

Student Evaluations from MUPG 475

"Completely changed my perspective of pedagogy. I came into this class with pre-conceptions about good teaching which this course challenged. I come away from the course embracing almost contrary opinions to what I had held before, recognizing the logic and more desirable philosophies that underlie this counter model. If more young teachers could be exposed to the ideas of this class, the new generation of students (and other people with whom we have personal relationships) would benefit enormously."

"Dr. Thompson is the best teacher I have ever encountered in my music and academic schooling. He is respectful of students opinions and took the time to know each of us. He is excellent at teaching concepts from his own personal experiences and from others experiences. I cannot emphasize how incredible this man is at teaching, how fair he is with his assignments so we are actually able to learn from our work, and how he acts as a guide for the class sessions rather than a leader for the entire duration of class. He is a rare teacher to come across."

"Dr. Thompson brings wisdom, knowledge and humour to the class. It is evident that he has many years of experience as a teacher, and has undergone much trial and error to reach this point in his teaching career. It is also clear, however, that he is still always learning, as he often makes note of statements students have made during class, for himself to reflect upon later. If he does not have an answer to a question immediately after it is posed to him, he reflects upon it for however many days he needs before returning to the student and answering it to the best of his ability. To me, this demonstrates a huge level of respect that he holds towards his students. The classes were three hours but never felt that long, as there was always a balance between his ideas, ideas of others (for instance TED talks) and student discussions."

"A course that provides critical thinking, philosophical approaches to many different concepts of life and human interaction, and a course that enhances student maturity. Much wisdom, much respect for Dr. Merlin Thompson."

"This course was amazing! I have learned so much from these few weeks about the instruction of music from a variety of perspectives: My own, Dr. Thompson's, history, music professionals and scholars, performers, etc."

"This is a great course that provides students with an interesting and engaging perspective on music teaching. I think this course will greatly influence how I decide to teach in the future. Lots of great philosophies and ideas explored in numerous class discussions."

"This course is extremely clarifying for music students who want to begin teaching but do not know where to start. Not only is Dr. Thompson's teaching experience an asset to this course, students also learn a considerable amount from their fellow classmates, through the discussions, stories and connections that arise during class. The teaching methods displayed in the course are influenced by the Suzuki method, but this is not a Suzuki class. Rather, it brings to light many of the reasons behind such methods, suggesting why the need was present for shifts in teaching styles; this allows us as students to begin recognizing the positive and negative qualities of various methods, which will ultimately help us to develop our own voice as teachers. The course is equally beneficial to students specializing in any instrument, and I certainly learned a lot of valuable information that could be applied both to my own piano students, and to teaching children in general. Coming into the course, I did not feel comfortable teaching beginner piano students. Now I feel equipped with enough knowledge to properly meet a young student's needs, which I think is remarkable considering the short length of the course."

"A terrific discussion-based course on subject matters that are very important to all music students, regardless of whether they think they will have an active use for leaning about studio pedagogy--there is still a tremendous amount to learn in this class."

"Meaningful topics discussion and inspirational reading."

"I am very excited to start teaching music! This course gave me insight into the roles of teachers, as well as how students are influenced by them both musically and in their personal lives. It also put into perspective all that my music teachers have done for me and how they have contributed to my musicianship."

"Wonderful class. I think this class is beneficial for anyone who would like to be a private teacher, and is an essential tool to any performer at the school."