



**ORCHESTRAL CONDUCTING**  
**MUAG 3870.002/5850.003**  
**SPRING, 2026**

**Instructor:**

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

**Teaching Assistant:**

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Bain Hall, Room 210

**Office Hours:**

by appointment

**Textbook:**

**Grieg** Peer Gynt Suite No. 1, Op. 46  
**Smetana** The Moldau (Vltava) from *My Fatherland (Ma Vlast)*  
**Schumann** Symphony No. 1 in B-flat Major, Op. 38 "Spring"

**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 ASSIGNMENTS

#### *Anatomy of the Orchestra* by Norman Del Mar

SECTION I: THE STRINGS – Chapters 1-10; QUIZ #1

SECTION I: THE STRINGS – Chapters 11-16; QUIZ #2

SECTION I: THE STRINGS – Chapters 17-24; QUIZ #3

SECTION II: THE WOODWIND – Chapters 1-3; QUIZ #4

SECTION II: THE WOODWIND – Chapters 4-7; QUIZ #5

SECTION II: THE WOODWIND – Chapters 8-12; QUIZ #6

SECTION III: HORNS – Chapters 1-8; QUIZ #7

SECTION III: HORNS – Chapters 9-12; QUIZ #8

SECTION IV: THE HEAVY BRASS – Chapters 1-5; QUIZ #9

SECTION IV: THE HEAVY BRASS – Chapters 6-11; QUIZ #10

SECTION V: TIMPANI AND PERCUSSION – Part I: Timpani – Chapters 1-10; QUIZ #11

SECTION V: TIMPANI AND PERCUSSION – Part II: Percussion – Chapters 1-5[Glockenspiel]; QUIZ #12

SECTION V: TIMPANI AND PERCUSSION – Part II: Percussion – Ch. 5[Xylophone-Flexatone]; QUIZ #13

SECTION VI: KEYBOARD AND OTHER INSTRUMENTS – Chapters 1-2; QUIZ #14

### 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.

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	15%
Rehearsal Observations	10%
Mid-Term Conducting Exam	15%
Final Conducting Exam	20%

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

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

**STUDENT BEHAVIOR**

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

**ACCESS TO INFORMATION – EAGLE CONNECT**

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

**ODA STATEMENT**

LINK: [disability.unt.edu](http://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, SPRING 2026**

LINK: <https://registrar.unt.edu/registration/spring-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**

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 [1/12; 1/14; 1/16]

Course and syllabus overview; anatomy of the beat; basics of score study, bow strokes, transpositions, etc.

Score Study Discussion – **Grieg** Peer Gynt Suite No. 1, Op. 46

Reading Quiz #1 due on Friday in Canvas by 10:00pm

### WEEK 2 [1/21; 1/23; (no class on 1/19)]

Conducting Assignment – **Grieg** Peer Gynt Suite No. 1, Op. 46

Reading Quiz #2 due on Friday in Canvas by 10:00pm

### WEEK 3 [1/26; 1/28; 1/30]

Conducting Assignment – **Grieg** Peer Gynt Suite No. 1, Op. 46

Reading Quiz #3 due on Friday in Canvas by 10:00pm

### WEEK 4 [2/2; 2/4; 2/6]

Conducting Assignment – **Grieg** Peer Gynt Suite No. 1, Op. 46

Reading Quiz #4 due on Friday in Canvas by 10:00pm

### WEEK 5 [2/9; 2/11; 2/13]

Score Study Discussion – **Smetana** The Moldau (Vltava) from *My Fatherland (Ma Vlast)*

Conducting Assignment – **Smetana** The Moldau (Vltava) from *My Fatherland (Ma Vlast)*

Rehearsal Observation #1 due Friday in Canvas by 10:00pm

Reading Quiz #5 due on Friday in Canvas by 10:00pm

### WEEK 6 [2/16; 2/18; 2/20]

Conducting Assignment – **Smetana** The Moldau (Vltava) from *My Fatherland (Ma Vlast)*

Reading Quiz #6 due on Friday in Canvas by 10:00pm

### WEEK 7 [2/23; 2/25; 2/27]

Conducting Assignment – **Smetana** The Moldau (Vltava) from *My Fatherland (Ma Vlast)*

Reading Quiz #7 due on Friday in Canvas by 10:00pm

### WEEK 8 [3/2; 3/4; (no class on 3/6)]

Conducting Assignment – **Smetana** The Moldau (Vltava) from *My Fatherland (Ma Vlast)*

Conducting Mid-Term Exam with UNT Concert Orchestra (Wed, March 4, 12:15pm-2:05pm)

Reading Quiz #8 due on Friday in Canvas by 10:00pm

### WEEK 9 [3/18; 3/20; (no class on 3/16)]

Score Study Discussion – **Schumann** Symphony No. 1 in B-flat Major, Op. 38 “Spring”

Reading Quiz #9 due on Friday in Canvas by 10:00pm

### WEEK 10 [3/23; 3/25; 3/27]

Conducting Assignment – **Schumann** Symphony No. 1 in B-flat Major, Op. 38 “Spring”

Reading Quiz #10 due on Friday in Canvas by 10:00pm

### WEEK 11 [3/30; 4/1; 4/3]

Conducting Assignment – **Schumann** Symphony No. 1 in B-flat Major, Op. 38 “Spring”

Rehearsal Observation #2 due Friday in Canvas by 10:00pm

Reading Quiz #11 due on Friday in Canvas by 10:00pm

### WEEK 12 [4/6; 4/8; 4/10]

Conducting Assignment – **Schumann** Symphony No. 1 in B-flat Major, Op. 38 “Spring”

Reading Quiz #12 due on Friday in Canvas by 10:00pm

### WEEK 13 [4/13; 5/15; 4/17]

Conducting Assignment – **Schumann** Symphony No. 1 in B-flat Major, Op. 38 “Spring”

Reading Quiz #13 due on Friday in Canvas by 10:00pm

### WEEK 14 [4/20; 4/22; 4/24]

Conducting Final Exam with UNT Concert Orchestra (Mon, April 20, 12:15pm-2:05pm)

Review One-On-One Meeting: Final Conducting Exam

Reading Quiz #14 due on Friday in Canvas by 10:00pm

### WEEK 15

No Class [room 232 needed for juries]