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
- 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*)
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

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.

Masks (cloth face coverings) must be worn over the nose and mouth at all times in this class and
appropriate physical distancing must be observed. Students not wearing a mask and/or not
observing appropriate physical distancing will be asked to leave the class. All incidents of not
wearing a mask and/or not observing appropriate physical distancing will be reported to the
Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Students who are reported for multiple infractions
of not wearing a mask and/or not observing appropriate physical distancing may be subject to
disciplinary actions.

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-
guidance.html


**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/)