Master of Music in Instrumental Conducting

Syllabus Spring 2026

Applied Lessons

MUSG - 5341

Professor: Dr. Brandon Houghtalen
Course Dates: January 20 – May 7
Email: bhoughtalen@utep.edu
Phone: 915-747-7796
Faculty Availability: email, office phone

Contact: I will be checking in on the course at least once a day M-F (unless otherwise notified). I am also very willing and happy to communicate individually with students as needed. If you contact me individually, my commitment is to respond to you in 24 hours or less on weekdays. If you must reschedule a meeting, please notify me as long in advance as possible, but no less than 24 hours in advance.

Faculty Expectations of Students:

Each week the student and professor will have an hour lesson. Modifications to the schedule may be permitted.

Instructional Time: Student will spend approximately 5 hours (on average) per week preparing and marking scores, creating visual representations of the scores, and completing self-analysis reviews of weekly lessons.

Course Description:

The purpose of this course is to expose the student to advanced aspects of conducting, score study/marking and rehearsal techniques/strategies. On a weekly basis, (or as structured by the student and teacher) each student will be required to prepare materials that address the following areas:

- Advanced conducting technique
- Advanced score marking and study
- Advanced rehearsal techniques/strategies
- Areas of further consideration will include transposition, advanced ear training/error detection, repertoire selection, and interpretation.

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Course Objectives

1. To define and build a context-specific gestural vocabulary.
2. To gain a greater understanding of score marking and study.
3. To gain enhanced knowledge of advanced rehearsal techniques/strategies.
4. To enhanced one's ability to discern error detection.
5. To gain a broader and deeper understanding of interpretation

Textbook and Other Course Materials:

Scores (will vary by student)

McMurray, Allan et al. *Conducting from the Inside Out*. Boulder, CO: TellStarr Studios, 2004.

Course Requirements

Each student will be responsible for participating in 14 conducting lessons throughout the semester.

Students will be responsible for taping and evaluating weekly rehearsals and concerts at their present position. Throughout the semester each student will be presented with feedback and information to assist them in becoming better prepared to be a more efficient conductor and educator. Areas that will be addressed throughout the semester will include:

1. Conducting Technique
2. Score Marking and Study
3. Rehearsal Techniques and Strategies
4. Repertoire Selection
5. Interpretation

Grading:

1. Weekly Lesson Grades	70%
2. Self-assessments	30%
TOTAL FINAL GRADE	**100%**

Students that must miss lessons and/or deadlines should notify the instructor ***in advance*** (preferably one full day before the lesson) to alter the agreed upon schedule. A message may be left via voice mail at 915-747-7796, email, or by leaving a note on my office door. A request may or may not be excused, at the discretion of the professor.

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Academic Integrity:

The International Center for Academic Integrity, comprised of a consortium of universities worldwide, defines academic integrity as "a commitment to fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. From these values flow principles of behavior that enable academic communities to translate ideals into action." As they relate to students, these values can be defined as follows:

Honesty: "adhering to standards of truthfulness and integrity"
Trust: participating in "an environment of confidence"
Fairness: abiding by the "standards, practices, and procedures" outlined by your instructors and institution
Respect: "encouraging a wide range of opinions and ideas"
Responsibility: assuming personal accountability and accepting sanctions in cases of misconduct.

Students are responsible for adhering to the above standards in all academic activity and refraining from all forms of academic dishonesty.

According to the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures, academic dishonesty includes committing (or attempting to commit) the following:

- Plagiarism – taking credit for work that is not your own (e.g., copying and pasting from the internet, failing to cite sources of information, failing to attribute direct quotes to their original author, or submitting your work from another course without prior permission).
- Cheating – This includes copying another student's work during an exam; using notes, books, or electronic devices during an exam without prior permission; taking an exam for another student; and communicating with or helping another student during an exam.
- Collusion – any collaboration with another student without the permission of the instructor.

Americans with Disabilities Act:

If you have or believe you have a disability that may impact your ability to succeed in a class, whether it be online or face-to-face, you may wish to contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) to show documentation of a disability or to register for testing and services. Students who have been designated as disabled must reactivate their standing with the CASS yearly.

