

Introduction to the Guitar

Music 135

Fall Semester 2006

Tue. & Thurs. 11:30 – 12:20

Room E 129

Mr. Wilson

E 122

Office hours are Tuesday 10:00 to 11:00 or by appointment

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Music is fun! The interesting thing about a “fun” thing is, that at some point in our growing up “fun” became dislocated from the concept of “work”. In fact, work often is associated with the exact opposite of “FUN”! Music 135, introduction to the guitar, is not about taking the fun out of music or the guitar! It is about offering the student the opportunity to develop their musical skill and their ability to play the guitar. When asked “what is the secret to getting great on the guitar?” I must emphatically say “there is no secret. Just have a great time playing and play a lot!” But then the student can ask “But how? I can't play!” Whereupon, we begin a, hopefully, long and rewarding relationship with the guitar in a journey exploring the content of our lives through music.

This class starts with very small steps that will cover the rudiments of how we can talk about music, how you can make music with and for other people or by yourself. By the end of the semester you will have a basic understanding of how to read music, a major and a minor scale, 5 basic chords and how to play that on the guitar with songs like *Dream, Dream, Dream*, and the legendary Spanish piece *Malaguena*. Along with the ability to accompany *and* solo over a Blues progression. We will also play some three and four part ensemble pieces with the whole class with pieces from Africa and Asia.

This class emphasizes the ability to read notes because it is important to have the student have a way to recall the lessons, or discuss the music in a recognizable way. The exercises in this class have a gradual increase in difficulty that will hopefully tease, challenge and inspire the student to want to play the guitar everyday and master the weeks exercise. It is this writer's belief that Fun can be defined as the ability to get lost in an endeavor and then return to it with a desire to improve. This desire to improve is the key to the marriage of work + fun = improvement/accomplishment.

It is very important that the student does not miss class as this is the only chance for the student to hear what the lesson is and a chance to rehearse it along with the instruction of how to read the handouts found on the website.

Class Schedule

week one

What is music? How do you study it? How is it natural?

Rudiments of music and of the guitar. Exercises 1-4

The Blues scale.

week two

A Blues accompaniment. The Major scale. The three stringed chord for G C and D.

Exercises 5-7

week three

I IV V, E| A B and G C D, arpeggios

week four

the minor scale on the first string. The full chord for G C and D. More arpeggios

week five

Balafon, music in three parts for the entire class

week six

Review of the previous six weeks work and a quiz

week seven

I vi ii V I *Dream, Dream, Dream* and the melody

week eight

establish a firm grasp of *Dream, Dream, Dream*

week nine

Malaguena melody and a sense of pulse

week ten

Malaguena a chordal accompaniment.

week eleven

Malaguena

intro, melody, in a different register, chords and rhythmic close.

week twelve

Review of

1. Blues scale and accompaniment
2. G major C major and D major chords with a scale
3. E minor arpeggio with scale
4. Music of African *Balafon*
5. *Dream, Dream, Dream*
6. *Malaguena*

The assignments will be illustrated in class and available on the website.

You are expected to arrive with a printed out version of each weeks assignment and be ready to rehearse it and discuss the finer details of the music in the piece.

Grading Guidelines

1. your attendance. 35%
2. your effort in the class. 35%
3. progress on the guitar. 30%