

# Percussion Techniques Syllabus - MUSA 2279

**University of Texas at El Paso**  
**Percussion Techniques Syllabus**  
**Prof. Andy P. Smith, DM**  
**M122 FFA**  
**office ph: 915-747-7802**  
**[apsmith@utep.edu](mailto:apsmith@utep.edu)**  
**MUSA 2279**

## **Course Information:**

**Percussion Techniques-MUSA 2279 CRN: 22280**

**Class Meets: Monday, Wednesday 10:30 - 11:20 am, M140 (Band Room)**

**Hybrid Format:** Some Lectures will be held via Zoom; Additional adjustments will be made if needed.

**Prerequisite:** Music Education Major

**Office Hours:** by appointment

## **Instructor Information and Introduction**

### **Dr. Andy P. 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 (MM). He was appointed Visiting Assistant Professor of Music and Director of Percussion Studies at UTEP in 2016.

Smith's most recent activities include clinic presentations, commissioned compositions, and CD recordings. In January 2019, he presented at the Jazz Education Network International Convention (JEN19), and at the Percussive Arts Society International Convention (*21st Century Samba-jazz Drumset*). His recent compositions include *Vento no Ritmo* (Wind in Rhythm) for flute trio with leg rattles, and *Tendencias*, a multi-percussion trio commissioned by 10-Can Percussion.

Dr. Smith previously taught at Middle Tennessee State University and Indiana University and served as the Percussion Instructor for the Tennessee Governor's School for the Arts, a state sponsored program for elite college-bound musicians. His career has taken him from the recording studios of Nashville, TN to Tanglewood, Ravinia and the Hollywood Bowl. He has traveled to Ghana West Africa and the Caribbean to be immersed in African diasporic rhythm. In 2012, Smith was awarded a Tinker Foundation grant to study contemporary Brazilian Jazz drumming in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Smith publishes with Row-Loff Publications and self-publishes at [andypsmith.squarespace.com](http://andypsmith.squarespace.com).

Recent recordings include *Finally Here* with Angel Roman and Mambo Blue, and *Transparency* featuring Latin Jazz group Batuquê Trio ([batuquetrio.com](http://batuquetrio.com)).

## **Course Description**

A study of major areas of percussion performance and pedagogy in preparation for music education certification. This includes conventional concert percussion, snare drum, mallet keyboards, timpani, drum-set, world percussion, and marching percussion. An emphasis will be placed on fundamental stick control and on sound pedagogical processes.

### **Goals**

- Develop fundamental technical proficiency on the core percussion instruments.
- Acquire pedagogical and practical knowledge for the purpose of fundamental percussion teaching.
- Compile a comprehensive "Percussion Techniques Binder."
- Develop working vocabulary of terminology for percussion teaching.

- Advance teaching “chops” through practicum exercises (primarily video assignments).

### **Objectives**

Develop mastery of fundamental techniques of percussion performance. The student should acquire an understanding of organizational and logistical issues specific to percussion study in public school. Acquire teaching methods for percussion.

### **Policies**

1. Recommended practice time - 20 minutes per day, 6 days per week.
2. Attendance - Final grade lowered one half letter grade for each absence after 2 absences for any reason. Communicate anticipated absences as a courtesy.
3. Weekly Assignments are due as assigned on Wednesdays. Each student is granted one “2-Day Extension Pass” to be used one time at any point in the semester (that week’s assignment will be due on Friday of the same week.)
4. Detailed descriptions of Written and Video assignments can be found in the Percussion Techniques Blackboard Shell in the Assignments folder. Video Links are found in the UNITS folders.
5. Written Homework: uploaded to the appropriate assignment prompt in **Blackboard IN PDF FORMAT**, proofed before submission. Anything that reads like it was written in one draft without proofing, I will return to you with a grade of zero. Please utilize the UTEP writing center.
6. Video Homework: Video Teaching Assignments and Video Playing Tests Videos will be submitted online via flip grid. The top level join code is percmethods2021 <https://flipgrid.com/percmethods2021> Each assignment presents as a “topic” in flip grid. Click on the topic and record.
7. Late homework submissions accepted at discretion of Professor - 5% grade reduction per week per assignment.

