

# **Fundamentals of Conducting**

University of North Texas College of Music  
MUAG 3800.003 & MUAG 5805.001, Spring 2025  
M/W/F 9:00-9:50 AM, MPAC 021

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Office Hours: by appointment

## **Course Syllabus**

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE**

To develop a professional approach to 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)
- Metronome

## **TEXTS**

The Art of Conducting by Donald Hunsberger and Roy E. Ernst 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. McGraw-Hill, Inc. 1992  
Basic Conducting Techniques by Joseph A Labuta and Wendy Matthews 7<sup>th</sup> ed. Routledge 2018  
The Modern Conductor, Elizabeth Green and Mark Gibson. Pearson, 7<sup>th</sup> 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.**

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

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

\*\*Tardies will be counted as ½ an absence

**Conducting Assignments:** Each week involves practice and preparation, and 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. Feedback will be given from both the instructor and your classmates. 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.

**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, and 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.

***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 one letter grade.***

### **GRADING PROCEDURES**

60% Evaluation and Conducting Rounds

25% Written Assignments

15% Final Conducting Exam

### **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/](http://eagleconnect.unt.edu/)

### **ODA STATEMENT**

See: [ODA](#)

LINK: [disability.unt.edu](http://disability.unt.edu). (Phone: (940) 565-4323)

### **DIVERSITY AND BELONGING**

See: [Diversity and Inclusion](#)

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

### **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, Fall 2023**

See: [Fall 2023 Academic Calendar](#)

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

**Financial Aid and Satisfactory Academic Progress**

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 issues, please visit:

See: [Mental Health Issues](#)

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

The counselor for music students is:

Myriam Reynolds

Chestnut Hall, Suite 311

(940) 565-2741

[Myriam.reynolds@unt.edu](mailto:Myriam.reynolds@unt.edu)

**ADD/DROP POLICY**

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

**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>

(Note: A printer-friendly PDF version is available by clicking the green button on the home page)

**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>