

**Sam Houston State University
School of Music**

**Syllabus for Graduate Choral Conducting
CND 501.3
FALL 2007
MWF 10:00-10:50 am**

PROFESSOR: Allen Hightower, DMA
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OFFICE HOURS: MWF 2-4 pm or by appointment

TEXT

Messiah, G.F. Handel

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- 1) To develop the skills necessary for conductor's analysis
- 2) To develop a clear and expressive conducting technique
- 3) To further the life-long quest for artistic, musical conducting

PHILOSOPHY

Building upon Conducting I, this course will help secure the foundation for a life-long study of conducting. Each physical gesture, intellectual concept, aural image, and emotional impulse will be examined carefully. We will become highly aware that every gesture gets a response. We will always ask ourselves if indeed the gesture inspired the response we desired. If not, perhaps the gesture must change. Our goal is to develop a clear and readable conducting technique, capable of clearly communicating through the physical varieties of speed, space, and weight in order to elicit the desired musical responses from our players and singers. Additionally, this course will address the most basic issues of score preparation, from which a conductor bases his choices of gesture.

The only limitation to greatness in this art is the limitation that the student puts upon himself. Therefore, it is expected that the student will present himself as an enthusiastic participant in every aspect of this course. It is our goal to take everything we understand about music and leadership, and to meld these qualities into the most amazing craft known to mankind, the art of silently shaping the expression of other musicians, the otherworldly magic known as conducting.

TOPICS

1. Technique Related:

Expanding the Individual

Preparation for the sound, the breath

Baton grip

Releases

Beat patterns

Beat styles

3 Essentials Variables of Speed, Space, and Weight

Conducting Planes: high, medium, low

4 Joints: fingers, wrist, elbow (half-arm), shoulder (whole arm)

Posture and Stance

Cueing: eyes, face, hand, baton, body

Roles of the left and right hand

Choral versus Instrumental conducting

Recitative conducting

Accompanying

Text-related gestures

Effect of the gesture upon tone

Malko/Green Conducting Exercises

Labonation for conductors (Rudolph von Laban)

2. Mind/Analysis Related:

Structural analysis

Harmonic analysis

Phrasal analysis: bar lines and numbers

Marking the score

Score Reading

Orchestration

Transpositions

Issues of bowing techniques

Work sheets and charts

Mental telepathy

Podium persona

Aural Image: knowing what you want

POLICIES

Attendance:

Punctual attendance is required. In accordance with Sam Houston State University policy, three absences will not in themselves adversely impact the student's grade. However, the fourth absence will result in an automatic lowering of the student's grade by one letter. Each additional absence beyond this would further lower the grade by a letter. Two tardies will be considered as one absence. If a student enters the classroom after the instructor has begun, the student is considered tardy. Be sure that your clock is in agreement with the clock in room 202. The class will begin promptly at 10:00 am.

Although an absence in itself does not necessarily impact the grade, the student's inability to perform the required daily assignment may in fact impact the student's grade for that particular assignment. Don't expect the instructor to allow conducting assignments to be done later than assigned. Furthermore, don't expect the instructor to accept late written work. You are highly encouraged to keep the instructor notified of any anticipated absences or delays.

If a health-related issue should arise which would cause you to miss this class on numerous occasions, thereby adversely impacting your grade, you should consider dropping the class. Though the instructor is sympathetic to health issues, a grade cannot be earned when the student is not present to participate in class.

Grading:

Grades will be given for participation in class exercises, prepared conducting materials, and written work such as articles and videotape reviews. Written work will not be accepted late. If in fact you are ill on the date in which an assignment is due, it is still your responsibility to get the material to the instructor by class time. If the assignment can be emailed, do so. If it cannot be emailed, have a classmate bring the assignment to class.

MATERIALS

1. Baton
2. Writable DVD
3. Three-ring binder for handouts and class notes
4. Metronome

