

Conducting II: Choral MUSC 298-01  
Syllabus Spring Semester 2015  
Monday and Wednesday 9:00 AM  
Presser Hall Room 352

Instructor: Andrew Larson  
Office Presser Hall 107  
822-8971 cell 435-764-7731  
[alarson@stetson.edu](mailto:alarson@stetson.edu)

**Description and Objectives:**

This course is intended to help class members refine skills essential to successful choral conducting. Primary emphasis will be placed upon the development of efficient and effective score study and choral rehearsal technique. Conducting “technique,” as it were, will be discussed and practiced as it relates to rehearsal skills.

Class activities and discussion will have as their objectives:

- Initial studies in choral repertoire
- Increased ability to understand and process what one hears at the podium
- Verbal articulation and understanding of specific rehearsal goals
- Growth in confidence gained from experience in conducting choral rehearsals
- Continued development of the physical technique of conducting
- Initial studies of stylistic authenticity in the performance of a variety of genre and periods of choral music
- Application of musical style in the choral rehearsal
- Development of skills in choral score study and preparation
- Development of techniques for teaching vocal production in the choral rehearsal
- Knowledge of the ensemble/conductor relationship and interaction
- Improved sight-reading ability along with the ability to read full score rather than just one part

Florida DOE Skills/Competencies 2.2, 2.6, 3.1, 3.3, and 5.1 are met in this class (MUSC 298-01).

**Required materials:**

\*The required “text” for this class will consist of (1) printed music checked out to you from the Stetson University Choral Library and which must be returned or replaced at semester’s end or a passing grade cannot be given, and (2) a packet of choral music you will select and pay for, turning in receipts paid at student’s expense in the amount of \$30.00 (explanation in class).

\*You must have a way to record each conducting session when you are at the podium.

\*Access to Blackboard at Stetson University

\*Colored Pencils

\*Baton

**Attendance Policy:**

If you must miss class you must let the instructor know beforehand in order to request an excused absence. The instructor may choose to excuse students for medical emergencies, funerals, etc. Otherwise, absences and tardies affect the final grade as follows:

2 absences	Grade drops 1 letter	2 tardies = one absence
3 absences	Grade drops 2 letters	per the policy stated here
4 absences	Grade drops 3 letters, and so forth.	

Please note that the attendance policy is SEVERE and IN ADDITION TO the graded conducting and written work of the semester. That is, if a student received an A on all of their conducting/written work for the semester and had 3 absences, their final grade would be C, and so forth. Rationale: Truly you are a student, not a paid, working professional. But this course presents a wonderful opportunity to experience the logistical, “accountability” side of the teaching/conducting world where there are no excused absences unless you notify your supervisor and follow institutional policies (i.e. most teachers have sick days, and so forth.)

### **Conducting Assignments:**

Much of our class time will be spent with students conducting and running rehearsals as the instructor interjects suggestions and guidance. (Some days will be lecture days where no one conducts alone or for a grade.) Grades and comments on each conducting experience will be assigned based on the criteria listed on the “Conducting Feedback Form,” as well as on individualized criteria that might not necessarily be listed on that form, but that will be discussed with the student. A copy of the feedback form will be given to the student in a class period after the conducting experience. (*If you do not have a disc or other technology to record your session you will not receive points for that turn.*)

The number of minutes of each conducting experience will be determined and a schedule will be posted so that each student will know exactly when to be prepared. The average grade of the conducting experiences will represent the conducting portion of the final grade as described below.

In order to make sufficient progress in Intermediate Conducting it will be necessary for you to meet one-on-one with the instructor. Plan on half hour sessions and come prepared to each session with score learned. You are free to sign up for more than that, but 3 will be calculated into your grade as outlined in the grade breakdown.

### **Written Assignments:**

#### Video Self-Evaluation

The instructor may call for a written evaluation of the recording made of a conducting session. This may range from just a few sentences, to a couple of paragraphs. These will be due in the class immediately following the student’s conducting session. These will be handled on an individual basis.

### Peer Review

We will take opportunity to offer one another written feedback on the conducting sessions. Students should maintain an air of professionalism in these writings, though frankness and clarity are also necessary. Guidelines will be given in class.

### Final Written Exam

A written final examination will be given which will cover in-class topics, topics discussed in class hand-outs, or topics from other assigned readings.

***Each student must bring his/her own choral packets to class each day so everyone has a score no matter who is at the podium. Students without music may have their final grade reduced.***

### **The final grade breakdown follows:**

75% Conducting (Number of mini-rehearsals depends upon number of students in class and how the lectures are scheduled—***the first experience is not graded***)

Each graded conducting experience is worth 25 points. The total number of points possible for this portion of the grade will be contingent upon the number of conducting experiences as determined by the number of students in the class. In addition to the in-class experiences, you must work 3 times with the instructor one-on-one as explained above. These sessions will be graded as completed, 25 points, or not completed, zero points, and will be figured into the conducting portion of the final grade.

15% Repertoire Portfolio

10% Written Exam

Once the number of 25-point rotations is completed, and all written work graded, the percentage-to-grade calculation is as follows:

93-100 A  
89-92 A-  
85-88 B+  
83-85 B  
80-82 B-  
77-79 C+  
73-76 C  
70-72 C-  
67-69 D+  
63-66 D  
60-62 D-  
59 or below F

Caveat 1: Regardless of earned grades on conducting or written work, a passing grade cannot be given to any student delinquent on the music purchase assignment (\$50.00) or in returning University-owned music.

Caveat 2: Remember that the attendance policy is ADDED TO the coursework as mentioned above.

### **Blackboard:**

Access to blackboard is required for this class. Of particular use will be the e-mail list-serve for times when a student cannot be in class and they MUST announce it to the other students as their absence affects the conducting rotation. Announcing an absence beforehand does not necessarily mean it will be an excused

absence—it is your professional courtesy to pre-announce an absence, however, and the instructor will inform whether the absence is excused or not.

### ***Special Needs***

*The Academic Success Center provides academic and disability resources for all Stetson University students. Students who anticipate barriers related to the format or requirements of a course should meet with the course instructor to discuss ways to ensure full participation. If disability-related accommodations are necessary, please register with the Academic Success Center (386-822-7127; [www.stetson.edu/asc](http://www.stetson.edu/asc)). The student, course instructor, and the ASC will plan how best to coordinate accommodations.*

*The ASC also coordinates free tutoring on campus for students. You can meet with a tutor to review principles, learn content-specific study strategies, and enhance content area knowledge. To review the tutoring options available and schedules, please see our website [www.stetson.edu/asc/tutoring.php](http://www.stetson.edu/asc/tutoring.php).*

### **Schedule:**

It is impossible to hand out a class schedule until after the first day of class and we sort out exactly who is in the class and calculate the number of conducting experiences we can fit into the semester. This amendment will be handed out during the second class period and it is part of this syllabus.