



**Advanced Conducting  
College of Fine Arts  
MUSC 4883 Section 201  
Spring 2026 MWF 3:00-3:50 PM**

**Contact Information**

Instructor: Dr. Matthew D. Luttrell

Instructor: Dr. Bret Smithey

Office (Luttrell): FA103

Office (Smithey): C117K

Office hours (Luttrell): MWF 1:00-3:00 PM, TR 2:00-5:00 PM

Office hours (Smithey): TBA

Office Phone (Luttrell): (940) 397-4210

Office Phone (Smithey): (940) 397-4789

Cell Phone (Luttrell): (480) 313-9274

Twitter: N/A

E-mail: [matthew.luttrell@msutexas.edu](mailto:matthew.luttrell@msutexas.edu)

E-mail: [bret.smithey@msutexas.edu](mailto:bret.smithey@msutexas.edu)

**Course Description**

This course builds upon foundational conducting technique and focuses on the artistic, analytical, and leadership skills required of advanced conductors of instrumental and vocal ensembles.

Emphasis is placed on refined gesture, expressive communication, score study, rehearsal strategy, and stylistic interpretation across a range of ensemble literature. Students will engage in intensive score analysis, conduct live ensembles, and develop rehearsal plans that address musical, technical, and pedagogical challenges. The course also explores the conductor's role as musical leader, including professional rehearsal etiquette, ensemble psychology, and effective verbal instruction. Designed for advanced undergraduates preparing for educational and professional conducting, teaching, or ensemble leadership roles.

**Textbook to Instructional Materials**

- A professional-level baton to the accepted measurements (this includes choral and instrumental students)
- Supplemental Conducting Packet (located in D2L)
- Metronome/Tuner App for your phone (recommend Total Energy Tuner)
- A cell phone (or other equipment) that allows you to film yourself for self-assessment

## **Study Hours and Tutoring Assistance**

Please see Dr. Luttrell or Dr. Smithey for assistance regarding study hours and tutoring.

## **Student Handbook**

Refer to: [Student Handbook](#)

## **Academic Misconduct Policy to Procedures**

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work, not the individual to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct.

[Office of Student Conduct](#)

## **Moffett Library**

Moffett Library provides resources and services to support student's studies and assignments, including books, peer-reviewed journals, databases, and multimedia materials accessible both on campus and remotely. The library offers media equipment checkout, reservable study rooms, and research assistance from librarians to help students effectively find, evaluate, and use information. Get started on this [Moffett Library webpage](#) to explore these resources and learn how to best utilize the library.

## **Student Assessment**

Students will be assessed based on the requirements of the grading rubric and the projects needed for completion, as well as your effectiveness in completing assignments on time and with certification in mind. You have a responsibility to the students you are teaching to be prepared, to be thorough, to think, and to participate with intent in your development as an educator. There is no one way to be effective as an educator, but you can smell out someone who is ill prepared to teach.

## **Grading**

Grading Scale: Refer to University Code regarding + and – grading scale.

A = 90 – 100

B = 80 – 89

C = 70 – 79

D = 60 – 69

F = 0 – 59

Table 1: Points allocated to each assignment

Assignments	Points
Conducting Examples (10x30 pts)	300
Score/Transposition Quiz	80
Video Assessments/Observations (7x60 pts)	420

Assignments	Points
Midterm Exam	100
Major Score Analysis	100
Final Conducting Experiences (2x50 pts)	100
Total Points	1100

Table 2: Total points for final grade.

Grade	Points
A	990
B	880 to 989
C	770 to 879
D	660 to 769
F	Less than 659

### **Homework**

All homework assigned is to be turned in on the assigned date. Late assignments will be accepted with a grade reduction based on the length of time after the initial due date.

### **Quizzes**

Quizzes are attached to the daily assignments area of the syllabus. These will be clearly discussed during class.

### **Exams**

There are two major examinations in basic conducting: the midterm examination and the final examination. The midterm examination is in typical format, featuring true/false, multiple choice, matching, and short answer questions based on the information given to that point in the course.

The final examination is a skills based examination, featuring each student conducting an ensemble at the end of the semester on a pre-determined selection. This will be discussed further as we get closer to the end of the semester, including rehearsal expectations, length of conducting time, and expectations.

