

## MUS33B Syllabus – Winter 2012

**Instructor:** Brian Griffeath-Loeb ([bgrifflea@ucsd.edu](mailto:bgrifflea@ucsd.edu))

**Office hours:** M-F, 10-11am @ S&E 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, Geisel (unless otherwise specified)

**Class meetings:** Wednesday, 2:00p - 4:50p, WLH 2155 (unless otherwise specified)

**Final Project Concert:** Monday, March 19, 3:00p - 5:59p, location TBD

### Course Overview

MUS33 will continue this term with particular emphasis on topics of direction and stasis in composition. Important questions include:

- What is it in music that gives the impression of “going somewhere”? Of “staying put”?
- What observations can we make about these qualities, and how might they be cultivated, subverted, blurred together strategically in music?

In a nutshell, our mission for the term is to investigate states of direction and stasis in and of themselves, and in relation to our own music, so that—whatever the agenda—they may be more confidently and conscientiously employed.

Precomposition will also be a topic of interest for the term. This generally refers to global planning in advance of the local, moment-to-moment decisions more commonly associated with the compositional process. In other words, we design the mold of our “castle” before assembling it from handfuls, or even individual grains, of sand. In doing so, we acquire more thorough understanding of context, which in turn serves as a source of inspiration/provocation/orientation, and can make the act of making decisions *easier*. Looking for ways to optimize individual creative flow—to erect supports and eliminate barriers—will be an ongoing concern throughout the course. Subtopics for precomposition include the use (or non-use) of repetition and memory.

It should be noted that while *all styles are fair game*, robust engagement with our points of interest (e.g., the above) takes precedence over stylistic norms in *evaluation of student work*. You must find a way to incorporate them into the aesthetic you’ve chosen or are exploring; if necessary, the aesthetic must adjust to address the topics, **not** the other way around. Criteria for evaluation further include how successfully a musical goal, of sufficient stretch for the individual, is articulated and realized. In other words, how clearly and precisely can you explain your intent for a piece of music, and then subsequently, how effectively can you manifest that intent? Moreover, how does this intent represent a sincere, substantial effort to step out of your comfort zone, away from what is exclusively safe and familiar, in order to welcome in new possibilities and broaden horizons?

### Rubric for Evaluation of Assignments

33% notation (clarity, thoroughness/specificity) and punctuality

33% fidelity of intent (assignment parameters fulfilled robustly and creatively)

33% creative vitality (this basically boils down to evidence of sincere engagement with your work)

## Grading Distribution

Project 1 (2' – “transformation”)	20%
Project 2 (2' – “dwelling”)	20%
Final Project	50%
• Structural diagram (precomposition) for final piece	(15%)
• 5-10' piece incl. transformation, dwelling, and/or gray area	(35%)
Participation and Attendance (indiv. and group meetings)	5%
Personal Stretch	5%

## Policies

Late work: assignments are to be turned in as indicated in the course calendar below. Work turned in after the date/time specified is considered late, and will be docked a full letter grade (10%)/day, starting immediately following the class period or other listed deadline.

Securing performers: I have arranged readings by graduate students for the first two projects. However, *it is the student's responsibility to find and secure performers for the final project*. Make sure to get on this...the earlier the better! See calendar below for absolute deadlines.

E-mail policy: I will do my best to respond to all inquiries in a timely fashion. This excludes the 24-hour period before any project deadline, during which responses will be handled at my discretion. This is meant to encourage students to seek out the help they need *well in advance*. Anticipate the unexpected and plan your studies accordingly to ensure you're in good shape, even if something (e.g., outside the purview of our class) comes up.

## Lecture Calendar

Date	Class Agenda	Assignments
Jan 11	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Course overview               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Syllabus                   <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Assignments/Rubric</li> <li>ii. Calendar</li> </ol> </li> <li>b. Meetings: group vs. indiv.                   <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Who can meet when?</li> </ol> </li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Personal introductions, interests               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Approaches to composition                   <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Improv (real-time, desk)</li> <li>ii. System/modeling</li> <li>iii. Dictation</li> </ol> </li> <li>b. Personal stretch</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Focal Points               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c. direction vs. stasis                   <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Projects &amp; Readings</li> <li>ii. Strategies for direction</li> </ol> </li> <li>d. Precomposition                   <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Repetition &amp; memory</li> </ol> </li> </ol> </li> </ol>	<p><i>For Jan 18, compose seven monophonic cells (4-16" long) of fundamentally CONTRASTING material (i.e., make each as different from the others as you can). Some parameters to consider for creating contrast:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Melodic profile (contour, range, etc.)</li> <li>• Harmonic profile (pitch collection, harmonies used, harmonic rhythm, key [if any], etc.)</li> <li>• Rhythmic profile (tempo, meter, regularity vs irregularity)</li> <li>• Phrase profile (length, continuity vs. fragmentation)</li> <li>• Register</li> <li>• Timbre (unity vs diversity)</li> <li>• Density (e.g., of events in time)</li> </ul>

