Friday, May 29

8:00–6:00 Registration Table Open

8:00–9:00 Coffee and Continental Breakfast

9:00–9:15 Opening Remarks

Jennifer Snodgrass, Co-Director of Gail Boyd de Stwolinski Center for Theory Pedagogy
Jennifer Shafer England, International Conference Coordinator

Session 1: 9:30-11

Session 1a (Panel): Heeding the Call: Reforming our Pedagogy for the 21st-century Graduate Student

J. Daniel Jenkins, University of South Carolina
Anna Gawboy, Ohio State University
Cara Stroud, Michigan State University

Session 1b (Paper session): Student experiences, challenges, and inclusivity

Adapting Music Theory Pedagogy: Workshops with a Dementia-Friendly Choir
Sarah Sarver, Oklahoma State University

Supporting Dyslexic Learners: Improving Instructional Strategies for Undergraduate Music Theory
Caroline Heggie, Private Violin and Music Theory Instructor

Distracting Devices: Student Attitudes and Strategies for Promoting Healthy Relationships with Screened Technology
Stephen Gomez-Peck, University of Alabama

Break: 11-11:15

Session 2: 11:15-12:15

Session 2a (Workshop): Dictation by Template: A New Approach to the Aural Skills Classroom

Jonathan Guez, University of Houston

Session 2b (Workshop): Applications of BandLab in the Music Theory and Aural Skills Classroom

Kristi Hardman, University of North Carolina at Charlotte

Lunch: 12:15-2:00

Plenary: 2:00-3:30

The Vital Exchange: What Secondary Teachers and University Professors Can Learn from Each Other with a Conversation on Research and Practice
Melissa Hoag, Oakland University

Break: 3:30-3:45

Session 3: 3:45-4:45

Paper session: Timbre and Beyond in the Undergraduate Core

Timbre in the Undergraduate Music Theory Core Curriculum
Lindsey Reymore, Arizona State University

Beyond Harmony: A Parameter-Based Undergraduate Music-Theory Core Curriculum
Nicole Biamonte, McGill University

Saturday, May 30

8:00–3:00 Registration Table Open

Session 4: 9:00-11:00

Session 4a (Panel): Collaborating on Curriculum Revision Across Individual and Institutional Transitions

Florian Walch, West Virginia University
Yiqing Mitty Ma, Colby College
Chris Lennard, Indiana State University

Session 4b (Paper session): Curricular Structures and Pedagogies

A Modular Approach to Decentering the Aural Skills Curriculum
Alexandrea Jonker, Crane School of Music, SUNY Potsdam
Justin Mariner, McGill University

Fluency, Growth, and Liberation: A Critical Pedagogy Approach
Hannah Benoit, McGill University / Bunker Hill Community College

Centering Care and Belonging in the Theory Classroom: Designing Course Activities to Support Student Well-Being
Gretta Sayers, Brandon University

Keyboard Skills in the 21st-Century Music Theory Classroom
Jess Forgione, Michigan State University

Break: 11:00-11:15

Session 5: 11:15-12:15

Session 5a (Workshop): Hearing and Performing Harmony with the Background Singer Workshop

Olga Sánchez-Kisielewska, University of Chicago

Session 5b (Paper session): From Undergraduate to Graduate

The Historical Field Trip in the Undergraduate Theory Core
Benjamin K. Wadsworth, Kennesaw State University

Teaching Graduate Music Theory Pedagogy Courses in an Era of Undergraduate Curricular Reform
Leah Frederick, University of Colorado Boulder

Lunch: 12:15-2:00

Session 6: 2:00-3:30

Session 6a (Panel): Teaching Aural Skills with Open Educational Resources

Amy Fleming, Baylor University
Timothy Chenette, Utah State University
James Sullivan, Michigan State University
Nick Schumacher, Michigan State University
Edward Taylor, Baylor University
Timothy McKinney, Baylor University

Session 6b (Paper session): What music(s) do we use?

Familiar Foundations: Introducing Set Theory Through Use of Familiar Tonal Music
Zachary Daniels, Oklahoma City University

Beyond Representation: Textbook Repertoires and Structural Change after Ewell's Call to Action
Fred Hosken, Butler University

Teaching Theory with Music by Artists with Disabilities: Sociocultural Complications, Literature, and Sample Lessons
Austin Wilson, Florida State University

Break: 3:30-3:45

Session 7: 3:45-4:45

Session 7a (Demonstration): Asynchronous Aural Skills & Auto-graded Dictation Practice

Julia Alford, Temple University / Auralia & Musition

Session 7b (Paper session): Self-efficacy and Self-determination

Increasing Student Motivation through Self-Determination Theory
Angela Ripley, Texas A&M University-Kingsville

The Opposite of Cheating: Community, Self-Efficacy, and Authentic Learning in First-Year Theory and Aural Skills in the Age of AI
Risa Okina, SUNY Potsdam | Crane School of Music

Sunday, May 31

Keynote, 9:00-10:00

Thinking and Teaching with AI
Jose Bowen

Discussion Groups
(Leaders to be Assigned)

Poster session, 11:00-1:00

Let's Play! - Gamifying the Music Theory Classroom
Matthew Ferrandino, Independent scholar
Frank Nawrot, Southeast Missouri State University

Keeping “Fundamentals” Fundamental: Current Trends in Student Preparedness and a Call for Further Curricular Reform
Cameron Storey, Michigan State University

Harmonic Species Counterpoint
David Geary, Wake Forest University

The Pedagogical Danzón: The Danzón as a Resource and Topic in the Music Theory Classroom
Neal Endicott, Drake University

A Model for Teaching Timbre in Music Theory Class
David Forrest, Texas Tech University

Pentatonic Improvisation as a Path to Confidence and Tonal Understanding
Alex Sallade, The Ohio State University

How Can I Help? Rethinking Accommodations in Aural Skills Assessments
Jennifer Beavers, University of Texas at San Antonio

On the Value of Three-Part Harmony
Karl Braunschweig, Wayne State University

Sight-Singing Assessment Styles of Collegiate Theory Faculty: A Pilot Study
Amy Fleming, Baylor University
Michele Henry, Baylor University

A Punk Pedagogy for Music Theory
Dave Easley, Oklahoma City University

Using the DAW as an Analytical Tool in the Undergraduate Music Theory Classroom
Lilly Korkontzelos, Michigan State University

Marching Percussion Pedagogy in Aural Skills: "Check Patterns" and Rhythmic Rounds
Tyler M. Howie, Oberlin College & Conservatory

Teresa Carreño: a Music Analysis Database
Peter Shelley, Mount Allison University

Enhancing the First-Year Music Theory Classroom through Cognitive Reflections
Lauren Shepherd, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

From Rules to Topics in Undergraduate Musicianship
Juan Chaves, University of Miami

Lunch, 1-2:30

2:30-4:00 Joint Discussions with Pedagogy into Practice and Workshops in Music Theory Pedagogy

6:00-8:00 Reception and conference dinner

End of conference

Abstracts (ordered by session)

Session 1a: Heeding the Call: Reforming our Pedagogy for the 21st-century Graduate Student

J. Daniel Jenkins, University of South Carolina
Anna Gawboy, Ohio State University
Cara Stroud, Michigan State University

In her 2021 SMT plenary talk "The 21st-century Theory Graduate Student," Leigh VanHandel passionately called for improvements in graduate education. While music theory pedagogues have addressed graduate teacher training (Barna and Reenan 2020; Marvin 2018) and the graduate theory review (Cotner 2011), a broader approach is needed in light of proposals to reform graduate education more generally (Horinko et. al. 2021; Casuto and Weisbuch 2021). In this panel presentation, three speakers will discuss how they have heeded the call to improve music theory pedagogy across different facets of graduate education.

Cara Stroud will discuss the question of Master's coursework as preparation for a PhD in music theory, and the role that personal and professional mentoring play in student success. J. Daniel Jenkins will review a year-long process he and his colleagues undertook to revamp the DMA oral and written comprehensive exam process and the consequences this has had for music theory coursework within the DMA degree. Anna Gawboy will report on their department's multi-year effort to redesign the PhD program in order to prepare theory graduates for future professional roles. This undertaking involved redesigning coursework and seminars, refining approaches to GTA mentoring, rethinking the role of candidacy exams, and preparing students for work both inside and beyond the academy.

Each speaker will end their presentation by reflecting on how to advocate for institutional change and promote the recognition of graduate mentorship and examination committee service as teaching, leaving time for small and large group discussion.

Session 1b: Student experiences, challenges, and inclusivity

Adapting Music Theory Pedagogy: Workshops with a Dementia-Friendly Choir
Sarah Sarver, Oklahoma State University

Interest in Public Music Theory (PMT) has grown in recent years, as reflected in publications such as *The Oxford Handbook of Public Music Theory* (2021) and the Spring 2025 special issue of *Music Theory Spectrum*, which developed out of the plenary session at the 2023 Society for Music Theory meeting. These ongoing conversations about PMT motivated me to engage more intentionally with non-professional musicians.

This talk provides an overview of my experiences working with a dementia-friendly choir in the rural community where I live. (The benefits of music-making for people living with dementia have been documented; see Kelly et. al 2023 for a review.) In the fall of 2025, the ensemble's director invited me to speak on a topic of my choosing. Knowing I would be introduced as a music theorist at the local university, something that often requires explanation, I wanted to show the singers what I do by adapting the kinds of activities I use in my classes in ways that would be accessible, meaningful, and empowering for them.

I designed a series of workshops on the theme of "How Music Works," inspired by Crystal Peebles' engagement with residents of a senior living community in Ithaca, NY (2022). While Peebles offered multi-week courses with analytical depth, my setting required a simplified, scaled-down approach appropriate for people living with memory challenges. The first workshop explored how rounds function, using a round familiar to the choir as the primary example. In a second workshop on the same topic, the choir composed a round of their own. Additional workshops were developed using the repertoire programmed for their upcoming concert.

My proposed presentation outlines how these workshops were structured and provides sample lessons that can be adapted for other PMT engagements. Drawing on insights from Peebles (2022), Krebs (2025), and Graf (2025), I address special considerations for connecting with the singers through visual aids, musical demonstrations, collaborative activities, and accessible terminology. I conclude by reflecting on how this project highlights the possibilities of PMT to foster community connection, musical confidence, and meaningful pedagogical exchanges with people living with dementia and their caregivers.

Supporting Dyslexic Learners: Improving Instructional Strategies for Undergraduate Music Theory

Caroline Heggie, Private Violin and Music Theory Instructor

Recent efforts in music theory pedagogy emphasize accessibility and inclusive teaching practices, yet the specific needs of dyslexic learners remain underrepresented. Undergraduate theory classrooms often privilege rapid symbol decoding, notational fluency, and working memory efficiency, which can disadvantage neurodiverse students. Leading research on dyslexia (e.g., Shaywitz) highlights the cognitive strengths many dyslexic learners bring, including pattern recognition and big-picture thinking, yet traditional timed or symbol-heavy exercises may fail to capture these abilities. Case studies in music theory (e.g., Parsons) show that slow-paced, scaffolded instruction allows dyslexic students to externalize thought processes, reducing cognitive overload and revealing musical insight that might otherwise remain hidden. Cross-modal and multimodal approaches (e.g., Louden) that combine auditory, visual, and kinesthetic input can enhance comprehension for neurodiverse learners.

Building on Cognitive Load Theory, this presentation examines how historical and contemporary pedagogical strategies can reduce extraneous cognitive demands in music theory instruction. Historical approaches, such as shape-note singing, highlight pattern recognition and the integration of auditory and visual elements, while contemporary multimodal digital tools provide ways to clarify structural relationships and reinforce musical patterns. Movement-based rhythm exercises and perceptual listening tasks support working memory and attention (Chenette). Sequenced exercises that use kinesthetic and visual cues help guide students' attention toward underlying musical concepts, allowing engagement with complex material without being overwhelmed by simultaneous decoding demands. These strategies create a framework for designing instruction that aligns with neurodiverse strengths while maintaining rigorous learning objectives.

This presentation introduces revised theory and aural-skills assignments designed specifically to support dyslexic learners. Tasks are structured to scaffold learning steps, integrate multimodal reinforcement, and provide alternative visual cues, enabling students to focus on musical structure and conceptual understanding rather than rapid symbol decoding. Findings highlight the need for more explicit guidance for instructors on accommodating diverse learning profiles and point toward classroom-based studies to determine the most effective strategies. By presenting concrete revisions grounded in research, this work demonstrates practical ways to make postsecondary theory instruction more accessible while maintaining academic rigor and encourages further exploration of adaptive approaches that foster deeper musical understanding for all students.

Distracting Devices: Student Attitudes and Strategies for Promoting Healthy Relationships with Screened Technology

Stephen Gomez-Peck, University of Alabama

Devices like laptops, tablets, and phones are helpful learning tools but pose the threat of distraction for both users and peers. This is particularly true for the current generation of college students, Gen Z (born ca. 1997–2012),"the first generation for whom Internet access has been constantly available, right there in their hands" (Twenge 2017, 5). The risks of unmanaged device use go beyond disrupting classroom focus: psychologists have found that devices are associated with a generational decline in mental health (Haidt 2024), surface learning (Rozgonjuk et al. 2019), and inattention and hyperactivity (Kushlev et al. 2016).

