

STUDIES IN MUSIC - Pre-Music Major Course

Fall 2025 | MUGC 4890.001 | Recital Hall

Professor:

Kenny Ross

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Teaching Assistant:

Jose Andrade

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Office Hours:

Mondays 12:00-1:00

Music Building, Room 143

Virtual Meetings by
appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This lecture course examines the essential question: ***What does it take to become a successful collegiate student?*** This survey-style class will examine topics that create the fabric of exceptional musicians, such as practicing, listening, and networking. It will also cover skills essential for college students, including planning, academic advising, and career preparation. The course culminates in a major project of the student's choosing that will solidify their path towards a successful collegiate career.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Develop a better understanding of what it takes to be a successful college student.
2. Develop a better understanding of what it takes to be a successful music major.
3. Develop a better understanding of what it takes to be a successful career musician.
4. Explore degree options within the College of Music and evaluate which program aligns best with their goals.
5. Prepare for and complete the application and audition process for the College of Music.

MATERIALS

No materials are required for this course. Rather, these are recommended materials that I believe every musician relies upon in some capacity.

- Tonal Energy app
- Quality headphones
- Electronic calendar

GRADING SCALE

A: 90-100	A: 450-500 points
B: 80-89	B: 400-449 points
C: 70-79	C: 350-399 points
D: 60-69	D: 300-349 points
F: 0-59	F: 0-299 points

The University of North Texas does not use plus (+) or minus (-) grades. For more information on the University's grading rubric, please refer to the link below:

<https://registrar.unt.edu/grades/understand-your-grade-report.html>

GRADING

This course is worth a total of 500 points.

Class Participation: 20% (100 points)

Class Assignments: 30% (150 points)

Concert Attendance: 10% (50 points)

Major Project: 40% (200 points)

ATTENDANCE

This is an attendance-graded class. Each student is permitted two absences and expected to communicate absences in advance. After the second absence, ***each additional absence will lower your final grade by one full letter.*** Two tardies are equivalent to one unexcused absence. Absences and tardiness will affect the final course grade as follows:

0-2 absences: No effect on grade

3 absences: Final course grade lowered by 10%

4 absences: Final course grade lowered by 20%

5 absences: Final course grade lowered by 30%

6 or more absences: Final course grade = F

Excused absences do not count towards your grade. Excused absences include official University or College of Music activities, family and medical emergencies, and all COVID-related procedures. If there are extenuating circumstances, the absence policy can be discussed at the discretion of the professor. Please note that ***students may not schedule their end-of-semester jury during any regularly scheduled class.***

PARTICIPATION

Participation accounts for 20% (100 points) of your final grade.

While evaluation is at the professor's discretion, students who attend class regularly and engage with all class activities should easily earn full participation credit.

ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments collectively account for 40% (200 points) of your final grade.

Detailed descriptions, rubrics, and due dates for each assignment are available on Canvas. You are responsible for checking Canvas regularly for updates. All assignments are due at 11:59pm on their respective due date.

All assignments must be submitted on time. Late work will receive a 20% penalty. ***No assignments will be accepted after Reading Day: December 5.***

CONCERT ATTENDANCE

The Concert Attendance Assignment accounts for 10% (50 points) of your final grade.

You are required to attend five concerts total for the semester:

- **Three UNT large ensemble concerts:**

UNT's flagship ensembles present professional-quality concerts throughout the semester. You will have ***five*** opportunities to attend these concerts for credit. Attendance will be recorded by the TA, Jose Andrade. To receive credit, you must check in with Jose at the event.

