



**Syllabus for Fundamentals of Conducting - Fall 2021**

**MUS 3313 - 001**  
**Credit: 3**

**Place: FAB 100 (Band Hall)**  
**Time: MWF @ 2:00pm - 2:50pm**

**Instructor:**

Dr. Andrew Alegría  
Office: FAB 200A  
Phone: (432) 837-8216  
Email: andrew.alegria@sulross.edu

**Office Hours:**

M/W/F 11:00am-12:00pm  
or by appointment

**Course Description:** Fundamentals of Conducting is an introductory class in the techniques and craft of conducting. Goals of the course include the development of basic baton techniques for a wide range of vocal and instrumental contexts, developing basic non-verbal communication skills, and exploring and cultivating an initial understanding of score study and preparation, including how that understanding might manifest itself in their eventual professional & pedagogical pursuits.

**Course Learning Objectives**

The purpose of this course is to acquire the basic knowledge and skills necessary to conduct choral and instrumental ensembles in rehearsal and performance. Special emphasis will be placed on the following skills:

1. Fundamental beat patterns – 4, 3, 2, 1, and other mixed meters
2. Preparatory Gestures: A single beat is the norm, but other preparatory gestures will be discussed
3. Communication of: articulation, dynamics, entrances, cues, and releases
4. Basic score preparation, analysis, and interpretation (Why These Notes?)
5. Basic rehearsal techniques and error detection
6. Function of the left hand and other non-verbal communication
7. Use of the baton, baton grip, posture, and stance

**Recommended Text Book:**

Labuta, Joseph A. and Wendy K Matthews. *Basic Conducting Techniques*. 7th ed. New York: Routledge, 2018.

Neuen, Donald. *Choral Concepts*. Los Angeles: Schirmer, 2002.

### **Required Materials**

- Blackboard access
- Baton – Mollard or comparable 12 or 14 inch baton [\$10.00]
- Primary Instrument - for use in class so we may have an ensemble to conduct
- Metronome (a phone app is fine)
- Colored pencils
- SD card (8 GB minimum)
- Manuscript Paper
- 3 Ring Binder
- Paper and pencil

### **Recommended Materials**

- Full length mirror

### **Student Learning Outcomes:**

- \* SLO 1: All students will demonstrate the ability to integrate appropriate musical expression into performance.
- \* SLO 2: All students will demonstrate the ability to research and prepare appropriate program notes.
- \* SLO 3: All students will demonstrate the ability to evaluate and critique a musical performance.

### **Marketable Skills:**

The music student graduating with a BM in music (instrumental or vocal performance; instrumental or vocal education; or music business) should have the following Marketable Skills:

1. Ability to collaborate and network with others to achieve a shared goal, utilizing problem solving, flexibility and improvisation, and consideration of others' thoughts and creative processes.\*
2. Proficiency in public speaking and writing about music, especially in teaching basic musical concepts to all ages and incorporating technology for presentation and production.\*
3. Ability to prepare and perform a program of age-appropriate, relevant, and diverse repertoire, as an individual or part of an ensemble, to an audience, advocating for the arts through engaging with and serving the community.
4. Experience using problem solving skills and abstract thinking to analyze compositions and examine their aesthetic through musical and extra-musical concepts, such as historical context and text setting.\*
5. Ability to create and disseminate basic marketing and public relations materials, as well as resumes, websites, and digital portfolios.

Marketable Skills specifically addressed by this course indicated with \*

## Grade Weighting

Grading Categories	Weighting
Conducting Evaluation I	15%
Conducting Evaluation II	15%
Conducting Evaluation III	15%
Conducting Evaluation IV	15%
Conducting Homework	15%
Practice Homework	10%
Presentation on a Conductor	15%

### General Remarks:

Because conducting is a full body experience, there may be times when ‘hands on’ work or physical contact between the instructor and student is beneficial. Instruction is often streamlined with this teaching tool, and students often find it helpful in comprehending conducting concepts. ‘Physical contact’ typically deals with elements of posture, alignment, and breath, and the instructor is to ask permission before engaging. The student should respond at the discretion of their comfort level – yes or no. It is important to remember that physical contact is one tool among many, to be used judiciously as needed, and intended solely to hasten the conductor’s technical progress. It is not, however, a required part of conducting instruction. If there are any concerns, please address them with the instructor directly. If you are uncomfortable speaking with your instructor directly, you should speak with the chair of department, Prof. Marjie Scott, to set up a meeting between the three parties.

