

Sul Ross State University
MUS 3317: Conducting
Spring 2016

Instructor: Jeffrey J. Meyer, D.M.A.
Office: FAB 103 Office Hours: TBA
Phone: office: 432-837-8018 cell: 785-840-6077
(text only in emergency situations, please)
E-mail: jeffrey.meyer@sulross.edu
Class Meeting Time: Independent Study, time TBA

Alpine Community Band rehearses Tuesday evenings from 7:30-9, beginning March 22, 2016.

Sunday, May 8, 3:00 pm Alpine Community Band Concert Marshall

Course Description

This course is designed to cover the fundamentals of conducting technique including beat patterns, baton technique, cuing, subdivision, fermatas, preparatory beats, releases, and expressive gestures for dynamics, phrasing, terminology, and multi-staff systems.

Textbook and Materials

Wittry, Diane. *Baton Basics: Communicating Music Through Gestures*. NY: Oxford 2014.

- Notebook or folder for compilation of materials.
- Conducting baton (to be discussed, *Mollard* is the most popular brand.)

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Perform the independent physical movements of conducting techniques including symmetrical and asymmetrical meters, cuing, and dynamics.
2. Perform, as conductor, multiple pieces of music while conveying succinct musical ideas through gesture.
3. Study scores effectively and efficiently to aid the rehearsal process.
4. Identify numerous musical terms and techniques used by composers and conductors.
5. Seek out resources to answer questions and problems beyond their knowledge.

Music Program Learning Objectives

This course is a required course for a major in music. As such, it helps the student to meet one or more of the program learning outcomes for the major.

These learning outcomes include:

The graduating student will demonstrate:

1. the ability to integrate appropriate musical expression into performance.
2. the ability to prepare appropriate program notes.
3. the ability to evaluate and critique a musical performance.

ADA Needs

Sul Ross State University is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1973. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request for accessibility services. Students seeking accessibility services must contact Mary Schwartz, M. Ed., L.P.C., in Counseling and Accessibility Services, Ferguson Hall, Room 112. The mailing address is P.O. Box C-122 Sul Ross State University, Alpine, TX 79832. Telephone: 432-837-8203. E-mail: mschwartz@sulross.edu.

Class Policies

1. Students are expected to attend each class and to arrive on time. Excessive absences or late arrival may hinder student progress and negatively impact the student grade; instructor will not wait for all to be present. Inform instructor of any known absences beforehand.
2. Students should complete readings prior to arrival at class, and have questions ready to discuss. Classes will start with questions, and proceed to lecture of the assigned topic. Written assignments will be due the next class day.
3. Any assignments are due at the beginning of class.
4. There is no such thing as a silly question...really.

Class Attendance and Participation

From the 2014-16 Undergraduate & Graduate Catalogue:

Regular class attendance is important to the attainment of the educational objectives of the University. Each instructor will keep class attendance records, and the instructor's policy on class attendance will be explained at the beginning of the semester or term. **The instructors will drop a student from a course when the student has a total of nine absences.**

An absence is defined as non-attendance in fifty minutes of class (for a course that meets 3 times per week); for example, non-attendance in a one and one-half hour class (or course that meets twice per week) will constitute one and one-half absences and non-attendance in a three hour class (or a class that meets one time weekly) will constitute three absences.

An absence because of participation in an official University activity is considered to be an **authorized absence.**

- Every effort will be made by departments to minimize missed class time of students by careful scheduling of authorized University activities. When a student has to miss a class due to an authorized University activity, it will be the responsibility of the **student** to notify the instructor of the class in advance.
- The **department** responsible for the authorized University activity will also notify instructors through the Student Life Office by providing an explained absence list to the office.

- Instructors will give students participating in an authorized University activity the opportunity to make up class work, including tests, within a reasonable time and at the convenience of the instructor.

In order for an absence to be **excused**, written notification must be provided by the University, a medical doctor, funeral program, etc. Any unauthorized absence with no documentation shall be considered **unexcused**.

A student who is dropped from a course for excessive absences will be notified in writing by the Director of Records and Registration after the drop has been approved by the Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs. Any student dropped for excessive absences will receive either an “F” or a “W” depending upon the faculty member’s discretion.

This class meets once per week, so each unexcused absence will count as 3 absences. **You may be dropped after 3 unauthorized absences.**

Unexcused absences (per each class missed for a 1x/week class)

- 1 = 3 absences (zero for the day)
- 2 = 6 absences (zero for the day, max. letter grade lowered to “B”)
- **3 = 9 absences (student may be dropped or grade lowered to “C, D, or F”)**

Tardy Policy

Being late to class is disruptive to other students, the teacher, and the learning process. If you enter after the start of class, you are tardy. The start of class is defined as the point at which the teacher begins teaching. A tardy will lower your participation grade. If you are tardy for what you believe is an excusable reason, please speak with me in person after class.

