POINT 1902 LOMA NAZARENE UNIVERSITY	**Department of Music** **MUC 2052-4052 Private Composition/ MUC4095** **1-2 Units**
Spring 2026	

Meeting days: TBA	**Instructor title and name:** Dr. Victor Labenske
Meeting times: TBA	**Phone:** 619-602-1690 (cell)
Meeting location: CMC 011	**E-mail:** vlabensk@pointloma.edu
Final Exam: Jury likely Thurs. 5/7	**Office location and hours:** CM 214 M 2-4 Tu 1:30-2:30 W 10:30-11, 2-2:30 Th 1:15-2:00 F 10:30-11 We might also arrange to meet over lunch (Tu, Th, F)

PLNU Mission

To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service is an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we strive to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

MUC2052 - Introductory lessons in music composition. Develops basic concepts of melodic writing and the manipulation of diverse harmonic, textural and rhythmic materials. May be repeated.

MUC3052 - Continued study of compositional processes through the exploration of nontraditional tonal materials in varied media. Includes introductory compositional experiences that utilize electronic media. May be repeated.

MUC4052 - Development of compositional skills through handling extended forms and larger performance forces, such as choir, band or orchestra. May be repeated.

Expected work at each level is indicated below:

- 2052 (first semester/unit) – exercises in phrasing, form, progression, introduction to 12-tone; projects including a piano piece and an art song
- 2052 (2nd semester/unit) –movements around 5 min. in length; small ensembles including string quartet, woodwind quintet; brass quintet; vocal music
- 3052 – continuation of small ensembles not used in 2052. Exploring non-tonal and non-traditional writing; electronic media; mixed ("Pierrot") ensemble; longer movements, with a final 3052 project approx. 10 minutes in length.
- 4052 – longer works and larger forces (orchestra, concert band); continued exploration of non-tonal and non-traditional writing.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

You will synthesize the following musical grammar and technical components with your own original thought as evidenced in your compositions; At a minimum for each area below, MUC2052 first semester students should demonstrate preliminary skills; MUC2052 second semester students should demonstrate basic skills, MUC3052 students should demonstrate proficient skills. MUC4052 students should demonstrate advanced skills in at least 3 areas as evidenced by the rubric completed by each faculty member at the jury.

- phrasing
- direction and climax
- harmonic process
- formal process
- notational accuracy
- expressive markings
- cohesive musical language
- philosophical/extra-musical connection
- idiomatic knowledge of instruments and voices

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Demonstrate mastery of advanced tonal, timbral and formal concepts.
- Synthesize applications of diverse genres and media in the composition of original works using small and large ensembles, atonal materials, and electronic media.
- Produce a substantial body of original compositions using a variety of tonal languages, performance forces and expressive content.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND RECOMMENDED STUDY RESOURCES

Dorico Notation Software would be very helpful (educational discount available)

Variego, Jorge. *Composing with Constraints.* New York: Oxford UP, 2021.

A metronome and possibly manuscript paper may also be useful.

Your pre-lesson responsibilities are:

1. Have your practice hours and days totaled and ready to report in lesson
2. Have pdf scans of your scores for me preferably by the evening before your lesson (you'll have Finale files (for playback) available in the lesson

- **Weekly Grade** – I will average the 2 components listed below (1. Practice hours and days, and 2. Assignment sheet) to determine a grade for each lesson after lesson #1.
    - ***Composing hours and days***
        - Each week at your lesson, you will report the number of hours and the number of days you composed over the past week.
        - The days practiced (6 days/week = 100%) will be averaged with the practice hours.
        - **For each unit of registration**, you need to compose a minimum of 4 hours per week, 6 days per week.
        - ***Upper division students may choose to individualize this requirement by adjusting or eliminating number of days.***
        - Your recorded composing time should be on assigned composition work only.
        - Practice rooms are available by checking out a key at the music office.
    - ***Assignment sheet -*** Together, we will create an assignment sheet at each lesson; in consultation with you, I will assign a grade for your progress on the previous week's assignments (sharing a .pdf or hard copy of your composition(s) in progress is required and will be part of your grade).

