

**FUNDAMENTALS OF CONDUCTING**  
**MUAG 3800.002; MUAG 5805.001**  
**FALL, 2021**

**Instructor** Dr. Clay Couturiaux, Assistant Director of Orchestral Studies

**Office** Murchison Performing Arts Center, Room 137  
940-565-3732 (Voicemail answered 24 hours)  
[clay.couturiaux@unt.edu](mailto:clay.couturiaux@unt.edu)

**Course Content:**

The Fundamentals of Conducting course is designed for the development of a professional conducting approach. The course will cover beginning and intermediate conducting techniques, score analysis and preparation, development of visual and aural skills, and transposition skills.

**Required materials:**

- (1) Fundamentals of Conducting workbook. [Provided by instructor.]
- (2) Baton.
- (3) Primary instrument (secondary instruments as requested)
- (4) Smartphone to video record weekly conducting assignments.

**Course Purpose:**

This course partially fulfills requirements undergraduate degrees for music majors.

**Expected Outcomes:**

Students will have made significant improvements in knowledge and ability in the following areas:

1. Physical technique of conducting.
2. Score study and analysis.
3. Orchestral transpositions.
4. Aural skills.

**Course Requirements and expectations:**

This is a *skills based course*, so regular attendance is essential. (See specifics regarding class attendance on page 2.) Regular and thorough preparation for class is also required; this means *thorough* preparation of class conducting materials before each class session as well as practice of individual parts *before* each class session.

**Course Times and Location:**

M W F; 9:00am – 9:50am; College of Music Room 232

**Final Written Exam:**

Wednesday, December 8, 2021; 8:00am-10:00am

**Grading: Conducting Assignments (cumulative) 40%; Terms Quizzes (cumulative) 10%;  
Written Exams (other than final, cumulative) 20%; Final Written Exam 10%; Final Conducting Exam 10%;  
Rehearsal and Concert Observations 10%.**

## PREREQUISITES

Junior (or higher) in good standing.  
Successful completion of MUTH 2500/2510

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

**Attendance** Attendance is expected for all scheduled classes. The nature of the course requires active participation and interaction among all class members at all times. Absences will result in a lowering of the final grade as follows:

- 2 no affect
- 3 reduction of 1 letter grade
- 4 reduction of 2 letter grades
- 5 reduction of 3 letter grades
- 6(+) grade of WF if withdrawal is requested, or final grade of F

\*Each tardy will be counted as  $\frac{1}{2}$  an absence

### Conducting Assignments

Weekly conducting assignments will be given and graded. Each student will be expected to conduct the assigned musical excerpts in class with the class members as the ensemble. Absence from class on a pre-assigned conducting assignment will result in the student being passed over for that conducting sequence, with a grade of zero or no credit. The instructor, in advance of the absence, may approve exceptions. The opportunity to make up a missed conducting assignment will be at the discretion of the instructor and will be rare.

### Rehearsal Observations

Each student is required to submit two rehearsal observations, each reflecting thirty minutes spent in a university or professional (conducted) ensemble rehearsal. The student must be an observer and not a member of the ensemble. The reports must represent at least *two different performing mediums* (choral, orchestral, or winds) as well as *two different conductors*.

All reports must be completed and submitted into Canvas by the deadlines listed below in the Schedule of Classes. The length must be a minimum of 700 words. Failure to complete the minimum word requirement will result in the reduction of the final grade for the observation by one letter grade. Correct spelling and the use of the English language is expected.

In your observation, consider the following:

1. Baton (or hand) technique
  - Is it clear/understandable?
  - Is it effective musically?
  - Is it visible?
2. Verbalizations
  - Does the conductor talk too much?
  - Do the performers respond well to the conductor's instructions?
  - Was the conductor professional in his/her comments?
3. Rehearsal technique
  - Is there a plan to the rehearsal?
  - Is the ensemble's interest focused on the music?
  - Is there an opportunity to relax in rehearsal?
  - What was accomplished during the rehearsal?
4. Musicality
  - Does the conductor insist upon dynamics, accents, phrasing, and rhythmic exactitude?
  - Were the balances correct, solo lines brought out, and/or supporting lines appropriate?
  - Were intonation discrepancies addressed?
  - Did the conductor insist on the correct style of each work?

### **Concert Observations**

Each student is required to submit two concert observations of conducted performances. The student must observe from the audience and may not be a performer during any portion of the concert. The reports must represent two different performing mediums (choral, orchestral, or winds) as well as different conductors.

All reports must be completed and submitted into Canvas by the deadlines listed below in the Schedule of Classes. The length must be a minimum of 700 words. Failure to complete the minimum word requirement will result in the reduction of the final grade for the observation by one letter grade. Correct spelling and the use of the English language is expected.

