

UTSC Music and Culture

Fall 2020 Course Delivery

Statement to Students

All university academic units face challenges in planning for 2020-21. This is especially true for the Music and Culture program. UTSC has mandated a “remote access guarantee” for Fall 2020, essentially meaning that all classes — including music — will be delivered online.

Rather than focus on deficit-thinking, we are endeavoring to emphasize the opportunities that 2020-2021 might present. Although mediated musical engagement will never be a sufficient replacement for person-to-person interaction, today’s technologies allow the opportunity to expand our conceptions of music, music-making, and musical interaction. We are confident that students will come away from 2020-21 with additional skills and knowledge that will serve them well throughout their lives.

The University of Toronto has set forth the following policies and priorities for 2020-21 ([here](#)):

- Health and safety
- Academic freedom and integrity
- Flexibility
- Course quality
- Academic progression
- Student equity (access to classes, high quality learning experiences)

In line with the University of Toronto guidelines, the following principles will guide decision-making for the Music and Culture program for the 2020-21 academic year:

- Ensure a complete slate of Music and Culture courses are offered so that academic progression is not disrupted.
- Strive to offer the highest quality music and culture learning experiences by minimizing constraints and maximizing opportunities.
- Aim to keep student costs associated with remote access in line with typical textbook expenditures in arts and science courses. (Note that no Music and Culture courses will require textbook purchases for 2020-21.)

There are many technical and logistical issues involved with “remote access” musical engagement. Two of the most basic are: (1) recording/transmitting live audio with reasonable fidelity, and (2) inputting MIDI-based musical content into a computer or other device. Some Music and Culture courses only involve recording/transmitting. Courses like “Music and Technology” and “Electronic Music II” require inputting MIDI-based content.

IMPORTANT: By its nature, Canadian higher education is not free. There will always be costs. We believe the requirements for the courses below represent learning opportunities, not expenses. However, ACM recognizes that some students may be facing additional challenges. The details are yet to be completely finalized, but ACM will be extending an offer to “buy back” equipment from students at 50% of the original purchase price after course completion.

Music and Sound Quality

Very few built-in microphones in computers and other devices will be sufficient for ensuring an adequate educational experience in online

ensembles. Very simply, built-in microphones are, with very rare exceptions, optimized for speech, not music.

In order to ensure the highest quality educational experience and ensure that no one is unfairly compromised, all students in performing ensembles will be required to have some form of external microphone (see Buyer's Guide below). While this will not, in itself, guarantee a high-quality result (because other factors also affect digital audio quality), having an external microphone will remove the problem of built-in microphones.

Some kind of "studio-quality" headphones are also highly recommended. The quality of earbuds is highly variable. Consider also that all of you will be spending considerable time in online environments. Investing in good headphones is simply a smart decision for your own auditory (and mental) health!

Large Ensembles: Concert Band, Concert Choir, String Orchestra

Concert Band: Thursdays, 5:00-7:00 pm (online)

Instructor: D. Hasznos

Concert Choir: Mondays, 5:00-7:00 pm (online)

Instructor: TBA

String Orchestra: Fridays, 3:00-5:00 pm (online)

Instructor: TBA

Concert Band will be offered online in Fall 2020. Students will develop musical skills and engage in music-making activities through home recording and online collaborative projects. Students are required to attend a weekly "rehearsal" on Bb Collaborate (or similar platform), including workshops on instrumental technique and on home recording. Students will need a computer or tablet (minimum Mac OS X 10.13 or later recommended, or PC equivalent) and a stable internet connection. While there is no textbook requirement for this course, students will be required to have an external microphone and studio-quality headphones (see Buyer's Guide below). Students are

expected to supply their own instrument. We do have a limited number of instruments (e.g., tuba, baritone saxophone) available for rental for students in the GTA.

Concert Choir will be offered online in Fall 2020. Students will develop musical skills and engage in music-making activities through home recording and online collaborative projects. Students are required to attend a weekly “rehearsal” on Bb Collaborate (or similar platform), including workshops on vocal technique and on home recording. Students will need a computer or tablet (minimum Mac OS X 10.13 or later recommended, or PC equivalent) and a stable internet connection. While there is no textbook requirement for this course, students will be required to have an external microphone and studio-quality headphones (see Buyer’s Guide below).

