

**UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT TYLER**  
**School of Performing Arts**

*course syllabus for*

**MUAP xx87 (3287, 4287): Composition (Upper-Division Individual Lessons)**  
**Spring 2025**

**By individual appointment, scheduled during Week 1 – FAC 1215**

**Professor:** Dr. Kyle Gullings

**Office:** FAC 1215

**Email (preferred contact method):** kgullings@uttyler.edu

**Office Phone:** 903.565.5653

**Office Hours:** (subject to change)

Mondays 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Wednesdays 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Thursdays 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.

(other times by appointment)

**Course Description:** MUAP 3287 and 4287 consist of private, weekly applied lessons in Composition at the Junior/Senior grade levels.

**Course Information:** All lessons will be taught in the instructor's university studio. Permission codes to enroll may be obtained by contacting the Music office. Fees will be charged for this course and are subject to change. Each level of applied lessons may be taken twice for credit. Upper-division lessons are delivered in an individual setting.

**Prerequisite:** None.

**Course Learning Objectives:** Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. **Understand, discuss, and creatively utilize** a variety of compositional techniques, with an emphasis on the canon of Western art music – particularly that of twentieth- and twenty-first-century models.
2. **Deploy** the above techniques through solo, chamber, vocal, large ensemble, and electronic mediums.
3. **Show** the clear beginnings of a unique, contemporary compositional style, balancing creativity and craft.
4. **Articulate** the aesthetic and practical relevance of their output within the artistic landscape they occupy.
5. **Engrave, edit, and distribute** their compositions through proficient use of music notation software.
6. **Present** a public recital, during their senior year, of original compositions.

**Required Materials:** No textbook is required. Students must have regular access to manuscript paper and a pencil, and music notation software.

**Assessment:**

<b>Grade Weighting</b>	Weekly Composition Progress	70% (lowest three grades dropped)
	Final Jury	30%
<b>Grading Scale</b>	90-100%	A
	80-89%	B
	70-79%	C
	60-69%	D
	Below 60%	F

**Methods for Assessing Outcomes:** The final grade will reflect the degree of significant progress made by the student each week, and the scope and quality of the final Jury.

**Methods of Instruction:** Enrolled students will meet weekly, individually, with the instructor to receive critiques of their compositions, discuss progress and techniques, assess and develop composer-specific proficiencies, and set specific goals for the following week. Outside listening and score study may also be assigned to serve as creative models. This individual meeting is in addition to any group applied composition lessons the student may be enrolled in.

**\*\* Attendance Policy:** Weekly attendance is essential and expected. Weekly grades are given for each lesson, and unexcused absences will result in a grade of 0% for that week's lesson. (The three lowest scores of the semester are

dropped.) Four (4) unexcused lessons (including those assigned for lack of progress) within a semester will result in an automatic semester grade of “F”, and no further lessons will be scheduled for the remainder of the semester.

At the instructor’s discretion, absences may be considered *excused* only for legitimate, *documented* reasons (serious illness, family emergency, etc.). Even in cases of *excused absences*, any outstanding assignments are due at the following class period. In all cases, it is the student’s responsibility to inform the instructor of absences with as much advance notice as possible, and to *document* that absence if an excused absence is being requested.

Make-up sessions are not offered for lower-division group lessons, even for excused absences. Make-up lessons for upper-division individual lessons are only offered upon student request, for excused absences approved by the instructor; make-ups are not offered for unexcused absences or due to lack of preparation or writing progress.

**\*\* Composer Readings:** Once each semester, as funds and circumstances allow, the Music Department will arrange for performer(s) to present student compositions in a workshop/performance format. Instrumentation will be announced near the beginning of each semester. All students enrolled in upper-division individual composition lessons are required to participate in these Readings to avoid a reduction of the final semester grade. Students enrolled in lower-division group lessons, and those not enrolled in lessons, are also highly encouraged to participate, subject to the approval of the instructor. The performers will generally conduct open rehearsal workshop sessions with time for discussion and revisions, followed by a public recital, and sometimes a talkback session featuring the performers, composers, and audience members.

**\*\* Other Composition Events:** From time to time, special events of interest to composers will be held, such as guest speakers/master classes, performances, and sessions on entering competitions, resume writing, and marketing. These events will be clearly posted in advance. When offered, these sessions are required for all Composition majors, and all students enrolled in upper- or lower-division composition lessons. Composers unable to attend for excused reasons must communicate their absence in advance to the instructor. Unexcused absences from composition events will count against the semester grade in lessons.

