

Music Humanities syllabus

The focus of Music Humanities is on the many forms of the Western musical imagination in art music, through works studied in their historical and cultural contexts. The specific goals of the course are to awaken and encourage active, critical, and comparative listening practices, to provide tools to respond verbally to a variety of musical idioms and performances, and to create engagement with the debates about the character and purposes of music that have occupied composers and musical thinkers since ancient times.

The course moves chronologically from the Middle Ages to the present, examining the choices and assumptions of composers, audiences, and performers, and exploring what we can and can't know about how music of the past may have sounded. Students' critical perceptions and articulate responses to the music, to performances recorded and live, and to the source readings that are a hallmark of the Core, will be a vital part of the class.

1. Musical sound and critical listening
2. Hildegard of Bingen and Josquin des Prez
3. Claudio Monteverdi and Barbara Strozzi
4. Johann Sebastian Bach and Joseph Bologne (Chevalier de Saint-Georges)
5. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
6. Ludwig van Beethoven
7. Franz Schubert, Frédéric Chopin, and Clara Schumann
8. The Romantic Stage and Claude Debussy
9. Igor Stravinsky and Arnold Schoenberg
10. Harry T. Burleigh and William Grant Still
11. Edward "Duke" Ellington
12. Billie Holiday and Nina Simone
13. John Cage, Steve Reich, and Pauline Oliveros
14. The 21st century [instructor choice]