

DEPARTMENT OF FINE ARTS

COURSE OUTLINE –Winter 2023

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

Northwestern Polytechnic acknowledges that our campuses are located on Treaty 8 territory, the ancestral and present-day home to many diverse First Nations, Metis, and Inuit people. We are grateful to work, live and learn on the traditional territory of Duncan's First Nation, Horse Lake First Nation and Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation, who are the original caretakers of this land.

We acknowledge the history of this land and we are thankful for the opportunity to walk together in friendship, where we will encourage and promote positive change for present and future generations.

INSTRUCTOR: Geoffrey Whittall **PHONE:** 780-539-2823
OFFICE: L-119 **E-MAIL:** gwhittall@nwpolytech.ca
OFFICE HOURS: As posted on my office door and by appointment

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(S)/COREQUISITE: MU1550

REQUIRED TEXT/RESOURCE MATERIALS:

- Pattison, Pat. 2010. *Writing Better Lyrics*, 2nd ed. Writer's Digest Books.
- Kachulis, Jimmy. 2004. *The Songwriter's Workshop: Harmony*. Berklee Press.
- **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: Notebook, 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

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

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 more 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 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 sections 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 and music writing, song analysis, song critiques and editing, and more.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Attendance at all class sessions is highly recommended. *Refer to Student Conduct, Attendance, on pages 47-48 of the NWP Polytechnic Calendar.*
- You should become familiar with pages 36-47 of the *NWP 2022-2023 Calendar*, along with Polytechnic 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 <https://www.nwpolytech.ca/programs/calendar/> or the College Policy on Student Misconduct: Plagiarism and Cheating at <https://www.nwpolytech.ca/about/administration/policies/index.html>

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