



**DEPARTMENT OF FINE ARTS**  
**COURSE OUTLINE – WINTER 2021**

**MU2570 (A3): SONG WRITING I – 3 (1.5-0-1.5) 45 Hours for 15 Weeks**

**INSTRUCTOR:** Geoffrey Whittall      **PHONE:** 780-539-2823  
**OFFICE:** L-119      **E-MAIL:** [gwhittall@gprc.ab.ca](mailto:gwhittall@gprc.ab.ca)  
**OFFICE HOURS:** By appointment

**WINTER 2021 DELIVERY:** Remote Delivery. This course is delivered remotely. There are no face-to-face or onsite requirements. Students must have a computer with a webcam and reliable internet connection. Technological support is available through [helpdesk@gprc.ab.ca](mailto:helpdesk@gprc.ab.ca).

Note: GPRC reserves the right to change the course delivery.

**CALENDAR DESCRIPTION:** An exploration of practice, design, and structures of song writing, including lyrics, melodies, harmonic progressions, and forms. In assignments, students will use a variety of techniques to unify those aspects into successful compositions.

**PREREQUISITE:** MU1550

**REQUIRED TEXT/RESOURCE MATERIALS:**

- Pattison, Pat. 2010. *Writing Better Lyrics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Writer's Digest Books.
- Kachulis, Jimmy. 2004. *The Songwriter's Workshop: Harmony*. Berklee Press.
- **WEBSITE:** <http://people.gprc.ab.ca/gwhittall>
- **MYCLASS:** You will need to access our MYCLASS page at <https://myclass.gprc.ab.ca> where you will be able to access a variety of necessary resources.
- Have on hand for each class session: Manuscript Paper, Pencil, Eraser

**RECOMMENDED MATERIALS:**

- Perricone, Jack. 2000. *Melody in Songwriting: Tools and Techniques for Writing Hit Songs*. Berklee Press
- Pattison, Pat. 1991. *Songwriting: Essential Guide to Lyric Form and Structure*. Berklee Press.
- Kachulis, Jimmy. 2003. *The Songwriter's Workshop: Melody*. Berklee Press.

**DELIVERY MODE(S):** Lecture and Lab

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:** Develop an understanding of harmonic, melodic, lyrical, and formal tools to enable students to write songs that are structurally sound, musically interesting, and lyrically meaningful. Students will develop habits and skills to successfully write lyrics, create and resolve musical tension, explore creative processes, develop an understanding of business aspects of creating music (copyright, publishing, and more), and produce lead sheets and recordings to share with other musicians.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:** Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to write lyrics using poetic devices, identify and use a number of tools including motivic development, chord progressions and song forms, create lead sheets and recordings, and be familiar with aspects of the business of songwriting.

### **TRANSFERABILITY:**

Please consult the Alberta Transfer Guide for specific course transfer information. You may check to ensure the transferability of this course at the Alberta Transfer Guide main page

<http://www.transferalberta.ca>

**\*\* Grade of D or D+ may not be acceptable for transfer to other post-secondary institutions. Students are cautioned that it is their responsibility to contact the receiving institutions to ensure transferability.**

### **EVALUATIONS:**

Songwriting Projects	60%
Assignments	20%
Quizzes	20%

**GRADING CRITERIA:** Please note that most universities will not accept your course for transfer credit **IF** your grade is **less than a C-**.

Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines		Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines
A+	4.0	90-100		C+	2.3	67-69
A	4.0	85-89		C	2.0	63-66
A-	3.7	80-84		C-	1.7	60-62
B+	3.3	77-79		D+	1.3	55-59
B	3.0	73-76		D	1.0	50-54
B-	2.7	70-72		F	0.0	00-49

**COURSE SCHEDULE/TENTATIVE TIMELINE:** This course will begin with an introduction to analyzing songs and continue on with an exploration of the creative process, poetic devices, and lyrics writing.

This will be followed by discussions of chord progressions and melodic design. By the end of February, we will have progressed from writing parts of songs to writing entire songs and making recordings. Aspects of the songwriting business will be discussed in the closing weeks of the semester.

Exercises will be part of many of our class sessions; this will include object writing, song analysis, song critiques and editing, and more.

**STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Attendance at all class sessions is highly recommended.
- More than 20% absenteeism may constitute a failure except for medical or extenuating circumstances in which case a doctor's letter may be required.
- Students may receive a warning 'Notice Of Absenteeism' at 15% absenteeism.
- After 20% absenteeism, you may be required to withdraw from the course.
- *Refer to Student Conduct, Attendance, on page 46 of the College Calendar.* You should become familiar with pages 37-48 of the GPRC 2020-2021 Calendar, along with College policies about academics and student responsibilities.

**STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING:**

Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated and there will be penalties. For a more precise definition of plagiarism and its consequences, refer to the Student Conduct section of the College Calendar at <http://www.gprc.ab.ca/programs/calendar/> or the College Policy on Student Misconduct: Plagiarism and Cheating at <https://www.gprc.ab.ca/about/administration/policies>

**\*\*Note:** all Academic and Administrative policies are available on the same page.