



Fundamentals of Conducting MUAG 3800

Tues/Thurs 8-9:20 am, Room 230

Instructor: Ms. J. Christine Le (she/her/hers)

Office: 217

Office Hours: By appointment (email to schedule)

Email: christinele4@my.unt.edu

Required Materials:

- [*The Conductor as Leader- Ramona Wis*](#)
- Baton (assistance will be provided to ensure baton is appropriate for your body type, ordering instructions will be provided during fitting session)
- Excerpts (these will be posted in Canvas)
- Music Packet- available at Penders (once music is decided)

Optional Supplemental Materials:

- The Anatomy of Conducting Architecture and Essentials- Workbook and Study Guide
- A Guide to Score Study by Frank Battisti/Robert Garafalo
- Upbeat Downbeat- Sandra Willetts
- Beyond the Downbeat- Sandra Willetts

COURSE DESCRIPTION/OBJECTIVES

A conductor is an artist, teacher, performer, motivator, administrator, and servant leader, among other things. They must lead, inspire, alter, and reinforce the performance of an ensemble. The three primary goals of this course are to 1) prepare the mind, 2) train the body, and 3) cultivate the musician so that each conductor may clearly, artistically, and powerfully communicate with members of an ensemble.

Objective 1: Students will learn the physical fundamentals of conducting and how to apply those skills in choral and instrumental settings by completing six conducting exams per semester.

Objective 2: Students will demonstrate knowledge of score reading, analysis, and study, by turning in two marked scores in the middle and end of the semester.

Objective 3: Students will be able to articulate the principles of conducting leadership by completing a written reflection on the readings of the semester, including creating a personal conductor's credo.

Objective 4: Students will be able to describe strengths and weaknesses of their own conducting habits by turning in written reflections after watching their conducting exam videos.

CLASS FORMAT

Class will include lectures and demonstrations, student-led exercises, student-led discussions, coachings, and stimulated conducting experiences, in addition to discussions designed for self and peer evaluations. Tests of the competences started above will be given periodically throughout the semester.

GRADING POLICIES

- A. **Grading Scale** The grading scale below will be used to determine final grades (after attendance policy is administered, when applicable):

A=90-100

B=80-89

C=70-79

D=60-69

F=59 or below

B. Grading Formula

Daily Participation (class attendance) three absences will not be counted against your grade, each tardy counts as a third of an absence), preparation and contribution to class activities (includes bringing your own materials, actively participating daily activities, and being prepared for your time on the podium) - 500 points

Class Assignments (quizzes, transposition exercises, daily assignments, rehearsal observations) - points vary, see CANVAS assignments/modules

Conducting Exams 1, 2, 4, and 5 - 100 points each exam

Mid-Term Exam (AKA Conducting Round 3) Three-parts: 300 points total

In-class conducting 100

Marked Score and Quiz 100

Video Reflection 100

Conducting Final Exam (AKA Conducting Exam 6) 400 points total

In-class conducting 200

Marked Score and Quiz 200

Essay (The Conductor as Leader) 75 points

Final Self-Analysis and Personal Conductor's Credo (specific criteria provided) 75 points

