

STUDIES IN MUSIC MUGC 4890

Fall 2026 ■ MUGC 4890.001(11061) ■ 11:15am-12:05pm ■ Recital Hall

Professor: Brian Sanders

Office: 204A

Hours: By appointment

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This lecture course examines two essential questions: “What does it take to become a successful collegiate student?” and “What does it take to become successful in my career?” This survey-style class will examine topics that create the fabric of exceptional students and professionals. Topics will focus on audition preparation and admissions, personal, behavioral, and career development, planning and time management, interview skills, resume/cover letter development, networking skills, academic advising, and mental health. The course culminates in a major project of the student’s choosing that will aid their path towards a successful collegiate and professional career.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Develop a better understanding of what it takes to be a successful college student.
2. Develop a better understanding of what it takes to be a successful music major.
3. Develop a better understanding of what it takes to be a successful in their musical profession.
4. Explore degree options within the College of Music and evaluate which program aligns best with their goals.
5. Prepare for and complete the application and audition process for the College of Music.

MATERIALS

The following materials are to be brought into every class to complete in-class activities, homework assignments, and major project workshops:

- Mobile Phone
- Laptop/Tablet
- Quality headphones
- Electronic calendar
- Writing Utensil

GRADING

This course is worth a total of 500 points.

Class Participation:	20% (160 points)
Class Assignments:	30% (190 points)
Concert Attendance:	10% (50 points)
Major Project:	40% (100 points)

GRADING SCALE

A: 90-100	A: 450-500 points
B: 80-89	B: 400-449 points
C: 70-79	C: 350-399 points
D: 60-69	D: 300-349 points
F: 0-59	F: 0-299 points

The University of North Texas does not use plus (+) or minus (–) grades. For more information on the University's grading rubric, please refer to the link below:

<https://registrar .unt.edu/grades/understand-your-grade-report.html>

ATTENDANCE

This is an attendance-graded class. Each student is permitted two absences and expected to communicate absences in advance. After the second absence, each additional absence will lower your final grade by one full letter. Two tardies are equivalent to one unexcused absence. Absences and tardiness will affect the final course grade as follows:

- 0-2 absences: No effect on grade
- 3 absences: Final course grade lowered by 10%
- 4 absences: Final course grade lowered by 20%
- 5 absences: Final course grade lowered by 30%
- 6 or more absences: Final course grade = F

Excused absences do not count towards your grade. Excused absences include official University or College of Music activities, family and medical emergencies, and all COVID-related procedures. If there are extenuating circumstances, the absence policy can be discussed at the discretion of the professor. Please note that students may not schedule their end-of-semester jury during any regularly scheduled class.

PARTICIPATION

Participation accounts for 20% (100 points) of your final grade.

While evaluation is at the professor's discretion, students who attend class regularly and engage in all class activities should easily earn full participation credit.

ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments collectively account for 40% (200 points) of your final grade.

Detailed descriptions, rubrics, and due dates for each assignment are available on Canvas. You are responsible for checking Canvas regularly for updates. All assignments are due at 11:59pm on their respective due date.

All assignments must be submitted on time. Late work will not be accepted.

*No assignments will be accepted after Reading Day: December 4 (Friday).

SCHEDULE

Week	Date	Topic	Assignment
1	8/17	Syllabus Admissions/Audition Process	First Day Survey (<i>In Class</i>)
2	8/24	How to be successful in college and beyond *Guest speaker (Dean Richmond)	Admissions Overview/ Dean Richmond Q&A
3	8/31	Major Project Roadmap *Guest Speaker Joel Wiley	Joel Wiley Q&A Canvas Profile/Professor Email/Calendar
4	9/07	LABOR DAY (NO CLASS!)	
5	9/14	Careers in Music/Department Day	(Major Project Roadmap DUE!)
6	9/21	Alternative Careers in Music *Guest Speakers (Giant Boykin and Jae Park)	
7	9/28	Academic Advising (Pre-Advising Workshop)	
8	10/05	Audition/Screening Prep (<i>tentative</i>)	Screening Assignment (<i>tentative</i>)
9	10/12	Musician Portfolio *(Guest Speaker – Jessica Muniz)	
10	10/19	Finding Your Way/Atomic Habits	Habits Survey (<i>In Class</i>)

11	10/26	Practicing & Listening	Practice Reflection Video
12	11/02	Giving Feedback and Peer Review	Peer Review Assignment (<i>In Class</i>)
13	11/09	Music Library Presentation (<i>pending</i>)	
14	11/16	Major Project Day	
15	11/23	THANKSGIVING (NO CLASS!)	
16	11/30	Major Project Day	Major Project Due!

