

Percussion Instruments Midwestern State University

Spring 2021 Syllabus – General Information

Instructor: Dr. Corey Robinson

Course Number: MUSC 3291

Class Location: Fain Instrumental Music Hall 105

Class Time: Monday and Wednesday, 3:00-3:50pm

Email: corey.robinson@msutexas.edu

Phone: (940) 397-4054

Office: Fain Instrumental Music Hall 101 (office hours posted on door)

Course Description:

The purpose of this course is to provide music education majors with basic information concerning teaching methods and performance techniques for musical instruments common to the percussion family. Students will follow a course of study that will enable them to teach new percussionists through a year of beginning band and gain the knowledge necessary to guide advanced level middle and high school students until they graduate with an accepted, organized approach to learning and developing percussion techniques and skills.

This course is designed to acquaint students with each major instrument found in the percussion family, while focusing primarily on the instruments that are most common to today's elementary, middle and high school band and orchestra literature. Topics for each instrument may include construction, acoustical properties, methods of sound production, idiosyncrasies of notation, pedagogy, playing techniques and resources for further study.

Course Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of the course, the student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate on each of the major percussion instruments, either by written or performance tests, an accurate knowledge in the following areas of pedagogy:
 - Instrument assembly and care
 - Grips and hand positions
 - Basic performance techniques
 - Varieties of sticks and mallets
 - Acoustical characteristics of each percussion instrument
2. Identify practical and acoustical ranges of the instruments.
3. Identify, diagnose, and prescribe common solutions to performance problems encountered by students.
4. Choose graded materials and literature that will account for a systematic growth in the musical and technical development of the school percussion student.

5. Become familiar with the various brands of percussion instruments to adequately advise themselves as well as students and parents in the selection of instruments that will fit their budget.
6. Understand and possess methods to successfully meet the challenges of percussion education in the public-school music curriculum.

Course Requirements:

Attendance:

Attendance will be taken each class period. Students are allowed to be absent a total of two class periods without penalty. Each subsequent absence will lower the student's final grade by one letter. Tardiness of more than ten minutes will be considered an absence. If a student is absent for a school related function, documented illness, or other reasonable excuse, it is the student's responsibility to communicate with the instructor and make-up any missed work. All make-up work will be given at the discretion of the instructor.

Participation:

Students will be expected to participate in class daily. This participation will include playing, teaching, discussion, and asking questions about the concepts taught in class. Playing many of these instruments will be new to many of you. Please remember, I understand that you are not professional percussionists. I do not expect perfection, but I do expect participation with a good attitude and a willingness to try new things.

Required Materials:

1. One pair of "general" drumsticks: Innovative IP-1 or similar 5B model
2. One snare drum practice pad for use in class and at home.
3. One pair of "general" keyboard mallets: Innovative IP240 or similar

Recommended Materials:

1. Cook, Gary. *Teaching Percussion* (3rd Edition). Thomson Schirmer Publications, 2006.

Grading

Attendance and Participation 100 points

Exams 300 points (100 points each)

There will be three exams over the course of the semester. Each will cover specifics of pedagogy, techniques, instrument construction, concepts about each instrument. Expect many short answer questions and expect to discuss the pedagogical aspects of all instruments and concepts that are discussed.

Exam #1 (February 22) will concern the snare drum. Exam #2 (March 24) is on keyboard percussion, timpani, and accessory instruments. Exam #3 (finals week) includes topics dealing with drum set, Latin percussion, and marching band.

Note Sheets 200 points

Much of the content in this course will be delivered through 32 prerecorded video lectures. An incomplete note sheet will accompany each video lecture. On the due dates detailed in the tentative schedule below, bring the completed note sheet(s) to class and they will be graded on completion. Each note sheet will be worth 6 points, with a bonus 8 points available for completing all 32 assignments. Even though each individual assignment is only worth a few points, missing out on the information in the videos will prove costly. Class time will be devoted to practicing the techniques discussed in the videos, not rehashing the information.

Performance Review 100 points

Watching high level performances on any instrument that you are attempting to learn is essential for a complete pedagogical understanding. For this class you are required to view the MSU Texas Percussion Ensemble Concert (April 13, 7:30pm in Akin Auditorium) through the MSU Texas Department of Music livestream page (<https://msutexas.edu/academics/finearts/music/livestream-events.php>) and write a review for 50 points. An alternate assignment will be provided for students who are participating in the Percussion Ensemble Concert or receive written approval from the instructor for an alternative assignment due to unavailability prior to that date. The other 50 points will come from reviewing performances of 5 pieces from the Texas PML that you found on YouTube for 10 pts each.

Each review will consist largely of a detailed commentary on percussion techniques used during the concert. Within this commentary, one might discuss why particular techniques were good or bad, the types of sticks/mallets used and whether they were appropriate, or new performance aspects learned by attending the concert. Include the physical set-up used in each piece (if applicable) and reasons why that might have been chosen. Briefly discuss a challenge that each particular piece may pose to percussion students (rhythmic, technical, conceptual, independence, endurance, etc.) and how you might address it when teaching. Reviews are due on April 21st.

Performance review specifics:

- Around two pages of length with standard formatting for the Percussion Ensemble Concert review. The other five pieces should total about two pages in length.
- You will be graded on the thoroughness and clarity of your observations.
- Review should be free of spelling and grammatical errors.
- In the interest of getting the best information possible, you may want to contact the performers to answer any further questions.

