

# **Applied Low Brass Lessons Syllabus**

## **Midwestern State University**

### **AMUS 1541, 2581, 3541, 3581, 4541, 4542, 4561, 4581**

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#### **Course Description:**

- The basic principle of applied lessons is to teach you about the pedagogy of your instrument and how to best perform on your instrument.
- You will study all aspects of music performance, including technique, tone production, tonguing, articulation, and phrasing.
- Music is a communicative art form, not just notes and technique. As many of you will go on to teach younger students about music, it is my goal to incorporate concepts and discuss situations that you will undoubtedly encounter as a band director/music teacher.

#### **Objectives:**

Students in applied tuba, euphonium, and trombone should be able to demonstrate:

- An evolving technical ability on their instrument.
- An understanding of musical phrasing and artistic interpretation.
- A basic understanding of the language of music.
- The ability to evaluate performances critically and coherently.
- An active interest in their craft.
- A concerted commitment toward improvement.
- A continuing knowledge base of pedagogy and teaching techniques on their instrument, as well as all aspects of music education.

#### **Resources:**

The following companies do a good job of stocking brass music:

Sheet Music Service of Portland, (800) 452-1133  
Hickey's Music Service, (800) 442-5397  
TUBA Press  
Robert King Music

#### **Attendance and Participation:**

Attendance at lessons is required. Twenty-four hour notice is required for canceling lessons, except in cases of emergencies, and will require a doctor's note, police report, court documentation, etc. I am happy to make up lessons that were canceled for emergencies at a time that is convenient for both of us. **Simply not showing up for a**

**lesson, or missing for a non-emergency situation, will result in an F for that week's lesson.** If you are more than 15 minutes late to your lesson, the lesson will count as an unexcused absence. **You are allowed one unexcused absence without penalty. After one unexcused absence, I will lower your final grade by ½ a letter for each subsequent unexcused absence.**

### **Studio Class:**

Attendance and participation at the weekly studio class is required. Failure to attend or participate will negatively impact your final grade.

## **Low Brass Grading Policy**

### **Assignments:**

You will be given music performance assignments for each lesson. Assignments should be prepared as if you were performing them publicly at the time of your lesson. To take away some of the ambiguity of how lessons are graded, consider the following:

#### **A lesson will be given the grade of A if:**

It is obvious that you have prepared the music for the lesson. You are playing the material technically very well and it is obvious that you have given a good deal of thought to the artistic interpretation of the assignment. You exhibit an understanding of the material and can perform at near-performance level. Repeated material from the prior lesson has been more or less solved.

#### **A lesson will be given the grade of B if:**

It is obvious that you have prepared the music for the lesson. You are playing the material fairly well, but still have a few technical issues that need to be worked out. You show signs of artistic interpretation, but still need to develop the music a bit further. You know that you could play this better. Repeated material from the prior lesson shows improvement.

#### **A lesson will be given the grade of C if:**

It is not obvious that you have prepared adequately for the lesson. You cannot play the material without hesitation. Notes are missed. Your performance is void of artistic expression. You show signs of understanding the material, but cannot execute these ideas through your instrument. Repeated material from the prior lesson shows little improvement.

#### **A lesson will be given the grade of D if:**

It is obvious that you have not prepared the music for the lesson, yet somehow you are struggling through and improving during the course of the lesson. You don't know how things should sound. You have ignored key signatures, missed notes, and demonstrate overall unsatisfactory performance. Repeated material from the prior lesson shows no improvement.

**A lesson will be given the grade of F if:**

You have an unexcused absence, or you attend the lesson but it is obvious that you have not prepared and no amount of struggling through can improve your performance. You failed to bring in the assigned material and cannot perform in your lesson. In these scenarios, you are wasting both my time and your own and the lack of self-discipline that is demonstrated is disappointing.

As music majors, you should spend a minimum of two hours a day practicing your instrument. Three hours a day is ideal and more is even better. However, the quantity of practice is not nearly as important as the quality of your practice sessions. Go into your practice sessions with goals to achieve and don't give up until it is evident that you have accomplished something.

**Students with Disabilities:**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil protections for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment which provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. In accordance with state and federal law, MSU provides academic accommodations to students with documented disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact Disability Support Services (DSS) in Room 168 of the Clark Student Center (phone 940-397-4140). The instructor is under no obligation to offer accommodations for students with disabilities who are not registered with DSS.

**Campus Carry:**

Senate Bill 11 passed by the 84<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature allows licensed handgun holders to carry concealed handguns on campus, effective August 1, 2016. Areas excluded from concealed carry are appropriately marked, in accordance with state law. For more information regarding campus carry, please refer to the University's webpage at <https://mwsu.edu/campus-carry/rules-policies>.