### **Requirements**

Students will be required to view all assigned tutorial videos consistently due to the experiential nature of the course. Reading, research, practice, recorded practicum, and thoughtful reflective writing will be required outside class. Consistent practice required for mastery of performance skills taught and evaluated throughout the semester. Students **MUST** have their practice pad and pair of drumsticks at home for practice during social distancing and shelter at home status. If you did not bring these home already, you must problem solve this (go get them/find a drummer near home to borrow these from for six weeks/oder new ones online). Students will assume responsibility for any loss or damage to university equipment. Students will be responsible for supplying their own sticks, mallets, organizational materials, video recording device, and required text. Students are expected to purchase required materials as soon as possible and to have in hand no later than Monday, the second week of class.

### Required

- *The Snare Drummer’s Toolbox from Row-Loff* <http://www.snaredrummerstoolbox.com>
- Snare Drum Sticks: Innovative Percussion IP-LD Lalo Davila Model (or equivalent)
- Keyboard Mallets: Innovative Percussion IP-F2 Hard Marimba Model (or equivalent)
- A smart phone or other video recording device will be needed to record video assignments.

\*The method book, sticks, and mallets can all be easily ordered online from a single source such as Lonestar Percussion or Steve Weiss Music.

### Recommended

- Not required, but if you'd like a more complete set of fundamental percussion implements of your own to take with you to your future teaching gig, consider a pre-packaged set such as the Innovative Percussion FP-2 <http://www.lonestarpercussion.com/Innovative-Percussion-FP2.html>

#### Provided

- Drum Pad (to be signed out). See the Teaching Assistant in the instrument storage room to sign-out a Remo or Real Feel drum pad for the semester. A replacement fee of \$40 will be imposed for any lost drum pad.
- Supplemental materials to be posted on Blackboard, otherwise found online, or passed out in class.

#### Online Resources

<http://pas.org>

<http://vicfirth.com/education-resource-library/>

#### **Outcomes**

Achieve mastery of fundamental performance and pedagogical techniques for percussion teaching. A foundation to include the above goals and objectives should be constructed, to be further developed through future practical and professional experience. A comprehensive "Percussion Performance and Pedagogy Binder" compiled throughout the course to take with you as a "go-to" reference resource. Concise, standard terminology for percussion teaching acquired.

#### **Grading**

- Attendance - **Strictly Enforced** - Attendance HAS BEEN taken promptly at the beginning of each class. Final grade lowered one half letter grade for each absence after 2 absences for any reason. Communicate anticipated absences as a courtesy. NO EXTRA CREDIT.
- Participation 5% (Set-up/Tear-down; Demonstrated in-class-effort toward understanding and execution of performance technique and execution of any practicum/pedagogical exercises). Set-up and tear-down is a fundamental part of participation in a percussion section or ensemble. Therefore, you will all be responsible for this aspect of the class.
- Quizzes 5% Periodic quizzes (announced or un-announced) will be given within the first five minutes of class. These will test your organizational skills and retention and will constitute a percentage of your semester grade.
- Video Playing Tests 20%
- Video Teaching Assignments 20%
- Assignments (Readings, Reflective Writing, Mallet Keyboard Ensemble Composition/Arrangement) 20%
- Exam 20%
- "Percussion Techniques Binder" 20% Students will compile this binder to include typed lecture notes, any supplemental materials posted or distributed in class, articles and resources compiled, quizzes, reflective writing, any assignments, and any additional relevant materials. There are two Binder checks at weeks 6 and 10. The binder will be reviewed by Dr. Smith week 13 for 20% of the final grade and returned to you for completion with a final check at the final exam. **All class notes and other text documents included in the Percussion Techniques Binder are required to be typed and printed from a word processor.**
- NO EXTRA CREDIT.

