

# AP MUSIC THEORY

## Syllabus

### ***Prerequisites:***

Although there are no specific prerequisites for this course, it is strongly recommended that students have prior training in music, either through lessons or participation in an ensemble (choir, band, orchestra).

### ***Course Objective***

This course is designed to challenge students in the study of music theory and analysis, composition, aural skills (ear training), and music history and to provide students with a learning experience similar to an introductory college course in music theory. At the conclusion of the course, the AP Music Theory Exam (as prescribed by the College Board) will be administered to all students enrolled in this class.

### ***Course Overview***

The requirements of this course are based on the most recent AP Course Description provided by the College Board. These requirements, while extensive, are attainable with diligence, consistent work, and an open teacher/student discussion atmosphere. Help is always available by contacting the instructor.

To accomplish these objectives in a competent and confident manner, students will participate in activities related to these objectives both inside and outside the classroom, using composition software, electronic keyboards, and aural and written materials.

### ***General Course Content:***

- Review of music fundamentals, including scales, key signatures, circle of fifths, intervals, triads, and inversions
- Ear training, including rhythmic, melodic and harmonic dictation
- Sight-singing using numbers for pitches
- Study of modes
- Study of figured bass
- Study of two-part counterpoint
- Study of four-part harmony
- Study of seventh chords
- Study of secondary-dominant functions
- Study of musical form, including Sonata form
- Study of common compositional techniques

*The objectives below have been adapted from the Expanded Course Specifications posted on the AP Music Theory Home Page on AP Central®.*

### ***Expanded Course Objectives:***

- Identify and notate pitch in four clefs: treble, bass, alto and tenor
- Notate, hear and identify simple and compound meters
- Notate and identify all major and minor key signatures

- Notate, hear and identify the following scales: chromatic, major, and the three minor forms
- Name and recognize scale degree terms (i.e., tonic)
- Notate, hear and transpose the following modes: Dorian, Phrygian, Lydian, and Mixolydian
- Notate, hear and identify whole-tone and pentatonic scales
- Notate, hear and identify all major, minor, diminished, diminished, and augmented intervals inclusive of an octave
- Transpose a melodic line to or from concert pitch for any common band or orchestral instrument
- Notate, hear and identify triads, including inversions
- Notate, hear and identify authentic, plagal, half and deceptive cadences in major and minor keys
- Detect pitch and rhythm errors in written music from given aural excerpts
- Notate a melody from dictation, 6 to 12 bars, in a major key, mostly diatonic pitches, simple or compound time, three to four repetitions
- Notate melody from dictation, 6 to 12 bars, in a minor key, chromatic alteration from harmonic/melodic scales, simple or compound time, three to four repetitions
- Sight-sing a melody, 4 to 8 bars long, major or minor key, duple or triple meter, simple or compound time, using solfege, numbers or a neutral syllable
- Notate and analyze simple 2-bar counterpoint in sixteenth- and/or eighteenth-century styles
- Realize a figured bass according to the rules of eighteenth-century chorale style, major or minor key, using any or all of the following devices: diatonic triads, seventh chords, inversions, nonharmonic tones, and secondary-dominant and dominant seventh chords
- Analyze a four-part chorale style piece using Roman and Arabic numerals to represent chords and their inversions
- Notate, hear and identify the following nonharmonic tones: passing tone (accented and unaccented), neighboring tone, anticipation, suspension, retardation, appoggiatura, escape tone, changing tone (cambiata), pedal tone
- Notate the soprano and bass pitches and the Roman and Arabic numeral analysis of a harmonic dictation, eighteenth-century chorale style, seventh chords, secondary dominants, 4 to 8 bars in length, major or minor key, three to four repetitions
- Compose a melody or expand a motive with or without text, 6 to 12 bars long, given specific directions about key, mode, phrasing, rhythm and harmonic language. Harmonize a 4 to 8 bar melody by writing a bass line, chords and/or chord symbols, given specific directions about key, mode, phrasing, rhythmic and harmonic language
- Define and identify common tempo and expression markings
- Identify aurally and/or visually the following: modulation, transposition, melodic and harmonic rhythm, sequence, imitation, ostinato, augmentation, diminution, inversion, retrograde and fragmentation
- Recognize standard musical algorithms, such as standard melodic, rhythmic and harmonic idioms that occur in music

