

Alpharetta High School

AP Music Theory Syllabus

Course Description:

This course encompasses a study in harmonic structure of the 17th & 18th Centuries through sight singing, ear training, keyboard study, score study, and rhythmic and melodic dictation.

Objectives:

- Students will be able to
- identify all notation found on musical scores;
 - discuss the characteristics of sound and its properties;
 - identify and construct any major, minor, or chromatic scale and all of the modes.
 - analyze the meter and rhythm of given examples; identify note values and note relationships;
 - aurally and visually identify melodic and harmonic intervals;
 - construct and identify major, minor, augmented, and diminished triads and their inversions;
 - apply theory principles to keyboard skills appropriate to level of ability.
 - sing a given melody at sight using solfege syllables.

Textbook/Materials:

Tonal Harmony, Kostka & Payne
Handouts and Worksheets
Finale Notepad, Coda software

Theory Notebook:

- Written Assignments - Unit work, board work, handouts, notes, etc.
- Aural Training Skills - Dictation (melodic/rhythmic), Aural Recognition, etc.
- Compositions - Staff paper will be provided, along with specific instructions.
- Glossary

The above notebook will be graded for organization and content during the week prior to the end of each grading period. The grades will be incorporated into the Daily Participation Average.

Special Considerations:

Late work will be accepted up to the 3rd day, with a ten point deduction per day. Missed work, due to excused absences, may be made up within a corresponding time frame.

Evaluation:

Daily participation 20%

includes group discussion, having all appropriate materials for class (i.e. notebook, pencil, texts) individual preparation, utilization of class time for work/practice

Tests/Quizzes 30%

Written Assignments 20%

Homework/in-class assignments/compositions kept in notebook

Keyboard and Aural Skills 10%

includes melodic dictation, rhythmic executions, rhythmic dictation, aural recognition of intervals, scales, triads, etc.

Midterm Exam 5%

Final Exam 15%

Assistance:

Students are encouraged to schedule help sessions on an individual basis at any time.

Conferences may be scheduled by appointment.

Students in danger of failing may elect to improve this grade by initiating recovery work in accordance with Fulton County policy.

Units of Study:

Daily sight reading and ear training exercises will supplement each of the following units.

Weeks 1-4: Chapters 1 and 2. Emphasis on music fundamentals, pitch and rhythm. Aural drills in both dictation and sight singing begin with material related to music fundamentals. Computer drills will aid in the development of skills. Students are quizzed with aural and pencil/paper tests. Test on fundamentals.

Week 5: Introduce construction of triads and seventh chords (Chapter 3). Speed quizzes, keyboard quizzes, and continued review of scales and key signatures will be utilized. Quiz on triads and seventh chords, as well as previous material.

Week 6: Chapter 4: diatonic chords in major and minor keys. Emphasize scale degree qualities, keyboard drills, computer drills in notational form and aural recognition of chords. Test on triads and sevenths in major and minor keys, along with previous material. Composition assignment.

Weeks 7, 8: Chapter 5: Principles of voice leading, the melodic line, voicing triads, traditional chord progressions, part writing with various root positions, instrument ranges and transposition. Midterm Test on this chapter, along with previous material.

Week 9: Begin Chapter 6, Harmonic progressions. Harmonic sequences using the circle of fifths, using I, V, and ii chords. Work on part-writing skills, avoiding parallel fifths, octaves, and fourths (sometimes), and large leaps in any voice. Sight singing using arpeggiated chords, keyboard work on chords and simple progressions. Quiz over first part of chapter.

Week 10: Continue Chapter 6, beginning with vi chord and continue through all diatonic chords. Differences in minor keys. Test over all of chapter 6.

Week 11: Continue with part writing both in major and minor modes. Add parts to given soprano or bass line. Second composition assignment, featuring a diatonic melody harmonized by a traditional chord progression.

Week 12, 13: Chapter 7, triads in first inversion. The need for inversions. Substituting first inversion chords for root position chords. Part writing first inversion triads. Rewrite previous part writing exercises, substituting first inversion chords. Keyboard, computer drills, sight singing using first inversion materials to reinforce. Test on Chapter 7.

Weeks 14 – 16: Chapter 8, musical forms. Small forms, terminology, cadence types, motives, phrases and periods. Examine musical examples in the music of Mozart and Haydn. Composition in small forms, from motives to double periods.

Week 17: Continue with chapter 8, then test. Chapter 9: Triads in 2nd inversion. Review first inversion, figured bass symbols, and reasons for inversions. Usual second inversion chords, the cadential six-four, the passing six-four, pedal (neighboring) six-four. Review rules for good part writing.

Week 18: Review for semester exam. The exam will be in AP format.

Week 19, 20: Setting text to music. Framing the text. Natural rhythm, high points, mood expressive words or phrases. Selecting a mode for melody. Choosing a text. Examine Schubert songs for accompaniment patterns. At end of 2nd week, turn in your completed song, melody and accompaniment. Be prepared to teach the class your song.

Week 21: Chapter 10 - Non-chord tones. Definitions and classifications of non-chord tones. Embellishing a simple texture. Test on Chapter 10.

Weeks 22, 23: Review Chapter 10, begin Chapter 11. Find examples of all non-chord tones in the music of Bach. Writing non-chord tones in 4-part texture. Summary of non-chord tones. Composition assignment incorporating non-chord tones in 4-measure chorale.

Weeks 24-26: Counterpoint. Definition, the melodic line, two voice counterpoint. Use fragments as motives to develop small compositions. Use Bach two-part inventions as examples. Composition assignment: a 4-8 measure phrase using two voices in polyphony.

Weeks 27,28: Chapter 18. Modulations using diatonic common chords. Determine relative and foreign keys, how chords function in more than one key. Common chord as a pivot between two keys. Keyboard exercises to parallel text. Composition assignment: Two four measure phrases, the second phrase is in the relative key to the first one. Begin with the melody. Harmonize with appropriate chords, develop an accompaniment pattern adding Non-chord tones for added interest in all lines. Determine pivot chord. Include a harmonic analysis and Non-chord tones, appropriately labeled.

Week 29: Chapter 16. Secondary functions. Define secondary functions, how these chords are used, how to incorporate them in compositions. Examine musical examples in text. Test on Chapter 16.

Weeks 30-33: Review for the AP exam. Take two practice exams. Class discussion based on problems taken from the previous AP exams. Dictation, sight-reading, keyboard drills. AP EXAM.

Weeks 34-36: Work on final composition in the style of choice. May use computer, synthesizers, Digital Hard Disk recorder. Print your composition. Review semester material for final exam.

AHS Plagiarism Statement: A particular kind of honor code violation occurs with plagiarism. Plagiarism is defined as the use of another's words or ideas and the presentation of them as though they are entirely one's own. Acts of plagiarism include but are not limited to using words or ideas from a published source without proper documentation; using the work of another student (e.g., copying another student's homework, composition or project); using excessive editing suggestions of another student, teacher, parent, or paid editor. Plagiarism on any project or paper at Alpharetta High School will result in a zero for the assignment, two days of Saturday school, and an Honor Code Violation. Unless directly stipulated by the teacher, collaboration on written work is not acceptable. Students who willingly provide other students with access to their work are in violation of the Alpharetta High School Honor Code. From time to time, students will be required to register with and post assignments to the Fulton County approved plagiarism detection site, turnitin.com. Should the teacher require posting the particular assignment to turnitin.com, the assignment must have been posted to the website prior to the time the assignment is collected in class or the assignment will be considered late.