- Students who miss more than 1 lesson (or equivalent) will earn a lower grade:
    - 2 absences = -5% of final studio grade
    - 3 absences = -10% of final studio grade
    - 4 absences = -20% of final studio grade
    - 5 absences = -30% of final studio grade

- ***Completing Compositions***

  If you are studying for **1 unit,** you will complete **2 pieces (or 6 min. of music)** during the semester:

- The **first piece (or first 3 min.)** by **week 8**.
- The **second piece (or last 3 min.)** by **our last lesson (before finals week)**

- If you are studying for **2 units, you** will complete **3 pieces (or 10 minutes of music) during the semester**:

- The **first piece (or first 3 min.)** by **week 5**.
- The **second piece (or next 3 min.)** by **week 10.**
- The **third piece (or last 4 min.)** by **our last lesson (before finals week).**

- INCOMPLETES AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS: You will receive 100% of the earned score for the weekly grade if you choose to complete the composition requirement by the due date. If you choose not to meet the requirement, the grade for that week will be 50% of the weekly grade earned that week. Subsequent weekly grades will be 50% until you have chosen to complete the composition requirement.

- If you would like me to, I will complete a grading rubric for each piece after you complete it, in order to show you the kind of feedback you will receive at the jury. Just ask me to do this.

- ***Composition forum*** **–** Forum enables you to hear each other's work.
  - Forum is held on Friday afternoon April 24 from 3:00-4:00 PM
  - Attendance at the **ENTIRE CLASS** is required.
  - Each missed forum will count as a missed lesson.
  - Music majors must present a piece on at least one forum.

- ***Performances -*** Having your works performed prepare you for your recital and your future work as a professional composer.
  - Department Recitals - Each composition concentration student must have an original work performed on a department recital once per semester. Failure to do so will count as two missed lessons.
  - Rehearsals – Students must arrange at least one rehearsal before the performance. A rehearsal must be videotaped and brought to the following lesson for review with the instructor.
- ***Competitions/Connecting with the Professional Community*** – We are sent to represent God's kingdom and PLNU in our world. Competitions also provide assessment by experts outside of our community.

  - If you are a composition concentration student at the 3052 or 4052 level you need to participate in a competition this semester (unless this is your first semester in this studio). Other composers may elect to participate. You may alternately choose to write a piece for a "call for scores" opportunity. An outstanding opportunity where our students have done well: Piano Guild Composition Competition (Fall) and MTAC Composers Today State Contest (Spring)
  - If this is a requirement for you and you choose not to participate, it will count as a missed lesson.

FINAL EXAMINATION POLICY

The jury (required of students for whom this semester of composition study is required for their major) is the final examination in Private Composition. And successful completion of this class requires taking the jury **on its scheduled day.**

- The jury is usually Thursday of finals week.
- Composition majors are required to take a jury at the end of each term according to the requirements in the catalog.
- Failure to take a required jury will result in course failure.
- The jury grade will count as 1/3 of the final grade.
- The composition jury will consist of a submitting all three compositions completed this semester (two compositions for students studying for 1 unit).

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

Grading components (details below):	Grading scale:	
1. **weekly grade (assignment sheets and practice hours/days)** 2. **composition completion schedule** 3. **jury** 4. **forum attendance** 5. **performance requirement** 6. **Peer review** 7. **attendance** 8. **competition**	A=93-100 A-=90-92 B+=87-89 B=83-86 B-=80-82 C+=77-79	C=73-76 C-=70-72 D+=67-69 D=63-66 D-=60-62 F=0-59

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) POLICY

You are allowed to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini Pro 1.5, GrammarlyGo, Perplexity, etc) to generate ideas, but you are not allowed to use AI tools to generate content (text, video, audio, images) that will end up in any work submitted to be graded for this course; this type of use will be considered **plagiarism**. If you have any doubts about using AI, please gain permission from the instructor.

SPIRITUAL CARE

Please be aware PLNU strives to be a place where you grow as whole persons. To this end, we provide resources for our students to encounter God and grow in their Christian faith.

If you have questions, a desire to meet with the chaplain or have prayer requests you can contact your professor or the Office of Spiritual Life and Formation.

PLNU COPYRIGHT POLICY

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.]

PLNU RECORDING NOTIFICATION

In order to enhance the learning experience, please be advised that this course may be recorded by the professor for educational purposes, and access to these recordings will be limited to enrolled students and authorized personnel.

Note that all recordings are subject to copyright protection. Any unauthorized distribution or publication of these recordings without written approval from the University (refer to the Dean) is strictly prohibited.