### *Expectations of Students:*

1. Students will participate in all classroom discussions and activities.
2. Students will complete all assigned exercises and readings.
3. Students will keep and maintain a Music Theory notebook, which will include class notes, handouts, assignments and listening logs.
4. Students will study the released AP Exams and take practice tests to prepare for the exam.
5. Students will listen to approximately two hours of music each week outside of class and maintain a music listening log, which will consist of written analysis and evaluations of each listening selection. These written logs should include observations and evaluations regarding the following items:
  - Melodic characteristics
  - Harmonic characteristics (harmonic idioms present)
  - Rhythm (straight/syncopated)
  - Texture (homophonic, monophonic, polyphonic, heterophonic)
  - Timbre (instrumentation, tone color)
  - Dynamics (dynamic contrasts)
  - Tempo (tempo changes)
  - Meter (duple/triple, simple/compound, regular/irregular)
  - Mode (major, minor, modal, atonal)
  - Form (binary, ternary, sonata, rondo, etc.)
  - Articulation (legato, staccato, etc.)
6. Students will attend one concert each nine weeks and submit a paper about the concert, using an appropriate musical vocabulary. This paper should contain general information about the concert, the student's evaluation of it, and specific analysis of three individual selections from the concert. (The local universities offer many fine concerts, most of which are free of charge.) The analysis should include the following:
  - Melodic characteristics (conjunct/disjunct)
  - Harmonic characteristics (harmonic idioms present)
  - Rhythm (homophonic, monophonic, polyphonic, heterophonic)
  - Timbre (instrumentation, tone color)
  - Dynamics (dynamic contrasts)
  - Tempo (tempo changes)
  - Meter (duple/triple, simple/compound, regular/irregular)
  - Mode (major, minor, modal, atonal)
  - Form (binary, ternary, sonata, rondo, etc.)
  - Articulation (legato, staccato, etc.)
7. Students will submit two major compositions each nine weeks, based on assigned form and content. Other minor compositions will be required to demonstrate understanding and synthesis of concepts presented. These compositions include:
  - A song in binary form
  - A song in ternary form
  - A song in sonata form
  - A song based on a major mode
  - A song based on a minor mode

- A song using two-part counterpoint
- A four-part fugue with subject, countersubject and free improvisation
- A song that modulates from one tonal center to another through the use of a pivot chord
- A song based on the whole-tone scale
- A song based on the chromatic scale
- A song based on a tone row or serialism
- A song based on a church mode

An orchestration, arrangement or choral octavo with correct notation, range and transpositions is the final composition project for the year.

**Primary Text:**

Kostka, Stefan and Payne, Dorothy, Tonal Harmony. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Boston: McGraw Hill, 2004.

Kostka, Stefan and Payne, Dorothy, Workbook for Tonal Harmony. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Boston: McGraw Hill, 2004 (with CDs).

**Resources available to students for reference:**

Grout, Donald Jay. A History of Western Music. 7th ed. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2005

Ottman, Robert. *Music for Sight Singing*, 5th ed. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 2001.

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Finale Notepad® (free download from [www.makemusic.com](http://www.makemusic.com))

**Course Planner**

**First Nine Weeks:**

Week	Chp	Concepts	Aural Skills	Performance Skills	Compositional Skills
1-2	**  2,1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Overview of AP Music Theory Course Description book</li> <li>▪ Rhythm &amp; Meter</li> <li>▪ Relative symbols of duration</li> <li>▪ Beat/Tempo Markings</li> <li>▪ Simple/Compound Meters</li> <li>▪ Time Signatures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Rhythmic dictation</li> <li>▪ Identification of beat and meter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sight-reading rhythms in variety of meters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Original rhythmic compositions</li> <li>▪ Notate given rhythmic pattern using different time signatures</li> </ul>
3	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pitch Notation</li> <li>▪ Treble/Alto/Tenor/Bass Clefs</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Performance on keyboard in multiple clefs,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Notate exercises in multiple clefs,</li> </ul>

