

MUSIC 2MP3: Introduction to Music Cognition
Tuesday: 10:30-11:20; Thursday 9:30-11:20; TSH 118

Instructor: Dr. Michael Schutz (TSH 424)

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Overview: This course will explore a number of fascinating questions, including: How does music ‘work’? What does it mean to “understand” music? Why does music regarded as “beautiful” in some cultures sound “painful” to our ears? Is western tonal music “better” than other forms of music? What can music teach us about the structure of the human mind? What can psychology teach us about the structure of music?

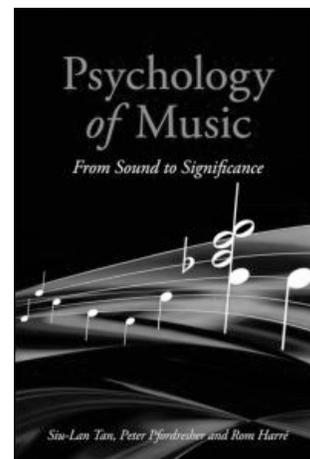
Course Objectives: By the end of the course students are expected to

- 1) Have a working knowledge of basic issues in acoustics & psychoacoustics, including fluency with reading waveforms and spectrograms
- 2) Exhibit broad working knowledge of key concepts, theories, and empirical findings from across the field of music cognition
- 3) Grasp basic contemporary research issues in the field of music cognition, including (but not limited to) those being researched at McMaster
- 4) Learn to identify pitches, scales, and chords in a grand staff, regardless of musical background

Required Text: Tan, Pfordresher, & Harré (2010). *Psychology of Music* (2010). The latest textbook for teaching music cognition. Available at the campus bookstore or online through a number of retailers.

Prerequisites:

One of PSYCH 1F03, 1X03, 1XX3 and registration in an Honours program; or registration in Level II or above of an Arts & Science program, a Bachelor of Health Sciences (Honours) program, or an Honours Music Cognition program (B.A., B.Arts&Sc., B.Mus., B.Sc.); or ISCI 1A24 A/B; or permission of the instructor. Familiarity with music notation is helpful, but not required (although it will need to be acquired through the music notation “modules” and ATL quizzes).



Class Format: This class will meet twice a week, once for 50 minutes (Tuesday) and once for 110 minutes (Thursdays). This format is designed to promote extended and

thought provoking discussions, in particular during the Thursday class. To this end, active participation by all students is essential.

Course Requirements and Grading:

Mid-term exams (40%): We will have two mid-term exams in the course. These exams will cover the first and second portion of the class respectively. The exams will consist of free responses to 25 questions, some of which include drawing figures (as demonstrated in class), giving short responses synthesizing points from lectures and the text, and performing basic arithmetic calculations. You are permitted (and encouraged) to work together in preparation for your exams, however the exam must be written independently.

Final exam (25%): The final will be at a time scheduled by the registrar. It will follow a similar format to the mid-term, and will cover material from the entire course

Note: If you experience a sudden medical condition that prohibits you from writing the exam, it is your responsibility to notify the instructor of this by email or phone prior to the exam itself. Under exceptional circumstances, this requirement may be waived if medical documentation is provided within 48 hours of the exam date. Please note that a doctor's note to the Dean's office does not exempt you from writing the exam, although medical documentation will be required of anyone requesting an alternate exam time.

Missed exams: McMaster has adopted a self-report tool, the McMaster Student Absence Form, to be used to report some (but not all) absences. The MSAF can be used, once per term, as per university policies: <https://www.mcmaster.ca/msaf/> Longer absences or absences due to non-medical reasons must be reported to your Faculty or Program office, with documentation. Note that relief from term work may not necessarily be granted. More information on wellness at McMaster can be found at <https://wellness.mcmaster.ca/>

Within 2 working days of a missed test, students requesting MSAF relief must (1) send your MSAF to me (schutz@mcmaster.ca) and (2) email me to arrange a make-up test for the work you have missed. No requests for special consideration will be accepted beyond one week from the time of the exam.

Written assignment (25%): There will one written assignment for the course, consisting of a term paper no more than 5 pages (double spaced), due at the beginning of class on the date specified below. This paper should be based on at least 3 primary empirical (i.e. containing data) academic journal articles. Review articles, meta-analyses, webpages, Wikipedia articles, and magazine articles are not valid references.

