

*The Counterpoint of J. S. Bach*

**SYLLABUS**

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**Instructor**

Dr. Reginald Bain, Professor  
Composition and Theory

**Contact Information**

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Office Hours: MTW 3:50-4:10 pm, or by appointment

**Course Information**

Term: Summer 2022, 3-Week Session III (3S5)  
Dates: June 20 - July 7  
Time: MTW: 12:20-3:50 pm<sup>1</sup>  
Website: <<https://reginaldbain.com/vc/musc726c/>>  
Blackboard: <<https://blackboard.sc.edu/>>

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**COURSE MODULES**

1. Counterpoint & Harmony
2. Canon
3. Invention
4. Fugue

**Description**

Analysis of contrapuntal techniques in the music of J. S. Bach with a focus on canon, invention, and fugue.

*Prerequisite:* Undergraduate tonal harmony and voice leading.

**Course Materials**

Reading assignments, digital scores, and analytical media will be made available in electronic format via Blackboard and the course website.

**Instructional Methods**

This course will be taught using multiple instructional methods including: lecture, group work/discussion, flipping and other student-centered learning approaches, and instructor-mentored student presentations with associated critical discussions. Students will complete analysis, writing, and score reading exercises in class, and discuss model analyses that illustrate the main topics of the course.

**Course Goals and Objectives**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Analyze tonal counterpoint
- Analyze chorales, canons, inventions, and fugues by J.S. Bach
- Identify advanced contrapuntal techniques associated with J.S. Bach's music
- Explain how analysis may inform contemporary performances of J.S. Bach's music
- Navigate online resources for Bach scholarship
- Engage in, and lead, an analytical discussion
- Plan, research, develop and present analytical oral presentations with supporting documentation that includes musical examples and diagrams

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<sup>1</sup> Blended/Hybrid Up to 49% web. Course that is taught both face-to-face and online with 49% or less of the course offered online. Course meets in-person on Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday and activities/assignments are completed asynchronously online by students in lieu of a Thursday meeting. The university-scheduled final exam day is Friday, July 8.

## Course Requirements

Daily reading, analysis, writing, score study and listening. Daily participation in the in-class exercises and class discussions. Daily use of the course Blackboard page and website to access digital course materials. Two analysis projects (1. *Chorale* and 2. *Invention*), and a final presentation on a fugue by J.S. Bach with supporting documentation. Three asynchronous Thursday projects: 1. *Bach & Friends*, 2. *Special Topics*, and 3. *Fugue Project Self-Reflection*. See the *Daily Schedule* for due dates/times.

## Technical Requirements

A computer, Web access, and a university-provided Blackboard account are required to access the digital course materials and submit work via Blackboard. Microsoft Word (.docx), Excel (.xlsx), and PowerPoint (.pptx) are the preferred document creation formats. These programs are available for free to all UofSC students. PDF is the required digital document submission format. For more detailed information, see *Links for Students*.

## University Policies

As described on the university's *Carolinian Creed*, *Honor Code* and *Center for Teaching Excellence* websites, students are expected to practice the highest possible standards of academic integrity and classroom etiquette. This course will follow the university's *Attendance Policy* which is available online at:

<https://academicbulletins.sc.edu/undergraduate/policies-regulations/undergraduate-academic-regulations/>

Detailed information about student services are available on the course website (see *Links for Students*).

## Student Disability Resource Center

If you are registered with the Student Disability Resource Center (SDRC), please make sure I receive a copy of your accommodation letter by the first day of class so I may work with you (and with SDRC as necessary) to make sure your accommodations are met. The SDRC is located in Close-Hipp, Suite 102. You may reach the SDRC via e-mail [sadrc@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:sadrc@mailbox.sc.edu), or phone (803) 777-6142.

## Classroom Policies

I am committed to making each day we meet an active, focused, positive, and distraction-free learning environment for everyone in the class. I expect all students to follow the university guidelines for classroom *safety* and *acceptable conduct*, as well as the *classroom etiquette* guidelines below:

- For current campus safety guidelines, visit the *Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Landing Page*: <https://sc.edu/safety/coronavirus/>.
- **Please do not enter the classroom while music is playing.** You may enter the classroom (as quietly as possible) when the instructor indicates that the current active listening exercise has ended.
- **Cell phones** should be put in **silent mode** before the class begins and should typically be **out of plain sight**.
- The use of laptops and tablets can be a significant distraction to others. Please be sensitive to this fact and limit their potential for distraction by using your electronic devices only for class-related activities.
- During certain *active learning activities*, electronic devices may need to be stowed away.
- In the case of *illness* or *extended absence*, be sure to keep the instructor informed via e-mail.
- Students are expected to be *fully attentive* to the *presentation of work by colleagues*.
- Students are expected to communicate ideas clearly and effectively. All work must reflect *acceptable standards of written English*. If you need help with your writing, the USC Writing Center (703 Byrnes Building, 803-777-2078) is committed to helping students take advantage of all the opportunities for learning that exist within the writing process.

