



Fundamentals of Conducting
MUAG 3800-001 Spring 2026
T/Th- 8:00-9:20 AM, MU230

Instructor: Mr. Matt Carlson (he/him)
Office Hours: By appointment (email to schedule)

Office: MU217
Email: MattCarlson@my.unt.edu

Required Materials:

- Baton (ordering instructions provided)
- Score Study Supplies (colored pencils & ruler if using paper copies)
- Readings & Excerpts (posted in Canvas)

COURSE DESCRIPTION/OBJECTIVES

A conductor is many things; an artist, teacher, performer, motivator, interpreter, administrator, and servant leader. They must lead, inspire, alter, and reinforce the performance of an ensemble. The three primary objectives 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. Each student will learn the fundamentals of conducting and how to apply those skills in choral and instrumental settings. Individual conducting skills will be developed through in-class conducting opportunities and out-of-class practice. In preparation for these conducting experiences, understanding and knowledge of the following will be essential:

1. Fundamentals of conducting gesture
2. Score reading, analysis, and study
3. Communication of advanced musical ideas through conducting technique

CLASS FORMAT

This class will utilize lectures, demonstrations, student-led exercises, student-led discussions, clinics, and conducting experiences, in addition to discussions designed for self and peer evaluations. Assessment of the competencies stated above will be through written exams, video recordings of conducting exercises, and in-class conducting sessions.

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. **Assessment Tools**

Class Assignments – Self-Analysis, Rehearsal Observations, Score Studies, etc.

Points vary, see Canvas assignments/modules

Daily Participation – Preparation and contribution to class activities (includes bringing your own materials, actively participating in daily activities, and being prepared for your time on the podium)

10 points per day, 300 points total

Conducting Performance Rounds – In-class conducting experiences of short excerpts

50 points each

Written Exams – Midterm & Final

50 points each

Final Self Analysis – a reflection on your growth as a conductor throughout the semester

75 points

ASSIGNMENTS AND POLICIES

- A. **DAILY PARTICIPATION GRADE:** Participation grades will be assigned each day throughout the semester based upon the following criteria: bringing all class materials, 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. Being unprepared for class will result in a loss of 10 points from your participation grade.
- B. **CONDUCTING PERFORMANCE ROUNDS:** Students' conducting gesture will be assessed through conducting performance rounds. Performance Rounds are excerpts conducted in-class, with the rest of the class serving as the ensemble.
- C. **WRITTEN EXAMS:** The Midterm and Final exams are written tests that assess student knowledge of material from the first and second half of the course. Topics for these exams will be discussed in class.

- D. **FINAL SELF ANALYSIS:** This is a more in-depth 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.
- E. **MAKE-UP DAYS:** There are two class days in the semester in which students will have an opportunity to re-conduct a conducting round of their choice. Students can choose from conducting rounds 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 (not 6). Students must notify the instructor via email no later than Thursday, April 16th at 11:59pm of their intent to complete a make-up conducting round. Each student is permitted only one attempt to make up only one conducting round. Priority will be given to students who were absent on the day of a conducting round.
- F. **EXTRA CREDIT:** Students may complete up to one additional rehearsal observation to earn 25 points of extra credit. It must be with a different ensemble than the first two observations. There are no additional extra credit opportunities in this course.
- G. **RETURN OF STUDENT WORK:** Students should expect a grade on submitted work within a week of the due date. If an assignment is turned in late, it will be given lower priority than other assignments that were turned in on time and still need to be graded.
- H. **LATE WORK:** Assignments that are turned in after the due date and time will incur a 10% penalty for each day they are late.
- I. **JURY SCHEDULING:** Students should not schedule their end-of-semester jury against a regularly scheduled class.
- J. **CELL PHONES:** Although cell phones may be used to video record your time on the podium, they may not be used to display music (i.e., you may not read your part off your phone). The minimum screen size that is acceptable for music reading in class is a 9.7" iPad (or similar). Students without access to a sufficiently large screen should use printed copies.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

A great deal of this course is dependent upon interaction and discussion among class members, and observation of their conducting and coaching. As such, 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 semester grade will be deducted by one letter grade per subsequent absence. There is no differentiation between excused and unexcused absences. Absences from 20% of the class meetings (6 absences) will result in failure of the course. Students must communicate absences via email in advance or shortly after.

Class begins promptly at 8:00am. Students will be marked tardy if they are not in the room ready to participate at 8:00am. Three tardies equal one absence. Students who arrive after 8:40am (halfway through the class) may be given an absence for the day, at the discretion of the instructor based on the class activities they missed.

