

Student Blog Post

Online reference: <https://drjonesmusic.me/qcc-group-project-and-sbp-music-criticism/>

The websites where SBP will be submitted and discussions will take place:

F2 (T 12:10-3): <https://fall2018f2.wordpress.com/>

J2 (T 3:10-6): <https://fall2018j2.wordpress.com/>

Due dates

November 6	In-class group project presentations. Group work process letter due. SBP prompt and rubric distributed
November 13	Student Blog Post first draft due in class
November 20	SBP first drafts returned to you with feedback
November 24	SBP final drafts due to your section website
November 26-December 9	SBP discussions (online)
November 27	SBP final draft process letter due in class

Assignment overview and formatting

Blogs are a lively, personal, flexible, and popular form of online self-publishing and discussion. The largest writing project this semester will be the Student Blog Post (SBP), which is an opportunity for you to take on the role of teacher—you're in charge of the content, the direction of the conversation, and sharing a worthwhile topic with your classmates in your section.

Your final draft will be submitted to the website for your section of Mu 101 along with blog posts from your classmates, creating an online magazine that you will all read and respond to over the course of two weeks (November 26-December 9). During this time, you're also in charge of leading the discussion on your own blog post.

Because the final draft of this assignment will be posted online—and because you have the option of being as creative as you like in the presentation of your ideas—there are no specific formatting requirements for this assignment. There is no word count for this assignment.

If you need to email me a file because you will miss class, name it like this: LastName, FirstInitial – Assignment (Example: Jones, A – SBP first draft OR Jones, A – SBP process letter). The only file formats I will accept are .doc, .docx, or .pdf. Attach your file directly to your email; I will not accept a link to a cloud service (e.g, OneDrive, Google Drive, iCloud).

This isn't a research-based course, so **do not** go digging for outside sources to complete this assignment. You have all the materials you need to successfully complete this assignment already: your ears, your eyes, and your own past experiences or knowledge—wherever you are right now is poised for growth if and only if you actively work to improve your critical thinking.

Grading and late assignments

If you know that you will be absent, make arrangements to submit your work *before* it is due—send it via email, send it to class with a friend, or drop it off in my mailbox.

First drafts are not graded, and late drafts will not be accepted; if a first draft is not submitted on time, it will not receive any feedback. If a rubric is not attached to a first draft, one will not be filled out as part of your feedback.

The final draft of your SBP will receive a letter grade based on the rubric. There are no rewrites or resubmissions on assignments that receive a letter grade. A final draft submitted without a process letter will be marked “late” until a process letter is also submitted. Your process letter must describe what you did to revise your final draft and what you learned in the process.

A late final draft will lose 1 point per day, up to 14 days. After that, late assignments will not be accepted. Assignments are marked as “submitted” the day that I receive them, whether as a hard copy placed in my mailbox in the Music Department office or the date stamp on an email.

Prompt

This semester, we’ve been using pieces of music to learn more about the world around us: how people behave, how people treat each other, how people think, and what people value. Your Student Blog Post will build on all of these lessons by imagining how different people react to the same piece of music.

For your SBP, you will choose one piece of music to discuss through the lens of music criticism, imagining how five distinct, different listeners would react to your piece. You may choose any piece of music from any time period or style that you like. The five listeners whose reactions or criticism you imagine to your chosen piece of music can be real or imaginary people from any time, from any place, and of any identity. At least three listeners you imagine for this assignment must fall into a category of music career we’ve studied in class: performer/conductor, composer, musicologist, ethnomusicologist, or arts administrator.

In your SBP, you will describe the musical features of this piece of music as you imagine your five listeners would hear it—melody, texture, rhythm, harmony, instrumentation, tempo, dynamics, form, text, etc.—AND what they think about those musical features (value judgments or music criticism). Use your experience digging into examples of music criticism for your group project, as well as insights or perspectives you learn from other groups’ presentations, to craft your imagined reactions and to make them as believable, nuanced, and detailed as possible.

The format of your SBP can be essay-like (e.g., describing what each listener would hear, how they would react, and why) or creative (e.g., a script, a story, newspaper articles, journal entries, etc. that reveal what these five listeners would hear, how they would react, and why). Your SBP must include:

- Who are your five listeners? What personality, background, or identity traits of the listener factor into their interpretation (e.g., socio-economic status, ethnicity or race, gender, geography, musical education or training—all the topics of our instructor-led online discussions!)? Your SBP must describe at least two specific traits of each listener.
- What does each listener hear?

- Your SBP must mention at least two specific music details that each listener would hear or think about: melody, harmony, rhythm, meter, dynamics, tempo, texture, instrumentation, form, or text.
- Only one of each listener's details can be the text (words) being sung—each listener cannot only think about text.
- This isn't a play-by-play chronological recounting of the sounds you hear in the piece, but a presentation of specific features/details they would think are most important.
- “So what,” or, why do the musical details they hear matter to them? What's the big picture at stake for each listener?
- A catchy, unique, enticing title
- A working link to the piece of music your SBP is discussing (YouTube or similar) – anywhere in the SBP
- At least one open-ended question to get the conversation started (not a yes/no question) – at the end of the SBP
- Your name – at the end of the SBP

SBP examples

There are links to several past SBP available online, professional music blogs, as well as think-piece essays from professional authors in which they incorporate musical analysis and social commentary. Although none of these examples is an exact template for your SBP, they can give you a sense of the kinds of ideas you can bring into this assignment or additional ways that people talk or think about music: <https://drjonesmusic.me/student-work/>

Student Blog Post: Music Criticism – Rubric (staple to the front of your first draft)

Student: _____ Section: _____

Title	Strong	Good	O.K.	Weak	Points: ___/10
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A strong/good SBP title is catchy, unique, enticing, and is not too long.

Use of technical vocabulary	Strong	Good	O.K.	Weak	Points: ___/10
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A strong/good SBP uses discipline-specific vocabulary appropriately and accurately.

Written skill	Strong	Good	O.K.	Weak	Points: ___/10
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A strong/good SBP is well-organized and generally contains correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling; a strong/good SBP demonstrates appropriate and effective word choice and style. Whether the SBP is essay-like or creative, in a strong/good SBP the prose is easy to follow, precise, and clear; a strong/good SBP avoids both vagueness and redundancy; a good/strong SBP avoids inaccuracies.

Five listeners	Strong	Good	O.K.	Weak	Points: ___/10
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A strong/good SBP describes five different listeners whose identities are clear and distinct: two specific details each, including but not limited to socio-economic status, ethnicity or race, gender, geography, musical education or training. A strong/good SBP includes five listeners whose reactions are compelling, provocative, insightful, or interesting in their contrasts.

Musical descriptions

A strong/good SBP prioritizes two specific musical detail to describe that is interesting, relevant, specific, and sufficient for each listener. Strong/good descriptions use discipline-specific vocabulary and/or evocative language to accurately, thoroughly, and vividly capture the sensation of hearing the musical feature being described. A strong description goes beyond mere description to say why a musical feature is significant to each listener. An OK/weak description is a chronological play-by-play of several details or is not vivid/evocative.

Listener #1: Musical description	Strong	Good	O.K.	Weak	Points: ___/10
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Listener #2: Musical description	Strong	Good	O.K.	Weak	Points: ___/10
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Listener #3: Musical description	Strong	Good	O.K.	Weak	Points: ___/10
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Listener #4: Musical description	Strong	Good	O.K.	Weak	Points: ___/10
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Listener #5: Musical description	Strong	Good	O.K.	Weak	Points: ___/10
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