

Sul Ross State University

SYLLABUS

MUS 1111 001: Individual Instruction, Piano

Spring, 2026

Dr. Karrin Ford

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Office hours: MWF 11-12; TT 11-12; or by appointment

Course Description:

This course provides private instruction in piano to students with prior keyboard study. Skills to be addressed include the continued development of technical facility, sight-reading, melodic harmonization, improvisation, transposition, and standard accompaniment styles.

Required Texts:

Lancaster, E. L. and Kenon D. Renfrow. *Alfred's Group Piano for Adults, Book 1*. 2nd edition. Van Nuys, California: Alfred Publishing Company, 2004.

Palmer, Willard, Morton Manus, and Amanda Vick Lethco. *Alfred's Complete Book of Scales, Chords, Arpeggios and Cadences*. Van Nuys, California: Alfred Publishing Company, 1994.

Student Learning Objectives:

1. The student will make significant progress in acquiring technical piano skills, including accurate note reading, optimal fingering, appropriate dynamics, and phrasing
2. The student will make significant progress in learning functional piano skills, including scales, sight reading, and melody harmonization
3. The student will gain a greater knowledge of piano literature
4. The student will be able to critique a musical performance, including his or her own, with specific feedback regarding accuracy and musicality
5. The student will attain greater confidence and satisfaction as a pianist

Requirements:

1. Attend all lessons. Excused absences will be made up at the instructor's discretion. MISSED LESSONS FOR UNEXCUSED ABSENCES WILL NOT BE RESCHEDULED. The following instances constitute an excused absence: 1) documented illness with note from medical provider; 2) family emergency; 3) university-approved activity.
2. Practice outside of lessons is essential to achieving success in this course. For MUS 1111 (one thirty-minute lesson per week), **an average of 5 hours practice per week must be achieved**. Weekly practice goals will be established at each lesson.
3. Make measurable progress in learning new technical and artistic skills (scales, sightreading, melody harmonization, transposition, and piano literature).

Grading:

A = Outstanding progress; weekly preparation above and beyond level of assignment; exceptional eagerness to learn; artistic incorporation of style, tempo, phrasing, and dynamics

B = Above average progress; weekly preparation demonstrates eagerness to learn; notes and rhythms mostly accurate; consistent use of expressive elements

C = Average progress; weekly preparation demonstrates inconsistent note and rhythmic accuracy; inconsistent use of expressive elements

D = Below average progress; weekly preparation demonstrates frequent note and/or rhythmic inaccuracies; little use of expressive elements

F = Unacceptable progress; weekly preparation demonstrates minimal note and/or rhythmic accuracy; no use of expressive elements

O = Missed lesson

Electronics:

The use of cell phones or other electronic devices during lessons is prohibited.

Food and Drink:

No food or drink may be brought into the lesson, other than bottled water.

Disabilities Statement:

Sul Ross State University is committed to equal access for all students in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (1973). Students seeking accessibility services for this course should contact the ADA Coordinator for Program Accessibility, Mary Schwartz Grisham, M.Ed., L.P.C., P.O. Box C-122, 112 Ferguson Hall (mschwartz@sulross.edu), or call (432) 837-8203 for more information about specific services available at Sul Ross State University.