If you need to be absent on a day you are scheduled to perform a conducting round, you will forfeit that opportunity. All missed conducting rounds will receive an automatic zero unless arranged with the instructor. Make Up Days at the end of the semester can be used to earn those points back. Absences that are a result of ODA accommodations are an exception to this policy, and will be addressed between the student and instructor/ODA office as necessary.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY & PENALTIES

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.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Vocabulary

- Fundamental Techniques: Lecture
- Introduce: group work as a class, no individual podium time
- Coaching: podium time in front of the class, getting feedback on what you practiced
- Round: longer excerpts of music used to practice gesture
- Perform: conducting the round in front of class for a grade
- Assign: work on for next time
- Due: submit by the date listed

Week 1

Tuesday January 13

- Creative Exercises
- Syllabus Review
- Fundamental Techniques: Alignment, Basic 1/2/3/4 patterns
- Introduce: Rounds (in unison)

Assign: Read “Brown *Daring Greatly* Ch. 2,” Get A Baton, Practice Rounds (in unison)

Due: *Daring Greatly* Ch. 2 Canvas Response (Wed Jan 14 11:59pm)

Thursday January 15

- Discuss: *Daring Greatly* Ch. 2
- Fundamental Techniques: Review Day 1
- Coaching: Rounds (in unison)
- Introduce: Round 1 Mary Had A Little Lamb/Lightly Row

Assign: Practice Round 1

Week 2

Tuesday January 20

- Coaching: Round 1 Mary Had a Little Lamb/Lightly Row
- Introduce: 4321 1234
- Fundamental Techniques: Preps
- Introduce: Star Spangled Banner Prep

Assign: Practice Round 1, Star Spangled Banner Prep

Due: Video: 4321 1234 (Wed Jan 21 11:59pm)

Due: Get A Baton (Wed Jan 21 11:59pm)

Thursday January 22 – Bring batons to class every day starting here

- **Perform: Round 1 Mary Had A Little Lamb/Lightly Row**
- Coaching: Star Spangled Banner Prep
- Fundamental Techniques: Dynamics
- Introduce: Etude 1 (dynamics only)
- Baton Check

Assign: Practice Etude 1 (dynamics only)

Due: Star Spangled Banner Prep (Mon Jan 26 11:59pm)

Week 3

Tuesday January 27

- Coaching: Etude 1 (Dynamics only, no baton)
- Fundamental Techniques: Baton Grip and Technique
- Practice: Dynamics Exercise
- Fundamental Techniques: Articulation
- Introduce: Etude 1 (articulation only)

Assign: Practice Etude 1 (articulation only)

Thursday January 29

- Coaching: Etude 1 (Articulation only)
- Practice: Articulation Exercise
- Introduce: Round 2 I Vow To Thee
- Discuss: Rehearsal Observation 1

Assign: Read “Jordan on Hillis Marking,” Rehearsal Observation 1, Practice Etude 1

Due: “Jordan on Hillis Marking” Canvas Response (Mon Feb 2 at 11:59pm)

Week 4

Tuesday February 3

- Fundamental Techniques: Score Study
- Discuss: Group Score Study of I Vow to Thee
- Practice: Etude 1 (dynamics and articulations together)

Assign: Complete Rehearsal Observation 1, Practice Etude 1

Thursday February 5

- Coaching: Round 2 I Vow To Thee
- Introduce: Laban Efforts
- Practice: Laban Efforts, Etude 1

Assign: Practice I Vow to Thee, Practice Etude 1, Complete Rehearsal Observation 1

Week 5

Tuesday February 10

- **Perform: Round 2 I Vow To Thee**
- Coaching: Etude 1

Assign: Complete Rehearsal Observation 1

Due: Self Analysis of Round 2 (Wed Feb 11 at 11:59pm)

Due: Video: Etude 1 (Mon Feb 16 at 11:59pm)

Thursday February 12 - NO CLASS (TMEA)

Week 6

Tuesday February 17

- Fundamental Techniques: Cues
- Introduce: Rounds (in rounds)
- Introduce: Round 3 We Shall Walk (cues only)

Assign: Practice Round 3 cues, prepare parts, Complete Rehearsal Observation 1

Thursday February 19

- Coaching: Rounds (in rounds)
- Practice: Cue Exercises
- Practice: We Shall Walk (cues only)
- Discuss: We Shall Walk Score Analysis

Assign: Practice Round 3 We Shall Walk, Complete Rehearsal Observation 1

Due: Rehearsal Observation 1 (Fri Feb 20 at 11:59pm)

