

Choral Conducting and Materials
MUG 4202
Spring 2024
MW | 8:30a - 9:20a | Music Building, room 145

Instructor:

James Cain

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Office: MUB 344

Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description

Basic techniques of choral conducting, score analysis, interpretation and use of basic choral materials. *2 credits*

Course Pre-Requisites

MUG 4104 – Conducting 1

Course Objectives

1. Students can confidently conduct a choir while utilizing appropriate conducting techniques to clearly communicate with singers.
2. Students can effectively analyze a musical score and make appropriate judgements that will inform programming, rehearsal planning, and performance.
3. Students can describe the core elements of historical choral performance practices for the major style periods and adapt their conducting gestures to reflect these practices.
4. Students can describe, assess, and utilize basic materials and resources available for the choral classroom.

Required Text

- Kesling, W. (2022). *Voices I Hear*. GIA Publications.

Required Materials

- conducting baton (wizard wands may not be used for conducting though you may bring yours to class if you have another course that requires it before or after Conducting)
- colored pencils

Course Schedule

** Note: All of the topics listed here will be covered during the semester. However, the schedule may be adjusted, potentially significantly, to accommodate the unique developmental needs of the students enrolled in the course.*

Week 1: Review of fundamental conducting techniques. Score analysis basics.

Week 2: Rehearsal planning. Choral warm-up strategies.

Week 3: Working with instruments. Programming basics.

Week 4: Medieval / Renaissance literature & performance practices.

Week 5: Baroque literature & performance practices.

Week 6: Choral classroom texts and resources.

Week 7: Classical literature & performance practices.

Week 8: Romantic literature & performance practices.

Week 9: Score preparation. Long-term rehearsal planning.

Week 10: Choral program development, recruitment, advocacy.

Week 11: Conductor profiles. Traditional choral schools. Artistry in gesture.

Week 12: Vocal pedagogy for the conductor.

Week 13: Choral trends, innovative programming.

Week 14: Professional skills.

Week 15: Rehearsals with UF choir.

Attendance Policy and Make-Up Policy

Ensure that you are familiar with the university attendance policies:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies>

This course is highly participatory. When you are absent from a class, you miss out on important experiences. Attendance is mandatory for every class meeting.

- **Due to the small class size, if you anticipate being absent from class, you should notify Dr. Cain via Canvas with as much notice as possible.**
- Tardies and absences will be excused per the university attendance policy regulations. If you are tardy or absent and you believe that the tardy or absence should be excused, you must notify Dr. Cain via Canvas. When appropriate, students must provide proper documentation of their tardy or absence in order for it to be considered excused.
- Assignments missed due to unexcused absence from class may only be made up at the instructor's discretion.
- The final grade for late assignments will be lowered by one letter grade for each day it is late.

Class Expectations

Students are expected to come to class on time and prepared to actively participate. Students are expected to practice conducting and complete homework assignments between classes. Failure to dedicate adequate time for practice and completing assignments for this course will result in poor performance. Since this course provides students with practical knowledge and skills for their careers as music professionals, it is expected that they will approach this class with a professional mindset and work ethic.

Course Assessment

Assignment	Percentage of Final Grade
Class Participation	15%
Assignments & Quizzes	20%
Conductor Observations	10%
Self-Reflections	15%
Rehearsal / Conducting performances	40%

Conductor Observations

Students will complete three observations of professional conductors and prepare a short essay summarizing their analysis of each conductor's gesture, rehearsal techniques (if applicable), and professionalism. At least one of the observations must be of a conductor who is not a UF faculty member. Additional instructions will be provided.

Self-Reflections

Students will complete several reflections of their own conducting by reviewing video of themselves conducting during assigned classes. Evaluation rubrics will be provided.

Rehearsal / Conducting performances

Students will be assigned to conduct short rehearsals of an assigned choral work periodically throughout the semester. The exact number of conducting opportunities will vary based on total course enrollment. The rehearsals will occur during class time and each conductor will lead their peers (serving as the choir) in rehearsal. Additionally, at the end of the semester, each student will have an opportunity to conduct one piece with one of the UF choirs. These practical experiences require students to synthesize their knowledge and skills. Thus, the conducting experiences are weighted heavily and students should prepare for them accordingly.

Final Course Grade

Percent	Grade	Grade Points
93 - 100	A	4.00
90 - 92	A-	3.67
87 - 89	B+	3.33
83 - 86	B	3.00
80 - 82	B-	2.67
77 - 79	C+	2.33
73 - 76	C	2.00
70 - 72	C-	1.67
67 - 69	D+	1.33
63 - 66	D	1.00
60 - 62	D-	0.67
0 - 59.99	E	0.00

More information on UF grading policy may be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies>

Students Requiring Accommodations

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via ufl.bluer.com/ufl. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results.

University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code (<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated

to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

Software Use

All faculty, staff, and students of the University are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

Student Privacy

There are federal laws protecting your privacy with regards to grades earned in courses and on individual assignments. For more information, please see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/ferpa-confidentiality-student-records>

Campus Resources:

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care:

If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352-392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu> and 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS)

Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

University Police Department at 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies), or <http://www.police.ufl.edu>.

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to learning-support@ufl.edu. <https://elearning.ufl.edu>.

Career Connections Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling. <https://career.ufl.edu>.

Library Support, <https://uflib.ufl.edu/find/ask>. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. <https://teachingcenter.ufl.edu>.

Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. <https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio>.

Student Complaints: <https://ombuds.ufl.edu/student>