



**ORCHESTRAL CONDUCTING**  
**MUAG 3870.002/5850.003**  
**FALL, 2023**

**Instructor:**

Dr. Clay Couturiaux, Assistant Director of Orchestral Studies  
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Murchison Performing Arts Center, Room 137

**Office Hours:**

by appointment

**Textbook:**

Tchaikovsky: Romeo and Juliet Overture-Fantasy

Dvořák: Symphony No. 9 in E minor, Op. 95 "From the New World"

Most public domain scores may be downloaded online at: [http://imslp.org/wiki/Main\\_Page](http://imslp.org/wiki/Main_Page)  
You are welcome to purchase your own scores – consult instructor for advice on editions.

Orchestral Excerpts provided by Instructor

**Materials:**

- Baton
- 3-ring binder
- Your Instrument
- Recording device

**Course Description:**

This course is designed for the development of a professional conducting approach and will include instruction on orchestral conducting techniques and pedagogy, score analysis and preparation, development of visual/aural discrimination skills, transposition skills, the role of the conductor in historical perspective, and a review of basic musicianship.

**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 repertoire.
4. Knowledge of orchestral instruments and mainstream audition excerpts.
5. Rehearsal technique.

**Methods for Assessing the Expected Outcomes:**

1. Instructor's assessment of improvement in physical technique of conducting.
2. Instructor's assessment of improvement in accompanying and other related techniques.
3. Instructor's assessment of the student's score study.
4. Instructor's assessment of improvement and knowledge of orchestral instruments and other related issues.

## **Course Requirements:**

### **CONDUCTING ASSIGNMENTS**

Students will receive a grade each time they conduct from the podium. The major portion of the grade will pertain to how well the student knows the score. Each student will be expected to conduct the assigned musical excerpt 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.

### **ATTENDANCE AND CLASS PARTICIPATION**

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 change
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 ½ an absence

### **READING ASSIGNMENTS**

#### **Conducting Bibliography**

Select one book from each of the following sections of the Conducting Bibliography attached to this syllabus. For each book, provide a one-page (minimum) to two-page (maximum) summary.

Conducting Treatises and Textbooks – [Reading Assignment #1]

Orchestral History and Practice – [Reading Assignment #2]

Conductors and the History of Conducting – [Reading Assignment #3]

### **REHEARSAL OBSERVATIONS**

Each student is required to submit two rehearsal observations, each reflecting thirty minutes spent in a university or professional orchestra. The student must be an observer and not a member of the ensemble.

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.

For each rehearsal observation, isolate one rehearsal technique used by the conductor and give the following information: (1) Description of the technique used; (2) Problem the technique was intended to solve or improve; (3) Name of work being rehearsed and location within the piece where the technique was used; (4) Your observation of the success of using the particular technique.

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?

**Grading:**

Attendance; In-Class Conducting Experience	40%
Reading Assignments	30%
Rehearsal Observations	10%
Final Conducting Exam	20%

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

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

**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://idea.unt.edu/diversity-inclusion>

**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 2023**

LINK: <https://registrar.unt.edu/registration/fall-registration-guide>

**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**

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 (listed above) for additional add/drop information.

LINK: <https://registrar.unt.edu/registration/fall-registration-guide>

**STUDENT RESOURCES**

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

**CARE TEAM**

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

## SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

### **WEEK 1 [8/21]**

Course and syllabus overview; anatomy of the beat; basic concepts of use of gravity, acceleration/deceleration; conducting areas/planes. 5 basic conducting patterns; discussion of the “four hinges”; basics of transpositions.

Exercises for Practice.

Score Study Discussion – Tchaikovsky: Romeo and Juliet Overture-Fantasy

### **WEEK 2 [8/28]**

Conducting Assignment – Tchaikovsky: Romeo and Juliet Overture-Fantasy

### **WEEK 3 [9/4]**

Conducting Assignment – Tchaikovsky: Romeo and Juliet Overture-Fantasy

### **WEEK 4 [9/11]**

Conducting Assignment – Tchaikovsky: Romeo and Juliet Overture-Fantasy

### **WEEK 5 [9/18]**

Conducting Assignment – Tchaikovsky: Romeo and Juliet Overture-Fantasy

Conducting Assignment – Orchestral Excerpts

Reading Assignment #1 due Friday

### **WEEK 6 [9/25]**

Conducting Assignment – Orchestral Excerpts

Rehearsal Observation #1 due Friday.

[No Class on Wed 10/5]

### **WEEK 7 [10/2]**

Conducting Assignment – Orchestral Excerpts

### **WEEK 8 [10/9]**

Conducting Assignment – Orchestral Excerpts

Score Study Discussion – Dvořák: Symphony No. 9 in E minor, Op. 95 “From the New World”

### **WEEK 9 [10/16]**

Conducting Assignment – Dvořák: Symphony No. 9 in E minor, Op. 95 “From the New World”

### **WEEK 10 [10/23]**

Conducting Assignment – Dvořák: Symphony No. 9 in E minor, Op. 95 “From the New World”

Reading Assignment #2 due Friday

### **WEEK 11 [10/30]**

Conducting Assignment – Dvořák: Symphony No. 9 in E minor, Op. 95 “From the New World”

### **WEEK 12 [11/6]**

Conducting Assignment – Dvořák: Symphony No. 9 in E minor, Op. 95 “From the New World”

Continue to prepare for final exam.

Rehearsal Observation #2 due Friday.

### **WEEK 13 [11/13]**

Conducting Assignment – Dvořák: Symphony No. 9 in E minor, Op. 95 “From the New World”

Continue to prepare for final exam.

### **WEEK 14 [11/27]**

Continue to prepare for final exam.

Final Conducting Exam with UNT Concert Orchestra on Fri 12/1

Reading Assignment #3 due Friday