MAJOR PROJECT

The Major Project accounts for 20% (100 points) of your final grade.

The Major Project for this semester is to fully prepare your application and audition process. This project, along with the course, is designed to help you succeed at UNT.

Step 1 - Roadmap: 10% (50 points): Upload a complete set of steps to Canvas that outlines your process and music selection.

Step 2 - Project: 10% (50 points): Upload evidence that you have completed your admissions and audition process (details in assignment module on Canvas)

EXTRA CREDIT ASSIGNMENT

To become a career musician, you must sacrifice time to develop your skills, knowledge, and relationships. When learning about the amount of work it takes to make it in this industry, I want to encourage you to take time for yourself and for your loved ones.

To emphasize the importance of that balance, you can earn extra credit by engaging in a relaxing, fun, or rejuvenating activity at any point this semester. This can be done by yourself or with other classmates.

To earn the extra credit, simply:

1. Take a photo of yourself engaging in a self-care activity.
2. Go to the Self-Care Extra Credit assignment on Canvas.
3. Upload your photo.
4. Click submit.

Completing this assignment will increase your final grade by 3%. For example, if you finish the semester with an 88% and complete this assignment, your final grade will be 91%. *This assignment is entirely optional.*

CONCERT ATTENDANCE

The Concert Attendance Assignment accounts for 10% (50 points) of your final grade.

You are required to attend five concerts total for the semester:

- Three UNT ensemble concerts:

UNT's flagship ensembles present professional-quality concerts throughout the semester. To receive credit, you must upload a photo of your face with the program and the venue in view. If these three are not legible in the photo it will not be counted.

- Two additional concerts:

Attend one concert within your desired department/instrument group and one concert outside of your department (on- or off-campus). To receive credit for these concerts, upload a selfie from the performance via Canvas, along with a brief statement (1-2 sentences) describing the performance. The sentences do not need to be complete, but they do need to contain information from the concert such as date, time, venue, performer, and any additional detail to your experience. Submission will not be counted if there is any missing information.

The concert photos and descriptions are due Thursday, December 4th, at 11:59pm.

Eligible Concerts: https://calendar.unt.edu/UNTCOM_events/calendarLinks to an external site.

Performing Ensemble	Location	Date and Time (all times pm)
Symphony Orchestra	Murchison Performing Arts Center	9/9 @ 7:30pm
Wind Orchestra	Murchison Performing Arts Center	9/10 7:30pm

Concert Orchestra	Murchison Performing Arts Center	9/16 @ 7:30pm
Wind Symphony	Murchison Performing Arts Center	9/17 @ 7:30pm
Spectrum: A Performance of New Works by North Texas Composers	Merrill Ellis Intermedia Theatre	9/21 @ 8:00pm
Wind Ensemble	Murchison Performing Arts Center	9/24 @ 7:30pm
ChoralFest!	Murchison Performing Arts Center	9/25 @ 7:30pm
Concert Winds	Murchison Performing Arts Center	9/28 @7:30pm
Baroque Orchestra and A Capella	Voertmon Concert Hall	10/3 @ 8:00pm
Brass Band	Murchison Performing Arts Center	10/5 @ 7:30pm
One O'Clock Lab Band	Syndicate @ the Union	TBA
Chamber Music Concert	Voertmon Concert Hall	10/12 @ 8:00pm
Early Music Chamber	Voertmon Concert Hall	10/19 @ 8:00pm
Five & Four O'Clock Lab Bands	Lab West	11/3 @ 8:00pm
Two & Three O'Clock Lab Bands	Lab West	11/9 @ 8:00pm
Seven & Six O'Clock Lab Bands	Lab West	11/10 @ 8:00pm

University Singers	Winspear Hall	11/10 @ 7:30pm
Horn Choirs Concert	Voertmon Concert Hall	11/11 @ 6:30pm
Concert Choir	Murchison Performing Arts Center	11/13 @ 7:30pm
A Cappella Choir	Murchison Performing Arts Center	11/14 @ 7:30pm

