

## Syllabus – Composition Practicum 263.1

**Sean O'Boyle AM**

• **Artist in Residence (composition)**

Room 121B – Brethren's House

CELL: [484-619-1528](tel:484-619-1528)

[oboyles@moravian.edu](mailto:oboyles@moravian.edu)

[www.seanoboyle.net](http://www.seanoboyle.net)

Music Office (Rose Panik): 610-861-1650

Hello and welcome to your composition lesson

A sense of curiosity throughout our time together is important and we will explore many styles & techniques with an open mind. This curiosity will serve you well throughout your musical life and lifelong learning.

### **Course Description - Composition Seminar**

Supervised work in exploring the composer's world, through conversation, listening, score study & creating short works.

### **Reference Materials**

Scores, recordings, DVD's as housed in the music department library.

### **Outcomes**

Students will be encouraged to find their compositional voice through the writing of chamber works.

My five pillars of composition will be addressed:

**Melody** - a combination of pitch and rhythm of indeterminate duration. Melodies are mostly considered to be the theme of a composition. A melody might be characterized by its contour/shape (rising or falling) and the size of the intervals in it. A melody that uses mostly small intervals (or scale steps) and is smooth is called a conjunct melody. A melody that uses large intervals is called a disjunctive melody. A motif is either a very short melody or a distinctive part of a longer melody.

**Counter melody** – (counterpoint) is an independent horizontal melody that counters the main melody or as a group of independent melodies interweaving melodic lines. Be aware, Polyphony may occur.

**Harmony** - the use of simultaneous pitches or chords. Harmony is the "vertical" aspect of music, as distinguished from melody and counter melody.

**Rhythm** – the time element of music. A rhythm is a specific pattern in time that can be heard in relation to a pulse, and this is organized into meter or a time signature.

**Magic** – This is the largely unknown quantity that makes certain works resonate with musicians and audience alike. As composers, we strive to make magic.

**Assignments will be based on weekly concepts and 2 completed chamber compositions.**

### **Areas of Evaluation**

- Attendance 10%
- Class Participation 30%
- Assignments 60%

### **Schedule of Lessons**

All lessons are scheduled by arrangement. If for some reason I am not available for a scheduled lesson time, the lesson will be made up at the mutual convenience of the student and myself. If a student cancels a lesson due to illness, every effort will be made to make up the lesson time. If in doubt, please call me by 9am and we can discuss the nature of your absence.

**Academic Honesty:** Students are expected to uphold the standards of academic honesty, as they are spelled out in the Student Handbook.

**Accommodations:** The Academic Support Center houses Disability Support and Greyhound Tutoring on the first floor of Monocacy Hall and can be reached at [610-861-1401](tel:610-861-1401). Greyhound Tutoring provides course-specific tutors to Moravian students, free of charge. If you would like to work with a Greyhound Tutor to boost your academic success, please request a tutor through <http://bit.ly/NeedTutorMC> (case-sensitive). Plan ahead! It takes 2-3 business days to connect you with a tutor. Please email Dana Wilson ([wilsond@moravian.edu](mailto:wilsond@moravian.edu)), Tutor Coordinator, for more information about tutoring. Please email Laurie Roth ([rothl@moravian.edu](mailto:rothl@moravian.edu)), Director of Academic and Disability Support, for more information about disability support.

Please note that this syllabus is subject to change.