

**Course Title:** A Practical Introduction to Music Theory and Harmony

**Course Code:** MUS 121

**Instructor:** Ilias Chrissochoidis

### Course Summary:

MUS 121 is a listening-based introduction to key music theory concepts and harmonic procedures. Using a library of carefully selected pieces of music, the student will become familiar with basic patterns of melodic and harmonic construction. The aim is to recognize the fundamental unity underlying musical phenomena and improve practical skills such as harmonizing a melody.

*Please see course page for full description and additional details.*

### Grade Options and Requirements:

- No Grade Requested (NGR)
  - This is the default option. No work will be required; no credit shall be received; no proof of attendance can be provided.
- Credit/No Credit (CR/NC)
  - A passing grade (for "Credit") = at least 70% of expectations accomplished
- Letter Grade (A, B, C, D, No Pass) [Note: Submission of written work is required.]

*Please Note: If you require proof that you completed a Continuing Studies course for any reason (for example, employer reimbursement), you must choose either the Letter Grade or Credit/No Credit option. Courses taken for NGR will not appear on official transcripts or grade reports.*

### Tentative Weekly Outline:

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.

#### 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

Week 7

Town hall meeting: Students submit musical examples of their choice for analysis and discussion.

**Student Evaluations:**

Offered almost annually since 2005, MUS 121 exemplifies Stanford's commitment to innovation and creativity. A selection of student comments from previous years is available here:

[http://ichriss.ccarh.org/teaching\\_evaluations.htm](http://ichriss.ccarh.org/teaching_evaluations.htm)