



Choral Conducting and Techniques MUCO5301
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
Division of Church Ministry
Fall 2021

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MISSION STATEMENT

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Leavell College prepare servants to walk with Christ, proclaim His truth, and fulfill His mission.

CHURCH MUSIC MINISTRIES VISION STATEMENT

Developing excellence in Kingdom-minded music and worship leaders

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to assist the student in becoming a more efficient conductor of choral music through the extensive use of video-recording equipment. Rehearsal techniques and the role of the conductor as a leader in public worship will receive specific attention and focus.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The students will:

- 1) Investigate leadership principles in relationship to becoming a competent conductor.
- 2) Compare leadership concepts associated with developing choral excellence with leadership concepts associated with developing rhythm band excellence and the worship choir.
- 3) Examine characteristics and/or conducting techniques associated with notable conductors and worship leaders.
- 4) Examine the conducting and leadership techniques of their peers and compare observations against an ever-increasing understanding of conducting excellence.
- 5) Discover various types of non-verbal communication..
- 6) Visually analyze musical scores from the perspective of a conductor.
- 7) Increase knowledge of sacred choral literature through score analysis and observing pieces presented by other conductors.
- 8) Aurally examine exemplary worship band recordings from the perspective of a worship leader.
- 9) Apply understanding of leadership skills, score study, and conducting patterns in choral rehearsals.
- 10) Integrate music theory, history, and sight-reading instruction into conducting lab and/or actual rehearsals.
- 11) Examine choral techniques research, instrumental techniques research, and/or choral literature research.
- 12) Apply knowledge of choral techniques in choral rehearsals (lab or actual

- rehearsals).
- 13) Demonstrate effective rehearsal procedures.

COURSE TEACHING METHODOLOGY

The instructor will use the following methods to accomplish objectives:

- 1) lecture
- 2) inquiry
- 3) drill
- 4) conducting coaching
- 5) worship band coaching

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

Fenton, Kevin. *Foundations of Choral Conducting*. Tallahassee: USingers Publishers, 2008.

Gregory A. Woodward. *The Millennial Conductor: From Cantillation to Contemporary Practices in Worship Leadership*. Toronto: Rakuten Kobo, 2020.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The students will:

- 1) 14% of final grade: Analyze various instructor-approved scores and prepare at least 8 scores for rehearsal. Adequate score preparation is required before a piece can be introduced in rehearsal. Adequate score preparation includes visual score analysis, being able to play any two vocal parts on the piano for the entire piece or a specified section of the score, and being able to sing any vocal part a cappella for the entire piece or a specified section. Scores in the textbooks will also be required for preparation and performance in association with the lab (e.g., a particular score in the textbook may be assigned as a weekly assignment, item 4 below). Some of the textbook scores may be counted toward the six (8) score requirement. The instructor will determine which textbook pieces, if any, will be counted toward the eight score requirement. For submission and grading, these scores will be referred to as Unit Scores (US).
- 2) 13% of final grade: Demonstrate leadership skills by teaching or directing at least 8 scores in live or mock rehearsal scenarios.
- 3) 15% of final grade: Complete seven (8) conducting review sheets as reflections on lab conducting experiences. The Review sheets (Unit Conducting Reviews, UCR) associated with Unit Conducting Assignments (UCA) are due 2 Mondays after the conducting assignment is made (e.g., a conducting recording on a Tuesday would be due 14 days later on Monday). The unit submissions should match the scores in item 1 above, the submissions will be labeled UCR 1-8. One of the units will include two submissions, which may be referred to by placing the letter “b” after the review (e.g., Unit 4b). To submit review sheets, a portal will be provided in BB. The student is also required to create a Google Drive Folder, which contains a folder for Conducting reviews. Students may fill out the sheets in written-form and submit the form as a picture in Google Drive. Review sheets associated with the textbook may be required in addition to the eight review sheets associated with choral pieces presented in choral settings (see weekly assignments, item 4). At least two of the review sheets must be the Eichenberger qualitative review sheet (provided in BB). The other review sheets will be assigned by the professor and will be associated with the Fenton or Woodward textbook.

