

MUS 194: BEGINNING CLASS GUITAR I FOR NON-MAJORS

COURSE SYLLABUS

Fall Semester, 2014

ASU School of Music

Instructor: Brendan Lake

Office: Gammage 211

Office hours: Tuesday 12:30pm-1:30pm, Thursday 2-4pm, and by appointment. When possible, please provide advanced notice in case I may be unavailable.

Email: Brendan.Lake@asu.edu

If needed prior to an appointment: phone 480-603-5355

REQUIRED MATERIALS

*Acoustic Guitar - Bring to class every day unless otherwise instructed. Solid-body electric guitars are discouraged.

*Textbook: [Mel Bay Mastering the Guitar Class Method, Level 1: 9th Grade & Higher by William Bay and Mike Christiansen](#)

*Guitar Picks (any size, and if you don't yet have a preference, start with [medium](#))

*Capo (recommended brand: Kyser)

- Note: Capos are designed to fit either [steel-string guitars](#) or [nylon-string guitars](#). Make sure you choose the right style for your guitar.

*Clip-on tuner (recommended brand: [Snark](#))

*Course Packet (get this at Alternative Print & Copy next to the ASU Art Museum on Mill & 10th St - Address: 1004 S Mill Ave, Tempe, AZ 85281)

Note: I've provided Amazon links, but most guitar stores will have these, with the exception of the textbook (which will be available at the ASU bookstore) and the course packet. If you have any questions, please email me or ask a guitar store employee for help.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Right-hand Technique: Use a pick or the fingers of the right hand to create clean, strong notes and strums in the correct or appropriate rhythms

Left-hand Technique: Use the correct pressure and placement of the left hand fingers to facilitate playing in positions I-IX without excess tension or awkward arm/wrist angles. Learn to execute left hand slurs, "hammer-ons" and "pull-offs"

Chords: Perform basic chords in the open position

Equipment: Understand the parts of the guitar, how they function, how to care for the instrument, and how to keep it in tune

Sight-reading: Read standard notation (in the open position), tablature, and chord diagrams

Improvisation: Use the blues, pentatonic, and diatonic major and minor scales to improvise over a given harmonic progression

Repertoire: Learn various songs and pieces chosen by the instructor and the student

CLASS CONDUCT

All electronic devices must be turned to their silent or vibrate modes. There will be many

instances when the class will be playing while the instructor is talking, and in these instances, please play quietly enough so you and the other students can hear the instructor clearly. Any violation of the Student Academic Integrity Policy or policies within the Student Services Manual will be reported to the appropriate authorities.

PRACTICING

Your instructor will introduce materials during class time with the expectation that you will practice outside of class and use your instructor's office hours to help you with any questions about assignments. As a general guideline, you will need to practice **at least** 60 minutes per each class in order to keep up with class progress.

ATTENDANCE

Daily attendance in class is expected. You are responsible for all of the material covered in class, whether or not you are present. Absences are categorized as excused or unexcused for grading purposes (see below). Student absences that are considered excused are those that involve the following:

- ASU required events (please provide documentation in advance from the professor in charge of the event to your MUS 194 instructor)
- Religious holidays not observed by the university (please contact your MUS 194 instructor and explain your absence in advance)
- Medical emergencies (please provide written documentation from your doctor, emergency room physician or medical clinic)
- Other absences may be considered excused in consultation with your instructor at his/her discretion (please consult in advance when possible)

Any other absences will be counted as unexcused. You are allowed 4 unexcused absences before your grade will be affected. On the 5th unexcused absence, your final grade will be lowered 5%. On the 6th unexcused absence, your final grade will be lowered 10%. On the 7th unexcused absence, your final grade will be lowered 15%. On the 7th unexcused absence, you will automatically fail the class.

*The student must attend spend at least 45 minutes in class to earn attendance.

GRADING

You will be graded regularly for attendance, participation, and assignments throughout the semester. For those absences that are excused, the assignments/grades must be made up within a week of the absence.

The grade is calculated using the following percentages:

Assignments (6% x 5) - 30%

Concert review - 10%

Midterm Written Exam - 10%

Midterm Performance Exam - 10%

Final Written Exam - 15%

Final Performance Exam - 15%

Class participation and contribution - 10%

The grading scale is computed in percentages and is as follows:

90-100 = A

80-89.9 = B

70-79.9 = C

60-69.9 = D

59 or lower = E

We will use the (+) (-) system which is computed thusly: A+ = 96.6 – 100, A = 93.3 – 96.5, and A- = 90.0 – 93.2. The corresponding numbers in the 80's yield corresponding types of B's. The university system allows for C+ and C, but no C-.

