Introduction to Collegiate Musical Studies
(Designing a Freshman Introductory Music Course)

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[MV = male voice / FV = female voice]

♦ **Terminology and Definitions** [21:03 / 8 pages]

[FV] Have you ever had that feeling, that real urge to, you know, truly get something, to be properly well-informed?
[MV] Hm-hm.
[FV] But then you just feel swamped by, well, everything that's out there?
[MV] Absolutely. It's overwhelming.
[FV] What if, though, there was a kind of shortcut, a way to get straight to the heart of what matters, you know, quickly, but also thoroughly?
[MV] Well, that's pretty much what we're aiming for with the deep dive.
[FV] Exact.
[MV] Today, we're exploring what well-informed really means and we're doing it through a, maybe, surprising lens, a freshman level music [course.]
[FV] Right.
[MV] A music course. And you might be thinking, okay, music, how does that connect to my life?
[FV] Mmn.
[MV] And that's where it gets really interesting, actually, because these core ideas, these definitions meant for music students – they go way beyond just music.
[FV] Way beyond. They touch on learning itself, creativity, how we solve problems.
[MV] Personal success, even things that apply in, well, any field. So, our mission today is to give you that direct path to these,

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kind of, hidden essential insights. Yeah, we've been looking at this, uh, exploratory design document for a course. It's called 'Introduction to Collegiate Musical Studies.'
[FV] And the goal: to teach students how to get the most out of the undergraduate experience, basically navigating college effectively.
[MV] Right. Maximizing the collegiate encounter, as they put it.
[FV] So, yeah, it's definitely not just about, like, music theory or history lessons. It's about building what the source calls a 'prudent and pragmatic content portfolio.'
[MV] Which sounds very academic, but really, it's just a solid toolkit for being a well-rounded student.
[FV] A kind of roadmap for success, but seen through this unique music education perspective. Let's, uh, let's unpack that a bit.
[MV] Got it.
[FV] So, when you first think 'music degree,' you probably picture, I don't know, recitals, theory classes, maybe learning about composers.
[MV] Sure, the standard stuff.
[FV] But what really jumps out from this course design is just how broad it is. This content portfolio we mentioned, it goes way beyond typical music lessons.
[MV] It's very holistic.

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I mean, alongside the expected musicianship and music history, it weaves in really crucial life and career skills.
[FV] Like what, what kind of things?
[MV] Well, things like business basics, leadership, and entrepreneurship.
[FV] For music students. That's fascinating.
[MV] Yeah. And time management for the music student. Very specific.
[FV] And it keeps going, right? I saw health and wellness for musicians, too.

[MV] Which makes total sense, you know, given the physical side of performing.
[FV] Definitely.
[MV] Plus, there's a real focus on the future. Sections on careers, résumé and bio-building, networking.
[FV] It's, honestly, a really comprehensive view of student success. I mean, frankly, any student in any major could probably use this kind of framework.
[MV] I agree. And well, for a course covering so much ground, you need a strong foundation, right?
[FV] Mm-hm.
[MV] So, that brings us to a key section: terminology and definitions.
[FV] Ah, the building blocks.
[MV] Exactly. Yeah. But these aren't just, you know, obscure music terms. The source is clear. They form a widespread

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lexicon, ubiquitous to higher education.
[FV] So, language you'd hear across campus, not just in the music building.
[MV] Precisely. Relevant to arts associations, too. The idea is to support an artist teacher's pedagogical language, their creative work, public speaking, general student success.
[FV] Okay, so let's get into some of these foundational definitions. Where should we start? Maybe with one people think they know, but maybe don't. ‘Aesthetics.’
[MV] Good one. Yeah, most people hear aesthetics and just think beauty.
[FV] Right. Pretty pictures, nice sounds.
[MV] But the definition here is much deeper. It's a branch of philosophy considering the principles and the nature of beauty, art, and taste.
[FV] Okay, philosophy. So, it's analytical.
[MV] Very. And crucially, it involves weighing and reflecting upon how artists imagine, create, and perform.
[FV] How things are made.
[MV] And how society uses, enjoys, and criticizes art, including, importantly, our feelings, mood, and appreciation.
[FV] So, it's not just if something is beautiful, but why