String Orchestra will be offered online in Fall 2020. Students will develop musical skills and engage in music-making activities through home recording and online collaborative projects. Students are required to attend a weekly “rehearsal” on Bb Collaborate (or similar platform), including workshops on instrumental technique and on home recording. Students will need a computer or tablet (minimum Mac OS X 10.13 or later recommended, or PC equivalent) and a stable internet connection. While there is no textbook requirement for this course, students will be required to have an external microphone and studio-quality headphones (see Buyer’s Guide below). Students are expected to supply their own instrument. We do have a limited number of instruments (e.g., cello, string bass) available for students in the GTA.

Small Ensembles (2 sections)

Wednesdays, 5:00 – 8:00 pm (“amplified”)

Tuesdays, 5:00 – 8:00 pm (“acoustic”)

There will be two sections of Small Ensemble offered in 2020-21. One section is intended for students interested in music making that may involve digital or amplified instruments (e.g., pop, rock, jazz, etc.), the other is intended for students interested in “acoustic” (e.g., classical, folk, etc.) music making. Typically, the full class is divided into small groups (approximately 3-6) that coordinate their own rehearsal schedules.

Small Ensembles will be offered online in Fall 2020. Note that the class time is officially 5:00-8:00 pm, but the full class meeting will typically occur for only one hour of this time, with the rest intended as flexible small group meetings, coachings, etc.

Students will develop musical skills and engage in music-making activities through home recording and online collaborative performance and arranging. Students are required to attend a weekly lecture on Bb Collaborate (or similar platform), including online coaching sessions and workshops on home recording.

Students will need a computer or tablet (minimum Mac OS X 10.13 or later recommended or PC equivalent) and a stable internet connection. While there is no textbook requirement for this course, students will be required to have an external microphone and studio-quality headphones (see Buyer's Guide below). Students are expected to supply their own instrument. We do have a limited number of instruments available for rental for students in the GTA.

VPMA95 Elementary Musicianship

Fall: Tuesdays, 10:00 am — 1:00 pm

Instructor: L. Risk

Elementary Musicianship will be offered synchronously online through Bb Collaborate or a similar platform. Students are required to attend a weekly lecture and occasional meetings with a TA (times TBD based on student and TA availability). Students will need a computer or tablet (minimum Mac OS X 10.13 or later recommended, or PC equivalent) and a stable internet connection.

There is no textbook requirement for this course, but students are required to have an external microphone, studio-quality headphones (see Buyer's Guide below), and a ukulele.

VPMB91 Music and Technology

Fall: Mondays, 10:00 am — 12:00 pm

Instructor: R. Mantie

Music and Technology will be offered synchronously online through Bb Collaborate (or similar). In addition to a stable internet connection, students will need a MIDI keyboard controller (MPK Mini II preferred; see Buyer's Guide below) and a computer (minimum Mac OS X 10.13 or later recommended, or PC equivalent [with Windows-compatible sound card, ASIO driver support and QuickTime recommended]).

VPMC01 Exploring Community Music

Fall: Wednesdays, 2:00 – 4:00 pm

Instructor: L. Risk

Exploring Community Music will be offered synchronously online through Bb Collaborate or a similar platform. There is no textbook requirement for this course but students will need a reliable internet connection, access to a computer or tablet, and a ukulele. In accordance with public health and safety guidelines, off-campus site visits may be replaced by remote visits.

VPMC90 Materials of Music III

Fall: Thursdays, 1:00 — 4:00 pm

Instructor: A. Rapoport

Materials of Music III (VPM C90) will meet synchronously on Thursdays between 1 and 4 PM. In this course you will have the opportunity to develop your skills in analysis of classical scores and composition of original music in the style of your choosing. **You are encouraged to be creative!** The course will be a combination of group meetings and individual lessons, the exact format TBA.

VPMC95 Musical Diasporas

Fall: Thursdays, 11:00 am — 1:00 pm

Instructor: M. Campbell

This course will be offered through Bb Collaborate/Microsoft Teams. Students will require a stable wifi connection, studio quality closed headphones (see Buyer's Guide below) and access to a desktop or laptop computer.

