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MUS 100: Introduction to Music Literature OER Curation

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MUS 100: Introduction to Music Literature OER Curation

Overview

Scope Notes

The course description on the syllabus of record is as follows: “Basic course in music, designed especially for liberal arts students. Study of musical forms, style, media and materials, coupled with the development of intelligent listening habits.”

Based upon my own knowledge of music (I have a BA in Vocal Music and am a classically trained lyric mezzo-soprano), as well as the learning objectives and weekly topic titles found within the syllabus of record, I believe OER materials need to be able to cover the following topics: musical terms and characteristics, listening comprehension, significant compositions and composers, and a variety of critical information regarding historical Western art music periods. The historical Western art music periods can be divided into the Middle Ages (presumably including the Renaissance), the Baroque Era, the Classical Era, the Romantic Era, and Twentieth and Twenty-First Century Music. Critical concepts, historical figures and composers, emergent genres, and significant pieces within these historical stylistic eras should be thoroughly covered.

Of critical importance when teaching music is a robust listening library. Any materials must contain sufficient auditory and visual samples for instructional use. Current materials also contain assignment libraries and test banks, so any OER textbook should ideally offer these, as well.

Current textbooks and materials

Understanding Music – Access Card, Jeremy Yudkin, 8th ed., Pearson (2016). 9780133940206.
\$59.99-79.99

Listen, Joseph Kerman and Gary Tomlinson, 9th ed., W. W. Norton & Company (2019).
9780393668070. \$55-71.50



Search Notes

This search consulted OER Commons, Open Textbook Library, OpenStax, BC Open Textbooks, Pressbooks, and MERLOT. Many textbooks found primarily cover music theory and/or are designed for multiple-semester courses. Many introductory textbooks do not cover the Western art music historical context clearly prioritized in the syllabus of record. Available ancillary/supporting materials in the field focused almost exclusively on either private instruction (vocal or instrumental) or theory/composition.

Promising OER Options

Resonances

- Morgan-Ellis, E. M. (Ed.), *Resonances: Engaging Music in its Cultural Context* (2020). University of North Georgia Press.
- Available from [OpenALG](#)
- PDF and print
- CC BY-SA
- Comments: Very good resource (high quality, good subject coverage, and engagingly written), but not organized as the course is currently organized. Textbook is organized by musical use, rather than by chronology, which does not align with the syllabus of record. Still, this includes PowerPoint presentations, learning objectives, and a test bank, all available upon request. Lots of embedded musical examples are included. It is, however, specifically noted in the instructor notes that the authors believe this textbook should NOT be taught in a single semester. Still, I think this resource has a lot of potential.

Understanding Music: Past and Present

- Citation: Clark, N. A., Heflin, T., Kluball, J., and Kramer, E., *Understanding Music: Past and Present* (2016). University of North Georgia Press.
- Available from [GALILEO](#)
- PDF and print
- CC BY-SA
- Comments: Pretty good resource; follows the chronological format of the course. It claims instructor resources are available on request, but I couldn't find a list of what is provided. There were some complaints from reviewers about the book's Western-centric view of music. One concerning issue is that technical music terms are apparently frequently introduced without sufficient definition, which for obvious reasons is problematic in an introductory course. Based on the reviews, this text could probably use a second edition, which would likely be excellent for this course.

Stretch Resource Options

Music Appreciation

- Harrison, A., Music Appreciation (2021). Simple Book Publishing.
- Available from [Achieving the Dream](#) (by Pressbooks)
- eBook/browser eReader, PDF
- CC BY
- Includes question bank and other instructor resources upon request.