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MUSI 160A.01: Beginning Guitar

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The University of Montana - School of Music
Beginning Guitar – Group Instruction
MUSI 160A

Fall 2022 Syllabus

MUSI 160A
2 credits
T/Th 1:00pm – 1:50pm
Room 218

Instructor: Jeff Troxel
Office: MUS 108
Phone: 307-272-9774 (cell)
Email: jeff.troxel@umt.edu
Office Hours: By Appointment

Text/Materials:

Written materials for class will be provided by the instructor. Students should bring a three-ring binder for handouts, as well as blank paper, pencils and erasers for taking notes. In addition, students will need the following items:

- A guitar in good playing condition – preferably acoustic.
- Heavy-gauge guitar picks – you'll want to have a few picks available in case they wear out or get lost.
- Extra strings – it's a good idea to have an extra set of strings in case you break one during class. If you are uncertain as to which strings to buy, we can discuss that in class.
- *Optional:* Clip-on tuner, footstool or yoga block, string-winders and wire cutters are handy tools for changing strings.

Course Description:

This course is an introduction to the guitar. Students will learn about the instrument in the following ways:

- The language and anatomy of the guitar
- Correct posture of the body and hands
- Achieving good tone and articulation
- Care and maintenance of your instrument
- The physical aspects of the guitar; how it's constructed, how it produces sound, tuning, changing strings.
- A large part of this class will focus on playing the guitar, and the development of techniques and musical sensibilities that enable students to participate in music where the guitar is used. Topic covered include proper hand positions, holding the instrument, chords and accompaniment, scales and melodic playing, stylistic considerations, plectrum and fingerstyle techniques, practical music theory, and exposure to a number of different musical styles.

Assessment: Subjective instructor evaluation, and test scores for the written part.

Grade Weighting

Mid-Term 25%
Final Exam 35%
Class presentation 10%
Homework Assignments 30%

Grading Scale

A = 100 - 93%	C = 76 – 73%
A- = 92 - 90%	C- = 72 - 70%
B+ = 89 - 87%	D+ = 69 - 67%
B = 86 - 83%	D = 66 - 63%
B- = 82 - 80%	D- = 62 - 60%
C+ = 79 - 77%	F = below 60 %

An A grade is superior work. It clearly fulfills the expectations of the assignment and then goes beyond the letter of the assignment to achieve a higher standard. It involves being creative within the framework of the assignment, and a clear attempt to do more than the minimum.

A B grade fulfills the letter of the assignment. It does the necessary required work with the obvious energy and commitment to do the assignment.

A C grade lacks in small ways of fulfilling the assignment. It might show a lack of effort or commitment or simply be mediocre.

A D grade misses the mark in large ways. The assignment is not fulfilled. A lack of effort and commitment is clearly evident.

An F grade is failure. No preparation has been made. Effort and commitment is missing.

Grades are based on attendance, progressive growth in performance abilities, written assignments, class presentations, and mid-term/final exams. Attendance will be taken at every class and each unexcused absence after three will lower the grade by one letter. An excused absence means the teacher has been informed ahead of time and has given approval for the absence, as well as material for the student to work on in preparation for the next class.

Progress means the student shows some improvement each week with the material covered in class. A minimum of thirty minutes of daily practice is expected outside the classroom. Student progress will be determined by the instructor's observations in class, as well as a final one-on-one performance exam for mid-term and finals.

Content Warning

In the examination of a wide variety of music and songs, we may occasionally happen upon lyric content or imagery that may be offensive to some listeners/viewers. In order to fully understand the broad landscape of expressive culture such items may be relevant to class discussions at times.

Electronic Gadgets

Except when they are being used for class purposes, electronic devices must be turned off during class.

Covid 19:

Students will adhere to university policies regarding Covid 19. Failure to follow recommended procedures may result in the student being asked to leave, or the class being cancelled.