THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

MARCHING MINERS

"THE SOUND OF THE SOUTHWEST"

2026-2027

HANDBOOK AND SYLLABUS

MARCHING MINERS STAFF

Director of the Marching Miners……Dr. Brandon Houghtalen
Associate Director of Bands, Director of Athletic Bands bhoughtalen@utep.edu
Fox Fine Arts M138

Assistant Director of the Marching Miners……Dr. Arturo Galvan
Assistant Director of Athletic Bands agalvan24@utep.edu
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Director of Bands……Dr. Andrew Hunter
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Director – UTEP Drumline……Dr. Andy Smith
Professor of Percussion apsmith@utep.edu
Fox Fine Arts M122

Visual Instructor……Dr. Rob Smith
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Coach – UTEP Diamonds Colorguard……Eddie Rosales
EDRosa_@outlook.com

Coach – UTEP Dance Team……Crystal Ortiz
cmortiz6@utep.edu

Graduate Staff…… Tim Marquess, Luis Olivas, Shelby Jones
Fox Fine Arts M137

Administrative Assistant – Department of Music……Lorraine Perales
Fox Fine Arts M301

The Voice of the Marching Miners……Various

Chair – Department of Music……Dr. Chris Dickey

STUDENT LEADERSHIP

Drum Majors
Angel Ortega, Sofia Perez, Mauricio Uranga

Piccolo/Flute
Johanna Romero: Music
Arlo Anglada: Marching
Sari Rodriguez: Personnel

Clarinet
Jarren Saenz: Music
Olivia Lea: Marching
Mabel Caraveo: Personnel

Saxophone
Deanna Garcia: Music
Moses Corralejo: Marching
Sebastian Arredondo: Personnel

Trumpet
Brianna Canales and Marc Buster:
Personnel

Mellophone
Leo Borroel: Music
Esteban Anguiano: Marching
Bella Rodriguez: Personnel

Trombone
Judith Olivas: Music
Emmanuel Good: Marching
Arabella Ramirez: Personnel

Euphonium
Angel Vega: Marching
Vania Mendez: Personnel

Tuba
Andy Gonzalez: Music
Raul Garcia: Marching
Ivan Espinoza: Personnel

Percussion
Aiden Ortega, Snare
Diego Cedillo, Tenor
Fernie Viera-Rivera, Bass
Crystal Alexander, Cymbals

Colorguard
Kaylee Chavez, Juanka Benitez

Undergraduate Teaching Assistant
Gabriel Jara, Jacob Melendez, Ana Conde, Kristan Isaacs, Claudio Padilla, Serena Sanchez, Israel Vasquez

Social Media Team Lydia Reveles, Johanna Romero

REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

MUSA 1241 – Marching Band meets on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 7:30 AM – 9:20 AM. The rehearsal space will be in the Sun Bowl or Magoffin Auditorium unless otherwise notified due to inclement weather, construction, or other issues outside of our control.

On the day of home football games, the Marching Miners will rehearse beginning approximately 8 hours before kickoff. The detailed schedule will be published during the week prior to game. Every effort will be made to balance students' personal time with the needs of the band.

For all rehearsals, band members should arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the start of rehearsal so that the band may begin working in a timely manner. Late arrivals or failure to attend will result in academic and/or financial penalty in keeping with policies outlined in this handbook.

ENROLLMENT

Every UTEP student member of the UTEP Marching Miners must be enrolled in MUSA 1241 or MUSA 4033. This is for liability and accountability purposes. Students may take the class for two hours credit (1241) or may make other arrangements (4033) with Dr. Houghtalen. EPCC students must complete the audit form during summer band rehearsals. Students not enrolled in the course must be removed from membership. All students, whether wind, percussion, colorguard, dance, or drum majors, and regardless of course credit, are part of the organization and must abide by the expectations outlined in this handbook.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148, or by email to cass@utep.edu, or visit their office located in UTEP Union East, Room 106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at www.sa.utep.edu/cass. *CASS' Staff are the only individuals who can validate and if need be, authorize accommodations for students with disabilities.*

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

(as of August 10– subject to modification)