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it's made that way and how it affects us, how we react to it.
[MV] Exactly. It's about understanding the whole process, creation and reception.
[FV] That's a really powerful lens. You could apply that to almost anything, couldn't you? An ad campaign, a piece of software, even just a difficult conversation. Thinking about its aesthetics.
[MV] Absolutely. How it's constructed, the principles behind it, the response it's trying to get. It changes how you evaluate things.
[FV] Okay, great start. And speaking of creating things, ‘creativity’… How does the course define that?
[MV] It's defined as the ability to discover new and original ideas, connections, and solutions to problems.
[FV] So, problem-solving is part of it.
[MV] Mm-mm. The key is that something new and valuable (they use brackets), novel, useful, is formed.
[FV] And that thing created. It doesn't have to be physical.
[MV] No, not at all. It could be intangible, like they say – a musical piece, a scientific theory, even a joke.
[FV] Ah, okay.
[MV] Or it could be physical, like an invention or a painting.
[FV] And then the source asks a really interesting

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question about it.
[MV] It does, directly. Does creativity require silence, introspection, reflection?
[FV] Which makes you stop and think, doesn't it? …about the conditions needed for new ideas? Is it always external or is there an inner game?
[MV] Yeah, it challenges that notion of creativity just happening.
[FV] Okay, moving to another concept, one that I think gets mixed up a lot. ‘Kinesthetic’ and ‘proprioception.’ We all talk about ‘muscle memory.’

[MV] Oh yeah, you got to build that muscle memory. You hear it all the time for sports, music, typing.
[FV] Right. But, what does the source say? This was a real 'aha!' for me.
[MV] That's a big one. The source states it very clearly. Muscles do not store memory.
[FV] Whoa. Okay, so. If the muscles aren't remembering, what is?
[MV] It's the brain, based on feedback. It's the proprioceptors giving information from the muscles to the brain.
[FV] 'Proprioceptors.' Those are the sensors in our muscles and joints.
[MV] Exactly. They tell the brain about movement, force, body position. So, after you repeat a motion, the brain begins to remember the motion,

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based on the position of the body at a given moment in time.
[FV] Ah, so it's brain memory informed by body position signals.
[MV] Precisely. Proprioception, itself, is defined as the sense of self-movement, force, and body position.
[FV] Hmn.
[MV] It's your internal sense of where your body is and what it's doing.
[FV] So, practice isn't about etching something into the muscle.
[MV] No. It's about refining the brain's map of the movement through that sensory feedback. It means practice needs to be, well, aware practice, not just mindless repetition.
[FV] That completely reframes how you'd approach learning a physical skill. Mind blown.
[MV - laugh]
[FV] Okay, next up, 'motivation.' We know we need it, but what is it fundamentally?
[MV] The source defines it quite simply as 'the desire to act in service of a goal.'
[FV] The 'why' behind the 'what.'
[MV] Yeah. It's called a crucial element in setting and attaining objectives. And it also mentions that it fuels competition and sparks social connection.
[FV] Interesting. And it breaks down different types.
[MV] It does,

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into two main categories. First, 'intrinsic motivation.' This is when the activity, itself, is rewarding.
[FV] Like learning for the sake of learning.
[MV] Exactly. Personal growth, gaining knowledge or skills, finding purpose, having meaningful relationships, things that feel good in themselves.
[FV] Okay. And the other type?
[MV] 'Extrinsic motivation.' This is about achieving an external outcome or benefit.
[FV] Like money, status.
[MV] Right. Wealth, status, image, power, getting a promotion – things you get as a result of the action.
[FV] And it mentions three core motivators driving this.
[MV] Yes. 'Achievement,' 'affiliation' (connecting with others), and 'power.' Understanding which of these drives you can be really useful.
[FV] Definitely. Okay. So, motivation fuels the action. What about how learning is actually delivered? 'Pedagogy.'
[MV] Simple definition for this one. 'The method and practice of teaching, especially as an academic subject or a theoretical concept.'
[FV] So, the how of teaching, the art and science of it.
[MV] Pretty much. It's studying what makes teaching effective, how best to guide learning.
[FV] Got it. And the last one in this cluster, 'entrepreneurship.'

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We usually think startups, shark tank.
[MV] Right. Tech billionaires. But the course frames it more broadly. It's the 'ability and readiness to develop, organize, and run a business enterprise to make a profit.'
[FV] Okay. So, still business focused, but maybe the mindset is key.

