COURSE SYLLABUS

SEMESTER COURSE OFFERED: Applied Guitar (private lessons)

DEPARTMENT: Music

COURSE NUMBER: MUSC 1114 TG

NAME OF COURSE: Guitar

NAME OF INSTRUCTOR: Terry Gaschen

Overview:

Music 1114 is a course in Classical guitar and as such the subject matter derives completely from the Classical repertoire for guitarists. There is no place for pick playing in the Classical style.

The technique of the right hand might be described as using the thumb and first three fingers (and occasionally the fourth finger) as separate picks: often known as “finger style”. The work of the left hand is very much like that for electric or steel string playing with the absence of certain key elements involving string bending and other effects peculiar to each instrument.

The instrument of the Classical Guitarist is the nylon stringed instrument known as the Classical Guitar. It is primarily an acoustic guitar. You won’t be plugging it in often. The Classical Guitar is old, centuries old, and it connects us both to the past and the future through an instrument which has achieved an improbable prominence in contemporary culture, especially through electric music.

The music of the Classical Guitar extends from transcriptions of Lute and Vihuela to original guitar compositions music to contemporary compositions, a period exceeding five centuries. This vast repetoire is where we concentrate our efforts.

Course Objectives:

1) Gain proficiency in Classical Guitar technique and expression.
2) Learn to organize practices effectively.
3) Improve sight reading skills for guitar.
4) Learn the guitar fretboard.
5) Learn scales, exercises and arpeggios.
6) Be able to perform classical compositions.

Grading:
Grading has a subjective aspect. The instructor’s assessment will be based upon the student’s effort, attitude and improvement during the semester as well as mastery of the musical skills appropriate to the student’s relative level of attainment. In general, students will not be penalized for lack of skills or experience but will be expected to make the best use of what aptitude they have in achieving the course objectives. You will memorize at least two pieces for performance and you will be tested for sight reading.

**Repertoire:**

Starting with pieces by Shearer, Carulli, Sor, Carcassi in Aaron Shearer's Classic Guitar Technique, Studies by Leo Brouwer and Villa-Lobos and more advanced material from a wide assortment of periods and styles.

**Time Component:**

It takes time to build a guitarist and you will be required to spend at least one half hour of structured practice each day. How much you spend in unstructured practice is your own affair as long as you get in the structured practice first. Playing guitar demands a real commitment of time and no one will be penalized for spending more than the half hour practicing. Every extra moment will be well worth your time.

**Problem Solving:**

Problems with technical or musical weaknesses have to be solved by first noting the problem, isolating it, and then repeating the motions or the sounds until achieving a more favorable result. Exercises can be built out of passages and scales and arpeggios anticipate many technical and musical problems. Listening is the most valuable sense to the guitarist, followed by quick, aware fingers. Much of practice should be guided by the mantra: listen, analyze, isolate, repeat. It is a simple formula you will learn to follow in order to make your practices more productive.

**Listening to Music**

You will be required to listen to Classical Guitar music on YouTube, the list of which I will give you later.