Date	Event	Performance Time
August 20	Mock Game Day	5:00 PM
August 24	Texas Western Gold Rush (Full Band)	6:00 PM
September 4-6	Recording Session	TBD
September 11	Minerpalooza	7:00 PM
September 12	BAND DAY and Football vs. TSU	7:00 PM
September 17	Night at the Chihuahuas (Drumline)	Evening
September 21	Miner Morning Mania (not full band)	Early…
September 26	Football vs. Oregon State (Homecoming)	7:00 PM
October 10	Football vs. Nevada	TBD
October 17	Football vs. San Jose State	7:00 PM
November 7	Football vs. Hawaii	TBD
November 12	UTEP NEA Concert (selected members)	Evening
November 14	Football vs. Wyoming	TBD
November 21	UTEP Honor Band Concert (selected members)	Evening
???	Bowl Game	TBD

TRAVEL

All members are required to travel with the band to any designated full band away trip, including bowl games which may fall over a holiday break. Any class absence will be excused by the Office of the Dean of Students. The below is meant to be a reference and may not reflect what actually happens.

Mountain West Conference Bowl Games

- Famous Idaho Potato Bowl. Monday, December 21, 2026. Albertsons Stadium, Boise, Idaho.
- Isleta New Mexico Bowl. Thursday, December 24, 2026. University Stadium, Albuquerque, New Mexico.
- Sheraton Hawai'i Bowl. Thursday, December 24, 2026. Clarence T.C. Ching Athletics Complex, Honolulu, Hawaii.
- Snoop Dogg Arizona Bowl. Sunday, December 27, 2026. Arizona Stadium, Tucson, Arizona.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

On Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, rehearsals begin at 7:30 AM and conclude at 9:20 AM. Students are expected to be present no later than 7:30 AM with their instrument, music, and drill to not be marked tardy. Students who are tardy after 7:35 AM must check in with a graduate assistant before reporting to their section. Any absence that is not preceded by an email to Dr. Houghtalen will be considered unexcused; emails after the fact are not considered valid for excusing the absence. To put it plainly, **uninformed = unexcused.** Any unexcused absence (or excessive excused absences) may result in alternate status for pregame and halftime.

As Saturday rehearsals are the final rehearsal before a performance, it is imperative that every member be present. Any unexcused absence or excessive tardy may result in alternate status for pregame and halftime for the remainder of the season. Additionally, Directors and Staff reserve the right to replace students with alternates during rehearsals and performance as they see fit based on performance and/or demeanor.

Any member that needs to miss a rehearsal for reasons sanctioned by the University must submit an absence request form via our Google Doc. The link will be emailed to all members on the first day of classes. Any such absences should be submitted I two weeks prior to the anticipated absence to be considered for approval. Emergencies, including illness, must be documented and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

GRADING AND ACADEMIC CREDIT

All members of the Marching Miners must be enrolled in one of three options (mentioned above). This is for liability purposes for the University and cannot be waived. Students should receive an "A" in the course provided they are in attendance, properly attired, perform to the best of their abilities, and have all equipment at all rehearsals and performances. This is a performance-based class, and the level of performance of each individual will be considered in the final grade.

The grading scale for this course is as follows:

A = 90-100
B = 80-89
C = 70-79
D = 60-69

All members of the Marching Miners begin with 100 points. Deductions/additions will be made to a student's overall grade as stipulated in the chart below. No more than 40 points can be deducted from a student's grade per day, and students may be given opportunities to earn extra credit at the discretion of the Directors.

Performance Absence **-30 points**

Unexcused absence from a performance (including rehearsal, warmups, special events, trips, etc.) Excused absences will not receive a deduction, but must be cleared with the Directors in advance (not including documented emergencies).

Performance Day Tardy **-10/-5 points**

Unexcused tardy of more than 30 minutes on a performance day is -10 points. Unexcused tardy of less than 30 minutes (in any amount) on a performance day will result in a loss of 5 points. An excused tardy will not receive a deduction as long as it is cleared with the Directors *in advance*.

Performance Day Deductions **-5 points**

Missing materials/equipment on the day of a performance, including uniform infractions, which must be remedied before students may perform. None of these infractions will be excused.

Rehearsal Absences **-10 points/-5 points**

Unexcused absence for a regular rehearsal is -5 points. A student's 4th excused absence is -10 points, as is each subsequent excused absence. Extenuating circumstances, such as a lengthy illness, will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Rehearsal Tardies **-7.5 points/-5 points**

Unexcused tardy more than 30 minutes is -7.5 points. Unexcused tardies of less than 30 minutes are -5 points. Tardies between 1 and 5 minutes will result in a loss of one point per minute. There is no deduction for a pre-approved tardy.

