A Practical Introduction to Music Theory and Harmony (MUS 121)  
Summer 2015  

Preliminary Syllabus

Instructor:  
ILIAS CHRISCHOYDIDIS, Ph.D. (Stanford)

Textbook:  
There is no textbook. Students will have free access to an online library of specially selected music examples (the address to be mailed before the first session).

Grade Options:  
No Grade Requested (NGR) – This is the default option. No written work is required; No credit shall be received; No proof of attendance can be provided. (Not suitable for those requiring proof of attendance/completion.)

Requirements for a Letter Grade or Credit/No Credit:  
Aural test or short (1-2 pp.) paper (please discuss with the instructor after first session).

Note: The following lists only basic topics I intend to cover during the course. As in previous years, I will be prepared to adapt the material to student need and progress. Every session will begin with a generous recapitulation to ensure that all students feel comfortable with the topics discussed.

Schedule:  
Week 1  
• scope, aims, and structure of the course  
• fundamental concepts: music sound; frequency and intervals, scale and melody; chords and harmony; beat, meter, rhythm; phrase, form  
• overtones and the “octave” principle  
• perfect intervals (octave, fifth, fourth)  
• duple and triple meter

Week 2  
• major and minor thirds  
• triads  
• major and minor scales  
• complex meters

Week 3  
• seconds and sevenths  
• triadic melodies  
• chords

Week 4  
• chromatic semitones  
• rhythmic alteration  
• harmony (basic chord progressions)  
• phrases
Week 5
- harmony (complex chord progressions)
- how to harmonize a melody
- texture
- basic forms

Week 6
- recapitulation
- suggestions for further engagement with the topic
- aural test