

COURSE SYLLABUS
Research Techniques

MUS 698, CID #2946
Spring 2008
Sam Houston State University
Fine Arts Building, Room 217
Monday evenings, 6 pm - 8:30 pm

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◆ **Office Hours**

I will be available to you every day, at any time by phone or email. You might be required to leave a message and a phone number at which you can be reached. You will need to call me to make an appointment if you need to see me in my office.

◆ **Course Description**

This course is an introduction to the materials needed for scholarly research in music. We will be examining texts on music research, journals, RILM and RISM, thematic catalogues, style manuals, dissertation abstracts, various databases, collected editions, and a myriad of other research materials.

◆ **Course Objective**

This course is designed to provide the means by which independent research in music may be conducted.

◆ **Required Textbook**

Crabtree, Phillip D. and Donald H. Foster; revised and expanded by Allen Scott.
Sourcebook for Research in Music. 2nd ed. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005. (ISBN 0-253-21780-6)

◆ **Other Important Texts (not required to own, but required to know)**

Duckles, Vincent and Ida Reed. *Music Reference and Research Materials: An Annotated Bibliography*, 5th ed. New York: Schirmer Books, 1997.

Holoman, D. Kern. *Writing about Music: A Style Sheet from the Editors of "19th Century Music."* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988. (We don't have this book in the library, but look it up on line and notice its contents.)

The Chicago Manual of Style, 15th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003. (This is the manual upon which Turabian is based, and is useful for further examples or explanations.)

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 6th ed., rev. by John Grossman and Alice Bennett. Chicago Guides to Writing, Editing, and Publishing. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996. (This is based on the *Chicago Manual of Style*, used by many scholarly publishers in the field of music.) There is also a newer, 2007 edition now. See the list of books on reserve and reference.

Wingell, Richard J. *Writing about Music: An Introductory Guide*, 3rd ed. Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 2002.

◆ Course Requirements

◆ Attendance

You will be expected to punctually attend every class. It will be your responsibility to obtain copies of any handouts given in your absence. Failure, on your part to do so, will not excuse any ignorance or missed assignment. Should you need to be absent, it will be your responsibility, likewise, to obtain the assignment and class notes from another class member. (I encourage study groups.) I will evaluate absences on a case-by-case basis.

◆ Grading

The following grading scale will be used for all assignments. No extra credit will be allowed.

A =	90-100
B =	80-89
C =	70-79
D =	60-69
F =	59 and below

The Grading percentages are as follows:

Weekly Class Assignments	50%
Paper	30%
Notebook	10%
Participation	10%

(**Note:** All assignments, including the paper, must be completed to receive a passing grade in this course.)

◆ Assignments

Assignments will be completed weekly and will consist of short summaries that you will distribute to the class and discuss in an informal manner. You will be graded on your contribution including your presentation of the material and the coherence of the information presented. You must always bring enough copies for everyone in the class, including yourself and me. All assignments, including the paper, must be completed to receive a passing grade in this course.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS will be penalized one letter grade per week, with no exceptions.

◆ **Participation**

You will be expected to actively participate in classroom discussion about assignments. If you are not accustomed to talking and contributing in class, you will need to change your approach for this class.

◆ **Notebook**

This is your opportunity to receive an easy “A” for 10% of your course grade. I expect, minimally, the following divisions in your notebook: Weekly Assignments (these can be organized according to your fancy), Class Notes, Miscellaneous Important Information (again organized according to your preference), and your Individual Research Documents.

◆ **Paper**

The paper is an individual research project (whose topic will be of your choosing and my approval), dealing with a work, or set of works, by a specific composer. You must submit a proposal for your project by the third class meeting. Your finished project will include an annotated bibliography (which utilizes the research materials covered in the class), the text of your paper, and a personalized report (about one or two paragraphs) summarizing your experience during your research and writing of your project. More details concerning this project will be given to you in class.

◆ **Recording of the Lectures will not be permitted.**

◆ **Academic Honesty**

You will be held accountable for honest behavior in this class. Honest test-taking procedures will be enforced.

◆ **Concerning Plagiarism**

You are guilty of plagiarism when you present someone else’s words or ideas as if they were your own.