CONCERT REVIEWS

You will be required to attend one on-campus guitar recital. In addition, you are asked to write a 1+ page double-spaced review of the recital. Please include three paragraphs in your review: (1) the names of the performers, titles of the pieces, and any other important concert details; (2) your perceptions of the performance; (3) what you learned, or how what you heard (and saw) relates to this class. Use musical terms where appropriate.

There's an accompanying information sheet on the concert review available on blackboard.

ASSIGNMENTS

You will be provided with five assignments via blackboard to complete and turn in on the days listed in the agenda below. Assignments must be turned in at the beginning of each class on the due date. Late assignments due to unexcused absences may be turned in the following class period for half-credit.

MIDTERM AND FINAL EXAMS

The exams consist of a written portion, which will cover class topics and principles, and a solo performance for the instructor conducted in the classroom. The exact times of the performance exams will be allotted the previous week and students will only need to show up for their appointment, with enough time beforehand to tune and warm-up. Performance exams will be graded on musical accuracy and musicality.

Note: you must take both midterms and both final exams to pass the class.

CLASS PARTICIPATION AND CONTRIBUTION

Students are expected to arrive on time with their guitars, to play in tune reasonably often, and to perform in the class in individual and ensemble settings.

RECORDINGS AND PICTURES

Students may only take audio recordings of class lectures and activities with the permission of the instructor. Similarly, students may only take pictures of music, charts, or diagrams on the white board or projector screen with the permission of the instructor.

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS

Students requesting accommodation for a disability must be registered with the Disability

Resource Center (DRC) and submit appropriate documentation.

A FINAL NOTE

This course has been designed to help you learn the basic skills of guitar and musicianship. Please take advantage of everything this course has to offer. There are many resources available to you – class time, your instructor (including office hours and emails), and your classmates.

AGENDA

(Subject to change based on class progress and interests)

CP = course packet, TB = textbook

Aug 20 - Introduction to the class

Understanding how the guitar works

Holding the guitar and posture

Using a pick & open strings

Tablature and basic melodies

HW: Read pp. 2-6, p. 15 (TB)

Practice pp. 16-17 (TB)

Aug 26 - More complex melodies

Tuning with your electronic tuner

Introduction to chords and strumming

Simplified (four-string) chords: C major, G major, G7, pp. 11-13 (TB)

HW: Repertoire I: “Easy Folk Songs” – Course Packet (CP)

Aug 28 -Perform “Easy Folk Songs” as a class

Understanding the twelve pitch series in music, and the pitches of the guitar

Right hand exercises, using a pick - Plucking up and down

Avoiding buzzing and clipped notes

Chords: C major, E minor

HW: Repertoire #2: Progression 2-1 (CP)

Practice p. 18 (all three parts for “Where the Red Fern Grows”) (TB)

Sept 2 –Perform p. 18 as a class

Using a capo (CP)

Rhythms and time signatures (CP & book)

More complex strumming patterns (CP)

Counting rhythmic values (CP)

Chords: A minor, G major, F major (Fmaj7)

How to practice chords (CP)

HW: Practice progressions in Repertoire # 2 (CP)

Sept 4 – **ASSIGNMENT #1 DUE: Review of the first two weeks** (there are 3 pages)

Review Repertoire #2

Chords: D major, D minor

Reading notes – p. 19-21 (TB)

Why knowing standard notation is useful

Notes on the 1st string
Tuning without a tuner
HW: pp. 22-26 (TB)

Sept 9 - Notes on the 2nd string
Fret positions and guitar fingerings
Chords: E major
Tips on playing and singing at the same time
Finding music on the internet and how to read it
HW: Practice a couple songs from repertoire #3 (CP)
pp. 29-32 (TB)

Sept 11 - Work through repertoire #3
Notes on the 3rd string
Harmonics
Tuning using harmonics on the 5th and 7th frets
Review: Finding music on the internet
Navigating ultimate-guitar.com, transposing keys and using a capo
HW: pp. 32-35 (TB)

