



Mills E. Godwin High School

AP Music Theory

2019-2020

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I. Course Description

AP Music Theory is a course introducing the motivated and talented music students to musicianship, theory, musical materials, and theoretical procedures. The course is designed to provide students with the major components common to a first year course in a college music program. AP Music Theory integrates aspects of melody, harmony, texture, rhythm, form, musical analysis, elementary composition, and, to some extent, history and style. Musicianship skills such as dictation and other listening skills, sight-singing, and keyboard harmony are considered an important part of the course. The student's fluency and ability to read and write standard musical notation is required for the successful completion of the course. It is also expected that the student has acquired at least basic performance skills in voice or on an instrument.

This syllabus is intended to give you an overview of the course, but for a complete breakdown of skills and for practice exams and other important links, please refer to the AP central website.

II. Course Objectives

The course objectives for AP music theory are largely drawn from the most recent, expanded course requirements for AP music theory, found on the music theory homepage at AP central. The ultimate goal of an AP music theory course is to develop a student's ability to recognize, organize, understand, and describe the basic materials and processes of music that are heard or presented in a score. This goal will be best achieved by integrated approaches to the student's development of:

- Aural skills through listening exercises
- Sight singing skills through performance exercises
- Written skills through pencil and paper written exercises
- Compositional skills through creative musical exercises
- Analytical skills through the guided, in-class analysis of musical compositions drawn from the body of great musical literature from a variety of styles.

III. Course Content

The course seeks student mastery of the rudiments and terminology of music, including:

- Notation
- Intervals
- Scales and keys
- Chords
- Metric organization
- Rhythmic patterns

We address these basic concepts through listening to a wide variety of music. We focus primarily on the system of major-minor tonality. Additionally, we will be studying modal, pentatonic, and whole tone scales, and twentieth-century techniques and terminology. We give serious attention to the acquisition of correct notational skills. Speed, accuracy, and fluency with basic music materials will be emphasized.

Building on this foundation, the course progresses to include more sophisticated and creative tasks, such as:

- Composition of a bass line for a given melody, implying appropriate harmony
- Realization of a figured bass
- Realization of a Roman numeral progression
- Analysis of musical repertoire, including study of motivic treatment, examination of rhythmic and melodic interaction between individual voices of a composition, and harmonic analysis of functional tonal passages.

The course will also emphasize procedures based in common-practice tonality:

- Functional triadic harmony in traditional four-voice texture (with vocabulary including non-harmonic tones and secondary dominants)
- Cadences
- Melodic and harmonic compositional processes
- Standard rhythms and meters
- Phrase structure (e.g. contrasting period, phrase group)
- Small forms (e.g. rounded binary, simple ternary, theme and variation, strophic)
- Modulation to closely related keys

The course additionally emphasizes chromatic harmony, tonal relationships, techniques of modulation, more distant key relationships, and larger musical forms.

IV. Aural Skills

One of the most important skills that any music student can develop is the training of the ear. Students will be expected to spend a considerable amount of time on melodic and harmonic dictation exercises and will be given resources and tools to practice fundamental aural skills in and outside of class time. Examples will include: dictation of a given diatonic melodic line, recognition of diatonic intervals from perfect unison to octave, aural identification of major, minor, augmented, diminished, and suspended fourth chords, aural identification of major and minor sixth chords, and aural identification of minor seventh, major seventh, and dominant seventh chords. Recognition of harmonic patterns will be stressed, and the ability to correctly identify and notate harmonic sequences will be an integral part of the course. Two-part (soprano/bass) dictation will be tested on a regular basis. The recognition of cadences will be stressed, and students will be expected to accurately detect standard cadence patterns in major and minor tonalities.

V. Sight-Singing

Students will practice sight singing in groups, as well as in a solo setting. The discovery of the singing voice (while not a part of the curriculum) will be touched on, as a means to strengthen a student's ability to accurately audiate pitches. Students will be expected to accurately sing a four measure melody that includes non-diatonic tones, in simple or compound duple time, and drawn from major or minor tonality. Additionally, the student should be able to draw harmonic implications from the melody, and supply a figured bass analysis of each sung example.