This paper explores how music theory teachers might respond to the ubiquity of distracting devices in two parts. First, I present findings from a survey of undergraduate music theory students at the University of Alabama that asked about the use of devices as well as beliefs about their effects on learning and focus in and out of class. Results from the survey (N=41) confirm that students use devices frequently in music theory class and suggest they use devices less often in theory than in other academic classes. Responses indicate students paradoxically value devices as important learning tools while also finding them distracting in class and while completing homework.

In response to these attitudes towards devices, the second part of this paper offers strategies for collegiate music theory teachers to promote healthy relationships with devices. I discuss four activities that require students to use their devices mindfully. Warmup quizzes on Kahoot! allow students to answer anonymously on their devices and create a structured end to screen use once the quiz is over. Yelp-style reviews facilitate student reflection through ratings of their classroom experiences using a format familiar from apps used outside of school. Music theory reels made on my Instagram reach students outside of class, encouraging them to practice skills in low- or no-pressure environments and disrupting the mindless content that often floods their social media feeds. In two- to five-minute "brain breaks," my students are allowed to do anything that helps them reset, from chatting with peers to scrolling on TikTok.

Session 2a: Dictation by Template: A New Approach to the Aural Skills Classroom

Jonathan Guez, University of Houston

A few years ago, I published an article in the *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy* that presents a new approach to doing dictation in the undergraduate aural skills classroom. The approach involves using templates, essentially carefully crafted worksheets that direct students' eyes and ears toward musical phenomena as they listen to professional recordings of real pieces of music. The practice requires students to deal with challenges that are often bracketed from dictation exercises, such as expressive timings and timbral differences, from the earliest stages of the curriculum. It exposes students to repertoire in different styles and across historical periods. And it reinforces the teaching of music-theoretical concepts at every step. I argued in the article that the approach chimes with recent cognitive understandings of musical skills acquisition. I believe, furthermore, that the method transcends some of the limits of dictation that have been identified by Karpinski (1990, 2000) and others.

At the end of my article, I proposed some ways that that instructors could integrate such templates into their aural skills classrooms—how to choose a recording, how to assess student work, and so forth. It would be more effective, however, and I believe more fruitful, to demonstrate the novelties of the method to teachers myself, in real time. To that end, this interactive workshop is designed to demonstrate more completely the use and benefits of dictation templates. Conference attendees and I will complete four templates together, with one eye toward allowing participants to experience for themselves the novelties and potential of the method, and the other toward offering ways that they might make use of these and other such templates at their home institutions.

Session 2b: Applications of BandLab in the Music Theory and Aural Skills Classroom

Kristi Hardman, University of North Carolina at Charlotte

In this workshop, participants will develop the skills needed to integrate BandLab—a free, web-based, collaborative digital audio workstation (DAW)—into their music theory and aural skills classrooms. The workshop leader will guide participants through abbreviated versions of three lesson plans involving BandLab, giving participants time to interact with key features of the DAW that can be used when teaching students of various levels. By the end of the workshop, participants will receive detailed lesson plans that can be modified to suit the needs of learners in any music theory or aural skills course. Participants will also develop understanding of the benefits and limitations of BandLab from the perspective of a university-level music theory professor who regularly incorporates the program into their courses.

Each lesson plan focuses on a different feature of Bandlab: the first focuses on the drum machine, the second on the AI-generated "smart chords," and the third on MIDI instruments. Using BandLab's built-in drum machine, the first lesson plan develops students' abilities in reading, writing, and performing musical rhythms by asking students to create short rhythmic patterns using the grid of a drum machine and translate their patterns to staff notation, or vice versa. For the second lesson plan, participants will engage with BandLab's "smart chords" feature. Likely intended for beginning musicians, this is a helpful tool for creating various chord progressions from just the root of a chord because it also gives some autonomy by allowing changes in the complexity, spread, and strum of the chords generated. As music instructors, we can leverage this tool in lesson plans that focus on building simple diatonic chords or chords with extensions and during discussion of harmonic formatting styles and voice leading. The third lesson plan provides methods for integrating music theory and aural skills through the creation of backing tracks using MIDI instruments in BandLab over which students can perform melodies and/or improvise.

To ensure participants get the most out of this workshop, everyone would sign up for a free BandLab account and watch this BandLab tutorial before the session.

Plenary

The Vital Exchange: What Secondary Teachers and University Professors Can Learn from Each Other with a Conversation on Research and Practice

Melissa Hoag, Oakland University

Session 3: Timbre and Beyond in the Undergraduate Core

Timbre in the Undergraduate Music Theory Core Curriculum

Lindsey Reymore, Arizona State University

Timbre is fundamental to music perception. Listeners can identify genres, artists, and even songs in less than half a second (e.g., Gjerdigan and Perrott, 2008; Krumhansl, 2010)—far too quickly to rely on melody, rhythm, or harmony. In everyday life, we manage astounding feats of timbral discrimination, such as distinguishing among dozens of familiar voices. With the right prompting, anyone can quickly tap into their listening experiences and describe their timbral impressions, making timbre an accessible entry point for students with varied musical backgrounds. Additionally, timbre expands opportunities for diversifying repertoire in Theory curricula. Yet, timbre is not typically integrated into undergraduate courses, and the field lacks widely available models for how to approach teaching timbre.

This paper outlines my three-week unit on timbre from the Theory undergraduate core, presenting its structure, materials, and conceptual framework. Each week approaches sound from a distinct disciplinary perspective, with themes of Acoustics, Perception, and Culture. We begin by exploring the physics of sound; students explain sound production, interpret graphical representations of sound, and compare instruments' acoustic profiles. In Week 2, they practice describing timbre using a qualitative semantic lexicon and relate their descriptions to acoustic features, articulating the distinction between the physical properties of sound and the perceptual phenomenon of timbre. Week 3 turns to meaning, where students critically examine how timbre carries cultural associations, how semantic descriptions of timbre may reflect expectations or biases, and how listening is shaped by Culture.

Activities and assignments range from analytical (e.g., labeling and interpreting spectrograms) to creative (e.g., recording or synthesizing sounds in response to semantic prompts). The unit concludes with a summative assignment that challenges students to integrate acoustics, perception, and culture through a guided investigation of instrumental timbre from an unfamiliar culture. Students select one of three instruments: the Luvale ngoma pwita (an African drum), the Iranian santūr (a hammered dulcimer), or the Chinese erhu (a bowed string). Pedagogical materials for each instrument have been curated by experts for the purpose of the course, including introductory readings, unaccompanied sound examples with spectrograms, culturally relevant recordings, pronunciation guides, and additional resources for the instructor.

Beyond Harmony: A Parameter-Based Undergraduate Music-Theory Core Curriculum

Nicole Biamonte, McGill University

Most undergraduate music-theory core curricula and textbooks focus primarily on harmony at the expense of other important and perceptually salient parameters such as melody, rhythm, timbre, and texture (Murphy & McConville 2017; London 2020). The bias toward harmony reinforces a repertorial bias toward "common-practice" Western art music, in which tonal harmony is a particularly complex parameter (Marvin 2011, 256; Molk 2019). In turn, this bias contributes to a culturally chauvinistic "hidden curriculum" that privileges students who are already familiar with Western art music, and marginalizes musics from other traditions and time periods (Palfy & Gilson 2018). This paper proposes a solution in the form of a parameter-based curriculum: an initial semester focused on rhythm and texture, two semesters on pitch structures, and a culminating semester on form and timbre. Beginning the course sequence with rhythm, which has cognitive and perceptual primacy over pitch (Thaut et al. 2014), flattens the learning curve, introducing notation without the complications of tonal context. It is also more stylistically inclusive, and foregrounds music as a process rather than an object. The next two semesters cover melody and harmony, with melody, which has perceptual primacy over harmony (Williams 2008), presented first rather than subordinated to the context of harmony.

This model affords engagement with a wide variety of musics, and helps students to develop broadly transferable analytical skills. A sample outline for a 4-semester music-theory curriculum consisting of 14-week terms is shown in Example 1. I discuss some possible variations on this curriculum as well as potential issues with its implementation—for instance, that theoretical and analytical models of timbre and texture are currently underdeveloped—and compare it to other proposed models of revised theory curricula (e.g., De Clercq 2019, Flinn 2015, Gades 2019, Lavengood 2019, Peebles 2019). Redesigning the traditional undergraduate music-theory core sequence around broad musical parameters rather than stylistically narrow aspects of harmony and voice-leading is more perceptually grounded, fosters a more complete understanding of music, and allows the study of a wider variety of art and vernacular musics from around the world, resulting in a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive theory curriculum.

Session 4a: Collaborating on Curriculum Revision Across Individual and Institutional Transitions

Florian Walch, West Virginia University
Yiqing Mitty Ma, Colby College
Chris Lennard, Indiana State University

The last half-decade in academia has been unsettled far beyond music theory. Precarious employment opportunities and political interference drive faculty to move jobs more frequently. Real and politically weaponized economic pressures have motivated program reductions and consolidations across a wide range of institutions: small to large, public to private. Concurrently, music theorists strive to diversify their curricula and teaching methods to meet the needs of students facing an uncertain economic and political future. While content for renewed curricula is now widely published, strategies for implementing such change amid personal and political disruptions are scarce—a hidden curriculum for faculty.

This panel hosts a conversation on how faculty can realize the ambitions of curriculum renewal amid the pressures of this moment through collaboration. We draw on our experiences as three junior faculty members (non-tenure-track, non-tenure-to-tenure-track, and tenure-track) at different types of institutions (private, small liberal arts; public, medium-sized doctoral/professional university; public, large flagship R1). After outlining the panel's motivation, our understanding of collaboration (across an institution's history, people, and peers), and the format of the panel, we share three cases of what this collaboration looks like in our institution. Each case is followed by brief questions to the individual presenter. At the end, we have reserved time for the audience to interact with the whole panel.

Our reflections show how different institutions face similar issues. We also center the soft skills needed in transitioning into, teaching in, and reimagining a music theory curriculum, such as understanding competing interests and building a shared vision. Presenter 1 discusses learning and teaching a newly shortened theory sequence as visiting faculty in a small, highly interdependent music department at a selective liberal arts college. Presenter 2 discusses transitioning from a visiting to a tenure-track position amid political and institutional pressures and a proposed new popular music program, for which his larger public university is consulting with Presenter 3's large, public R1 university. Presenter 3 discusses piecing together institutional knowledge after program cuts and high personal turnover, and how this work can shape a shared new vision.

Session 4b: Curricular Structures and Pedagogies

A Modular Approach to Decentering the Aural Skills Curriculum

Alexandrea Jonker, Crane School of Music, SUNY Potsdam
Justin Mariner, McGill University

The field of music theory has been reckoning with how to broaden the scope of musical styles and repertoires studied in the classroom to be more inclusive. The majority of these efforts have focused on the written music theory classroom, while less attention has been given to aural skills classes. In this paper, we will outline the ways in which we have redesigned the undergraduate core aural skills curriculum at our institution, with a focus on diversity of repertoire.

Modular organization is a key part of our curriculum design, segmenting each course into three short, stylistically-bound units (4–5 weeks) to allow for meaningful encounters with each style. Over the four-semester core sequence, students now experience units on North American folk music, African-American spirituals, blues, and ragtime, as well as units devoted to western classical eras (Classical, Baroque, Renaissance, and Romantic). Each classically-oriented unit features composers from outside the canon. Two peer-teaching units give students an opportunity to work on music in any style that interests them. The curriculum is not intended to be a survey of global musical activity, but rather a selection that is approachable to students, placed in an order that facilitates gradual acquisition of musical skills.

In our presentation, we will share examples of the repertoire we have curated and class activities we have developed. These activities go beyond traditional sight-singing and dictation, adding methodologies that are suitable to styles that feature improvisation and aural learning. We will also discuss our rationale for the selection of styles, including sensitivity towards appropriation, and limiting factors, such as the high degree of variation in the musical backgrounds of our students and instructors. We will situate our course design within a broader context of inclusive pedagogy by outlining initiatives to reduce specific barriers to class participation. Ultimately, the modular approach allows for gradual curriculum revision and renewal, as individual units can be modified separately. This paper aims to incite dialogue and collaboration among attendees who are considering revisions to their own aural skills curriculum as we continue to explore ways of improving ours.

Fluency, Growth, and Liberation: A Critical Pedagogy Approach

Hannah Benoit, McGill University / Bunker Hill Community College

Undergraduate music theory emphasizes analyzing, researching, and writing about the construction, performance, and perception of music. Concurrently, institutions advocate for broadly applicable intellectual skills, such as critical thinking and student autonomy, yet music-theory educators often struggle to create learning environments that effectively foster these outcomes (London 2020, 427–428; Marvin 2012; Rogers 2004, 4–5). Critical pedagogy—an educational philosophy rooted in dialogue, humility, contextual understanding, and equipping students with the tools to enact social change (Freire 1970; Giroux 1981; Illich 1971)—aligns with both disciplinary and institutional objectives. In this presentation, I propose a three-phase framework (Fluency, Growth, and Liberation) for implementing principles of critical pedagogy in undergraduate music theory curricula, helping instructors more effectively align their teaching with disciplinary expectations and the wider aims of higher education.