Teaching Demonstration 100 points

This assignment will give you an opportunity to practice your teaching craft. The submission for this assignment will be a 10-minute video of you teaching someone a lesson in percussion. The person you choose to teach should be someone who has not taken this course and is not a trained percussionist. The lesson you choose to teach is up to you. I would recommend a “first day” lesson on any percussion instrument so that

no prior experience is needed. *Before you film your lesson, a lesson plan must be approved by the instructor of this course.* The lesson plan must contain a clear goal and methodology. Grading will be based on clarity of teaching, responsiveness to the problems that occur, and overall effectiveness of the lesson.

Percussion Ensemble Program Project 50 points

Each student will organize two percussion ensemble concert programs for a hypothetical future percussion ensemble concert. Each concert program will contain 20-30 minutes of music of varied styles and genres. One of the two programs will have music appropriate for a middle school or beginning high school level percussion ensemble, and one program will contain music for an advanced high school level percussion ensemble.

Thought should go into the number of pieces, the number of players, the instrumentation, the order of the program and the listener's experience. For each piece, a brief justification should be included detailing reasons why the piece was included on the program. Each program will be scored out of a total of 25 points.

Portfolio 150 points

The portfolio will be a documentation of your work and is the most important artifact that you can take from this class. A quality portfolio will be an invaluable reference when you begin to teach young percussionists. Your portfolio should include everything from the entire semester including, but not limited to note sheets, handouts, relevant articles, graded tests, concert reviews and other pertinent information regarding percussion pedagogy. The portfolio will be graded on the following:

1. Neatness and clarity of the organization of the portfolio (50 points)
2. Comprehensiveness of all materials (50 points)
3. 5 current articles relating to percussion education including a 3-sentence explanation of why each is relevant to your career as a music teacher (50 points)

The portfolio may be submitted in person or as a digital copy by 3:00pm on April 19th. Hard copies must be in a 3-ring binder with tabs designating some sort of logical organizational structure. Digital copies must be **one** .pdf file and include a table of contents with page numbers. Portfolios will be returned by April 21 to facilitate studying for Exam #3.

Total for the Class 1000 points

- A = 900 points or more
- B = 800-899 points
- C = 700-799 points
- D = 600-699 points
- F = 599 points or lower

Tentative Course Schedule

	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>
Week 1: Jan 11, 13	Introduction, Syllabus	Introduction to the Snare Drum Lecture 1 Due
Week 2: Jan 18, 20	<i>No Class: Martin Luther King Jr. Day</i>	Grip and Stroke Lecture 2 Due
Week 3: Jan 25, 27	Sticking Systems Lecture 3 Due	Dynamics, upstrokes and downstrokes Lecture 4 Due
Week 4: Feb 1, 3	The Double Stroke Roll Lecture 5 Due	Review Day
Week 5: Feb 8, 10	The Multiple Bounce Roll Lecture 6 Due	Ornamentation Lecture 7 Due
Week 6: Feb 15, 17	The Roll Base Lecture 8 Due	Review for Exam #1
Week 7: Feb 22, 24	Exam #1: The Snare Drum	Introduction to Keyboard Percussion Lectures 9 and 10 Due
Week 8: Mar 1, 3	Scales, Arpeggios and Reading Music Lectures 11 and 12 Due	Rolls and 4-Mallet Playing Lectures 13 and 14 Due
Week 9: Mar 8, 10	Timpani Construction, Tuning, Stroke Lectures 15, 16 and 17 Due	Timpani Performance Techniques Lecture 18 Due
Week 10: Mar 15, 17	Orchestral Accessories Lectures 19-24 Due	Playing Keyboards, Timpani and Orchestral Accessories
Week 11: Mar 22, 24	Review for Exam #2 Teaching Demo Lesson Plan Due	Exam #2: Keyboards, Timpani and Orchestral Accessories
Week 12: Mar 29, 31	Percussion in the Marching Band Lecture 25 Due	Playing Techniques for Marching Band Lecture 26 and 27 Due
Week 13: Apr 5, 7	Playing Techniques for Marching Band Teaching Demonstration Due	Hand Drums Lecture 28 Due
Week 14: Apr 12, 14	Latin Percussion Lecture 29 Due	Drum Set Set-up Lecture 30 Due
Week 15: Apr 19, 21	Drum Set: Pedagogy, Rock Drumming Lecture 31 and Portfolio Due	Jazz Drumming, Review for Final Lecture 32 and Concert Reviews Due

Exam #3 will be given during the final exam time for this course

COVID-19 Information:

This course will fully comply with all recommendations and guidelines given through the “MSU Taskforce to Return to Campus” report. Here is a link to their complete report: https://msutexas.edu/return-to-campus/_assets/files/december-2020-reopening-taskforce-report.pdf. Another helpful resource is the MSU Texas Coronavirus Update page which can be found here: <https://msutexas.edu/coronavirus/index.php>.

There are some additional points that I would like to emphasize.

- 1) Masks will be required for all students during class from the moment of entering the Instrumental Music Hall until leaving. No practicing is to occur in the building or on shared instruments without the use of a proper face covering.
- 2) Cleaning protocols for the percussion area will be addressed in class as needed.
- 3) If you need assistance or would like to meet with me during my office hours, the best way to contact me is through email. We will then schedule a Zoom call as soon as possible. An in-person meeting can also be scheduled if necessary.
- 4) Social distancing will occur throughout every class.
- 5) If you are feeling in any way sick, do not attend class, and contact me immediately.

Other Information:

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 students’ 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 Website.