

## Seminar: Neo-Riemannian Theory

MUT 6936  
UF, Fall 2025  
W 4:05–7:05 p.m.

### Instructor:

Dr. Rich Pellegrin  
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**Prerequisites.** Grade of C or better in MUS\_TH 6629: Analytical Techniques (or equivalent at another institution).

**Course Description.** A literature-based, seminar-style course. Focuses on close reading of two recent works that are accessible to a broad audience and offer significant historical perspectives.

**Required Materials.** The following two books are required and are available for purchase in the bookstore. Any additional readings will be distributed in class or made available online.

Cohn, Richard. *Audacious Euphony: Chromatic Harmony and the Triad's Second Nature*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Tymoczko, Dmitri. *A Geometry of Music: Harmony and Counterpoint in the Extended Common Practice*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.

**Final Paper.** The final project for this course will be chosen by the student, in consultation with the instructor. The final project is due **Saturday, April 19 at 2pm**,

In some cases, this component of the course may be treated more as a “project” than a “paper,” but any project will still have a significant written component. I am more concerned with quality than quantity, but master’s students should aim for 3,000 to 3,500 words, while doctoral students should aim for 3,500 to 4,500 words. I’ve never met a professor, peer reviewer, or editor who looked favorably on manuscripts that were both extremely long and of poor quality.

I do not require formal proposals, bibliographies, or rough drafts in advance of the due date. However, I would be happy to provide deadlines and feedback to any student who wishes to submit such items. In the last one or two class meetings of the semester, you will present your research to the class, providing an opportunity to get feedback and ideas from your peers and myself.

### Presentations.

These may be in a variety of formats, and may be formal or informal, at the student’s discretion. At a minimum, presentations on readings should 1) draw the group’s attention to the most important passages of the reading; 2) draw the group’s attention to passages that are of particular interest to you, offering your own perspective; and 3) articulate questions you have about the reading or other questions that facilitate discussion. One approach is to walk the group through the reading, accomplishing these three goals as you go.

**Participation.**

This category includes careful, thoughtful preparation for each class meeting, including completing assigned readings and analytical work. Your active engagement in class discussions will make this course a better learning experience for everyone. This includes: listening carefully to others and reacting to their ideas; not monopolizing the discussion; offering support; recalling a passage you have read or analyzed; raising a new issue; asking for clarification; keeping track of the line of thought (paraphrasing someone else's idea, etc.); noticing that someone is trying to be heard; explaining your idea; explaining your confusion (e.g., about a given passage you have tried to analyze, or that someone else has analyzed).

- Paragraph above written by Dr. Bruns, Dean of the UC-Boulder School of Music

Some challenging and uncomfortable subjects will be discussed during this course. We may study scholarship, including my own, that introduces a range of perspectives on these matters. These viewpoints are presented in a spirit of exploration and neutrality. We are here to develop our critical skills together as a class through shared intellectual inquiry. All viewpoints and backgrounds are welcome in this class, and all students are encouraged to contribute their perspective on any subject we address.

**Grading.** Your final grade will be comprised of the following components:

50%	Final Paper
30%	Presentations
20%	Preparation / Participation

There is no final exam for this course.

**Attendance Policy.** Attendance in this class is critical, particularly as we only meet once a week—please make every effort to be in class. If you must miss a class, let me know in advance. Any unexcused absences beyond one will result in a 5% reduction in your final grade for the course. The student is responsible for all material missed during an absence.

**Bibliography.** The literature on neo-Riemannian/transformational theory is vast, having exploded in recent years. See the extensive bibliographies in the books we are studying. Consult with the instructor for significant sources on particular subjects. Major figures include Hugo Riemann, David Lewin, Richard Cohn, and Dmitri Tymoczko.

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**Academic Honor Policy.** UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

**Disability Accommodations.** Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which

must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

**Course Evaluations.** Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

### **Campus Resources:**

#### Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care:

If you or a friend is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) or (352) 392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

*Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS)*  
Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

*University Police Department*, 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).  
<http://www.police.ufl.edu/>

#### Academic Resources

*E-learning technical support*, (352) 392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to [Learning-support@ufl.edu](mailto:Learning-support@ufl.edu). <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>.

*Career Resource Center*, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling.  
<http://www.crc.ufl.edu/>

*Library Support*, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.