Due: We Shall Walk Score Analysis (Mon Feb 23 at 11:59pm)

Week 7

Tuesday February 24

- Midterm Exam Review
- Coaching: Round 3 We Shall Walk (m. 1-8)
- Practice: We Shall Walk m. 9-23

Assign: Study for Midterm Exam, Practice We Shall Walk

Thursday February 26

- Coaching: We Shall Walk (m. 9-23)
- Discuss: Rehearsal Observation 2

Assign: Study for Midterm Exam, Practice We Shall Walk

Week 8

Tuesday March 3

- **Midterm Exam**
- **Perform: Round 3 We Shall Walk Through The Valley**
- Fundamental Techniques: Transposition

Due: Self-Analysis of Round 3 (Wed Mar 4 at 11:59pm)

Due: Transposition Practice (Mon Mar 16 at 11:59pm)

Thursday March 5 – NO CLASS (SWACDA)

Spring Break

Tuesday March 10 – no class

Thursday March 12 – no class

Week 9

Tuesday March 17

- Practice: Transposition
- Introduce: Transposition Practice 2
- Fundamental Techniques: Fermatas
- Introduce: Jesu Meine Freude

Assign: Practice Jesu Meine Freude, Complete Rehearsal Observation 2

Due: Transposition Practice 2 (Wed Mar 18 at 11:59pm)

Thursday March 19 – Bring instruments to class every day starting here

- Practice: Transposition
- Coaching: Jesu Meine Freude
- Fundamental Techniques: 5/4 and 6/4
- Introduce: Round 4 Horkstow Grange
- Discuss: Round 4 Horkstow Grange Score Analysis

Assign: Practice Horkstow Grange, Prepare Horkstow Grange parts, study for Transposition Quiz

Due: Horkstow Grange Score Analysis (Mon Mar 23 at 11:59pm)

Week 10

Tuesday March 24

- **Transposition Quiz**
- Coaching: Round 4 Horkstow Grange

Assign: Practice Horkstow Grange, Complete Rehearsal Observation 2

Thursday March 26

- Coaching: Round 4 Horkstow Grange

Assign: Practice Horkstow Grange, Complete Rehearsal Observation 2

Due: Rehearsal Observation 2 (Fri Mar 27 at 11:59pm)

Week 11

Tuesday March 31

- **Perform: Round 4 Horkstow Grange**
- Introduce: Round 5 Shostakovich

Assign: Practice Shostakovich parts

Due: Self-Analysis of Round 4 (Wed Apr 1 at 11:59pm)

Thursday April 2

- Discuss: Shostakovich Score Analysis
- Practice: Round 5 Shostakovich

Assign: Practice Round 5 Shostakovich, Prepare Shostakovich parts

Due: Shostakovich Score Analysis (Mon Apr 6 at 11:59pm)

Week 12

Tuesday April 7

- Coaching: Round 5 Shostakovich

Assign: Practice Shostakovich

Thursday April 9

- **Perform: Round 5 Shostakovich 5 Mvmt 2**
- Discuss: Advanced Score Study
- Introduce: Round 6 Vivaldi Gloria

Assign: Practice Vivaldi Gloria, Prepare Vivaldi Gloria parts

Due: Self-Analysis of Round 5 (Fri Apr 10 at 11:59pm)

Week 13

Tuesday April 14

- Discuss: Vivaldi Gloria Score Analysis
- Practice Vivaldi Gloria

Assign: Practice Vivaldi Gloria

Due: Vivaldi Gloria Score Analysis (Wed Apr 15 at 11:59pm)

Thursday April 16

- Coaching: Vivaldi Gloria

Assign: Practice Vivaldi Gloria, Decide on Make Up Conducting Rounds

Due (optional): Decide on Make Up Conducting Round (Thurs Nov 13 at 11:59pm)

Week 14

Tuesday April 21

- Coaching: Vivaldi Gloria
- Final Exam Review

Assign: Practice Vivaldi Gloria, Make Up Day selections (optional), study for Final Exam

Thursday April 23

- Coaching: Vivaldi Gloria
- Fundamental Techniques: Irregular Meters

Assign: Practice Vivaldi Gloria, Make Up Day selections (optional), study for Final Exam

Week 15

Tuesday April 28

- **Final Exam**
- **Perform: Round 6 Vivaldi Gloria**

Assign: Practice Vivaldi Gloria (if you didn't go yet), Make Up Day selections (optional)

Thursday April 30

- **Perform: Round 6 Vivaldi Gloria (continued)**
- Make Up Day

Due: Final Self-Analysis (Tue May 5 at 10:00am)

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

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 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>