ASSIGNMENTS AND POLICIES

- A. **PARTICIPATION GRADE:** Participation grades will be assigned throughout the semester based upon the following criteria: class attendance, preparation for and performance of musical excerpts (both as conductor and ensemble member), participation in and contribution to class discussions, and demonstration of professional attitudes and behaviors. All daily grades will be averaged together and will constitute the final participation grade for the course.
- B. **GRADED CONDUCTING ROUND:** Six graded conducting rounds (including the Midterm and Final) will be interspersed throughout the semester. Specific musical excerpts will be conducted and video recorded in class. Excluding the final exam, all graded conducting rounds will be conducted by memory. For Conducting Exams 3-6, a self-analysis will be a part of each conductor's grade: After viewing the exam footage, follow-up self-analysis reports from graded conducting rounds (utilizing criteria provided) must be completed and uploaded to Canvas by 11:59pm on the day of your assigned round, unless prearranged with the instructor.
- C. **CONDUCTOR AS LEADER ESSAY:** At the conclusion of the reading of *The Conductor as Leader*, each student will prepare an essay documenting the impact upon the reader by the material presented in the book. The essay should utilize standard 12-sized font and margin, double-spacing, and must be a minimum of two to a maximum of five pages in length. This assignment should present a summary of the "high points" that you found to be particularly impactful on your views or beliefs about leadership and conducting. See the Class Schedule for the essay due date and time.
- D. **MIDTERM EXAM:** A two-part Midterm Exam will focus on topics discussed and assignments completed from the beginning of the semester. Special emphasis will be placed on score marking, score study techniques, conducting terms, and assigned readings.
- E. **FINAL EXAM:** The Final Exam will include the turning in of a marked score (which may be used during the Score Knowledge Quiz), conducting a full piece of choral music, an excerpt from another, and a conducting etude. *Unlike the Midterm, the conducting portion of this exam will not be required to be done from memory.*
- F. **FINAL SELF ANALYSIS:** This is a more indepth self-analysis where you will have an opportunity to address your growth for the semester in addition to the self-analysis of your final conducting round
- G. **PERSONAL CONDUCTOR'S CREDO:** like the "Conductor's Credo" that we discussed on the first class meeting (and can be found in Canvas), this is your opportunity to write up a collection of short statements of belief, understanding and commitment that you will take forward into your life as an artist-teacher-conductor. *Should not exceed one page and is not in essay form.*
- H. **MAKE-UP DAY:** On the final class day of the semester, students will have an opportunity to re-conduct a conducting exam of their choice. Students can choose from conducting rounds 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 (not the final exam). Students must notify the instructor no later than one week before the final day of their intent to complete a make-up conducting exam.
- I. **EXTRA CREDIT:** If more than 80% of the class completes the SPOTS evaluation, everyone in the class will receive a 3 point bump in their final number grade.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

As a great deal of this course is dependent upon interaction and discussion among class members, daily and prompt attendance is expected, required, and is a sign of professional commitment. You are allowed 3 absences for the semester, after which your grade will be deducted by one letter grade per subsequent absence. There is no differentiation between excused and unexcused absences. If you need to be absent on a day you are scheduled to conduct a practice round, you will forfeit that opportunity. All missed quizzes and conducting exams will receive an automatic zero unless arranged with the instructor. Absences from 20% of the class meetings (6 absences) will result in failure of and removal from the course. Additionally, three tardies equal one absence in this course.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY & PENALTIES

1. Every member of the faculty, staff, and student body is responsible for protecting the integrity of learning, scholarship, and research. Plagiarism or any form of cheating involves a breach of student-teacher trust. This means that any work submitted under your name is expected to be your own, neither composed by anyone else as a whole or in part nor handed over to another person for complete or partial revision. Be sure to document all ideas that are not your own. Instances of plagiarism or any other act of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Honor Council and may result in failure of the course.
2. A 10% penalty will be given to all late daily or written assignments unless special arrangements are made prior to the due date. For each additional class day that the assignment is late, an additional 10% will be taken off of the grade.
3. No conducting exam, conducting assignment, or score study quiz will be made up or accepted late without the instructor's consent.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Week 1	
Tuesday, August 20 Syllabus Review Creative Exercises Fundamental Techniques: Posture, Alignment, Basic 1/2/3/4 patterns Discuss Conductor's Credo Assign: Brown <i>Daring Greatly</i> Ch. 2	Thursday, August 22 Conducting Philosophies Creative Exercises (partner & mirror) Review Fundamental Techniques: Posture, Alignment, Basic 1/2/3/4 patterns Cues and Cutoffs Due: Discuss <i>Daring Greatly</i> Ch. 2
Week 2	
Tuesday, August 27 Review Fundamental Techniques: Posture, Alignment,	Thursday, August 29 Fundamental Techniques: Introduction to Score Study and

