

Topic

- **The small print**

- Course Objectives:

to develop a detailed understanding and working knowledge of principles of playing and teaching the classic guitar and procedures for their application to individuals in a variety of teaching settings

- Text:

Mastering Guitar Technique: Process and Essence by Christopher Berg, 1997, Mel Bay Publications, Pacific, MO. Selected readings from journals will be assigned and other materials will be given out in class.

- Grades

will be determined by in-class participation during discussions, mid-term exam, in-class presentation, and a final exam. All students will present a well-organized and concise 30-minute oral evaluation of a selected pedagogical book or method. Graduate students will also submit a 10-12 page paper comparing and contrasting two or three similar guitar methods or books. See me for project suggestions or approval.

- Format:

Most of the material will be presented in lecture during the first half of each class. In-class discussions will occupy the second half of each class. We will address the topics below and ideas during the two classes of each week.

- **Week One: The Re-Imagination of Performance and Pedagogy**

- Nature of genius; Teacher as Artist; Overview of guitar pedagogy: history, evolution, detours, and new directions.
- Assignment: “The Re-Imagination of Guitar Pedagogy” by Christopher Berg, Soundboard, Winter 2000 Volume XXVI, No. 3, pages 43-52;

- **Week Two: Our Primary Instrument**

- A discussion of the capabilities and limitations of our bodies (the instrument we use to play our instrument) and the way these relate to performing music on the guitar.
- Assignment: study pages 7-24 in *Mastering Guitar Technique*.

- **Week Three: Our Primary Instrument** (continued)

- Because this information is the cornerstone of our approach to technique and musicianship, we will spend two weeks on it.

- **Week Four: Principles of Positioning and Movement**

- A thorough study of principles of positioning and movement and how these inform seating, right hand positioning, and basic right hand finger movements.
- Assignment: study pages 25-32 and 37-46 in *Mastering Guitar Technique*.

- **Week Five: Left Hand Positioning and Movement; String Crossing**

- A detailed approach to left hand positioning and basic left hand finger movements; string crossing for both hands.
- Assignment: study pages 33-36 and 49-50 in *Mastering Guitar Technique*.

- **Week Six: Visualization**

- An introduction to mental techniques of study; open-position scales; sight-reading.
- Assignment: study “An Innovative Approach to Learning the Guitar” by Aaron Shearer (hand-out).

- **Week Seven: Arpeggio Technique; Tone; Slurs**

- A detailed analysis of sympathetic and opposed motion of the fingers as applied to right hand arpeggio patterns; concepts of tone production.
- Assignment: study pages 59-66 and 92-107 in *Mastering Guitar Technique*.
- (A take-home mid-term exam will be given this week.)

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- Week Eight: **Shifting; Advanced Scale Technique; Fingerboard Harmony**
 - An approach to effortless shifting; a discussion of the various scale systems; and how to reveal the hidden logic of the guitar fingerboard.
 - Assignment: study pages 108-110 in *Mastering Guitar Technique*.
- Week Nine: **Interpretation**
 - A discussion of approaches to music interpretation; how musical ideas can shape technical development but also how a deeper understanding of technique can liberate musical ideas; relationship of fingering to phrasing.
 - Assignment: handout given out in class. (You already have this.)
- Week Ten: **Mastery: Practice as a Noun**
 - A discussion of practice; how strategies need to change as students develop.
- Week Eleven: **Career Options**
 - Creating an effective resume; job search; how to set up a private studio; other possibilities. Guest speakers may be invited this week.
- Week Twelve: **In-Class Presentations**
- Week Thirteen: **In-Class Presentations**
- Week Fourteen: **In-Class Presentations**