Introduction to the Guitar
Music 135  
Tue. & Thurs. 12:30 – 11:20  
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%