<p>Basic 1/2/3/4 Patterns Cues/cutoffs</p> <p>Fundamental Techniques: Legato/Staccato</p> <p>Conducting Group Work 1: 43211234 exercise <i>Mary Had a Little Lamb</i> intro and practice</p> <p>Assign: Video Submission of 4321 1234 exercise</p>	<p>Marking</p> <p>Due: Video Submission of 4321 1234 exercise (due August 29, 11:59 PM)</p> <p>Practice Conducting Exam 1: <i>Mary Had a Little Lamb/Happy Birthday</i> 4321 1234 legato/staccato, order baton</p>
Week 3	
<p>Tuesday, September 3</p> <p>Practice Conducting Exam 1: <i>Mary Had a Little Lamb/Happy Birthday</i>, 4321 1234 legato/staccato</p> <p>Fundamental Techniques: Dynamics, Weight, and Planes</p> <p>Due: Order Baton (show receipt)</p>	<p>Thursday, September 5</p> <p>Conducting Round 1: <i>Mary Had a Little Lamb/Happy Birthday</i>, 4321 1234 legato/staccato</p> <p>Fundamental Techniques: Rebound, Score Reading and Transposition</p> <p>Transposition Assignment 1</p>
Week 4	
<p>Tuesday, September 10</p> <p>Fundamental Techniques: Five patterns, Six Patterns, Syncopated entrances, non-dominant hand dynamics</p> <p>Practice 5 patterns- Zanaida Robles “Veni Sancte Spiritus”</p> <p>Practice 6 patterns- W.A. Mozart “Laudate Dominum” Introduce Conducting Exam 2/43211234 LH <>, ><, Self-recording/self-assessment</p>	<p>Thursday, September 12</p> <p>Practice Conducting Exam 2/43211234 LH <>, >< in pairs, small groups</p> <p>Assign: <i>Jordan on Hillis Marking</i> / Rehearsal Observation 1 (primary)</p>
Week 5	
<p>Tuesday, September 17</p> <p>Fundamental Techniques: Review 5 patterns, 6 patterns, Baton Grip and Technique, Conducting Self-Analysis</p> <p>Transpositions: Music Theory Practice Website</p> <p>Discuss: <i>Jordan on Hillis Marking</i></p> <p>Assign: Transposition Assignment 1</p>	<p>Thursday, September 19</p> <p>Fundamental Techniques: Compound Meter, Continued LH Independence, review Baton Grip and Technique</p> <p>More Transposition Practice (Quizlet)</p> <p>Introduce Conducting Round 3</p>
Week 6	

<p>Tuesday, September 24</p> <p>Conducting Round 2, LH <>, ><</p> <p>Discuss/Assign: Midterm written portion and Conducting Round 3 marked score and analysis</p> <p>Due: Transposition Assignment 1</p>	<p>Thursday, September 26</p> <p>Discuss: <i>The Conductor As Leader</i> Ch. 1</p> <p>Discuss Conducting Exam 3/MIDTERM</p> <p>Midterm written portion review</p>
Week 7	
<p>Tuesday, October 1</p> <p>Fundamental Techniques: Fermata, Fermata Types</p> <p>Discuss <i>Conductor as Leader</i> Ch. 2</p> <p>Midterm review: Group A Practice</p> <p>Discuss Self-Analysis of Round 2 (small Groups)</p>	<p>Thursday, October 3</p> <p>Fundamental Techniques: Fermata Review</p> <p>Lab work: Fermatas</p> <p>Midterm review: Group B Practice</p> <p>Discuss <i>Conductor as Leader</i> Ch. 3</p>
Week 8	
<p>Tuesday, October 8</p> <p>MIDTERM: Written Portion</p> <p>Midterm Conducting Round 3</p> <p>Due: Round 3 marked score and analysis</p>	<p>Thursday, October 10</p> <p>Rhythmic Etude 1-4 Introduction Rehearsal Observation discussions Assign: Rehearsal Observation 2 (Non-Primary) Due: Rehearsal Observation 1 (Primary)</p> <p>DUE: MIDTERM VIDEO Self- Analysis (due by October 10, 11:59 PM)</p>
Week 9	
<p>Tuesday, October 15</p> <p>Fundamental Techniques: Intro to Asymmetrical Meters</p> <p>Practice Conducting Exam 4: Conducting Etude</p> <p>Discuss <i>Conductor as Leader</i>, Ch. 4</p>	<p>Thursday, October 17</p> <p>Fundamental Techniques: Continue Asymmetrical Meters</p> <p>Practice Conducting Exam 4: Conducting Etude</p> <p>Introduce: Conducting Exam <i>mixed meeter</i> XXXXXXXXX</p>
Week 10	

