

Neumann College  
*MUS 253-Piano Performance Class*  
Dr. Maria Jose Martin  
Fall 2006

“For the formation of the artist, the first pre-requisite  
Is the improvement of the human being.”  
Franz Liszt

Meagher Theatre  
Wednesday: 2:00-3:00  
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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

MUS 253, 254- Piano Performance is designed for the student to develop his or her piano performance skills by performing in front of a small audience of peers every week in the College's Meagher Theatre, thus producing a more comfortable performance level. Relaxation and mental focus techniques, performance poise, and piano technical skills are practiced throughout the semester. Students also become active listeners by offering constructive criticism to the performer.

This semester this course has acquired the exciting component of service learning, so the students will not only benefit from taking part in several performance opportunities but also they will share their love of music and creation with the community. This love of music was also expressed by St. Francis of Assisi in his “Litany of Love”:

“And please me the birds, singing so much  
And please me the flowers in bud-  
So pleases me all that pleases the courtly”

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

- 1) To promote students' professional development and ethical behavior through the service-learning component incorporated in this course.
- 2) To empower students to connect meaningfully with music and understand it as the vehicle of social, cultural, spiritual themes.
- 3) To empower students to connect meaningfully with the children and the older in the community.

## **METHOD IN WHICH SERVICE-LEARNING COURSE REQUIREMENTS ARE MET:**

**PREPARATION:** The semester will be divided into two periods:

In the first period (September and October) students will be practicing technical exercises (including scales, arpeggios, and etudes) and a repertoire of a minimum of three pieces from different music periods (e.g. Bach, Schumann, and Kabalevski)

**ACTION:** During the second part of the semester (November and December), the student will get involved in the presentation of three different performances (dates to be determined):

1. The Assisi House (performance for the older)
2. Child Care Center at Neumann College (performance for children)
3. Final Students' Recital (Meagher Theatre). **This recital will take place December 5, Tuesday, 2006 at 7:00 P.M.**

The students are responsible for providing information and background of the composers and the music to be performed, as well as a question-and answer session following the presentation.

**REFLECTION:** Students must keep a weekly *journal* in which each describes his or her personal in-put and thoughts from a lecturer or guest musician, a concert, the experience of a community service project, a classmate's views or the reflections on an assigned reading of an article. The student might reflect on the following questions:

- 1) What *attracts* me here and *why*?
- 2) What do I *resist* and why?
- 3) What *questions* does this material *raise* for me? *Answer* for me? *Not* answer for me?

Students will record in this journal their musical goals for the semester, the growth they note in their playing and the role of their performances in the community. The journal entries include students' ideas about how they will combine the demands of career development with community service in the future. Students will reflect on topics such as the role of the artist in our society or why music must be used in all societies to improve the lives of people of all economic backgrounds, not just the privileged.

Four times each quarter a *group discussion* is held during the time period to encourage the sharing of experiences.

## **ATTENDANCE AND EVALUATION:**

Students should attend all performance classes, since we will only meet once per week and the progress will be only possible by practice performing in front of an audience. If a student has a conflict, he or she should notify me in advance. More than one unexcused absence may result in a lower grade. Lateness is factored into time absence.

Evaluation is based on:

- Preparation for each performance class, involving a minimum of a half-hour practice everyday.
- Achievement of objectives stated above.
- Individual progress

## **GRADING/ASSESSMENT:**

40% class participation

40% service learning projects: three performances

20% journal

I persuade students to attend at least one classical music recital or concert by the Neumann faculty, choir, jazz ensemble, or the Delaware County Symphony. I especially would like to invite you to the concerto I will be playing at Neumann's Meagher Theatre this semester:

*"A Beethoven Celebration"*: a special performance celebrating the music of one of the Masters of Classical Music with the Wilmington Community Orchestra under the direction of Spanish guest conductor Jose Ignacio Martinez del Pulgar; featuring the soloists Neumann College faculty pianist Maria Jose Martin, violinist Sylvia Ahramjian and cellist Ovidiu Marinescu. Friday, October 27, 2006; 8:00 p.m. Meagher Theatre; Free to Neumann students

Note: Students are encouraged to consult with me anytime if they have questions or problems. I will try to solve these problems to the best of my capabilities. If you have special needs for assistance, please notify me immediately. Reasonable effort will be made to accommodate your special needs.