- 4) 11% of final grade: Complete various weekly assignments associated with the development of choral techniques and conducting skills as assigned. For example, several weeks will include a Bluejeans meeting that will be recorded. Weekly Assignments will be submitted in Google Drive in a folder titled, Weekly Assignments. If the weekly assignment requires a conducting review, distinct from the Unit Reviews, they should be labeled Weekly Reviews (WR).
- 5) 7% of final grade: Aurally analyze 1 instructor-approved worship song (aural analysis: 350 word minimum per review).
- 6) 4% of final grade: Observe two local conductors in a live setting. The student may request a substitution of one observation by observing a conductor through Youtube. A review of these observations should be submitted in the Google Drive Folder.
- 7) 10% of final grade: Read and review 2 research articles related to choral techniques, instrumental techniques, and/or choral literature (at least 650 words per review). Both of these articles must come from a peer-reviewed research journal (e.g., The Journal of Research in Music Education). These reviews should be posted in the Google Drive folder.
- 8) 18% of final grade: Demonstrate knowledge of information presented in class, the textbook, google drive collaborations, research assignments, or required reading on library reserve through the midterm and final exams.

* All writing projects must be submitted through a personal Google Drive folder and divided according to type of submission.

* Assignments will be automatically lowered by 10 points for the first 2 days they might be turned in late. After 2 days, the assignment grade will automatically be lowered by an additional 5 points per day (see assignment due dates in calendar).

* Each student will be required to meet with the instructor or grader to demonstrate that he or she is ready to present a piece for the rehearsal lab. In some cases the outside of class rehearsal may be accepted as an alternate fulfillment of this requirement.

* If NOBTS is evacuated for 4 or more days (e.g., hurricane), please refer to Blackboard for assignments.

* Every student must purchase a baton. Videos of lab conducting experiences will be uploaded to a computer in the computer lab. If the student prefers an alternate method of reviewing videos, that method must be approved by the instructor.

* Conductors are encouraged to participate in all ensembles for which they are eligible.

* A copy of the approved NOBTS Style Guide can be found in the course Blackboard shell, or can be located online at the Writing Center's page on the seminary website at: https://www.nobts.edu/_resources/pdf/writing/StyleGuide.pdf

EVALUATION OF GRADE

- A final average of 93% to 100%—A

- A final average of 85% to 92%—B
- A final average of 77% to 84%—C
- A final average of 70% to 76%--D
- A final average below 70%--F

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

For assistance regarding technology, consult ITC (504-816-8180) or the following websites:

1. Selfserve@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the Selfserve.nobts.edu site (Access to online registration, financial account, online transcript, etc.)
2. BlackboardHelpDesk@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the NOBTS Blackboard Learning Management System NOBTS.Blackboard.com.
3. ITCSupport@nobts.edu - Email for general technical questions/support requests.
4. www.NOBTS.edu/itc/ - General NOBTS technical help information is provided on this website.

HELP FOR WRITING PAPERS AT “THE WRITE STUFF”

NOBTS maintains a Writing Center designed to improve English writing at the graduate level. Students can receive writing guides, tips, and valuable information to help in becoming a better writer.

PLAGIARISM ON WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

NOBTS has a no tolerance policy for plagiarism. Plagiarism in certain cases may result in expulsion from the seminary. See the NOBTS Student Handbook for definition, penalties, and policies associated with plagiarism.

Week 1 (Aug 15-21)

Present syllabus

Review choral conducting philosophies

Read Fenton chapters 1-2/Woodward chapters 1-2

Conducting Assignment Weekly Assignment (WA) #1 (20th or 21st century)

Due: Email google drive folder to Professor Woodward and Mr. Johnson, grader, johnsonfamily2585@gmail.com

*** The 20th/21st Century Weekly Conducting Assignment (WCA) referenced above will be associated with Worship Conducting Review #1 (WCR#1). Some weeks, there may be a conducting assignment in BB that is distinct from the 8 required conducting reviews described in Assignment 2 from the course syllabus, which are labeled UCR#1-8. Note that this first weekly assignment is due in the form of a WR#1 two Mondays after the piece is conducted in class. Unless specified in BB or by the professor, you may choose to use any review form in the book of the Woodward text (e.g., Appendix C) or the Eichenberger form. All remaining Weekly conducting assignments will be due two Mondays after the assignment is presented. For example, if a weekly assignment in BB includes a piece that should be conducted, and if that piece is not one of the required Unit Conducting Review pieces (UCR#1-8), then you should use the review type assigned or choose a review and label it as WCR#__. Place all of these reviews in a subfolder within your google drive folder. Label the folder WCR. The Assignment will also be submitted through BB.**

Week 2 (Aug 22-28)