**\*\* Lesson Format/Expectations:** For upper-division individual lessons, at the start of each semester, the instructor and the student will jointly create a contract of pieces to be composed and specific skills to be improved during the semester. Student progress and grading will be evaluated based on fulfillment of this contract. Students in MUAP 3287 and 4287 are expected to create one or more original works each semester totaling approximately ten minutes. Failure to meet these requirements will result in a lowering of the final semester grade, at the instructor’s discretion.

We spend the majority of our lesson time discussing your compositions in progress, which are the most direct demonstration of your ideas and skills. Just as with any other private music lesson, improvement and success will come only with regular practice. As a composer, time spent composing IS your practice. This activity is the primary focus for the successful Composition major.

While school work, family and job concerns, and writer’s block will occasionally hinder the well-meaning composer, regular production of new music is essential to earning and maintaining the title “composer.” Therefore, occurrences of no or unsatisfactory weekly progress within a semester will be handled as follows:

1. First time – 0% for the weekly lesson grade. The hour will be spent on idea generation strategies, composer proficiency etudes, score study, and future goals.
2. Second and third times – 0% for the weekly lesson grade, and the lesson will be canceled. The composer will be encouraged to spend this time composing for the following week.
3. Fourth time – Automatic semester grade of “F”, and no further lessons will be scheduled for the remainder of the semester.

All official composition assignments must ultimately be notated using computer software such as Dorico, MuseScore, Finale, or Sibelius. Hand-written drafts are acceptable for weekly lessons, but not the final Jury submission. Notation software on a laptop or manuscript paper and a pencil are required at each lesson.

**\*\* Portfolio / Juries:** Near the end of each semester, students in upper-division individual lessons will prepare an end-of-semester Jury of all original compositions completed, representing his/her work over that semester only. All notated compositions and excerpts must include computer-engraved score(s), suitable audio renditions (synthesized or

recorded), and a Composition Jury Sheet, submitted digitally to the primary instructor, ahead of a live feedback session with a 3-member faculty committee.

Note: Students completing a Senior Recital in Composition in the same semester as applied composition lessons are exempt from the Jury requirement but may participate in Juries at their discretion. If not taking a Jury, the final Senior Recital grade will serve as the “Jury” component of the Applied Composition Lesson grade.

Only students enrolled in lower-division group composition lessons will prepare a *separate* end-of-semester Portfolio of all listening assignments, etudes, and assigned compositions completed in group lessons, which will receive written feedback by the primary instructor only. Students enrolled in both levels of composition lessons will submit *both* a Portfolio and a Jury.

**\*\* Grading Requirement – Public Performance of Compositions:** Every student enrolled in upper-division applied composition lessons must arrange for a public performance of at least one original composition each semester. The piece chosen needn’t be written during the current semester of study. Both acoustic and electronic compositions (though not mere MIDI realizations of acoustic works) satisfy this requirement.

Suitable opportunities for public performance include Departmental Student Recitals, Degree Recitals (the composer’s or others’), Composer Readings Recitals (detailed above), and any other student- or Department-organized events recognized on the official Music Department calendar. Students may perform their own works or enlist the help of colleagues. While the Department strives to arrange a number of performance opportunities each semester, it is ultimately the student’s responsibility to secure performances. Failure to complete this requirement by the end of each semester will result in a lowering of that semester’s grade by one letter grade.

**\*\* Senior Recital:** During the last year of study, students majoring in Composition must present a 50+ minute recital of original works. While every effort will be made by the Department to help facilitate the performance, **it is solely the student’s responsibility** to enroll in MUAP 4100, secure a 3-member Faculty Committee, schedule a date and location for the hearing and recital, and ensure that performers are secured, rehearsed, and prepared to perform at a passable level. While all circumstances will be taken fully into account, the recital will be graded primarily on the quality of the compositions as reflected in the performance.

No later than four weeks before the recital, the student must present a live Recital Hearing with all performers present. At the hearing, the Faculty Committee will hear the entire program and vote on whether the recital will be ready for performance. If the hearing is passed, the recital is cleared to proceed. If the hearing receives a provisional pass, the student generally has two weeks to rectify any concerns of the committee. If the student does not pass the hearing or resolve the provisional pass, the recital is postponed until the following semester and the student will receive a grade of “F” for MUAP 4100, unless an Incomplete is warranted by circumstances outside the student’s control.