### Class Attendance

- \* Absences will be excused for medical emergencies or serious personal conflicts, **but prior approval or documentation is required.**
- \* Every three tardies will equal one absence.
- \* A tardy of more than 10 minutes will be recorded as an absence. (I still encourage you to come to class if you are late. You will be less likely to miss information that way.)
- \* Please email prior to the start of class if you are going to be absent or tardy.

### Participation

- \* Paying attention, asking relevant questions, giving constructive feedback when called upon will all be considered when determining the class participation grade.
- \* You are responsible for notes, handouts, and all assignments from missed classes. Dr. Alegría will not repeat classes nor provide his lecture notes.
- \* Six absences result in you being dropped from the course with a grade of “F” as per university policy. Upon the 3rd unexcused absence you will be dropped one letter grade. Upon the 4th unexcused absence you will be dropped another letter grade. And upon the 5th unexcused absence you will be dropped yet another letter grade.
- \* DO NOT schedule doctor’s appointments, trips, etc. which conflict with class time. DO NOT take off early for or return late from scheduled college vacations.

## **The Presentation on a Conductor**

This will be a presentation given near the end of the semester. Each student will have 10 mins to present on a current or past conductor. The student must provide a handout and show one video on YouTube of a performance with the conductor. Each student must be dressed nicely for their oral presentation.

Final Project presentation handout should contain the following:

1. Conductor's name, birth year, and death year (if applicable)
2. A short biography
3. Show video to class.

## **Students with Disabilities**

Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the Student's responsibility to initiate a request. Please contact me, Ms. Rebecca Greathouse Wren, M.Ed., LPC-S, Director/Counselor, Accessibility Services Coordinator, Ferguson Hall (Suite 112) at 432.837.8203; mailing address is P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas 79832. Students should then contact the instructor as soon as possible to initiate the recommended accommodations.

## **Student Support Services**

Academic support is available to all students through the SSS, housed in Ferguson Hall, Room 105. Call 432-837-8118 or email at [sss@sulross.edu](mailto:sss@sulross.edu)

## **SRSU Library Services**

The Sul Ross Library offers FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library's website, [library.sulross.edu](http://library.sulross.edu). Off-campus access requires your LoboID and password. Check out materials using your photo ID. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email ([srsulibrary@sulross.edu](mailto:srsulibrary@sulross.edu)), or phone (432-837-8123).

## **Academic Integrity Policy**

Principles of academic honesty are universally recognized as fundamental to scholarship. Consistent with the traditions and policies of SRSU, students are expected to be aware of and abide by these principles. Academic integrity specifically prohibits cheating, plagiarizing, and falsifying results of any work.

Cheating involves deception, as well as the provision or receipt of unauthorized assistance. Students are expected neither to receive nor to provide unauthorized assistance with academic work. This applies to, but is not limited to, written work, examinations, papers, reports, solutions to problems, computer programs, and art work.

Plagiarism is the use of another person's ideas, words or work without proper citation or acknowledgement. In order to avoid plagiarism, academic work should be produced by the student, giving credit for the help, words or ideas from other sources in the manner traditionally prescribed.

Academic integrity also prohibits the making of unauthorized copies of copyrighted material, including software and any other non-print media, as well as theft or defacement of print and non-print library materials. Any violation of this policy will be treated as a serious matter. Penalties ranging from failure of the assignment/exam to failure of the course will be enforced. In cases of repeated or flagrant violations, a student may be dismissed from the university. Cases of academic dishonesty will be reported to the academic affairs office. (Refer to SRSU catalog)

### **Classroom Climate of Respect**

Importantly, this class will foster free expression, critical investigation, and the open discussion of ideas. This means that all of us must help create and sustain an atmosphere of tolerance, civility, and respect for the viewpoints of others. Similarly, we must all learn how to probe, oppose and disagree without resorting to tactics of intimidation, harassment, or personal attack. No one is entitled to harass, belittle, or discriminate against another on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, national origin, or sexual preference. Still we will not be silenced by the difficulty of fruitfully discussing politically sensitive issues.

### **Diversity Statement**

"I aim to create a learning environment for my students that supports a diversity of thoughts, perspectives and experiences, and honors your identities (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, socioeconomic class, age, nationality, etc.). I also understand that the crisis of COVID, economic disparity, and health concerns, or even unexpected life events could impact the conditions necessary for you to succeed. My commitment is to be there for you and help you meet the learning objectives of this course. I do this to demonstrate my commitment to you and to the mission of Sul Ross State University to create an inclusive environment and care for the whole student as part of the Sul Ross Familia. If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, please don't hesitate to come and talk with me. I want to be a resource for you."