The Fluency phase supports students to gain foundational vocabulary and basic disciplinary knowledge. Here, students acquire information necessary to later engage in critical thinking about discipline-specific concepts. This phase prepares them for the Growth phase, in which students advance their knowledge and are challenged to connect course content to social realities. This increased engagement encourages broader understandings of music-theoretical ideas while strengthening autonomy and critical-inquiry skills. In the final phase, Liberation, students work towards independence and conscientização, or "critical consciousness" (Freire 1970, 35). This phase emphasizes creative thinking, empowerment, and independent questioning within and beyond music theory. Students are encouraged to view themselves as active contributors to disciplinary knowledge and emancipatory societal transformation.

This presentation offers an example trajectory of music-theory content and sample unit designs that follow this three-phase progression. I include model learning objectives, suggested in-class activities, and assessment strategies that support each phase. My proposed framework is intentionally flexible and adaptable to any music-theory core sequence or course. I conclude with an appendix of critical-pedagogy resources for instructors that emphasize collaboration, conversation, and continual improvement in teaching practices.

Centering Care and Belonging in the Theory Classroom: Designing Course Activities to Support Student Well-Being

Gretta Sayers, Brandon University

Care in education requires a holistic approach (hooks) that integrates student well-being. Recent research on pedagogies of care (Cheng, Renihan et al.) highlights ways we can support students and the College Music Society posits "belonging" as one of its four pillars for reimagining music schools (music.org). In this paper, I will discuss how I have centered care and belonging in my pedagogy (Noddings), address how we can define belonging (Brown) and contextualize care in student-centered teaching (Snodgrass) framed within music students' first-year experience. I will highlight some challenges students may face as they transition to higher education, describe the activities I implement to centre care and belonging in a music theory fundamentals course, along with students' responses to the activities, before concluding with some reflections on the praxis and its efficacy.

Music students enter university with diverse training, skills, and backgrounds. Some find their first theory class challenging, while other progress with ease. Regardless of their backgrounds, all students begin their studies with a love for music. Integrating this shared emotional connection with course content can encourage a sense of kinship and belonging with their peers. I assign individual reflection journals with prompts designed to nurture students' identity, self-awareness, and embodiment, and create in-class group activities to foster inclusivity and belonging. Using self-reflective practices, students assess how these activities affect their emotional well-being and sense of belonging alongside studying the course content. Students also share how they would feel cared for and what a care-full classroom looks like. Nearly all students have reported positive engagement with the well-being exercises and group activities. However, tensions are present as others cite certain activities as "frivolous" or describe a lack of belonging with their peers. Such student feedback is vital for centering care and belonging in our pedagogy. When students feel cared for, they are confident to share their concerns, questions, or opinions. Instructors, nevertheless, need to be aware of associating students' contributions to class or good grades with assumptions about their overall success. Positive student engagement and academic achievement do not always correlate with a sense of belonging.

Keyboard Skills in the 21st-Century Music Theory Classroom

Jess Forgione, Michigan State University

Historical keyboard skills like realizing figured bass are not perceived as widely relevant today, yet keyboard fluency in melody, chord spelling and voicing, and recognizing harmonies is, if anything, even more important in today's age of digital entrepreneurship. Keyboard proficiency benefits 21st-century musicians across genres, as the keyboard is widely available and allows those who play a single-voice instrument to play harmonies. Furthermore, working in a Digital Audio Workstation often means reading piano roll notation and programming virtual instruments using a MIDI keyboard.

Curricular reform toward a more modernized and inclusive music theory has been a topic of significant discourse, including Philip Ewell's (2019) plenary presentation and Trevor de Clercq's (2019) essay on the value of centering popular music in the undergraduate theory curriculum. Scholars including Michael Callahan (2012, 2015) and Roger Graybill (2020) have discussed pedagogical benefits of including the keyboard in undergraduate theory and aural skills, based in historical practices like Baroque improvisation and Common Practice music. However, despite calls for diversified, 21st-century curricula from theorists and piano pedagogues (Pike 2014) alike, little work has bridged these conversations by applying pedagogical keyboard skills to modern musical practice. This proposal addresses that gap.

This paper advocates for the incorporation of the keyboard in the music theory classroom in a way that decenters historic pianism and focuses instead on generalizable skills useful in a range of western styles: reading and voicing chords, contrapuntal textures, score reading and rehearsal skills, and DAW proficiency (useful even for classical musicians in a landscape where musicians are often judged by their production quality). I introduce several sample activities that incorporate the 21st-century keyboard to achieve learning outcomes including chord spelling and voicing, melody and bassline harmonization, improvisation, counterpoint (focused on pitch and rhythmic relationships in a broader, style-agnostic sense), and identification of and composition using stock progressions. Figure 1 shows one such activity, which asks students to harmonize a bassline, working in a DAW. Attendees will leave the presentation with activities that integrate 21st-century keyboard skills within typical theory and aural skills contexts.

Session 5a: Hearing and Performing Harmony with the Background Singer Workshop

Olga Sánchez-Kisielewska, University of Chicago

In this session, recorded tracks—from blues to postmillennial pop—will serve as sandboxes for identifying chord progressions and using them in music-making. The "background singer workshop" is not meant to teach the techniques of professional backing vocalists: I use the term to designate a set of *flexible, yet structured sing-along activities* (all involving movable-do solfège) designed to teach harmony and voice leading with popular music.

Building on methods advanced by scholars who treat the singalong as a powerful pedagogical tool (Gonzales 2012, Root 2016, Snodgrass 2021, Stevens 2016), I tailor each activity to specific songs and learning objectives and by varying three parameters:

- *What to sing:* guide tones, bass lines, voice-leading patterns, and/or arpeggiations, using either simple rhythms or more elaborate, stylistically appropriate ones. We begin singing in unison and progressively incorporate 1–3 additional voices.
- *Visual support:* lead sheets, Roman numerals, or solfège charts. Other options include progressively removing visuals to develop musical memory, or to work exclusively by ear.
- *Complexity and student agency:* activities range from short and simple exercises to illustrate a theoretical concept to improvisation and composition within a harmonic framework.

For instance, I recently reviewed applied dominants and modal mixture singing along Billie Eilish's "Halley's Comet." We begin singing the guide tones Sol-Si/Le-La as we listen to the first 2 verses, with the option of mapping chord changes across a timeline to expedite the task. Then we sing roots reading from chord symbols to create a simple bass line. After some scaffolding activities, we end performing from Roman numerals: guide tones for intro, added bass for verse 1, melodic line based on arpeggiations plus tendency tones for verse 2, four-part harmony for chorus, free choice for verses 3–4.

These strategies foster student engagement, promote active listening, facilitate memorization, and encourage creativity and collaboration. Workshop participants will sing through a reel of highlights drawn from a practice I've found consistently effective and will leave with a collection of ready-to-use activities for their own classrooms.

Session 5b: From Undergraduate to Graduate

The Historical Field Trip in the Undergraduate Theory Core

Benjamin K. Wadsworth, Kennesaw State University

There have been isolated attempts (Wason 2018, Clendinning and Marvin 2016) to integrate historical theorists and their approaches into skills-based, undergraduate written theory curricula, but they tend to 1) veer into a liberal arts survey of thinkers, or 2) skim over the analytical or compositional details of historical approaches. Instead, building on pedagogies of language translation (Cook 2010; Carreras, Noriega-Sánchez, and Calduch 2018), which promote two-way translation between a student's mother tongue (L1) and a new, target language (L2), I propose the method of the *historical field trip* (HFT), an aside ideally placed two to three classes after the introduction to a new topic that aims to build students' historical awareness and critical thinking skills. An HFT compares the approach of an historical thinker with a school's curricular one. It is an outgrowth of the *historical minutes* found at the end of each chapter in the recent undergraduate textbook *Explorations in Music Theory* (Terefenko and Wadsworth 2025) and tested in classrooms at Kennesaw State University and the Eastman School of Music (2020–2024). After an introduction to a theorist's cultural and theoretical background, the method features a translation of the historical approach (L2) into the class's prevailing one (L1) (an instance of *code switching*), which launches a discussion comparing L2 and L1 and moving from analytical application to theoretical purpose. For instance, in an HFT on the 17th-century contrapuntist Diruta (L2) in comparison with Fux (L1), students explore a theoretical "travel brochure" of 17th-century Venice, Italy and 18th-century Vienna, Austria, compare Diruta's seven species with Fux's five, consider Diruta's intriguing thoughts on keyboard technique, compare Diruta and Fux's first-species counterpoints, and investigate Diruta's focus on improvisation as opposed to Fux's on written composition. The L2 content reinforces students' knowledge of L1, helps them empathize with historical theorists and composers, and gives them greater confidence in the class's analytical methods. With this approach, historical content can play a vital role in undergraduate theory without sacrificing students' skill development.

Teaching Graduate Music Theory Pedagogy Courses in an Era of Undergraduate Curricular Reform

Leah Frederick, University of Colorado Boulder

Across the country many music programs are rethinking what we teach in our undergraduate music theory courses. These curricular changes take a variety of forms, from merely reframing traditional topics to completely reimagining the content of the core curriculum (Covach 2020; Music Theory Pedagogies Reimagined 2025). For those teaching graduate courses in theory pedagogy, these curricular revisions pose a challenge to the ways that we prepare future theory pedagogues. Upon accepting their first teaching position, a new theory instructor must be prepared to teach in a wider range of pedagogical scenarios than ever before: while some institutions still expect candidates to be proficient in teaching traditional harmony and voice-leading topics, others seek out candidates to spearhead an overhaul of an entire core curriculum. This paper examines the goals and aims of our graduate courses in theory pedagogy, asking: how can we best prepare future theory pedagogues to teach amid this evolving curricular landscape?

To address this question, I first draw on the concept of signature pedagogies (Shulman 2005; Gurung et al. 2009)—"specific pedagogical techniques that may be unique to [a] discipline"—to ask how our idealized teaching practices in music theory reflect the priorities and values of the field. How do the pedagogical skills employed in a well-designed theory or aural skills lesson on a harmony topic (e.g., Burt 2020) relate to those needed to execute a lesson on a less conventional concept, such as timbre and instrumentation? Though such lessons require different specific teaching methods, they ultimately share common values that can be prioritized in the training of aspiring theory pedagogues, such as encouraging close listening, fostering musicianship skills, and facilitating discussion.

I conclude the presentation by detailing the structure of my own graduate theory pedagogy course, which was designed in response to this challenge of undergraduate curricular reform. This course emphasizes a dialogue between the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) literature and content-specific writings on theory pedagogy, encourages self-reflection on one's musical and pedagogical priorities, and provides opportunities for peer teaching demonstrations on both traditional and less conventional topics.

Session 6a Teaching Aural Skills with Open Educational Resources

Amy Fleming, Baylor University
Timothy Chenette, Utah State University
James Sullivan, Michigan State University
Nick Schumacher, Michigan State University
Edward Taylor, Baylor University
Timothy McKinney, Baylor University

Open Educational Resources (OERs) are teaching and learning resources that are free to use and modify. Perhaps the most notable music theory OER, *Open Music Theory*, was first published in 2014; the years since have seen a blossoming of such materials, including the heavily updated *Open Music Theory, version 2* (2023). Aural skills OERs have been much slower to appear, perhaps in part because of the difficulty of finding or generating large amounts of excerpts for sight-reading or ear training. Yet the past four years have brought several substantial new OER offerings in aural skills.

In this panel, the authors of the aural skills OERs *Foundations of Aural Skills* (2022), *The Ear-Training Compendium* (2022), *The Rhythm and Meter Compendium* (2023), *The Sight-Singing Compendium* (2025), and *Rhythm Through Repertoire* (2025) will discuss teaching aural skills with OERs. The first part of the panel will offer an overview of available aural skills OERs, including their scopes and curricular applications. In the second part, each team of authors will demonstrate the broad content of their own OERs and how to implement them in the classroom. Author teams will also discuss their motivations for creating their OER(s), the pedagogical foundations of their projects, and the challenges and triumphs involved in creating and implementing their OERs. The final part of the panel will offer practical suggestions for how to get started remixing or creating your own OER. A question-and answer-period will follow.

Session 6b: What music(s) do we use?

Familiar Foundations: Introducing Set Theory Through Use of Familiar Tonal Music

Zachary Daniels, Oklahoma City University

A common problem in the theory classroom occurs when addressing the challenges students face when learning atonal music theory, especially the concept of pitch classes. Traditionally, pitch-class set theory is introduced alongside unfamiliar atonal music, which can overwhelm students by requiring them to learn new analytical methods and musical styles at the same time. This dual challenge often creates barriers to understanding. The problem has been approached in a myriad of ways, as demonstrated in Stanley Kleppinger's *Strategies for Introducing Pitch-Class Set Theory*, or even in standard textbooks such as the Clendenning and Marvin *Musician's Guide* or the Kostka/Payne *Tonal Harmony*. These authors focus largely on the methods of introduction instead of the materials being analyzed as the issue at hand.

The *Familiar Foundations* approach introduces pitch-class concepts using familiar tonal music—such as Bach chorales, Chopin preludes, and Haydn or Mozart string quartets. By connecting pitch-class analysis to music students already know from earlier in their studies, this method helps them build on existing knowledge and eases their transition to atonal theory. It also clarifies how pitch-class analysis complements traditional harmonic analysis, deepening students' understanding of chord structures and interval relationships. It is therefore useful not only to those stretching into atonal music, but for those seeking a new way of understanding diatonic and chromatic harmonic structures – such as the pitch relationships in resolving an augmented sixth chord or the enharmonic nature of said augmented sixths and the dominant of a different key altogether.

