



MUSC 4091 Section 201 – University Orchestra

Spring 2021

M 6:00-8:30 PM, Fain Instrumental Music Building 105

Contact Information

Instructor: Matthew D. Luttrell, D.M.A

Office: Fain Instrumental Music Hall 105 (Office hours posted and appointments available)

Email: matthew.luttrell@msutexas.edu

Phone: (940)-397-4210

Course Description

University Orchestra is open to all students by audition and presents concerts throughout the semester. Repertoire includes standard and new literature for symphonic orchestra and chamber groups. This ensemble is considered to be of the highest quality and standard at Midwestern State University.

Required Course Materials

Each member is issued his/her own folder and music. Care should be taken to keep the music in good condition. It must be returned free of all rehearsal markings. Lost music is subject to fines up to the total replacement cost of the set.

Course Objectives

- The student will demonstrate a high level of competence in skills required to perform with other musicians and as soloist in the large ensemble setting, i.e. matched tone and style, intonation, balance, blend and musical communication. This will also include the ability to collectively run a sectional rehearsal.
- The student will demonstrate the ability to respond to non-verbal performance instruction from the conductor.
- The student will demonstrate a high level of competence in technical aspects of performance, i.e., tone quality, articulation, pitch consistency, dynamic control, technical agility and accurate rhythmic concepts.
- For music education and performance students, one key attribute for this ensemble is to continue to foster your education on processes, techniques, and training tools that will be available to you on leaving MSU. We are here to create fantastic music educators and

musicians first and foremost. The more preparation time put in at the beginning, the more involved the instructors may teach.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will possess a better understanding of performing in a symphony orchestra, a familiarity with current and traditional repertoire for this genre, and rehearsal techniques required to prepare orchestras for public performance.

Student Assessment

Students will be assessed on their ability to arrive before rehearsal and be prepared to play at the assigned rehearsal time, arrive with music prepared for upcoming performances, and participate throughout the class period.

Grading

Your grade is determined by a combination of your attendance, professionalism, music preparation and performance. Your grade is lowered one letter grade for each unexcused absence or two unexcused tardy. Absence from a dress rehearsal lowers your grade one letter. Absence from a performance results in a failing grade for the semester. Excessive excused absences or tardiness may also affect your grade.

As for rehearsal preparation, the advantage for an ensemble director conducting a chamber-style ensemble is that there is no hiding on your part. You are your own part, your own section, and your own ensemble. It is the goal of every musician, professional, amateur, and student to provide the very best they have to offer. This will require you to prepare outside of rehearsal. There are opportunities built into the schedule to help facilitate this approach. If a part is not prepared, you may be asked to leave the rehearsal. Please do not put your ensemble peers in a difficult position. If one part is not ready, then the other parts have no ability to adjust, conform, and complete their task. A single individual can hurt an entire ensemble.

If you feel that you cannot approach this course in this manner, please let Dr. Luttrell know immediately. Thank you!

Attendance

Attendance at every assigned rehearsal is expected. Students should arrive early to assemble equipment and then be prepared to play once the clock strikes the assigned rehearsal time. Two (2) unexcused absences will result in the maximum grade of a B, three (3) unexcused-maximum grade of C, four (4) unexcused-maximum grade of D. Any more unexcused absences result in a failing grade. Dr. Luttrell must approve any excused absence at least 48 hours IN ADVANCE of the rehearsal, or the student must provide official documentation of illness or family emergency for an absence to be classified as "excused." Any student who is absent from a performance will be removed from the ensemble and receive an "F" for their final semester grade.

Special Needs

If a student needs class accommodation(s) because of a documented disability, (2) has an emergency medical condition that may interfere with class performance, or (3) requires special handling in case the building must be evacuated, he/she is encouraged to contact the office of Disability Support Services in room 168 Clark Student Center (940) 397-4140 and make an appointment with the professor as soon as possible.

Student Conduct

Behavior that interferes with either the instructor's ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to benefit from the instruction will result in the instructor removing the disruptive student(s) from the class, either temporarily or permanently (instructor drop), and assigning a final lower grade, up to and including an F. In addition, and depending on the nature of the behavior or conduct, the student(s) may be subject to further disciplinary actions as per MSU policies.

Privacy Statement

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.

Campus Carry

Senate Bill 11 passed by the 84th 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 [MSU Campus Carry Policy](#).

COVID-19 Statements

Seating arrangements – All classes for University Orchestra will be held in FA105 (unless otherwise designated) in a predetermined setup (to be provided on the second rehearsal day).

Face coverings –MSU policy for indoor and outdoor classes and rehearsals applies. In addition, students that play woodwinds and brass will be provided masks appropriate for their respective instrument (we will play in class in some cases). Please do not share these with anyone.

Flexibility – At any time, we may transfer University Orchestra to an online (adapted) course. In this instance, the class will continue until the overall work is commensurate with the credit amount. Accommodations will be provided. Illness and accommodations will be done on a person-to-person basis.

Attendance – Attendance is expected at all times, and absence from a class needs to be communicated as quickly as possible. Attendance will be taken every class.

D2L – D2L is an official means of communication and repository of class records, music, and materials for University Orchestra.

