

MUED 1121-500, 502

Strings Class

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Office: MU307

Office Hours: MWF 10-10:50, or by appointment

Course Information

Semester: Fall 2025

Class Location: Music Building 137

Class Modality: In person- Section 500 MWF 9:00-9:50, Section 502 MWF 11:00-11:50

Course Description

Strings Class is a fundamental string techniques and pedagogy course designed to develop basic performance and teaching skills for violin, viola, cello, and/or bass. This course will help students learn beginner playing techniques as well as best practices for teaching individuals and ensembles. This course is primarily an opportunity for you to learn how to teach yourself and others through thoughtful practice, reading, and reflection. There are no prerequisites for enrollment, and mastery of a string instrument is not expected by the end of this course. Regardless of prior experience, students should demonstrate a thorough understanding of course content, apply consistent and honest effort, and work effectively towards their own goals in the process. Success in this course will be determined by a healthy work ethic, attendance and presence in class, integration of key skills, and putting one's best foot forward.

Course Objectives

- Acquire basic playing skills on violin, viola, cello, or bass.
- Understand the relationship between your playing, emotions, physicality, and decision-making.
- Develop diagnostic skills for teaching basic posture, position and performance in string playing.
- Survey and compare common string methods (methods books) to be able to confidently select an appropriate and effective approach for any given school program.
- Comprehend instructional content and sequencing for teaching a string program.

Course Content, Readings, & Media

All content, readings, and media will be provided by the instructor. **There are no required out-of-pocket costs required for students to take this course.** Students are not required to purchase any books, equipment, or other materials for this course.

Grading Policy

Performance: 25% (100 points)

During the university scheduled final exam time, your class will put on a concert performance in a public area of the building. You will be responsible for learning and understanding all aspects of a classroom performance. All aspects of the final concert will be compiled into a google folder to which I will give you access for your records later in your teaching career.

Participation: 25% (100 points)

Participation in class means actively engaging with the instruments, content, and fellow classmates. This portion of the grade also includes occasional readings, though these are relatively few. A participation grade will be given to every student following every class. Careful listening, skillful playing, physical and emotional self-awareness, and integrating skills and ideas as needed are key. Using a laptop, tablet, or mobile device for any purpose unrelated to the conversation or the course will be construed as a lack of participation.

Teaching Demonstrations: 25% (100 points)

Each student will teach the class 8-minute lessons. Students will submit a lesson plan for each 8-minute lesson to be approved by the instructor prior to the teaching demonstration. After the teaching demonstration, students will also submit a reflection assessing their own teaching in comparison to the lesson plan that they wrote. The teaching demonstration grade will consist of a combination of the lesson plan, the teaching demonstration, the student reflection, and an evaluation by the course instructor.

Assignments, Reflections, and Discussions: 25% (100 points)

Students are expected to complete readings, quizzes, class or Canvas discussions and reflections as they are assigned.

**** Please note - students will need to refrain from using cell phones, smart watches, and other devices during class.

Laptops and tablets are permitted for class work only. Cell phones are not permitted unless requested from the instructor before the start of class. If it becomes evident that laptop/tablet usage is contributing to distractions (e.g., surfing the web, doing outside work), the instructor reserves the right to prohibit their future usage. Inappropriate use of these devices will result in lowering your grade by a letter.

Late Work Policy

Deadlines are marked in Canvas as well as in the syllabus. I will accept late work at 5 points off per calendar day that it is late. Please communicate if you have extenuating circumstances.

Attendance Policy

- Attendance at all class meetings is expected. Three absences for any reason (aside from university-excused absences) will subject the course grade to being lowered by one full letter. Per Division of Music Education policy, more than three absences result in a failing grade for the course. End-of-semester juries must not be scheduled during class time; any such absences will not be excused.
- Daily attendance will be taken by the instructor. All students are responsible for staying informed of in-class assignments, email or Canvas announcements, physical handouts, turning assignments in on time, and informing the instructor in writing (by email) of any circumstances affecting attendance or performance in class.
- Be on time. Three tardies equal one unexcused absence.
- Note: If you have a disability that impacts your attendance, please carefully read the ODA statement on Page 6 of this syllabus and consider contacting the Office of Disability Access (disability.unt.edu) if you wish to engage the University Policy on making “reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities”.

