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# Reimagining the Graduate Music Bibliography Course for Music Performers

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# Reimagining the Graduate Music Bibliography Course for Music Performers

## **Comments**

Presented at the Music Library Association California Chapter's 7th Annual Meeting on Thursday, September 12th and Friday, September 13th, 2019, at the Stanford Music Library in Stanford, CA.

# Reimagining the Graduate Music Bibliography Course for Music Performers

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**MLACC 2019**

How many of you teach a  
graduate Music Bib,  
Research Methods, etc.?

# Background

- Chapman University, Hall-Musco Conservatory of Music
- First cohort of grad students
- MM in Keyboard Collab. Arts

## Some early questions:

- How can I make a research methods class relevant to KCA MM students?
- What do KCA MM students need to know about music research and why?
- How will our small(ish) music library meet the needs for a graduate research course?
- Use a book or start from scratch?

## What I was given:

- A syllabus that looked unlike my Music Bibliography courses, with
  - A different name for the course
  - Learning outcomes
  - Program outcomes
  - Suggested texts, content, main study units, and methods of evaluation
- **An invitation to make changes**

From the  
original  
syllabus

**Catalog Description:**

This course serves as an introduction to graduate studies in music where we explore the literature of scholars, performers, composers and educators who have contributed to the global network of information concerning aesthetic, theoretical, philosophical, historical, cultural, and pedagogical aspects of music.



## Student Learning Outcomes:

- Student will...
- explore the literature of the community of scholars, performers, composers and educators who have contributed to the global network of information.
- learn about the principles of research and will examine ways to discover authoritative information and evaluate the potential relevance of selected resources to an original research topic.
- conduct an analysis that offers a distinctive interpretation of the subject.
- review standards of writing style and format as they pertain to music scholarship.
- communicate their intellectual discoveries with clarity and directness.
- be able to use the printed and electronic information resources available through the Leatherby Libraries.
- be able to locate important bibliographic sources for research in music and music literature.
- be able to construct a comprehensive bibliography on any musical topic.
- be able to write program notes for musical works of any genre.

# Reframing my ideas of the course

- My experience**
  - **Research collections**
  - **Class for musicology students**
  - **Music Bib. focused on specific resources and comprehensive bibliography**
  
- My KCA students**
  - **Smaller conservatory collection**
  - **Performers**
  - **Research Methods, focusing on scholarship and writing**

# Strategy 1. Literature review

*Build a framework to understand the course*

# Notable literature

- Jonathan Saucedo. “**Administration and Curricula of the Introductory Graduate Music Research Course,**” *Notes* 71, no. 3 (2015): 448-478. doi:10.1353/not.2015.0003.
- Monchick, Alexandra. “**Critical Thinking and Writing Strategies in the Music Bibliography Classroom.**” *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* 7, no. 2 (2017): 44–55.
- Duffy, Michael J. IV, “**Information Literacy for Music Graduate Students: A Framework Application**” (2018). *University Libraries Faculty & Staff Presentations*. 9. [https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/library\\_presentations/9/](https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/library_presentations/9/)



*“Even if performance students’ culminating experience is a recital, a substantial research paper is beneficial not only as a writing sample for further study, but also as a means to develop their writing skills for practical career purposes.”<sup>1</sup>*

*“Because performance students often lack confidence when it comes to writing, it is very important for the instructor to empower them.”<sup>2</sup>*

1. Monchick, 44.

2. Monchick, 46.

# Notable literature

- Jonathan Saucedo. "Administration and Curricula of the Introductory Graduate Music Research Course," *Notes* 71, no. 3 (2015): 448-478. doi:10.1353/not.2015.0003.
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## **Strategy 2.** Syllabus review

*What were other instructors doing?*

# Syllabus Review

- Collected 8 syllabi from
  - Former institutions
  - Instructors whose scholarship I had recently consulted
  - Instructors who I knew took different approaches
  - Online syllabi



# Syllabus Review

- **Looked at:**
  - **Book requirements**
  - **Structure of scheduled topics**
  - **Assignments**

