

This quarter, we'll cover six official topics; two predetermined by the instructor and four more to be decided collaboratively as we go. Each topic will get a full week of discussion. It's possible that some topics we cover will be subtopics of other topics we cover. Some possible topics are given in the [intro lecture slides](#) from January 4.

For each official topic, there will be a small number of "root papers" that we use as starting points. For example:

- For January 9-11, we'll talk about **music performance analysis**, and the root paper will be [this survey by Lerch et al., 2021](#) (Transactions of ISMIR).
- For January 16-18, we'll talk about **optical music recognition**, and the root paper will be [this survey by Calvo-Zaragoza et al., 2019](#) (ACM Computing Surveys).

In addition, you will choose three branch papers to read on each topic (more details below). You should read the root paper and your branch papers well enough to be able to discuss them in class.

What to do for each topic:

1. Read the root paper. Take notes to help yourself organize the main points in the paper. What are the main directions we could take in our exploration? Which ones are most interesting to you? Which ones center *musicians as users*? What important gaps do you feel you need to fill in to better understand the paper? What questions does this paper raise? Be prepared to summarize the paper in about five minutes.
2. Create a google doc in the topic's subdirectory of [this google folder](#) (make the title your name), and put there a list of papers you might read on this topic. (Style this list like you would a bibliography: include authors, title, publication venue, year, and a URL.) The list can be as long as you'd like, but ultimately you are expected to carefully read three additional papers (one before Tuesday). **The main rules are that the paper should be peer-refereed, academic work, and it should be relevant to the week's topic.** It's perfectly reasonable to look at a paper (read its abstract and introduction) before deciding whether to add it to your list. When you add a paper to your list, also make a note about why you think it might be worth a close look. You might add to your list:
 - A paper that you know about or discover that might have been a better choice as a root paper.
 - A paper cited by the root paper that seems important (either because it's "seminal" or because it might fill in a gap for you), or that seems interesting to you.
 - A paper cited by a paper you considered (whether or not you added it to the list).
 - A paper you've heard of from some other channel (e.g., a web search you did on this topic).
 - A paper from a recent conference that looks relevant and interesting to you. The ISMIR conference is a good starting point; Noah made a [list](#) of interesting papers at ISMIR 2023 and organized them by topic. You may also find relevant papers at ICASSP, NeurIPS, and more.
 - A paper you see in someone else's list (please give them credit in your note).

3. Carefully read three papers from your list and, for each, prepare a page of notes in case you are called on to discuss what you read. You don't need to share these notes with anyone (but if it's helpful to you, you can put them in the same google doc as your list). **You should read at least one before the Tuesday class meeting, and you should read all three before the Thursday class meeting.** It's okay to start a paper and decide partway through to abandon it; if you do this, leave some notes in your list about the paper and why you didn't finish it.
4. For each paper you read, register it using [this form](#). **Do this only after you finish the paper.**
5. A typical Tuesday class:
 - We'll start with a small group discussion of the root paper. Each group should spend five minutes discussing questions anyone has about this paper or sharing a bit about other papers people in the group have read, including recommendations.
 - We'll spend some time with these questions in a class-wide discussion. This will guide us toward discussion of papers that you've selected and read.
 - If discussion slows down, the moderator (instructor or TA) might call on you to talk about a paper you've read. Expect this to happen a few times during the quarter.
6. Thursday classes will be similar, starting with a small group recap of Tuesday's discussion and then a class-wide discussion of the remaining branch papers. We probably won't get to every paper, and that's okay – there's always more to read.
7. Your final task is to post to the class discussion board your thoughts about where future work on this topic might still go, based on what you've read and what we've discussed. This post doesn't need to be long, but it's only worth doing if you have some original thoughts about where research in this area is headed. One driving question to guide you: what topics should we delve into more deeply? Feel free to propose a candidate for a root paper launching us into a new topic.

How does this affect my grade?

- The seminar portion of the class is worth 45 points. There are multiple ways to get to 45 points and no extra credit once you pass 45 points.
- For each topic, you will earn 6 points if you submit the [form](#) on time (once before Tuesday's class, and a second and third time before Thursday's class) reporting the three papers you're an "expert" on. That's 2 points per paper, and 36 points for the whole quarter if you do everything on time.
 - If you miss a deadline, you can get 1 point per paper if you submit before Friday at noon, up to three papers.
 - No points will be awarded for papers after that.
- A thoughtful future work post will earn 2 points. If you do this for all six topics, that's 12 points.
 - If you propose a root paper for a future topic, and it's chosen for topic 3, 4, 5, or 6, you'll get a third point.

- Every time you are called on in class to summarize one of your branch papers, you have the opportunity to earn 3 points. You should assume you'll be called on at least three times during the quarter, but probably not much more than that, so be prepared. You can volunteer in advance by noting on [the form](#) that you really want to discuss the paper.
 - If you do this 3 times, you will have met the target of 9 points for discussion, but there is no limit to how many times you do this.
 - If you're not up for summarizing a paper, it's okay to say "pass" and take zero points this time. If you're not there when you're called on, this counts as "passing" on the opportunity. There's no guarantee about when your next opportunity will come around.
- If you're keeping track, you'll notice that the total number of possible points is 48 plus three times the number of times you're called on in class, plus the number of times you convince the instructor to follow your proposed future root paper ... which is more than 45. That means we're *expecting* that you'll miss a reading/future research deadline or two, or pass on summarizing a paper in class. There are multiple ways to get to 45 points, so just keep at it and focus on making the seminar portion of the course as interesting for yourself as you can!

Suggested checklist each week:

- ☐ Monday: read the root paper, take notes, and start a list of potential branch papers.
- ☐ Tuesday before class: read your first branch paper and submit [the form](#). Be ready to discuss the paper if you're called on.
- ☐ Wednesday: read another branch paper and submit [the form](#).
- ☐ Thursday before class: read the third branch paper and submit [the form](#). Be ready to discuss any of your branch papers if you're called on.
- ☐ Friday before noon: post to Ed your thoughts about future work in this area.

The instructor estimates you will spend one hour per paper (i.e., four hours of reading and note-taking per week).