

**MUSIC 310  
SELECTED TOPICS**

**BULLETIN INFORMATION**

MUSC 310 – Selected Topics (3 credit hrs)

**Course Description:**

Course content varies and will be announced in the schedule of courses by suffix and title. Intended for non-majors unless otherwise indicated.

**SAMPLE COURSE OVERVIEW**

Italian Music in Context is a survey of major genres of Italian music from the Middle Ages to the present time with particular attention to the cultural and social contexts in which music was created, performed, and consumed. The course materials will be arranged according to the different types of musical venues ranging from monasteries to theaters, private homes to public squares. The topics covered in the course will include sacred, art, and popular music from the Middle Ages to the twenty-first century, film music, folk music, and recorded popular music. Through engagements with a wide range of Italian music, students will explore music's relationship with salient cultural, social, and political movements in Italy history.

**ITEMIZED LEARNING OUTCOMES**

**Upon successful completion of MUSC 310, students will be able to:**

1. Create or interpret literary, visual or performing arts.
2. Recognize and describe the most important genres and musical styles of Italian music including the individual styles of several composers and their representative works, using appropriate terminology, salient features that characterize the representative works.
3. Identify the relationship between major works of Italian music and their cultural, social, and political contexts.
4. Assess music of unfamiliar traditions.

**SAMPLE REQUIRED TEXTS**

1. **Course Packet** consisting of primary documents and secondary sources chosen by the instructor. Primary documents will include letters, excerpts from theoretical treatises, contemporary reviews, and poetic texts. Secondary sources include essays by modern musicologists on topics covered in the course. Students are expected to have read all pertinent materials prior to the class meeting.
2. **Audio and Video Recordings** of compositions covered in class. Recordings will be made accessible to the students through streaming services that USC Libraries subscribe to such as NAXOS and Alexander Street Press's Opera in Video. Students are expected to have listened or viewed all pertinent materials prior to the class meeting.

## SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Crocker, Richard L. *An Introduction to Gregorian Chant*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000.
2. Gallo, F. Alberto. *Music in the Castle: Troubadours, Books, and Orators in Italian Courts of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Centuries*. Trans. Anna Herklotz. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2996.
3. Gossett, Philip. *Divas and Scholars: Performing Italian Opera*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006.
4. Haar, James. *The Italian Poetry and Music in the Renaissance, 1350–1600*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988.
5. Long, Michale. "Trecento Italy." In *Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, ed. James W. McKinnon, 241–68. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1991.
6. Pirrotta, Nino. *Music and Theatre from Poliziano to Monteverdi*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982.
7. Talbot, Michael. *Venetian Music in the Age of Vivaldi*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999.

## SAMPLE ASSIGNMENTS AND/OR EXAMS

1. **Listening Exams:** The Listening Exams assess students' mastery of the basic facts and analytical listening skills using appropriate terminologies needed to interpret major genres of Italian music. The test requires students to identify information related to musical excerpts (title of the composition, name of the composer, dates of composition, venue of performance, etc.) presented aurally and describe the musical excerpts' salient features in terms of melody (range, length, shape), harmony (modal, tonal, atonal), rhythm (repeating patterns, dance rhythms), timbre (combinations of instruments), and text-music relationship (if texted).
2. **Listening Journal:** The Listening Journal assesses students' ability to apply the analytical listening skills to compositions assigned for each class meeting and to relate information (specific historical circumstances behind composition and performance of works, biographical information about composers) and concepts (compositional techniques such as organum, cantus firmus, imitation, and madrigalism; standard forms such as ballata, binary form, sonata form, and la solita forma in opera; and cultural and artistic trends and movements such as Humanism, mannerism, Counter Reformation, style galant, Romanticism, Futurism, and Modernism) presented in class. Students are expected to enter their Listening Log daily. The instructor will collect the Listening Logs at the time of Listening Exams.
3. **Concert Reports:** Students must attend least three live performance of music related to the class and write a report for each in which they demonstrate their application of knowledge, concepts, and skills presented in class (and discussed above) to music they encounter outside of the class. Each report should contain no fewer than 900 words (3 pages) and be submitted to the instructor one week after attending the performance.
4. **Discussion:** Students are expected to participate in in-class discussion in order to practice their communication skills referring to information and applying concepts presented in class (and discussed above)

## **SAMPLE COURSE OUTLINE WITH TIMELINE OF TOPICS, READINGS/ ASSIGNMENTS, EXAMS/PROJECTS**

**Week 1:** Introduction: Music and Its Venues

**Week 2:** Music in Sacred Spaces: Monasteries and Convents

**Week 3:** Music in Sacred Spaces: Churches and Cathedrals

**Week 4:** Music in Private Spaces: Songs of Courtly Love

**Week 5:** Music in Private Spaces: Madrigals

- Listening Exam 1
- Submit Listening Journal 1

**Week 6:** Music in the Theater: The Birth of Opera

**Week 7:** Music in the Theater: Opera for Public Consumption

**Week 8:** Music in Hybrid Places: Oratorios and Orphanages

**Week 9:** Music in Confused Places: Blending of Sacred and Theatrical Styles

- Listening Exam 2
- Submit Listening Journal 2

**Week 10:** Music in the Concert Hall: Italian 20th-Century Music

**Week 11:** Music in the Theater: From Stage to Cinema

**Week 12:** Music in Public Venues: Italian Folk Music

**Week 13:** Music in Private Spaces: Popular Music from Phonographs to MP3s

**Week 14:** Summary and Conclusion

### **FINALS**

- Listening Exam 3
- Submit Listening Journal 3