## **Strategy 3.** Conversations and interviews

*WHY do things that way?*

## Conversations and interviews

- Some casual
- Some at length
- With other instructors
- With the director of the KCA program
- With the Dean of the College of Perf. Arts
- With another Chapman prof about a particular assignment

**So what did I come up with?**

# Principles

- No busy work
- Students should leave the course more confident
  - Music scholarship
  - Writing and citation
  - Bibliographic research
  - Evaluating resources
- Engage with ACRL Framework

# My syllabus

## **Student Learning Outcomes:**

- Student will effectively explore the literature of the community of scholars, performers, composers and educators who have contributed to the global network of information in order to construct a comprehensive bibliography on any musical topic.
- Student will be able to use the printed and electronic information resources available through the Leatherby Libraries, archives, scholarly online resources, etc.
- Student will apply critical evaluation of sources.

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# My syllabus

- Kept the original course description
- Refined learning outcomes to what was essential and **assessable**.
- Changed required text
- Added *The Craft of Research* to reserves
- Completely redesigned “Content/Main Study Units” and “Methods of Evaluation and Grading”

## Methods of Evaluation

- **Class participation** 15 points
- **3 Short assignments** 15 points (5 points each)
- **Wikipedia editing project** 50 points
- **Annotated bibliography** 50 points
- **Editions comparison** 15 points
- **Term Paper (Outline/Intro/Abstract)** 50 points
- **Reflective Essay** 5 points
- **Total possible:** 200 points



## Short Assignments

1. Library scavenger hunt
2. Summarize the contribution of a musicology article
3. "Bach's Chorus"; Analyzing the scholarly conversation on an issue

**Also...**

**[GASP!]**

**Wikipedia**

- Sparked by presentation by history professor
  - Then lengthy one-on-one meeting with her
- Application to ACRL Framework

## Wikipedia assignment

- Ties in with all 5 Frames of ACRL Framework
- Students go through training
- Learn to rely solely on non-original ideas and solid sources
- Their work is instantly “published” and is accessed by thousands

## Annotated Bibliography

- Still an es
- 25 sources
- At least 7
- Chicago T
- Must add

### Phil Ford "How to Read Academic Writing" Questions

- What is it?
- Why is it here?
- What is it doing?
- How was it made?
- What's in it for me?
- [For this bibliography, I add another category: What are the significant features?]

Ford, Phil. "How to Read Academic Writing." *Dial M for Musicology* (blog), January 8, 2014.

<https://dialmformusicology.com/2014/01/08/how-to-read-academic-writing/>.

## Editions Comparison

- Compare three or more editions of the same work from different publishers
- Goal is to discover:
- What went into creating the edition (source material)?
- Who are the editors and why are they qualified?
- Purpose of the edition (scholarly study, performance, analysis, pedagogy, etc.)
- How well the edition delivers on its purpose (are there inaccuracies, are the fingerings useful or distracting, etc.)

## Term Paper

- **Outline**
- **Introduction**
- **Abstract**
- **[No actual paper]**

## Reflective Essay

- **Principle: Metacognition**
- **Students recognize their development and new understandings**
- **Recognize changes in their anxieties and confidence levels**

## Reflective Essay

Part 1: for your own reflection [I ask the students to keep this reflective essay to refer to at the end of the course. I don't ever read it]:

- How confident do you feel about your research and writing abilities?
- What do you hope to gain from this course?
- What are your anxieties or worries related to the course or to the topics discussed in the course?

Part 2: for class discussion:

- Think of past experiences you have had with doing research and writing.
- What was a positive experience?
- What was something that you found difficult?



**What did I learn?**

*And what would I change?*

## Lessons learned

- Textbook was completely unnecessary
- How to lead a discussion when there is a language barrier
- Collaborative pianists do not enjoy reading musicology articles about György Ligeti
- Faculty presence had positives and negatives

## Things I would change

- No textbook
- More written assignments rather than relying on discussion
- Choose topics in which they are interested
- More rubrics

**Questions?**

The end!

## Discussion Questions:

**My questions to you:**

What has been your experience as an instructor?

As a student?

What would you like to see in a Music Research Methods/Bibliography course?