There is often some misunderstanding about the nature of presenting historical facts in your music-history research project and in the statements concerning the music that you are studying. Presenting the common facts (not opinions) of a composer’s education, career, repertoire, and whereabouts is, for the most part, common knowledge. As a writer you must assimilate the **facts in words of your own**, not resembling the original source **in any way**, including, but not limited to, your order of presentation and emphasis on details. You **must give credit** to your source by listing it as a reference in your bibliography. You may incorporate just the facts without footnoting if you have used words that were **entirely your own**. *It is important that you take care to not interject any borrowed opinions from your sources unless you plan to footnote.* Watch for

interjected opinions that the original author has communicated by using various adjectives. Make sure you omit these if you are not footnoting.

The Musical Style and Significance of a Composer:

If you use another person's words, ideas, opinions, statistics, or conclusions about a composer's importance, style, musical composition, etc., then you **must document** your source in a footnote (then and there) in your text. If you do not do this you are guilty of plagiarism and will receive an **automatic F** on the assignment. It does not matter if you have reworded the information, it still is not based on your original thought and needs documentation. Documentation includes framing the borrowed information in quotation marks and footnoting the source immediately after the closed quotation mark.¹ You also will need to list the source a second time in your bibliography. If you fail to follow this procedure the consequences will be the aforementioned F.

Help from Others:

If you receive assistance from someone (let's say they offer their opinion on the importance of Ravel's *Bolero*) then you must also footnote their opinion as borrowed information. If you receive assistance in the editing or typing of your work you must include an acknowledgement page acknowledging their assistance.

Dishonesty:

1. It is dishonest to present your own previously written material as a new assignment in this or in any other class.
2. It is dishonest to copy another student's work, research, or writing, even in part.
3. It is dishonest to allow your work to be used by someone else.
4. It is dishonest in these music history classes to use internet articles or sites as information sources of biographical, stylistic, or historical significance issues.

☞ All dishonesty will result in an automatic F. An F in the course could result depending on the severity of the offense as determined by the instructor.

Don't Do It

I realize that there are degrees of plagiarism. Total plagiarism (turning in someone else's work as your own—including copying or buying program notes or a biography from an internet site—will result in an **F in the class** and recommendation to the University for disciplinary action. Partial plagiarism will result, as mentioned before, in an F for the project. The temptations today are great. You are busy, stressed, and trying to do your best. Do not give in to a quick research solution on the internet. This is dishonest to do for your projects in this class. Resist the temptation and choose the proper way. If you cannot find the proper way, come talk to me as soon as you are aware of your difficulty.

¹ The footnote will appear at the bottom of your page like this one if you choose "Insert" and then "Footnote". Don't choose "Endnote." For my classes, you will need to place your footnotes at the bottom of the relevant page.

Reasons Behind the “No Internet Rule”

First, the cites on the internet concerning musical topics vary tremendously in accuracy. Second, the authors of the cites that display biographies of our composers have used the same sources in the library that you are supposed to use. If you do not do the original research yourself from those library sources, then you are cheating. So, by using someone else’s assimilated facts from library sources, rather than performing the entire research exercise yourself, you are failing to do what was assigned.



◆ Proper Classroom Demeanor

According to university policy, students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. I will expect that members of the class will raise their hand when desirous of contributing to the class in the form of a question or statement. Please “refrain from behavior in the classroom that is intentionally or unintentionally disruptive of the learning process. Students are prohibited from eating in class, using tobacco products, making offensive remarks, reading newspapers, sleeping, talking among each other at inappropriate times, wearing inappropriate clothing, or engaging in any other form of distraction. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result in, minimally, a directive to leave class or being reported to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action in accordance with university policy.”

(Reproduced here as directed from the College of Arts & Sciences)

◆ Disabilities

Accommodations for disabilities must be initiated by the student by going to the Counseling Center and the Services for Students with Disabilities in a timely manner. Every semester that a student desires accommodation, it is the student’s responsibility to complete a Classroom Accommodation Request Form at the Students with Disabilities Office and follow the stated procedure in notifying the faculty.

◆ Religious Holidays

If you must miss a class because it is your religious holiday I must be notified of your intended absence no later than the 15th class day.

See the Separate Handout for a Schedule of the Class

Important Note: Failure to read or to obtain this syllabus (or to read this important note) will not negate the contents herein. Likewise, failure to obtain or to read information concerning tests and assignments for this class will not negate your responsibility for those graded items nor the criteria by which they are graded.