### **Projects Required**

The major project in this class is the Macro-Micro-Macro project, also referred to as the MMM project. For this project, all students will receive a form (also located in D2L) that clearly assists in breaking down all information for the designated score, allows the student to assess and develop ways to effectively approach working in a classroom environment on that piece, then put back together that information to create an overarching idea on classroom performance design.

### **Extra Credit**

Extra credit assignments are at the discretion of the instructor and may (or may not) be provided.

## Make-up Work/Tests

Make-up work and/or tests are based on the circumstances of the missing materials. Please discuss this with Dr. Luttrell as soon as possible.

## Inclement Weather

In the case of campus closure due to inclement weather, key decision-makers will monitor weather projections and communicate with local news agencies and WFISD leadership to make a delay or cancellation decision.

**Notification processes** - Notification occurs through official campus channels and in communication with the local news networks. MSU channels include MSU Alert, MSU Safety app, Postmaster, and website headers. MSU Police and the Office of Marketing and Public Information. Information for all channels can be found at [MSU Ready](#).

The timeline is as follows:

Event	Time	Day	Decision
Inclement weather occurs during regular work/class day	3:30 PM	Day of inclement weather	Cancel classes/events after 5:00 PM
Overnight inclement weather expected	8:00 PM	Day before inclement weather	Close campus or delay opening
Delay called the day before but change to closure due to the extent of weather impact	6:15 AM	Day of delay	Close campus
No cancellation or delay decision made the night before	5:30 AM	Day after no decision made the night before	Close campus or delay opening

## Important Dates

Last day for term schedule changes: January 23, 2026

Deadline to file for graduation: February 16, 2026

Last Day to drop with a grade of "W": April 29, 2026

Refer to: [Drops, Withdrawals to Void](#)

## Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

Use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor.

**Please note:** This class requires you to have access to a computer (with Internet access) to complete certain activities, check for class news updates, have access to materials, instructions, resources and to upload your assignments in D2L. It is your responsibility to have (or have access to) a working computer in this class. Each time you log into D2L is documented. You should open D2L often to reference content, materials, and updates.

### **Attendance/Active Discussion/Participation**

Students are expected to attend the class sessions and participate actively in discussions and presentations based on the course design as provided on the first day of classes. Regardless of the format, **YOU ARE SUPPOSED TO ATTEND CLASS**. Everyone is expected to perform in the in-class ensemble (as needed) **AND BE PREPARED TO PERFORM THE MUSIC AS ASSIGNED**. Attendance Policy: 2 unexcused absences will result in the maximum grade of a B, 3 unexcused-maximum grade of C, 4 unexcused-maximum grade of D, any more and you should probably drop the class. This is your career. Make the most of it!

Every time you conduct, you will receive a grade based off of your preparation, musicality, expressiveness, and overall command of the podium. While conducting can be somewhat arbitrary in what looks "good", people can tell when you don't know what you are doing. Be prepared for **ALL** classes to conduct, not just the class you **THINK** you will conduct in.

All students will be required to bring their instruments to class (this will be discussed in class). Your participation is highly important to the structure of the class.

### **Instructor Class Policies**

I expect all students to be in every class with baton and instrument. Be prepared to discuss, to move, and to emote. There is no specific dress code, however, students should consider that their presence on the podium can be adversely affected by choice of attire. Dress for success, dress for confidence.

### **Change of Schedule**

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the Schedule of Classes each semester.

### **Refund and Repayment Policy**

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees, and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. However, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans, and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. As described below, two formulas (federal and state) exist in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).

### **Services for Students with Disabilities**

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable

accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make an application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#).

### **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.

### **Obligation to report Sex Discrimination under State and Federal Law**

Midwestern State University is committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from sex discrimination of any kind. State and federal law require University employees to report sex discrimination and sexual misconduct to the University's Office of Title IX. As a faculty member, I am required to report to the Title IX Coordinator any allegations, personally observed behavior, or other direct or indirect knowledge of conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination or sexual misconduct, which includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating violence, or stalking, involving a student or employee. After a report is made, the office of Title IX will reach out to the affected student or employee in an effort to connect such person(s) with resources and options in addressing the allegations made in the report. You are also encouraged to report any incidents to the office of Title IX. You may do so by contacting: Laura Hetrick, Title IX Coordinator, Sunwatcher Village Clubhouse. 940-397-4213, [laura.hetrick@msutexas.edu](mailto:laura.hetrick@msutexas.edu)

You may also file an online report 24/7 on the [Sexual Misconduct Report Form](#).