Students enrolled in MUAP 4100 must also be enrolled in MUAP 4287 upper-division individual composition lessons in the same semester. Please see [www.uttyler.edu/music](http://www.uttyler.edu/music) for additional details regarding recital policies.

**\*\* Communication:** Students are required to regularly check their Patriot e-mail account and the class Canvas page.

**\*\* Academic Integrity:** Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated (cheating, copying homework, plagiarism, etc.). I report 100% of suspected academic dishonesty issues to the Office of Student Conduct and Intervention.

**Statement on the Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in This Course:** AI is not permitted in this course at all. To best support your learning, you must complete all graded assignments by yourself. This exclusion of other resources to help complete assignments includes artificial intelligence (AI). Refrain from using AI tools to generate any course context (e.g., text, video, audio, images, etc.) for an assignment or classroom activity.

**Other:** For additional **Student Resources** and **University Policies and Information**, please read below, or view those sections on our course Canvas site under the Syllabus Module.

\* \* \* \* \*

## **Student Resources**

Resources to assist you in the course

- [UT Tyler Student Accessibility and Resource \(SAR\) Office](#) (provides needed accommodations to students with document needs related to access and learning)
- [UT Tyler Writing Center](#)
- [The Mathematics Learning Center](#)
- [UT Tyler PASS Tutoring Center](#)
- [UT Tyler Supplemental Instruction](#)
- [Upswing \(24/7 online tutoring\) - covers nearly all undergraduate course areas](#)
- [Robert Muntz Library](#) and [Library Liaison](#)
- [Canvas 101](#) (learn to use Canvas, proctoring, Unicheck, and other software)
- Digital Support Toolkit (for supported courses only. Students are automatically enrolled in the toolkit for supported courses)
- LIB 422 -- Computer Lab where students can take a proctored exam
- [The Career Success Center](#)
- [UT Tyler Testing Center](#)
- [Office of Research & Scholarship Design and Data Analysis Lab](#)

Resources available to UT Tyler Students

- [UT Tyler Counseling Center](#) (available to all students)
- [MySSP App](#) (24/7 access to Student Support Program counseling through phone or chat and online wellness resources available in a variety of languages)
- [Student Assistance and Advocacy Center](#)
- [Military and Veterans Success Center](#) (supports for our military-affiliated students)
- [UT Tyler Patriot Food Pantry](#)
- [UT Tyler Financial Aid and Scholarships](#)
- [UT Tyler Student Business Services](#) (pay or set up payment plans, etc.)
- [UT Tyler Registrar's Office](#)
- [Office of International Programs](#)
- [Title IX Reporting](#)
- [Patriots Engage](#) (available to all students. Get engaged at UT Tyler.)

## **University Policies and Information**

### **Withdrawing from Class**

Students may [withdraw](#) (drop) from this course using the [Withdrawal Portal](#). Withdrawing (dropping) this course can impact your Financial Aid, Scholarships, Veteran Benefits, Exemptions, Waivers, International Student Status, housing, and degree progress. Please speak with your instructors, consider your options, speak with your advisor, and visit the One-Stop Service Center (STE 230) or email [enroll@uttyler.edu](mailto:enroll@uttyler.edu) to get a complete review of your student account and the possible impacts to withdrawing. We want you to make an informed decision. UT Tyler faculty and staff are here for you and often can provide additional support options or assistance. Make sure to carefully [read the implications for withdrawing from a course and the instructions](#) on using the [Withdrawal portal](#).

Texas law prohibits students from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career\*. The six courses dropped includes those from other 2-year or 4-year Texas public colleges and universities. Consider the impact withdrawing from this class has on your academic progress and other areas, such as financial implications. We encourage you to consult your advisor(s) and Enrollment Services for additional guidance. **CAUTION #1:** Withdrawing before census day does not mean you get a full refund. Please see the [Tuition and Fee Refund Schedule](#). **CAUTION #2:** All international students must check with the [Office of International Programs](#) before withdrawing. All international students are required to enroll full-time for fall and spring terms. **CAUTION #3:** All UT Tyler Athletes must check with the Athletic Academic Coordinator before withdrawing from a course. **CAUTION #4:** All veterans or military-affiliated students should consult with the [Military and Veterans Success Center](#).

\* Students who began college for the first time before 2007 are exempt from this law.

