

Fall 2026 Secondary Organ Study

UNT College of Music
MUAS 1502, 3502, 5502, 6502

Instructor: Yuqing He

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Lesson Location: Organ Recital Hall, Room 253 / designated organ practice rooms

Lesson Length: 25 or 50 minutes weekly, depending on credit hours and enrollment

Course Description

Secondary Organ Study provides individualized instruction in organ technique, repertoire, registration, and related performance skills. Because students enter the course with different levels of keyboard and organ experience, repertoire and technical assignments will be adapted to each student's background, needs, and progress.

Students with little or no previous organ experience will focus initially on fundamental manual and pedal technique, coordination, organ console orientation, and basic repertoire. More experienced students will continue developing technique, stylistic awareness, registration, hymn and service playing, and repertoire from a variety of historical periods.

Course Goals

1. Develop greater fluency and control in manual technique, including both legato and articulated approaches.
2. Develop secure and efficient pedal technique.
3. Improve coordination between manuals and pedals.
4. Develop familiarity with organ console functions, registration, manual changes, and use of the swell box.
5. Develop stylistically appropriate approaches to repertoire from different historical periods.
6. Build a basic working vocabulary of organ terminology and registration.
7. Develop greater independence in practicing, score preparation, and problem solving.
8. For students interested in church music, develop practical skills in hymn playing.
9. Prepare appropriate repertoire and/or technical material for final jury and studio performance requirements.

Required Materials

Organ shoes: Students are expected to obtain suitable organ shoes at www.organmastershoes.com or Avriel. Students who do not yet own organ shoes should obtain them as soon as possible.

Practice-room key: Students must obtain access to the organ practice rooms from the copy room in the College of Music. The key opens the Organ Recital Hall (Room 253) and organ practice rooms 335, 337, 340, and 349.

Music and technical materials: Materials will be assigned according to the individual student's level and may include:

- George H. Ritchie and George B. Stauffer, *Organ Technique: Modern and Early*
- Assigned organ repertoire from different periods, including Baroque, Romantic, or Neo-Classical/Modern.
- Hymns and other service-playing materials when appropriate
- Instructor-provided exercises and supplementary materials

Students should bring assigned music, a pencil, and any requested materials to each lesson.

Technical and Musical Areas of Study

The specific sequence will depend on each student's level and progress.

Manual Technique

- Legato touch and finger substitution
- Finger independence and control

- Articulated/non-legato touch for early music
- Manual changes
- Coordination between two or more manuals

Pedal Technique

- Proper posture and bench position
- Toe and heel technique
- Pedal scales and basic pedal exercises
- Legato and articulated pedal technique
- Independence and coordination of hands and feet

Manual and Pedal Coordination

- Simple exercises combining one hand and pedal
- Two manuals with pedal
- Independence among contrapuntal voices
- Gradual development toward complete organ textures

Registration and Console Skills

- Families of organ stops
- Basic principles of registration
- Couplers and manual changes
- Swell-box control
- Registration appropriate to different historical styles

Repertoire and Stylistic Study

Repertoire will be selected according to each student's technical development and previous experience. Students may study works or excerpts representing several stylistic periods during the semester.

Early and Baroque Music

- Short works or chorale settings by composers such as J. S. Bach, Buxtehude, Pachelbel, or other appropriate composers
- Repertoire emphasizing articulated touch, contrapuntal independence, and clear rhythmic character

French Baroque

- Short works introducing characteristic French registrations, ornamentation, and articulation

Romantic Repertoire

- Appropriate works or excerpts by composers such as Mendelssohn, Franck, Brahms, or similar composers
- Repertoire emphasizing legato technique, phrase shaping, use of the swell box, and Romantic registration

Twentieth- and Twenty-First-Century / Neo-Classical Repertoire

- Appropriate works introducing modern sonorities, rhythmic patterns, registration, and different approaches to articulation

Hymn and Service Playing

- Introduction and stanza preparation
- Registration changes between stanzas
- Clear leadership of congregational singing
- Simple service-playing techniques

Not every student will study repertoire from every category. Assignments will be selected according to the student's background, technical development, and professional goals.

Practice Expectations

Regular practice is essential for progress.

Students registered for one credit hour are expected to practice approximately one hour per day, six days per week. Students registered for two credit hours should plan for approximately two hours of practice per day.

Practice should be focused and should address the specific technical and musical goals discussed in each lesson. At the end of each lesson, the instructor and student will establish goals and assignments for the following week.

Students are expected to arrive prepared to demonstrate meaningful progress on assigned material.

Weekly Lessons and Attendance

Regular attendance is required. If a student must miss a lesson because of illness, family emergency, an unavoidable academic conflict, or another excused circumstance, the student should contact the instructor at least 24 hours before the lesson time if they cannot come within the day to be excused. Unexcused absences will count as 0% for their weekly grade. Make-up lessons will normally be considered only for excused absences and will depend on scheduling availability. If a student arrives more than 10 minutes late without prior communication, the lesson may be considered an unexcused absence.

Studio Class / Performance

Students are expected to attend at least 4 organ studio classes, recitals, and other events as determined by the organ area. Each student should prepare at least one work or appropriate selection for performance during the studio class.

Final Jury

Students will complete a final jury for 10 minutes in total for students registered for one credit hour and 15 minutes for students taking the two-credit option. The jury may include technical exercises, studies, repertoire, and/or other material covered during the semester. Jury repertoire will be selected according to each student's level and progress.

Students should maintain a record of repertoire and exercises studied during the semester on the jury sheet and bring it to the jury.

Evaluation

- Weekly lesson preparation and progress: 35%
- 4-time studio class/recital attendance: 15%
- Final jury: 50%

Weekly lesson grades will reflect preparation, improvement, responsiveness to instruction, and completion of assigned work rather than a fixed repertoire standard identical for every student.