Should you wish to visit with someone about your experience in confidence, you may contact the MSU Counseling Center at 940-397-4618. For more information on the University's policy on Title IX or sexual misconduct, please visit the [MSU Sexual Misconduct Resource Page](#).

### **College Policies**

#### ***Smoking/Tobacco Policy***

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by MSUTexas. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated smoking areas at each location.

#### ***Alcohol and Drug Policy***

To comply with the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibit the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also

subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state, and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

### Campus Carry

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes as prohibited. The new Constitutional Carry law does not change this process. Concealed carry still requires a License-to-carry permit, and openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit [Campus Carry](#).

### Active Shooter

The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by the MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit [MSUReady – Active Shooter](#). Students are encouraged to watch the video entitled "Run. Hide. Fight." which may be electronically accessed via the University police department's webpage: ["Run. Hide. Fight."](#)

### Grade Appeal Process

Students on a college campus have rights to fair treatment. Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University [MSU Catalog](#) in the event they believe they have received a grade they consider unjust. Reminder: do your work.

**\*Notice:** Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

### Course Schedule

Week or Module	Activities	Assignments
Week 1 1/21 & 1/23	Introduction to Advanced Conducting Wednesday: course intro Friday: Intro to Nessum Dorma and Rienzi Overture	
Week 2 1/26, 1/28, 1/30	Score Analysis - Nessum and Rienzi Monday: Group Work – Analysis of Nessum Wednesday: Group Work – Analysis of Rienzi Friday: Conducting Discussion – Dorma/Rienzi	1/30 (or 2/1) – Observation of WFSO in rehearsal – <b>one page assessment</b>
Week 3 2/2, 2/4, 2/6	Conducting – Examples 1 & 2 Monday: Introduction to pieces Wednesday: Conduct pieces Friday: Conducting Assessment	
Week 4 2/9, 2/11, 2/13	Transpositions Monday: Re-introducing transpositions Wednesday: No Class Friday: No Class	Due Friday: <b>Video Assessment #1</b>

Week or Module	Activities	Assignments
<b>Week 5</b> 2/16, 2/18, 2/20	<b>Score Analysis – Romeo and Juliet</b> Monday: Group Work – Romeo and Juliet Wednesday: Developing a plan for rehearsal Friday: Presenting rehearsal plans	Due Friday: <b>Rehearsal Plan</b> Due Sunday: <b>YSO Observation</b>
<b>Week 6</b> 2/23, 2/25, 2/27	<b>Conducting – Examples 3 &amp; 4</b> Monday: Introduction to pieces Wednesday: Conduct pieces Friday: Conducting Assessment	Due Friday: <b>Online Transposition Quiz</b>
<b>Week 7</b> 3/2, 3/4, 3/6	<b>Conducting – Examples 5 &amp; 6</b> Monday: Introduction to pieces Wednesday: Conduct pieces Friday: Conducting Assessment	
<b>Week 8</b> Spring Break	<b>No Class – No Assignments</b>	
<b>Week 9</b> 3/16, 3/18, 3/20	<b>Assessment Week – Major Project</b> Monday: Introduction of musical score assignment Wednesday: Continuation of Analysis and establishing your projects Friday: Initial presentations of materials	Due Friday: <b>Video Assessment #2</b>
<b>Week 10</b> 3/23, 3/25, 3/27	<b>Review Week – First eight weeks</b> Monday: Materials review Wednesday: Materials review Friday: Midterm Examination (exam online – no class)	Due Friday: Midterm Examination
<b>Week 11</b> 3/30, 4/1	<b>Conducting – Examples 7 &amp; 8</b> Monday: Introduction to pieces Wednesday: Conduct pieces Friday: Conducting Assessment	Due Friday: <b>Video Assessment #3</b>
<b>Week 12</b> 4/6, 4/8, 4/10	<b>Conducting – Examples 9 &amp; 10</b> Monday: Introduction to pieces Wednesday: Conduct pieces Friday: Conducting Assessment	
<b>Week 13</b> 4/13, 4/15, 4/17	<b>Choral Conducting – Everything you need to know</b> Monday: Introduction to pieces Wednesday: Conduct pieces Friday: Conducting Assessment	Due Friday: <b>Video Assessment #4</b>
<b>Week 14</b> 4/20, 4/22, 4/24	<b>Rehearsal Techniques I</b> MWF: sectional rehearsals, error detection, stopping, correcting, resuming rehearsal, rehearsal pacing and order	Due Friday: <b>Video Assessment #5</b>
<b>Week 15</b> 4/27, 4/29, 5/1	<b>Rehearsal Techniques II</b> MWF: efficient rehearsal strategies, giving clear verbal instructions, building ensemble culture and morale, prepare short rehearsal plan for peer group	Due Friday: <b>Major Project</b>
<b>Week 16</b> 5/4, 5/6, 5/8	<b>Final Podium Performance</b> Monday: Final Prep for Class Conducting Wednesday: Final Prep for Class Conducting Friday: Course Evaluations – Debriefing for Final Exam	Thursday: <b>Conduct Wind Ensemble</b> Friday: <b>Conduct University Singers</b>