[MV] I think so. It emphasizes the entrepreneur as an innovator, a source of new ideas, goods, services, and business procedures.
[FV] Ah, so it's about innovation, seeing opportunities, taking initiative, organizing resources. That could apply anywhere.
[MV] Exactly. Building a nonprofit, starting a new project at work, even organizing a community garden. It's that proactive, problem-solving mindset.
[FV] This course design is really painting a picture of a very capable, adaptable student. It also touches on learning styles, right? How we take information in.
[MV] Yes, understanding your own learning profile can make a huge difference in how effectively you study or learn anything new.
[FV] So, what are the main types they outline?
[MV] They list four core profiles. First, 'auditory learners.' These folks benefit most from listening: [9:00]
lectures, discussions, audiobooks, podcasts.
[FV] Like this one.
[MV] Hopefully. Then you have tactile 'kinesthetic learners.' They need to touch, move, do – hands-on activities, experiments, building things.
[FV] Okay, learn by doing. Makes sense. What else?
[MV] 'Visual learners.' They prefer to see the information. Think charts, graphs, diagrams, mind maps, videos, demonstrations. They like to visualize relationships between ideas.
[FV] Seeing the connections. Got it. And the last one.
[MV] 'Reading and writing learners.' These individuals learn best through interacting with text, reading articles, textbooks, writing summaries, taking detailed notes, rephrasing concepts in their own words.
[FV] Knowing your preference there, that seems like a superpower for studying.
[MV] It really can be. Tailoring your approach to how you learn best. Game-changer.
[FV] And speaking of language, the course obviously gets into musical terms, Italian ones specifically.
[MV] Yeah, there's a whole world of Italian musical terminology. It's vast.
[FV] But what's interesting is how some terms stay purely in music, while others have, kind of, [10:00]
leaked out into everyday English.
[MV] That's a great way to put it. 'Leaked out.' You're right. We use words like 'tempo' casually now.
[FV] Or 'concerto,' 'piano,' 'soprano,' 'opera.' Those are just English words for most people.
[MV] Absolutely.
[FV] Right.
[MV] But then you have terms that are purely musical, like 'rallentando' – slowing down, or 'adagio' – slow.
[FV] And the course highlights some specific examples.
[MV] It does, across different categories. For speed, besides 'rallentando,' there's 'accelerando' – speeding up, 'mosso' – agitated, 'vivace' – fast and lively.
[FV] Okay. Dynamics. Loud and soft.
[MV] Yep. 'Pianisimo' – very soft, 'crescendo' – getting louder. And one I love, 'forte-piano.'
[FV] What's that?
[MV] Loud, then immediately soft. Such a precise instruction.
[FV] Wow. Yeah. Performance techniques.
[MV] 'Pizzicato' – plucking strings, 'glissando' – sliding between notes, 'vibrato' – that wavering pitch.
[FV] And mood. Can't terms convey mood?
[MV] Definitely. 'Agitato' – agitated, 'con fuoco' – with fire, [11:00]
'maestoso' – majestic, 'scherzando' – playful.
[FV] It's amazing how much information, how much feeling, can be packed into a single word in that context.
[MV] It really shows the power of specialized language for precise communication.

[FV] Absolutely. Okay. So, for musical language, let's broaden out again. 'Intelligence.' We tend to fixate on IQ scores.
[MV] Right. That single number.
[FV] But this course introduces a much wider view. Howard Gardner's theory.
[MV] Yes. The theory of 'multiple intelligences.' Gardner proposed this back in 1983. His idea is that intelligence isn't just one thing.
[FV] Not monolithic.
[MV] No, he argued there are at least eight distinct kinds of intelligence. Everyone has them to varying degrees and they determine our problem-solving capabilities.
[FV] Eight kinds. Okay. What are they?
[MV] Let's see. 'Musical-Rhythmic,' obviously relevant here.
[FV] Mm-hm.
[MV] 'Bodily-Kinesthetic' – think athletes, dancers, surgeons. 'Visual-Spatial' – artists, architects, navigators. 'Interpersonal' – understanding others, social skills.
[FV] People smarts.
[MV] Right. 'Verbal-Linguistic' – writers, speakers.