First Implemented in 2023, this method led to immediate improvements in student comprehension and has been adopted by faculty at several colleges and universities. Although some may view revisiting earlier musical styles as a detour, classroom feedback and improved understanding of atonal theory demonstrate the value of establishing a strong foundation using familiar music of the common practice era. This paper describes the development and application of the *Familiar Foundations* method and provides sample materials for educators seeking to implement part or all of these methods into their own teaching.

Beyond Representation: Textbook Repertoires and Structural Change after Ewell's Call to Action

Fred Hosken, Butler University

This project builds on Philip Ewell's seminal critiques of the field (2019, 2020, 2023) by examining how the music-theory textbook market has responded to his call to confront the institutional and structural "white racial frame" embedded in the field. Expanding on Ewell's demographic analysis of musical examples in core theory textbooks, I compare the representation of composers in pre- and post-Ewell editions to assess whether meaningful shifts have occurred.

Part One surveys the most recent editions of nine widely used textbooks and compiles demographic data – birth and death dates, gender, birthplace, and racial identity – for all cited composers. To evaluate the scope and balance of representation, I employ Shannon and Gini-Simpson diversity metrics, adapted from biodiversity studies, which measure both richness (the number of distinct "types," here composers) and evenness (their distribution). I also calculate the percentage of examples drawn from what I call "The Boys," a tongue-in-cheek play on Justin London's "BHMB" (2022) that highlights the persistence of a small, male-dominated canon. Alongside reporting these findings, I offer instructors quantitative tools for auditing their own course repertoires, promoting institutional transparency and enabling data-driven curricular change.

Part Two steps back from repertoire counts to consider what structural transformation requires. As Ewell argues, simply increasing the number of non-stale, male, and pale composers – while necessary – is also "the first solution the white frame will think of" and fails to address the deeper problem: the continued centering of Western functional tonality as the singular subject of music-theoretical inquiry (2020). Without interrogating the values embedded in our pedagogies, we risk reproducing the very structures we aim to reform. Thus, this project concludes by pragmatically exploring paths forward. I present my own course packets as imperfect but productive ways of evolving my own pedagogical frameworks while negotiating – and productively challenging – the expectations and demands of studio and ensemble faculty peers, the job market(s), and our current generation of students. The task of antiracist education is so vast and overwhelming that we risk paralysis but standing still and talking in circles achieves nothing.

Teaching Theory with Music by Artists with Disabilities: Sociocultural Complications, Literature, and Sample Lessons

Austin Wilson, Florida State University

Explorations of the musical culture of disability usually involve at least one of three discussions: how disability is represented in music (Cizmic 2006; Straus 2006, 2011, 2018, 2021), how disability informs performance (Groemer 2016, Honisch 2009, Jensen-Moulton 2009, Lubet 2010), or how disability affects the listening and viewing experience of music (Bakan 2019; Glennie, Gilman, and Kim 2019). Much less frequently discussed in music theory is music created by artists with disabilities. While Blake Howe (2016), Anabel Maler (2024), and Jeremy Tatar (2023) have made notable strides, works by disabled musicians are still rarely included among diversity initiatives in music theory.

After discussing sociocultural and pragmatic factors that may contribute to this shortcoming, I offer a (nascent) list of works by composers with disabilities and demonstrate possible pedagogical applications of three pieces. For this paper, I focus on rhythm and meter, using Thomas Wiggins's "Réve Charmant: Nocturne" to introduce the concept of polyrhythm, Gaelynn Lea's "Lost in the Woods" to introduce phrase extensions and contractions, and Miss Jacqui's "Broken" to introduce metrical (grouping) dissonance (Duinker 2021, Krebs 1999). In the lesson involving Miss Jacqui's "Broken," I also foster the development of analytical skills by asking "what purpose is the grouping dissonance serving?" and walking through strategies for addressing this question (e.g., examining the meaning of the lyrics, consulting music videos or visuals when relevant and available). Through this process, I provide guidance on constructing theses and frame analysis as crafting and supporting an argument rather than trying to find the "right" answer. I model this by proposing a potential argument that connects Miss Jacqui's use of grouping dissonance to the dissonance between societal perceptions of people with disabilities and Disability Pride (Carmel 2020).

Session 7a: Asynchronous Aural Skills & Auto-graded Dictation Practice

Julia Alford, Temple University / Auralia & Musition

In 2017, Temple University established an online master's degree program in Music Education, which necessitated the creation of an aural theory review course. I was tasked with the design and implementation of the course from its inception.

I began creating and teaching the course in 2018 and spent several semesters experimenting with different formats, methods, and platforms — moving from a hybrid model, to synchronous online, and finally to a fully asynchronous format. I have since arrived at a successful methodology combining video lectures, Auralia for auto-graded ear training assignments, PracticeFirst for sight singing, and a university-supplied proctoring service to ensure academic integrity.

The customizability of Auralia enabled me to build assignments that begin with simple, unlimited dictation exercises and progress into increasingly complex melodic and harmonic dictations. After each dictation, students receive immediate feedback on their practice assignments and can repeat them to achieve a higher score.

In this demonstration, I will provide an overview of my course design and how I use Auralia and PracticeFirst across the semester. Through scaffolded practice exercises and dictations, students develop the ability to sight sing complex melodies, complete modulating, chromatic, and contrapuntal melodic dictations, and perform chromatic and modulating harmonic dictations with soprano, bass, and chord identification.

Finally, I will demonstrate how Auralia and PracticeFirst can be adapted and customized to fit a wide range of curricula and student groups. While I, as an adjunct faculty member, designed my course around a specific diagnostic exam, both platforms are flexible enough to serve diverse course designs and learning goals. Their ever-growing libraries of assignments and examples provide an ideal foundation for faculty who wish to raise student skill levels without significantly increasing their own workload.

Session 7b: Self-efficacy and Self-determination

Increasing Student Motivation through Self-Determination Theory

Angela Ripley, Texas A&M University-Kingsville

Motivating students is a perennial challenge in higher education, especially when undergraduate music students do not yet realize the value of required music theory and aural skills courses for their future careers. I address this challenge from the perspective of self-determination theory (SDT), which links satisfaction of the basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness to improved motivation and well-being (Ryan and Deci 2020). Most applications of SDT to the field of music focus on performance or music education (e.g., Bonneville-Roussy and Evans 2025; Woody 2021). Although some applications of SDT to music theory pedagogy appear in work by Ripley (2024; 2020) and Wentink (2024), these sources do not discuss how to incorporate SDT systematically throughout the curriculum. In this paper, I introduce SDT; present pedagogical strategies to foster students' autonomy, competence, and relatedness in music theory and aural skills; and examine benefits of SDT for students' learning and well-being.

By way of illustration, I share activities I designed to infuse my courses with SDT. For example, I invite Theory III students to choose their own music analysis adventure—a solo excursion, team quest, or guided tour—when we explore a modulating piece during class. I also provide examples of how to frame course-related communication to meet students' basic psychological needs by "providing meaningful feedback, providing choices, using informational rather than controlling language, supporting internalization, and providing rationales and acknowledging feelings" (Graham and Vaughan 2022, 139). As shown by empirical research in psychology and music, pedagogical benefits of SDT are far-reaching, affecting students' academic success, career commitment, and physical and mental well-being (Hatfield, Halvari, and Williamon 2025; Herrera et al. 2021; Zelenak 2024).

I argue that intentional changes in pedagogy—whether large or small—can make a difference. Recognizing opportunities and challenges for instructors with varying degrees of autonomy in their course design, I offer context-specific suggestions to help them implement SDT successfully. Instructors who include SDT in music theory and aural skills courses prepare their students not only to graduate but also to thrive.

The Opposite of Cheating: Community, Self-Efficacy, and Authentic Learning in First-Year Theory and Aural Skills in the Age of AI

Risa Okina, SUNY Potsdam | Crane School of Music

In the age of generative AI, instructors across higher education face increasing challenges in maintaining academic integrity and supporting meaningful learning. Recent surveys report that generative AI use is widespread among undergraduates, with a strong majority using these tools for coursework and many believing their instructors are unaware of this usage. Such data highlights a central problem: policing or detecting AI use is unlikely to foster genuine learning or engagement. Instead, research shows that when students feel supported through academic challenges and develop confidence in their ability to learn, they are more likely to choose authentic learning over academic dishonesty (Gallant and Rettinger 2025).

This presentation argues that cultivating community and self-efficacy in the first-year undergraduate theory and aural-skills sequence offers a more effective and holistic approach to teaching in the AI era. Drawing on mindset theory and integrity research, the presentation outlines a semester-long pedagogical model structured into four phases: Phase 1 (Weeks 1–4) centers on building community and establishing a safe, collaborative classroom culture; Phase 2 (Weeks 5–8) expands community formation as new peer relationships develop; Phase 3 (Weeks 9–12) focuses on individualized instructor–student connections that reinforce students' developing confidence; and Phase 4 (Weeks 13–14) culminates in a group project grounded in principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Weekly small-group aural-skills assignments form a central component of this model, encouraging students to practice together outside of class. This structure reduces performance anxiety, strengthens relationships, and prepares students for collaborative final work. By the end of the semester, most students report feeling more connected to their peers and more comfortable participating in class. Within this supportive environment, explicit guidance on responsible AI use becomes more effective: students better understand the distinction between appropriate assistance and inappropriate outsourcing, and they express greater motivation to complete work authentically.

The presentation concludes with sample assignments, AI-use statements, and classroom practices that demonstrate how community-centered pedagogy can promote academic integrity and more meaningful learning in first-year music theory and aural-skills courses.

Keynote

Thinking and Teaching with AI

Jose Bowen

The excitement (and panic) surrounding Artificial Intelligence (AI) is shattering expectations around assignments, assessments, class preparation and attendance, while challenging us to build more future-proof and inclusive classrooms. AI is rapidly changing how humans work and think, including how we think about "average"; if AI can produce consistent "C" work, we need to update our policies and grading. AI is even changing the processes of creativity, with music -- and musicians! -- now being created entirely by AI. Together, we will examine the musical skills and curricular materials that matter most in this new age, why an articulation of "quality" is essential, and what policies and practices improve motivation and decrease cheating. Attendees will learn practical techniques to transform assignments and assessments to leverage the power of AI while encouraging the creativity needed to be successful in music.

Poster session

Let's Play! - Gamifying the Music Theory Classroom

Matthew Ferrandino, Independent scholar
Frank Nawrot, Southeast Missouri State University

This presentation demonstrates how interactive game-based learning increases student's confidence in the music theory classroom by drawing from a collection of games and activities that is being developed by the authors as an open educational resource. This resource features a growing collection of activities ranging from "20 Questions"–style identification exercises to a Modulation card game. The online resource will also be open to submissions from other educators, fostering a living document of pedagogical strategies grounded in play.

Musical "play" or musical "games" are well established as ways of teaching and reinforcing concepts, but are often geared towards music fundamentals in a K–12 context. The games presented here emphasize strategy and conceptual understanding for a wide variety of topics from fundamentals to post-tonal. We have found that students take initiative in the game play and often suggest variations to the rules, goals, and gameplay of the activities.

Among the featured activities, Key-Signature Bingo transforms a familiar chance-based format into a strategic key-identification exercise. Students fill their own cards with unique major and minor keys, then must anticipate and reason through relationships between relative and parallel pairs as signatures are called. The Neo-Riemannian Card Game adapts a standard deck of playing cards with three suits representing Parallel, Relative, and Leading-Tone transformations. Students then take turns playing cards, which generates a harmonic progression, with the objective of reaching a goal chord. Chromatic Modulation Challenge engages small groups in competitive harmonic problem-solving, as teams compose the shortest chromatic sequence connecting two tonal centers. We have observed that these activities foster analytical thinking, creativity, and peer collaboration through play.

This presentation will demonstrate several of these games and their adaptability for various skill levels. Participants will have opportunities to play through games and discuss ways in which they could be adapted in their own classrooms.

Keeping "Fundamentals" Fundamental: Current Trends in Student Preparedness and a Call for Further Curricular Reform

Cameron Storey, Michigan State University

In my time as a k-12 music educator, I began to notice a gap in the music theory knowledge of my students. It seemed as though these students were only learning music theory as an aside to their ensemble classes. This study intends to illuminate questions of readiness for music theory incoming music majors; I do this by reporting my own interviews with six music theory professors at NASM-accredited colleges and universities in Indiana. These interviews were conducted to gain insight on the preparedness of incoming undergraduates; these interviewees suggested that incoming students are not ready for collegiate music theory. I use information gathered in these interviews to examine both the under-preparedness of undergraduate music majors for music theory study as well as the academic systems in place hindering students' ability to succeed. I then synthesize the 2013 music theory curricular reform measures (Hoag 2016) and examine if they have manifested within the universities I examined (Campbell et al. 2016). I conclude that these universities have not adjusted their curriculum and are not supporting their students according to the reform. In presentation of this research, I further the conversation on how music theory educators can align with these reforms to better meet and serve our students.