# Appendix 1

## TExES Domains and Competencies

### Texas Examinations of Educator Standards (TExES)

The Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for Basic Conducting link to the following TExES domains and competencies necessary to become a music educator in the state of Texas:

#### Domain I- Listening

Competency	Description
Competency 001- The teacher applies standard terminology to describe and analyze various elements in a musical recording.	C. Recognizes and describes the melody, harmony and texture of a musical work (e.g., modal, tonal, atonal, ostinato, doublings, melody and counterme melody). D. Analyzes chordal structures (e.g., major, minor, dominant seventh, diminished seventh), harmonic progressions, cadences (e.g., authentic, half, deceptive, plagal) and harmonic textures (e.g., polyphonic, homophonic, monophonic).
Competency 003- The teacher evaluates and critiques musical compositions and performances in a musical recording.	A. Identifies vocal and instrumental sounds and distinguishes among timbres (e.g., voice and instrument types and ensembles). B. Recognizes accurate pitch, intonation, rhythm and characteristic tone quality; recognizes and diagnoses performance problems; and detects errors accurately.

#### Domain II- Music Theory and Composition

Competency	Description
Competency 004- The teacher knows how to read, write and interpret standard music notation.	A. Knows standard music terminology and identifies and interprets music symbols and terms from notation (e.g., dynamics, embellishments, articulation markings, tempo markings). B. Recognizes clefs, keys and meters; recognizes scales and pitch collections (e.g., modal, major, minor, pentatonic, whole-tone); identifies specific melodic and harmonic intervals; and identifies different rhythms and meters.

Competency	Description
	<p>C. Reads melodies in various modes and tonalities; interprets rhythmic and melodic phrases from notation; and reads music that incorporates complex rhythmic patterns in simple, compound and asymmetric meters.</p> <p>D. Recognizes and describes melody, harmony and texture of a musical work (e.g., modal, tonal, atonal, ostinato, doublings, melody and countermelody).</p> <p>E. Analyzes chordal structures (e.g., major, minor, dominant seventh, diminished seventh), harmonic progressions, cadences (e.g., authentic, half, deceptive, plagal) and harmonic textures (e.g., polyphonic, homophonic, monophonic)</p>
Competency 005- The teacher understands methods and techniques of musical composition and improvisation and knows how to arrange music for specific purposes and settings.	<p>A. Knows how to compose and arrange simple vocal and instrumental music for specific purposes and settings (e.g., scoring techniques, transpositions, ranges).</p> <p>B. Analyzes compositional devices (e.g., repetition/contrast, delayed resolution, augmentation/diminution, fugue, tone row, ostinato) and applies knowledge of music forms (e.g., binary, ternary, rondo, concerto, opera, twelve-bar blues).</p> <p>C. Knows how to improvise melodically, rhythmically and harmonically (e.g., question and answer, variation, twelve-bar blues).</p> <p>D. Applies criteria for evaluating and critiquing musical compositions, evaluates specific musical works and styles using appropriate music terminology and knows how to offer constructive suggestions for the improvement of a musical composition.</p>