Jan 18	<p>2-3:20: Trumpet presentation w/ Paul Hembree  3:20-3:30: Break  3:30-4:50: Follow-up presentation on notation and transformational strategies</p> <p><u>M-F office hours:</u> Short, individual meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selection of cells for first project (A, B)</li> <li>• Selection of cell for second project (C)</li> <li>• Further discussion of ideas &amp; strategies</li> </ul>	<p><i>For Jan 25</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Begin work on first project</b>  ("transformation" from A to B)</li> <li>2. Select a piece of music that features the trumpet prominently, listen to it three times, and <b>write a journal entry</b> on what it suggests to you about the nature of the instrument and its possibilities.  <b>E-mail to me by January 24.</b></li> </ol>
Jan 25	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Focal Points <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. stasis <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. discussion of nature</li> <li>ii. strategies in composition</li> </ol> </li> <li>b. precomposition <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. defining the task(s)</li> <li>ii. subdividing the task(s)</li> <li>iii. provocation and strategic hierarchy</li> </ol> </li> </ol> </li> </ol> <p><u>M-F office hours:</u> short, individual meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• check in on "transformation" project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ compositional progress</li> <li>○ notation / score preparation</li> <li>○ questions/concerns/suggestions</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><i>For Feb 1</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Completion of first project</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Scores e-mailed as pdf to me  <i>by Monday, Jan 30 @ 8AM</i></li> </ol> </li> </ol>
Feb 1	<p>2-3:20: project readings w/ Paul Hembree  3:20-3:30: break  3:30-4:50: horn presentation w/ Nicolee Kuester</p>	<p><i>For Feb 8</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Begin work on second project</b>  ("dwelling" on C [selected during week of Jan 18 in consult. with me])</li> </ol>
Feb 8	<p>No class</p> <p><u>M-F office hours:</u> short, individual meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• check in on "transformation" project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ compositional progress</li> <li>○ notation / score preparation</li> <li>○ questions/concerns/suggestions</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><i>For Feb 15</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Completion of second project</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Scores e-mailed as pdf to me  <i>by Monday, Feb 13 @ 8AM</i></li> </ol> </li> </ol>
Feb 15	<p>2-3:20: project readings with Nicolee  3:20-3:30: break  3:30-4:50: discussion &amp; assignment of structural diagrams (direction, stasis, gray area, etc.)</p>	<p><i>For Feb 22</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Select instrumentation for final piece</b>  (different from 33A!)</li> <li>2. <b>Design structural diagram</b></li> </ol>

Feb 22	<p>2-3:20: group discussion of structural diagrams  3:20-3:30: break  3:30-4:50: individual meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• review of structural diagrams and instrumentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ plans for securing performers</li> </ul> </li> <li>• material ideas</li> <li>• questions/concerns/suggestions</li> </ul> <p><u>M-F office hours</u>: reserved for additional meetings as needed</p>	<p><i>For Feb 29</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Compose initial sketches</b> for at least <u>two sections</u> of final project</li> <li>2. <b>Secure performers</b> for final concert, CC'ing me on confirmation e-mail</li> </ol>
Feb 29	<p>No class as group</p> <p><u>Class time + M-F office hours</u>: indiv. meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• check in on final project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ compositional progress</li> <li>○ performers secured</li> <li>○ notational ideas for desired agenda</li> <li>○ questions/concerns/suggestions</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><i>For Mar 7 (final project cont.)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Two sections solidified &amp; sent as pdf to performer(s)</b> in e-mail, CC'ing me</li> <li>2. <b>Compose initial sketches</b> for <u>rest of piece</u></li> </ol>
Mar 7	<p>No class as group</p> <p><u>Class time + M-F office hours</u>: indiv. meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• check in on final project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ finalized sections</li> <li>○ sketches for rest of piece</li> <li>○ revisions / plans for completion</li> <li>○ questions/concerns/suggestions</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><i>For Mar 14 (final project cont.)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Full draft completed &amp; sent as pdf to performer(s)</b> in e-mail, CC'ing me</li> </ol>
Mar14	<p>No class as group</p> <p><u>Class time + M-F office hours</u>: indiv. meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• check in on final project, discussion of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>final</b> revisions</li> <li>○ notational issues</li> <li>○ score preparation</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><i>FINAL PROJECT DEADLINE</i>  <b><u>Friday March 16 @ 12pm</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Final draft completed &amp; sent as pdf to performer(s)</b> in e-mail, CC'ing me</li> </ol>
Mar19	<p><b>FINALS WEEK</b>  <b>Final Project Concert</b>  3:00p - 5:59p, location TBD</p>	