

BAIN MUSC 726
Topics in Music Theory

Debussy & Ravel

SYLLABUS

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 2023, 3-Week Session III (3S5)
Dates: June 19 - July 7¹
Location: Music Building, R215
Format: MTW: 4:10-7:40 pm, B3WEB²
Website: <https://reginaldbain.com/vc/musc726d/>
Blackboard: <https://blackboard.sc.edu>

COURSE MODULES

1. Piano Music
2. Ballet Music
3. String Quartets
4. Solo & Chamber Music
5. Vocal Music
6. Orchestral Music

Description

Analysis of melody, harmony, rhythm, form, style and orchestration in the music of Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel. *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 that include lecture, group discussion, and student-centered learning approaches (e.g., active learning exercises, flipping, and online activities). Students will complete analysis, writing, listening, and score reading exercises that focus on model analyses of major works that illustrate the main topics of the course. The capstone project for the course is an instructor-mentored student presentation with associated critical discussion.

Course Goals and Objectives

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

- Analyze the music by Debussy & Ravel using traditional and recently developed analytical techniques
- Compare/contrast the music of the two composers
- Explain how analysis may inform contemporary performances
- Navigate online resources for Debussy and Ravel scholarship
- Engage in, and lead, an analytical discussion
- Plan, research, develop and present an analytical oral presentation with supporting documentation that includes musical examples and diagrams

¹The university-scheduled final exam day is July 7.

² 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.

Course Requirements

Daily score study, listening, analysis, and reading. Daily participation in class discussions. Daily use of the course Blackboard page and website to access digital course materials. Two analysis projects (*Debussy Project* and *Ravel Project*) and a final oral presentation (*Final Project*) with supporting documentation. Each project has a required project proposal. There will also be three Asynchronous Thursday Activities: 1. *Visualizing Debussy & Ravel*, 2. *Special Topics*, and 3. *Final Project Self-Reflection*. See the *Daily Schedule* and Blackboard 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 USC students. PDF is the required digital document submission format. For more detailed information, see *Links for Students > Blended Course Information* on the course website.

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. For more detailed information, see *Links for Students* on the course website.

Student Services

Information about **Graduate Student Opportunities and Support**, **Wellness at the School of Music**, and **other student services** is also available on the course website under *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, or phone (803) 777-6142.

Attendance Policy

This course will follow the university's *Attendance Policy* which is available online at:

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

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:

- 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

- 5% - Daily attendance, course engagement, preparation, and interaction with colleagues
- 30% - Three Asynchronous Thursday Activities (10% ea.)
- 20% - Debussy Project
- 20% - Ravel Project
- 25% - Final Project

COURSE OVERVIEW

Calendar

	M	T	W	TH*
June	19	20	21	22
June	26	27	28	29
July	3		5	6

* - Asynchronous Thursday
No class on July 4

Daily Schedule

Week 1	June 19-22	Topics	Works for Study ³
	Mon., 6/19	<i>Piano Music</i>	DEBUSSY, Clair de lune (c1890), from <i>Suite bergamasque</i> (1905) RAVEL, <i>Pavane pour une infante défunte</i> (1899) DEBUSSY, <i>Pour le piano</i> (1901)
	Tues., 6/20	<i>cont.</i>	DEBUSSY, <i>Preludes</i> : Book 1, VI. Des pas sur la neige (1910) Book 2, X. Canope (1913) RAVEL, <i>Valses Nobles et Sentimentales</i> (1911)
	Wed., 6/21	<i>Ballet Music</i>	DEBUSSY, <i>Prelude a l'après-midi d'un faune</i> (1894) RAVEL, <i>Ma mère l'Oye</i> (1910)
	Thurs., 6/22	ASYNC. THURSDAY ACTIVITY #1: <i>Visualizing Debussy & Ravel</i>	DEBUSSY, <i>Images</i> , Book 1 (1905), I. Reflects dans l'eau RAVEL, <i>Le Tombeau de Couperin</i> (1917), II. Fugue
Week 2	June 26-29		
	Mon., 6/26	DEBUSSY PROJECT DISCUSSION <i>String Quartets</i>	DEBUSSY, String Quartet in G minor (1893) RAVEL, String Quartet in F major (1903)
	Tues., 6/27	<i>Solo & Chamber Music</i>	DEBUSSY, <i>Syrinx</i> (1913) DEBUSSY, Violin Sonata (1917) RAVEL, Sonata for Violin and Cello (1922) RAVEL, Violin Sonata No. 2 (1927)
	Wed., 6/28	<i>Vocal Music</i>	Selected songs, choral music, and opera excerpts
	Thurs., 6/29	ASYNC. THURSDAY ACTIVITY #2: <i>Special Topics</i>	
Week 3	July 3-6		
	Mon., 7/3	RAVEL PROJECT DISCUSSION <i>Orchestral Music</i>	DEBUSSY, <i>Trois Nocturnes</i> (1899) RAVEL, <i>Bolero</i> (1928)
	Wed., 7/5	STUDENT PRESENTATIONS	
	Thurs., 7/6	ASYNC. THURSDAY ACTIVITY #3: <i>Final Project Self-Reflection</i>	

Course Bibliography: <<https://reginaldbain.com/vc/musc726d/pub/biblio.html>>.

³ Assignment/activity and project due dates are available on the course website and in Blackboard.