YSTCM Modules Available to NUS students in Semester 1, Academic Year 2017/2018

Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music modules are divided into these categories:

1) General Education Modules
   (Human Cultures / Thinking & Expression / Singapore Studies)
2) Music History Focused Modules
3) Music Theory Focused Modules
4) Music Technology Focused Modules
5) Music Ensembles

SEMESTER 1

1) General Education Modules

a) Human Cultures

GEH1047 Social and Cultural Studies Through Music
Modular credits: 4 MCs
This module provides across-cultural introduction to music both as an art and as a human, socio-cultural phenomenon. Through lectures, reading and listening assignments, and actually playing different styles of music, students will learn how music works, why people listen to and make music, what its roles are in a society, and how these things vary in different cultures. The module introduces a variety of musical styles and cultures that represent an enormous wealth of human experience. At the end of the course the students will have access to a much wider variety of music to listen to, participate in, enjoy, and understand.

Past student comments
- “[The lecturer is] passionate and well-versed in his knowledge in terms of the music from different parts of the world”
- “[A] different kind of music”

GEH1060 Social History of the Piano
Modular credits: 4 MCs
An interdisciplinary study of how societies and different generations responded to the invention of the piano. This module focuses on the social history of the piano throughout the past three centuries, canvassing a wide array of performers, composers, supporters, manufacturers, “heroes”, politicians, teachers and students. Various expressions of ideologies from differing periods eventually revolutionized and effectuated the versatility of the piano, shaping a legacy which led to the “globalization” of the piano, including China. Students will learn through lectures, readings, discussions, listening, playing, and attending piano recitals and masterclasses.

Past student comments
- “[The lecturer] is very kind and understanding...he sympathises with the students’ workloads and interacts with the students as much as he can”
- “[The lecturer] is a very passionate teacher and he has given me more knowledge about not only the history of the piano, but also what it is like to be a musician”
- “Engaging and fun teacher that spurs the interest of students”
b) Thinking and Expression

GET1040 Communicating About the Arts
Modular credits: 4 MCs
We talk and write about the arts on a daily basis, especially in social media, but what makes talking and writing about the arts unique, challenging, and why should it be exciting? This course helps students further develop the basic concepts and expressive language needed to communicate more effectively about different art mediums and forms, and different ways to communicate about the arts, from opinions and evaluations, to formal reviews, to critical and theoretical responses. Students will do multiple oral and written assessments in this course.

- Newly Offered Module

c) Singapore Studies

GES1020 Western Music Within a Singaporean Context
Modular credits: 4 MCs
This module will look at the place of the Western Classical music tradition within the cultural life of Singapore. It will assess the impact of majority cultures (particularly from the Chinese, Malay and Indian communities) on the general reception of Western music, as well as on music written by Singapore-based composers. Students will be introduced to the principal figures in Singapore’s musical development. The module will also chart the growth of music education in Singapore, both in the national schooling system as well as in private institutions and tertiary academies. A prior knowledge of music is helpful but not required.

Past student comments
- “[The lecturer] is very encouraging as a tutor and inspired me to think beyond materials taught in class”
- “I had a deeper understanding in general how certain things work in Singapore, and a better appreciation of the country it is today”
- “[The lecturer’s] lessons are very insightful. It was as much a discovery journey as it a learning one”
2) Music History Focused Modules

MUH2202 What Was, and Is, Popular Music?
Modular credits: 4 MCs
What musicians, singers, and composers have, and had, the most, and least, followers, and why? This course is a detailed study of the dynamics among music, music makers, and audiences in history. Central to this course is a critical comparison of historical and present case studies. Historical case studies draw from the western music legacy, and contemporary case studies will draw from the global as well as Singapore and Asia. Students will analyse common patterns, discriminate differences, and make inferences from these case studies.
- Newly Offered Module

MUH2203 Music of the Church and State
Modular credits: 4 MCs
A study of music produced in religious and political settings, with an emphasis on music of the European Baroque tradition. The course explores issues of patronage, audience reception and performance, both in Baroque Europe and modern Singapore and SE Asia. Students will investigate and analyse musical genres and styles, and the religious beliefs, political ideology and artistic movements which form their context. (Non-Conservatory students that can read music may take this course as a free elective.)
Past student comments
- “Helpful towards every single student”
- “Very passionate about music and has an extensive understanding”

3) Music Theory Focused Module

MUT1201 Introduction to Classical Music Composition
Modular credits: 4 MCs
The module uses the online course Write Like Mozart available on the Coursera platform as the basis of its content. It introduces students to strategies for style writing of European art music. Issues of harmonic progression, voice leading, and texture are addressed as are relevant compositional concepts like repetition, variation, and elaboration. A blended learning module with video lectures and demonstrations, class time is dedicated to hands-on workshops. Simple compositions in the style of common practice European music form the bulk of the assessment. A familiarity with musical rudiments is highly recommended. Prior experience with composition is not required.

