

# MUED 1221.500

## Strings Class

**Miguel Garcia, Ph.D.**

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Office Hours: by appointment

### Course Information

Semester: Spring 2026

Class Location: Music Building 137

Class Time: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 11:00 am - 12:20 pm

Class Modality: In person

### 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 string 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 musical prerequisites for enrollment. 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 attending and participating in class, completing all assignments, working hard, integrating key skills, and practicing intention and awareness.

## Course Objectives

- Acquire basic playing skills on violin, viola, cello, or bass.
- Understand the relationships between your playing, emotions, physicality, and choices.
- Develop diagnostic skills for teaching basic posture, position and performance in string playing.
- Explore and understand the features of popular string methods books.
- Comprehend instructional content and sequencing for teaching a string program.
- Any other objectives, topics, or content deemed necessary for inclusion in the course at the sole discretion of the Instructor.

## 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.

## Course Overview (subject to change)

### *Introduction*

January 13: Introduction

January 15: Logistics: Canvas, Syllabus, & Survey

### *Getting Started*

January 20: Instrument Assignments & Parts of the Instruments

**DUE: “Welcome to Strings” Survey (Canvas)**

January 22: Posture

January 27: Pizzicato

January 29: Review

## *Basic Technique*

February 3: Physicality of the Right Hand

February 5: Bow Hold

February 10: Sound Quality

February 12: Affirmation & Validation

February 17: Left Hand, pt. 1

February 19: Left Hand, pt. 2

February 24: Integration

February 26: Review

March 3: Beginner Repertoire, pt. 1

March 5: Beginner Repertoire, pt. 2

**Week of March 9: NO CLASS (Spring Break)**

## *Intermediate Skills*

March 17: Scales, pt. 1

March 19: Scales, pt. 2

March 24: Introduction to Pedagogy

March 26: Teaching Through Affirmation & Validation

March 31: Finger Patterns, pt. 1

April 2: Finger Patterns, pt. 2

## *Teaching and Rehearsing*

April 7: Repertoire

April 9: Rehearsing Techniques

*Note: April 10 is the last day to drop any or all classes with a “W”*

April 14: Rehearsing Techniques

April 16: Teaching Demonstrations

April 21: Teaching Demonstrations

April 23: Teaching Demonstrations

April 28: Teaching Demonstrations

April 30: Last Class

## **Teaching Philosophy**

I am deeply committed to supporting all of my students. I believe that music education is a noble profession that can create musical connection, belonging, and community in children and adults. If your goal is to become a part of this profession, it is my goal to help you in any way I can. You are welcome to contact me during office hours if you wish to have a conversation about our work in class, music education in general, or any other area in which you may need professional support or guidance.

## Attendance Policy

**Attendance at all class meetings is required.**

**Three unexcused absences for any reason (aside from University-excused absences) will subject the course grade to being lowered by one full letter.**

**More than three unexcused absences will result in a failing grade for the course, as per Music Education Division policy.**

**If an unavoidable situation prevents you from attending class (for example, illness with a doctor's note), please email me before class to determine whether the absence can 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 of any circumstances affecting attendance or performance in class.

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](https://disability.unt.edu)) if you wish to engage the University Policy on making "reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities".

## Jury Policy

**End-of-semester juries must not be scheduled during class time.**

**Any absence due to a jury will not be excused.**

## Use of Generative AI

In this course, the use of GenAI tools (i.e., ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, etc) is limited as directed by the Instructor. Any additional use requires explicit permission, proper citation, and authentic student work. Students must ask the Instructor prior to any proposed use of AI and obtain permission each time. Lack of adherence to this policy may result in a failing grade.

## **Grading Policy**

### ***Attendance and Participation: 50 Points (50%)***

Every class that you attend and participate in is worth 1.6 points.

Participation in class means being physically present and 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 class or the course will be construed as a lack of participation.

Repeated instances of this behavior (except for University-approved accommodations) will result in a participation grade of "0" for the day.

### ***Final Projects: 25 Points (25%)***

Later in the semester, each student will select a Final Project to complete. Options may include peer teaching, a podcast interview, or an academic paper. See Canvas for details later in the semester.

### ***Reflections, Assignments, and Discussions: 25 Points (25%)***

Students will complete weekly written reflections to be submitted on Canvas. Other assignments and discussions may be assigned as necessary.

### **Late Assignments Policy**

Late assignments will automatically receive a grade of "0" unless approval is given from the Instructor for alternate arrangements.

Any incomplete or not submitted assignments will receive a "0" at the end of the semester.

In general, I have found that late work disrupts learning, distracts from the original purpose of the assignment, creates unnecessary labor for the instructor, and increases stress for students. If there is a serious situation that prevents you from turning in work on time, I urge you to email me **before** the assignment is due to make alternate arrangements.

## Important Information

We will abide by all current university policies and guidelines regarding any health-related alerts.

### Canvas technical requirements:

<https://clear.unt.edu/supported-technologies/canvas/requirements>

Help desk information included on website

### Additional Student Support Services

[Registrar](https://registrar.unt.edu/registration) (<https://registrar.unt.edu/registration>)

[Financial Aid](https://financialaid.unt.edu/) (<https://financialaid.unt.edu/>)

[Student Legal Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services>)

[Career Center](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center>)

[Counseling and Testing Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services)  
(<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>)

[UNT Food Pantry](https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry) (<https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry>)  
Academic Support Services

[Academic Resource Center](https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources) (<https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources>)

[Academic Success Center](https://success.unt.edu/asc) (<https://success.unt.edu/asc>)

[UNT Libraries](https://library.unt.edu/) (<https://library.unt.edu/>)

[Writing Lab](http://writingcenter.unt.edu/) (<http://writingcenter.unt.edu/>)

## University Required Syllabus 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.

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](http://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/](http://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)

### **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>