

Graduate Course Number: 556B/6823

Course Title: General Music: There's Nothing "General" About It!

Days/Times of Class Meetings: Online, asynchronous

Number of Credits for the course: 2 Graduate Credits/ 3 Graduate Credits

Instructor with phone number, email address, and office hours:

Renée Burnett, (773) 520-4267, RBurnettVCM@gmail.com

Office hours: Sunday 7:30-9:30pm

"This Syllabus is a general outline of the course and is subject to change upon notification to the students during a regular class session."

* This course is offered at two course levels. Students enrolled in the MMed program at VanderCook are eligible to enroll for the 500 course number. Students not enrolled in the MMed program who wish to earn graduate credit as a MECA Continuing Education student should register for the four digit course number. The difference in credits earned and tuition cost is attributed to the difference in tuition rates for the MMed and MECA Continuing Education programs. If you are unsure which section is best for you, please contact us directly at meca@vandercook.edu.

Student Engagement Statement:

Each hour of credit implies 3-4 hours of classwork per week, including assigned reading and Zoom meetings (not required, but strongly encouraged; recordings of missed meetings will be available for later viewing and comments)

Course Introduction:

"It's a blow off class." "My parents don't care about my music grade." "Even if I fail, I won't be held

back.” “It’s just a Special, not a real class.” “I don’t plan on becoming a musician, anyway.”

We’ve all heard these disparaging comments from students, and shamefully, these sentiments are sometimes shared by parents and school administrators. But if we’re totally honest with ourselves, we are guilty of using these same excuses to justify not putting in the time and effort to create a worthwhile course of study for our students. It’s so convenient to tell ourselves:

“The kids get so much homework, they need a blow off class.” “If their parents don’t even care, why should I?” “There’s no real consequence for failure, besides more hassle for me.” “It’s just a Special. No one really cares what goes on in my class. It exists to give the other teachers



prep/team time.” “Most of these kids aren’t going to be pursuing careers in music, and will go on to have perfectly decent lives with or without my class.”

There is absolutely no reason why your music class couldn’t be the favorite class of everyone in the school. If you believe in what you’re selling, the students will buy in. If you are open to new knowledge and perspectives, your students will be, too. If you care, your students will care. You and your students deserve a music class you can look forward to each and every day. But as we all know, music is a wildly expansive area of study, and there is no shortage of published lesson ideas for middle school general music. With so many varying approaches, timelines, skill sets, materials, and activities, how does one create a cohesive curriculum which makes sense for his/her particular teaching assignment, that still does justice to such a wondrous, life-affirming subject?

Course Description:

Through extensive collaboration, we will assemble an interconnected web of activities and objectives for the middle school music classroom, for the purpose of enhancing an existing general music curriculum, or building one from the ground up. There will be a focus on “connecting the dots”, as even a seemingly random 2-minute activity can be linked to more broad concepts encountered both in your class and outside of it. At the end of the 12 weeks, you will have designed a comprehensive, unique, and highly personalized Curriculum Scope and Sequence which works for YOU!

- Resources:

- The course instructor and participants will share teaching materials and make recommendations for resources aimed at:
 - Teachers, to aid/improve instruction
 - Students, shared by their teacher to educate and enlighten
 - Teachers, shared by their students to educate and enlighten
 - Teachers and students, to educate and enlighten through mutual exploration and discovery

These may include, but are not limited to: Published texts, film, social media, streaming services, commercial and satellite radio, recorded media, software,



professional organizations, instruments, technology, artifacts, anecdotal evidence and experience, “Rube Goldbergs”, prior coursework, examples of student work

- **Listening:**

- For most, musical enjoyment is solely experienced through listening. The music that’s already out there in the world is the music educator’s most valuable commodity, yet we tend to limit our exposure. To the extent we want our students to engage with new music, we must create opportunities to do the same. Required coursework will include exploration of music that is new to you, with ideas for how it might be integrated into your lessons.
- All course participants will contribute suggestions toward a common “Listening Library” for students, with potential for connections with other lessons/activities. (Examples will be provided by the course instructor.)

- **Music Masters:**

- A strong case could be made that ALL music has inherent value. Unquestionably, there have been particular artists who have left a profound musical, cultural,

societal, and artistic legacy which deserves to be recognized and celebrated by successive generations of listeners, composers, and performers. Our students are far more likely to respect their contributions when they are able to see and hear how these pioneers have shaped the music of today. Part of this course will be designing an interconnected lesson on a Master of your choosing, which, combined with submissions of your classmates, will provide a “Music Masters Museum” of useful biographical and historical information to share with your students. (Examples will be provided by the course instructor.)

