Instructor: Dr. Michael Murphy  
Office: M126A  
Office Hours: MW 10:00-11:00 am, or by appointment  
Office phone: 936.468.1181  
Office email: murphymt2@sfasu.edu  
Class Meeting Times: Tuesday and Thursday 9:30-10:45 a.m., M125

REQUIRED MATERIALS  
- Conducting baton (weighted - order through Premier baton) please wait to purchase  
- Metronome  
- Full length mirror  
- Colored pencils  
- Video recording device

COURSE DESCRIPTION  
Fundamentals of choral conducting. Fall  
Prerequisite(s): 9 hours of music

The choral conducting curriculum focuses on three 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 (Learn and Integrate) (Communication)  
2. A knowledge of representative choral works selected from the major style and periods and genres (Learn and Integrate)  
3. An ability to interpret with stylistic understanding various forms and styles of choral compositions (Learn and Integrate)  
4. An ability to independently study and prepare a score for rehearsal and performance (Learn and Integrate)  
5. An ability to sequence learning and plan for rehearsal (Think and Create)
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 (Communicate)
7. An ability to choose appropriate non-verbal cues to shape and develop choral sound (Communicate)
8. Observation and self-observation techniques (Think and Create) (Learn and Integrate)
9. Error detection and prescriptive skills (Think and Create) (Learn and Integrate)
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) (Think and Create) (Learn and Integrate)
11. To broaden gesture vocabulary (Think and Create) (Learn and Integrate)
12. Facility using each gesture with intent not habit (Learn and Integrate)
13. Become an active observer in your ensemble rehearsals (responding to conductors’ directives, thinking about conductors’ decisions, both gestural and musical, during rehearsal) (Think and Create) (Learn and Integrate)

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 projects, written assignments, and other assigned readings

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES
Score study, listening, rehearsal planning, conducting competencies, preparation for class (readings), 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 an open 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 14 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 three (3) 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.

**Definition of Academic Dishonesty**
Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit.

**Withheld Grades**
There will be no withheld grades given for this course.

**Students with 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, and 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. For additional information, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/)
Calendar

MUP 356: Three semester hours credit, two hours and thirty minutes of class contact/instruction hours per week. Students are expected to practice outside of class meetings at least an hour each day the assigned conducting etudes/exercises, readings, self-assessments, and complete beginning score study exercises (in-depth score study is covered in Conducting II).

* 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 14 arrive at 8:00 a.m. and dismiss at 4:30 p.m. (Sing and observe with choir) **Attendance required**

**Week 1 (August 27, 29)**

**Tuesday**
Syllabus
Introductions/Fun Time!
- “Scotland’s Burning” -Traditional
- Malko Conducting exercises

**Thursday**
Fundamentals
- Malko Conducting exercises
- Warming-up the body exercises
- Posture
- Hand position
- Basic patterns (2, 3, 4)
- Simple Articulations (legato, marcato, staccato)

**Due:** Read Chapter 1 “Inspiration” *Conducting Technique* pp. 3-6 and Chapter 2 “Other Studies” *Conducting Technique* pp. 7-12
Answer the following questions:
1. What musical and leadership qualities do you think make an effective conductor?
2. Why do you think it is important to develop a clear and efficient conducting technique?
3. What is the greatest indicator of success in this class: The information presented by the professor or the regular and consistent practice of the student? Why?

**Week 2 (September 3, 5)**

**Tuesday**
Fundamentals (continued)
- Warming-up the body
- Posture
- Hand position
- Basic patterns (2, 3, 4)
- Simple Articulations (legato, marcato, staccato)
- Preparatory gestures

Due: Read Chapter 3 Conducting Technique – General pp. 9-12, Chapter 5 Odds and Ends pp. 15-16, and Chapter 6 Beat Patterns -Theory pp. 16-22, Chapter 7 Beat Patterns – Specific pp. 22-34

Answer the following questions:
1. Should one bend the knees when conducting? Why or why not?
2. Should one conduct the beats or the rhythms? Why?
3. Submit video demonstrating competencies in conducting 2, 3, 4 patterns. Set metronome to 80 to the beat and conduct patterns in the articulations of legato, marcato, and staccato.

