

Course Title	Principles Of Ensemble Playing				
Course Code	MPR160				
Course Type	Compulsory				
Level	Bachelor (1st Cycle)				
Year / Semester	1 st Year / 2 nd Semester				
Teacher's Name	TBA				
ECTS	3	Lectures / week	2 Hours/14 weeks	Laboratories / week	None
Course Purpose and Objectives	<p>This course aims to equip students with the necessary knowledge, tools and strategies for rehearsing, functioning and performing within an ensemble context. Students will learn skills for interacting effectively with the other members of the ensemble and develop a critical mind on issues relating to rehearsal time management, rehearsal co-ordination, publicity and performance. Teaching tools necessary for coordinating student ensembles will also be discussed, with special attention given to performing duets. By the end of the course, students will gain the skills necessary for playing chamber music and, ultimately, begin to make more complex artistic decisions on their own.</p>				
Learning Outcomes	<p>Upon successful completion of this course students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define small and large ensemble techniques. • Recall the historical evolution of ensemble playing in multiple regions and musical genres. • Review and discuss chamber music literature. • Identify performance practices of different styles and genres. • Recall existing mixed chamber ensemble repertoire and develop a realistic and balanced original ensemble repertoire. • Rehearse, function and perform as active members of a mixed ensemble. • Practice good habits of preparing and rehearsing professionally as an ensemble member. • Identify professional conduct and successful rehearsal techniques. • Apply the principle of McBeth pyramid to their own ensemble; • Perform select pieces with a musical understanding appropriate to a chamber ensemble musician. • Perform with an appropriate posture and employ an enhanced understanding of their instruments' properties. • Evaluate their individual and collective tone production and quality. • Analyze and perform given musical extracts, distinguishing sound, dynamics and color as well as the different roles of ensemble instruments. • Evaluate other ensemble performances and make constructive comments as necessary. 				
Prerequisites	None	Co-requisites	None		

Course Content

Historical Introduction to Ensemble Playing and Its Evolution: Chamber music in the Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic and Modern eras. Historical evolution of popular music idioms and subsequent groups.

Classical and Popular Music Ensembles: Small “chamber” music ensembles (as opposed to big band ensembles), the repertoire, style and development at the beginning of the 21st century.

McBeth Pyramid: Balancing and blending sections, instrumental families and, finally, the overall ensemble; blended and individual ensemble sonority.

Stage Deportment: Techniques of stage management and mannerisms and psychological performance control, seating arrangements for effective balance and projection.

Breathing Exercises: Explanation of the relationship between breathing and physical tempo, techniques of training an ensemble to “breathe together” through a series of exercises regarding collective coordination.

Introduction to Alexander Technique: Explanation of the relationship between the physiological and psychological and the importance of assuming a good posture. Development of appropriate ergonomic postures and physical awareness and discussing musicians’ injuries and how these can be avoided.

Ensemble Techniques: Strategies for the whole ensemble to attack, sustain and release together on all wind instruments and bowed strings and to attack followed by silences for percussion and guitars.

Chamber Ensemble Performance Practice: Discussion of selected seminal ensemble works, especially those of open instrumentation, and ways that some of these could be arranged for the instruments available in class.

Review of Videotaped Ensemble Performances: Evaluating, analyzing and commenting critically on classroom performances.

Aural Skills: Techniques specifically relating to listening and developing interaction between members. Learning to listen to one another and respond accordingly. The importance of everyone memorizing their parts in order to concentrate on the issues that really matter in the ensemble context.

Professional Standards of Individual and Collective Conduct: Relationship between a conductor / leader / director and performers; collective performance skills, enhanced knowledge of various psychological issues that affect public performances (both as soloists and members of an ensemble).

Development of Individual and Collective Music Qualities:

Tempo: Demonstrate and work creatively and practically towards strategies dealing with tempo fluctuations.

Rhythmical Uniformity: Techniques for creating a strong common pulse as an ensemble and the ability to subdivide individually from there on.

Melody and Harmony: Ways of articulating simple melodic patterns and harmonic progressions. Learning to balance accompaniment with principal roles.

	Through these exercises, students will improve their intonation, phrasing, articulation, dynamic control and overall technical and musical expression.										
Teaching Methodology	Face to face										
Bibliography	<p>Alcantara, P. (2013). <i>Indirect Procedures: A musician's guide to the Alexander Technique</i>. Clarendon Press, Oxford.</p> <p>Blum, David. (2013). <i>The art of quartet playing</i>. New York: Knopf</p> <p>Green, Barry, and W. Timothy Gallwey. (2015). <i>The inner game of music: overcome obstacles, improve concentration and reduce nervousness to reach a new level of musical performance</i>.</p> <p>Kohut, D. L. and Grant, J. W., (1990). <i>Learning to Conduct and Rehearse</i>. Englewood Cliffs, NJ, Prentice-Hall.</p> <p>Lisk, E., (1995). <i>The Creative Director: Alternative Rehearsal Techniques</i>. 4th Edition. Milwaukee, WI, Meredith Music.</p> <p>Rink, J. (Ed.), (2014). <i>Musical Performance: A Guide to Understanding</i>. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.</p>										
Assessment	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Examinations</td> <td>Final: 50%</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Mid-term: 30%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Concert Attendance/Diary Log</td> <td>10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Class Participation and Attendance</td> <td>10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>100%</td> </tr> </table>	Examinations	Final: 50%		Mid-term: 30%	Concert Attendance/Diary Log	10%	Class Participation and Attendance	10%		100%
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