

# MT 101A

## Introduction to Tonal Theory A

California Institute of the Arts  
Syllabus, Spring 2010

Instructor: Andrew Tholl atholl@alum.calarts.edu  
Lectures: Tuesday and Friday 10:10am – 12:00pm, Room B318  
Keyboard Tutorial: Tuesday 6:00pm – 7:00pm, Room B321  
Office Hours: Tuesday 12:10 – 1:00, Room B241 and by appointment  
Course Weighting: 3.0 units

### Course Description

An introduction to the structure of tonal music through the exploration of melodic construction, systems of consonance and dissonance, cadences, harmonic function, sequences, modulations and simple forms. Musical examples are drawn primarily from Western classical, as well as jazz and popular music traditions. Prerequisite: MT100 or placement by examination. Permission of the instructor required.

### Course Objectives

Through lectures, discussion, listening, exercises, score-study and creative assignments you will:

- learn to perceive and describe the organization of diatonic tonal music
- explore the structure of individual musical passages in a manner that can inform your personal acts of listening, performance and composition
- make direct creative application of the concepts introduced

### Course Materials

- Required Texts (to be ordered directly from McGraw-Hill by telephone: 1-800-338-3987)
  - Koskta, S. and D. Payne. *Tonal Harmony: with an Introduction to Twentieth-Century Music*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. McGraw-Hill, New York, NY. 2008. ISBN 0073401358
  - Kostka, S. and D. Payne. *Workbook for Tonal Harmony*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. McGraw-Hill, New York, NY. 2008. ISBN 0077269969
- The textbook and the workbook can also be found on reserve in the library, however it is expected that you purchase your own copies.

### Class Format

Every class will begin with music listening and an accompanying writing assignment regarding the music. Music will usually begin playing by 10:05 (and no later than 10:10) and will continue until 10:15 at which point you will hand in your assignment. If you are not there to listen, you cannot participate so it is in your best interest to show up to class on time. This will make up a portion of your participation grade in the class. Additionally, at the beginning of every class you might sign in on the attendance sheet.

After each daily listening example, class time will usually be divided between lecture, discussion, and in-class exercises. Typically, Tuesdays will cover new material based on the reading from the text book and on Fridays homework assignments will be due and there will be an in class quiz. These in class quizzes will be held immediately after the listening assignment.

On Tuesday evenings there are required keyboard section classes. There will be 5 keyboard assignments over the course of the semester. You will not be required to attend all of these sessions and a schedule of when you are expected to attend will be determined in the first week of classes.

In an attempt to reduce the amount of paper consumed by our class, most all assignments will be sent to you via email as a pdf attachment.

**Evaluation will be based on:**

- **Attendance**
  - being present and on time.
- **Participation**
  - listening/writing examples
  - making an active contribution to the class
  - being prepared to answer questions regarding reading and other assignments
- **Assignments and Tests**
  - based on concepts covered in class
- **Keyboard Assignments**

**Attendance Policy:**

- An absence may be excused only if the student submits to the instructor's departmental mailbox (or under office door) detailed handwritten notes from the course textbook thoroughly covering all missed information. These notes must be submitted by 10:00 am on the first school day following the day of his/her return to class. The reason for the absence is immaterial.
- 3 unexcused absences, or 5 absences *of any sort*, will result in an automatic grade of NX (insufficient attendance).
- If you are absent for a quiz, it can only be made up if your absence is excused due to medical reasons. You may be asked to show a doctors note.

**Other Course Policies:**

- All students must sign in at lectures by 10:15am, after which time the sign-in roster will be removed, the lecture-room door may be locked, and the student will be regarded as having been absent from that lecture. Although you have until 10:15am to sign in, you are expected to be in the room and ready for class by 10:10am. If you do not sign in (even if you are actually there), you are considered absent.
- Signing any name other than your own on the sign-in roster will be treated as an instance of academic misconduct and will be referred to the Associate Provost and the Dean for disciplinary action.
- Assignments submitted after the end of the lecture in which they are due but before the end of the following lecture period will lose 30% of their value. **Assignments submitted thereafter will not be accepted.** Exceptions can only be made if a doctor's note is supplied confirming medical reasons why the assignment could not be submitted on time.
- The following are not permitted during lectures, unless explicitly solicited by the instructor:
  - the use of laptops, cell phones, or mp3 players
  - talking with classmates
  - reading
  - doing homework
  - eating

If you are found doing any of these things you may be asked to leave for the remainder of the lecture.

**Things to help you succeed in this class:**

- Show up to class. The easiest way to fail is from insufficient attendance.
- Read the text book assignments before the class during which they are discussed. Things will make much more sense if you do this.
- The moment you begin to struggle with the material, get a tutor through student services and come and visit me in office hours to talk to me about it. Most of the concepts in this class build upon one another and once you get behind it is extremely difficult to catch up.
- Do your homework. Study for the quizzes.

I have read and understood this syllabus and I agreed to be bound by its conditions.

Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