Harmonic Species Counterpoint

David Geary, Wake Forest University

In 2010, Seth Monahan created a new method for teaching two-part counterpoint in the undergraduate core curriculum called *harmonic species counterpoint*. In short, students study Fuxian melodic and contrapuntal principles through melody composition exercises but with provided bass lines and Roman numerals in the Western classical style. I have adopted and adapted this pedagogical method in my Music Theory I course since 2018, and it has been highly successful for my students. This poster presentation will summarize my approach, provide examples of activities and assignments, and highlight the method's musical and pedagogical benefits.

The Pedagogical Danzón: The Danzón as a Resource and Topic in the Music Theory Classroom

Neal Endicott, Drake University

Despite the vast scope of their influence — and the clear opportunities for the diversification of repertoire that they provide — Latin American styles have only limited presence within many music theory curricula. While individual instructors often incorporate elements of Latin American music into their teaching, the absence of such styles from common text and anthologies significantly diminishes the potential for easy incorporation.

This presentation makes a case for the inclusion of such styles in a broad sense within the theory and aural skills sequence and outlines a specific unit that can be appended to the study of form, in which students explore the Afro-Cuban *danzón* through compositions ranging from the traditional *danzón* of the 1800 and early 1900s through contemporary interpretations and reinterpretations of the genre. This unit not only sees students engage with formal structures in *danzón*, but also with various presentations of chromatic harmony, the concept of rhythm as a vital component of form, introduces students to several highly influential living composers, and also provides opportunities to see linkages between musical analysis and sociopolitical issues and cultural identity.

A Model for Teaching Timbre in Music Theory Class

David Forrest, Texas Tech University

Timbre studies, absent in most music theory textbooks, invite students to expand their aural analysis skills beyond pitch and rhythm. This poster proposes a timbre analysis module that engages this growing subfield of music theory. The proposed module fills 1-2 weeks of instructional time. Following the scholarship, the lessons focus primarily on popular music with suggestions for application to other styles (Blake 2012; Heidemann 2016; Lavengood 2020; Malawey 2020; Nobile 2022). These lessons require no special equipment, software, or instructor training. The module focuses on sound-source identification, from which students may move to more advanced topics such as spectrograms and attack-delay-sustain-release (ADSR) profiles.

The activity sequence follows Bloom's taxonomy of the cognitive domain (Bloom 1956). The assignments can be completed in class or for homework. The lessons begin with a 10-page reading supplement that introduces basic concepts and terminology from Malawey 2020 as well as a playlist of songs that isolate common timbres. Assignment 1 serves as a reading check. Assignment 2 asks students to aurally identify timbres in select songs. In Assignment 3, students identify modifications in vocal timbres such as reverb, auto-tune, and changes between head and chest voice. Assignment 4 asks students to find songs on their own that feature specific timbres, providing students agency to analyze their own playlists and allowing for some personal disclosure of listening preferences. Assignment 5 asks students to mark the entrance of specific instruments in select songs. Assignment 6 prompts students to experiment with a range of vocal timbres, make physical connections with timbral effects, and discuss the effect on lyrical interpretation (Heidemann 2016; Nobile 2022). The first part of Assignment 7 has students assess relationships between timbre and narrative in select songs. The second part has students interpret how timbral changes in cover songs affect narrative, meaning, and identity (Nobile 2022). The full poster includes more complete samples of the assignments as well as links to playlists, answer keys, and a teacher's guide that attendees can try out in their own classrooms.

Pentatonic Improvisation as a Path to Confidence and Tonal Understanding

Alex Sallade, The Ohio State University

Improvisation has long been recognized as a powerful tool for integrating aural, theoretical, and creative skills, yet students often find the task daunting. Michaelsen (2014) calls improvisation the "ideal" activity for theory classrooms because students mobilize conceptual knowledge, technical skills, and expressive decision-making simultaneously. Azzara (1999) emphasizes the value of structured improvisation and Chenette (2022) highlights the role of attentional control in developing musicianship. Responding to this scholarship and to NASM requirement that students "create original or derivative music," this poster describes the stages of an improvisation assignment for first semester music students with links to examples of student work.

The assignment aims to 1) build students' confidence in making musical decisions, 2) expand their musical imagination and expressive capacity, and 3) reinforce theoretical understanding of scale and tonal tension/resolution. It is introduced through an in-class activity in which students create simple antecedent–consequent pairs by pulling from rhythm "banks" and following limited tonal guidelines. This collaborative exercise emphasizes focused listening, low-stakes risk-taking, and early metacognition. The assignment itself, completed individually, includes three stages:

Stage 1: "Familiarization" develops fluency with the major pentatonic scale through short notated exercises that gradually shift from reproduction to guided improvisation. Students generate four-bar phrases using only "stepwise" motion, beginning and ending on tonic. Stage 2: "Phrase Improvisation" asks students to improvise larger formal units—sentences and paired antecedent–consequent phrases—encouraging deliberate direction, stronger musical memory, and longer-range decision-making. Stage 3: "Popular Song Application" introduces the minor pentatonic and blues scales. It culminates in improvising rhythmic melodies over a backing track oriented toward popular styles, bridging classroom concepts with vernacular practices.

Metacognitive reflection is embedded throughout. Students submit written responses alongside recordings, evaluating their strengths, challenges, tonal awareness, and strategies for shaping musical gestures intentionally rather than randomly. By foregrounding creativity, attentional control, and tonal understanding, this assignment demonstrates how introductory aural training curricula can move beyond pattern drilling toward broader musicianship development. This assignment comes from a set of eight improvisation assignments spread out over four semesters. Materials for the assignment and others will be available to download.

How Can I Help? Rethinking Accommodations in Aural Skills Assessments

Jennifer Beavers, University of Texas at San Antonio

Students entering music programs may not realize they have learning differences—such as ADHD, test anxiety, short-term memory challenges, hearing deficits, or other forms of neurodivergence—that can negatively impact their performance in musicianship courses. As Karpinski notes "dictation (and other musical training) can often serve as an initial point of diagnosis for these conditions (2000, 65). Yet instructors who notice signs of difficulty cannot discuss them because of privacy policies. Students who register with Disability Services typically receive generalized accommodations, most often extended time on exams, distributed uniformly to all faculty. These accommodations are designed for lecture-based courses and rarely align with the distinctive demands of aural skills instruction.

In dictation and sight singing courses, time-based accommodations are not always pedagogically meaningful. Aural skills assessments rely on repeated hearings, auditory memory, and real-time processing; simply extending overall exam time does little to address these specific challenges. Although faculty are encouraged to collaborate with students on appropriate modifications, instructors receive little discipline-specific guidance or research to support these decisions. This poster questions the assumption that standard time-based accommodations effectively support students in aural skills courses and proposes a more tailored approach.

Part I will outline common disabilities encountered in aural skills classrooms and the standard accommodations associated with them. Drawing on consultation with the Chair of Disability Services, this section will clarify how accommodations are assigned and why they may or may not translate effectively to musicianship assessment. Part II will present preliminary findings from an IRB-approved study conducted in Spring 2025. Three students with time-allowance accommodations will complete two versions of a typical dictation assessment: A standard test with mandated time-and-a-half between hearings, and a test of similar duration but offering additional hearings instead of extended silence. Participants will complete a survey describing their diagnosed disability and which testing method better supported their learning. Comparative analysis will evaluate whether increased time or increased auditory exposure provides more meaningful support for student success.

This project aims to spark a broader conversation about discipline-specific accommodations in aural skills pedagogy and to offer data-driven guidance for instructors, disability services, and curriculum designers.

On the Value of Three-Part Harmony

Karl Braunschweig, Wayne State University

In his landmark article, Ludwig Holtmeier (2007) reveals insights both historical and theoretical on the Rule of the Octave and concludes by outlining what he calls an "Italian concept of chord," in which certain tones and their motions play a larger role in guiding harmony than others. Embedded within this is a historical aside which recognizes the role of three-part writing as a valuable pedagogical tool at a historical moment before the four-voice standard became entrenched (Muffat 1699). Building on this insight, I propose to re-examine the inherent potential of three-voice harmony exercises and what these can offer to a 21st-century musician. Interestingly, three-voice textures do in fact have a presence—though quite limited—in current pedagogy, occasionally appearing randomly or in chapters on tonal sequences. But three-part harmonic models are hardly ever used in other areas of diatonic and chromatic harmony. (Notable exceptions include Kostka/Payne/Almen 2018, and especially Ijzerman 2018.) Practically, there are good reasons for this, given that four voices are necessary for constructing most seventh chords; yet the repertoire overflows with passages that clearly feature only two or three active voices.

In my paper, I will outline three different types of exercises in three-voice writing that can be implemented easily in the classroom alongside common exercises in chord realization and analysis. These include 1) reducing standard four-voice progressions to three-voices, 2) constructing progressions using an additive method (two, three, then four voices), and 3) creating a two-part embellishment of a three-voice model. Implemented individually or collectively, the objective of these exercises is to develop an understanding of how certain tones within a harmonic texture take on heightened importance—the same ones that would likely be focal points in a compelling performance.

We have come a long way in liberating our students from the former rigidity of four-part writing. I believe the exercises presented here contribute positively to this effort by offering another perspective that not only mediates between two- and four-voice examples but also raises awareness of how certain tones and motions take on a heightened musical significance.

Sight-Singing Assessment Styles of Collegiate Theory Faculty: A Pilot Study

Amy Fleming, Baylor University
Michele Henry, Baylor University

Sight-singing is a significant skill in the curriculum for music majors, with diverse approaches to instruction and assessment. While sight-singing is mandated in accredited undergraduate music curricula (NASM, 2024), specific content, competencies, and assessment strategies are left to individual institutions to determine. Faculty assess sight-singing using a variety of approaches, including note-by-note, measure-by-measure, specified skills competencies, and a more holistic focus. Kleppinger (2017) outlined frustrations about various scoring methods. Research-based sight-singing assessments share little agreement on content, delivery, or scoring, which includes assessment by note (Henry, 2001; Cooper, 1965; MakeMusic, 2011), measure or segment (Bowles, 1971; Otterstein & Mosher, 1932; Scott, 1996; College Board, 2025), interval (Nelson, 1970; Scofield, 1980; Thostenson, 1969), skill (Henry, 2001), or a holistic approach (Carey, 1959; Hillbrand, 1924; Thostenson, 1969).

This study explores the types of approaches to assessing sight-singing employed by collegiate theory faculty. Research questions include:

1. What approaches do collegiate theory faculty use to assess sight-singing?
2. What led collegiate theory faculty to their system of choice, and are they satisfied with their approach?
3. What types of information are collected when scoring sight-singing?
4. What are advantages and disadvantages of various scoring approaches?

Theory faculty were interviewed concerning their sight-singing assessment practices. Interview questions included educational background, courses taught involving sight-singing, departmental or personal scoring procedures, previous experiences, and perceived value and drawbacks of currently used system. In addition, each faculty member scored three prerecorded sight-singing melodies, each performed with intentionally embedded errors to represent a variety of commonly-occurring sight-singing mistakes. For each recording, faculty were given the notated melody and allowed to mark the page as they listened. They were then asked to provide a score for each melody and an explanation of how they arrived at their score. Results include a reporting of background information, an account of various sightsinging assessment practices, and an analysis of the scores given by each faculty member. Discussion includes an accounting of variations between the employed scoring systems and the possible benefits and deficiencies of the scoring systems. Implications for future research, as well as recommended practices for instruction and assessment, are shared.

A Punk Pedagogy for Music Theory

Dave Easley, Oklahoma City University

The core music theory and aural skills curriculum produces colonizing effects (Attas 2019, 2022; Lett 2023); features a white racial frame (Ewell 2020, Kim 2021); creates barriers to access (Quaglia 2015); and is reproduced as a commodity, negatively affecting students and teachers alike (Easley 2025). Several authors have provided alternatives, all in an effort to diminish the hegemony of such an exclusive curriculum (e.g., Gades 2019, Lavengood 2019, Stover 2025). Yet, the core persists as the standard for most music majors in the United States.

I examine the core through the lens of punk pedagogy, what Estrella Torrez describes as "a manifestation of equity, rebellion, critique, self examination, solidarity, community, love, anger and collaboration. It is a space where the teacher-learner hierarchy is disavowed and the normative discourse of traditional education is dissembled" (2012, 136). My own application draws on Torrez's model, which emphasizes responsibility, reflection, and action (136), especially when harnessed to undermine systems of oppression, such as those found in the core curriculum.

I draw on the small, but growing body of scholarship devoted to punk pedagogy in order to outline the specific concerns that it addresses and to demonstrate what a punk pedagogy for music theory might look like in practice. I connect the punk ethos to a "localized critical pedagogy" (Torrez, 136) within my own institution, which itself has become dominated by the neoliberal push in higher education in general. In addition to curricular concerns, I address the material realities of my theory colleagues who are on contingent contracts; as Torrez suggests, punk pedagogy fosters community, which includes both students and teachers. I provide examples of how I've incorporated aspects of punk pedagogy into my classroom. I focus on a first-semester Theory I course as well as a graduate course on readings in music theory and pedagogy. By the end of my talk, I hope to inspire others to consider their responsibility, to reflect on it, and to take action in their own classrooms, scholarship, and advocacy.

