

# Composition (MUS3207)

## Fall 2019 Syllabus

Dr. Ben Johansen  
McCrary Music Building, 233  
B\_Johansen (email)

Daniel Lujan  
Roxy Grove, 222  
Daniel\_Lujan (email)

Alex Ayala  
Roxy Grove, 222  
Alex\_Ayala1 (email)

### [Meeting Time/Place]

Tue/Thur @ 12:30pm, in Alinea (Marrs McLean Science Building, 330)

### [Required Attendance Outside of Scheduled Class Time]

None.

As non-composition majors, you are **NOT** required, but *are* welcome, to attend:

Aug. 25 @ 8pm in Alinea = Comp Forum

Sept. 15 @ 8pm in Alinea = Comp Forum

Oct. 3 @ 4pm in Alinea = Ishai Adar (visiting film composer)

Oct. 4 @ 4pm in Alinea = Ishai Adar (visiting film composer)

Nov. 10 @ 8pm in Meadows = Comp Forum (Chris Sies plays composers' perc pieces)

Dec. 6 @ 4pm in Meadows = Festivus Studio Concert

### [Scheduled Class Time Attendance]

The following is from the School of Music Undergraduate Handbook, but applies to graduate students as well (I made the last sentence red):

School of Music policy requires that to earn credit in a course a student must be officially enrolled by the end of the second full week of the semester and attend at least 75% of all class meetings. Faculty members may establish additional attendance requirements as outlined in course syllabi. Any student who is not present for at least 75% of the scheduled class sessions for any course will automatically receive a grade of "F" in the course. **Any University-related activity necessitating an absence from class will count as an absence when determining whether a student has attended the required 75% of class meetings.**

### [Course Objective]

To explore a variety of compositional techniques, repertoire, concepts, and aesthetics from the recent past, and to provide students interested in composition with the basic tools *and experience* needed to compose effectively in contemporary idioms.

### [Grading]

25% Composition Journal

25% Class Attendance + Participation

25% Small assignments (short pieces, readings, listening/score study, creative exercises, etc.)

25% Original Composition assignment(s)

A	=	96-100	B	=	83-86	C	=	73-76
A-	=	90-95	B-	=	80-82	C-	=	70-72
B+	=	87-89	C+	=	77-79	F	=	0-69

### [Academic Success]

I believe every student who has been admitted to Baylor can be successful and I want to partner with you to help you thrive academically. Be sure to take advantage of the many resources available for academic success, including coming to see me during my office hours. Students who regularly utilize the great resources in the Paul L. Foster Success Center (<http://www.baylor.edu/successcenter/>) are among my most successful students. If your academic performance in this class is substandard, I will submit an Academic Progress Report to the Success Center so that the team of coordinated care professionals can ensure that you get the help you need.

### [First Generation College Students]

Baylor University defines a first-generation college student as a student whose parents did not complete a four-year college degree. The First in Line program at Baylor is a support office on campus for first-generation college students to utilize if they have any questions or concerns. Please contact First in Line at [firstinline@baylor.edu](mailto:firstinline@baylor.edu), call 254-710-6854, or visit [www.baylor.edu/firstinline](http://www.baylor.edu/firstinline) to learn more about the services available.

### [Academic Integrity]

Plagiarism or any form of cheating involves a breach of student-teacher trust. This means that any work submitted under your name is expected to be your own, neither composed by anyone else as a whole or in part, nor handed over to another person for complete or partial revision. Be sure to document all ideas that are not your own. Instances of plagiarism or any other act of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Honor Council and may result in failure of the course. Not understanding plagiarism is not an excuse. As a Baylor student, I expect you to be intimately familiar with the Honor Code at: <http://www.baylor.edu/honorcode/>

### [Students Needing Accommodations]

Any student who needs academic accommodations related to a documented disability should inform me immediately at the beginning of the semester. You are required to obtain appropriate documentation and information regarding accommodations from the Office of Access and Learning Accommodation (OALA). Contact Information: (254) 710-3605 - Paul L. Foster Success Center, 1st floor on the East Wing of Sid Richardson.

### [Baylor University Title IX]

#### *Sexual and Gender-Based Harassment and Interpersonal Violence Policy:*

Baylor University does not discriminate on the basis of sex or gender in any of its education or employment programs and activities, and it does not tolerate discrimination or harassment on the basis of sex or gender. If you or someone you know would like help related to an experience involving sexual or gender-based harassment, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, stalking, intimate partner violence, or retaliation for reporting one of these type of prohibited conduct, please contact the Title IX Office at (254) 710-8454, or email, [TitleIX\\_Coordinator@baylor.edu](mailto:TitleIX_Coordinator@baylor.edu) or report online at [www.baylor.edu/titleix](http://www.baylor.edu/titleix).

