

Musical Semiology

Code: 100667
ECTS Credits: 6

2025/2026

Degree	Type	Year
Musicology	OT	3
Musicology	OT	4

Contact

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Teaching groups languages

You can view this information at the [end](#) of this document.

Prerequisites

The 1st year courses "Llenguatge musical I", "Llenguatge musical II" as well as the 2nd year course "Anàlisi musical" should have been successfully completed.

Objectives and Contextualisation

Since the 1960s to the present, there are several practices and knowledge that are identified under the terms semiology or semiotics of music. Despite the absence of a unified theoretical framework, what is shared is the fact of putting in the first place concepts like sign or meaning and the reflection on musical meaning, as well as the capacity of communication of music, always from an interdisciplinary perspective.

The course presents the main currents of musical semiology, relating them to the different sign theories that are taken as a starting point, proposing guidelines and strategies for the practice of musical analysis and its interpretation.

Competences

Musicology

- Critically analyse musical works from any of the points of view of the discipline of musicology.
- Relate concepts and information from different humanistic, scientific and social disciplines, especially the interactions which are established between music and philosophy, history, art, literature and anthropology.
- 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.
- Students must be capable of communicating information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
- Students must develop the necessary learning skills to undertake further training with a high degree of autonomy.

Learning Outcomes

1. Apply the conceptualisation of philosophy, history, literature and anthropology to musical research.
2. Correctly apply the analytical method of tripartition.
3. "Correctly apply the concept of the musical ""gesture""."
4. Correctly apply the concept of the process of communication and signification.
5. Correctly relate procedures of semiology with theories of musical rhetoric.
6. Define the concept of narratology in music and its different modes of application to music.
7. Define the foundations of semiotic analysis using the models of Peirce and Greimas.
8. Discern and apply theories of inference generation in its application to musical language.
9. Draw hermeneutic conclusions from the analysis of scores, applying different analytical methods.
10. Identify the social practices of music and its interpretation from a semiological standpoint.
11. Integrate knowledge acquired in the production of clear and concise appropriate to the academic and specialist communication.
12. Make correct application of the methodology of semiotic analysis to interrelate music with other artistic languages (painting, sculpture and others).
13. Make correct use of the concept of the musical symbol and sign.
14. Produce correct, precise and clear argumental and terminological writing of knowledge acquired, both in the area of musical specialisation and dissemination.
15. Solving problems autonomously.
16. Summarising acquired knowledge about the origin and transformations experienced in its several fields of study.
17. Understand the propedeutic use of musical analysis, especially in its semiological approach.
18. Use analytical methodology setting out from the establishment of the musical topos.
19. Use the appropriate terminology in the construction of an academic text.

Content

1. Basic concepts of musical meaning:

- How do signification and communication work? Main theories
- Basic concepts of musical semiotics
- Hermeneutics and interpretation
- Body and cognition

2. Musical rhetoric

- What is rhetoric?
- *Musica poetica* and rhetorical figures
- Relationships between music and text

3. The Topic Theory

- Topics and Classicism
- Topics beyond Classicism

4. Music and narrativity

- The agents of music
- Narrative archetypes

5. Music, multimodality, and heterosemiosis

Activities and Methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Master class	30	1.2	1, 12, 3, 4, 2, 17, 14, 6, 7, 8, 9, 13, 19, 10, 11, 18, 5, 15, 16
Supervision	7	0.28	14, 19, 11, 15, 16
Type: Supervised			
Debate Seminars on work analysis and reading	13	0.52	1, 12, 3, 4, 2, 17, 14, 6, 7, 8, 9, 13, 19, 10, 11, 18, 5, 15, 16
Type: Autonomous			
Completion of projects	40	1.6	1, 4, 17, 14, 9, 13, 19, 10, 11, 15, 16
Content reading and study	39	1.56	1, 3, 2, 17, 14, 7, 8, 9, 13, 19, 11, 18, 15, 16
Information search	15	0.6	14, 11, 15, 16

Theoretical classes will be combined with several practical activities that can be individual or collective.

Various musical works will be analyzed in class and text comments related to the contents of the subject will be carried out.

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

Continuous Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Group assignment	30%	2	0.08	1, 4, 17, 14, 13, 19, 10, 11, 15, 16
Moodle exercises and participation in class	10 %	0	0	1, 12, 3, 4, 2, 17, 14, 6, 7, 8, 9, 13, 19, 10, 11, 18, 5, 15
Written test 1	30 %	2	0.08	1, 12, 3, 4, 2, 17, 14, 6, 7, 8, 9, 13, 19, 10, 11, 18, 5, 15, 16
Written test 2	30 %	2	0.08	1, 12, 3, 4, 2, 17, 14, 6, 7, 8, 9, 13, 19, 10, 11, 18, 5, 15, 16

There will be two written tests, one half-way through the course and the other at the end of the semester, the result of each of which will represent 30% of the overall grade.

A compulsory group assignment will be carried out on a topic that will have to be agreed on with the teacher. The group assignment grade will represent 30% of the overall grade.

Tasks carried out on Moodle in relation to various activities (seminars by guest professors, attendance or online viewing of congresses and conferences on musical semiology) and class activities on wooclap will also be included, representing 10% of the overall grade.

To pass the course, it will be necessary to approve the group assignment with 5 and each of the two written tests with a minimum grade of 4, and the average of the two exams must be a passing grade.

The qualifications of the written tests and of the assignment will be published in the Virtual Campus. At the time the results are published, the revision dates will also be published.

To qualify for the re-evaluation test will be necessary to have passed the mandatory assignment. Tests that have not been done within the deadline will not be re-evaluated.

It will not be possible to opt for the consideration "not assessed" if the student has participated in one of the written tests or has submitted the mandatory assignment.

SINGLE ASSESSMENT

- Exam of theoretical content and semiotic analysis of a musical work: 40%
- Written essay on an aspect of the syllabus according to the parameters of the group work (but individual and with recorded oral presentation): 30%
- Submission of four video reviews of the ESMUC "Jornades ab Sentits": 30%

The submission of the essay and the reviews and the completion of the exam will be carried out on a single date indicated in the subject program, accessible from the Virtual Campus.

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Software

There are no specific software applications planned for teaching purposes, but it is recommended to bring a laptop to class in order to take part in Woodlap activities and to better follow the projected materials.

In this course, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies is not allowed at any stage. Any work that includes AI-generated content will be considered an act of academic dishonesty and may result in a partial or full penalty on the activity's grade, or more severe sanctions in serious cases.

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/Spanish	second semester	morning-mixed
(TE) Theory	1	Catalan/Spanish	second semester	morning-mixed