CHORAL CONDUCTING I
MUP 356 Syllabus
Stephen F. Austin State University
School of Music
Fall 2017

Instructor: Dr. Tod Fish
Office: M126B
Office Hours: By Appointment
Office phone: 936.468.1148
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Class Meeting Times: Tuesday and Thursday 8:00-9:15 a.m. (Cole Hall)

REQUIRED MATERIALS
- Caplin, Thomas. The Learning Conductor. Norsk Musikforlag musikkforlagene.no
- Conducting baton (weighted - order through Premier baton) please wait to purchase
- Metronome
- Full length mirror
- Colored pencils
- Video recording device

CATALOG DESCRIPTION
The choral conducting curriculum focuses on four major areas:
1. The development of basic competencies in choral conducting technique
2. The development of verbal and non-verbal communication in the rehearsal setting
3. The study of choral repertoire representative of various styles periods with emphasis on analysis and interpretation

COURSE OBJECTIVES
This course will guide the student in the exploration of pedagogical practices associated with choral conducting. Students will demonstrate:

1. A clear, efficient, and expressive conducting technique
2. A knowledge of representative choral works selected from the major style and periods and genres
3. An ability to interpret with stylistic understanding various forms and styles of choral compositions
4. An ability to independently study and prepare a score for rehearsal and performance
5. An ability to sequence learning and plan for rehearsal
6. An ability to express musical ideas through gesture; an ability to respond in rehearsal to the choir’s performance; and an ability to deliver clear, concise verbal directions
7. An ability to choose appropriate non-verbal cues to shape and develop choral sound
8. Observation and self-observation techniques
9. Error detection and prescriptive skills
10. A proficiency in conducting patterns and gestures (e.g. preparatory exercises, basic beat patterns, cueing and release gestures, fermatas, mixed meters, asymmetrical meters, gradual changes in tempo, dynamics, and articulation contrasts)
11. To broaden gesture vocabulary
12. Facility using each gesture with intent not habit
13. Become an active observer in your ensemble rehearsals (responding to conductors’ directives, thinking about conductors’ decisions, both gestural and musical, during rehearsal)

ASSESSMENT
Several types of assessment are used in this course:

1. Self-analysis and reflection form
2. Faculty analysis and feedback through observation
3. Demonstration of competency in textbook, projects, written assignments, and other assigned readings

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES
Score study, listening, rehearsal planning, conducting competencies, preparation for class (reading), aural analysis and error detection competencies, self-evaluations of personal conducting video segments, teacher evaluation of demonstrated conducting and rehearsal skills.

Academic Work:
1. All work must be typed (12 font, Times New Roman, Double Spaced) with the exception of in-class assignments
2. To receive full credit, all assignments must be completed and submitted in class on the due date. Late work will be accepted no later than 5:00 p.m. on the next class meeting, and will carry a deduction of 10 points
3. Keep copies of all submitted and returned work
4. Attend class, have a fun and positive disposition

COURSE GRADING
Course grading is contingent upon 1) conducting/music competencies, 2) video self-reflections, 3) score studies 4) chapter questions, 4) mid-term, 5) final exam, 6) middle school choir clinic (September 23 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.)

GRADING SCALE (before complaining about a grade, honestly ask yourself which grade you deserve based on the work you put in your weekly assignments, mid-term, and final semester grade)

90 – 100% = A
EXCELLENT = Considerable evidence of practice and preparation for class; demonstrated outstanding capacity to analyze and synthesize; outstanding grasp of conducting/music competencies; commitment to attendance is noteworthy

80 – 89% = B

GOOD = Evidence of practice and preparation for class; some evidence of critical capacity and analytical ability; to analyze and synthesize; reasonable understanding of conducting/music competencies; commitment to attendance. Evidence of familiarity with the literature.

70 – 79% = C

SATISFACTORY = Evidence of some understanding of conducting/music competencies, subject matter, practice, and preparation for class; benefitting from his/her university experience by attending class most of the time.

60 – 69% = D

MARGINAL = Evidence of minimally acceptable familiarity with conducting/music competencies and/or subject matter; minimum practice and preparation for class; minimum effort in attendance.

59% or lower = F

INADEQUATE = insufficient evidence of understanding of conducting/music competencies and/or subject matter, no commitment to attendance, consistent practice, and preparation; weakness in critical and analytical skills.