**Student Privacy:**

Federal privacy law prohibits the instructor from releasing information about students to certain parties outside of the university without the signed consent of the student. Thus, in almost all cases the professor will not discuss a student's academic progress or other matters with his/her parents. Please do not have them call. Regardless of these important legal considerations, the professors' general policy is to communicate with the students, not their parents, even when a student has signed a consent form. College students are adults and are expected to behave accordingly.

**Academic Dishonesty:**

Academic dishonesty including plagiarism and giving or receiving unauthorized assistance is prohibited. Plagiarism is (1) the use of source material of other persons (either published or unpublished, including the Internet) without following the accepted techniques of giving credit or (2) the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given. If

a student in the class plagiarizes material, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken. The Student Honor Creed developed and adopted by the MSU Student Government reinforces the discouragement of plagiarism and other unethical behaviors. The first statement of the creed reads, "As an MSU student, I pledge not to lie, cheat, steal, or help anyone else do so." Plagiarism is lying, cheating, and stealing.

**Social Justice:**

Social justice is one of Midwestern State University's stated core values, and the professor considers the classroom a place where students are treated with respect as human beings, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, political beliefs, age, or ability. Moreover, diversity of thought is appreciated and encouraged, provided the students can agree to disagree. The professor's expectation is that ALL students consider the classroom a safe environment.

**Students Expectations/Conduct:**

Students are required to participate in all class activities. Students are to read weekly assignments, prepare questions, and prepare to answer questions regarding assigned readings. Readings are reviewed in class for clarity and understanding.

Students are to conduct themselves in a professional manner so that all students may learn without distraction or disruption.

College students are adults and are expected to behave accordingly. Classroom behavior that interferes with either the instructor's ability to conduct class or the ability of the other students to benefit from instruction will result in the instructor's removing the disruptive student(s) from class.

**COVID-19 Addendum to Fall 2020 Syllabus:**

- Given the state of the world, everything in this course could change with very little notice. That means deadlines, projects, even weighted percentages for each component of the course could change. Please note that I will consult with the class and use students' input to the extent practicable in making decisions about how to proceed. Students should not hesitate to contact me with questions, concerns and, even better, great suggestions. Most students know I will go out of my way to be fair to all.
- Safety and health of all are our top considerations. You are required to follow all best practices as they are developed during this crisis. If you feel sick, do not come to class. If you need to miss class, contact me as outlined under class procedures, and I will work with you.
- Masks will be required in all in-person classrooms, per the governor's order. Those who are unwilling to wear a mask must contact me before the end of the first week of class to discuss. Please see the university's official policy at the web sites listed below.
- A mandatory seating chart, to ensure social distancing and facilitate contact tracing should it be necessary, will be implemented.

- The Department of Music and the College of Fine Arts have adopted specific cleaning protocols, and all students are required to abide by these rules. Students who are unwilling to do their share to ensure everyone's health will be contacted by the professor. In short, you will be required to clean your area before and after class, the first as a safety precaution for yourself, the second as a courtesy toward others. We realize this means some areas may be cleaned twice within a brief time period, but this is better than not at all. This rule holds for traditional classrooms, labs, practice rooms, and public areas.
- All handouts and other information will be available through the university's D2L system, and D2L's Gradebook function will be enabled (I will, nonetheless, keep my own spreadsheet with grades, and students are welcome to contact me for grade updates). Students are expected to understand how to navigate D2L, even if we continue with in-person classes.
  - If you do experience problems with D2L, please let me know as soon as possible. In addition, the D2L page has a "Report A Problem" function on the top navigation bar as well as a FAQ function in the middle of the page on the right.
  - Forward your D2L email to the email address of your choosing if you have not already done so; otherwise, you may have messages which you never receive.
- If we are forced to switch to online-only instruction, all students will be required to:
  - Attend class at the assigned time. I will offer to record the sessions but these recordings are supplemental and not replacements for attending at the assigned times. Excuses such as work will not be accepted, and students will be expected to make arrangements to attend every session. Students are also required to attend for the full class session.
    1. The same provisions regarding attendance for in-person classes will be in effect if we move to a virtual classroom.
  - Have a computer with a webcam that can accommodate Zoom or other video software.
  - Have reliable WiFi.
    1. As to the three requirements above, I know not all students have access to a reliable computer and reliable WiFi. However, you are expected to make arrangements in advance and have a plan. Do not assume you will be able to complete the course using only your phone and/or without attending actual classes during class time. If these requirements present problems for you, please contact me as early in the semester as possible. I will work with students in the hope that they do not have to drop the class as a result of these requirements.
  - Observe proper video meeting etiquette: Arrive on time

<https://msutexas.edu/coronavirus/index.php>

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/117HY4z4mY5izJpR44ejuZ8rhTyoWEGEG/view>

<https://msutexas.edu/return-to-campus/assets/files/return-to-campus-taskforce-8-4-20.pdf>