## Grading Scale

A = 90-100%; B+ = 85-89%; B = 80-84%; C+ = 75-79%; C = 70-74%; D+ = 65-69%; D = 60-64%; F = 0-59%

## Grade Distribution

- 10% - Daily attendance, course engagement, preparation, and interaction with colleagues
- 30% - Three asynchronous projects (10% ea.)
- 15% - Chorale Project
- 20% - Invention Project
- 25% - Fugue Project

## COURSE OVERVIEW

### Calendar

|      | M  | T  | W  | Th |
|------|----|----|----|----|
| June | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| June | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| July | 4  | 5  | 6* | 7  |

\* - Presentation day

### Daily Schedule

| Week 1 | June 20-24            | Topic  | Reading   |
|--------|-----------------------|--|---|
|        | Mon., 6/20            | <i>Species Counterpoint</i>                                | Fux 1725, 19-23<br>Gauldin 2004, A14-25   |
|        | Tues., 6/21           | <i>Thoroughbass &amp; Harmony</i>                          | David & Mendel 1966, 388-393 & 398<br>Benjamin 1986, Appendix 1: Harmony  |
|        | Wed., 6/23            | <i>Canon</i>   | Benjamin 2003, Ch. 6 Imitation: Canon   |
|        | Thurs., 6/23          | <i>Asynchronous Thurs. 1</i>                               | <i>Bach &amp; Friends</i>   |
| Week 2 | June 29-30 & July 1-2 |  |   |
|        | Mon., 6/27            | <i>Invention</i>   | Turek 1995a, The Invention<br>Benjamin 2003, Ch. 7 The Two-Voice Invention<br>Benjamin 2003, Ch. 5 Double (Invertible) Cpt.<br>Gauldin 2013, The Two-Part Invention |
|        | Tues., 6/28           | <i>Fugue</i>   | Turek, 1995b, Fugue<br>Benjamin 2003, Ch. 10 Fugue 1  |
|        | Wed., 6/29            | <i>Fugue (cont.)</i>                                       | Benjamin 2003, Ch. 11 Fugue 2   |
|        | Thurs., 6/30          | <i>Asynchronous Thurs. 2</i>                               | <i>Special Topics</i>   |
| Week 3 | July 5-8              |  |   |
|        | Tues., 7/5            | <i>Fugue (cont.)</i><br><i>Fugue Project Consultations</i> | Kerman 2015 (Optional Selections)   |
|        | Wed., 7/6             | FUGUE PRESENTATIONS  |   |
|        | Thurs., 7/7           | <i>Asynchronous Thurs. 3</i>                               | <i>Fugue Project Self-Reflection</i>  |

### References:

- Benjamin, Thomas. 2003. *The Craft of Tonal Counterpoint*, 2nd ed. New York: Routledge.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1986. *Counterpoint in the Style of J.S. Bach*. New York: Schirmer.
- David, Hans T. and Arthur Mendel, eds. 1966. *The Bach Reader*. New York: Norton.
- Fux, Johann Joseph. 1725/1965. *The Study of Counterpoint from Johann Joseph Fux's Gradus ad Parnassum*. Translated and edited by Alfred Mann. New York: Norton.
- Gauldin, Robert. 2013. *A Practical Approach to Eighteenth-Century Counterpoint*, Revised Edition. Long Grove: IL, Waveland Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2004. "An Introduction to Species Counterpoint," in *Harmonic Practice in Tonal Music*, 2nd ed. New York: Norton, pp. A14-25.
- Kerman, Joseph. 2015. *Art of Fugue: Bach Fugues for Keyboard, 1715-1750*. Berkeley: U. of California Press.
- Turek, Ralph. 1995a/b. "The Invention," and "Fugue," in *The Elements of Music*. New York: McGraw Hill.

### Works for Study

*The Four-Part Chorales of J.S. Bach* (Dahn 2021) – <https://www.bach-chorales.com>

*Canons*, BWV 1072-78, BWV 1086, BWV 1079 & BWV 1087

*Goldberg Variations* (1741), BWV 988

*Inventions* (1723), BWV 772-786

*Well-Tempered Clavier*, Book 1 (1722), BWV 846-869

*Musical Offering* (1747), BWV 1079

*The Art of Fugue* (1751), BWV 1080