Due: Read Chapter 8 The Left Hand pp. 37-38 and Chapter 9 Dynamics, Accents, Phrasing, Tempo, Character pp. 39-46

Answer the following questions:
1. What are the schools of thought regarding the use of the left hand?
2. When the left hand is not in use, what should you do with it?
3. How do you show marcato and staccato?

Thursday
Cues and releases
Introduce Conducting lesson 1
“I Vow to Thee, My Country” - Gustav Holst

Due: Read Chapter 10 Cues pp. 46-50 and Chapter 11 Off-Beat Cues, Accents, and Syncopations pp. 50-54

Answer the following questions:
1. When should one cue?
2. When should you not cue?

Week 3 (September 10, 12, 14)

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

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

Saturday
All-Region Middle School Choir Clinic 8:00 a.m.- 4:30 p.m. (Observe and sing with Choir)
Week 4 (September 17, 19)

Tuesday
Fermatas
Introduce Conducting lesson 2 - Conduct chorale demonstrating all three types of fermatas
Conduct chorale “O Sacred Head Now Wounded” demonstrating all three types of fermatas

Due: Read Chapter 17 Fermatas pp. 85-90
Answer the following questions:
1. How many types of fermatas does the book outline? Provide a brief synopsis of each fermata.
2. Is it permissible to have a new tempo after a fermata? Explain.

Due: Reflection on Conducting 1 – “I Vow to Thee, My Country”

Thursday
Conducting lesson 2 – Chorale - demonstrating all three types of fermatas (Group 2)
“O Sacred Head Now Wounded” -J.S. Bach

Week 5 (September 24, 26)

Tuesday
Conducting lesson 2 – Chorale - demonstrating all three types of fermatas (Group 1)
“O Sacred Head Now Wounded” -J.S. Bach

Thursday
Dynamics
Melded Gesture
Left Hand/Independence of Hands
Sustain and Release

Due: Reflection on Conducting 2 “O Sacred Head Now Wounded”

Week 6 (October 1, 3)

Tuesday
Introduction to Score Study
Thursday
Introduce 5, 6, 7 meters
Compound meters 6/8, 9/8, 12/8

Pass out musical terms for Mid-term

**Week 7 (October 8, 10)**

**Tuesday**
Mid-term on musical terms

**Thursday**
Introduce Conducting lesson 3 “Call to Worship” – Daniel Moe

**Week 8 (October 15, 17)**

**Tuesday**
Conduct assignment 3 “Call to Worship” for grade (Group 1)

**Thursday**
Conduct assignment 3 “Call to Worship” for grade (Group 2)

**Week 9 (October 22, 24)**

**Tuesday**
Introduce conducting assignment 4 – “Chester” -William Billings

Due: Reflection on Conducting 3 “Call to Worship”

**Tuesday**
Conduct assignment 4 “Chester” for grade (Group 1)

**Week 10 (October 29, 31)**

**Tuesday**
Conduct assignment 4 “Chester” for grade (Group 2)

**Thursday**
Conduct assignment 4 “Chester” for grade (Group 3)
Week 11 (November 5, 7)

Tuesday
Introduce conducting assignment 5 – “Praise Ye the Lord of Hosts” -Camille Saint Saëns

Due: Reflection on conducting assignment 4 “Chester”

Thursday
Conduct assignment 5 “Praise Ye the Lord of Hosts” for grade (Group 2)

Week 12 (November 12, 14)

Tuesday
Conduct assignment 5 “Praise Ye the Lord of Hosts” for grade (Group 3)

Thursday
Conduct assignment 5 “Praise Ye the Lord of Hosts” for grade (Group 1)

Week 13 (November 19, 21)

Tuesday
Make-up day

Thursday
Introduce Conducting final exam “Deck the Halls in 7/8” -James McKelvey

Due: Reflection on conducting assignment 5 “Praise Ye the Lord of Hosts”

Week 14 (November 26, 28)

Tuesday
No class – Thanksgiving holiday

Thursday
No class – Thanksgiving holiday

Week 15 (December 3, 5)

Tuesday
Practice Conducting final exam “Deck the Halls in 7/8” -James McKelvey
Thursday
Practice Conducting final exam “Deck the Halls in 7/8” -James McKelvey

Final exam -
Conduct final exam - Tuesday, December 10 8:00-9:00 a.m.
“Deck the Halls (in 7/8)” -James McKelvey