Texas A&M University - Central Texas
MUSI 3138 - 110: String Methods
1 credit
Spring Semester 2020 Syllabus

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OFFICE HOURS: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1FsS_E_LcMFzyl2P7IRHeSGME_nLQ2ZZXBtum0EYqipc/edit?usp=sharing

COURSE OBJECTIVE: This course will provide students with a foundation for teaching beginning strings, particularly as it relates to leading string ensembles as music teachers. Students will develop both playing and teaching skills on the violin, viola, cello, and double bass, gaining an understanding of bowing, fingering, and posture. Students will also become familiar with score reading, tuning, sizing, accessories, and basic maintenance specific to string instruments. It is the goal of this course that, by the end of the semester, students will feel confident teaching a classroom of beginning string students.

MEETING TIMES: Mondays/Wednesdays: 3:30 - 4:20 p.m.
ROOM: PAC 708

MATERIALS: Students will have access to Temple College’s string instrument collection. There are not enough instruments for each person in the class to use one individually, so we are going to have to share instruments with each other. Here is a list of TC’s string instruments:

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<tr>
<th>VIOLINS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SERIAL NUMBER</td>
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<tr>
<td>94392-34</td>
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<td>78771-04</td>
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<td>UNIVERSAL</td>
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<td>Kessler</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VIOLAS</th>
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<tr>
<td>SERIAL NUMBER</td>
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<tr>
<td>1738</td>
<td>Locker 8</td>
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<td>VA 160103-350</td>
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</tbody>
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NOTE: Instruments must always be stored in room temperature environments. To prevent damage and/or theft, **never leave an instrument in a parked car.**

- Although this text is only recommended, I strongly encourage students to purchase it, as it will serve as an invaluable resource for future string educators.

**CLASS ATTENDANCE:** Because this is an experience-based course, **regular on-time attendance is a must.** Playing technique and pedagogy for four instruments is a lot to cover in a 1-credit single-semester course, so new material will be introduced at every class period. If you miss a class period, you miss out on material we will not cover again, and you will fall behind. But, most importantly, one person’s absence slows down the rest of the class, as the group cannot move on to new material until each student has a firm grasp of each string-related concept.

If you absolutely must miss a class, be sure to inform the instructor in advance of the class in question. You are responsible for getting notes from a classmate in order to catch up prior to the next class.

All absences will lower the final grade according to the point system below (see “GRADING”). The only exception is if the absence is deemed legitimate per TAMUCT policy (i.e. illness or family emergency).
ASSIGNMENTS:
Individual Practice (not graded):
- As a musician, you are well aware that practice is essential to maintaining and improving one’s level of playing. Students are expected to adhere to this universal truth and practice their instruments however long it takes to become comfortable with the techniques discussed in class. For some, this is 30 minutes daily. For others, it is 60 minutes daily. You are responsible for determining the amount of practice time needed to adequately learn the required techniques.
- Although individual practice is not graded, preparedness is. Show up to class prepared. Take out your instruments daily to review what we’ve discussed.

Concert Attendance/Reaction Paper (graded):
- Attend the following string concert:
  - Temple College Orchestra: Tuesday, April 21, 2020, 7:30 p.m., Mary Alice Marshall Performing Arts Center Auditorium
- Write a 2-page reaction paper (typed, size 12 font, double-spaced, PDF format) summarizing the program, the techniques used by the performers, and how the use of these techniques contributed to the musical aspects of the performance (color, phrasing, dynamics, etc.). During your discussion, cite specific examples from the pieces. Draw parallels between your observations and our class discussions. If something does not line up with what we’ve discussed, address it. If you have questions about certain concepts, feel free to pose them in your paper.
  - Paper due on Canvas by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, May 1, 2020

Midterm Examination (graded):
- Wednesday, March 4, 2020 during class time
  - Two portions:
    1. Performance: You will play individually in front of the instructor. The instructor will assign performance material during the weeks leading up to the examination.
    2. Written: This will consist of material discussed during class. Examples include string instrument parts, pedagogy for posture, and string-related musical terminology.

Final Examination (graded):
- Monday, May 4, 2020 and Wednesday, May 6, 2020 during class time
  - You will lead a master class on an instrument of your choice. You will need to bring a friend to class who has never played a string instrument before and teach that friend the rudiments of posture, bow hold, tone production, and fingering. More details will become available in the weeks leading up to the examination.

GRADING: A-F. Final grades for the course will be based on the following 1000-point system:
- 620 points for class participation, broken up as follows:
  - attendance (31 classes x 10 points each)
  - preparedness (31 classes x 10 points each)
- 100 points for concert attendance/reaction paper
- 100 points for midterm examination (50 points for performance portion, 50 points for written portion)
- 180 points for final examination

(NOTE: Items turned in late will receive a 10% deduction per day.)
Letter grades will be determined as follows:
A  900 - 1000 points
B  800 - 899 points
C  700 - 799 points
D  650 - 699 points
F  0 - 649 points

SCHEDULE (subject to necessary adjustment):

Mon, Jan 13  Introductions, syllabus, parts of a string instrument, clefs
Wed, Jan 15  Violin

Mon, Jan 20  NO CLASS (Martin Luther King Jr. Day)
Wed, Jan 22  Violin

Mon, Jan 27  Violin
Wed, Jan 29  Violin

Mon, Feb 3   Violin
Wed, Feb 5   Violin

Mon, Feb 10  Violin
Wed, Feb 12  Violin

Mon, Feb 17  Viola
Wed, Feb 19  Viola

Mon, Feb 24  Viola
Wed, Feb 26  Viola

Mon, Mar 2   Viola
Wed, Mar 4   Midterm

Mon, Mar 9   NO CLASS (Spring Break)
Wed, Mar 11  NO CLASS (Spring Break)

Mon, Mar 16  Cello
Wed, Mar 18  Cello

Mon, Mar 23  Cello
Wed, Mar 25  Cello

Mon, Mar 30  Cello
Wed, Apr 1   Cello

Mon, Apr 6   Bass
Wed, Apr 8   Bass

Mon, Apr 13  Bass
Wed, Apr 15  Bass
Mon, Apr 20        Bass
Wed, Apr 22        Bass

Mon, Apr 27        Practice for Final Examination
Wed, Apr 29        Practice for Final Examination

Mon, May 4         Final Examination
Wed, May 6         Final Examination

IMPORTANT LINKS:
TMEA: https://www.tmea.org/
UIL: https://www.uiltexas.org/music

MARKETABLE SKILLS REQUIRED BY THIS COURSE (use these for building your resume):

- Critical Thinking
  - Creative thinking
  - Evaluation and synthesis of information
  - Problem solving
  - Set realistic goals
  - Set priorities
- Communication Skills
  - Perceiving nonverbal messages
- Empirical and Quantitative Skills
  - Goal setting
  - Extracting important information
  - Analyze information
  - Detail oriented
- Teamwork
  - Work effectively with others
  - Consider differing opinions
  - Advise/counsel/encourage
  - Negotiate priorities
- Social Responsibility
  - Intercultural competence
  - Knowledge of civic responsibility
  - Community development
  - Cultural arts development
- Personal Responsibility
  - Flexibility
  - Finish projects on time
  - Follow instructions
  - Time management