

MUED 1221-502

Strings Class

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Office Hours: by appointment

Course Information

Semester: Spring 2026

Class Location: Music Building 137

Class Modality: In person- 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.

Course Objectives

- Acquire basic playing skills on violin, viola, cello, or bass.
- Understand aspects of string pedagogy and how they relate to playing and teaching a stringed instrument.
- 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. 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 5-minute lessons. Students will submit a lesson plan for each 5-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 4 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 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 means 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. I believe the information and skills you will acquire in this course will be valuable to many aspects of your teaching. 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 1: (1/12-1/16) Introduction, Community Building, Google form, Parts and care of the Instrument, Sequencing in strings, Assign Instruments.

Reading and reflection – Allen article (linked in Canvas)

Week 2: (1/19-1/23) Basic Technique and Set Up

Videos – stringtechnique.com

1/19 – MLK Day – NO CLASS

Week 3: (1/26-1/30) Beginning Left-Hand Technique

Reading and reflection – Posture Article

Week 4: (2/2-2/6) Beginning Right hand technique

Reading and reflection – Connect the Dots

Week 5: (2/9-2/13) Right and Left Hand Separately then together

2/13 – TMEA Convention in San Antonio – no class Friday

Week 6: (2/16-2/20) Integration of Posture, Left Hand, and Right Hand, first rote songs

Rote-teaching

Week 7: (2/23-2/27) Bow Techniques –

Tone quality, dynamics, bow strokes

Week 8: (3/2-3/6) Left Hand techniques – vibrato, shifting, finger patterns

Reading and reflection – Effective Ensemble leader

3/9-3/13 NO CLASS – Spring Break

Week 9: (3/16-3/20) Choosing a Method Book Group Project

How to teach note reading

Week 10: (3/23-3/27) Warm-Ups and Repertoire Selection

Week 11: (3/30-4/3) Rehearsal Sequencing, Begin Teaching Demos

Week 12: (4/6-4/10) Teaching Demos

Week 13: (4/13-4/17) Teaching Demos/Concert Preparation Assignments

Week 14: (4/20-4/24) Concert Preparation

Week 15: (4/27-5/1) Concert Preparation, continued

5/1 – Reading Day – No Class

Week 16: FINAL EXAM – Concert

University Required Syllabus Statements

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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.

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: Spring Academic Calendar Information

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

Semester Calendar, Spring 2026

See: Spring Semester Calendar

Link: <https://registrar.unt.edu/sites/default/files/spring-2026-academic-calendar.pdf>

Final Exam Schedule, Spring 2026

Link: <https://registrar.unt.edu/sites/default/files/final-exam-schedule-spring-2026-main.pdf>

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/spring-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>