Rehearsal Deductions **-3-5 points**

Missing materials/equipment for rehearsals, including attire, instrument, music, drill

Extra Credit Opportunities **+3-5 points**

Service opportunities may be awarded to students in good standing to repay the band for the time that was missed. These opportunities will be rare and should not be counted upon to save an earned grade that is not desirable.

For further information on UTEP policies for grades and absences, please consult the College of Liberal Arts General Information Regarding Courses and Grades.

Note: students who receive service awards may forfeit all or part of these awards based upon tardies, absences, or other infractions.

PERFORMING POSITIONS

Due to the inevitability of illnesses, absences, and the like, pregame and halftime shows will be written for fewer members than the total ensemble. This will result in some alternate positions. Performing positions will be based upon playing ability, marching ability, and attendance. Students who are designated as alternates will almost certainly end up in a performing position at some point due to absence or illness of a performing member. Performing positions may be reassigned at any time by one of the Directors or Staff. Alternates will still be expected to prepare all music and shadow several positions within their section in case they need to be placed into the show on late notice.

Any absence on the Friday preceding a home game will result in being replaced with an alternate for both pregame and halftime.

REHEARSAL ATTIRE

Students should dress appropriately for the weather and for the physical demands of performing in a marching band. Tennis shoes or marching shoes (dance shoes for Diamonds and Dance) with socks are required, and students wearing any other footwear will be required to change before participating in rehearsal for their own safety and the safety of others. Sandals, flip flops, boat shoes, house shoes, Crocs, and other similar shoes are not acceptable. During warm weather, loose, light clothing should be worn. All students will be required to wear a shirt at all times; rehearsing in undergarments or swim attire is prohibited. On colder days, heavier clothing may be worn, but students should not cover their ears (including hoodies or beanies/skull caps).

During Saturday gameday rehearsals, wind and percussion players will wear their official 2026 Marching Miners t-shirt, solid black athletic shorts, and their band shoes. Diamonds and Dance rehearsal uniforms for these days will be defined at a later time.

"LIGHT" UNIFORM

On some occasions, the band may perform in a "light" uniform, rather than the full Marching Miners uniform. This will consist of: official Marching Miners polo shirt, plain khaki shorts (not cargo shorts, not various shades of light brown – think "school uniform" khakis shorts), tennis shoes, and the official 2026 Marching Miners ballcap. We must maintain the professional image of the Marching Miners on these occasions; compliance is imperative.

OFFICIAL UNIFORM

Every student is provided with a complete uniform with the exception of the official Marching Miners t-shirt, band shoes (black MTX), long black socks (calf-length), and gloves (white, wrist-length, cotton). In the event that a member misplaces any uniform article, the cost will come out of any service award – excess amounts will be charged through the University, and grades/transcripts may be held as a result.

Uniforms issued to students will remain in the uniform room throughout the week, and will be checked in and out on performance days. ***Students will not be allowed to take uniforms home with them.*** Instructions for storing uniforms after a performance will be given by members of Kappa Kappa Psi. If a uniform is not returned after a performance, including being found in a classroom or the band room, the offending member will receive a 10-point grade deduction and service award penalty.

White cotton gloves must be clean and stain-free for performances. Many students purchase several pairs of gloves to ensure this outcome. Black cotton socks worn with the uniform must be calf-length, so that skin does not show when band members are seated in the stands. Brass players using a school-owned instrument are <u>required</u> to wear black cotton gloves during all rehearsals.

Students may not wear powder or foundation in uniform to prevent staining the uniform. Additionally, only water may be consumed while in uniform, and students may only eat approved gameday snacks while in uniform. The University has invested in making us the best-looking band in America; we will protect that investment vigorously.

Under no circumstances should uniforms be altered without the permission of the Directors. If your uniform requires alterations, speak to the Directors and the situation will be handled accordingly.

APPEARANCE

When you wear the Marching Miners band uniform, you will not only be representing the University, but everyone who has worn the orange and blue before you. We expect your personal appearance to be an ***impeccable*** reflection of your personal taste as well as your organizational pride. An untidy, disheveled uniform may result in alternate status and/or a lowered grade.