MUT3113 Orchestration A (Year 3 and Year 4 students only)
Modular credits: 4 MCs
The terms orchestration and instrumentation go hand-in-hand. While instrumentation refers to the study of individual instruments, orchestration deals with the technique and process of writing for a group of instruments. This module will introduce students to the characteristics and abilities of the instruments in the symphonic orchestra and how they work together through in-class listening and writing assignments, orchestration projects, and performance. The module will also address many of the problems faced by composers, conductors, teachers, and performers. The technique of orchestration is an important part in every musician’s education

Interested students will need to attend a placement test on 31 July. The deadline to register for the placement test is Thursday (27 July) at 6pm. Please register for the placement test (2 available slots at Seminar Room 8 at YSTCM, at 11am or 2.45pm) with Ms Joanne Soh at this email: mussohj@nus.edu.sg.
The test is about one hour. Last but not least, students also need to submit a short 3-5 minute video playing their instruments.
MUT3216 Bach Suites
Modular credits: 4 MCs
This module focuses on J.S. Bach’s works for solo instruments, with an emphasis on the dance suite. Selected works to be studied include the unaccompanied Sonata and Partitas for Violin, Cello Suites, Keyboard Suites, and the Partita for Flute. The contextual use of dance rhythms and dance forms in other Bach works, as well as neo-baroque trends in the 20th century will also be topics of discussion. The module aims to bridge compositional thinking with performance and interpretative analysis. Because of this, analysis, composition, and performance are equally represented as modes of learning. Major assessment is in the form of analytical work and music compositions that are performed in class and/or public concerts.

Interested students will need to attend a placement test on 31 July. The deadline to register for the placement test is Thursday (27 July) at 6pm. Please register for the placement test (2 available slots at Seminar Room 8 at YSTCM, at 11am or 2.45pm) with Ms Joanne Soh at this email: mussohj@nus.edu.sg. The test is about one hour. Last but not least, students also need to submit a short 3-5 minute video playing their instruments.

4) Music Technology Focused Modules

MUA1165 Music and Machines
Modular credits: 4 MCs
This module examines the use of machines to create music in the last 70 years. It focuses on the topics of synthesis, signal processing, live interactivity, and computer-aided composition, and introduces important repertoire that uses technology from this time period. Students will work in programming environments designed for musical applications to create electro-acoustic and algorithmic compositions. The module is mandatory for all BMus students majoring in composition at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory. For those students, it should be taken during the second semester of study.

5) Music Ensembles

MUA1192/1193 Chamber Singers 1/2
Modular credits: 2 MCs
This course allows students to learn the fundamentals of vocal production and choral technique through participation in a vocal performance ensemble. Students will participate in regular rehearsals, and will learn and perform choral music with an emphasis on Renaissance and Twentieth-century music. Through this course, students will gain knowledge of diverse repertoire, composers, genres, styles and period performance practices. They will also learn fundamentals of vocal production and choral technique and will experience working together in a unique team ensemble.

More information regarding signing up of auditions will be included soon, so keep a lookout for this space!

MUA3205 Jazz Study and Performance
Modular credits: 4 MCs
An introduction to the performance of jazz or popular music as practiced in the USA from the 1920s to the early 1950s. This module shows you how to perform and improvise jazz music as an instrumentalist or vocalist through the study and practice of class materials and listening. Theoretical materials will include chord scale theory, basic jazz musical forms, chord extensions, basic reharmonization techniques, and roman numeral analysis in jazz.
The improvisational concepts taught are based on jazz theory and practice. There will be a listening list of about 80 well-known jazz pieces.

Interested students will need to attend a placement test on 31 July. The deadline to register for the placement test is Thursday (27 July) at 6pm. Please register for the placement test (2 available slots at Seminar Room 8 at YSTCM, at 11am or 2.45pm) with Ms Joanne Soh at this email: mussohj@nus.edu.sg. The test is about one hour. Last but not least, students also need to submit a short 3-5 minute video playing their instruments.

6) Keyboard Focused Modules

MUA2201 Keyboard Literature
Modular credits: 4 MCs
Keyboard Literature explores the great composers and their greatest works for keyboard instruments. The keyboard music that forms the core repertory of contemporary conservatory curriculums and concert programs will be the primary focus. Semester 1 slightly emphasizes music from the Baroque through Classical period, but works from all periods will be covered. Works for harpsichord, clavichord, organ and fortepiano will be examined, and practical experience performing on period instruments (especially the harpsichord and fortepiano) will allow the students to experience the sound world of the composer. (Non-Conservatory students that can read music may take this course as a free elective.)

MUA3224 Intermediate Keyboard Studies
Modular credits: 4 MCs
This module presents the study of intermediate piano repertoire and application of harmony at the keyboard. Students learn various important keyboard skills and techniques that enhance their understanding of and experience in making music. Such skills include harmonization, transposition, figured bass, improvisation, piano techniques, score reading, musical interpretation, solo and ensemble playing.

More information regarding signing up of auditions will be included soon, so keep a lookout for this space!