

Fundamentals of Conducting

UNT College of Music

MUAG 3800.002, Fall 2024
M/W/F 8:00-8:50 AM, MU 232

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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:

- 0-1 absences..... no effect
- 2 absences reduction of half letter grade
- 3 absences reduction of 1 letter grades
- 4-5 absences reduction of 2 letter grades
- 5+ 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).

Transposition Project: Students will select an excerpt of a piece to transcribe into a flexible ensemble setting, pending approval by the instructor. All harmonies of the excerpt must be represented in the students' final projects. Students must provide at least four parts (representing soprano, alto, tenor and bass) utilizing all pitched instruments (C, Bb, Eb and F). Students may use Finale/Sibelius on the UNT lab computers (preferred) or free software online such as MuseScore or Noteflight.

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	60%
Written Assignments	25%
Final Conducting Exam	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

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

STUDENT BEHAVIOR

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

ACCESS TO INFORMATION – EAGLE CONNECT

Your access point for business and academic services at UNT occurs at my.unt.edu. All official communication from the university will be delivered to your Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit: <http://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. For additional information see the Office of Disability Access. <http://disability.unt.edu> Phone: (940) 565-4323

UNT POLICY STATEMENT ON DIVERSITY

<https://idea.unt.edu/diversity-inclusion>

ACADEMIC CALENDAR AT A GLANCE

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

HEALTH AND SAFTY INFORMATION

<https://music.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness>

REGISTRATION INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

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

FINAL EXAM SCHEDULE

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

FINANCIAL AID AND SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

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

RETENTION OF STUDENT RECORDS

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

COUNSELING AND TESTING

UNT's Center for Counseling and Testing has an available counselor whose position includes 16 hours per week of dedicated service to students in the College of Music and the College of Visual Arts and Design. Please visit the Center's website for further information:

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

For more information on mental health issues, please visit:

Link: <https://speakout.unt.edu>.

The counselor for music students is:

Myriam Reynolds

Chestnut Hall, Suite 311

(940) 565-2741

Myriam.reynolds@unt.edu

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. After the 12th class day, students must first submit a completed "Request to Drop" form to the Registrar's Office. The last day for a student to drop a class in Fall 2022 is November 18. Information about add/drop may be found at:

https://registrar.unt.edu/sites/default/files/Fall_2023_Official_Calendar.pdf

See Academic Calendar (listed above)

STUDENT RESOURCES

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

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