Sept 16 - More on Repertoire #3
Fret positions and guitar fingerings
Left hand exercises, finger independence
The natural/"white" notes in open position
HW: pp. 49 (TB)

Sept 18 – **ASSIGNMENT #2 DUE: Internet Printouts - Two songs**
Review week 4 material
Discuss internet printouts
Slurs (hammer-ons and pull-offs)
Ensemble in class: p. 37 (TB)
HW: pp. 36 (TB)

Sept 23 – Ensemble in class: p. 50-51
Vibrato
Triplets
"Swinging the eighths"
HW: pp 42-44 *Only the chords* (TB)

Sept 25 - Power chords
Repertoire 4
Discuss performance midterm repertoire
How the midterm performance will be graded
Transcribing standard notation to/from tablature
Chord: A major
HW: pp. 52-53 (TB)

Sept 30 - More on Repertoire 4

Ensemble in class: Charlotte's Web, p. 57-59

Musicality: Dynamics, Playing with tempo

HW: p. 54, 131 (TB) (Tempo and Dynamics)

Oct 2 – **ASSIGNMENT #3 DUE: Transcribing standard notation and tablature**

Review for first written exam

Review midterm repertoire

HW: Prepare for exam and practice midterm pieces

Oct 7 & Oct 9 -

PERFORMANCE MIDTERMS - Only come for your appointed time

NO CLASS ON OCT 14 - FALL BREAK

Oct 16 - **WRITTEN EXAM** - Guitars are optional for use on the test, but you're not allowed to pluck or strum any notes

Oct 21 – Notes on the 4th string, p. 52-53

New chords – D7, B7, A7, E7

'7' chords

When to use 7 chords instead of regular major chords

Music theory - chords of C major

HW: p. 52-53 (TB)

p. 60 - chords only (TB)

Oct 23 – p. 56 - Rounds

Music theory review, and the chords of G major

Discuss assignment 4, the fretboard map of pitches

Sus chords

HW: practice Sus chords and chords of C and G major (CP)

pp. 61-62 (TB)

Oct 28 - Notes on the 5th string

Review power chords

Review movable chord patterns

Hw: p. 65-67 (TB)

Oct 30 - First and second endings, p. 68

Dotted quarter notes, p. 70

Chord inversions

Key signatures

Hw: p. 68, 70, 90 (TB)

Nov 4 - **ASSIGNMENT #4 DUE: Fretboard map**

Fingerpicking and *p i m a*
Right Hand Fingerpicking Patterns (1-5) (CP)
Fingerpicking in popular music
Notes on the 6th string
Hw: pp. 72-73 (TB)
Right Hand fingerpicking patterns (1-5) (CP)

Nov 6 – Practice on key signatures and sharps
Right Hand Fingerpicking Patterns (6-10)
Review chord theory
Hw: pp. 82-83 (TB)
Right Hand Fingerpicking Patterns (6-10) (CP)

NO CLASS ON NOV 11 - VETERANS DAY

Nov 13 - Final exam performance repertoire
How the final exam performance will be graded
Review dynamics & tempo
Musicality: Articulation & timbre (“TAM-ber”)
Applying musicality principles to popular and classical music
Hw.: p. 91 (TB)

Nov 18 – Practice on key signatures and sharps
Basics of improvising
Pentatonic scale in E minor and A minor
Review the blues
Hw: Practice the pentatonic scale (CP)
p. 113-115 (TB)

Nov 20 - **ASSIGNMENT #5 DUE: Writing a Chord Progression**
Review improvisation
Twelve bar blues in E and A
Blues scale
Fingerpicking patterns
HW: practice the twelve bar blues patterns and the blues scale (CP)
p. 97-98 (TB)

Nov 25 – Playing and practicing bar chords
Chords: Bm and F
Blues continued
HW: practice common bar chords (CP)
p. 105-106 (TB)

Dec 2 – **FINAL WRITTEN EXAM** – Guitars optional, and you can leave when you finish

Dec 4 - **PERFORMANCE EXAMS**

Sign up to perform for me on either this day or during finals week. You don't need to go to the other session, and on your assigned day, you only need to show up for your time slot. Arrive early to warm up and tune your guitar.

Finals Week

PERFORMANCE EXAMS (continued)

T,Th class 10:30-11:45am - Tuesday, Dec 9, 9:50-11:40am

T,Th class 4:30-5:45pm - Thursday, Dec 11, 2:30-4:20pm