

MUSE 334 - BEGINNING CONDUCTING

"As conductors and teachers, our primary function is to create an environment in which the art of music can flourish."

John Whitwell

"In study the conductor can separate the art from the technique, but in performance must strive fully and constantly for a total artistic experience." Eugene Ormandy

"In music one must think with the heart and feel with the brain." George Szell

"On the podium, the conductor must dream the music." David Maslanka

"But, fundamentally, I think goodness is very underrated." Marin Alsop

"One hopes to worship God with a little art, if one has any." Igor Stravinsky

Course Objectives/Course Objectives

- An introduction to the art of conducting (what exactly is our role in music making?!)
- An introduction to the technique of conducting and fundamentals of movement
- An introduction to score reading
- Self evaluation by means of video recordings
- Transpositions of instruments
- Terminology for the conductor
- Observations of conductors in rehearsal (when possible)
- And anything else we can squeeze in!

Professor Contact Information

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Course Information

Beginning Conducting is a 3-credit class meeting MWF 9:00-9:50 in the Band Hall. Prerequisite: 12-hours of music credits.

Course Description: Techniques of conducting both choral and instrumental groups. Supervised laboratory experience.

Materials

(1) Textbook – *Methods and Materials for Conducting* by Doug Stotter (PDF provided through Canvas) and other documents (2) *The Conductor as Leader* by Ramona M. Wis (on reserve in library or you can purchase your own) (3) Baton (I will have a selection for you to choose from, \$35 charged to your account). (4) Basic knowledge of computer music notation software (Sibelius, Finale, Finale Notepad, MuseScore, Dorico, etc.)

Assignments/Due Dates

Unless it is prearranged with Dr. Ward, late assignments will not be accepted. It is crucial in this class that you do not fall behind. With the amount of material to cover, it will be difficult to play the catch up. Don't put off assignments!

Attendance

Attendance in this course is crucial, and daily, prompt attendance is an expectation of this course. If you miss this class—

- You will get behind very quickly. In addition to all of the normal "bookwork, tests, and quizzes" as with any class, we will be building physical skills in this course which require constant repetition and evaluation.
- You do a disservice to your colleagues in the course by missing class, especially if it occurs on a conducting round and your part is not represented.
- One of the signs of a professional person (especially in our field) is showing up. Please respect this process and your colleagues by being here.

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You are allowed two absences/skips (I encourage you not to use them). After that, each unexcused absence will lower your final grade by 3 points. Generally, absences are only excused for school conflicts (approved absence form provided) or illness (with a note from a doctor or clinic preferred). Departmental guidelines from the handbook state “failure to attend at least 80% of classes in a semester will result in a grade of F, whether the absences are excused or unexcused. Nine MWF classes constitute 20% of a semester’s classes, the maximum number of absences allowed for a passing grade.” Two tardies equal one absence.” In class conducting exercises cannot be made up for an unexcused absence, and an unexcused absence during one of the four conducting rounds will lower your grade on that round by one letter grade. Most important thing is to communicate!

Assessments/Grades

Homework/class participation/video self-evaluations	10%
In-Class Quizzes (4 terminology, 1 transposition)	15%
Conducting assignments	40%
Essay on <i>The Conductor as Leader</i>	10%
Midterm	10%
Final Exam	15%

90-100=A 80-89=B 70-79=C 60-69=D Below 60=F

Terminology Quizzes

There will be 4 terminology quizzes this semester. The first three (see the calendar) come from the terminology list in the syllabus, and the 4th quiz covers foreign names of instruments (in the textbook, pages 224-225). These terms can be practiced on computer or your mobile device as flash cards at <https://quizlet.com/join/NXZMshWkv> or directly in Canvas.

Essay on The Conductor as Leader by Ramona M. Wis - *Due date—Friday Oct 3 by 11:59 pm*

Write an essay that is a personal reaction to the material and thoughts presented in the book. It should present a summary of the “high points” that you find particularly relevant, and how your views or beliefs about music and conducting grew or changed. No fewer than 4-5 direct references to the text, with minimal quoting. Use MLA guidelines for formatting, and it should be at minimum 5 pages in length. Do not use AI for **ANY** aspect of this paper. If you have any questions, or would like some great resources and advice, please visit the [ACU Writing Center](#). Please turn this in via Turnitin/Canvas in PDF, doc. or .docx format.

The book is (1) on reserve at the reserve desk in the library, (2) available as a [book to order on Amazon](#), (3) available in [Kindle format on Amazon](#), (4) available as an [Apple Book/iBook](#), and (5) a reserve copy behind the front desk in the WPAC. If you choose to use this please make sure it doesn't leave the main office area OR the West Lobby.