Expected appearance consists of:

- **Jacket:** Clean, pressed, with collar fastened and back zipped at all times. In the event of extreme heat, the Directors will instruct the band to remove jackets and roll them neatly, placing them inside the shako.
- **Bibbers:** Clean, pressed, and neatly hemmed (buttoned); should never hang loose or drag the ground. When in doubt, ask a uniform manager.
- **Shako:** Must be worn with the chin strap completely *under the chin* and the bill at eyebrow level. When not worn, the shako is to be set down facing away from you right-side up with the plume intact. When carried, carry the shako right-side up by the bill, not by the chin strap.
- **Black shoes:** Clean and free of noticeable scuffs
- **Hair:** Properly groomed; no hair should touch the collar of the uniform, and should be tucked into the shako neatly when shako is worn. Hair accessories should be solid black. Unnatural hair color that draws attention should be avoided. Facial hair must be neatly groomed. Any questions should be referred to Dr. Houghtalen.
- **T-shirt:** The official 2026 Marching Miners shirt must be worn under the uniform.
- **Gloves:** White, long-wristed cotton gloves; must be free of stains and dirt.
- **Facial/Head Jewelry:** Any piercings must be simple, stud-type piercings. If piercings can be safely removed for performances, it is requested that you do so.
- **Makeup:** Students will not be allowed to wear powder or foundation in uniform. Additionally, students will not paint their face or wear any decals in uniform.
- **Ballcap:** the band will change from their shako into the official 2026 Marching Miners ballcap in the stands. This cap will always be worn with the bill to the front and never backwards….whether in full uniform, light uniform, or in any other situation. No matter where you are, if you wear your hat backwards, Dr. Houghtalen will find you…

We ***never*** wear an incomplete uniform in public (see above for extreme heat). **Remember – uniform is not only a noun, it is a verb.** When in public, we are always performing; this includes our uniform appearance.

Uniform inspections will be held by section leaders **prior to step-off** and are **mandatory** for all members of the band.

MARCHING MINERS CODE OF CONDUCT

Each member of the Marching Miners should remember that this organization is a source of pride to thousands of UTEP students, alumni, fans, faculty, and administration. The actions of individuals reflect upon this group as a whole, especially when those actions are irresponsible.

Band members who display a pattern of irresponsibility or behavior that is damaging to the morale or concept of teamwork within the organization may jeopardize their position in the Marching Miners. Uniformed members clearly represent the university not only to live audiences locally, but also to televised audiences regionally and nationally. Any inappropriate language, obscene gestures, or disrespectful acts by band members reflect adversely on the Band Department and UTEP. Marching Miners student behavior is expected to be above that of the regular UTEP student. We do not try to, nor do we feel we should have to, police band member behavior during UTEP athletic events.

Social media is another form of representation of our organization through its members. Pictures, conversations, and posts on all social media must be in good taste. Explicit language, negative remarks about any UTEP team/organization, suggestive comments and pictures, and anything else that would not portray the Marching Miners in a positive manner are prohibited. Examples include, but are not limited to, posting pictures suggesting inappropriate behavior (drinking, smoking, inappropriate dancing, blatant drunkenness, etc.), posts containing any vulgar or explicit language, degrading tone, rudeness, or any negative statements towards UTEP persons or organizations. Violations of the aforementioned items will be considered a violation of the Marching Miners Code of Conduct and handled accordingly.

Responsible behavior and a positive attitude are expected of all members at all times. Failure to comply with these expectations may result in suspension, and/or dismissal from a rehearsal, game, performance, trip, or permanent dismissal from the Marching Miners. Any student who is dismissed from the program for disciplinary reasons can expect to fail the class, forfeit their service award, and have future membership revoked.

Participation in any band event, whether on or off campus, is considered an academic commitment. As such, band members are expected to adhere to a strict prohibition against alcohol or illegal drug consumption and/or possession. Smoking (including vaping) is not allowed.

Possession and/or consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs prior to or during any rehearsal or UTEP sponsored event, including trips, is prohibited. Failure to comply with this regulation will result in suspension and/or dismissal from the Marching Miners.

Any student who is dismissed from the program or disciplined for this reason can expect to fail the class, forfeit his/her service award, and have future membership revoked. All infractions will be referred to the Office of the Dean of Students.

The Marching Miners have a **ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY** concerning hazing. Hazing is clearly defined in the UTEP Student Life Policies and Procedures and is available at: http://catalog.utep.edu/undergrad/academic-regulations/student-life-policies-and-procedures

If you observe or feel that you have been a victim of hazing, please contact one of the Directors or Staff immediately.

The Directors of the Marching Miners reserve the right to modify any part of this course as necessary to meet the learning needs of the class. Any changes will be made known to all members at the next regular rehearsal following the modification.