### **Artificial Intelligence Statement**

UT Tyler is committed to exploring and using artificial intelligence (AI) tools as appropriate for the discipline and task undertaken. We encourage discussing AI tools' ethical, societal, philosophical, and disciplinary implications. All uses of AI should be acknowledged as this aligns with our commitment to honor and integrity, as noted in UT Tyler's Honor Code. Faculty and students must not use protected information, data, or copyrighted materials when using any

AI tool. Additionally, users should be aware that AI tools rely on predictive models to generate content that may appear correct but is sometimes shown to be incomplete, inaccurate, taken without attribution from other sources, and/or biased. Consequently, an AI tool should not be considered a substitute for traditional approaches to research. You are ultimately responsible for the quality and content of the information you submit. Misusing AI tools that violate the guidelines specified for this course is considered a breach of academic integrity. The student will be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in UT Tyler's Academic Integrity Policy. Refer to the About This Course section of the UT Tyler Syllabus Module for specific information on appropriate use of AI in your course(s).

### **Final Exam Policy**

Final examinations are administered as scheduled. If unusual circumstances require that special arrangements be made for an individual student or class, the Dean of the appropriate college, after consultation with the faculty member involved, may authorize an exception to the schedule. Faculty members must maintain student final examination papers for a minimum of three months following the examination date.

### **Incomplete Grade Policy**

If a student, because of extenuating circumstances, is unable to complete all of the requirements for a course by the end of the semester, then the instructor may recommend an Incomplete (I) for the course. The "I" may be assigned in place of a grade *only when all of the following conditions are met*: (a) the student has been making satisfactory progress in the course; (b) the student is unable to complete all coursework or final exam due to unusual circumstances that are beyond personal control and are acceptable to the instructor, and (c) the student presents these reasons before the time that the final grade roster is due. The semester credit hours for an Incomplete will not be used to calculate the grade point average.

The student and the instructor must submit an Incomplete Form detailing the work required and the time by which the work must be completed to their respective department chair or college dean for approval. The time limit established must not exceed one year. Should the student fail to meet all of the work for the course within the time limit, then the instructor may assign zeros to the unfinished work, compute the course average for the student, and assign the appropriate grade. If a grade has yet to be assigned within one year, then the Incomplete will be changed to an F, or NC. If the course was initially taken under the CR/NC grading basis, this may adversely affect the student's academic standing.

### **Grade Appeal Policy**

Disputes regarding grades must be initiated within sixty (60) days from the date of receiving the final course grade by filing a Grade Appeal Form with the instructor who assigned the grade. A grade appeal should be used when the student thinks the final course grade awarded does not reflect the grades earned on assessments or follow the grading scale as documented in the syllabus. The student should provide the rationale for the grade appeal and attach supporting document about the grades earned. The form should be sent via email to the faculty member who assigned the grade. The faculty member reviews the rationale and supporting documentation and completes the instruction section of the form. The instructor should return the form to the student, even if a grade change is made at this level. If the student is not satisfied with the decision, the student may appeal in writing to the Chairperson of the department from which the grade was issued. In situations where there is an allegation of capricious grading, discrimination, or unlawful actions, appeals may go beyond the Chairperson to the Dean or the Dean's designee of the college from which the grade was issued, with that decision being final. The Grade Appeal form is found in the [Registrar's Form Library](#).

NOTE: The Grade Appeal Form is different from the Application for Appeal form submitted to the Student Appeals Committee, which does not rule on grade disputes as described in this policy.

### **Disability/Accessibility Services**

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA), the University of Texas at Tyler offers accommodations to students with learning, physical, and/or psychological disabilities. If you have a disability, including a non-visible diagnosis such as a learning disorder, chronic illness, TBI, PTSD, ADHD, or a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment, you are encouraged to visit <https://hood.accessiblelearning.com/UTTyler/> and fill out the New Student application. The Student Accessibility and Resources (SAR) office will contact you when your application has been submitted and an appointment with the Assistant Director Student Accessibility and Resources/ADA Coordinator. For more information, including filling out an application for services, please visit the SAR webpage at <https://www.uttyler.edu/disability-services>, the SAR office located in the Robert Muntz Library, LIB 460, email [saroffice@uttyler.edu](mailto:saroffice@uttyler.edu), or call 903.566.7079."

