

# Percussion Ensemble Syllabus - MUSA 1150

University of Texas at El Paso  
Percussion Syllabus  
Prof. Andy P. Smith, DM  
M122 FFA  
office ph: 915-747-7802  
[apsmith@utep.edu](mailto:apsmith@utep.edu)  
MUSA 1150-001 Spring 2024

## Course Information:

### Percussion Ensemble MUSA 1150-001

**Class Time:** Tuesday, Thursday 12:00 - 1:20 pm

Additional chamber music rehearsals as scheduled, incl. Fridays 3:00 - 4:20

**Prerequisite:** *consent of instructor and Chair of Music*

### Instructor Information and Introduction

**Dr. Andy Smith**

For a more complete biography, please go to [andypsmith.squarespace.com](http://andypsmith.squarespace.com)

Dr. Smith earned his Doctor of Music degree in Percussion Performance and Pedagogy from the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music in 2014 with additional degrees and studies at Berklee College of Music, the University of Massachusetts Amherst (BME), and Middle Tennessee State University (MA). He was appointed Assistant Professor of Music and Director of Percussion Studies at UTEP in 2021, having served as Visiting Assistant Professor since 2016. Smith's most recent activities include clinic presentations (PASIC, JEN), commissioned compositions, and CD recordings (*Mambo Blue*, *Jim Shearer*, *Batuque Trio*, *Deanna Little*).

### Course Description

Percussion ensemble provides the percussion student with the opportunity to prepare and perform a wide variety of percussion chamber ensemble literature. Repertory will be drawn from classic Percussion Ensemble literature, contemporary works, ethnic and popular music styles and original compositions and commissions. The UTEP Percussion Ensemble also includes specialized ensembles, Pantastics Steel Band, and the Afro-Cuban and Brazilian Percussion Ensembles. The ensembles will perform both on and off campus and represent the school of music serving as the premier ensemble of UTEP Percussion. Pantastics and other specialized ensembles augment the conventional percussion ensemble program enhancing the identity and exposure of UTEP Percussion.

### Core Values

Responsibility  
Self-Discipline  
Creativity  
Communication

### Goals

Students will prepare for performance, selected percussion ensemble literature with musical understanding and control. Students will also develop techniques specific to the percussionist's art that will facilitate the achievement of artistic excellence while developing as a mature musician in an ensemble setting. Through this

process, an understanding of professionalism, and what it means to be prepared is developed.

### **Objectives**

- Prepare a Percussion Ensemble Concert and ad-hoc performances.
- Develop awareness, accuracy, consistency, and artistry.
- Students will experience the rehearsal and performance of major periods and styles of percussion literature.
- Retention of rote traditions through transcription, lecture notes, and construction of a world music binder.
- Rehearsal will focus on individual preparation of assigned repertory, ensemble cohesion and stylistic interpretation.
- Participants gain an appreciation for professional preparedness.
- Students learn creative problem solving applicable to instrument construction and adjustment, implement selection, and musical execution.

### **Policies**

- A rehearsal schedule for current repertory will be posted weekly.
- Students are responsible for individual retention and preparation of assigned parts *exceeding* posted expectations for rehearsal marks etc.
- Maintain a notebook of world music transcriptions.
- Students are responsible for locating assigned instruments and being set-up on time. Multiple selections will frequently be rehearsed within the same class meeting - all pieces should be set up or pre-staged before the start of class.
- All participants are responsible for daily maintenance of instruments.
  - Stow instruments properly as labeled
  - Lift mallet keyboard instruments gently over thresholds and two people are required at all times to move marimbas.
  - Tune - daily fine tuning membranes will prolong drumhead life and prevent instrument wear and tear.
- Performances will be scheduled in advance and should be duly noted in students' individual calendars.

### **Required Materials**

Students will be responsible for supplying their own sticks and mallets appropriate to each music selection, purchasing new supplies as needed. Students are also responsible to maintain sheet music. Failure to bring assigned parts/sheet music to rehearsal will result in a failed grade for that class meeting. Each student will also supply black towels for trap tables. Students may need to purchase accessory instruments as needed (triangles, tambourines, wooden stools, etc.).

### **Outcomes**

Students will gain experience in performing classic and contemporary percussion ensemble literature, building confidence and finesse as stage performers.

Students will learn a variety of percussion specific techniques and learn to play myriad styles of music in-depth. Students will learn pedagogical techniques in varied modes by observation (music reading, rote learning, transcribing, etc.)

Through working as a team on logistical issues and music rehearsal, solving problems with multiple percussion set-ups and specialized sounds, and seeing all music selections through in development, students will gain valuable experience unique to the art of percussion.

The best prepared and executed performance selections will be audio/video recorded and presented and distributed on the web.

## **Grading**

Attendance is critically important as students are assigned to individual parts. Grades will be lowered one letter grade for each unexcused absence after 2. Additionally, students are responsible for advance preparation of assigned repertory.

