

# AP Music Theory Course Syllabus

Westside HS

2023-2024

Ms. Sturm

[savanna.sturm@houstonisd.org](mailto:savanna.sturm@houstonisd.org)

**AP Exam Date:** May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024

## Class Description:

This class is a very fast-paced and in-depth music course that highlights how music is performed, composed, and studied. As we learn new topics, we will continue to build upon them until the AP exam. It is important that you complete all assignments and activities, as they will be tools that prepare you for the AP exam.

*\*\*It is HIGHLY recommended that you have a significant background knowledge of music before taking this course. Usually, this includes being in band, choir, orchestra, or having taken music lessons. If you have any concerns, please speak with me.\*\**

## Materials:

Students will need to provide the following materials:

- 1” Binder
- 5 Count Tab Dividers
- Notebook paper (Loose-leaf or in a notebook)
- Pencils **\*\*No pens, only pencils! \*\***
- Eraser

I can provide the students with staff/manuscript paper; however, if you are able to supply your own, that would be great!

## Textbooks:

The following textbooks will be available in the classroom for student use:

1. Clendinning, Jane Piper, and Elizabeth West Marvin. *The Musicians Guide to Theory and Analysis*. New York: W.W. Norton.
2. Cole, Samuel W., and Leo R. Lewis. *Melodia: A Course in Sight-Singing Solfeggio*. Pennsylvania: Oliver Ditson Company.

## Grading:

30%- Minor Grades (Homework, Daily Assignments, Quizzes, Binder Checks)

70%- Major Grades (Tests, Projects, Progress Checks)

### **Late Work Policy:**

1 Day Late= -5 Points

2-5 Days Late= -10 Points

More than 5 Days (1 school week) Late= Zero

\*\*Of course if a student is absent, there will be adjustments made.\*\*

### **Tutorials:**

Tuesdays during the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of lunch AND/OR Thursdays after school.

\*Please let me know ahead of time, as I am only in the music theory classroom during 1<sup>st</sup> period. During most other times of the day, I am likely in the band hall (M102) or my office (M116), which is inside the band hall.

\*If a student is absent, they are encouraged to attend tutorials to catch up on the material covered in class.

### **Major Grade Retakes:**

If a student receives below a 70 on a MAJOR GRADE, they have a chance to retake the assignment for UP TO a 70. In order to do this, the student must let me know that they would like to retake the assignment and attend at least one tutorial session before attending another tutorial session to complete the retake.

### **Electronics Policy:**

ALL electronic devices are expected to be on silent and put away during class time. This includes phones, tablets, headphones/earbuds, etc.

Laptops: Students are expected to have their charged laptop with them every day. Laptops are expected to remain put away until students are asked to use them.

Phones: Students will be given a spot on the “phone table” (a gray table in the classroom) with their name on a sticky note. At the beginning of every class, students will place their phone on their sticky note, where it will remain until the end of class. Students will **NOT** touch any device that does not belong to them.

### **Classroom Resources:**

The following resources are available within the classroom to assist in the development of aural skills and keyboard fluency:

1. An electronic keyboard used for listening practice and sight singing assistance. Students will also be given chances to play the keyboard during practice assignments.
  - a. There are practice rooms in the music wing that contain pianos, which may be used by Music Theory students during lunch and before/after school with a pass.
2. There is a sound system that can be connected to the teacher's computer to complete listening practice/exams.

Students have school-issued laptops and will be shown online tools, such as [musictheory.net](http://musictheory.net) and AP Classroom, that will assist in further developing their music theory comprehension.

## Course Timeline

### Unit 1: Music Fundamentals I (Pitch, Major Scales and Key Signatures, Rhythm, Meter, Expressive Elements)

#### **16-18 Classes**

- 1.1 Pitch Notation
- 1.2 Rhythmic Values
- 1.3 Half Steps and Whole Steps
- 1.4 Major Scales and Scale Degrees
- 1.5 Major Keys and Key Signatures
- 1.6 Simple and Compound Beat Division
- 1.7 Meter and Time Signature
- 1.8 Rhythmic Patterns
- 1.9 Tempo
- 1.10 Dynamics and Articulation

### Unit 2: Music Fundamentals II (Minor Scales and Key Signatures, Melody, Timbre, Texture)

#### **20-23 Classes**

- 2.1 Minor Scales: Natural, Harmonic, Melodic
- 2.2 Relative Keys: Determining Relative Minor Key and Notating Key Signatures
- 2.3 Key Relationships: Parallel, Closely Related, and Distantly Related Keys
- 2.4 Other Scales: Chromatic, Whole-Tone, and Pentatonic
- 2.5 Interval Size and Quality
- 2.6 Interval Inversion and Compound Intervals
- 2.7 Transposing Instruments
- 2.8 Timbre
- 2.9 Melodic Features
- 2.10 Melodic Transposition
- 2.11 Texture and Texture Types
- 2.12 Texture Devices

- 2.13 Rhythmic Devices

### Unit 3: Music Fundamentals III (Triads and Seventh Chords)

#### **13-15 Classes**

- 3.1 Triad and Chord Qualities
- 3.2 Diatonic Chords and Roman Numerals
- 3.3 Chord Inversions and Figures: Introduction to Figured Bass
- 3.4 Seventh Chords
- 3.5 Seventh Chord Inversions and Figures

### Unit 4: Harmony and Voice Leading I: Chord Function, Cadence, and Phrase

#### **15-17 Classes**

- 4.1 Soprano-Bass Counterpoint
- 4.2 SATB Voice Leading
- 4.3 Harmonic Progression, Functional Harmony, and Cadences
- 4.4 Voice Leading with Seventh Chords
- 4.5 Voice Leading with Seventh Chords in Inversions

### Unit 5: Harmony and Voice Leading II: Chord Progressions and Predominant Function

#### **13-15 Classes**

- 5.1 Adding Predominant Function IV (iv) and ii (ii diminished) to a Melodic Phrase
- 5.2 The vi (VI) Chord
- 5.3 Predominant Seventh Chords
- 5.4 The iii (III) Chord
- 5.5 Cadences and Predominant Function
- 5.6 Cadential 6/4 Chords
- 5.7 Additional 6/4 Chords

## Unit 6: Harmony and Voice Leading III: Embellishments, Motives, and Melodic Devices

### **11-13 Classes**

- 6.1 Embellishing Tones: Identifying Passing Tones and Neighbor Tones
- 6.2 Embellishing Tones: Writing Passing Tones and Neighbor Tones
- 6.3 Embellishing Tones: Identifying Anticipations, Escape Tones, Appoggiaturas, and Pedal Tones
- 6.4 Embellishing Tones: Identifying and Writing Suspensions; Identifying Retardations
- 6.5 Motive and Motivic Transformation
- 6.6 Melodic Sequence
- 6.7 Harmonic Sequence

## Unit 7: Harmony and Voice Leading IV: Secondary Function

### **10-12 Classes**

- 7.1 Tonicization through Secondary Dominant Chords
- 7.2 Part Writing of Secondary Dominant Chords
- 7.3 Tonicization through Secondary Leading Tone Chords
- 7.4 Part Writing of Secondary Leading Tone Chords

## Unit 8: Modes and Form

### **10-11 Classes**

- 8.1 Modes
- 8.2 Phrase Relationships
- 8.3 Common Formal Sections

\*\*Following the completion of Unit 8, we will use AP tests from previous years to review for the upcoming exam. \*\*