VPMD91 Electronic Music II*

Fall: Tuesdays, 2:00 — 4:00 pm

Instructor: K. Suzuki

This course will be offered online through Bb Collaborate/Microsoft Teams. In addition to a stable internet connection, students will need equipment and software including: computer (minimum Mac OS X 10.13 or later recommended, or PC equivalent [with Windows-compatible sound card, ASIO driver support and QuickTime recommended), MaxMSP monthly subscription (\$14.99/month - last two months), studio headphones, external microphone (USB, portable, or Mic + Interface - see Buyer's Guide below). Strongly Recommended: MIDI Keyboard controller (25 key MPK Mini II or similar), Pro Tools First cloud storage (\$4.99/month). *Note that we are negotiating reduced rates for subscriptions, but this is not confirmed at this time.*

**VPMD91 has a prerequisite of VPMC91. Due to the extraordinary circumstances under which we are operating, the prerequisite can be waived with Instructor's permission. If you are interested in this course but do not have the prerequisite, please contact Dr. Suzuki to discuss: kotoka.suzuki@utoronto.ca*

Buyer's Guide*

Items below have been vetted as good quality items, but we are not endorsing any requiring any particular product or brand.

The equipment listed reflects options at a range of price points. Please find your own comfort level.

As mentioned above: ACM is working on a buy-back plan – which may not address immediate cash flow issues, but should help alleviate some longer-term financial concerns.

Before making any purchases, please ensure that the equipment you plan on getting is compatible with your computer! A simple Google search of “[equipment name] + [system requirements]” usually gives you the right answer. You can also refer to the manual which is often provided online on the product’s website.

If you have a technology-related question (prior to August 31), want to check if your existing equipment will be sufficient, please contact Christopher Dela Cruz at christopher.delacruz@utoronto.ca.

** Note that digital audio items are in extremely high demand throughout the world right now. Every music student in every university (plus many high school students) all want items similar to what we have posted here. We encourage you to buy now rather than waiting for fall.*

External Microphones

The world of digital audio microphones can be dizzying for first-timers. There are so many options it can be difficult to know where to begin. The basic problem is this: acoustic sound has to be converted into digital sound. There are two ways to do this: (1) use a regular microphone with an audio interface; (2) use a USB microphone.

To make things even more complicated, there are two basic types of microphones: dynamic and condenser. (There are other kinds, but these are the two most common.) To oversimplify: dynamic microphones are less sensitive, meaning you need to play or sing quite close to the microphone. Condenser microphones are “powered,” meaning they can pick up sounds from further away. This can be both an advantage (you don’t have to be as close to the microphone) and a disadvantage (e.g., picking up the background sound of noisy roommates, a passing siren, or someone cutting the lawn outside your window).

Microphones (Audio Interface + XLR Cable required)

Dynamic:

- More for singing; most are commonly used for live performances
 - Shure SM58 (approx. \$145)
 - Sennheiser e945 (approx. \$289)
 - Heil Sound PR40 (approx. \$476)
 - Electro-Voice RE20 (approx. \$529)
 - Shure SM7B (approx. \$579)
- More for instruments; most are commonly used for live performances
 - Shure SM57 (approx. \$145)
 - Audix i5 (approx. \$150)
 - Sennheiser e906 (approx. \$249)
 - Telefunken M80 (approx. \$350)
 - Beyerdynamic M201 (approx. \$369)

Condenser:

- CAD GXL2200 (approx. \$149)
- Audio Technica AT2020 (approx. \$149)
- Avantone Pro CK-6 (approx. \$149)
- Audio Technica AT2035 (approx. \$219)
- Blue Microphones Spark (or Spark SL) (approx. \$269)
- Rode NT1A (approx. \$329)
- Rode NT-1 (approx. \$379)
- Warm Audio WA-47jr FET (approx. \$429)

Audio Interfaces (i.e., not a microphone; these convert acoustic or electrical to digital)

- Focusrite Scarlett Solo 3rd Gen (approx. \$169)
- Steinberg UR22 MKII (approx. \$179)
- MOTU M2 (USB-C, approx. \$225)
- Focusrite 2i2 3rd Gen (approx. \$239)
- Presonus 24C (USB-C, approx. 229)
- Solid State Logic SSL 2 Desktop (approx. \$329)