Conduct Fenton exercises/chapters 1-2

Read Fenton chapters 3/Woodward chapters 3-4, 7

Renaissance/Baroque Performance Practice Discussion

Integrating music instruction into the rehearsal

Conducting Assignment UCA1 (Renaissance/Baroque)

Due: WA#1 to be presented live

Week 3 (Aug 29-Sept 4)

Read Fenton chapter 4/Woodward chapters 5-6, review 7

Score Study Part I

Due: UCA1 to be presented live

Week 4 (Sept 5-11)

Neuen Exercise

Read Fenton chapter 5/Woodward chapter 7

Score Study Part II

UCA #2 (20th/21st Century Anthem)

Due: UCA2 to be presented live; WR#1

Week 5 (Sept 12-18)

Video selected exercises

Choose and Prepare Instructor-approved scores (2)

20th century performance practice

Due: UCA#3 (Baroque/Classical) to be presented live; Article 1 (Google Drive); #UCR1 (Woodward Appendix B)

Week 6 (Sept 19-25)

Read Woodward Chapter 8

Introduce coordination games

Introduce varying time-signature drills

Due: UCA#4 (Worship Choir) and Weekly Conducting Assignments (Harlan Hymns) to be presented live; Outside Conducting Observation #1; Conducting Assignment #UR2 (Woodward Appendix C)

Week 7 (Sept 26-Oct 2)

You can't win the Kentucky Derby Riding a Donkey (Vocal Tone)

Due: Midterm (BB)

UCA#5 (Baroque/Classical)

Due: UCA#5 to be presented live; #UCR3 (Appendix D)

Fall Break (Oct 3-9)**Week 8 (Oct 10-16)**

Due: Weekly Assignment; UCR#4 (Appendix C)

Read Fenton Chapter 6

Week 9 (Oct 17-23)

Read Fenton Chapter 7

Show you can teach

Due: UCA #6 Major Work Romantic/20th Century (must include significant instrumental writing) to be presented live; Outside Conducting Observation #2 (Oct 30); Worship Song Aural Analysis Due (see rubric in Woodward text); UCR#5 (Eichenberger) (Post Google Docs comments related to Baroque performance practice; Interact with Google Docs postings related to Baroque Performance Practice)

Week 10 (Oct 24-30)

Due: UCA#6 Major Work Romantic/20th Century (must include significant instrumental writing) and/or Weekly Conducting Assignments; Article #2;

**(Post Google Docs comments related to Classical performance practice;
Interact with Google Docs postings related to Classical Performance Practice)**

Week 11 (Oct 31-Nov 6)

Read Fenton Chapter 8/Woodward chapter 9

Major Works Score Study Review

Due: UCA#7 (20th/21st Century Anthem) to be presented live; UCR#6 (Appendix D); (Post Google Docs comments related to Romantic performance practice; Interact with Google Docs postings related to Romantic performance practice);

Week 12 (Nov 7-13)

Read Fenton Chapter 9/Woodward chapter 10

Due: UCA#7 (20th/21st Century Anthem) to be presented live; Weekly Conducting Assignments (reminder: due when assigned 2 Mondays after conducted)

Week 13 (Nov 14-20)

Read Fenton Chapter 10

(Movement from Handel's Messiah or another movement from a common practice period Christmas work approved by the Professor)

Due: UCA#8 to be presented live; UCR#7 (Appendix E); (Post Google Docs comments related to 20th century performance practice; Interact with Google Docs postings related to 20th century performance practice)

Thanksgiving Break! (Nov 21-27)

Week 14 (Nov 28-Dec 4)

Choral Techniques

Read Fenton Chapter 11

Review for Final Exam

Due: UCA#8 to be presented live; UCR#8 (Eichenberger; this final review is due Friday, Dec 3); Outside Conducting Experience

Final Exam: December 3, noon-December 7, 5 PM

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Rudolf, Max. *The Grammar of Conducting: A Comprehensive Guide to Baton Technique and Interpretation*. 3 ed. Reston: Schirmer, 1995.

* The primary sources of data that inform the pedagogical approach for this class are lectures, master classes, and/or choral rehearsals associated with the following conductors: Wanda Saul, Perry Robinson, Robert Fennell, Milfred Valentine, Mark Taylor, Tim Koch, William Weinart, Andre Thomas, Rodney Eichenberger, Jon Duncan, and Brian Gaber.