Video Self-Evaluations

Purpose

The purpose of these evaluations is for you to critique yourself and identify positives in your conducting, as well as areas that need attention. This is one of the most valuable methods for improving as a conductor. The videos will be posted in a shared Google Drive folder.

These are posted on Canvas as a Module (from the Homework/Video self-evals/Participation category) and are due by 5:00 p.m. on the due date (see the calendar).

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Guidelines

General Observations - Overall demeanor, posture, tension, what type of energy is being sent out, am I reflecting the music (technically, spiritually, emotionally, etc.)

More Specific Observations

Beat pattern

Staying on plane

Smoothness of motion

"Changing" enough

Left hand effectiveness/independence

Facial expression--is there any? is it appropriate?

Command of the ensemble

Knowledge of the score--how is the knowledge of the score/assignment (lack thereof) reflected in the conducting?

Posture

Shoulders

Knees locked?

Reflecting the music in the body as well as the hands and face?

Due dates are on the calendar. **Include on the form what you think your grade should be on the assignment.** Grades on these assignments will be determined on the completeness of your self-evaluation. Cover everything that is applicable on this page as well as things you notice yourself. They will also be graded for grammar, punctuation, etc. so please use good writing skills.

ACU Academic Integrity Policy

Abilene Christian University is a community of learners that supports the quest for knowledge and truth through intellectual and personal integrity, honesty in learning, instruction, research and service. Its educational programs, faculty and staff, administration, and campus environment all exist to educate students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world. Academic integrity is essential to the most effective development of a person's intellectual skills and abilities. Academic dishonesty is not insignificant in its impact on student development. Violations of academic integrity and other forms of cheating, as defined below, involve the intention to deceive or mislead or misrepresent, and therefore are a form of lying. The complete policy [may be viewed here](#).

Special Needs Policy

Abilene Christian University is dedicated to removing barriers and opening access for students with disabilities in compliance with ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. The Alpha Scholars Program facilitates disability accommodations in cooperation with instructors. In order to receive accommodations, you must be registered with Alpha Scholars Program, and you must complete a specific request for each class in which you need accommodations. If you have a documented disability and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please visit [Alpha Scholar's Program](#).

Sexual Assault & Anti-Harassment

At ACU, we strive to comply with all applicable legal requirements prohibiting, preventing, and responding to harassment against any member of the ACU community (e.g., **Title VI, VII, and IX**). Moreover, as a Christian community, ACU has committed itself, unequivocally, to ensuring a working and learning environment in which the dignity of every individual is respected. Our [Anti-Harassment Policy](#) outlines specific definitions and procedures related discriminatory and sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, assault, stalking, and relationship violence. If you experience harassment in any of these forms, we encourage you to [report it](#) so that we can help maintain a work and academic environment free of unlawful harassment.

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DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT (for next class)
Mon 8/28	<i>NO class - opening ceremony</i>	Read Preface material/Ch. 1
Wed 8/30	The role of the conductor Movement/Green exercises	
Fri 9/1	Movement/Green exercises	Read handouts/Laban
Mon 9/4	Movement/Green exercises/Intro to Laban movement	
Wed 9/6	Green/Laban/movement	
Fri 9/8	Green/Laban/movement	Twinkle Little Star
Mon 9/11	Quiz No. 1--Terminology (steady speed & Set 1) Twinkle Little Star	Read Chapter 2
Wed 9/13	Laban song of your choice Basic patterns	Read Chapter 3
Fri 9/15	Neutral mask Basic patterns/beat of preparation	Read Chapter 7
Mon 9/18	Neutral Mask Basic patterns/prep/cuing w/batons	Practice Ex. 5b, pg. 19
Wed 9/20	Basic patterns/cuing/etc	
Fri 9/22	Conducting Exercise 5b, pg. 19	Read Chapter 8
Mon 9/25	Conducting Exercise 5b, pg. 19 Fermatas and dynamics/Intro of quarter note drill	[Do Video #1 this week]
Wed 9/27	Fermatas and dynamics	
Fri 9/29	Fermatas and dynamics Video #1 due by 5:00 p.m.	
Mon 10/2	Quiz No. 2--Terminology (Set 2) Video Self Evaluation #1 due Fermatas and dynamics	
Wed 10/4	Rd. #1--Quarter note drill	
Fri 10/6	Rd. #1--Quarter note drill	Read Chap 10, pg. 119-123
Mon 10/9	Melding <u>Conductor as Leader</u> Essay due by 9:00 a.m.	
Wed 10/11	Melding/Conductor as Leader discussion	
Fri 10/13	Lecture on History of Conducting	Read Chap 11 and handouts
Mon 10/16	Video Evaluation #2 due (Rd. #1) Quiz No. 3 – Terminology (Sets 3-5) Melding Intro to Transposition	Assign Chorale
Wed 10/18	Midterm Exam review Transposition	
Fri 10/20	Midterm Exam	