#### Domain V- Music Education

Competency	Description
Competency 011- The teacher knows how to plan and implement effective music instruction.	<p>C. Demonstrates an understanding of appropriate sequencing of music instruction and knows how to deliver developmentally appropriate music instruction that is sequenced and delivered in ways that encourage active engagement in learning and make instructional content meaningful.</p>

Competency	Description
	<p>D. Knows how to adapt instructional methods to provide appropriate learning experiences for students with varied needs, learning modalities and levels of development and musical experience.</p> <p>E. Knows how to provide instruction that promotes students' understanding and application of fundamental principles of music and that offers students varied opportunities to make music using instruments and voice, to respond to a wide range of musical styles and genres and to evaluate music of various types.</p>
Competency 012- The teacher knows how to provide students with learning experiences that enhance their musical knowledge, skills and appreciation.	<p>F. Applies strategies and procedures for effectively managing and organizing the music class in various settings (e.g., rehearsal room, concert hall, marching field); knows how to manage time, instructional resources and physical space effectively for the music class; and knows how to teach students concert etiquette.</p> <p>G. Demonstrates knowledge of techniques for effectively and efficiently managing varied resources for the music education program and applies strategies for managing and documenting the use and condition of musical instruments and other materials in the music program.</p>

### TAC §228.30 Alignment

Alignment Category	Description
(4) the skills that educators are required to possess, the responsibilities that educators are required to accept, and the high expectations for students in this state;	Students receive practical experience with arranging music for various ensembles, writing drill for a set instrumentation, and using performances of local ensembles to assess performance in "mock-adjudication" examples
(5) the importance of building strong classroom management skills;	Students work on enhancing instruction through the use of technology, consistent instructional practices from various schools and drum corps, and through engagement with "master teachers" in their respective disciplines
(7) appropriate relationships, boundaries, and communications between educators and students;	Students interact with professionals and directors in competitive environments; students assist in instruction (observed in controlled environment)

## TAC §149.1001 Alignment

Alignment Category	Description
(1) Standard 1--Instructional Planning and Delivery. Teachers demonstrate their understanding of instructional planning and delivery by providing standards-based, data-driven, differentiated instruction that engages students, makes appropriate use of technology, and makes learning relevant for today's learners.	<p>Course Objectives #8, 10, 11</p> <p>Assessed through discussion and activities based on effective dissemination of materials in a modified classroom setting.</p>
(2) Standard 2--Knowledge of Students and Student Learning. Teachers work to ensure high levels of learning, social-emotional development, and achievement outcomes for all students, taking into consideration each student's educational and developmental backgrounds and focusing on each student's needs.	<p>Course Objectives #8</p> <p>Assessed through classroom discussion of teaching practices and weekly demonstration of performance skills, as well as codifying marching style and instruction.</p>
(3) Standard 3--Content Knowledge and Expertise. Teachers exhibit a comprehensive understanding of their content, discipline, and related pedagogy as demonstrated through the quality of the design and execution of lessons and their ability to match objectives and activities to relevant state standards.	<p>Course Objectives #1, 2, 3, 5</p> <p>Assessed through weekly projects, video assessments, and in-class collaborations.</p>
(4) Standard 4--Learning Environment. Teachers interact with students in respectful ways at all times, maintaining a physically and emotionally safe, supportive learning environment that is characterized by efficient and effective routines, clear expectations for student behavior, and organization that maximizes student learning.	<p>Course Objectives #6</p> <p>Assessed through weekly interactions with the instructor of the course and discussed when appropriate during mock teaching assignments.</p>
(5) Standard 5--Data-Driven Practice. Teachers use formal and informal methods to assess student growth aligned to instructional goals and course objectives and regularly review and analyze multiple sources of data to	<p>Course Objectives #9</p> <p>Students are instructed to assess and describe various elements of ensemble performance and the correlation of score-based performance, as well as its lack of consistency.</p>

Alignment Category	Description
measure student progress and adjust instructional strategies and content delivery as needed.	