- Activities and Assessments:



- The nuts and bolts of your class - How will you maximize your (limited) time with your students? Listening and history are certainly important components, but music creation and performance are critical for maintaining student engagement. Primary resource - Middle School General Music: The Best Part of Your Day, 2nd Edition, by Elizabeth Ann McAnally

<u>Student Learning Outcomes</u> <u>Outcomes Assessments</u>

Students will be able to maximize teaching and learning time with activities to keep their students engaged for the entire class period, and beyond.

Peer Collaboration assignments, oral and written responses to Discussion topics (Schoology and Zoom)

Students will be able to recognize and capitalize on the interconnectedness of concepts and activities within the general music classroom, and how this facilitates transfer into students' lives outside of the classroom.

Peer Collaboration assignments, oral and written responses to Discussion topics (Schoology and Zoom), Curriculum Design assignments

Students will be able to draw from an organized pool of teacher and student resources for immediate and future application in the classroom.

Peer Collaboration assignments

Final Project: Curriculum Scope & Sequence



Students will be able to synthesize concepts and activities collected throughout the course into a practical course Curriculum Scope and Sequence catered to their unique teaching assignment and environment.

Program-Level Outcomes Addressed:

a. Professionalism in Teaching - Candidates will participate in group and character-building activities by working alone and with others to explore personal strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to personal and professional growth. Students will demonstrate the ability to: Research best educational practices; Discern new uses for information from a variety of course work; Reflectively discuss their teaching and ways to enhance it.

b. Excellence in Music- Candidates will explore more deeply the culturally and historically important aspects of music, musicians, and composers throughout the world and across time. Students will demonstrate the ability to: Recognize style traits of various composers, genres, and periods; Identify major and transitional composers in a variety of styles, genres, and periods; Learn or review and apply new techniques to perform in a style appropriate to genre, style, period, and culture.

c. Strength in Character- Candidates will develop new approaches to the praxis of teaching by learning about, experiencing, and using best practice techniques as borne out in proven traditional practices and those demonstrated as effective through current research. Students will demonstrate the ability to: Discuss a variety of educational approaches; Describe why particular educational approaches are chosen for use; Choose and apply new approaches to the teaching praxis. .

Course Requirements and Assessment:

Weekly assignments will typically include reading a chapter from Middle School General Music (front-loaded in the Course Schedule), and providing feedback. Students will provide written responses to a variety of Discussion topics pertaining to teaching middle school music, and review



and respond to classmates' submissions. Peer Collaboration assignments provide an opportunity for everyone to share what they already do in their classrooms, so we may benefit from one another's experience and expertise. Zoom meetings are not required, but when missed, a recording should be viewed so as not to miss out on valuable information. Curriculum Design assignments (back-loaded in the Course Schedule) will require you to synthesize shared resources and newfound insights to

create a Curriculum Scope and Sequence, which is the final project for this course.

Assignments are to be submitted in a timely manner according to the Course Schedule provided in this syllabus. It is okay to work ahead (one week max) to accommodate a planned vacation, school event, or personal conflict. Late work will be accepted at the discretion of the course instructor, provided there is adequate communication between parties beforehand.

Assessment will be ongoing, in the form of frequent written communication from the course instructor, and scored according to assignment parameters met. Responses to Discussion topics should be thoughtfully and respectfully communicated. Specific expectations for all other assignments will be provided at the time the assignment is given.

Grading Breakdown:

- Discussion responses: 30%
- Peer Collaboration assignments: 30%
- Curriculum Design assignments, including final project: 40%

Instructional Materials:

- Required text: Middle School General Music: The Best Part of Your Day, 2nd Edition, by Elizabeth Ann McAnally

Course Bibliography: N/A

Course Schedule:

Week #1, February 13-19:

- Discussion:

- Sharing of current practices – What works/doesn't work for you? What are some real/imagined obstacles to leading the class of your dreams?
- What do you hope to gain from this course? Please detail how I, as your course instructor, and your fellow teachers in this class, can be of the greatest service to you.



- Respond to at least 3 of your classmates' posts.
- Zoom Session #1: February 19, 6:30-7:30pm CST

Week #2, February 20-26:

- Assigned Reading: McAnally text - Preface, introduction, and chapter 4, "Connecting" (we will be reading the chapters in reverse order)
- Discussion:
 - McAnally text feedback - In terms of your philosophy/priorities, what does and doesn't ring true for you?
 - What defines a successful program? What is your ultimate goal for your students? Describe your educational priorities.
 - Respond to at least 3 of your classmates' posts.
- Curriculum Design: Introduce yourself to 3 new songs/compositions, and provide specific written feedback on what you heard.