#### **Percussion Events**

- TBD Zoom Percussion Clinics and Recitals

#### **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/>

### **Semester Outline**

Week 1 (One Class) Syllabi and Course Expectations; sign-out drum pads with TA at M131 Row-loff LESSON 1 pp. 1–10 Fundamentals and Set-Up

Week 2 Snare Drum (Playing and Teaching): Instrument Set-up; Technique Guidelines; Sticking; Strong vs. Weak Hand

Week 3 Snare Drum (Playing and Teaching): Stroke-Types, Dynamics, Accents, Strong-Hand Lead Sticking in 16th-Note Rhythm, Rolls  
Assignment Due: Video Teaching Assignment No. 1 (S.D. Fundamentals) **Due Wednesday**

Week 4 Snare Drum (Playing and Teaching) Rolls, Paradiddles, Rudiments  
Quiz (Fundamentals of Grip and Stroke)

Week 5 Snare Drum (Playing and Teaching)  
Assignment Due: Video Playing Test No. 1 “Suite Sixteenths” Toolbox p.35, AND “exercise incorporating the double stroke” Toolbox p. 38, (bottom three systems of the page) q=80–96.

Week 6 Section Percussion: S.D., Bass Drum, tam-tam, and Cymbals (Playing and Teaching)  
BINDER CHECK NO. 1 (Binder complete for snare drum unit)  
See video links for “Section Percussion” Unit

Week 7 Tambourine and Triangle  
See video links for triangle and tambourine  
Assignment Due: Video Summation No. 1 (See Video Summation Guidelines). Performance Practice of Crash and Suspended Cymbals, Bass Drum and Tam-tam.

Week 8 Additional Common Percussion Accessories: Demonstration; Petting Zoo; Ensemble s.d. roll skeleton concept; mini-rudiment ritual; Rock Steady  
*In Class Activity - Teaching Roll Skeleton Concept*

## Spring Break

Week 9 Mallet Keyboards: Instruments; Pedagogy; Playing and Teaching

View tutorial videos in Blackboard Unit Folder

Type “binder notes” entry on mallet keyboards (See outline)

Assignment Due: Video Playing Test No. 2 “Rock Steady” Toolbox p. 51

Prepare Toolbox p. 46, check your work with peers and with Dr. Smith (Due Next Week)

Week 10 Mallet Keyboards Continued

Assignment Due: Toolbox p. 46, scanned and uploaded to blackboard assignments

Week 11 Developing & Organizing Your Percussion Section

s.d. mini-rudiment ritual

Assignment Due: Your Typed Binder Notes on Mallet Keyboards

Quiz: Mallet Keyboards

Week 12 Timpani: Instrument; Playing and Teaching

View tutorial videos in Blackboard Unit Folder

Assignment Due: Video Teaching Assignment No. 2 “Roll Skeleton Concept”

Assignment Due: Your Typed Binder Notes on Developing and Organizing Your Percussion Section

Week 13 ABCs of “World Percussion” (Africa, Brazil, Cuba)

View tutorial videos in Blackboard Unit Folder

Assignment Due: Your Typed Binder Notes on Timpani

Assignment Due: Video Playing Test No. 3 - Mini-Rudiment Ritual (5-stroke roll; paradiddle; single-stroke 4; flam)

Week 14 Marching Percussion: Teaching and Playing

View tutorial videos in Blackboard Unit Folder

Final touches on Percussion Pedagogy Binder - prepare to scan and compile the complete binder to be uploaded Friday, May 8

Assignment Due: Video Teaching Assignment No. 3 (5-stroke roll; paradiddle; single-stroke 4; flam)

Week 15 Drum-set: Instruments; Playing and Teaching; Music Styles

View tutorial videos in Blackboard Unit Folder

Assignment Due: Upload Complete Binder by May 5, the Last Class Meeting

FINAL EXAM - Prose Style; OPEN BINDER; May 14, 3-hour window

## **The Snare Drummer’s Toolbox from Row-Loff SYLLABUS**

WEEK 1

Row-loff LESSON 1 pp. 1–10 Fundamentals and Set-Up Prismatic pp. 9–14

WEEK 2

LESSONS 1, 2 and 3 pp. 11–24 Sticking

WEEK 2 AND 3

LESSONS 4 and 5 pp. 25–37 Stroke-Types, Dynamics, Accents, Strong-Hand Lead Sticking in 16th-Note Rhythm

WEEK 3, 4, and 5

LESSONS 6 and 7 pp. 38–53 Rolls, Paradiddles, Rudiments \*Rudiment Ritual Supplement

WEEK 6 through 9

LESSONS 8 and 9 pp. 54–69 Flams, Drags, More Rudiment Families

LESSON 10 pp. 70–77 Etudes

as assigned