Using the DAW as an Analytical Tool in the Undergraduate Music Theory Classroom

Lilly Korkontzelos, Michigan State University

William O'Hara's (2025) exploration of digital audio workstation (DAW)-centred analyses highlights how the DAW provides unique perspectives as a pedagogical tool. Building on O'Hara's survey, I carried out an IRB approved experiment to consider how usage of the DAW may be implemented in the undergraduate theory curriculum. This presentation will thus unfold in three parts. First, I explain the experimentation process itself, detailing the methodology and the topics—namely, fugal expositions and timbre—used to evaluate the DAW's efficacy in enhancing student learning outcomes. Next, I use the qualitative data collected to explore three identified benefits of the DAW as an analytical tool. The DAW is multimodal, offering an experience that is visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic and thus plurally accessible to varying learners. Moreover, fluency in a DAW has professional relevance as today's music industry requires knowledge of a variety of musical practices in order to maintain a successful career. Despite the developments in music making and learning that have transpired over the last century, the undergraduate music theory curriculum largely platforms only one type of music literacy as being the "correct" one (Abrahams 2021, 83). This serves to create musicians who are ill-equipped to enter a multifaceted industry that may require them to be literate in a variety of musical communications (92). Lastly, the use of the DAW creates new avenues for curricular equity and contributes to the ongoing work in the field to make music theory more equitable, accessible, and welcoming to students of all backgrounds and aspirations (Palfy and Gilson 2018). The last section of this presentation details further ways in which the DAW may be used as an analytical tool to examine familiar and unfamiliar topics to the undergraduate core theory sequence. Overall, my goal is to begin a conversation about how the DAW can be regarded as a viable analytical tool to create accessible, meaningful, and democratized learning environments in the undergraduate theory curriculum.

Marching Percussion Pedagogy in Aural Skills: "Check Patterns" and Rhythmic Rounds

Tyler M. Howie, Oberlin College & Conservatory

Drumline warmups come in multiple forms. Some are unison exercises, others are more involved ensemble etudes, and still others can be played either in unison or in parts. Adapting methods developed for marching percussion, this paper argues for the use of rhythmic rounds in aural skills, highlighting their adaptability and offering advice for their composition.

Example 1 shows an abridged "accent-tap" exercise with three formal sections (A, B, and C), each marked by a change in meter.

- A = 5/8 (2+3)
- B = 7/8 (2+2+3)
- C = 10/8 (2+2+3+3)

This exercise can be played in unison, in parts (each subsection of the drumline starts in a different spot), or as a round (one subsection following the next).

This same sort of exercise can be adapted for aural skills. Example 2 shows a sample etude that can be performed in unison or as a round, allowing for differentiation in the classroom, depending on students' needs. Struggling classes can perform the etude in unison, stronger classes can perform it as a round in two groups, and advanced classes can perform the rounds with only one person per part.

To aid the composition of these etudes, I offer a basic guideline, borrowing the concept of "check patterns" (Hannum 1986) from marching percussion. Check patterns are the basic patterns or subdivisions underlying rhythms, and they also are basic rhythmic units (e.g., the different groupings of three sixteenth notes within the span of one beat). On another level, the "check" of a rhythm is relative. In Example 1, the check is a measure of taps preceding the accent-tap sections. It helps students set up the hand speed for the eighth notes and the dynamic for the taps.

In drumline music, check patterns are often used to set up more complicated rhythms. This same approach can be applied here, setting up both individual and ensemble success. In Example 2, m. 1 is the check of m. 3. The check prepares the more syncopated rhythms, and when played as a round, one group has those while the other has the check, further reinforcing the underlying grid.

Teresa Carreño: a Music Analysis Database

Peter Shelley, Mount Allison University

Over the years there have been several excellent resources available to the music theory pedagogue interested in expanding their in-class analytical options beyond our received canon of European men. Some of these, such as *Music Through the Ages*, offer complete compositions with brief biographies and leave it to the instructor to mine for the appropriate analytical examples. Others, such as Straus's *Music by Women for Study and Analysis* and *Maust's Expanding the Music Theory Canon*, instead offer conveniently excerpted examples, organized by analytical concept. Here I'd like to offer a third, more niche approach: a database—hopefully the first of many—dedicated to a single composer, searchable by analytical topic. Such a database will make it easier for teachers to return to a particular composer's work multiple times over the course of the theory curriculum, allowing students to fix a clearer picture of the composer as their own music literacy grows. Many of us already do this sort of work with canonical composers, but only the specialist has much facility doing this outside of the canon. I have chosen Carreño for this project for three reasons: First, her music is a delight to perform and to hear, and offers a refreshing antidote to music theory's frequent obsession with "serious" music at the expense of brilliant styles. Second, her music remains largely ignored by analysts. Third, and of greatest importance, Carreño demonstrates a preference for lucid harmonic textures, frequently employing a registrally distinct bass and a consistent harmonic rhythm, which in turn makes her music ideal for introducing new harmonic techniques.

Enhancing the First-Year Music Theory Classroom through Cognitive Reflections

Lauren Shepherd, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Metacognitive reflection allows students to consider what and how they learn. Giving students these low-stakes reflections help them understand the personal relevance of assignments, find intrinsic value in their work, and deepen their motivation by asking them to reflect on their process for completing an assignment. Through student responses, instructors can provide structured and guided opportunities for practice. I adapt José Antonio Bowen's model for metacognitive reflection to the music theory classroom, showing how incorporating student self-guided reflection results in better exam grades while presenting opportunities for pedagogical intervention, specifically within the first-year sequence.

This paper offers practical metacognitive reflections that instructors can integrate into formative and summative assignments to cultivate more autonomous and confident music theory learners. Additionally, I suggest tools and opportunities to reflect on how instructors think about assignment design and suggest a reframing of common assessment practices to create different opportunities for student engagement and metacognitive reflection as defined by Lovett (2013) and Winkelmes (2013). I present strategies for giving students multiple opportunities to practice through active teaching, modeling desired thinking, cognitive wrappers, and creating scaffolded learning activities that build to a graded assignment.

I provide evidence that highlights how cognitive reflection transforms basic theory skills—like key signatures and roman numeral analysis—into adaptable and transferable knowledge while giving students the tools to find success in other college courses. The data indicate that incorporating metacognitive reflection helps students shift their understanding of music theory from rule-based memorization to concept-driven understandings, improving student retention while strengthening their analytical flexibility. These preliminary findings suggest that students' internal reflections further enhance their analytic accuracy and increase their agency and confidence in those analytic skills, resulting in higher grades and satisfaction with exam scores. Ultimately, I show that incorporating reflection as a part of assessment strategies creates a more inclusive classroom environment that is meaningful, relevant, and accessible to all students (Hockings 2010).

From Rules to Topics in Undergraduate Musicianship

Juan Chaves, University of Miami

Undergraduate theory and aural skills courses often proceed as if the musical world outside the conservatory walls has barely changed in a century. Students arrive fluent in the sounds of game scores, film music, TikTok loops, Chopin, Jobim, Beyoncé, and bedroom producers, yet we greet them with materials from a different era and hope they still matter. Many students see the sequence as a set of rules to memorize rather than a collection of tools to understand the music that fills their lives.

This paper introduces a musicianship curriculum that combines recent theoretical insights with students' existing musical fluency by focusing on a single analytical paradigm: topic theory. Building on calls for a more public-facing core that engages the musics students already know (Belcher and Grant 2020), I show how a workshop–laboratory model can connect listening, analysis, and creative work through two complementary moves: using topics, such as a "Sturm und Drang," or "Coltrane Changes," as curricular anchors; and engaging students in the analytical work of surveying musical features (meter, groove, timbre, harmonic patterns) across diverse repertoires to ask whether they cohere into culturally recognizable conventions. In a multiweek unit, students work with established topics to identify their defining features (meter, groove, timbre, harmonic patterns) and then turn that same analytical lens on unfamiliar examples across classical, jazz, and popular repertoire, asking whether their surface features cohere into culturally recognizable conventions. Throughout, they transcribe, analyze excerpts by ear and from the score, sing, improvise within stylistic contexts, and compose a short passage that deliberately employs a topic.

Methodologically, the project draws on praxial and experiential philosophies of music education (Green 2009; Elliott and Silverman 2015; Allsup 2016), Situative Learning Theory (Lave and Wenger 1991), and Constructionism (Papert and Harel 1991), implemented through a design-based research approach in a pilot unit in my own theory and aural skills sections. I present sample assignments, excerpts from student work, and reflections that show stronger retention of core concepts, greater transfer between listening and creative tasks, and more precise stylistic vocabulary.

My broader aim is to show that adopting a newer paradigm allows theory and skills courses to retain analytical rigor while engaging the musical and stylistic worlds students inhabit. By treating undergraduates as musicians capable of rigorous analysis and creative work, the workshop–laboratory model offers a scalable path toward a musicianship sequence that speaks directly to the repertoire they already value.

Presenter Bios (alphabetical by last name)

Julia Alford

Dr. Julia Alford is the Education Manager for Higher Education, North America for Auralia & Musition, a role that affords her the privilege of supporting music faculty at a variety of colleges and universities and has provided an in-depth view of the pedagogical landscape in music theory and ear training at the university level. She is also a member of the adjunct faculty at Temple University in Philadelphia and provides public education resources for melodic and harmonic dictation through her YouTube channel, The Aural Theory Course. In her spare time, she composes sacred and art music, plays accordion, competes in trail races, rescues too many cats, and nurtures a decent-sized garden. Dr. Alford holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in music composition from Temple University.

Hannah Benoit

Hannah Benoit is a Ph.D. Candidate in music theory at McGill University and currently serves as an adjunct instructor of music theory at Bunker Hill Community College in Boston, Massachusetts. Her forthcoming dissertation is the first large-scale study of critical pedagogy within the context of music theory, which has received grant funding from the Fonds de Recherche du Quebec. Hannah's other research interests include the analysis of form in Electronic Dance Music. She has made appearances at several conferences including Music Theory Midwest, The Society for Music Theory, and Pedagogy into Practice, and her research will appear in the forthcoming volume of T*he Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy*.

Nicole Biamonte

Nicole Biamonte is associate professor of music theory at McGill University in Montreal. Her primary research area is the theory and analysis of popular music, focusing on pitch structures, meter and rhythm, form, and most recently, timbre and texture. She also researches, and regularly teaches a seminar in, music theory pedagogy. In addition to her edited collection *Pop-Culture Pedagogy in the Music Classroom*, her work has appeared in numerous journals and edited collections, including a chapter on teaching common-tone diminished-seventh chords with examples from art music, jazz, and popular music in the *The Routledge Companion to Music Theory Pedagogy*.

Karl Braunschweig

Karl Braunschweig serves as Associate Professor and Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of Music at Wayne State University. His research explores the ways in which conceptual modes and models have mediated our understandings of musical structure and aesthetics from the eighteenth century to the present, and includes studies of the role of counterpoint and dissonance within models of harmony, the historical basis of phrase structure, and the outlining of a broad framework for interpreting form and structure through poetic figuration. His publications have appeared in *Music Theory Spectrum*, the *Journal of Music Theory, Music Theory and Analysis, Music Theory Online, Acta Musicologica, Theory and Practice, Intégral*, and *Gamut*; he also serves on the editorial board for *Intégral*.

Juan Chaves

Juan Chaves is a musician and educator whose work bridges jazz, popular music, and contemporary music theory pedagogy. He holds multiple degrees across jazz and classical traditions and currently pursues a DMA in jazz composition at the University of Miami, where he teaches in the undergraduate classical musicianship curriculum and explores innovative approaches that connect theory to the music students already know. His research centers on topic theory, musical meaning, and experiential learning, drawing on praxial philosophy and situative learning to reframe core skills such as solfege, improvisation, and analysis as tools for interpretation. As a composer and performer, Chaves integrates Latin American influences with jazz and pop idioms, and he is actively engaged in recording and collaborative projects. His current pedagogical work investigates a workshop–laboratory model that fosters analytical rigor, creativity, and stylistic fluency across diverse repertoires, aiming to make music theory more relevant, inclusive, and connected to contemporary musical practice.

Timothy Chenette

Timothy Chenette teaches aural skills and music theory at Utah State University, where he was the 2021 Honors Outstanding Professor of the Year. His Ph.D and MM in music theory, with minors in voice performance, piano performance, and music history, are from Indiana University. Prof. Chenette is a leading scholar of aural skills teaching. His research explores cognitive foundations, innovative methods, and particularly how to teach the elusive skill of identifying chords within a progression. He is the author of *Foundations of Aural Skills*, a freely available online aural skills textbook that promotes a creative and accessible approach to learning aural skills.

Zachary Daniels

Zachary Daniels is an active composer, conductor, and music theory scholar. He is currently an adjunct professor whose research investigates the intersections of melodic structure, contrapuntal design, and compositional systems in American musical traditions. His current projects examine granularity in palindromic processes, motivic coherence across multi-layered textures, and the development of his Polyphinite methodology, a 21st-century expansion to counterpoint that addresses issues faced by composers today. Daniels' work emphasizes the pedagogical implications of analytical transparency, particularly how structural insight can shape performance practice and creative decision-making. He teaches harmony, counterpoint, form, and aural skills, integrating research-driven inquiry with applied musicianship. His work as a composer and conductor informs his analytical perspective, grounding theoretical investigation in rehearsal realities, ensemble communication, and creative interpretation. Daniels also consults on workflow systems and musical identity, extending his research interests into broader questions of how musicians conceptualize, organize, and transmit musical knowledge.