Week #3, February 27-March 5:

- Assigned Reading: McAnally text, chapter 3, "Responding"
- Discussion:
 - McAnally text feedback - Which of the suggested approaches for students responding to music are best suited to your own classroom? Explain your choice(s).
 - What purpose does categorizing music into styles/genres serve? Is it an irrelevant construct, or a helpful tool in teaching?
 - Respond to at least 3 of your classmates' posts.
- Curriculum Design: Introduce yourself to 3 new songs/compositions, and provide specific written feedback on what you heard, this time using one of the suggested response formats from the assigned reading.



- Zoom Session #2: March 5, 6:30-7:30pm CST

Week #4, March 6-12:

- Assigned Reading: McAnally text, chapter 2, "Performing"
- Discussion:

- McAnally text feedback - Which of the suggested approaches for student performance are best suited to your own classroom? Explain your choice(s). ○ What skills do you bring to the kids, and where do you feel like a total imposter? ○ Respond to at least 3 of your classmates' posts.
- Peer Collaboration: For our "Listening Library", submit 3 suggestions for songs you think all students should hear, your reasons for choosing them, and how they might connect to other activities presented in your class.

Week #5, March 13-19:

- Assigned Reading: McAnally text, chapter 1, "Creating"
- Discussion:
 - McAnally text feedback - Which of the suggested approaches for student creation are best suited to your own classroom? Explain your choice(s).
 - How do/might you address the use of music with adult themes, or do you avoid it entirely? What parameters, if any, have been imposed by your school or district administration in regards to music literature used in/for class?
 - Respond to at least 3 of your classmates' posts.
- Zoom Session #3: March 19, 6:30-7:30pm CST

Week #6, March 20-26:

- Discussion:
 - How important is assessment? Are there occasions where simply having a musical experience is enough, or is measurable data required for legitimacy?
 - How might you incorporate the evolution of music technology in your curriculum?
 - Respond to at least 3 of your classmates' posts.
- Peer Collaboration: For our "Music Masters Museum", choose a musical artist you think all students should know about, and design a student resource which provides biographical



information, listening examples, new vocabulary, and historical/cultural significance of the artist. Feel free to share links to online resources and lesson plans.

- Peer Collaboration: For our "Performance Pool", suggest a performance component to accompany the lesson on your chosen Music Master. Feel free to provide links to lesson

plans and materials you have used or found online.

Week #7, March 27-April 2:

- Discussion:
 - How has SOPPA hindered/helped your teaching? What are your workarounds, if any? (shhh, we won't tell!)
 - How might you incorporate music law (copyright, royalties, contracts) into your curriculum?
 - Respond to at least 3 of your classmates' posts.
- Peer Collaboration: For our "Resource Room", submit at least 3 recommendations for students and/or educators seeking greater knowledge of music. Feel free to provide links to websites, articles, videos, and playlists.
- Peer Collaboration: For our "Creation Closet", submit 3 project ideas relating to musical composition and/or interdisciplinary arts, and describe how they would connect to previous lessons presented in your class.
- Zoom Session #4: April 2, 6:30-7:30pm CST

Week #8, April 3-April 9:

- Curriculum Design:
 - Review our shared Listening Library. Allow yourself time to listen to the song recommendations of your peers. Begin creating a playlist of songs you plan to use in your own classroom.
 - Review our shared Music Masters Museum. Allow yourself time to read up on the noteworthy artists recommended by your peers. Begin creating a list of Masters you plan to focus on in your own classroom.
 - Review our shared Creation Closet. Investigate the software recommendations and lessons plans shared by your peers. Begin creating a list of activities you plan to use in your own classroom.
- Review our shared Performance Pool. Begin creating a list of performance experiences (and their corresponding rubrics, perhaps?) you plan to use in your own classroom.



