

### Course Materials

Horvit, Michael, et al. *Music for Ear Training*, Third Edition. Boston: Schirmer Cengage Learning, 2008.

Ottman, Robert W., et al. *Music for Sight Singing*, Seventh Edition. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2006.

Auralia—Computer program for dictation drills available on computers in Biedenharn Hall.

Blank manuscript (staff) paper.

Pencils.

\*\*Helpful materials and web links can be found at <http://www.ulm.edu/~everett/auralskills.html>.\*\*

### Course Description and Prerequisites

This course covers fundamental elements of melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic dictation and sight-singing (from ULM Catalog). Prerequisites are a passing score on the Theory Placement Exam or successful completion of MUSC 101.

Aural Skills functions as the “in practice” counterpart to the written Music Theory course. Because both visual and aural cognizances of musical elements (rhythm, melody, harmony, etc.) are vital to complete musical development, the purpose of this course is to train students to perceive and identify these elements aurally and visually and to reproduce them through both singing and dictation. In-class activities will include sight-singing rhythmic and melodic exercises, as well as dictation of rhythms, melodies, and harmonies. The Auralia software program and Horvit text will be used for additional practice outside of class. In this introductory course, the perception and reproduction of simple and compound meter rhythms, basic intervals, and melodies and harmonies within major keys will be emphasized, along with an introduction to minor keys and more complex intervals.

### Student Goals and Objectives

Through this course, the student will learn to:

1. Aurally recognize basic intervals.
2. Aurally recognize simple and compound meter rhythms.
3. Identify key signatures.
4. Aurally perceive the differences between major and minor keys.
5. Aurally recognize chord characteristics.
6. Dictate diatonic melodies and basic intervals.
7. Dictate basic rhythms in both simple and compound meters.
8. Sight-sing rhythms and diatonic melodies.

### Teaching Strategies

Aural Skills is a “lab” course by nature, therefore class meetings will consist primarily of corporate dictation and sight-singing exercises. Students may be called upon to write their dictation answers on the board for the class, and/or to sight-sing individually or in small groups. In-class discussions will focus upon developing techniques and ideas for greater student achievement, though it must be emphasized that individual and small group PRACTICE outside of class is necessary if this course is to be completed successfully. Students are encouraged to utilize the Auralia software program and Horvit text and accompanying CD frequently in order to build dictation skills. Small group work with a piano and/or tuner also is effective.

### Assignments

Course assignments and their weight toward the final grade are as follows:

- Dictation tests (4) – 35%. Tests on dictation skills developed during individual and corporate practice will be given at four (4) points during the semester, tentatively scheduled for September 10, October 1, November 3, and December 11. (Dates

may be changed at the instructor's discretion, but will be close to these.) Rhythmic, melodic, intervallic, and harmonic dictation will be included on these tests.

- Sight-singing tests (4) – 35%. Similar to the tests above, except for sight-singing. Students will be required to sing both prepared and unfamiliar melodies, as well as articulate rhythm patterns. The dates of the sight-singing tests will be the same as those of the dictation tests.
- Dictation quizzes – 15%. Short quizzes on dictation skills will be given at various points during the semester, and may be announced or unannounced. These will be similar to the tests discussed above, but will be shorter and possibly more frequent.
- Sight-singing quizzes – 15%. Materials similar to the sight-singing tests discussed above, but with the same brevity and frequency as the dictation quizzes.

### Singing and Rhythm Execution Methodologies

- All singing in this course will be executed using movable “do” solfège. Because good musicianship requires that the performer (or conductor or teacher) not only know how his or her part “goes,” but also how that part fits melodically and harmonically into the whole, solfège will be used to promote this understanding. Solfège also provides a “frame of reference” needed to enable the performer to sing or play accurately at sight, helps to protect against errors in singing, and is an extremely helpful tool in both melodic and harmonic dictation.
- Rhythm exercises will be executed by having the student count the subdivisions of the beat (1 and 2 and, etc.) aloud and clap the written rhythm. Rhythms will not be accurately executed if the performer does not subdivide the beat internally; counting subdivisions aloud in practice helps the student to develop this important skill.