Week	Chp	Concepts	Aural Skills	Performance Skills	Compositional Skills
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Movable Clefs</li> <li>▪ Octave Registers/Keyboard</li> </ul>		with correct octave register	with correct octave registers
3-4	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Keys/Scales/Modes</li> <li>▪ Major/minor key signatures</li> <li>▪ Major/minor scale construction</li> <li>▪ Modal Scales</li> <li>▪ Scale degree names</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Conjunct, tonal melodic dictation</li> <li>▪ Identification of mode</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sight-singing conjunct, tonal melodies in a variety of modes</li> <li>▪ Performance of scales on keyboard</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Original melodic compositions in a variety of modes</li> </ul>
5-6	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Intervals</li> <li>▪ Major/minor/augmented/diminished and perfect intervals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identification of intervals played melodically and simultaneously</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Singing intervals – individually by step/leap and simultaneously as a group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Begin Species I Counterpoint</li> <li>▪ Motivic treatments (inversion/tonal and real transpositions)</li> </ul>
7-8	3,4,5,6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Triads</li> <li>▪ Major/minor/augmented/diminished</li> <li>▪ Inversions</li> <li>▪ Roman numerals</li> <li>▪ Begin figured bass notation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identification of chord quality</li> <li>▪ Identification of I, IV and V</li> <li>▪ Continued melodic dictation, include arpeggiated chords</li> <li>▪ Begin harmonic dictation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Singing arpeggiated chords</li> <li>▪ Continued melodic sight-singing, include arpeggiated chords</li> <li>▪ Group singing of triads</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue Counterpoint</li> <li>▪ Root Position 4-part writing</li> </ul>
8-9	3,4,5,6,8,9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Seventh Chords</li> <li>▪ M, Mm, m, half and fully diminished</li> <li>▪ Continued</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identification of chord quality</li> <li>▪ Identification of V vs V7 chord</li> <li>▪ Continued melodic and harmonic dictation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continued melodic sight-singing</li> <li>▪ Group singing of seventh chords</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Part-writing, including inversions</li> </ul>

***Second Nine Weeks:***

Week	Chp	Concepts	Aural Skills	Performance Skills	Compositional Skills
1-2	7, 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Harmonic Progression &amp; Cadences</li> <li>▪ Circle of 5ths Progressions</li> <li>▪ Authentic/Plagal/Half/Deceptive and Phrygian Cadences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continued melodic dictation</li> <li>▪ Continued harmonic dictation</li> <li>▪ Identification of cadences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue sight-singing</li> <li>▪ Performance on keyboard of simple cadences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 4-part writing using original progressions</li> <li>▪ Demonstrate cadences in a variety of keys/voicings</li> </ul>
3-4	11, 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Non-Harmonic Tones</li> <li>▪ Passing and neighboring tones</li> <li>▪ Suspensions and retardations</li> <li>▪ Anticipations</li> <li>▪ Escape Tones and Appoggiaturas</li> <li>▪ Pedal Point</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Harmonic dictation incorporating NHT's</li> <li>▪ Continued melodic dictation</li> <li>▪ Identify NHT's</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continued sight-singing</li> <li>▪ Group performance of NHT's</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Counterpoint using NHT's</li> <li>▪ (Invertible Counterpoint)</li> <li>▪ 4-part writing using NHT's</li> </ul>
5-6	10, 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Phrases, Period and Form</li> <li>▪ Repeated phrase, parallel periods, contrasting periods, two &amp; three phrase periods and double periods</li> <li>▪ Binary and Ternary Forms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identification of phrases/cadences and form</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continued sight-singing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Binary form composition of harmonized melody</li> </ul>
7-8	13, 16, 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Secondary Chords</li> <li>▪ Major/minor/augmented/diminished and perfect intervals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Harmonic dictation including secondary dominants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continued sight-singing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 4-part writing incorporating secondary dominants and leading tones</li> </ul>
8-9	23, 24, 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Other Non-Diatonic Chords</li> <li>▪ Augmented 6<sup>th</sup> Chords (Italian, French, German)</li> <li>▪ Neapolitan Chord</li> <li>▪ Picardy Thirds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continued harmonic dictation</li> <li>▪ Identification of non-diatonic chords</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continued sight-singing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 4-part writing incorporating non-diatonic chords</li> </ul>