Concerts eligible for TA attendance check:

Performing Ensemble	Location	Date and Time (all times pm)
Wind Orchestra	Windspear Hall	9/11 @ 7:30
Symphony Orchestra	Windspear Hall	9/24 @ 7:30
One O'Clock Lab Band	Syndicate @ the Union	10/8 @ 9:00
Wind Symphony	Windspear Hall	10/16 @ 7:30
A Cappella Choir	Windspear Hall	11/15 @ 7:30

- **Two additional concerts:**

Attend one concert within your desired department/instrument group and one concert outside of your department (on- or off-campus). To receive credit for these concerts, upload a selfie from the performance via Canvas, along with a brief statement (1-2 sentences) describing the performance.. The photo must provide clear evidence of attendance, as determined by the professor. If multiple people from this class are visible in the photo, small extra-credit points will be awarded. The concert photos and descriptions are due ***Thursday, December 4th, at 11:59pm.***

MAJOR PROJECT

The Major Project accounts for 40% (200 points) of your final grade.

The Major Project for this semester is to fully prepare your application and audition process. This project, along with the course as a whole, is designed to help you succeed at UNT.

After completing Steps 1 and 2, personalized assignments and due dates will be created based on your individual needs. Please refer to Canvas regularly for details and updates.

Step 1 - Roadmap: 5% (25 points): Upload a complete set of steps to Canvas that outlines your process and music selection.

Step 2 - Meeting: 10% (50 points): Schedule and attend a 10-minute meeting with the professor/TA.

SELF-CARE EXTRA CREDIT ASSIGNMENT

To become a career musician, you must sacrifice time to develop your skills, knowledge, and relationships. We will discuss what sacrifice looks like, as well as develop tools to manage time effectively. When learning about the amount of work it takes to make it in this industry, I want to encourage you to take time for yourself and for your loved ones.

To emphasize the importance of that balance, you can earn extra credit by engaging in a relaxing, fun, or rejuvenating activity at any point this semester. This can be done by yourself or with other classmates.

To earn the extra credit, simply:

1. Take a photo of yourself engaging in a self-care activity.
2. Go to the Self-Care Extra Credit assignment on Canvas.
3. Upload your photo.
4. Click submit.

Completing this assignment will increase your final grade by 3%. For example, if you finish the semester with an 88% and complete this assignment, your final grade will be 91%. ***This assignment is entirely optional.***

CLASS SCHEDULE TOPICS

Schedule subject to change. For most accurate information, please check Canvas regularly.

Week	Date	Topic
Part 1 - Life/Collegiate Skills		
1	8/18	Syllabus
2	8/25	Admissions Process/Expectations
Week 3 - NO CLASS - Labor Day - 9/1		
4	9/8	Finding Your Why
5	9/15	Careers in Music
6	9/22	What this Career Takes
7	9/29	Music Business
8	10/6	Academic Advising
9	10/13	Department Day
Part 2 - Music Skills		
10	10/20	Practicing
11	10/27	Listening
12	11/3	Education/Giving Feedback
13	11/10	Practicing for Performance
14	11/17	<i>To be determined by class</i>
Fall Break - NO CLASS - 11/24-11/30		
15	12/1	<i>To be determined by class</i>

UNIVERSITY STATEMENTS

Defibrillators in the College of Music:

Music Building: Across from the west side of the Music Commons, directly across from the elevator

Music Building: Third floor hallway, across from the staircase that comes up from the Copy Room.

Next to Room 322

Music Building: Across from the Copy Room next to Room 293

Music Building: Voertman Lobby by the big double set of doors that lead out to the courtyard

Music Building: Main Office (247) under the student worker's desk

Music Annex: Next to room MA117, near the triple set of doors on the east side of the building

Music Practice Building North: First floor on the Avenue C side

Music Practice Building South: First floor on the Avenue C side

Bain Hall: First floor by the restrooms

Murchison Performing Arts Center: Located off the main lobby, beyond the grand staircase, across from the single occupancy restroom (next to the public water fountains)

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.

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.

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. 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.

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.

Link: disability.unt.edu

Phone: (940) 565-4323

Health and Safety Information:

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

Registration Information for Students:

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

Academic Calendar, Fall 2025:

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

Financial Aid and Satisfactory Academic Progress:

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 to 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.

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.

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

Counseling and Testing:

UNT's Center for Counseling and Testing has an available counselor for students in need. Please visit the Center's website for further information:

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

UNT 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 for additional add/drop Information.

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

Student Resources:

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

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.

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