## COURSE CALENDAR

**Although there are no chapters to read, you must take time to practice the music for each class. Your active participation in class, both conducting and practicing, will demonstrate to me that you have read the music.**

### Week 1

**Mon., Aug. 23** - Syllabus & Lecture/Practice: The Baton, Preparation, Downbeat, and Release

**Wed., Aug. 25** - Practice: The Baton, Preparation, Downbeat, and Release

**Fri., Aug. 27** - Practice: The Baton, Preparation, Downbeat, and Release

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### Week 2

**Mon., Aug. 3** - Lecture/Practice: Beat Patterns and Preparations

**Wed., Sep. 1** - Practice: Beat Patterns and Preparations

**Fri., Sep. 3** - Practice: Beat Patterns and Preparations

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### Week 3

**Mon., Sep. 6** - No Class (Labor Day Holiday)

**Wed., Sep. 8** - Conducting Evaluation I

**Fri., Sep. 10** - Conducting Evaluation I

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### Week 4

**Mon., Sep. 13** - Lecture/Practice: Preparations and Releases for All Counts  
& Conducting Musical Styles

**Wed., Sep. 15** - Practice: Preparations and Releases for All Counts  
& Conducting Musical Styles

**Fri., Sep. 17** - Practice: Preparations and Releases for All Counts  
& Conducting Musical Styles

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### Week 5

**Mon., Sep. 20** - Lecture/Practice: The Fractional Beat Preparations

**Wed., Sep. 22** - Practice: The Fractional Beat Preparations

**Fri., Sep. 24** - Practice: The Fractional Beat Preparations

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### Week 6

**Mon., Sep. 27** - Lecture/Practice: Divided Meters

**Wed., Sep. 29** - Practice: Divided Meters

**Fri., Oct. 1** - Practice: Divided Meters

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**Week 7**

**Mon., Oct. 4** - Conducting Evaluation II

**Wed., Oct. 6** - Conducting Evaluation II

**Fri., Oct. 8** - Lecture/Practice: The Fermata & The Cue

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**Week 8**

**Mon., Oct. 11** - Practice: The Fermata & The Cue

**Wed., Oct. 13** - Practice: The Fermata & The Cue

**Fri., Oct. 15** - Lecture/Practice: Asymmetrical and Changing Meters

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**Week 9 - [Midterms]**

**Mon., Oct. 18** - Practice: Asymmetrical and Changing Meters

**Wed., Oct. 20** - Practice: Asymmetrical and Changing Meters

**Fri., Oct. 22** - Practice: Asymmetrical and Changing Meters

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**Week 10**

**Mon., Oct. 25** - Conducting Evaluation III

**Wed., Oct. 27** - Conducting Evaluation III

**Fri., Oct. 29** - Lecture/Practice: Expressive Conducting and the Left Hand  
& Tempo Changes and Accompanying

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**Week 11**

**Mon., Nov. 1** - Practice: Expressive Conducting and the Left Hand  
& Tempo Changes and Accompanying

**Wed., Nov. 3** - Practice: Expressive Conducting and the Left Hand  
& Tempo Changes and Accompanying

**Fri., Nov. 5** - Practice: Expressive Conducting and the Left Hand  
& Tempo Changes and Accompanying

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**Week 12**

**Mon., Nov. 8** - Lecture on The Instrumental and Choral Rehearsal

**Wed., Nov. 10** - Lecture on The Instrumental and Choral Rehearsal

**Fri., Nov. 12** - Lecture on The Instrumental and Choral Rehearsal

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**Week 13**

**Mon., Nov. 15** - Lecture on The Instrumental and Choral Rehearsal

**Wed., Nov. 17** - Presentation on Conductor

**Fri., Nov. 19** - Presentation on Conductor

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**Week 14**

**Mon., Nov. 22** - Presentation on Conductor

**Wed., Nov. 24** - No Class (Thanksgiving Holiday)

**Fri., Nov. 26** - No Class (Thanksgiving Holiday)

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**Week 15**

**Mon., Nov. 29** - Final Exam Review

**Wed., Dec. 1** - Final Exam Review

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**Final Exam**

Tues. Dec. 7

3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m

Room: FAB 100