VI. Class Expectations

The following guidelines will set Godwin AP Music Theory students up for success this year:

1. As with any arts class emphasizing skill acquisition, regular attendance is vital. If a student is absent, it is expected that the student will ask for make-up work and schedule any make up assessments. Students should check Schoology regularly.
2. Students are expected to be in their seat by the bell and prepared with all materials and homework assignments at the start of class.
3. Students will be active participants in the class, and will be proactive in seeking help and/or clarification of the material as soon as it is necessary.
4. Visit the restroom or drinking fountain before class begins.
5. No food or drink in the music theory room (this includes gum, candy, etc.)

VII. Academic Integrity

Cheating/Plagiarism: Students are responsible for neither giving, nor receiving assistance, written, oral or otherwise, in any assignment to be graded as the work of a single individual. Students are responsible for giving due recognition of sources from which material is quotes, summarized or paraphrased. This includes persons who have provided assistance. *See student handbook* (pg. 17) for further clarification.

VIII. Attendance

Regular attendance is essential for success in AP Music Theory. The attendance office will process attendance information daily, see student handbook for further clarification.

IX. Grading Policy

The grading system is numerical from 0-100 on a 10 point grading scale per every nine-week marking period. Based on this grading system, each marking period (quarter) grade will be determined by the following assessments:

Summative Assessments (60%) – Examinations: aural skills, written skills, sight singing

Formative Assessments (40%) – Daily class work, homework, practice exercises, sight-singing, and dictation exercises

X. Materials

Kostka, Stefan and Payne, Dorothy. Tonal Harmony, 6th ed. New York, NY: McGrawHill, 2009. (text provided by HCPS)

Scoggin, Nancy. AP Music Theory (2nd Edition) U.S.A.: Barron's Educational Series, Inc., 2014. (student purchase)

Finale Notepad (install from software center)

Websites to practice aural and written theory concepts

Notebook paper

Staff paper (can be printed from various sites...see resources)

Pencils with erasers

XI. Course Planner

This schedule is only approximate, as classes may move at different paces from one year to another. The class meets every school day for a fifty minute period. Written homework and assignments are given at each class meeting. Students are responsible for at home practice with ear training using websites and tools for independent practice and sight singing.

Marking Period 1: AP Music Theory CED Units 1-3

Theory:

Kostka & Payne Chapters 1-5, Chapter 26 (modes, pentatonic, & whole tone scales only):
Notation, naming notes, ledger lines, half/whole steps, accidentals, enharmonic note names, major scales, minor scales (three forms), modes, pentatonic scales, whole tone scale, major and minor key signatures, scale degree names, intervals, rhythmic notation, beat/tempo, simple meter, triad and seventh chord construction, identifying and writing triads and seventh chords in inversions, and figured bass.

Dictation:

Simple diatonic intervals and rhythms will be covered using short phrases of two to four measures, with special emphasis on correct notation practices.

Sight singing:

We will work on basic pitch realization, finding “do,” and developing strategies for accurately singing at sight. We focus on pitch patterns and understanding intervallic relationships. We sing solo and by groups.

Analysis:

Simple analysis of structures (harmonic, melodic) in a variety of forms using examples from “real” compositions.

Composition:

Student will compose basic rhythmic and melodic melodies.

Marking Period 2: AP Music Theory CED Units 3-5

Theory:

Kostka & Payne Chapters 5-11: Principles of voice leading, notating chords, parallel motion, root position part writing, instrumental ranges and transposition, harmonic progression, sequences, and introduction to non-chord tones. Triads in first inversion, soprano-bass counterpoint, triads in second inversion, cadential, passing, and pedal six- four chords, cadences, phrases, and periods.

Dictation:

Rhythmic and melodic dictation examples become more challenging. Dictation will be taken in two parts (bass and soprano) and student begin to listen to harmonic content using diatonic chords.

Sight singing:

We will begin sight singing in compound meter, in various key signatures and clefs - including alto clef, and in major and minor keys. Students will be assessed periodically.

Analysis:

We will analyze music from a variety of styles. The interaction of melody and harmony are discussed, and diagrammed in musical examples drawn from a wide variety of sources.

Composition:

Students create chord progressions and realize four voice part writing.