Cleaning protocols – no instruments (or batons) are to be shared at any time. When an instrument is stored in its place, it should have enough proper space to allow for social distancing.

Office hours – Since University Orchestra rarely requires office hours, all inquiries/questions regarding this class should be done via email and/or online meeting (only in exceptional instances).

Social distancing – All music courses will adhere to the minimum 6-ft. rule, and will also begin with further distancing, depending on the activity.

Values of the Midwestern State University Instrumental Program

EVERY REHEARSAL IS A PERFORMANCE

Experience the musical flow with every rehearsal moment. Don't wait until the concert to turn on musical concentration. Musical discoveries made during rehearsal can be retained and enhanced in subsequent rehearsals and the performance. Work with as much diligence during rehearsal as in a concert and listening/adjusting will be tremendously enhanced. Some players don't realize that passages are out of tune, for instance, until the concert. That is, obviously, too late.

MUSIC IS MADE OUT OF SILENCE

Musical sensitivity is based on the ability of players to hear. It is difficult to hear during a loud rehearsal. Talking destroys not only the silence, but also the concentration level of the players. Players who talk are not listening and interfere with the ability of others to concentrate. Players who do not listen cannot play musically.

A REHEARSAL IS NOT THE PLACE FOR INDIVIDUAL PRACTICE

Prepare your parts ahead of time. Rehearsals are needed to put together musical ideas, nuance, blend and balance, not work out notes that can be practiced individually. Don't hold the rest of the group back by not being able to play your part. Make it a personal goal to work out all technical problems immediately after the first reading.

Good performances are constructed, little by little, through progress in good rehearsals.

“Rehearsal as Realization”

- A rehearsal should be where musicians come together to learn each other's parts, not their own.
- A rehearsal must unite the performers in a shared understanding of the composer's intent and the conductor's interpretation of that intent.
- Each player must accept an equal responsibility for the outcome.
- Each player must know their parts well enough to concentrate on listening to others.
- Every rehearsal must have the potential to create beauty.
- Rehearsals must focus on what's right as well as what needs to be altered.
- Technical proficiency cannot dominate an entire rehearsal.
- Each rehearsal must encourage both extrinsic and intrinsic musical growth for the entire ensemble.

“Energizing the Ears”

- Listening must be of highest importance from the FIRST sound.
- Always tune in a way that promotes evaluative listening.

- Establish listening goals in tuning and warm-ups (i.e. match the clarinet, get inside the trombones, etc.).
- We will use real music or excerpts whenever possible.
- The conductor's actions are designed to guide the ensemble's listening.

“Pitch and Rhythm”

- Always be encouraged to listen for the ensemble's internal pulse!
- Learn your parts as if they were a mastery of homework.
- Use sounds from the ensemble as a metronome.
- Imitation is the highest form of flattering.
- Sing your parts when you are not rehearsing.
- Instead of thinking “You're behind”, think about how to LEAD.
- Always listen for something that is the same as what you are playing.

“A Balancing Act”

- Get inside the sounds of other players around you.
- Always try to focus your ears to instruments which are leading (i.e. low voice, solo part, high voice, inner part, melody, etc.)
- Make students aware of what others are playing by asking and not telling.
- Always think of the person to the left and right as part of your “trio”.
- When something goes right, acknowledge it, then play it again so the ensemble gains the awareness of what it sounds like to be right.
- Play only wonderful recordings.

“Tuning it in”

- Always match to the left, then right, then behind or ahead.
- Listen down to the lowest pitch.
- Its simple; the “beats” get slower as intonation improves and faster as it gets further apart.
- Tune to your instrument family.
- Use a tuner as an aid (i.e. as a reference for A 440) but do not expect to use it as a definitive way of creating good pitch.
- Don't use your eyes for pitch.
- When it comes to pitch, “make your best guess”; searching for intonation is better than holding a note out of tune.
- Tune to different pitches.
- If you hear more than one pitch, it's out of tune.

“Don't tune out”

- Parts are always handed off from one person to another; stay focused in the rehearsal.
- Listen, sing, and make evaluative ideas on how a part is played in a particular section. Be mindful of all sounds around you.

Warm-up Exercises and Tuning Sequence – Orchestra

All members check individual intonation before tuning sequence begins.

Scales (G, D, A, E, etc.) [all major and variant minor/modal scales should be practiced]

1. *Interval Exercises (2nds, 3rds, 4ths)*
2. *Scales and Arpeggios (choose specifically regarding fingering patterns and clean tones)*
3. *Velocity Exercises using Major/Minor patterns, trills, and differing articulations.*

Chorale exercise

1. *Play chorale, with focus on phrasing and breath support*
2. *Sing chorale on a specified vowel (A, E, I, O, U) to promote aural awareness*
3. *Play chorale again with focus on pitch accuracy and tone production*

Suggestion: Sixteen Chorales (for Concert Band) by J.S. Bach, arr. Mayhew Lake - G. Schirmer, Inc.

Tuning pitch given by either tuner or best available player in ensemble (try to use students/performers as much as possible)

Tune the ensemble through intonation consorts, such as:

1. *Concert A given; enter Group 1 (winds)*
2. *Concert A given; enter Group 2 (strings)*

Note: Intonation is all about listening and adjustment. We never trust a single tuning pitch or tuning exercise as being absolute.