CLASS POLICIES

Attendance
There are no excused versus unexcused absences for this course. Each student is permitted two (2) absences to be used at the student’s discretion and may be used for any reason. Tardies/early departures accumulate and become absences (3 tardies/early departures = 1 absence). An absence does not mitigate the student’s responsibility for course content, work due or work assigned on the day of an absence. In the event of a chronic illness or family emergencies that demand excessive absences or missing work, it is recommended that a student seek a withdrawal from the course. NO incompletes will be given!

Professional Behavior
This includes preparedness for class, on-time attendance, participation in all discussions and/or activities.
STUDENTS WITH DOCUMENTED DISABILITIES
To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations.

Calendar

* Instructor reserves the right to modify the schedule as needed

Conductors, please mark your calendars to attend the All-Region Middle School Choir Clinic on Saturday, September 23 arrive at 8:00 a.m. and dismiss at 4:30 p.m. (Sing and observe with choir) **Attendance required**

**Week 1 (August 29, 31)**

**Tuesday**

Syllabus
Introductions/Fun Time!

**Thursday**

Fundamentals
  - Warming-up the body
  - Posture
  - Hand position
  - Basic patterns (2,3,4)
  - Preparatory gestures

Due: 5 questions and answers on “Introduction” and “Beat, conduct, or lead?” – *The Learning Conductor* pp. 10-11

Due: 5 questions and answers on “Choral Conducting - Goals and Purpose” – *The Learning Conductor* pp. 135-141

**Week 2 (September 5, 7)**
Tuesday

Fundamentals (continued)
  Warming-up the body
  Posture
  Hand position
  Basic patterns (2,3,4)
  Preparatory gestures

Due: 5 questions and answers on Frameworking – Conducting Techniques and Philosophy – *The Learning Conductor* pp. 12-68

Thursday

Introduce Conducting lesson 1
Gustav Holst – “I Vow to Thee, My Country”

Due: 5 questions and answers on Preparatory Beats –Cueing – *The Learning Conductor* pp. 69-90

Week 3 (September 12, 14)

Tuesday
Conducting lesson 1- Unison selection – Gustav Holst – “I Vow to Thee, My Country” (Group 1)

Thursday
Conducting lesson 1- Unison selection – Gustav Holst – “I Vow to Thee, My Country” (Group 2)

Week 4 (September 19, 21, 23)

Tuesday
Score study

Due: 5 questions and answers on Rehearsal Methodology– *The Learning Conductor* pp. 183-220

Thursday
Cues and releases

Due: 5 questions and answers on Cutoff/Release– *The Learning Conductor* pp. 91-98
Saturday
All-Region Middle School Choir Clinic 8:00 a.m.- 4:30 p.m. (Observe and sing with Choir)

Week 5 (September 26, 28)

Tuesday
Fermatas

Due: 5 questions and answers on Fermatas/Pauses– The Learning Conductor pp. 99-112

Thursday
Introduce Conducting lesson 2 - Conduct chorale demonstrating all three types of fermatas
Conduct chorale demonstrating all three types of fermatas

Week 6 (October 3, 5)

Tuesday
Conducting lesson 2 – Bach Chorale - demonstrating all three types of fermatas (Group 2)

Thursday
Conducting lesson 2 - Bach Chorale - demonstrating all three types of fermatas (Group 1)

Week 7 (October 10, 12)

Tuesday
Dynamics
Melded Gesture
Sustain and Release

Thursday
Mid-term on terms

Week 8 (October 17, 19)

Tuesday
Introduce conducting assignment 3
Due: 5 questions and answers on Conducting – From Within, Outwards – *The Learning Conductor* pp. 118-134

**Thursday**
Conduct assignment 3 for grade (Group 1)

**Week 9 (October 24, 26)**

**Tuesday**
Conduct assignment 3 for grade (Group 2)

**Tuesday**
Conduct assignment 3 for grade (Group 3)

**Week 10 (November 7, 9)**

**Tuesday**
Introduce conducting assignment 4

Due: 5 questions and answers on What is Music? – *The Learning Conductor* pp. 112-117

**Thursday**
Conduct assignment 4 for grade (Group 2)

**Week 11 (November 14, 16)**

**Tuesday**
Conduct assignment 4 for grade (Group 3)

**Week 12 (November 21, 23)**

**Tuesday**
No class – Thanksgiving holiday

**Thursday**
No class – Thanksgiving holiday

**Week 13 (November 28, 30)**
Tuesday
Conduct assignment 4 for grade (Group 1)

Thursday
Introduce final exam

**Week 14 (December 5, 7)**

Tuesday
Practice final exam/Make-up day

Thursday
Practice final exam/Make-up day

**Final exam -**
Conduct final exam - Thursday, December 14 8:00-10:00 a.m.