Use of Generative AI (GenAI)

In this course, I want you to engage deeply with the materials and develop your own critical thinking and writing skills. For this reason, the use of Generative AI (GenAI) tools like [insert tool(s) here, e.g., Claude, ChatGPT, and Gemini] is not permitted. While these tools can be helpful in some contexts, they do not align with our goal of fostering the development of your independent thinking. Using GenAI to complete any part of an assignment, exam, or coursework will be considered a violation of academic integrity, as it prevents the development of your own skills, and will be addressed according to the Student Academic Integrity policy.

Teaching Philosophy

I believe that music is a way through which we can understand and connect with other humans. It is a privilege and an honor to mentor and educate pre-service music teachers who have discovered a spark and passion for music that they wish to share with future generations of student musicians. In our journey together, I want to help you hone your skills and passion while guiding you to shape your own teaching philosophy. If I can be of any assistance to you along your path, please let me know.

TENTATIVE Course Overview (subject to change)

Week	Month	Monday	Wednesday	Friday	Assignments
1	August	18	20	22	Due on Canvas :
INTRODUCTION: Syllabus, Instrument Information, Opening Discussion, Logistics, Canvas, Parts of the Instrument, basic posture, principles of tuning the instrument, principles of teaching stringed instruments					1. Google Form 2. Allen Reading Quiz Both due Fri by class
2		25	27	29	Demonstrate in class :
Basic Technique and Set Up: Instrument assignments, Introduction to Posture, Playing/Rest Position, Introduction to left- and right-hand techniques, Open String Song					Proper posture – Feet, seat, back, how to hold and adjust instrument
3	September	1 no class Labor Day	3	5	Due on Canvas :
Beginning Left-Hand Technique: Introduction to left hand, finger pattern cycle, overview of finger patterns 1 and 2					Feedback assignment Due Friday by class
4		8	10	12	Demo in class :
Beginning Right hand technique: Bow Hold, using the bow, placing the bow in the string, beginner bow strokes, Open string cycle, when to introduce note reading					Proper bow hold on pencil, straw, and dowel rod
5		15	17	19	Due on Canvas :
Begin Student-Led warm-ups with Open String Cycle Bow techniques – Tone quality, dynamics					*Extra credit* Sign up to lead warm-ups
6		22	24	26	Demo in class :
Integration of Posture, Left Hand, and Right Hand, first rote songs					Open String Cycle and Finger Pattern 2
7	Sept/Oct	29	1	3	Demo in class :
Choosing a Method Book					Method Book Info
8	October	6	8	10	Due on Canvas :
Left Hand techniques – vibrato, shifting,					What Makes an Ensemble Teacher Great? Due Friday by class
9		13	15	17	Due on Canvas :
Bow Techniques – bow strokes Review lesson plan requirements					Sign up for a 5-minute lesson to teach in class Due Friday by class
10		20	22	24 – SMTE no class	Due on Canvas :
Warm-Ups and Repertoire Selection Lesson plans due Wednesday					Lesson plan for teaching demo Due Wednesday by class
11		27	29	31	Demo in Class :
Rehearsal Sequencing, Begin Teaching Demos					Teaching Demos/ Feedback
12	November	3	5	7	
Teaching Demos, continue demos and feedback					Sign up for concert/final exam duties **Due Monday by class
13		10	12	14	
Finish Teaching Demos/Feedback, Begin concert prep					
14		17	19	21	Due on Canvas :
Concert Preparation, lessons plans, students teaching lessons, assignment of groups for concert duties					Turn in your Concert Prep Assignment Due Friday by class
15	December	1	3	5 – Reading Day – No class	No assignment this week.
Concert Preparation, continued					
16	FINALS	8	10	12	
11 AM CLASS FINAL: Monday, Dec 8 Section 502 - 10:30 AM-12:30 PM					
9 AM CLASS FINAL: Wednesday, Dec 10 Section 500 - 8:00-10:00 AM					

University Required Syllabus Statements

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. 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/

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. (Phone: (940) 565-4323)

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 2025

See: [Fall 2025 Registration Information](#)

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

Final Exam Schedule, Fall 2025

See [Final Exam Schedule](#)

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 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.

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 for students in need. 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 resources, please visit:

See: [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 (listed above) for additional add/drop Information.

Drop Information: <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:

See: [Student Resources](#)

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.

See: [Care Team](#)

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