The Title IX office understands the sensitive nature of these situations and can provide information about available on- and off-campus resources, such as counseling and psychological services, medical treatment, academic support, university housing, and other forms of assistance that may be available. Staff members at the office can also explain your rights and procedural options if you contact the Title IX Office. You will not be required to share your experience. **If you or someone you know feels unsafe or may be in imminent danger, please call the Baylor Police Department (254-710-2222) or Waco Police Department (9-1-1) immediately.** For more information on the Title IX Office, the *Sexual and Gender-Based Harassment and Interpersonal Violence policy*, reporting, and resources available, please visit [www.baylor.edu/titleix](http://www.baylor.edu/titleix).

### [Military Student Advisory]

Veterans and active duty military personnel are welcomed and encouraged to communicate, in advance if possible, any special circumstances (e.g., upcoming deployment, drill requirements, disability accommodations). You are also encouraged to visit the VETS Program Office with any questions at (254) 710-7264.

**[Schedule]**

Tue Aug27 Lesson 1: **Idea: Improvisation**  
 Thu Aug29 Share ideas  
 Tue Sep03 Lesson 2: **Idea: Inspiration**  
 Thu Sep05 Share inspiration assignment  
 Tue Sep10 Lesson 3: Infrastructure (bring ~4 measure motive/melody/gesture)  
 Thu Sep12 individual 1:1 lessons (have ideas & infrastructure draft)  
 Tue Sep17 individual 1:1 lessons (have ideas & infrastructure draft)  
 Thu Sep19  
 Tue Sep24  
 Thu Sep26 1st piece due (and performed by those in class)  
 Tue Oct01  
 Thu Oct03  
 Tue Oct08  
 Thu Oct10 Discussion: What do you want out of the rest of the semester?  
 Tue Oct15  
 Thu Oct17  
 Tue Oct22  
 Thu Oct24  
 Tue Oct29  
~~Thu Oct31~~ **(no class) Baylor Football Home Game**  
 Thu Nov07  
 Tue Nov12  
 Thu Nov14  
 Tue Nov19  
 Thu Nov21  
 Tue Nov26  
~~Thu Nov28~~ **(no class) Thanksgiving**  
 Tue Dec03  
 Thu Dec05

# Listening/Score Study

Kate Soper (b. 1981) - Voices from the Killing Jar (2010-12)

- [video of performance](#)
- [video of score+audio](#)
- **Question: What has the composer done in the score to help the performer?**

Saad Haddad (b. 1992) - Kaman Fantasy for violin and piano (2014)

- [video of score+audio](#)
- **Question: What has the composer done in the score to help the performer?**

Einojuhani Rautavaara (1928-2016) - *Book of Visions: "1 - A Table of Night"*

- [Score](#)
- [Recording](#) (read the liner notes)
- **Question: Find pillars in the piece - how does the composer create a clear and continuous trajectory to those pillars? How does the composer transition out of the one pillar (goal) to the beginning of a new trajectory?**

## Quotes

### [David Ward-Steinman "On Composing: Doing It, Teaching It, Living It"](#)

Boulanger would say, for example, "Why do you write F-sharp here; are you sure it is the best note?" Darius Milhaud, by comparison, would say, "That page is useless; it goes nowhere. Throw it out!" This was followed by, "A good idea is worth repeating; a bad idea is worth nothing." So I repeated a passage he had called a "good idea" and he said, "A composer should never do work a copyist can do. If you wish to repeat something, vary it or develop it further." He also applied this injunction to my orchestration. (He himself composed and orchestrated in ink directly on master sheets as I often observed, with nary a pencil or preliminary sketch in sight.)

Boulanger said, in effect, "Every note in the music must be necessary and pull its own weight, every part should be able to stand alone; if you can remove any- thing without harming the passage then it doesn't belong there." W. H. Auden expressed the same idea more elliptically in the context of a long poem: "Before the Positive could manifest Itself specifically, it was necessary that nothing should be left that negation could remove."<sup>2</sup> Or more simply, remove what is negative and then only the positive will be left. (Easier said than done when the negative is not initially apparent. It is easier to be objective about your own work after you have put it aside for six months or so. It is never a good idea to publish something while the "ink" is still wet.)