In your observation, consider the following:

1. Stage Presence
  - How does the conductor enter the stage?
  - How does the conductor acknowledge the audience and the performers?
  - What does the conductor do between movements of a multi-movement work?
  - How does the conductor acknowledge soloists or featured sections?
  - How does the conductor acknowledge the entire ensemble?
  - How does the conductor exit the stage?
2. Baton (or hand) technique
  - Is it clear/understandable?
  - Is it effective musically?
  - Is it visible?
3. Musicianship
  - In what ways does the conductor enable the musical performance? (mechanics, musicianship, etc.)
  - How does the conductor visibly communicate style and musicianship to the ensemble?
  - Other general observations.

### **Terms Quizzes**

Six terms quizzes will coincide with Terms Lists in the Fundamentals of Conducting workbook.

### **Written Exams**

Tests include questions pertaining to class discussions and the Fundamentals of Conducting workbook.

### **Final Conducting Exam**

Exam includes excerpts conducted throughout the session.

## SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

|           |    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-----------|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| August    | 23 | •Course and syllabus overview; anatomy of the beat; basic concepts of use of gravity, acceleration/deceleration; conducting areas/planes; five basic conducting patterns; discussion of the “four hinges”; basics of transpositions |
|           | 25 | •Anatomy of the beat; basic concepts of use of gravity, acceleration/deceleration; conducting areas/planes; five basic conducting patterns; discussion of the “four hinges”; basics of transpositions                               |
|           | 27 | •Anatomy of the beat; basic concepts of use of gravity, acceleration/deceleration; conducting areas/planes; five basic conducting patterns; discussion of the “four hinges”; basics of transpositions                               |
| September | 30 | •Time beating in 2, 3, & 4; preparatory gestures and cut-off’s. [excerpts 1, 1.5, 2, 2.5, 3, 4, & 4.5]                                                                                                                              |
|           | 1  | •Time beating in 2, 3, & 4; preparatory gestures and cut-off’s. [excerpts 1, 1.5, 2, 2.5, 3, 4, & 4.5]                                                                                                                              |
|           | 3  | •Time beating in 2, 3, & 4; preparatory gestures and cut-off’s. [excerpts 1, 1.5, 2, 2.5, 3, 4, & 4.5]<br>•Terms Quiz #1 due in Canvas by 10:00pm                                                                                   |
|           | 6  | No Class [Labor Day]                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|           | 8  | •Time beating in 2, 3, & 4; preparatory gestures and cut-off’s. [excerpts 1, 1.5, 2, 2.5, 3, 4, & 4.5]                                                                                                                              |
|           | 10 | •Time beating in 1; more sophisticated preparatory gestures; passive vs active gestures. [excerpts 5, 6, & 7]<br>•Rehearsal Observation #1 due in Canvas by 10:00pm                                                                 |
|           | 13 | •Time beating in 1; more sophisticated preparatory gestures; passive vs active gestures. [excerpts 5, 6, & 7]                                                                                                                       |
|           | 15 | •Time beating in 1; more sophisticated preparatory gestures; passive vs active gestures. [excerpts 5, 6, & 7]                                                                                                                       |
|           | 17 | •Time beating in 1; more sophisticated preparatory gestures; passive vs active gestures. [excerpts 5, 6, & 7]<br>•Terms Quiz #2 due in Canvas by 10:00pm                                                                            |
|           | 20 | •Conducting in divided patterns; more sophisticated conducting using passive vs active gestures; cues. [excerpts 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, & 13]                                                                                            |
|           | 22 | •Conducting in divided patterns; more sophisticated conducting using passive vs active gestures; cues. [excerpts 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, & 13]                                                                                            |
|           | 24 | •Separation of hands exercises.<br>•Written Exam #1 -- Basic conducting concepts; transpositions; terms, all concepts discussed to this point. [due in Canvas by 10:00pm]                                                           |
|           | 29 | •Conducting in divided patterns; more sophisticated conducting using passive vs active gestures; cues. [excerpts 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, & 13]                                                                                            |
| October   | 1  | •Conducting in divided patterns; more sophisticated conducting using passive vs active gestures; cues. [excerpts 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, & 13]                                                                                            |
|           | 4  | •Fermatas [excerpts 14, 15, 16, & 17]<br>•Terms Quiz #3 due in Canvas by 10:00pm                                                                                                                                                    |
|           | 6  | •Fermatas [excerpts 14, 15, 16, & 17]                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|           | 8  | •Fermatas [excerpts 14, 15, 16, & 17]                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|           | 11 | •Fermatas [excerpts 14, 15, 16, & 17]<br>•Concert Observation #1 due in Canvas by 10:00pm                                                                                                                                           |
|           | 13 | •Baton grip and use.<br>•Irregular time signatures. [excerpts 18, 19, 20, & 20.5]                                                                                                                                                   |
|           | 15 | •Irregular time signatures. [excerpts 18, 19, 20, & 20.5]                                                                                                                                                                           |
|           | 18 | •Irregular time signatures. [excerpts 18, 19, 20, & 20.5]<br>•Score study discussion.<br>•Terms Quiz #4 due in Canvas by 10:00pm                                                                                                    |
|           | 20 | •Irregular time signatures. [excerpts 18, 19, 20, & 20.5]                                                                                                                                                                           |
|           | 22 | •More sophisticated style gestures (staccato/legato/sostenuto/gesture of syncopation), baton grip and use. [excerpts 21, 22, & 23]                                                                                                  |
|           | 25 | •Separation of hands exercises.<br>•Written Exam #2 – Concepts re expressive gestures, cueing, and separation of hands, transpositions, plus all material from Exam #1. [due in Canvas by 10:00pm]                                  |
|           | 27 | •More sophisticated style gestures (staccato/legato/sostenuto/gesture of syncopation), baton grip and use. [excerpts 21, 22, & 23]                                                                                                  |
|           | 29 | •More sophisticated style gestures (staccato/legato/sostenuto/gesture of syncopation), baton grip and use. [excerpts 21, 22, & 23]                                                                                                  |
| November  | 1  | •More sophisticated style gestures (staccato/legato/sostenuto/gesture of syncopation), baton grip and use. [excerpts 21, 22, & 23]<br>•Terms Quiz #5 due in Canvas by 10:00pm                                                       |
|           | 3  | •Tempo changes, changes of texture, and cueing. [excerpts 24, 25, 26, 27]                                                                                                                                                           |
|           | 5  | •Tempo changes, changes of texture, and cueing. [excerpts 24, 25, 26, 27]<br>•Rehearsal Observation #2 due in Canvas by 10:00pm                                                                                                     |
|           | 8  | •Tempo changes, changes of texture, and cueing. [excerpts 24, 25, 26, 27]                                                                                                                                                           |