### **Military Affiliated Students**

UT Tyler honors the service and sacrifices of our military-affiliated students. If you are a student who is a veteran, on active duty, in the reserves or National Guard, or a military spouse or dependent, please stay in contact with your

faculty member if any aspect of your present or prior service or family situation makes it difficult for you to fulfill the requirements of a course or creates disruption in your academic progress. It is important to make your faculty member aware of any complications as far in advance as possible. Your faculty member is willing to work with you and, if needed, put you in contact with university staff who are trained to assist you. The [Military and Veterans Success Center \(MVSC\)](#) has campus resources for military-affiliated students. The MVSC can be reached at [MVSC@uttyler.edu](mailto:MVSC@uttyler.edu) or via phone at 903.565.5972.

### **Students on an F-1 Visa**

To remain in compliance with Federal Regulations requirements you must do the following:

- Traditional face-to-face classes: Attend classes on the regular meeting days/times.
- Hybrid Classes: Attend all face-to-face classes convened by the instructor according to the schedule set for your specific course.
- Online course: Only one online course can count toward your full-time enrollment. Students are expected to be fully engaged and meet all requirements for the online course.

### **Academic Honesty and Academic Misconduct**

The UT Tyler community comes together to pledge that "Honor and integrity will not allow me to lie, cheat, or steal, nor to accept the actions of those who do." Therefore, we enforce the [Student Conduct and Discipline policy](#) in the Student Manual Of Operating Procedures (Section 8).

### **FERPA**

UT Tyler follows the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as noted in [University Policy 5.2.3](#). The course instructor will follow all requirements to protect your confidential information.

### **Absence for Official University Events or Activities**

This course follows the practices related to [Excused Absences for University Events or Activities](#) as noted in the Catalog.

### **Absence for Religious Holidays**

This course follows the practices related to [Excused Absences for Religious Holy Days as noted in the Catalog](#).

### **Absence for Pregnant Students**

This course follows the requirements of Texas Laws SB 412, SB 459, SB 597/HB 1361 to meet the needs of pregnant and parenting students. Part of the supports afforded pregnant students includes excused absences. Faculty who are informed by a student of needing this support should make a referral to the Parenting Student Liaison. NOTE: Students must work with the Parenting Student Liaison in order to receive these supports. Students should reach out to the Parenting Student Liaison at [parents@uttyler.edu](mailto:parents@uttyler.edu) and also complete the [Pregnant and Parenting Self-Reporting Form](#).

### **Campus Carry**

We respect the right and privacy of students who are duly licensed to carry concealed weapons in this class. License holders are expected to behave responsibly and keep a handgun secure and concealed. More information is available at <http://www.uttyler.edu/about/campus-carry/index.php>.

## Composition (Upper-Division Individual Lessons) – Spring 2025

### Course Calendar

(assignment due dates subject to change)

<b>Date(s)</b>	<b>Event</b>
1/13 Mon.	- Classes Begin (Group and individual lessons scheduled during Week 1)
1/20 Mon.	- <i>NO CLASSES</i> : MLK Jr. Day
1/27 Mon.	- <i>Census Date</i> (Last day to withdraw from course without penalty)
2/6 Thr.	* Composer Mentor Session #1 5:30–7:00pm @ The Listening Lounge
2/20 Thr.	* Composer Mentor Session #2 5:30–7:00pm @ The Listening Lounge
2/20 Thr.	Wind Symphony Concert <b>7:00pm</b> @ Cowan Center (composer premiere)
2/27 Thr.	* Composer Mentor Session #3 5:30–7:00pm @ The Listening Lounge
3/6 Thr.	* Composer Mentor Session #4 5:30–7:00pm @ The Listening Lounge
<b>3/7 Fri.</b>	* <b>Composer Mentor Performance 7:00pm @ The Listening Lounge</b>
3/13-3/15	- <i>NO LESSONS</i> : Instructor out of town for CMS South Central Conference (OKC)
3/17-3/21	- <i>NO CLASSES</i> : Spring Break
3/31 Mon.	- <i>Withdrawal Deadline</i>
4/24-4/25	- <i>NO LESSONS</i> : Instructor out of town for Texas OER Fellows Workshop (Austin)
4/28 Mon.	<b>Composition Portfolios</b> (lower-division) & <b>Juries</b> (upper-division) <b>Due 5:00pm</b>
5/2 Fri.	<b>Composition Juries</b> (upper-division only; slots 9:00-11:00am tentative, see Canvas)
TBD	Flute Choir Submission Deadline
TBD	Flute Choir Performance

For updates, check Canvas for *Important Composer Event Dates – Spring 2025*.