### Grading Scale

90-100=A                      80-89=B                      70-79=C                      60-69=D                      0-59=F

### Grading Methodologies

Dictation quizzes and tests will be graded as follows:

- Interval, chord, scale, cadence, meter, and mode identification questions will be assigned one point each.
- Rhythm dictation questions will be assigned one point per beat.
- Melodic dictation questions will be assigned two points per beat—one point for pitch, one point for rhythm. Some leniency will be exercised when a single mistake causes subsequent notes to be incorrect, yet the intervals and/or rhythms after the first missed notes are “correct.”
- Harmonic dictation questions will be assigned one point per pitch, one point per chord identification, and one point for identifying the cadence.
- The student's score will be converted to a percentage grade. For example, if the student is awarded seven points out of ten possible, he or she will receive a grade of 70.

The singing portions of sight-singing quizzes and tests will be graded as follows:

- Students that miss no pitches, rhythms, or solfège syllables will receive a score of 100.
- A score of 95 will be awarded when the student's execution is generally correct, but with a bit of stuttering or stumbling.
- A score of 90 will be awarded when the student's execution is “close,” but perhaps the pitch modulates, solfège is slightly inaccurate, and/or rhythmic execution is somewhat inconsistent.
- A score of 85 will be awarded when the student's execution is, again, “close,” but with greater inconsistencies than needed for a score of 90.
- A score of 80 will be awarded when pitch and solfège are mostly correct, but rhythm execution is completely inaccurate.
- A score of 75 will be awarded when the pitch modulates, rhythm execution is inaccurate, but solfège is correct.
- A score of 70 will be awarded when the student has the “gist” of the exercise, but with frequent misses in pitch, rhythm, and solfège.
- A score of 60 will be awarded when the student sings somewhat correctly but refuses to use or cannot correctly use solfège syllables.
- A score of 40 will be awarded when the student at least somewhat accurately executes rhythm and solfège, but misses most or all pitches.
- A score of 20 will be awarded when pitch, rhythm, and solfège are all woefully incorrect.
- A score of 0 will be awarded when the student refuses to take the quiz or test, or misses class that day without excuse.

The rhythm execution portions of sight-singing quizzes and tests will be graded as follows:

- Note: all rhythm execution exercises in quizzes and tests will be four measures in length.

- Students that count and clap with complete accuracy will receive a score of 100.
- A score of 90 will be awarded when the student's execution is "correct," but tempo is inconsistent; OR, if the student has to start over more than once.
- A score of 80 will be awarded when one measure (or equivalent) is executed incorrectly, but the rest is correct.
- A score of 60 will be awarded when two measures (or equivalent) are executed incorrectly, but the rest is correct.
- A score of 50 will be awarded when the student claps somewhat accurately, but refuses to or cannot correctly count subdivisions aloud.
- A score of 40 will be awarded when three measures (or equivalent) are executed incorrectly, but the rest is correct.
- A score of 20 will be awarded when the student's execution is almost completely incorrect.
- A score of 0 will be awarded when the student refuses to take the quiz or test, or misses class that day without excuse.

Sight singing tests will generally include three sections: rhythm execution, prepared melody, and sight singing. Each section will be graded individually according to the above standards and then combined to produce the total score for the test. Rhythm execution and sight singing will each be weighted 30%, and the prepared melody 40%.

### Class Preparation

Students should PRACTICE both sight-singing and dictation skills on a **daily** basis, as these skills can only be acquired through diligent practice much like that which is undertaken to develop performance skills as a vocalist or instrumentalist. Students will be given "assignments" for exercises in the texts, Auralia, and/or other materials to serve as a guide for class preparation. While there is no homework in this course *per se*, students that do not practice regularly **will** fall behind, and very likely fail the course. The instructor is available during office hours for individual help outside of class, if needed.

### Attendance

Attendance at each class meeting is essential for optimal student learning. In order for a pre-planned absence to be deemed excused, the student must inform the instructor in advance of the planned absence, and the instructor must approve of the reason for the absence. This rule does not apply to immediate emergency situations such as sudden illness or injury, car trouble, or death in the immediate family, although it is still desirable that the instructor be contacted in advance, if possible. A doctor's excuse or other official notice will be requested in these instances. All other absences will be deemed unexcused. Tests and quizzes missed due to excused absences can be made up; however, previously announced tests or quizzes must be completed prior to the missed class if the absence is planned in advance. Work missed due to absences deemed unexcused cannot be made up. Students that miss more than seventy-five (75) percent of class meetings—in this course, eight (8) or more absences—will receive a grade of "W" (prior to the last day to drop a course) or "F" (after the last day to drop a course) in MUSC 103.