The topic of this assignment is of your choosing, provided it falls under the broad rubric of "music cognition research." It is suggested (though not required) that you align this topic with one of McMaster's many research labs/teams so that you might be able to one day explore this topic, should your interest continue. Additional information on the specifics of these project will be distributed independently.

Music notation quizzes (10%): As part of this class you will have a chance to learn about (and/or demonstrate) your ability to read notated music. The course website

includes links to a series of online quizzes measuring your ability to read notated music and identify chords. Quizzes can be repeated as necessary. For those unfamiliar with musical notation, the course website contains links to several introductory music theory lessons, along with websites for “practice” of these concepts. The practice tools will generate examples and grade them in real time. Once you are comfortable with a particular concept, take the formal quiz on this concept in ATL. If you are unhappy with your quiz performance, simply return to the practice site to improve your skills and then retake the quiz.

Policy for Written Work: Work should be submitted in class on the day that it is due. Late work (not submitted during the specified class), should be both delivered to the appropriate TA (as clarified in class) in hard copy, and emailed to both your TA and Dr. Schutz. Late assignments will not be accepted via email without special prior arrangements. Late work is subject to a penalty of 3% per calendar day (i.e., an assignment due on Thursday submitted the following Monday would receive a deduction of 12%). *Important: it is your responsibility to ensure materials were received—if you believe you send the document but the TA did not receive it then it is not considered submitted.*

Backup of electronic files: Students are expected to maintain an electronic archive of their work for the course. Not only is this easy using widely available free backup methods (i.e. Dropbox), it will prevent agonizing loss of data should you misplace your laptop, have your hard-drive die, or find that “your dog ate your memory stick.” Given the importance of data backup, prevalence of options, and this explicit policy designed to prevent anguish, deadlines will not be waived due to technical glitches.

Acquiring “class friends”: You should acquire and maintain the names, email addresses, and texting device (i.e. mobile phone) numbers of at least 5 classmates. Should you miss class for any reason, contact your network of friends for copies of their notes. In order to maximize the efficacy of office hours, this time is reserved for clarifying concepts of previously discussed material, not reviewing the content of missed lectures.

Email Policy: In the 21st century, email has become an important form of communication. If you prefer receiving information via text rather than email, this is a great time to connect with a form of technology that the workforce uses regularly. You will be responsible for all information sent via email, as it is the preferred form of communication for the course.

It is the policy of the Faculty of Humanities that all email communication between students and instructors (including TAs) must originate from their official McMaster University email accounts. This policy protects the confidentiality and sensitivity of information and confirms the identities of both the student and instructor. The School of the Arts’ instructors will delete messages that do not originate from McMaster email accounts.

Important dates:

25-Jan:	Online quizzes due
8-Feb:	Exam I
8-March:	Written assignment due (beginning of class)
22-March:	Exam II
TBD:	Final Exam (scheduled by the registrar)

Attendance policy:

It should come as no surprise that regular attendance in class is one of the keys to academic success. Therefore, it is expected that you attend all scheduled lectures. Should circumstances arise making it not possible for you to attend, it is your responsibility to obtain notes from a friend and/or fellow student in the class. Consequently, students are required to obtain the names and email addresses of no less than five (5) classmates during the first week of the course (we will set aside some time to do this during the first day of class for those who attend the first day).

Should you miss class for any reason, please check with these classmates for notes and a summary of what was discussed. Should you remain unclear on particular concepts after checking with multiple students, feel free to contact the instructor. Note that office hours are reserved first and foremost for clarifying concepts and answering questions arising from material discussed previously with those in attendance, not to repeat all of the material for those who did not attend (which is why it is important to obtain notes from a classmate).

Academic Integrity: You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. The academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g., the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations

Grading Scale:

(may change based on circumstances but not without prior mention in class)

Online quizzes	10%
Exam I	20%
Exam II	20%
Final Exam	25%
Written project	25%

Grading for the class will be done according to the official McMaster University grading scale. Please note that “excellent” assignments warrant a grade of “A,” corresponding to a numeric value of 85-89. Only “outstanding” assignments warrant a grade of “A+,” in the range of 90-100. I suggest spending some time thinking about the grade you would like to achieve, and then reflect on the quality of preparation required in order to achieve this grade.

Grade	Equivalent Grade Point	Equivalent Percentages
A+	12	90-100
A	11	85-89
A-	10	80-84
B+	9	77-79
B	8	73-76
B-	7	70-72
C+	6	67-69
C	5	63-66
C-	4	60-62
D+	3	57-59
D	2	53-56
D-	1	50-52
F	0	0-49 – Failure