Cell Phone Policy

Class time is limited and use of cell phones causes unneeded distraction to the learning process. Therefore, cell phone use during class is strictly prohibited, and repeated violation of this policy will have an effect on your daily participation grade.

Professional Communication Policy

- All communication with me should be done either face-to-face or through e-mail.
- You are expected to check your e-mail on a regular basis.
- Communication by cell phone is for EMERGENCY ONLY! Please call if an emergency will prevent you from attending class. Text messaging will not be allowed, nor will communication via Facebook.

Grading

Grades are not given, they are EARNED. Students will be given the opportunity to earn points in the following areas:

- Daily Participation Grade 20%
- Written Assignments 20%
- Conducting Performance Project with Alpine Community Band 20%
- Quizzes 20%
- Final Exam or Written Project 20%

Letter grades will be based on the following percentages:

90-100 = A = Excellent

80-89 = B = Good

70-79 = C = Average

60-69 = D = Poor

Below 60 = F = Failure

I = Incomplete

Calendar

This class meets for a weekly seminar TBA in FAB 103. Outside of class, you will be required to observe and conduct rehearsals. Those could include Sul Ross State University ensembles, other ensembles in the community such as community bands and choruses, symphonies, high school ensembles, or online videos of conducting.

Conducting Study Weekly Calendar, Spring 2016

Week 1 – Tuesday 1/19 - Friday 1/23

Syllabus, Intro assignment

Conductor: Carlos Kleiber

Week 2 – Mon 1/25 – Fri 1/30

Baton Basics – Ch. 1: The Body, Brass Day

Cond: Leonard Bernstein

Score: Mozart Divertimento (strings only)

Week 3 – Mon 2/1 – Fri 2/5

BB – Ch. 2: Motion and Gestures

Cond: Pierre Boulez

Score: Mozart Wind Serenade (winds only)

Week 4 – Mon 2/8 – Fri 2/12

TMEA

Cond: Claudio Abbado

Score: Haydn London Symphony (Classical Sym)

Week 5 – Mon 2/15 – Fri 2/19

BB – Ch. 3: Connecting to the Sound

Cond: Marion Alsop

Score: Mozart Symphony (later) (Classical Sym comparison)

Week 6 – Mon 2/22 – Fri 2/26

BB – Ch. 4: Applying and Combining Gestures

Cond: Frederick Fennell

Score: Beethoven Egmont Overture (formal chart)

Week 7 – Mon 2/29 – Fri 3/4

BB – Ch. 5: Controlling Tempo and Volume

Cond: Daniel Barenboim

Score: Beethoven Violin Concerto (solo concerto)

Week 8 – Mon. 3/7 – Fri 3/11

BB – Ch. 6: Becoming Centered, Ensemble Concerts

Cond: George Solti

Score: Mozart Requiem (Choral)

Week 9: Mon. 3/14 – Fri. 3/18

Spring Break

Week 10 – Mon. 3/21 – Fri. 3/25

BB – Ch. 7: Making Music

Cond: Lorin Maazel

Score: Bach Magnificat (Choral, Baroque)

Week 11 – Mon. 3/28 – Fri. 4/1

Basic Conducting Techniques – Ch. 1-3

The Baton, Preparation, Downbeat, and Release

Beat Patterns and Preparations in Tempo, Dynamic, and Basic Style

Preparations and Releases for all Counts

Cond: Diane Wittry

Score: Mozart Opera Excerpts (arias, recitative)

Week 12 – Mon. 4/4 – Fri. 4/8

BCT Ch. 4-6

Fractional Beat Preparations

Divided Meters

Conducting Musical Styles

Cond: Gustavo Dudamel

Score: Brahms Symphony No. 1 (differing interpretations)

Week 13 – Mon. 4/11 – Fri. 4/15

BCT Ch. 7-9

The Fermata

The Cue

The Left Hand

Cond: Simon Rattle

Score: Dvorak Symphony No. 8 (Scherzo form, conducting in 1, metric modulation)

Week 14 – Mon. 4/18 – Fri. 4/22

BCT Ch. 10-12

Asymmetrical and Changing Meters
Tempo Changes and Accompanying
Analysis and Score Preparation

Cond: Fritz Reiner

Score: Grainger Lincolnshire Posy (band music)

Week 15 – Mon. 4/25 – Fri. 4/29

BCT Ch. 13 & 14

The Instrumental Rehearsal
The Choral Rehearsal

Cond: Igor Stravinsky

Score: Stravinsky Soldier's Tale (asymmetry and style)

Week 16 – Mon. 5/2 – Weds. 5/4

Final Conducting Project, Ensemble Concerts

Daily exercises to consist of:

Discussion of relevant weekly topics, with accompanying lecture

Writing (journal observations)

Conducting ensembles in rehearsal and performance

Discussion of conducting and rehearsal techniques

Watching and critiquing videos of student conducting (and famous conductors)

Terms quizzes

Score study

Discussion of individual conducting projects