Audio interface/microphone (headphone) package suggestions:

Focusrite Scarlett Solo Studio 3rd Gen Bundle (approx. \$329)

- ❖ 1-in, 2-out USB Audio Interface with Condenser Mic & Headphones + 1 XLR Mic Cable

Focusrite Scarlett 2i2 Studio 3rd Gen Bundle (approx. \$399)

- ❖ 2-in, 2-out USB Audio Interface with Condenser Mic & Headphones + 1 XLR Mic Cable

Presonus AudioBox USB 96 Studio Recording Package (approx. \$299)

- ❖ 2-in, 2-out USB Audio Interface with Condenser Mic & Headphones + 1 XLR Mic Cable

Behringer U-PHORIA Studio Pro Complete Recording Bundle (approx. \$315)

- ❖ 2-in, 2-out USB Audio Interface with Condenser Mic & Headphones + 1 XLR Mic Cable

USB Microphones (Audio Interface not required)

For the USB-C users, buyer beware! Always check the compatibility of your computers before making any purchases

- Audio Technica AT2020USB+ (approx. \$219)
- Rode NT-USB (approx. \$225)
- AKG Lyra (approx. \$289)
- Sennheiser MK4 Digital (approx. \$499)

Accessories

- K&M 25400 Boom Mic Stand (approx \$35) + Mic Clip MY100 (approx. \$8)
 - XLR Mic Cable (approx. \$6)
 - Pop Filter (optional) (approx. \$18)
 - Shockmounts (optional, if your microphone doesn't come with a mic clip or a shockmount) (approx. \$10 - \$70, depending on the microphone)
 - USB Type-C Adapters (*Don't forget to check if you need this for your machine with the setup you decide to go with!*)
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Headphones

- **Closed**
 - Audio-Technica ATH-M30x (approx. \$80)
 - Sennheiser HD 280 Pro Closed (approx. \$129)
 - Sony MDR-7506 Closed Headphones (approx. \$140)
 - Audio-Technica Closed Headphones ATH-M50x (approx. \$219)
 - Beyerdynamic Closed Headphones DT 770 (approx. \$239)
 - **Semi-Open**
 - AKG K240 (approx. \$109)
 - Fostex T50RPMK3 (approx. \$199)
 - AKG K240 MK II (approx. \$239)
 - **Open**
 - Yamaha HPH-150 (approx. \$109)
 - Fostex T20RPMK3 (approx. \$229)
 - Beyerdynamic Open Headphones DT 990 (approx. \$239)
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USB MIDI Keyboard suggestions

To some extent, almost any MIDI keyboard will do. Every MIDI keyboard has its pros and cons, however. Some are designed primarily for specific software programs in mind, so buyer beware! As always, check for compatibility (including USB-C).

Akai MPK Mini II (approx. \$130)

- 25-key controller; also has drum pads; very small and transportable
- Consistently receives excellent reviews

M-Audio Keystation 49 MK3 49-Note Keyboard Controller (approx. \$130)

- A larger keyboard that pianists might prefer; increased size means less portability
- New versions come bundled with multiple entry-level software licenses

Nektar LX25+ (approx. \$135)

- 25-key controller also has drum pads + transport controls; full-sized synth-action keys

Arturia MiniLab MKII (approx. \$139)

- 25-key controller; also has drum pads + lots of encoders; micro-sized synth-action keys

Native Instruments Komplete Kontrol M32 (approx. \$169)

- 32-key controller, sleek and feature packed keyboard, micro-sized synth-action keys
- Solid keyboard and comes with free software

*** For those less familiar with MIDI input controllers, be aware that most produce no sound (i.e., most do not contain a built-in speaker). Most do not even have any internal sounds; they only “trigger” sounds within a particular software program. Their purpose is only to send information (e.g., the note ‘C’) to a computer or other device, which then records or plays that information.*

Vendor suggestions (offers shipping)

Long-McQuade (<https://www.long-mcquade.com/>)

Steve’s Music (<https://stevesmusic.com/>)

Moog Audio (<https://www.moogaudio.com/>)

L.A. Music (<https://www.lamusic.com/>)

Cosmo Music (<https://cosmomusic.ca/>)

Amazon (<https://www.amazon.ca/>)