**Concert attendance does not count if you are performing. You must be in the audience to have it count. This does include programs where you are performing in an ensemble with another ensemble. Meaning if you are on the program at all, it will not count.*

***Performance in the Lyric Theater will count towards UNT ensemble credits*

UNIVERSITY STATEMENTS

Defibrillators in the College of Music:

- Music Building: Across from the west side of the Music Commons, directly across from the elevator
- Music Building: Third floor hallway, across from the staircase that comes up from the Copy Room.
- Next to Room 322
- Music Building: Across from the Copy Room next to Room 293
- Music Building: Voertman Lobby by the big double set of doors that lead out to the courtyard
- Music Building: Main Office (247) under the student worker's desk
- Music Annex: Next to room MA117, near the triple set of doors on the east side of the building
- Music Practice Building North: First floor on the Avenue C side
- Music Practice Building South: First floor on the Avenue C side
- Bain Hall: First floor by the restrooms
- Murchison Performing Arts Center: Located off the main lobby, beyond the grand staircase, across from the single occupancy restroom (next to the public water fountains)

Academic Integrity:

Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a “0” for that particular assignment or exam [or specify alternative sanction, such as course failure].

Additionally, the incident will be reported to the Dean of Students (Office of Academic Integrity), who may impose further penalty. According to the UNT catalog, the term “cheating” includes, but is not limited to: a. use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; b. dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; c. the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university; d. dual submission of a paper or project, or resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor(s); or e. any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage. The term “plagiarism” includes, but is not limited to: a. the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment; and b. the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

Link: <https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003>

Student Behavior:

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor’s ability to conduct a class or other students’ opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student’s conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university’s expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, fieldtrips, etc.

Link: <https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct>

Access to Information - Eagle Connect:

Your access point for business and academic services at UNT occurs at my.unt.edu. All official communication from the university will be delivered to your Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect.

Link: eagleconnect.unt.edu/

ODA Statement:

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the

Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter. You can now request your Letters of Accommodation ONLINE and ODA will mail your Letters of Accommodation to your instructors. You may wish to begin a private discussion with your professors regarding your specific needs in a course. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester. For additional information see the Office of Disability Access.

Link: disability.unt.edu

Phone: (940) 565-4323

Health and Safety Information:

Link: <https://music.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness>

Registration Information for Students:

Link: <https://registrar.unt.edu/students>

Academic Calendar, Fall 2025:

Link: <https://registrar.unt.edu/registration/fall-academic-calendar.html>

Financial Aid and Satisfactory Academic Progress:

A student must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) to continue to receive financial aid. Students must maintain a minimum 2.0 cumulative GPA in addition to successfully completing a required number of credit hours based on total hours registered. Students cannot exceed attempted credit hours above 150% of their required degree plan. If a student does not maintain the required standards, the student may lose their financial aid eligibility. Students holding music scholarships must maintain a minimum 2.5 overall cumulative GPA and 3.0 cumulative GPA in music courses. If at any point you consider dropping this or any other course, please be advised that the decision to do so may have the potential to affect your current and future financial aid eligibility. It is recommended that you to schedule a meeting with an academic advisor in your college or visit the Student Financial Aid and Scholarships office to discuss dropping a course before doing so.

Link: <http://financialaid.unt.edu/sap>

Retention of Student Records:

Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Canvas online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic

environment for one year. You have a right to view your individual record; however, information about your records will not be divulged to other individuals without the proper written consent. You are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the university's policy in accordance with those mandates.

Link: <http://ferpa.unt.edu/>

Counseling and Testing:

UNT's Center for Counseling and Testing has an available counselor for students in need. Please visit the Center's website for further information:

Link: <http://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>.

UNT Mental Health Resources:

Link: <https://disparities.unt.edu/mental-health-resources>

Add/Drop Policy:

Please be reminded that dropping classes or failing to complete and pass registered hours may make you ineligible for financial aid. In addition, if you drop below half-time enrollment, you may be required to begin paying back your student loans. See Academic Calendar for additional add/drop Information.

Link: <https://registrar.unt.edu/registration/fall-academic-calendar.html>

Student Resources:

The University of North Texas has many resources available to students. For a complete list, go to:

Link: <https://success.unt.edu/aa-sa-resources>

Care Team:

The Care Team is a collaborative interdisciplinary committee of university officials that meets regularly to provide a response to student, staff, and faculty whose behavior could be harmful to themselves or others.

Link: <https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care-team>