

Fundamentals of Conducting

UNT College of Music

MUAG 3800.005, Fall 2024
Tu/Th 9:30-10:50 AM, MU 230

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Office Hours: by appointment

Course Syllabus

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE

To develop a professional conducting approach with emphasis on techniques appropriate to wind, orchestral, and choral conducting. The course will include instruction in beginning and intermediate conducting techniques, score analysis and preparation, development of visual/aural discrimination skills, the role of the conductor in historical and philosophical perspectives, and a reinforcement of basic musicianship.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this course, the student will be able to:

- Demonstrate proper conducting posture
- Demonstrate effective baton technique
- Demonstrate the following techniques:
 - Preparatory gestures, downbeats, and releases
 - Patterns for various meters, including duple/triple, simple/compound
 - Representation of a diversity of styles
 - Representation of dynamic indications
 - Independent and complimentary use of right and left arms-hand complex
 - Entrances on beats other than one and incomplete beats
 - Diversity of gestural vocabulary in the service of cues and more
 - Representation of a diversity of tempos and transitions
 - Tempo alterations
- Evaluate conducting techniques by:
 - Observing and evaluating conducting experiences
 - Observing and evaluating class members
 - Reflection on different conductors of various ensembles in concert and rehearsal
- Demonstrate visual/aural discrimination skills through rehearsal situations
- Describe the role of the conductor in historical and philosophical perspectives
- Refine the essential skills of musicianship in a conducting context
- Internalize transpositions and their use in score reading through independent exercises and assignments

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Each student must have the following materials:

- Baton (subject to instructor approval; there will be an opportunity to purchase a custom baton within the first week of class)
- Course Handouts/Packet (provided by the instructor)
- Three-Ring binder, folder or tablet to organize your scores, handouts, articles and reflections
- Your major or secondary instrument as determined by the instructor.
- Electronic device with video recording capabilities (cell phone, video camera)

- Manuscript paper or composition software for transposition assignments
- Metronome

TEXTS

The Art of Conducting Donald Hunsberger and Roy E. Ernst 2nd edition. McGraw-Hill, Inc. 1992
 The Elements of Expressive Conducting Michael Haithcock, Brian Doyle, Kevin Gerald, Conway Publications 2020
 Conducting: The Art of Communication 2nd edition, Wayne Bailey and Brandt Payne. Oxford University Press, 2015
 Basic Conducting Techniques Joseph A Labuta and Wendy K. Matthews 7th ed. Routledge 2018
 The Modern Conductor, Elizabeth Green and Mark Gibson. Pearson, 7th edition. 2003.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance/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. Thus, attendance is worth a large portion of the final grade in this course. Excused absences will be handled on a case-by-case basis and will require written e-mail communication as well as approval from the instructor **prior to being absent.**

Absences will result in a lowering of the final grade as follows:

- 0-2 absences..... no effect
- 2-3 absences reduction of half letter grade
- 4-5 absences reduction of 1 letter grades
- 6-7 absences reduction of 2 letter grades
- 7+ absences..... grade of WF if withdrawal is requested, or final grade of F

**Tardies will be counted as ½ an absence

Conducting Assignments: First and foremost, this is a participatory class. Each week involves practice and preparation. While it is absolutely ok to make mistakes during the learning process, you must also be prepared to be engaged and willing to learn new concepts daily. 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 (if in a live setting). Feedback will occur from the instructor and peers. The student must provide an electronic device with video recording capabilities to record their conducting experience. The opportunity to make up a missed conducting assignment will be at the discretion of the instructor.

Written Assignments and Tests: Individual written work pertinent to the course material will be assigned as needed. Examples include transposition assignments and quizzes, vocabulary/term assignments and quizzes, concert observations, rehearsal observations, article reviews, vocabulary quizzes, and conducting self-evaluations.

Discussion: Topics will be posted throughout the course. The purpose of the discussions is to provide awareness of the many viewpoints about the fundamentals of conducting and the role of the conductor/educator on the podium. Rather than restating or summarizing the author's ideas, the student is encouraged to synthesize the material and viewpoints represented and to critically reflect and relate the concepts expressed in the article to what you have learned in the class. The discussions are meant to spark positive dialogue with your personal background as the launching pad of learning.

Concert/Rehearsal Reflections: Each student must complete two (2) 45-minute rehearsal/concert observations (1 must be a rehearsal) with each reflecting attendance at a major university or professional (conducted) ensemble concert rehearsal. At UNT, these ensembles might include the A Cappella Choir, Concert Choir, Chamber Choir, Wind Symphony, Wind Orchestra, Opera, Symphony Orchestra, Chamber Orchestra. Professional ensembles include, but are not limited to the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, the Dallas Wind Symphony, Lone Star Wind Orchestra, etc. The student must be an observer and not a member of the

ensemble. The observations should be drawn from two different ensembles and should represent different conductors. The reports must represent two different performing mediums (winds, orchestral, choral, or major jazz ensemble).

Final Project: Submission of a YouTube link or video file containing a professional portfolio showcasing your conducting from class. This should be a video that could be used for a job application, professional website, etc. Should include at least three pieces of footage of you conducting, as well as a reflection (either in video format or via document submission) on a technique where you saw improvement, and your plans to further your conducting growth in the future.

For full credit, all written assignments must be uploaded to Canvas in Microsoft Word format by 11:59 pm on the given due date. Late submissions will receive an automatic lowering of grade.

GRADING PROCEDURES

The final grade is based on the following criteria.

<u>Evaluation</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Conducting Experiences	50%
Written Assignments	20%
Final Conducting Exam	15%
Final Conducting Project	15%

100 pts total

Grading Scale

100–90	A
89–80	B
79–70	C
69–60	D
60 or below	F

RESOURCE LINKS

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

See: [Academic Integrity](#)

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

STUDENT BEHAVIOR

See: [Student Code of Conduct](#)

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

ACCESS TO INFORMATION – EAGLE CONNECT

See: [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.

See: [ODA](#)

LINK: disability.unt.edu. (Phone: (940) 565-4323)

Health and Safety Information

Students can access information about health and safety at: <https://music.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness>

Registration Information for Students

See: [Registration Information](#)

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

Academic Calendar, Spring 2025

See: [Spring 2025 Academic Calendar](#)

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

Final Exam Schedule, Spring 2025

See above

Financial Aid and Satisfactory Academic Progress

Undergraduates

See: [Financial Aid](#)

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

Graduates

See: [Financial Aid](#)

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

RETENTION OF STUDENT RECORDS

See: [FERPA](#)

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

COUNSELING AND TESTING

See: [Counseling and Testing](#)

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

For more information on mental health resources, please visit:

See: [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.

Drop Information: <https://registrar.unt.edu/registration/spring-academic-calendar.html>

STUDENT RESOURCES

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

See: [Student Resources](#)

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.

See: [Care Team](#)

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