

# Fundamentals of Conducting

## UNT College of Music

**MUAG 3800.002 & MUAG 5805.001**

**Fall 2023**

**M/W/F 9-9:50 AM, PAC 021**

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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, orchestra, and choral conducting. The course will include instruction in beginning and intermediate conducting techniques, score analysis and preparations, 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 arm-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 evaluations 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 the 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 access to composition software for transposition assignments
- Metronome, separate from the device used to record

## **RECOMMENDED TEXTS**

*The Art of Conducting*- Donald Hunsberger and Roy E. Ernst. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1992

*The Elements of Expressive Conducting*- Michael Haithcock, Brian Doyle, Kevin Gerald, Conway Publications, 2020

*Conducting: The Art of Communication*- Wayne Bailey and Brant Payne. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Oxford University Press, 2015

*Basic Conducting Techniques*- Joseph Labuta and Wendy Matthews, 7<sup>th</sup> edition. Routledge, 2018

*The Modern Conductor*- Elizabeth Green and Mark Gibson. 7<sup>th</sup> edition. Pearson, 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

3 absences..... Reduction of 1 letter grade

4 absences..... Reduction of 2 letter grades

5 absences..... Reduction of 3 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:** 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 any missed conducting assignments 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.

- 1 formal discussion topic will be posted in Canvas for the course, as well as informal discussions about a variety of topics 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 observations (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, One O'Clock and Two O'Clock Lab Band. Professional ensembles include, but are not limited to the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, the Dallas Wind Symphony, 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:** Student 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 five parts (representing soprano, alto, tenor and bass) utilizing all pitched instruments (C, Bb, Eb, F, C bass clef). 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 or pdf format by 11:59 pm on the given due date. Late submissions will receive an automatic lowering of one letter grade.***

**Conducting Portfolio:** A Conducting Portfolio will be due on **exam week**. The purpose of the portfolio is to organize all of your best conducting moments. Select video excerpts that represent your best work. This project is not only meant to prepare you for job applications, but it also assesses your personal awareness. The length of the project will be determined by the amount of conducting time achieved in the conducting rounds throughout the semester. Students can use iMovie or other free software on the music lab computers. Students may also be asked to include a semester ending self-evaluation as well.

### **Important Due Dates (listed chronologically)**

August 25—Pre-self Assessment Due  
August 30 —Discussion 1 Due  
September 4— Labor Day No Class  
September 18—Conducting Assessment 1 Begins  
September 28—Observation 1 Due  
September 29—Transposition Submission Proposal Due  
October 6—Score Study Submission 1 Due  
October 9—Conducting Assessment 2 Begins  
October 30—Conducting Assessment 3 Begins  
November 8—Transposition Assignment Due  
November 17—Score Study Submission 2 Due  
November 27—Conducting Assessment 4 Begins  
December 1—Observation 2 Due  
December 4—Post-self Assessment Due  
December 6—Last Day of Class  
December 13—Final Portfolio Due

*For full credit, all assignments must be uploaded to Canvas by 11:59 pm (CST) on the due date. Late submissions will receive an automatic lowering of one letter grade per calendar day.*

### **GRADING PROCEDURES**

400 pts: Conducting Rounds and Technical Proficiencies  
100 pts: 2 Concert Observations  
100 pts: Pre and Post Self-Assessment  
300 pts: 3 Discussions/Written Tests/Score Samples  
100 pts: Transposition Project Final: Video Conducting Portfolio  
  
1000 pts total

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a "0" for that particular assignment or exam [or specify alternative sanction, such as course failure]. Additionally, the incident will be reported to the Dean of Students (Office of Academic Integrity), who may impose further penalty. According to the UNT catalog, the term "cheating" includes, but is not limited to: a. use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; b. dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; c. the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university; d. dual submission of a paper or project, or resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor(s); or e. any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage. The term "plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to: a. the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment; and b. the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

See: [Academic Integrity](#)

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

## **STUDENT BEHAVIOR**

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

See: [Student Code of Conduct](#)

Link: <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](https://my.unt.edu). All official communication from the university will be delivered to your Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect.

See: [Eagle Connect](#)

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

## **DIVERSITY AND BELONGING**

UNT values diversity and individuality as part of advancing ideals of human worth, dignity and academic excellence. Diverse viewpoints enrich open discussion, foster the examination of values and exposure of biases, help educate people in rational conflict resolution and responsive leadership, and prepare us for the complexities of a pluralistic society. As such, UNT is committed to maintaining an open, welcoming atmosphere that attracts qualified students, staff, and faculty from

all groups to support their success. UNT does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, or veteran status in its application and admission process, educational programs and activities, employment policies and use of university facilities.

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>

### **Final Exam Schedule, Fall 2023**

See above

### **Financial Aid and Satisfactory Academic Progress**

#### Undergraduates

A student must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) to continue to receive financial aid. Students must maintain a minimum 2.0 cumulative GPA in addition to successfully completing a required number of credit hours based on total hours registered. Students cannot exceed attempted credit hours above 150% of their required degree plan. If a student does not maintain the required standards, the student may lose their financial aid eligibility.

Students holding music scholarships must maintain a minimum 2.5 overall cumulative GPA and 3.0 cumulative GPA in music courses.

If at any point you consider dropping this or any other course, please be advised that the decision to do so may have the potential to affect your current and future financial aid eligibility. It is recommended that you schedule a meeting with an academic advisor in your college or visit the Student Financial Aid and Scholarships office to discuss dropping a course before doing so.

See: [Financial Aid](#)

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

#### Graduates

A student must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) to continue to receive financial aid. Students must maintain a minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA in addition to successfully completing a required number of credit hours based on total registered hours per term. Music scholarships require a 3.5 cumulative GPA. Students cannot exceed maximum timeframes established based on the published length of the graduate program. If a student does not maintain the required standards, the student may lose their financial aid eligibility.

If at any point you consider dropping this or any other course, please be advised that the decision to do so may have the potential to affect your current and future financial aid eligibility. It is recommended you schedule a meeting with an academic advisor in your college, an advisor in UNT-International or visit the Student Financial Aid and Scholarships office to discuss dropping a course.

See: [Financial Aid](#)

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

### **RETENTION OF STUDENT RECORDS**

Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Canvas online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. You have a right to view your individual record; however, information about your records will not be divulged to other individuals without the proper written consent. You are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the university's policy in accordance with those mandates.

See: [FERPA](#)

Link: <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:

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**

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/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>