<p>Tuesday, October 22</p> <p>Conducting Round 4: Practice</p> <p>Discuss <i>Conductor as Leader</i> Ch. 5</p>	<p>Thursday, October 24</p> <p>Conducting Round 4: Etude</p> <p>Introduction and small-group practice: <i>Deck the Halls</i> in 7/8</p>
Week 11	
<p>Tuesday, October 29</p> <p>Fundamental Techniques: Accelerando/Ritardando</p> <p>Practice Conducting Exam 5: <i>Deck the Halls</i> in 7/8</p> <p>Discuss <i>Conductor as Leader</i> Ch 6</p>	<p>Thursday, October 31</p> <p>Practice Conducting Exam 5: Mixed Meter</p> <p>Assign: <i>Conductor as Leader</i> Essay</p>
Week 12	
<p>Tuesday, November 5</p> <p>Conducting Round 5 Mixed Meter</p> <p>Discuss <i>Conductor as Leader</i> Ch 7</p> <p>Due: Rehearsal Attendance 2 Write up (non-primary)</p>	<p>Thursday, November 7</p> <p>Introduce: Conducting Exam 6</p> <p>Discuss Rehearsal Attendance Observation 2</p>
Week 13	
<p>Tuesday, November 12</p> <p>Practice Conducting Exam 6</p>	<p>Thursday, November 14</p> <p>Practice Conducting Exam 6</p>
Week 14	
<p>Tuesday, November 19</p> <p>Practice Conducting Exam 6</p> <p>Final Exam Review</p>	<p>Thursday, November 21</p> <p>Final Exam Review</p> <p>Assign: Personal Conductor's Credo and Self-analysis of Final Video</p> <p>Due: <i>Conductor as Leader</i> Essay, Choose your make-up exam if needed</p>
THANKSGIVING WEEK	

Tuesday, November 26 No class (Thanksgiving Break)	Thursday, November 28 No class (Thanksgiving Break)
Week 15	
Tuesday, December 3 Final Exam, Written Portion Conducting Round 6	Thursday, December 5 Make-up Day Due: Personal Conductor's Credo and Self-Analysis Final Video (due by final day of university classes)