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'Intrapersonal' – understanding yourself, self-awareness. 'Logical-Mathematical' – scientists, mathematicians. And 'Naturalistic' – understanding the natural world.
[FV] Wow, that really does broaden the definition of smart, doesn't it? It covers so many different ways people excel.
[MV] It does. And later, he even suggested others, like 'Existential' and 'Moral' intelligence might exist.
[FV] Fascinating. And within the arts, the source highlights specific roles that students should experience.
[MV] Yes. Four essential roles for what it calls 'fully rounded learning.' Every student should engage with these.
[FV] Okay. What's the first role?
[MV] The 'creator' in music. That's the composer. But more broadly, it's about making choices, generating original work – the cognitive side of creation.
[FV] Initiating, designing. Got it. Second.
[MV] Well, 'performer.' This isn't just about technical skill, though that's part of it. It also requires personal courage, inner communicative capacity, effective use of rehearsal, stamina, and focus.
[FV] That sounds intense. Like presenting a major project or giving a speech.

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[MV] Very similar demands, yes. Third role is the 'audience.'
[FV] More than just sitting there, I assume.
[MV] Much more. It's about active listening, or viewing. Having the ability of the heart to set aside preconceptions and to encounter something new with openness and a healthy curiosity.
[FV] So, being receptive, empathetic, making personal connections.
[MV] Exactly. And the final role: the 'critic.'
[FV] Ah, the analyst.
[MV] Yes. Applying previous knowledge. Putting the work in context, observing details, comparing accurately, using analysis to illuminate the work.
[FV] So, creation, performance, reception, analysis – those feel like universal ways to engage with almost anything, not just art.
[MV] I think that's the point. They're frameworks for deep engagement in any field.
[FV] Okay. And speaking of frameworks, the course offers some practical strategies too, right? …for tackling challenges.
[MV] It does. It mentions a couple of problem-solving models, like a four-stage one. Understand the problem, brainstorm solutions, pick a strategy, implement it.
[FV] Simple logical flow.

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[MV] There's also a five-stage one, mentioned, but the four-stage is pretty clear. Basic structure for tackling anything tricky.
[FV] And for managing time, something very concrete.
[MV] Yes. This connects right back to that 'time management for the music student' module. It introduces the 'Eisenhower matrix.'
[FV] Ah, the urgent-important grid. I've heard of this.
[MV] It's super practical. Divides tasks into four boxes based on urgency and importance.
[FV] Right. Box one: 'urgent and important.'
[MV] Do it now. Your top priorities.
[FV] Box two: 'important, but not urgent.'
[MV] Decide when to do it. Schedule it. This is where strategic work happens.
[FV] Box three: 'urgent, but not important.'
[MV] Delegate it if you can. These are often interruptions or other people's priorities.
[FV] And box four: 'not important and not urgent.'
[MV] Delete it. Get rid of the time-wasters. It's a fantastic tool for clarifying what really needs your attention.
[FV] That matrix, alone, is worth the price of admission, metaphorically speaking. So useful for anyone feeling overwhelmed.
[MV] Totally agree. And there's another framework mentioned specifically for arts learning:

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'Four Angles of Arts Learning.'
[FV] Okay. What are those?
[MV] 'Creating, responding, connecting, and presenting.' It's another way to look at the whole artistic process from making something to sharing it and reflecting on it.
[FV] Creating, responding, connecting, presenting – seems like a cycle.
[MV] It can be. There's also a 'version two' mentioned. 'Demonstration/lecture, students-at-work, critique, and performance/exhibition.' Slightly different lens, same core idea of holistic engagement.
[FV] It's clear that how things are thought is just as important as what is taught, in this model. The source talks about specific teaching pioneers.
[MV] It does. Highlighting some really innovative pedagogical approaches from the 20th and 21st centuries.
[FV] Like who?
[MV] Well, there's the 'Dalcroze method,' also known as 'eurhythmics.' This focuses on experiencing music through physical movement, learning kinesthetically.
[FV] Feeling the rhythm in your body.
[FV] Exactly. Then the 'Suzuki method,' famous for its 'mother tongue' approach.
[FV] Uh, yeah. Starting kids really young on violin, right?
[MV] Often. Yes.

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Key principles are starting early, learning by ear, and imitation, first crucially, with no reading of musical notation initially. Learning music like a language.
[FV] Fascinating. Different philosophy entirely.
[MV] Very. Then there's the 'Alexander Technique.' Not strictly music education, but vital for performers, actors, anyone using their body professionally.
[FV] What's the focus there?
[MV] Body awareness, improve posture, and enhance movement efficiency. Basically, becoming mindful of how you hold and move your body, and unlearning bad habits that cause tension or inhibit performance.
[FV] Seems useful for anyone who sits at a desk all day, too.
[MV] Absolutely. Then there's 'Gordon Music Learning Theory.' This introduced a really key concept: 'Audiation.'
[FV] Audiation. What's that?