Week #9, April 10-16:

- Discussion:
 - Some wise person once said that a minute of instruction lost in a classroom of 30 students amounts to 30 minutes of lost learning. That hit me HARD. What are some ways you can maximize your time with your students? Take into account every moment available for learning, including passing time, waiting around for the fire drill to begin, packing up, etc.
 - How might you incorporate music career options into your curriculum?
 - Respond to at least 3 of your classmates' posts.
- Curriculum Design: Consider all of the topics/activities you can think of which you would like to incorporate into your teaching, and create a diagram which organizes them by the National Core Arts Standards (Creating, Performing, Responding, Connecting) used in the McAnally text, and illustrates how they are interrelated. (In other words, connect the dots!) Use the lists you created in last week's Curriculum Design assignment, as well as the productive time fillers you described in this week's discussion question. Additional topics you might choose to incorporate:
 - Music trivia
 - Show and Tell
 - Personal anecdotes
 - New vocabulary
 - Mini-lessons on acoustics, music theory, the voice, ancient music, found sounds, the definition of music, radio, awards and honors, improvisation, instrument families....
 - Whatever your students might find interesting!
- Zoom Session #5: April 19, 6:30-7:30pm CST

Week #10, April 17-23:

- Curriculum Design:



- Begin crafting a Curriculum Scope & Sequence for a general music class (real, or theoretical) you have been assigned to teach. It should be for a single grade level (unless grade levels are combined within classes), encompassing a single academic

term, or an entire school year. Whatever will be most useful to you is what you should create. Some organizational options:

- Comprehensive units (ex: all things relating to Jimi Hendrix)
- Daily plan (ex: Fridays are performance days)
- Weekly plan (ex: Week #1 is Hip Hop)
 - Objectives (ex: Once an objective has been met, the next objective is introduced)
- Your own unique system!

Week #11, April 24-30:

- Curriculum Design: Continue working on your Scope & Sequence Curriculum project.
- Discussion:
 - What aspects of the Scope & Sequence project are proving to be the most challenging for you? Remember, this class is all about collaboration. Let us know how we—myself, and your fellow classmates—can be of assistance to you.
- Zoom Session #6: April 30, 6:30-7:30pm CST

Week #12, May 1-5:

- Finish your Curriculum Scope & Sequence project. FIRM DEADLINE: MAY 5

Attendance Policy: N/A

Candidate Conduct

“An important part of VanderCook’s Conceptual Framework and Candidate Dispositions and Outcomes is the focus on professionalism and character. Specific descriptors include participation as well as attendance, flexibility in the face of changing circumstances and institutional needs, the commitment to continual personal development, self-reflection and growth, respect for the academic community and the individuals and resources of that community, and behavior, speech and dress that is



appropriate and respectful in the educational environment. Failure to observe standards of professional behavior may result in referral to the Standards Committee and/or the appropriate dean. Consistent concerns in this area will have an impact on

successful completion of the program.”

- Cell Phone/Computer Policy: N/A

Health and Safety

VanderCook College of Music is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for study and work. Basic information regarding the maintenance of health and safety within the contexts of practice, performance, teaching and listening is provided throughout the academic year. Health and safety information specific to this course will be addressed. It is the responsibility of each individual musician to take an active role in making informed decisions to help maintain their own health and safety.

Academic Honesty

“Candidates are expected to maintain the highest standards of integrity in their academic work. Failure to do so will jeopardize a candidate’s success in the program. Examples of academic dishonesty include:

- Presenting another’s words, music, or concepts as your own by failing to acknowledge or properly cite the source.
- Communicating or receiving answers or information to/from another in a testing situation.
- Consulting notes or any other source of answers/information in a testing situation, unless the instructor authorizes such access.
- Making available or accessing tests or quizzes from current or previous classes unless explicitly authorized by the instructor.
- Bringing, by any means, answers or information into a testing situation except as explicitly authorized by the instructor.
- Collaborating or turning in jointly produced work on any test or assignment that is intended to reflect individual effort.”

Plagiarism



“Plagiarism means taking someone else’s words, ideas, data or work and presenting them as your own. This could mean an exact duplication of someone else’s work without proper citation of the source, or it could mean you present it with only small changes and do not cite the source.

Plagiarism can occur in art, music, literature, or technology – really in any area of intellectual work.

All work submitted should be properly credited to the original source of the information or idea whether the source is a book, Internet site, article, or any other medium. In written work, quotation marks or block indentations show direct quotations and the source must be cited. If information that is not common knowledge is paraphrased or summarized from a source, that source (including websites) must be cited. Failure to do so in academic assignments represents cheating and carries the appropriate penalties.

Copyright compliance is the goal of VanderCook College. Information to help with clarification of what constitutes fair use of copyrighted material, including photocopying, is on permanent reserve in the Ruppel Library.

No candidate should expect to receive a passing grade on any test or assignment that reflects dishonesty or academic irregularity. Cheating in any form may result in failure of the class and academic expulsion.”

Disability Statement

“If a student has a disability which might interfere with that student’s ability to function in this course it is the responsibility of that student to notify the instructor at the beginning of the course.”