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DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT (for next class)
Mon 10/23	Finish Transposition	Read Chapter 4
Wed 10/25	Read Chorale/prepare for Rd. #2/bring instruments	
Fri 10/27	Quiz No. 4 – Transposition Additional beat patterns/subdivision <i>Fall break - no class</i>	
Mon 10/30	Conducting Rd. #2 – Chorale	
Wed 11/1	Conducting Rd. #2 – Chorale Chorale Analysis due in class	
Fri 11/3	Conducting Rd. #2 – Chorale Additional beat patterns/subdivision Expressive gestures and style	Read Chapter 5
Mon 11/6	Additional beat patterns/subdivision Expressive gestures and style	
Wed 11/8	Video Evaluation #3 due (Rd #2) Expressive gestures and style	Read Chapter 9
Fri 11/10	Expressive gestures and style Mixed meter	
Mon 11/13	Mixed meter Same – intro of “America”	Read Appendix B & Chap 12
Wed 11/15	Finish mixed meter Intro to the full score and score study	
Fri 11/17	Mixed meter	
Mon 11/20	Conducting Rd. #3 “America”	
Wed 11/22 & 24	<i>Thanksgiving Break</i>	
Mon 11/27	Conducting Rd. #3 “America” Full score/study	
Wed 11/29	Full score/study & resources for the conductor Review/prepare for Conducting Rd. #4	
Fri 12/1	Review/prepare for Conducting Rd. #4 Quiz No. 5 – Foreign names of the instruments (pages 224-225) Video Evaluation #4 due (Rd #3)	
Mon 12/4	Conducting Rd. #4	
Wed 12/6	Conducting Rd. #4	
Fri 12/8	Conducting Rd. #4 Final Exam review Course Evaluations	

Final exam – Thursday, Dec 14, 2:00-3:45 p.m.

Video Evaluation #5 due (Rd #4) – due by final exam

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TERMINOLOGY

Terms indicating a steady rate of speed

Larghissimo	
Largo	
Larghetto	
Grave	
Adagissimo	
Adagio	
Andante	
Andantino	(from slowest to fastest)
Moderato	
Allegretto	
Allegro	
Veloce	
Vivace	
Vivo	
Vivacissimo	
Presto	
Prestissimo	

Set 1 - Change of speed and/or power

accelerando (accel.) (It.)	Becoming faster
affrettando (It.)	Hurrying, rushed, pressing on
incalzando (It.)	Pressing on, hurrying
stringendo (It.)	Pressing on, speeding up
allargando (It.)	Slowing down, becoming broader and sometimes louder
langsam, langsamer (Gr.)	Slow, slower
etwas langsamer (Gr.)	Somewhat slower
largando (It.)	Slowing down and becoming broader
rallentando (rall.) (It.)	Becoming slower
ritardando (ritard.) (It.)	Becoming slower
ritenuto (rit.) (It.)	Immediately slower
slentando (It.)	Slackening, slowing down
zurückhalten (Gr.)	To hold back, to slow down. (Ritard)
calando (It.)	Becoming softer and slower
mancando (It.)	Becoming softer, fading away
morendo (It.)	Fading away
perdendo, perdendosi (It.)	Dying away
smorzando (smorz.) (It.)	Fading away
doppio (It.)	Double, two fold, twice as
doppio movimento (It.)	Twice as fast
im takt (Gr.)	In tempo, in strict time
l'istesso tempo (It.)	At the same tempo
meno mosso (It.)	Less motion, slower
movimento (It.)	Tempo
piu mosso (It.)	More motion, faster
stretto (It.)	Accelerated, faster

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a piacere (It.)	Freely, at will, at the performer's discretion
ad libitum (ad lib.) (latin)	Freely, at will, improvised
colla parte (It.)	Follow the soloist's part (with the voice)
con alcuna licenza (It.)	With some freedom; not perfectly rhythmic
fermata (It.)	Pause or hold
lunga pausa (It.)	Long sustained pause or hold
rubato (It.)	Varying the note values within the rhythm, not strictly as written
recitativo (It.)	In a declamatory style, free in rhythm/tempo
senza tempo (It.)	Without time
suivez (Fr.)	Follow; usually refers to following the soloist who may take some liberties