[MV] Gordon defined it as ‘comprehension and internal realization of music.’ He famously said, ‘Audiation is to music what thought is to language.’
[FV] So, hearing and understanding music in your head before it's played or sung.
[MV] That's the core idea. Inner hearing, inner musical thinking.
[FV] Wow. One more.

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[MV] The ‘Manhattanville Music Curriculum Project’ or MMCP, from 1970. This was an alternative approach, trying to make music education more relevant.
[FV] How so?
[MV] It stressed ‘artistic relevance, personal relevance, social relevance.’ It encouraged students to act as musicians – composing, improvising; not just spectators. And it presented music as something dynamic, changing, and evolving.
[FV] These really show a move towards more active, experiential, and relevant learning, don't they?
[MV] Definitely. A move away from just passive reception of information.
[FV] Okay, so we've covered learning styles, intelligence, teaching methods, but what about measuring progress? The course even gets into basic statistics for understanding grades.
[MV] It does. It suggests that students may benefit from knowing their statistical status within the particular framework of the assessment. Basically, understanding where you stand using ‘mean, median, and mode.’
[FV] Right. The classic measures of central tendency. Let's quickly define those. ‘Average’ or ‘mean?’
[MV] That's what most people think of as average.

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Add up all the scores, divide by the number of scores.
[FV] Okay.
[MV] Arrange all the scores from lowest to highest. The ‘median’ is one exactly in the middle. Half the scores are above it, half or below it.
[FV] The midpoint value. And ‘mode.’
[MV] Easiest one. It's just the score that appears most frequently in the list.
[FV] Okay. Mean, median, mode. But why is knowing the difference important? Especially ‘mean’ versus ‘median?’
[MV] Ah, this is the crucial part. The real ‘aha’ moment – as you said earlier. The mean, the average, can be really misleading sometimes.
[FV] How so?
[MV] Because it's heavily influenced by outliers – very high or very low values. The source gives a great example with 10 student grades.
[FV] Let's hear them.
[MV] Okay, the grades are 55, 78, 82, 86, 86, 89, 92, 94, 99, 100.
[FV] Okay, quite a range, with that 55 pulling things down.
[MV] Exactly. Now, if you calculate the mean, add them up, divide by 10, you get 77.2.
[FV] 77.2. Okay.
[MV] But if you find the median, the middle value in that ordered list, it falls between 86 and 89. So, the median is 87.5.

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[FV] Wow, that's a big difference. 77.2 versus 87.5.
[MV] Huge. And the mode, the most common score, is 86.
[FV] So, the median, 87.5, and the mode, 86, give a much better sense of where the typical student scored than the mean, 77.2.
[MV] Precisely. That one low score of 55 skewed the mean way down. The source explicitly says ‘the average mean is not a robust tool since it is largely influenced by outliers.’
[FV] So, if you really want to understand the central point of a data set, especially one with extremes, the median is often a much better guide.

[MV] Absolutely. Think about house prices or salaries. One mansion or one CEO salary can drastically inflate the mean, making it look like the typical value is much higher than it really is for most people.
[FV] Hmm.
[MV] The median cuts through that distortion.
[FV] That is such a clear and practical insight. Just understanding that difference helps you interpret data much more critically.
[MV] Definitely.
[FV] Wow, what an incredible journey we've just taken. It really is amazing, isn't it?

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How digging into the terminology for an introductory music course…
[MV] Hmn.
[FV] …can unlock such profound insights about learning, creativity, solving problems, managing ourselves – things that are just universally useful, way beyond music.
[MV] It shows how interconnected these fundamental skills are. You've essentially just gained a more robust 'toolbox,' as the source might put it.
[FV] A toolbox for understanding not just music, maybe, but your own learning process, how you approach challenges.
[MV] How you interpret data and information more critically. These are principles for being genuinely well-informed, whatever your field.
[FV] So, thinking about all this, what's the takeaway for you, listening right now? We learned about audiation.
[MV] Right. That inner musical thought. 'Audiation is to music what thought is to language.'
[FV] So, the final thought is maybe this. What new languages of understanding, what new ways of thinking internally, are you ready to cultivate and bring to life in your own journey? Whether it's in your work, your studies, or just how you navigate the world.
[MV] Mmm. Something powerful to reflect on.

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[FV] Definitely something to think about until our next deep dive.

[End - 21:03]