### Tardies

Students arriving late to class will have their tardies deemed excused if the instructor is informed in advance, or if the student has a note or promise of a note from a doctor, another instructor, or other responsible party. All other tardies will be deemed unexcused. In addition, four (4) unexcused tardies will be considered equal to one unexcused absence. See the attendance policy above for penalties for unexcused absences/tardies. Policies regarding work missed due to tardies are the same as those listed above for absences.

### General Policies, Procedures, and Information

In addition to the information specified above, information in the ULM Student Policy Manual and Organizational Handbook (<http://www.ulm.edu/studentpolicy>) applies in this course.

In case of an in-class emergency, the instructor will provide information on how to proceed.

For information on Student Services, including the Student Success Center, Counseling Center, Special Needs, and Student Health Services, please visit <http://www.ulm.edu/studentaffairs>.

**MUSC 103: Aural Skills I**  
**ULM Division of Music**  
**Fall 2009**  
 Time: 8:00-9:15am TR  
 Location: Biedenharn 129

**Dr. Micah Everett, Instructor**  
 Phone: 318-342-1596  
 Email: everett@ulm.edu  
 Web: <http://www.ulm.edu/~everett>  
 Office Hours, Biedenharn 211: TBA

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Tentative Class Schedule (subject to change)

Unit I: August 24-September 10

- Subjects Covered:
  - Introduction to sight-singing using solfège syllables.
  - Rhythms in simple meters.
  - Introduction to intervals.
  - Conjunct (stepwise) melodies in major keys.
  - Chord qualities: major, minor, augmented, diminished triads.
  - Identification of major and minor scales (all forms).
- Ottman *Music for Sight Singing* Chapters 1-2.
- Horvit *Music for Ear Training* Units 1-2.
- Suggested Auralia Exercises:
  - Interval Comparison Levels 1-5.
  - Interval Recognition Levels 1-7.
  - Scale Recognition Levels 1-3.
  - Chord Recognition Levels 1-2.
  - Meter Recognition Levels 1-3.
  - Rhythmic Dictation Levels 1-3.
  - Rhythm Elements Levels 1-2.
  - Rhythm Elements Dictation Level 1.
  - Melodic Dictation Levels 1-2.

Unit II: September 15-October 1

- Subjects Covered:
  - More complex rhythms in simple meters.
  - Continued work on intervals.
  - Conjunct (stepwise) and some disjunct (with leaps) melodies in major keys.
  - Chord qualities: same as above, plus dominant seventh.
  - Cadences: Perfect Authentic, Imperfect Authentic, Half, Plagal
- Ottman *Music for Sight Singing* Chapters 2-3.
- Horvit *Music for Ear Training* Unit 2.
- Suggested Auralia Exercises:
  - All Previous Exercises.
  - Chord Recognition Level 3 (4-5 optional).
  - Rhythm Elements Dictation Level 3.
  - Chord Recognition Level 3 (4-5 optional).
  - Cadences Level 1.
  - Melodic Dictation (Levels 3-5 optional).

Unit III: October 6-November 3

- Subjects Covered:
  - Rhythms in simple and compound meters.
  - Intervals.
  - Conjunct and disjunct melodies in major keys, with leaps occurring more frequently.
  - Harmonic dictation: I, ii6, IV, V.
  - Cadences: Add Deceptive.
- Ottman *Music for Sight Singing* Chapters 3-4.
- Horvit *Music for Ear Training* Units 3-4.
- Suggested Auralia Exercises:
  - All Previous Exercises.
  - Chord Progressions Level 1-3.
  - Cadences Levels 1-2.
  - Meter Recognition Level 4.

- Rhythmic Dictation Levels 4-6.
- Rhythm Elements Levels 3-4 (5 optional).
- Rhythm Elements Dictation Levels 3-4 (5 optional).

Unit IV: November 5-December 11

- Subjects Covered:
  - Introduction to minor, chromatic solfège syllables.
  - Rhythms in simple and compound meters.
  - Intervals.
  - Conjunct and disjunct melodies in major keys, introduction to minor keys.
  - Harmonic dictation: introduction of the cadential six-four and minor keys.
  - Identification of major and minor keys when listening to pieces.
  - Cadences.
- Ottman *Music for Sight Singing* Chapters 4-5.
- Horvit *Music for Ear Training* Units 4-6.
- Suggested Auralia Exercises:
  - All Previous Exercises.
  - Cadences Levels 3-4.
  - Chord Progressions Levels 4-5.
  - Rhythmic Dictation Levels 4-8.
  - Rhythm Elements Level 5.
  - Rhythm Elements Dictation Level 5.
  - Melodic Dictation Levels 4-5 (6-7 optional).