



Syllabus for Fundamentals of Conducting - Fall 2023

MUS 3313 - 001

Credit: 3

Place: FAB 100 (Band Hall)

Time: MWF @ 11:00 AM - 11:50 AM

Instructor:

Dr. Andrew Alegría

Office: FAB 200A

Phone: (432) 837-8216

Email: andrew.alegria@sulross.edu

Office Hours:

M/W/F 2:00 PM — 3:00 PM

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.

Required Textbook:

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

Recommended Textbook:

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 (32 GB minimum)
- Paper and pencil

Recommended Materials

- Full length mirror

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

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 singing is a whole-body experience, sometimes ‘hands-on’ work or physical contact between the instructor and student is beneficial. My instruction is often streamlined with this teaching tool, and students often find it helpful in comprehending singing concepts. ‘Physical contact’ typically deals with elements of alignment, breathing, and phonation, 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, used judiciously as needed and intended solely to hasten the singer’s technical progress. It is not, however, a required part of voice instruction. If there are any concerns, please address them directly. If you are uncomfortable speaking to Dr. Alegría directly, you should talk with the Visual and Performing Arts Chair, Marjie Scott, to schedule a meeting.

Excused absences include university activities and sickness. For both categories, an email must be sent to Dr. Alegría by either an SRSU professor, the SRSU university system, or a letter from your physician. Remember, a severe illness is one that needs hospitalization or follow-up visits with a physician. Unless you are contagious, have a fever, or have projectile bodily fluids, make plans to come to rehearsal and sit in the back without singing.

Unexcused absences will be decided by the conductor on a person-by-person basis. Known conflicts should be submitted by email as soon as possible. This includes but is not limited to mental health day, mental health week, forgetting that you have class, hanging out with friends and/or family, car problems, house problems, pet problems, personal illness in which the singer does not plan to see the doctor (e. g. headaches, tummy-aches, toothaches, bowel movement problems, etc...).

Each singer will receive three unexcused absences for the whole semester. (A)

Upon the 4th unexcused absence, you will be dropped one letter grade. (B)

Upon the 5th unexcused absence, you will be dropped another letter grade. (C)

Upon the 6th unexcused absence, you will be dropped another letter grade. (D)

Upon the 7th unexcused absence, you will be dropped another letter grade. (F)

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.

Participation

All vocalists and instrumentalists must participate in each of your classmate's conducting homework and exams by playing their primary instrument or singing on a neutral vowel on a musical line. This means that everyone must take time to practice the music on your instrument before class. If a student is absent, excused, or unexcused, that student is responsible for notes, handouts, and all assignments from missed classes. Dr. Alegría will not repeat courses nor provide his lecture notes.

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 of a instrumental or choral 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.

Americans with Disabilities Act:

SRSU Accessibility Services. Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with the 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 each semester for each class. Students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Mrs. Mary Schwartze Grisham, LPC, SRSU's Accessibility Services Director at 432-837-8203 or email mschwartze@sulross.edu. Our office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall, room 112, and our mailing address is P.O. Box C122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas, 79832.

FUNDAMENTALS OF CONDUCTING COURSE CALENDAR

Week 1

Mon., Aug. 28 - Syllabus & Welcome to the World of Conducting

Wed., Aug. 30 - Read Chapter 1 and Practice 1-1 and 1-2

Fri., Sep. 01 - Conduct: 1-1 and 1-2

Week 2

Mon., Sep. 04 - No Class (Labor Day Holiday)

Wed., Sep. 06 - Conduct: 1-1 and 1-2

Fri., Sep. 08 - Read Chapter 2 and Practice 2-1, 2-5, and 2-8

Week 3

Mon., Sep. 11 - Conduct: 2-1, 2-5, and 2-8

Wed., Sep. 13 - Conduct: 2-1, 2-5, and 2-8

Fri., Sep. 15 - Conducting Evaluation I

Week 4

Mon., Sep. 18 - Read Chapter 3 and Practice 3-1, 3-2, and 3-8

Wed., Sep. 20 - Conduct: 3-1, 3-2, and 3-8

Fri., Sep. 22 - Conduct: 3-1, 3-2, and 3-8

Week 5

Mon., Sep. 25 - Read Chapter 4 and Practice 4-1, 4-5, and 4-6

Wed., Sep. 27 - Conduct: 4-1, 4-5, and 4-6

Fri., Sep. 29 - Conduct: 4-1, 4-5, and 4-6

Week 6

Mon., Oct. 02 - Read Chapter 5 and Practice 5-1, 5-3, and 5-7

Wed., Oct. 04 - Conduct: 5-1, 5-3, and 5-7

Fri., Oct. 06 - Conduct: 5-1, 5-3, and 5-7

Week 7

Mon., Oct. 09 - Conduct: 5-1, 5-3, and 5-7

Wed., Oct. 11 - Conducting Evaluation II

Fri., Oct. 13 - Read Chapter 6 and Practice 6-8, 6-9, and 6-10

Week 8

Mon., Oct. 16 - Conduct: 6-8, 6-9, and 6-10

Wed., Oct. 18 - Conduct: 6-8, 6-9, and 6-10

Fri., Oct. 20 - Practice: 6-2, 6-5, 6-16

Week 9 - [Midterms]

Mon., Oct. 23 - Conduct: 6-2, 6-5, 6-16

Wed., Oct. 25 - Conduct: 6-2, 6-5, 6-16

Fri., Oct. 27 - Read Chapter 7 and Practice 7-4, 7-3, and 7-8

Week 10

Mon., Oct. 30 - Conduct: 7-4, 7-3, and 7-8

Wed., Nov. 01 - Conduct: 7-4, 7-3, and 7-8

Fri., Nov. 03 - Read Chapter 8 and Practice 8-1, 8-2, and 8-4

Week 11

Mon., Nov. 06 - Conduct: 8-1, 8-2, and 8-4

Wed., Nov. 08 - Conduct: 8-1, 8-2, and 8-4

Fri., Nov. 10 - Read Chapter 9 and 10 and Practice 10-1, 10-4, and 10-11

Week 12

Mon., Nov. 13 - Conduct: 10-1, 10-4, and 10-11

Wed., Nov. 15 - Conduct: 10-1, 10-4, and 10-11

Fri., Nov. 17 - Conducting Evaluation III

Week 13

Mon., Nov. 20 - Read Chapters 13 and Chapter 14

Wed., Nov. 22 - No Class (Thanksgiving Holiday)

Fri., Nov. 24 - No Class (Thanksgiving Holiday)

Week 14

Mon., Nov. 27 - Lecture on The Instrumental and Choral Rehearsal

Wed., Nov. 29 - Presentation on Conductor

Fri., Dec. 01 - Presentation on Conductor

Week 15

Mon., Dec. 04 - Lecture on The Instrumental and Choral Rehearsal

Wed., Dec. 06 - Final Exam Review

Final Exam

Tues. Dec. 12

10:15 AM - 12:15 PM

Room: FAB 100