Set-up and tear-down/strike: Students are expected to show up early enough to set up their instruments before rehearsal starts. Students are expected to help with all transport and set up of instruments for percussion ensemble concerts. All students are required to set-up and strike after each performance. Everyone will remain present after performances until all equipment is returned to its proper storage. Failure to fulfill this responsibility will result in the lowering of one letter grade. Grades will be based on student performance, preparation, and attitude during rehearsals. Performances are mandatory. Unexcused absences from a percussion ensemble performance will result in failure of the course. Evidence of rote tradition/world music transcriptions, as well as quiz responses will impact 10% of the course grade.

## **Scheduled Performances Spring 2024**

1. Tuesday, March 19, B-Line Trio, 7:30 PM
2. Wednesday, April 3, 4:30 PM Percussion Ensemble/Pantastics Dress Rehearsal
3. Wednesday, April 10, Percussion Ensemble/Pantastics Concert with Tom Miller, 7:30 PM
4. 100 % attendance is required for all performances and dress rehearsals. The same is expected if adjustments are made to the above schedule with reasonable notice.
5. Conquer The Rhythm, May 3/4, TBD

## **Concert Dress:**

- 1) Unless otherwise notified, attire for Percussion Ensemble performance is all black: long sleeve black shirt/blouse and black pants/long skirt, black socks and black dress shoes. Individual expression by way of accessories encouraged - blazer, scarf, tie, vest, shirt/garment style. No athletic shoes.
- 2) UTEP Percussion T-shirt (blue and orange) and White pants and shoes. To be worn at select events such as Brazilian *bateria* and Pantastics performances. Pants and shoes must be ALL WHITE.

## **COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS**

Please stay home if you have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. If you are feeling unwell, please let me know as soon as possible, so that we can work on appropriate accommodations. If you have tested positive for COVID-19, you are encouraged to report your results to [covidaction@utep.edu](mailto:covidaction@utep.edu), so that the Dean of Students Office can provide you with support and help with communication with your professors. The Student Health Center is equipped to provide COVID 19 testing.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that people in areas of substantial or high COVID-19 transmission wear face masks when indoors in groups of people. The best way that Miners can take care of Miners is to get the vaccine. If you still need the vaccine, it is widely available in the El Paso area, and will be available at no charge on campus during the first week of classes. For more information about the current rates, testing, and vaccinations, please visit [epstrong.org](http://epstrong.org)

## Course Resources: Where you can go for assistance

UTEP provides a variety of student services and support:

### Technology Resources

- [Help Desk](#): Students experiencing technological challenges (email, Blackboard, software, etc.) can submit a ticket to the UTEP Helpdesk for assistance. Contact the Helpdesk via phone, email, chat, website, or in person if on campus.

### Academic Resources

- [UTEP Library](#): Access a wide range of resources including online, full-text access to thousands of journals and eBooks plus reference service and librarian assistance for enrolled students.
- [University Writing Center \(UWC\)](#): Submit papers here for assistance with writing style and formatting, ask a tutor for help and explore other writing resources.
- [Math Tutoring Center \(MaRCS\)](#): Ask a tutor for help and explore other available math resources.
- [History Tutoring Center \(HTC\)](#): Receive assistance with writing history papers, get help from a tutor and explore other history resources.
- [RefWorks](#): A bibliographic citation tool; check out the RefWorks tutorial and Fact Sheet and Quick-Start Guide.

### Individual Resources

- [Military Student Success Center](#): Assists personnel in any branch of service to reach their educational goals.
- [Center for Accommodations and Support Services](#): Assists students with ADA-related accommodations for coursework, housing, and internships.
- [Counseling and Psychological Services](#): Provides a variety of counseling services including individual, couples, and group sessions as well as career and disability assessments.

## **PLAGIARISM/ACADEMIC DISHONESTY STATEMENT**

**Cheating/Plagiarism:** Cheating is unethical and not acceptable. Plagiarism is using information or original wording in a paper without giving credit to the source of that information or wording; it is also not acceptable. Do not submit work under your name that you did not do yourself. You may not submit work for this class that you did for another class. If you are found to be cheating or plagiarizing, you will be subject to disciplinary action, per UTEP catalog policy. Refer to <http://sa.utep.edu/osccr/academic-integrity> for further information.

## **DISABILITIES STATEMENT**

**Disabilities:** I will make any reasonable accommodations for students with limitations due to disabilities, including learning disabilities. Please see me personally before or after class in the first two weeks or make an appointment, to discuss any special needs you might have. If you have a documented disability and require specific accommodations, you will need to contact the Disabled Student Services Office in the East Union Bldg., Room 106 within the first two weeks of classes. The Center for Accommodations and Support Services can also be reached : <http://sa.utep.edu/cass/>