|          |    |                                                                           |
|----------|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|          | 10 | •Tempo changes, changes of texture, and cueing. [excerpts 24, 25, 26, 27] |
|          | 12 | •Tempo changes, changes of texture, and cueing. [excerpts 24, 25, 26, 27] |
|          | 15 | •Review for Final Written Exam and Final Conducting Exam                  |
|          |    | •Terms Quiz #6 due in Canvas by 10:00pm                                   |
|          | 17 | •Final Conducting Exam                                                    |
|          | 19 | •Final Conducting Exam                                                    |
|          | 22 | •Final Conducting Exam                                                    |
|          | 24 | No Class [Thanksgiving]                                                   |
|          |    | •Concert Observation #2 due in Canvas by 10:00pm                          |
|          | 29 | No Class [juries]                                                         |
| December | 1  | No Class [juries]                                                         |
|          | 3  | No Class [juries]                                                         |
|          | 8  | •Final Written Exam [in Canvas]; 8:00am-10:00am                           |

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

LINK: [https://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/06.003.AcadIntegrity.Final\\_.pdf](https://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/06.003.AcadIntegrity.Final_.pdf)

### **STUDENT BEHAVIOR**

LINK: Student Code of Conduct - <https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct>

### **ACCESS TO INFORMATION – EAGLE CONNECT**

LINK: [eagleconnect.unt.edu/](https://eagleconnect.unt.edu/)

### **ODA STATEMENT**

LINK: [disability.unt.edu](https://disability.unt.edu) [Phone: (940) 565-4323]

### **UNT Policy Statement on Diversity**

LINK: [https://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/04.018\\_PolicyStateOnDiversity.pub8\\_.18\\_0.pdf](https://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/04.018_PolicyStateOnDiversity.pub8_.18_0.pdf)

### **Registration Information for Students**

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

### **Academic Calendar at a Glance, 2021-2022**

LINK: [https://registrar.unt.edu/sites/default/files/Fall\\_2021\\_Academic\\_Calendar.pdf](https://registrar.unt.edu/sites/default/files/Fall_2021_Academic_Calendar.pdf)

### **Final Exam Schedule**

LINK: <https://registrar.unt.edu/exams/final-exam-schedule/fall>

### **FINANCIAL AID AND SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS**

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

### **RETENTION OF STUDENT RECORDS**

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

### **COUNSELING AND TESTING**

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

### **ADD/DROP POLICY**

LINK: <https://registrar.unt.edu/registration/dropping-class>

### **STUDENT RESOURCES**

LINK: [https://www.unt.edu/sites/default/files/resource\\_sheet.pdf](https://www.unt.edu/sites/default/files/resource_sheet.pdf)

### **Covid Syllabus Statement: Face Coverings**

UNT encourages everyone to wear a face covering when indoors, regardless of vaccination status, to protect yourself and others from COVID infection, as recommended by current CDC guidelines. Face covering guideline could change based on community health conditions.

### **Covid Syllabus Statement: Attendance**

Students are expected to attend class meetings regularly and to abide by the attendance policy established for the course. It is important that you communicate with the professor and the instructional team prior to being absent, so you, the professor, and the instructional team can discuss and mitigate the impact of the absence on your attainment of the course learning goals. Please inform the professor and instructional team if you are unable to attend class meetings because you are ill, in mindfulness of the health and safety of everyone in our community. Contact the UNT COVID Team at [COVID@unt.edu](mailto:COVID@unt.edu) for guidance on actions to take due to symptoms, pending or positive test results, or potential exposure.