UAB
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Musical Notation I

Code: 100654
ECTS Credits: 6

2025/2026

Degree	Type	Year
Musicology	OB	3

Contact

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Teachers

(External) Maria Incoronata Colantuono

Teaching groups languages

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document.

Prerequisites

It is recommended to have a good level of music theory.

Objectives and Contextualisation

To provide students with the theoretical and practical knowledge necessary to read, transcribe, and interpret
medieval music written in its main notational systems.

Competences

- Demonstrate a sufficient level of knowledge of historical and current musical language and theory,
  including the rudiments of harmony and counterpoint, to be able to correctly approach the study of
  composition.
- Know and understand the historical evolution of music, its technical, stylistic, aesthetic and
  interpretative characteristics from a diachronic perspective.
- Make changes to methods and processes in the area of knowledge in order to provide innovative
  responses to society's needs and demands.
- Relate knowledge acquired to musical praxis, working with musicians through the analysis and
  contextualisation of different repertoires, both related to historical music and to the different
  manifestations of contemporary music.
- Students must be capable of applying their knowledge to their work or vocation in a professional way
  and they should have building arguments and problem resolution skills within their area of study.

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- Students must be capable of collecting and interpreting relevant data (usually within their area of study) in order to make statements that reflect social, scientific or ethical relevant issues.
- Students must be capable of communicating information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
- Students must have and understand knowledge of an area of study built on the basis of general secondary education, and while it relies on some advanced textbooks it also includes some aspects coming from the forefront of its field of study.
- Take account of social, economic and environmental impacts when operating within one's own area of knowledge.
- Use digital tools and interpret specific documentary sources critically.

Learning Outcomes

1. Acquire fluency of sightreading to practical musical ends.
2. Analyse the sustainability indicators of the academic and professional activities in this field, integrating the social, economic and environmental dimensions.
3. Apply different models of musical notation in musical praxis.
4. Assess the reliability of sources, select relevant data and contrast information.
5. Be familiar with editions of early music.
6. Discuss musical theory and praxis with musicians.
7. Identify and critically assemble the basic bibliography that has shaped the field of study.
8. Identify the main systems of writing in Western music, both vocal and instrumental (10th to 17th centuries).
9. Identifying the context of the historical processes.
10. Integrate knowledge acquired in the production of clear and concise appropriate to the academic and specialist communication.
11. Make condifent use of vocabulary relative to musical paleography.
12. Make historical distinctions between the different systems of musical notation.
13. Produce correct, precise and clear argumental and terminological writing of knowledge acquired, both in the area of musical specialisation and dissemination.
14. Propose new experience-based methods or alternative solutions.
15. Transcribe the main systems of Western music according to the modern conventions of notation and edition.
16. Use the appropriate terminology in the construction of an academic text.
17. Write critical papers on musicology that are planned and organised efficiently.

Content

- Principles of Gregorian semiology

- Neumatic notations

- Early polyphonic notations

- Modal notation

- Fundamentals of mensural notation

- Notation of the French Ars nova

- Italian notation of the Trecento

Activities and Methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Theoretical and practical face-to-face lessons	45	1.8	1, 3, 6, 12, 5, 9, 8, 15, 11
Type: Autonomous			
Personal study of the course material	32	1.28	1, 3, 13, 6, 12, 5, 16, 9, 8, 10, 17, 15, 11
Reading of specific bibliography (books and articles)	7	0.28	13, 16, 9, 10, 17
Transcription excercices	62	2.48	13, 12, 5, 16, 8, 17, 15, 11

The syllabus will be developed through practical classes based on the proposed manuscript musical excerpts, following an explanation of the theoretical and practical principles on which they are based.
All transcription exercises will be completed with the active participation of the students.

