

**Sam Houston State University - School of Music**  
**Course Syllabus**

**Course: MUS 226.02: Conducting I** (2 credit hours)

**Semester:** Spring Semester, 2008

**Classroom:** Fine Arts Building, Room 202

**Meeting Times:** Tuesday, Thursday: 8:00 – 9:20 a.m.

**Instructor:** Professor Alejandro Montiel **Phone:** (936) 294-1360

**Office:** PR 5, Music Building **Email:** almotiel@sbcglobal.net

**Office Hours:** By appointment only

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

MUS 226 is an introduction to the basic techniques of conducting music. The course will offer a balance between theoretical studies related to the art of conducting and a laboratory setting used to develop beginning/intermediate level skills and refine specific techniques.

**Prerequisite:** Sophomore standing.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

1. To gain an understanding of the extensive role of the conductor.
2. To give each student an understanding of the impact of the physical aspects (posture, stance, facial expressions, etc.) of the conducting gesture on the effectiveness of his/her work in both rehearsal and performance.
3. To develop skills use of both hands and the baton in conducting gestures.
4. To learn the basic, traditional time-beating patterns in both simple and compound patterns as well as an overview of asymmetrical conducting patterns.
5. To develop the use of active, passive, and expressive gestures.
6. To develop the conductor's gestures of preparation, appropriate releases, the ictus and the rebound.
7. To develop skills in using the non-baton hand in conducting.
8. To develop skills in the use of appropriate cues and gestures.
9. To learn musical terminology appropriate for and used in score study.
10. To learn basic transpositions and clefs (treble, alto, tenor and bass).
11. To develop an understanding of the use of dynamics, tempi.
12. To develop skills to effectively use sub-divisions of beats.
13. To evaluate conductors based upon a set of predetermined criteria.
13. To give the student the opportunity to conduct an in-class performance of his/her peers.

### **COURSE MATERIALS**

**Required Text:** *The Art of Conducting*, 2nd Edition  
Donald Hunsberger & Roy E. Ernst

**Reference Text:** *The Modern Conductor*, 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Ed. -Elizabeth A. H. Green

**Materials:** Baton    Blank RDVD    Class notes  
Instrument/voice (your main instrument or voice as needed/required)

**General Information:** Students must bring baton, textbook, and note pad/paper to class daily. Students will be required to take class notes. Additionally, students will be asked to bring instruments and parts/musical examples later in the semester, when announced. It is the student's responsibility to obtain ALL course materials before the end of the second week of classes (January 25<sup>th</sup>). **Additional Course Materials will be distributed. COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

□ **COURSE OUTLINE:**

- I. Introduction
  - a. Role of the Conductor
- II. Basic Technique
  - a. Posture/Stance/Facial Expression/Intent of Will
  - b. Holding the baton
  - c. Field of Conducting
    1. Conducting space
    2. Horizontal planes
    3. Vertical planes
  - d. Beat/Pulse
    1. Ready position
    2. Figure 8 (studies/exercises)
    3. Preparatory beat
  4. Ictus and takt
  5. Rebound
  6. Releases/cut off gestures
- e. Patterns
  1. Traditional patterns (2-4 & 6)
  2. Balance
  3. Clarity
  4. Starting on beats other than one
  5. Asymmetrical patterns (Mixed meter, 5, 7, 9)
  6. Sub-divided patterns (Divided beat pattern)
- f. Active Gestures-Styles
  1. Staccato
  2. Legato
- g. Passive Gestures
  1. Dead
  2. Neutral
- h. Left Hand
  1. Independence/mirror
  2. Dynamics
  3. Cues
  4. Patterns
  5. Phrase contour
- i. Releases/Fermata
  1. On each beat in each pattern
  2. Release and cut off

3. Rebeaten Fermata 4. No/Short/Long  
Caesura  
III. Introduction to Score Study  
a. Terminology b.  
Transpositions and clefs

### Course/Instructor Evaluations

Students may be asked to complete two course/instructor evaluation forms toward the end of the semester, one official and one unofficial.

**ASSIGNMENTS:** students are responsible for completing ALL assignments.

- No extension of time to complete required assignments will be given.
- Due dates/times are not negotiable.

### Examinations/quizzes

**Quizzes** – there will be at least 4 quizzes during the semester

#### Tests

- Mid-term exam** Thursday, March 6, 2007
- Final exam** Tuesday, May 13, 2007; 8-10 a.m.

