

Sul Ross State University

SYLLABUS

MUS 1181: Class Piano
2:00-2:50 MW

Fall, 2026
FAB 200

Dr. Karrin Ford
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Office Hours: MWF 11-12; TT 1-2; or by appointment

Course Description:

This course provides an introduction to piano study for students with little or no keyboard background. Topics to be covered include keyboard technique, score reading, pitch and rhythm notation, harmonization of simple melodies, transposition, improvisation, ensemble playing, and accompaniment styles.

Required Text:

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

Primary Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- 1) Read and play short passages in treble and bass clefs, employing specified elements of pitch, rhythm, dynamics, and articulation
- 2) Understand and be able to apply the concepts of key signatures, time signatures, pitch notation, and rhythmic notation
- 3) Accompany simple melodies with left-hand chords
- 4) Understand and be able to apply chord notation using standard Roman numeral symbols
- 5) Transpose a simple melody no more than a whole step up or down
- 6) Harmonize a short melody and analyze its chordal implications

Student Learning Outcomes:

- 1) Students will demonstrate the ability to integrate appropriate musical expression and knowledge into performance
- 2) Students will demonstrate the ability to research and prepare appropriate program notes, using analytical and theoretical skills
- 3) Students will demonstrate the ability to evaluate and critique a musical performance, using analytical and theoretical skills

Attendance:

Regular, punctual attendance is essential for the educational objectives of this course to be achieved. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of every class.

In accordance with the *Sul Ross State University Student Handbook*, any student who accumulates more than nine (9) absences per semester, whether excused or unexcused, may be dropped from a course at the faculty member's discretion.

Students are responsible for all class materials, activities, and announcements made when absent.

University excused absences will allow students to make up or complete assignments incurred by absence without penalty. The following instances constitute a university-excused absence: 1) documented illness with note from a medical provider; 2) family emergency; 3) university-approved activity.

In the case of a university-excused absence, major tests will be rescheduled. An unexcused absence shall result in a grade of zero for any quiz, daily assignment, or homework grade taken that day.

Two tardies shall equal one absence.

Assignments:

Written homework assignments will be given at the end of most class meetings.

All assignments are due at the beginning of class unless otherwise announced.

Unexcused late assignments will be penalized 10 points per class meeting. No work will be accepted more than one week past its due date.

No penalty will be assessed for work completed upon return from a university-excused absence, provided such work is submitted in a timely manner.

Quizzes will be unannounced, and no rescheduling will be allowed as a result. Quizzes given at the beginning of class may not be made up if a student arrives late, nor may any portion thereof be completed for credit.

Missed Assignments, Quizzes, or Exams:

In the event of an unforeseen absence, extensions of time to take and/or complete daily assignments and/or exams may be granted on a case-by-case basis. The circumstances surrounding such extensions must be documented in writing and advance notice given where possible.

Grading:

Homework	20%
Daily Playing Tests	30%
Tests (3)	30%
Final Examination	20%

Grades will be based on the following percentages:

A+	100 – 98	C+	79 - 78
A	97 - 93	C	77 -- 73
A-	92 - 90	C-	72 -- 70
B+	89 - 88	D+	69 -- 68
B	87 - 83	D	67 -- 63
B-	82 - 80	D-	62 -- 60
		F	Below 60

Academic Integrity:

Sul Ross State University expects all students to engage in academic pursuits with honesty and integrity both in and out of the classroom. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in any form (cheating, copying homework, looking at another student's test, etc.) and violations will be considered in light of policies stated in the *Sul Ross State University Student Handbook*. All academic dishonesty cases shall be considered initially by the faculty member involved and reviewed subsequently by both the academic department chair and the dean of the college.

Electronics:

Use of cell phones and other electronic devices (computers, MP3 players, recording devices, etc.) for non-emergency purposes during class is prohibited.

Food and Drink:

No food or drink may be brought into the classroom with the exception of bottled water.

Disability:

Sul Ross State University is committed to providing equal access for all students, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide responsible accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request each semester for each class in which accommodations are needed. Students seeking accessibility services for this course should contact Counseling and Accessibility Services, 112 Ferguson Hall. The mailing address is P. O. Box C-122, or call (432) 837-8691 for more information about specific services available at Sul Ross State University.

Revisions to the Syllabus:

Every effort will be made to follow the course outline given below. Nonetheless, unforeseen circumstances, events, or other conditions may alter dates and/or topics listed, resulting in minor revisions to this document as the semester progresses.

COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1	8/24 8/26	Introduction; Unit 1: Keyboard Basics Keyboard Basics
Week 2	8/31 9/02	LABOR DAY HOLIDAY Unit 2: Intervals and Other Keyboard Basics
Week 3	9/07 9/09	Unit 3: Major Five-Finger Patterns Unit 3: The Major Triad
Week 4	9/14 9/16	Unit 4: Major Five-Finger Pattern Review Unit 4: Major Five-Finger Pattern Review
Week 5	9/21 9/23	Unit 5: Minor Five-Finger Patterns Unit 5: The Minor Triad
Week 6	9/28 9/30	Unit 6: Minor Five-Finger Pattern Review Unit 6: Minor Five-Finger Pattern Review
Week 7	10/05 10/07	Unit 7: Augmented and Diminished Triads Unit 7: Augmented and Diminished Triads
Week 8	10/12 10/14	Unit 8: Major Scales in Tetrachord Position Unit 8: Intervals: 6ths, 7ths, and 8ths

Week 9	10/19 10/21	Unit 9: Major Scales (Group I) Unit 9: Triads
Week 10	10/26 10/28	Unit 9: Major Scales and Arpeggios Unit 10: Major Scales (Group 2)
Week 11	11/02 11/04	Unit 10: Triad Inversions Unit 11: Dominant and Dominant Seventh
Week 12	11/09 11/11	Unit 12: The Subdominant Chord Unit 12: Alberti Bass and Waltz Bass
Week 13	11/16 11/18	Unit 13: Primary Chords in Major Keys Unit 13: Primary Chords in Major Keys
Week 14	11/23 11/25	Unit 14: Minor Scales in Tetrachord Position THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY
Week 15	11/30 12/02	Review Review

FINAL EXAMINATION: Tuesday, December 8, 3:00 – 5:00 P. M.