PLNU ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. For all student appeals, faculty and students should follow the procedures outlined in the University Catalog. See Academic Policies for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

PLNU ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students with disabilities may request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in the Bond Academic Center (EAC@pointloma.edu or 619-849-2533). Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will work with the student to create an Accommodation Plan (AP) that outlines allowed accommodations. Professors are able to view a student's approved accommodations through Accommodate.

PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester/term about the implementation of their AP in that particular course. Accommodations are not retroactive so clarifying with the professor at the outset is one of the best ways to promote positive academic outcomes.

Students who need accommodations for a disability should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to assure appropriate accommodations can be provided. It is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC. Students cannot assume that because they had accommodations in the past, their eligibility at PLNU is

automatic. All determinations at PLNU must go through the EAC process. This is to protect the privacy of students with disabilities who may not want to disclose this information and are not asking for any accommodations.

LANGUAGE AND BELONGING

Point Loma Nazarene University faculty are committed to helping create a safe and hospitable learning environment for all students. As Christian scholars we are keenly aware of the power of language and believe in treating others with dignity. As such, it is important that our language be equitable, inclusive, and prejudice free. Inclusive/Bias-free language is the standard outlined by all major academic style guides, including MLA, APA, and Chicago, and it is the expected norm in university-level work. Good writing and speaking do not use unsubstantiated or irrelevant generalizations about personal qualities such as age, disability, economic class, ethnicity, marital status, parentage, political or religious beliefs, race, gender, sex, or sexual orientation. Inclusive language also avoids using stereotypes or terminology that demeans persons or groups based on age, disability, class, ethnicity, gender, race, language, or national origin. Respectful use of language is particularly important when referring to those outside of the religious and lifestyle commitments of those in the PLNU community. By working toward precision and clarity of language, we mark ourselves as serious and respectful scholars, and we model the Christ-like quality of hospitality.

If you (or someone you know) have experienced other forms of discrimination, you can find more information on reporting and resources at www.pointloma.edu/nondiscrimination.

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT AND DISCRIMINATION

In support of a safe learning environment, if you (or someone you know) have experienced any form of sexual discrimination or misconduct, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, know that accommodations and resources are available through the Title IX Office at pointloma.edu/Title-IX. Please be aware that under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, faculty and staff are required to disclose information about such misconduct to the Title IX Office.

If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact Counseling Services at counselingservices@pointloma.edu or find a list of campus pastors at pointloma.edu/Title-IX.

If you (or someone you know) have experienced other forms of discrimination or bias, you can find more information on reporting and resources at www.pointloma.edu/bias

PLNU ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICY

Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions, the

faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university withdrawal date or, after that date, receive an "F" grade.

Note: The information below must be included under the "PLNU Attendance and Participation Policy" Section if you are teaching an Online or Hybrid course.

LOMA WRITING CENTER

The Loma Writing Center exists to help all members of the PLNU community cultivate transferable writing skills to engage their academic, professional, personal, and spiritual communities. We work toward this goal by conducting one-on-one consultation sessions, supporting writing education across the PLNU community, and participating in ongoing writing center research.

Getting feedback from the Loma Writing Center while you're in the process of working on an assignment is a great way to improve the quality of your writing and develop as a writer. You are encouraged to talk with a trained writing consultant about getting started on an assignment, organizing your ideas, finding and citing sources, revising, editing for grammar and polishing final drafts, and more. For information about how to make in-person or online appointments, see Loma Writing Center webpage or visit the Loma Writer Center on the first floor of the Ryan Library, room 221.

- Appointment Calendar
- Website
- Email: writingcenter@pointloma.edu

LOMABOOKS INSTRUCTIONS FOR STUDENTS

Note: For courses using materials available through Lomabooks

For both digital and print materials, please add these student instructions to your syllabus and Canvas Course. Prior to the start of class, the PLNU Bookstore will also be sharing student instructions in a standalone email on how to access their content.

This course is part of our course material delivery program, **LomaBooks**. *The bookstore will provide each student with a convenient package containing all required physical materials; all digitally delivered materials will be integrated into Canvas.*

You should have received an email from the bookstore confirming the list of materials that will be provided for each of your courses and asking you to select how you would like to receive any

printed components (in-store pick up or home delivery). If you have not done so already, please confirm your fulfillment preference so the bookstore can prepare your materials.

For more information about **LomaBooks,** *please go:* HERE