### GRADING

Quizzes 10 points each 40 points  
Mid-term 80 points  
Final (written - cumulative) 100 points  
Practica/examinations/evaluations 80 points  
Written Assignments 60 points

**Grades ranges:** curve developed based on highest and lowest point spread in the class.

### Grading Policies:

- Some extra credit MAY be given and will be announced at the appropriate time
- Final grades will be based on class attendance, points earned, and faculty evaluation.

**1. Conducting Practica/examinations/evaluations** This portion of any conducting course is the time in which the student applies the theory and principles associated with the process of learning to conduct. Each conducting evaluation will be added together with all others to arrive at an average for the entire semester. Conducting grades will be weighted toward *growth and improvement* that should occur over the course of the entire semester. If you are ill on the day in which an exam is scheduled, your work must be made up during the class meeting following the illness provided your absence is **officially excused**. Otherwise, **no make-up exam will be allowed**.

**2. Conducting Final** – students will conduct a pre-determined selection of music and be evaluated on all aspects we have covered in the class. As mentioned earlier, conducting

grades will be weighted toward *growth and improvement* that should occur over the course of the semester. **Attitude** – a cooperative, pleasant working relationship in class is appreciated and expected. **Related Conducting & Academic Studies** **1. Daily work** - Review of articles, class participation, and attendance. --A grade of F will be given to any work which is not handed in at the assigned time. **There will be no variation in this policy.** If you are away from class on University business, your work must be handed-in before you leave on business or at the next class period. If you are ill and have a doctor's report of your illness your work MIGHT be accepted. **2. Written Examinations** – the mid-term and final are cumulative...everything we've covered can be on those exam.

## **ATTENDANCE:**

### **General Information on Attendance:**

1. **Students will not be penalized for two or fewer absences**
2. A student's final grade will be lowered 10 points for each absence past the 2nd absence
3. **BE ON TIME FOR CLASS.** If you are not in class when role is taken, you will not be given credit for attending that day.
4. A student is counted as being in attendance when:
  - a. The student is physically sitting in his/her seat
  - b. The student has all materials necessary to perform the class activities as required
  - c. The student and the instrument are properly warmed-up (as assigned)
5. Students are provided a daily sign-up sheet on which to record their attendance. It is the student's responsibility to insure that the sheet is signed.

**Attendance and punctuality are required.** Should any variance occur, direct communication is *expected*. **(Document each/every communication by e-mail, please.)**

Assignments **will not** be accepted past the date for which they were announced except in extreme cases. Special permission must be received from the professor for these cases. The University catalogue states that in a regular class "A student shall not be penalized for three or fewer hours of absences when examinations **or OTHER ASSIGNED CLASSWORK have not been missed**; however, at the discretion of the instructor, a student may be penalized for more than three hours of absences (2 class meetings for T-day classes)."

In any performance-based course/class, the final grade is affected subjective judgment by the instructor. Among the most influential factors on a student's grade in class are **ATTITUDE** and **ATTENDANCE, PREPARATION** and "**PERFORMANCE**." As you surely would assume, these four factors override almost all others. **Cooperation** is expected.

## **ACADEMIC HONESTY:**

The University policies regarding academic honesty will be followed and strictly enforced.

## **PROPER CLASSROOM DEMEANOR/RULES OF CONDUCT**

"Students will refrain from behavior in the classroom that intentionally or unintentionally disrupts the learning process and, thus, impedes the mission of the university. **Please turn off or mute all cellular phones and/or pagers before class begins.** Students are prohibited from eating in class (except on specified occasions), using tobacco products, making offensive remarks, reading newspapers, sleeping, talking among each other at inappropriate times, wearing inappropriate clothing, or engaging in any other form of distraction. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result in a, minimally, directive to leave class or being reported to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action in accordance with university policy."

## **ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

**Americans with Disabilities Act:** SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may affect your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: No accommodation can be made until you register with the Counseling Center. **Student Absences on Religious Holy Days Policy:** Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. University policy 861001 provides the procedures to be followed by the student and instructor.

### **Visitors In The Classroom**

The class will be host to visitors at numerous times during the semester. All courtesies should be extended to visitors at all times. Any class member who would like to bring a visitor to class should obtain permission from the instructor prior to that time. "Unannounced visitors to class must present a current, official SHSU identification card to be permitted in the classroom. They must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. If the visitor is not a registered student, it is at the instructor's discretion whether or not the visitor will be allowed to remain in the classroom" (from University Policy).