Annotation: Within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

Assessment

Continous Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Final exam	50%	2	0.08	1, 3, 13, 6, 12, 5, 16, 9, 8, 10, 14, 17, 15, 11, 4
Test 1	25%	1	0.04	2, 13, 12, 16, 8, 7, 10, 15, 11
Test 2	25%	1	0.04	2, 13, 12, 16, 8, 7, 10, 15, 11

Assessment

- Completion of two midterm exams (25% each) and a final exam (50%). The exams will consist of the transcription of one or more musical excerpts and a questionnaire with questions about the history of notation systems and the repertoires they convey.

- Each test, if necessary, can be orally justified during group or individual tutoring sessions.

Clarifications

- To calculate the final grade of the course, both midterm exams must be passed independently.

- Failed or missed midterm exams for duly justified reasons will be reassessed during the make-up exam.

- Under no circumstances may the course be passed with failed exams.

- The make-up exam will only assess the failed content.

- Individual exams will not be scheduled outside the assigned date and time, except in duly justified cases of force majeure.

- If a student commits any irregularity that may significantly affect the grade of an assessment, that assessment will be graded as zero, regardless of any disciplinary process that may be initiated. If multiple irregularities occur during the assessments of the same course, the final grade for the course will be zero.

- If exams cannot be held in person, their format will be adapted (maintaining the weighting) according to the possibilities offered by UAB's virtual tools. Homework, activities, and class participation will be conducted through forums, wikis, and/or exercise discussions via Teams, etc. The professor will ensure students can access these or will offer alternative means within their reach.

- A student will be considered "non-evaluable" if they do not attend the midterm exams or the final exam.

  USE OF AI

  For this course, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies is permitted exclusively for support tasks, such as bibliographic or information searches, text correction, or translations. Students must clearly identify which parts were generated using these technologies, specify the tools used, and include a critical reflection on how these tools influenced the process and the final outcome of the activity. Lack of transparency regarding the use of AI in this graded activity will be considered academic dishonesty and may result in partial or total loss of marks for the activity, or more serious sanctions in severe cases.

  This course does not allow a single final evaluation system.

Bibliography

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Bradley, C*., Poliphony in Medieval Paris: the art of composing with plainchant*, ed. Cambridge University Press (2020)

Calvia A. - Saggio F., *Nei castelli e nelle corti. Musica vocale tra Medioevo e Rinascimento*, (ed) Libreria Musicale Italiana, 2025.

Caraci M., Sabaino D., Aresi S., Le notazioni della polifonia vocale dei secoli IX-XVII, ed. ETS, 2007

Colette M. N. - Popin M.- Vendrix PH., *Histoire de la notation du Moyen Âge à la Renaissance*, Paris, Minerve, 2003

Epifani M. - Rocco Rossi F., *Scrivere a più voci. Alla ricerca della notazione perfetta*, (ed) Libreria Musicale Italiana, 2024

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Hiley D. - Szendrei J., *Notation*, § III.1, Plainchant, in Groveonline

Kelly TH. F., *Capturing Music. The Story of Notation*, New York, W.W. Norton, 2014

Laudario di Cortona (Il). Cortona, Biblioteca del Comune e dell'Accademia Etrusca, ms. 91, ed. Libreria musicale italiana, 2015

Luisi F., Gozzi M., Scotti A*., Il canto fracto. L'altro gregoriano,* ed. Torre d'Orfeo, 2005

Paléographie musicale: les principaux manuscrits de chant grégorien, ambrosien, mozarabe, gallican, Solesmes, 1889-.

Schimd M.E., *La notazione musicale. Scrittura e composizione tra il 900 e il 1900,* a cura di A. Cecchi, Roma, Astrolabio, 2017

Software

There is no requiered software

Groups and Languages

Please note that this information is provisional until 30 November 2025. You can check it through this link. To consult the language you will need to enter the CODE of the subject.

Name	Group	Language	Semester	Turn
(PAUL) Classroom practices	1	Catalan	first semester	morning-mixed
(TE) Theory	1	Catalan	first semester	morning-mixed