Dave Easley

Dave Easley is Professor of Music Theory at Oklahoma City University and current chair of the Society for Music Theory's Committee on Accessibility and Disability. He has published and presented research on American hardcore punk and metal, the music of Giuseppe Verdi, and critical music theory pedagogy. He has served on the editorial board for the *Engaging Students: Essays in Music Pedagogy* series since 2014. Dave is a dedicated pedagogue and received OCU's Excellence in Teaching Award in 2016. He is currently working on a project that questions and reimagines the role of theory and aural skills in music education.

Neal Endicott

Neal Endicott is a composer, music theorist, and pedagogue currently on the faculty of Drake University. His research is primarily in the area of music theory pedagogy, where he explores means of adapting, evolving, refining, redefining, and, as necessary, deconstructing curricula to better serve students in the contemporary landscape and to align pedagogy with values necessary to the survival and growth of the discipline. Neal's work has been published by the Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy, and has been presented at the Pedagogy Into Practice Conference, Music Theory Midwest, and numerous College Music Society conferences.

Matthew Ferrandino

Matthew Ferrandino, Ph.D., is currently an independent scholar who was previously taught at Eastern Illinois University, Murray State University, Oklahoma State University, Ottawa University (KS), and the University of Missouri Kansas City Conservatory. His research focuses on the analysis and interpretation of popular music and musical multimedia. Additionally, he is an active songwriter, recording artist, multi-instrumentalist, and producer and has composed music for video games and podcasts. Ferrandino has presented his research internationally and nationally including annual meetings of the Society for Music Theory, the Society for American Music, the International Association for the Study of Popular Music, Music and the Moving Image, and Gessellschaft für Musiktheorie. He currently serves as Editor for SMT-Pod and Managing Editor for Music Theory Spectrum.

Amy Fleming

Amy Fleming is a Senior Lecturer in Music Theory at Baylor University. Her research interests lie primarily in the music of the 20th and 21st centuries and in theory and aural skills pedagogy. Her work has been published in the *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy* and *Expanding the Canon: Black Composers in the Music Theory Classroom*. She is also the lead author of a series of Open Educational Resource aural skills textbooks. She received the Teaching Assistant Prize for Excellence in Teaching from the Eastman School of Music in 2017 and the Outstanding Teaching Award from Baylor in 2024.

Jess Forgione

Jess Forgione holds a BM in Composition from Baylor University, where she participated extensively in the Piano Pedagogy program, and recently finished her master's degree in Music Theory at Michigan State University. At MSU, she taught the full four semester aural skills sequence as well as two semesters of written theory, focusing especially on integrating the music of today into her classroom. She is currently pursuing projects on Trauma Informed Pedagogy in music theory and on reimagining aural skills curricula to more fully include jazz students.

David Forrest

David Forrest teaches graduate and undergraduate music theory courses, supervises the undergraduate theory sequence, and serves as Honors College Music Liaison at Texas Tech University. Dr. Forrest holds a Ph.D. in Fine Arts with a concentration in Music Theory, an M.M. in Choral Conducting, and a B.M. in Music Education, all from Texas Tech. He has presented research across Europe and the United States, predominantly on popular music, music theory pedagogy, and the music of Benjamin Britten. Dr. Forrest's work has been published in several journals including *Music Theory Spectrum, Music Theory Online, Journal of Mathematics and Music*, and *College Music Symposium*, and he is co-editor of *Essays on Benjamin Britten from a Centenary Symposium* (2017). Dr. Forrest has served as President of the Texas Society for Music Theory. Dr. Forrest's research poster for Pedagogy into Practice 2026 comes from his forthcoming textbook on the analysis of popular music.

Leah Frederick

Leah Frederick is Assistant Professor of Music Theory at the University of Colorado Boulder. Her recent publications in *Music Theory Spectrum* (2024), the *Journal of Music Theory* (2024), and *Music Analysis* (2026 [forthcoming]) use mathematical techniques to study relationships between patterns in instrumental spaces (i.e., the layout of notes on a physical instrument) and the corresponding pitch relationships they produce. Her pedagogy-related interests concern connections between theory pedagogy and the broader literature on teaching and learning. Her article related to this topic, "Expertise, Difficulty, and Recognizing Chords in 'More Complicated' Contexts: Harmonic Analysis as a Pedagogical Bottleneck," will soon appear in the *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy* (2025). Frederick previously taught in faculty positions at the University of Michigan and at Oberlin Conservatory, where she was involved in the redesign and launch of Oberlin's new undergraduate theory curriculum. She holds a Ph.D. from Indiana University, where she was also awarded the Wennerstrom AI Fellowship for outstanding teaching.

Anna Gawboy

Anna Gawboy is Associate Professor of Music Theory at Ohio State University, where she coordinates the music theory area and teaches graduate and undergraduate courses. Her writing on pedagogy has appeared in *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy, Engaging Students, Music Theory Online*, and the *Norton Guide to Teaching Music Theory*. In 2021, she was selected by her students to receive the School of Music Award for Distinguished Teaching, in recognition of her ability to meet pandemic-related challenges in teaching core music theory. With her co-editor Timothy Chenette, she has revived *Engaging Students: Essays in Music Pedagogy*, and she invites you to submit your short essays for Volume 10 (2026) by June 15.

David Geary

David Geary is an Assistant Professor of Music at Wake Forest University. His research focuses on popular music, rhythm and meter, and music theory pedagogy. His work is published in *Music Theory Online*, the *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy,* and several edited collections, including *Expanding the Canon: Black Composers in the Music Theory Classroom and The Routledge Companion to Music Theory Pedagogy*. He earned his PhD from Indiana University and currently serves on the editorial board for *SMT-V*.

Stephen Gomez-Peck

Stephen Gomez-Peck is Assistant Professor of Music Theory at the University of Alabama where he teaches courses throughout the undergraduate core curriculum, offers theory electives at the undergraduate and graduate levels, and supervises Graduate Teaching Assistants. He recently designed a new course at UA—Music Theory Pedagogy—that ran for the first time this spring. As a teacher, Stephen is interested in the powers of humor and humility to create safe, enriching, and joyous learning environments. In addition to his pedagogical work, Stephen studies hip-hop music and recently published his article "The Kendrick Lamar/Drake Beef by the Numbers" in *American Music Review*. Outside of work, you can find Stephen running, ideally on a tree-lined dirt road. He ran the Boston Marathon for the second time this spring.

Jonathan Guez

Jonathan Guez is Assistant Professor at the Moores School of Music at the University of Houston. His research interests include Schubert, Adorno, and musical form. His published work appears in the *Journal of Schenkerian Studies*, *Music Theory Spectrum*, *Music Theory Online*, the *Journal of Music Theory*, *Music Analysis*, the *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy*, the *Goethe Yearbook*, and elsewhere. His article, "Toward a Theory of Recapitulatory Tonal Alterations," was a finalist for the Society for Music Theory's Emerging Scholar Award.

Kristi Hardman

Kristi Hardman is an Assistant Professor at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. She received her PhD in music theory from the Graduate Center, CUNY. She also holds music and education degrees from the University of Manitoba and an MA in music theory from the University of British Columbia. Kristi has a strong interest in music theory pedagogy, with more than ten years of experience teaching in various classroom settings from kindergarten to university level. Additionally, Kristi's research interests include popular music, North American Indigenous music, timbre, rhythm, and meter.

Caroline Heggie

Caroline Heggie is an independent scholar in music theory from the United States, now based in the United Kingdom. She holds a Master of Arts in Music Education and a Master of Music in Music Theory, and her research focuses on music theory pedagogy, neurodiversity, and music by women composers. Caroline has over a decade of teaching experience, working with learners of all ages—from early childhood through undergraduate students in the US—and in both primary and secondary schools. She holds a teaching license in the United States, Qualified Teacher Status in the United Kingdom, and works one-to-one with neurodivergent students to support their learning. An active performer in East Anglia, Caroline plays violin and is engaged in community, educational, and ensemble music-making.

Michele Henry

Michele Henry is Professor of Choral Music Education at Baylor University where she teaches music education courses and supervises student teachers. Dr. Henry is the co-author of the *Level Up!* Sightreading Series, which focuses on a systematic approach to individualized sight-reading instruction and assessment. Her research appears in the discipline's top journals, as well as Oxford and GIA presses. Dr. Henry is on the editorial boards for the *Journal of Music Teacher Education* and *Texas Music Education Research*. She served as Vice-President and College Division Chair for the Texas Music Educators Association, Chair of NAfME's Instructional Strategies Special Research Interest Group, and the Steering Committee for the biennial International Symposia for Assessment in Music Education. Dr. Henry is heavily involved with certification policies for music teachers. She holds a Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota, an MME from the University of North Texas, and a BME from Oklahoma Baptist University.

Tyler M. Howie

Tyler M. Howie is currently Visiting Assistant Professor of Music Theory at Oberlin College and Conservatory, where he teaches classes on post-tonal theory and musical theater. He is interested broadly in American music, and his research focuses on connections between music theory and genre theory. He has presented at conferences for the Society for Music Theory, the Society for American Music, and the International Association for the Study of Popular Music, and his work on emo, math rock, and post-(millennial) punk can be found in *SMT-Pod* and a forthcoming issue of *Music Theory Online*. In addition to music theory, Tyler also teaches marching percussion to high school and collegiate groups as well drum and bugle corps. Each summer since 2019, he has worked as a consultant with the Shippensburg University Marching Band in Shippensburg, PA.

Fred Hosken

Dr. Fred Hosken is an Assistant Professor of Music Theory at Butler University, where he is the coordinator of the music theory and aural skills curriculum. His research specializes in the perception and production of groove and focuses on how musicians create and manipulate unique "feels," such as "laid back" and "tight," through their performances. This approach to music theory, analysis, and interpretation allows for a deeper understanding of how subtle timing variations contribute to the overall character of musical grooves.

J. Daniel Jenkins

J. Daniel Jenkins is Professor of Music Theory and Associate Dean for Graduate Studies, Public Music, and Experiential Learning at the University of South Carolina. He is editor of *Schoenberg's Program Notes and Musical Analyses* and *The Oxford Handbook of Public Music Theory*, both available from Oxford University Press. His own efforts in public music theory in South Carolina include community engagement projects with Lee Correctional Facility, the Lourie Center, and Toby's Place. Dedicated to pedagogy, Jenkins teaching awards include the Michael J. Mungo Undergraduate Teaching Award and the Garnet Apple Award for Innovative Teaching from the University of South Carolina, the Edward Peck Curtis Award for Excellence in Teaching from the University of Rochester, and the Outstanding Teaching Assistant Prize at the Eastman School of Music. He received the Wilson Wyatt Alumni Award from the University of Louisville School of Music in 2024.

Alexandrea Jonker

Alexandrea Jonker is an Assistant Professor of Music Theory at the Crane School of Music at SUNY Potsdam. She received a PhD in music theory from McGill University in 2024. Her dissertation proposes an analytical methodology for Johanna Beyer's four earliest compositions that intertwines aspects of transformational theory and queer theory. Alexandrea was a two-time winner of the Innovative Teaching and Learning in Music Award at McGill University. Her work on inclusive aural skills pedagogy was recognized with a Best Student Paper award from the Rocky Mountain Society for Music Theory and the Music Theory Society of the Mid-Atlantic. Alexandrea's ideas on aural skills pedagogy can be found in the *Routledge Companion to Music Theory Pedagogy* (2020), *SMT-Pod* Season 4 (co-authored with Peter Schubert), and in the forthcoming edition of *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy* (2026).

Lilly Korkontzelos

Lilly Korkontzelos is a second-year master's student in music theory at Michigan State University. Originally from Toronto, Ontario, she earned her Bachelor of Music degree at the University of Windsor in jazz vocal performance in 2020. Lilly spent the years during and proceeding her undergraduate degree performing, teaching, and working as a producer and audio engineer at several local recording studios. These experiences have directly impacted her research interests and methodologies. Currently, Lilly's primary focus is audio production and engineering techniques and how they may affect perceptions of narrative and identity. Her other research interests include timbre and texture, music cognition, and neotonality. In her free time, Lilly enjoys reading, going to art galleries, playing video games, and gushing over her cat (pictures available upon request).

Chris Lennard

Chris Lennard is Assistant Professor and coordinator of the music theory and aural skills classes at Indiana State University. He holds degrees in music performance and music theory from Bowling Green State University, the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, and the University of Texas at Austin, and has previously presented at meetings of the Semiotic Society of America, the Music Theory Society of New York State, and Music Theory Southeast. Chris' research focuses on metaphorically-structured conceptualization of musical experience and context-dependent notions of consonance and dissonance, which he explores in relation to modernist works of the mid-twentieth through the twenty-first centuries and heavy metal.

Yiqing Ma

Yiqing Ma is a music theorist, ethnographer, and carillonneur and currently Visiting Assistant Professor of Music at Colby College. Yiqing's research focuses on critical approaches to timbre and voice in Japanese music, East Asian languages and popular culture, global history of music theory exchanges, and music cognition. She received her Ph.D. in Music Theory from the University of Michigan in 2025. Her current book project, tentatively titled *Gendering Voice in Modern Japan*, interrogates the relation between music and social structural power that revealed through the beliefs, pedagogy, and policies around vocality, tracing how "feminine" voices evolve, challenge, and respond to shifting understandings of gender performance in post-war Japan. She has published articles and conference papers on gender performance in Japanese popular music, timbre in Japanese and Chinese music theory, and meanings in music affects.