Set 2 - Terms of expression

affettuoso (It.)	Tenderly, with feeling
agitato (It.)	Excited, restless
amoroso (It.)	Fondly, with love or warm feeling
animato (It.)	Lively, animated, spirited
con anima (Sp.)	Soulful, with feeling
bravura (It.)	Great technical skill, in a virtuoso manner
breit (Gr.)	Broad, same as Largo
brio (It.)	Vigorously, with fire
calme (Fr.)	Tranquil, still, quiet
calore (It.)	With warmth, fervent, impetuous
cantabile (It.)	In a singing style, lyrical, melodious
comodo (It.)	Comfortable, easy, unhurried
dolce (It.)	Sweet, smooth, gentle
dolente (It.)	Sorrowful, mournful
doloroso (It.)	Lamenting, grieving
energico (It.)	With vigor, powerfully
etwas (Gr.)	Somewhat
forza (It.)	Powerful, forceful, loud
fuoco (It.)	With fire, passionately, excited
giocosio (It.)	Jocose, humorous
grazia (It.)	Graceful, pretty
gusto (It.)	Style, zest
lebhaft (Gr.)	Animated, lively
legato (It.)	Smooth, even
leggiero (It.)	Lightly, even
lontano (It.)	Far off, remote
lunga (It.)	Long, sustained
maestoso (It.)	With dignity, nobly
marcia (It.)	March
marziale (It.)	Martial, military
pastorale (It.)	In a simple, unaffected style
pesante (It.)	Weighty, ponderous, dull
pomposo (It.)	Stately, majestic
risoluto (It.)	Boldly, decisively, vigorously
ruhig (Gr.)	Quiet, calm, tranquil
semplice (It.)	Simply, unaffected
secco (It.)	Plain, simple, unadorned

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sforzando (It.)	With a strong accent
sostenuto (It.)	Sustained
staccato (It.)	Detached
stentando (stentato) (It.)	Difficult, labored
strepitoso (It.)	Noisy, boisterous
tranquillo (It.)	Quiet, peaceful
zingaro (It.)	Gypsy

Set 3 - Qualifying terms

a (It.)	to, from, by
alla (It.)	to the
assai (It.)	much, very
con (It., Sp.)	with
e (It.)	and, is
giusto (It.)	Exact, right, appropriate
immer (Gr.)	Always, constantly
ma (It.)	but
ohne (Gr.)	Without (ohne Dampfer, without mute)
tanto (It.)	much, so much, as much (ma non tanto)
troppo (It.)	too, too much (ma non troppo)
mezzo (It.)	medium, half
molto (It.)	very, much
moto (con) (It.)	Somewhat lively, not too slowly
meno (It.)	less
mosso (It.)	moved, agitated
non (It., Fr.)	no, not
piu (It.)	more
poco (It., Sp.)	little, a bit
quasi (It.)	almost, as if
sans (Fr.)	without
scherzo (It.)	lively and brisk (refers to Scherzo movement)
sehr (Gr.)	very
senza (It.)	without
subito (It.)	suddenly, immediately, at once
tenuto (It.)	Held, sustained

Set 4 - Terms of direction affecting notation

a due (a2) (It.)	Two together, to be played by both
al fine (It.)	To the end
attaca (It.)	Continue without pause
attacca subito (It.)	Continue without pause suddenly
bis (Gr.)	Up to, until
da capo (It.)	From the beginning
dal segno (It.)	From the sign
divisi (It.)	Indicating separate parts
erstes mal (Gr.)	The first time
loco (It.)	Return to normal position
muta (It.)	Change

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ottava or 8va (It.)	Octave (higher or lower, 8vb most correct form for lower)
prima volta (It.)	First time
replica (It.)	Repeat
segue (It.)	Continue without pausing
simile (It.)	Similarly, in like manner
tacet (Latin)	Be silent
tempo primo (It.)	First tempo
tutti (It.)	All, total
volti subito (It.)	Turn the page quickly

Set 5 - Miscellaneous

a capella or a cappella (It.)	Unaccompanied voice (s)
-ando, -endo, -ante, -ente (It.)	English <i>ing</i> , present participle ending
altissimo (It.)	Highest
dur (Fr.)	Harsh, rough. (In German, major)
-issimo (It.)	Forms superlative degree
-ino, -etto (It.)	Diminutives, less
gamut (Latin)	A scale, usually refers to the range of an instrument or voice
mente (It.)	English <i>ly</i> , adverb ending
moll (Gr.)	minor
ossia (It.)	Or, or else, indicating an alternate version