Marking Period 3: AP Music Theory CED Units 6-8

Theory:

Kostka & Payne Chapters 11-18: Non-chord tones: passing tone, neighboring tone, suspension, retardation, appoggiatura, escape tone, neighbor group, anticipation, pedal point. Diatonic V7-II7-VII7 Chords in major and minor, resolutions and inversions.

Secondary dominants and secondary leading tone chords and their function.

Dictation:

We take melodic dictation using altered tones from the secondary dominant sphere of chords. Continue to build harmonic dictation skills, to now include inverted chords.

Sight singing:

We continue to practice diatonic sight singing (with #4 and b7) with special emphasis on singing in phrases, and in smoothly connecting notes to make coherent melodic patterns.

Analysis:

Special focus is given to harmonic analysis, with a figured bass. We examine and analyze full scores from the common practice period.

Composition:

Students compose harmonic passages using first and second inversion chords. Students will compose a bass line for a given melody, implying appropriate harmony, or harmonization of a given melody in four parts. Students also compose melodic passages with all types of NCTs.

**First sample AP Music Theory exam is administered*

Marking Period 4: AP Music Theory CED Units 1-8 Review and AP Exam Prep

Theory:

Kostka & Payne Chapters 18-20 Continuation of modulation and secondary functions, small forms (e.g., simple binary, rounded binary, ternary, theme and variation, strophic.) Preparation for the free response questions on the AP exam.

Dictation:

Melodic and harmonic dictation examples are drawn from exam level-appropriate examples. Speed, accuracy, and correct notation are also reiterated.

Sight singing:

Students continue to develop the skills required for exam level performance, with special emphasis on fluency through a musical passage.

Analysis:

We analyze musical examples using all of the tools at our disposal: melodic movement, harmony and figured bass analysis, non chord tones, etc.

Composition:

Following the AP Music Theory exam, students complete a final composition project which will demonstrate the student's mastery of the AP Music Theory curriculum.

XII. Textbook and Teacher Resources

Primary Textbooks

Kostka, Stefan. and Dorothy Payne. *Tonal Harmony with an Introduction to Twentieth-Century Music*. 7th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2013.

Workbook: Kostka, Stefan. and Dorothy Payne. *Tonal Harmony with an Introduction to Twentieth-Century Music*. 7th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2013.

Other Teacher Resources

College Board AP Music Theory Course Description. 2019.

The Presbyterian Hymnal: Hymns, Psalms, and Spiritual Songs. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1992.

Bach, J.S. *371 Four-Part Chorals, Vol 1*. New York: Kalmus, 1985.

Benjamin, Thomas, Michael Horvit, and Robert Nelson. *Music For Analysis: Examples from the Common Practice Period and the Twentieth Century*. 7th ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Berkowitz, Sol, Perry Goldstein, and Edward Smaldone. *A New Approach to Sight Singing*. 6th ed. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2017.

Bolkovac, Edward, and Judith Johnson. *150 Rounds for Teaching and Singing*. Milwaukee: Boosey & Hawkes, 2004.

Burkart, Charles, and William Rothstein. *Anthology for Musical Analysis*. 7th ed. Independence, KY: Cengage Learning, 2011.

Burstein, L. Poundie, and Joseph Straus. *Concise Introduction to Tonal Harmony*. 1st ed. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2016.

Durham, Thomas L. *Beginning Tonal Dictation*. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, 2003.

Gauldin, Robert. *Harmonic Practice in Tonal Music*. 2nd ed. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2004.

Ottoman, Robert. *Music for Sight Singing*. 8th ed. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Simon and Schuster, 1986.

Starer, Robert. *Rhythmic Training*. Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard, 1985.

Important Websites

- <http://apcentral.collegeboard.com> - AP Central
- <http://www.good-ear.com/> – assists with ear training, interval identification
- <http://www.musictheory.net/> – assists in fundamental theory skills
- <http://www.studystack.com/flashcard-497> - music vocabulary flashcards
- <http://people.virginia.edu/~pdr4h/musicpaper/> - blank staff paper
- <http://www.gmajormusictheory.org/index.html> - fundamental music theory worksheets
- <http://www.teoria.com/> - tutorials in theory, also available in Spanish
- <http://www.dlib.indiana.edu/variations/scores/> - online musical scores
- <http://www.music.vt.edu/musicdictionary/> - music dictionary