Justin Mariner

Justin Mariner is an Associate Professor at McGill University's Schulich School of Music, where he teaches aural skills, theory, and keyboard. His compositions have been performed in Canada, the United States, and Europe, and have been included in the Gaudeamus International Music Week, the Winnipeg New Music Festival, Cluster Festival, the Victoria Symphony Orchestra's Reel Music project, and the Toronto International Film Festival. He has been commissioned to write pieces for the Via Salzburg Chamber Orchestra, the Ensemble contemporain de Montréal, the Société de musique contemporaine du Québec, Quatuor Bozzini, and Brigitte Poulin. His work on aural skills pedagogy with Peter Schubert has been published in *Engaging Students* (2017), *The Routledge Companion to Music Theory Pedagogy* (ed. Leigh VanHandel, 2020), and *The Routledge Companion to Aural Skills Pedagogy* (ed. Kent Cleland and Paul Fleet, 2021).

Timothy R. McKinney

Timothy R. McKinney is Professor of Music Theory at Baylor University. His research interests include the relationship between words and music in the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries, the history of music theory, and musical form. His articles appears in *Musical Quarterly, Early Music, Music Review, Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy*, and other journals and edited volumes. His book *Adrian Willaert and the Theory of Interval Affect: The Musica nova Madrigals and the Novel Theories of Zarlino and Vicentino* traced the origins of the association of major with happy affections and minor with sad ones. His critical edition of Girolamo Parabosco's *Madrigali a cinque voci* appeared from A-R Editions in 2022. He very much enjoyed working on the Sight-Singing Compendium with his colleagues at Baylor.

Frank Nawrot

Frank Nawrot is a composer, guitarist, and scholar. His original music is inspired by Danny Brown, Julia Wolfe, D'Angelo, Julius Eastman, Meshuggah, and Prince. Frank's music has been performed around the world—in Chicago, New York City, Kansas City, Hong Kong, Croatia, Lithuania, and Canada. He has a reputation for writing concert music that is accessible while being challenging enough to provide audiences with a fresh and exciting experience. In addition to concert music, Frank also records and produces music in a variety of styles. Armed with a doctoral degree in music composition and fifteen years performing rock, pop, and hip-hop, Frank brings a unique sound to the stage, the radio, and the screen. His research interests include popular music, minimalism, and composition & theory pedagogy. He has presented his research to the Society of Music Theory, the Society of Minimalist Music, and the Society of Composers, Inc., among others.

Risa Okina

Risa Okina is a music theorist and collaborative pianist who has performed across the United States and Japan. She is Assistant Professor of Music Theory and Collaborative Piano at the Crane School of Music, SUNY Potsdam. Before moving to upstate New York, she was an active performer in the Philadelphia area, collaborating with students, local musicians, and ensembles including ENAensemble and several opera and theater groups. Risa studied with renowned pianist Alexander Toradze as a member of the Toradze Piano Studio and performed regularly in its recital series. She earned her Ph.D. in Music Theory from Temple University, where she also taught written and aural theory. Her research interests include Sonata Theory, Musical Narrative, Musical Semiotics, and hermeneutic approaches to 19th-century composers, particularly Brahms. She has presented her research at national and international conferences, including the Society for Music Theory, Music Theory Midwest, the International Brahms Conference, and the International Congress on Musical Signification.

Lindsey Reymore

Lindsey Reymore is an Assistant Professor at Arizona State University and co-PI of the CACTUS Music Lab. Her research investigates the roles of timbre in musical experience, particularly with respect to meaning, cognition, and formal structure. Lindsey completed a postdoctoral fellowship at McGill University with the ACTOR and holds a PhD in Music Theory from The Ohio State University as well as degrees in oboe performance from The University of Texas at Austin (MM) and Vanderbilt University (BMus).

Angela Ripley

Angela Ripley is an Assistant Professor of Music Theory at Texas A&M University-Kingsville. She holds a Ph.D. in music theory from The Ohio State University. Her research focuses on music theory pedagogy, with specializations in pedagogical games and student leadership. Her articles are published in journals including the *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy, Engaging Students: Essays in Music Pedagogy, College Music Symposium, Music Theory Pedagogy Online, and HAYDN: The Online Journal of the Haydn Society of North America*. She has presented her research at national and regional meetings of the Society for Music Theory, and this is her fifth Pedagogy into Practice presentation. She currently serves as a member of the SMT Student Presentation Award Committee and as co-chair of the Student Paper Award Committee for this year's Pedagogy into Practice Conference.

Olga Sánchez-Kisielewska

Olga Sánchez is an Associate Instructional Professor at the University of Chicago, where she teaches the Harmony and Voice Leading sequence and coordinates musicianship labs. She holds a PhD in Music Theory and Cognition from Northwestern University. Her research interests include eighteenth-century music, musical meaning, music and dance, and music theory pedagogy. She has published articles in journals such as *Music Theory Spectrum* or the *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy* and contributed chapters to edited volumes such *Singing in Signs: Semiotic Explorations of Opera* (OUP 2020). Her research and pedagogy have been recognized with multiple awards, including SMT's 2025 Emerging Scholar Award (Article) and the Janelle Muller Award for Excellence in Pedagogy (2020). Before moving to the US and embarking on her academic career, Olga was a clarinet player and high school teacher in Madrid. This will be her 4th PiP conference.

Alex Sallade

Alex Sallade is associated faculty in theory at The Ohio State University, where he coordinates the undergraduate aural training curriculum and teaches other courses in music theory. He holds a PhD in music theory from Ohio State and is especially interested in innovative approaches to aural skills pedagogy, particularly methods that promote musicianship. His other research examines sound design in video games and the role of audio in immersive, interactive experiences, which formed the basis of his dissertation.

Sarah Sarver

Dr. Sarah Sarver is Assistant Professor of Music Theory at Oklahoma State University. Her research examines late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century tonality, with particular focus on chromaticism and its interaction with diatonic structure in the music of Richard Strauss, as well as text–music relationships in German Romantic Lieder. More recently, her work has expanded to music theory pedagogy, including the integration of vocal repertoire in theory classrooms and its impact on student engagement and representation. She has also contributed extensively to digital pedagogy as a content reviewer and digital media author for W.W. Norton's *The Musician's Guide* series. Sarah is an active mentor of undergraduate research as well, collaborating with students on conference presentations and scholarly projects, and she was nominated for Oklahoma State University's 2026 Excellence in Research Mentoring Award.

Gretta Sayers

Gretta Sayers is Assistant Professor at Brandon University. Her research explores pedagogy, care, analysis & performance, and formal functions of Western Art Music with particular attention to adapting form-functional theory for post-tonal repertoires. She collaborates with a singer to examine connections between formal functions and poetic meaning. They have an article forthcoming in *Theory & Practice* and co-teach a performance and analysis course exploring how the language and tools of formal analysis support an embodied performance experience. Gretta has partnered with colleagues across BU in a cross-disciplinary exploration of the cultures and tensions of care in academia and she is co-editor for a special issue of *Intersections: Canadian Journal of Music* on music and care in Canada, which will include her article on integrating care into the music theory classroom. She has an article forthcoming in *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy* and has presented at regional, national, and international conferences.

Nick Schumacher

Nick Schumacher is Assistant Professor of Music Theory at Michigan State University, where he teaches undergraduate courses in theory and aural skills and graduate courses in theory pedagogy, performance and analysis, and analysis of music for winds. As a clarinetist and theorist, his primary research interests include performance and analysis, theory and aural skills pedagogy, and the music of TV and film. In 2024, Nick was selected as a fellow for MSU's Adams Academy, a year-long fellowship designed for educators to explore and share transformative approaches to teaching and learning. Along with MSU colleague James Sullivan, Nick co-authored the forthcoming Open Educational Resource (OER) *Rhythm Through Repertoire*, a sight-reading anthology of excerpts drawn from real musical literature.

Peter Shelley

Peter Shelley is a music theorist and piano pedagogue currently serving as Visiting Assistant Professor at Mount Allison University in New Brunswick. He holds a Ph.D. in music theory from the University of Washington, and an M.M. in piano pedagogy and performance from the University of Idaho. He is passionate about undergraduate music theory education, and is especially interested in participating in the growing project of expanding gender representation in the music theory canon. His research has focused on the role of form in the piano music of Fanny Hensel. This present project seeks to make more accessible the excellent work of Teresa Carreño.

Lauren Shepherd

Dr. Lauren Shepherd is an Assistant Professor of Music Theory at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where she serves as the coordinator for first-year theory. Her research interests include genre in popular music, music theory pedagogy, and new analytic techniques for understanding music of the 20th and 21st century. Her current projects present an interdisciplinary analysis of the social and musical constructions of genre in American popular music that combines frameworks from music theory, musicology, and ethnomusicology with theories of gender, race, sexuality, and class. Through both her research and teaching, she strives to imagine an equitable and inclusive field of music studies.

Cameron Storey

Cameron Storey just completed the first year of her master's in music theory at Michigan State University. She holds a bachelor's degree in instrumental music education, and she continues to be an active member in K-12 education as the band director of the Montessori Radmoor elementary school. As a theory pedagogue, she seeks to bring representation to otherwise ignored student populations through data analysis. As an analyst, she is interested in music cognition, as a lens through which she evaluates musical theatre to further represent historically marginalized, stigmatized, and disabled people groups. She has presented both nationally and internationally on how those on the autism spectrum experience metric entrainment, and on specific pre-college music theory experiences that enable first-year music student success. This is Cameron's first time in Canada, and looks forward to having a true Tim Horton's experience!

Cara Stroud

Cara Stroud, she/her, is Associate Professor and Area Chairperson of Music Theory at Michigan State University, where she has been teaching since 2016. Cara has also taught as a faculty member or graduate student at Oklahoma State University, Florida State University, and University of North Texas. At MSU, she teaches a recently revised undergraduate curriculum and graduate courses in popular music, music after 1900, and musical meaning. Her research interests focus on issues of form and musical meaning in recent music, including narrativity, intertextuality, the tarantella topic, nostalgia, form in Top-40 pop music, and revising the music theory curriculum. Her work appears in *Music Theory Spectrum, Engaging Students,* and *Music Theory Online*. Her essays appear in *Twentieth- and Twenty-First-Century Song Cycles* (edited by Callahan and Sly, Routledge, 2020), and *Black Composers in the Music Theory Classroom* (edited by Hoag, Routledge, 2023). Cara enthusiastically serves the SMT and MTMW.

James Sullivan

James Sullivan is Associate Professor of Music Theory at Michigan State University, where he teaches undergraduate courses in music theory and aural skills, as well as graduate courses in rhythm and meter, post-tonal music, and music and text. His teaching philosophy centers around the idea that analysis, performance, and listening are interconnected and that developing skills in one area reinforces those in another. His research focuses on rhythm and meter in 20th- and 21st-century music, including issues of analysis, perception, and performance. His publications appear in Music Theory Spectrum, Music Theory Online, Music & Letters, and the volume Twentieth- and Twenty-First-Century Song Cycles: Analytical Pathways Toward Performance (Routledge, 2021).

Benjamin K. Wadsworth

Dr. Benjamin K. Wadsworth is Professor of Music Theory at the Bailey School of Music at Kennesaw State University, where he also serves as Coordinator of Theory, and since November 2026, as Interim Assistant Director. His research focuses on music theory pedagogy, Schenkerian analysis, and a variety of projects inspired by the needs of music theory majors, ranging from Leonard Bernstein's treatment of motives to flow in Kendrick Lamar's albums. His publications include the *Explorations in Music Theory* textbook in undergraduate written theory, co-authored with Dariusz Terefenko from the Eastman School of Music (Routledge, 2025), and an influential article on the pedagogy of Schenkerian analysis (2016). He has presented papers at international, national, and regional conferences. In addition to his role as a music theorist, he is active as a collaborative pianist, organist, choir director, and music arranger.

Florian Walch

Florian Walch is currently Assistant Professor of Music Theory at West Virginia University. Before coming to WVU, he was a Teaching Fellow at the University of Chicago, where he earned his PhD in Music History and Theory in 2023. His research examines tensions between genre, theory, and technology in popular and classical music and Florian's book project, *Generic Outliers: Extreme Metal Across the Digital Divide*, examines how an underground music genre sought to reconcile the pursuit of escalation with inherited traditions. Florian's research has appeared in *Indiana Theory Review* and in the collections *Analyzing Black Metal* and *The Routledge Companion to Metal Music Composition*. Further articles on metal music are forthcoming in *Music Theory Spectrum* and *Metal Music Studies*.

Austin Wilson

Austin Wilson is a PhD student in Music Theory at Florida State University. He received his Master's degree in Music Theory from Michigan State University, and prior to joining the academic side of music, he was a middle and high school band director in rural Illinois. Austin is interested in music theory as service, and his current projects include finishing up an SMT-V video on Topical Irony in Sitcom Theme Songs, designing music cognition experiments to explore how pre-concert lectures and program notes can influence enjoyment and engagement, and expanding the work in this presentation to offer more resources for anyone interested in listening to, analyzing, or teaching music by artists with disabilities. Outside of music theory, Austin is active as a horn player and performs with the Tallahassee Winds.