If you feel that you may have a disability requiring accommodations and/or modifications, contact CASS: E: cass@utep.edu
P: (915) 747-5148

You also can visit the CASS website at https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/cass/ or the CASS office in Room 108 East Union Building.

This course is ADA compliant by providing PDF's and closed captioning for multimedia when needed.

The University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. Students who become pregnant may also request reasonable accommodations, in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations and University policy. Accommodations that constitute undue hardship are not reasonable. To make a request, please register with the UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS). Contact CASS at 915-747-5148, email them at cass@utep.edu, or apply for accommodations online via the CASS portal.

Communicating Effectively:

Learning online is not a spectator sport. It is everyone's responsibility to participate as fully as they can so everyone can get the most from the experience. Here are some simple tips to follow to ensure your participation and engagement in the learning process:

Ask questions: If you don't know the answer, someone else will.

Reach out to others: Offer a fact, article, link or other item that can help others learn from something you can share.

Be appropriate: The online classroom is not the place for insulting or insensitive comments, attacks, or venting. Inappropriate behavior will usually subject to disciplinary action, as well.

Be diplomatic: When sending messages on emotionally charged topics, make sure you write the message and then walk away for at least an hour before rereading the message and then sending it. Re-reading emotionally charged messages ensures that they are constructive instead of destructive. Think of the person at the other end.

Stay focused: Stay on topic to increase the efficiency of your learning.

Statement for (N) etiquette:

When communicating electronically, many of the feelings or impressions that are transmitted via body language in face-to-face communications are lost. Consequently, interpreting emotions and innuendos is much more difficult. Only what is written, or drawn, carries the message. Often, excitement can be misinterpreted as anger or insult. It is important that we all keep this in mind as we communicate. Words in print may seem harmless, but they could emotionally

injure us when working at a distance. Hence, it is vitally important that we are conscious of how we communicate while working at a distance.

For example, avoid the use of caps in your electronic messages, as wording in caps comes across as shouting. The standard practice ("Netiquette") for participation in networked discussion requires that all participation be focused on the topic at hand, not become personalized, and be substantive in nature. (Translation: you may certainly disagree with others, but you must do so respectfully; you may express strong beliefs or emotions, but you may not get so carried away that you lose all perspective on the course itself.)

Please observe the following:

- You are required to check the Blackboard course shell daily for messages, updates and assignments.
- Respect and courtesy must be provided to fellow classmates and the instructor at all times, in all contexts. No harassment or inappropriate postings will be tolerated.
- Be professional and careful in what you say about others.
- When reacting to someone else's message, address and focus on the ideas, not the person who posted them.
- Be careful when using sarcasm and humor. Without face-to-face communications your joke may be viewed as criticism.

Tech Support Tools and Resources:

Everything you need to help support you in a class that uses an online environment like Blackboard--can be found here:

Learning Remotely at UTEP

Technology Checklist:

As you prepare to take an online course at UTEP, we want to share with you some basic information about technology to make this a successful experience. Having your computer requirements checked and all software up to date is essential to access course content. Please take some time to read through this page and ensure you have the information you need to get successfully started.

Supported Browsers
For a PC: Firefox and Chrome **For a Mac:** Firefox and Chrome

Additional Software

When creating documents, slide presentations, spreadsheets, etc., you should use Microsoft Office. The UTEP Technology Support Services (3rd floor, UTEP Library) can

also provide you with any applications, compatibility packs, patches, and updates you may need. You can also get the entire Microsoft Office Suite for FREE!

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Use of AI technologies or automated tools, particularly generative AI such as ChatGPT or DALL-E, is *only allowed with approval from the instructor BEFORE being used*. Without permission, you will be expected to think creatively and critically to complete assignments without assistance from these tools.

If given permission to use any of these tools, students must properly cite and give full credit to the program used upon submission of every relevant assignment. For example, text generated using ChatGPT must be cited:

Chat-GPT(version). Date of query (year/month/day). "Text of your query."
Generated using OpenAI. https://chat.openai.com/

A short paragraph describing how the tool(s) was/were used for the assignment must be included.