

Percussion Instruments Midwestern State University

Spring 2020 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

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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.

Preparation:

Practicing regularly is imperative to success in any instrumental methods course. Students are expected to practice for 20 minutes every day to keep up with the necessarily hasty pace of the distributed material. Each day we will be building on the concepts that are formed in previous classes, so getting caught up after an absence is a must. Extra help will be given upon request. Please do not come to me the day before a Playing Example is due and expect me to have the time to help.

Required Materials:

1. One pair of "General" Drumsticks. Innovative IP-1, or other 5B model
2. One Snare Drum Practice Pad for use in class and at home.
3. Primatic, Stephen. *Percussion Methods*. Meredith Music Publications, 2015.

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 24) will concern the snare drum. Exam #2 (April 6) is on keyboard percussion, timpani, and accessory instruments. Exam #3 (finals week) includes topics dealing with drum set, Latin percussion, and marching band.

Playing Examples 300 points (60 points each)

In lieu of taking class time for individual playing exams, five playing examples will be submitted by video throughout the semester. These will primarily deal with the snare drum and will only require your sticks and practice pad. The requirements for each video will be explained and distributed in class throughout the semester. Each example must be submitted as unedited video by posting a link to an unlisted YouTube video through each assignment on D2L. Please let me know as soon as possible if there are any issues with acquiring the technology to submit these assignments.

Portfolio 200 points

The portfolio will be a documentation of your work in this class. The portfolio is the most important artifact that you can take from this class as it 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, typed notes, handouts, relevant articles, graded tests, comment sheets from performance exams, concert reviews, and other pertinent information regarding percussion pedagogy. The portfolio will be graded on the following:

1. Neatness, clarity, and comprehensiveness of class notes and class assignments (50 points)
2. Neatness, organization, and comprehensiveness of class handouts and class texts (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)
4. Overall organization, future usefulness, and completeness of the entire portfolio (50 points)

The portfolio may be submitted in person or as a digital copy by 3:00pm on May 6. 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.

Performance Review 50 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 attend the MSU Texas Percussion Ensemble Concert (April 21, 7:30pm in Akin Auditorium) and write a review. An alternate assignment will be provided for student who are participating in the Percussion Ensemble Concert.

This 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 general or technical 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.

Performance review specifics:

- Around two pages of length with standard formatting.
- Every review is due within one week of the concert.
- You must include a copy of the program with your review.
- 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..... 50 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.

Total Points for the Class 1000 points

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

Tentative Course Schedule

	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>
Week 1: Jan 22	<i>No Class: Martin Luther King Jr. Day</i>	Introduction, categorizing percussion instruments
Week 2: Jan 27, 29	Preparing to play, grip and stroke	Snare: Parts of a drum, warm-ups
Week 3: Feb 3, 5	Snare: Accents, rudiments, and flams	Snare: The roll
Week 4: Feb 10, 12	Snare: Roll rudiments and the drag PE #1 Due	<i>No Class: TMEA</i>
Week 5: Feb 17, 20	Snare: Pedagogy, method books, other resources	Review for Exam #1
Week 6: Feb 24, 26	Exam #1: The Snare Drum PE #2 Due	Keyboards: Introduction
Week 7: Mar 2, 4	Keyboards: Technique, warm-ups	Keyboards: Reading
Week 8: Mar 9, 11	Keyboards: 4-mallet grips	Timpani: Introduction PE #3 Due
	<i>Spring Break</i>	<i>Spring Break</i>
Week 9: Mar 23, 25	Timpani: Tuning, stroke, touch	Accessories: Common techniques and performance
Week 10: Mar 30, Apr 1	Accessories: Playing	Review for Exam 2 PE #4 Due
Week 11: Apr 6, 8	Exam #2: Keyboards, Timpani, and Accessories	Marching Percussion: Introduction
Week 12: Apr 13, 15	Marching Percussion: Exercises and performance	Marching Percussion: Exercises and performance Teaching Demonstration Due
Week 13: Apr 20, 22	Latin Percussion	Latin Percussion
Week 14: Apr 27, 29	Drum Set: Set-up	Drum Set: Pedagogy, rock drumming PE #5 Due
Week 15: May 4, 6	Drum Set: Jazz drumming	Review for Exam #3 Portfolio Due

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

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](#).