***Third Nine Weeks:***

Week	Chp	Concepts	Aural Skills	Performance Skills	Compositional Skills
1-3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 2-part Inventions</li> <li>▪ Motive, counter-motive and sequence</li> <li>▪ Augmentation and diminution</li> <li>▪ Closely related keys</li> <li>▪ Real and tonal sequences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify real/tonal sequences</li> <li>▪ Identify motive/ counter-motive and form within inventions</li> <li>▪ Melodic dictation using invention motives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue sight-singing</li> <li>▪ Performance of motive, etc. on keyboard</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Composition of a 2-part invention</li> </ul>
4-6		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ AP Exam Vocabulary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify examples, using exam terminology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sing examples, as appropriate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Short examples of terms, as appropriate</li> </ul>
7-9		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ AP Free-Response Review</li> <li>▪ Roman Numerals</li> <li>▪ Figured Bass</li> <li>▪ Bass line Composition</li> <li>▪ Scoring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Melodic/ harmonic dictation and analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sight-singing released exam items</li> <li>▪ Analysis of released examples</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Completion of released items</li> </ul>

***Fourth Nine Weeks:***

Week	Chp	Concepts	Aural Skills	Performance Skills	Compositional Skills
1-3	18, 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Chromaticism &amp; Modulations</li> <li>▪ Modal change and Tonicization</li> <li>▪ Common Chords and Altered Chords</li> <li>▪ Use of modulations in binary &amp; ternary forms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify modulations</li> <li>▪ Continued Harmonic dictation</li> <li>▪ Continued melodic dictation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue sight-singing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Examples of types of modulations</li> </ul>
4-6		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ AP Exam Review</li> <li>▪ Complete released exams</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Complete released exams</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Complete released exams</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Complete released exams</li> </ul>
5-7		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Final Composition Project</li> <li>▪ Motive/Theme</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Performance of final projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Composition of final project</li> </ul>

Week	Chp	Concepts	Aural Skills	Performance Skills	Compositional Skills
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Form/modulation</li> <li>▪ Instrumentation/</li> <li>▪ Transposition</li> </ul>			
8-9	28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Twentieth Century</li> <li>▪ Serialism/12-tone technique</li> <li>▪ Minimalism</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 12-tone composition</li> </ul>

***Evaluation:***

The grade breakdown is as follows:

Daily assignments	20 percent	
Homework	10 percent	(listening logs, concert reports)
Sight-Singing	10 percent	
Dictation	10 percent	
Listening	10 percent	
Unit tests/quizzes	20 percent	
Compositions	20 percent	

***Teacher Resources***

Benward, Bruce and Kolosick, J. Timothy, Ear Training, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. Boston: McGraw Hill, 2005

Burkhart, Charles. *Anthology for Musical Analysis*, 6th ed. New York: Schirmer, 2003.

Horvit, Michael, Timothy Koozin, and Robert Nelson. *Music for Ear Training, with workbook and CD-ROM*, 2nd ed. Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth, 2005.

*MacGAMUT 2003 for Mac and Windows*). Columbus, Ohio: MacGAMUT Music Software. [www.macgamut.com](http://www.macgamut.com)

Ottman, Robert W., and Paul E. Dworak. *Basic Ear Training Skills*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1991.

Clendinning, Jane Piper, and Elizabeth West Marvin. 2005. *The Musician's Guide to Theory and Analysis, with Workbook and Anthology*. New York: W.W.Norton.

Ricci Adams' Music Theory Web site: [www.musictheory.net](http://www.musictheory.net)

Circle of 5ths: <http://randscullard.com/CircleOfFifths/>

Finale: <http://www.finalemusic.com>

Interval Song: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n12d4zS56cY>