



**ORCHESTRAL CONDUCTING**  
**MUAG 3870/5850**  
**FALL, 2026**

**Instructor:**

Dr. Clay Couturiaux, Assistant Director of Orchestral Studies  
clay.couturiaux@unt.edu  
Murchison Performing Arts Center, Room 137

**Office Hours:**

by appointment

**Textbook:**

**Barber** First Essay for Orchestra, Op. 12  
**Beethoven** Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67  
**Rimsky-Korsakov** Capriccio Espagnol, Op. 34

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.

**Materials:**

- Baton
- Scores
- Your Instrument
- Recording device (cell phone)

**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:

### 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

### 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.

### READING ASSIGNMENT

**Walter, Bruno: Of Music and Music-Making. New York: W. W. Norton, 1957.**

Provide a summary (850 word minimum; 1-inch margins; 12-point font; double-spaced page) that also includes a minimum of four quotes from the book. Due on Friday, October 23 by 11:59pm in Canvas.

### PROGRAM ASSIGNMENTS

Programming assignments should be one-page and presented on the date due in the following format:

Student's name                      Due date

Description of assignment.

Program #1:

|            |                              |     |
|------------|------------------------------|-----|
| Joe Smith  | Overture for Joe             |     |
|            | 2222-4200-tmp+2-hp-cel-str   | 7'  |
| Jane Smith | Piano Concerto No. 4, Op. 19 |     |
|            | 1212-2200-tmp-str            | 25' |

INTERMISSION

|             |                                                        |     |
|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Steve Smith | Symphony No. 6, Op. 5                                  |     |
|             | [3[1.2.3/pic]3[1.2.Eh]3[1.2.bcl]2/4331/tmp+6-hp-pf-str | 44' |

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD ANY WORKS BE OFFERED IN PROGRAMMING ASSIGNMENTS WITH WHICH THE STUDENT IS NOT FAMILIAR!!

- #1: Two different programs that include **Rimsky-Korsakov** Capriccio Espagnol, Op. 34  
Both programs must also include a soloist.  
Due on Friday, September 11 by 11:59pm in Canvas.
- #2: Two different programs that include **Barber** First Essay for Orchestra, Op. 12  
Programs must also include a soloist.  
Due on Friday, October 9 by 11:59pm in Canvas.
- #3: Two different programs that include **Beethoven** Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67  
Programs must also include a soloist.  
Due on Friday, November 6 by 11:59pm in Canvas.

## REHEARSAL OBSERVATION

Each student is required to submit one rehearsal observation, reflecting a minimum of one hour spent in a university or professional orchestra. The student must be an observer and not a member of the ensemble.

Due on Friday, November 13 by 11:59pm in Canvas. 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 Assignment                         | 15% |
| Program Assignments                        | 15% |
| Rehearsal Observation                      | 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]

**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 2026**

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

**Final Exam Schedule**

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

**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>

**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 (listed above) for additional add/drop information.

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

**STUDENT RESOURCES**

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

**CARE TEAM**

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

## SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

### **WEEK 1** [8/17; 8/19; 8/21]

Course and syllabus overview; anatomy of the beat; Programming discussion.

Score Study Discussion – **Rimsky-Korsakov** Capriccio Espagnol, Op. 34

### **WEEK 2** [8/24; 8/26; 8/28]

Conducting Assignment – **Rimsky-Korsakov** Capriccio Espagnol, Op. 34

### **WEEK 3** [8/31; 9/2; 9/4]

Conducting Assignment – **Rimsky-Korsakov** Capriccio Espagnol, Op. 34

### **WEEK 4** [9/7 No class Labor Day; 9/9; 9/11]

Conducting Assignment – **Rimsky-Korsakov** Capriccio Espagnol, Op. 34

Program Assignment #1 due Friday by 11:59pm in Canvas

### **WEEK 5** [9/14; 9/16; 9/18]

Conducting Assignment – **Rimsky-Korsakov** Capriccio Espagnol, Op. 34

### **WEEK 6** [9/21; 9/23; 9/25]

Score Study Discussion – **Barber** First Essay for Orchestra, Op. 12

Conducting Assignment – **Barber** First Essay for Orchestra, Op. 12

### **WEEK 7** [9/28; 9/30; 10/2]

Conducting Assignment – **Barber** First Essay for Orchestra, Op. 12

### **WEEK 8** [10/5; 10/7; 10/9]

Conducting Assignment – **Barber** First Essay for Orchestra, Op. 12

Program Assignment #2 due Friday by 11:59pm in Canvas

### **WEEK 9** [10/12; 10/14; 10/16]

Score Study Discussion – **Beethoven** Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67

Conducting Assignment – **Beethoven** Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67

### **WEEK 10** [10/19; 10/21; 10/23]

Conducting Assignment – **Beethoven** Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67

Reading Assignment due Friday by 11:59pm in Canvas

### **WEEK 11** [10/26; 10/28; 10/30]

Conducting Assignment – **Beethoven** Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67

### **WEEK 12** [11/2; 11/4; 11/6]

Conducting Assignment – **Beethoven** Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67

Program Assignment #3 due Friday by 11:59pm in Canvas

### **WEEK 13** [11/9; 11/11; 11/13]

Conducting Assignment – **Beethoven** Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67

Rehearsal Observation due Friday by 11:59pm in Canvas.

### **WEEK 14** [11/16; 11/18; 11/20]

Conducting Assignment – **Beethoven** Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67

### **WEEK 15** [No classes – Thanksgiving Break]

### **WEEK 16** [11/30; 12/2; 12/4 No class]

Final Conducting Exam with UNT Concert Orchestra on Mon 11/30 & Wed 12/2