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MUS 496.01: Independent Studies in Music - Piano Accompanying

Christopher Charles Hahn

University of Montana, Missoula, christopher.hahn@umontana.edu

Steven K. Hesla

University of Montana - Missoula, steven.hesla@umontana.edu

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PIANO ACCOMPANYING (MUS 196-496)
The University of Montana
Wednesday 4:00-5:00
Spring 2007

SYLLABUS

Instructors: Dr. Christopher Hahn and Professor Steven Hesla

Course Description: Instruction in the technique and art of musical collaboration on the piano with vocalists and instrumentalists.

Course Objectives: 1) To develop the various musical skills associated with the art of accompanying and making chamber music: identifying and articulating musical ideas; listening to the musical elements of the accompaniment part; listening to the vocalist/instrumentalist and responding in a flexible and musical manner. 2) To develop a sensitivity to various elements of keyboard performance practice: pedaling; touch; appropriate instrument as accompanying medium; ornamentation; arrangement of written accompaniments (esp. orchestral reductions) to fit better the performance medium.

Topics to be covered include: Rehearsal techniques; Techniques of basic ensemble playing; Ensemble balance; Sight-reading; Employing the appropriate tone color in different ensemble settings; Orchestral reduction techniques; Accompanying and improvising in secco recitatives from operas on the harpsichord; Following instrumental cues; Following and breathing with a singer; Following a conductor

Method of Instruction: Repertoire will be based on assignments and requests from the vocal and instrumental faculty. Students will meet one hour a week with Dr. Hahn or Professor Hesla. Additional individual coaching may also be scheduled as needed.

Course Requirements: Students will be required to learn at least one instrumental work and/or several vocal accompaniments per semester. Accompanists are required to perform in workshop recital, juries, masterclasses, student recital hour, etc. if requested by the instrumental/vocal applied instructors, however all pieces **must be heard in accompanying class prior to any performance, and it is the accompanist's responsibility to make their piano professor aware immediately of any new repertoire that has been assigned by another instructor.** Accompanists are required to perform for the juries of the students they accompany.

Attendance at lessons as requested by the applied instructors of the instrumentalists or singers you accompany is compulsory. Usually this will not be every lesson. As juries and workshop performances approach, however, plan to attend most lessons, or portions thereof. Accompanists are also responsible for adequately rehearsing their pieces with their partners in preparation for these lessons.

If a student is planning to do any "freelance" accompanying, that student should inform their piano professor about any upcoming performances at least one week prior to the event.

Grading Policy: Individual coaching preparation and progress 70%
Regular participation in class 30%

Attendance: Attendance is required at all scheduled events as directed by the instructor. Unexcused absences will result in a lowered grade.