Important Links for Student Success

University of North Texas

Academic Integrity

<http://facultysuccess.unt.edu/academic-integrity>

Student Behavior

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

Access to Information–Eagle Connect

eagleconnect.unt.edu/

ODA Statement

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>

Final Exam Schedule

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

Financial Aid and Satisfactory Academic Progress

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

Retention of Student Records

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

Counseling and Testing/Mental Health

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

<https://speakout.unt.edu>

UNT Care team

<http://studentaffairs.unt.edu/car>

SAMPLE RUBRIC: Conducting Exam

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Starting Position (10 points)	10 pts Excellent The conductor is completely still before first prep, giving the ensemble a moment to focus before the first sound.	9 pts Good One or two slight movements occur before first prep, but it is a strong starting position.	7 pts Acceptable There is some distracting movement before first prep, but the conductor brings in the ensemble on time.	5 pts Fair Much movement happening before or at the same time as first prep	3 pts Significant Issues Excessive movement happening before or at the same time as first prep to the point where choir is unsure when to begin
Fermatas (10 points)	10 pts Excellent All fermatas are clear, confident, and accurate.	9 pts Good All fermatas are accurate, and the fourth fermata is clear to the ensemble.	7 pts Acceptable All fermatas are accurate and clear, with some minor issues.	5 pts Fair Fermatas are somewhat clear, with one or more issues.	3 pts Significant Issues More than two instances of unclear or inaccurate treatment of fermatas.
Articulations/ Dynamics (10 points)	10 pts Excellent Precise and confident patterns that clearly convey articulation and dynamics	9 pts Good Clear and consistent articulations and dynamics throughout	7 pts Acceptable Student shows articulations and dynamics, with some issues.	5 pts Fair Many instances of incorrect articulations and/or dynamics	3 pts Unclear/inconsistent Student conducts incorrect articulations, or shows no articulations in

					his/her/their gesture
Travel time between beats (10 points)	10 pts Excellent Seamless transitions between beats, with no noticeable delays or rushing	9 pts Good Generally clear and consistent travel time between beats	7 pts Acceptable Minimal delays or rushing between beats	5 pts Fair Noticeable but not distracting delays/rushing between beat	3 pts Significant issues Significant delays or rushing between beats throughout the pattern
Cues/Lifts (10 points)	10 pts Excellent Precise, expressive cues that enhance the performance	9 pts Good Clear and well timed cues/lifts throughout.	7 pts Acceptable Adequate cues, but occasionally missed or unclear.	5 pts Fair Cues/lifts are present, but late or lacking prep/ ictus/rebound	3 pts Significant issues Inconsistent and/or late cues/lifts. Lack of cues/lifts all together.
Cut-offs/ Releases (10 points)	10 pts Excellent Precise and musically expressive cut-offs that enhance the performance	9 pts Good Clean and well timed cut-offs, with clear prep, ictus, and rebound.	7 pts Acceptable Adequate cut-offs, but occasionally messy or late	5 pts Fair Cut-offs present, but late or do not have a prep/ ictus/rebound	3 pts Significant issues Inconsistent and/or late cut-offs. Final cut-off non- existent.
Facial Expressions/ Eye Contact (10 points)	10 pts Excellent Student looks up for most to all of the piece. Student has dynamic and expressive facial expressions that communicate musical intent.	9 pts Good Student looks up for most of the piece, and has an engaged face.	7 pts Acceptable Conductor makes a visible effort to look at the ensemble, but has a neutral or unengaged face.	5 pts Fair Conductor looks mostly at music. Conductor has a blank face or distracting facial expressions.	3 pts Significant issues Conductor does not look at ensemble at all
Posture/ Habits (10 points)	10 pts Excellent Excellent posture, demonstrating grace, fluidity, and confidence. No distracting extra movement/habits.	9 pts Good Good posture, showing confidence and connection with the ensemble. Occasionally but rare extra movement/habits	7 pts Acceptable Adequate posture, lacking some fluidity in gesture. More than one instance of extra movement/habits	5 pts Fair Slouched or stiff posture. Many instances of extra movement that distract from the gesture/habits	3 pts Significant issues Several instances of extra movement/habits that distract from the conductor's gesture.

Reflection (20 points)	20 pts Excellent Conductor answers all reflection questions on time with thoughtfulness and elaboration.	19 pts Good The conductor answers all reflection questions on time.	17 pts Acceptable The conductor answers some questions, or answers with single word responses.	15 pts Fair Conductor did not answer all questions, or submitted answers several days past the due date.	10 pts Significant Issues Conductor did not complete reflection until prompted to do so by the instructor.
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