

Sam Houston State University - School of Music
Course Syllabus

Course: MUEN 1117.01: Symphony Orchestra (1 credit hour)
MUEN 3117.01: Symphony Orchestra (1 credit hour)
Semester: Spring Semester, 2018
Classroom: GPAC Concert Hall & SOM Rm. 202
Meeting Times: Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 12:00 p.m. - 12:50 p.m. [STRINGS]
Tuesday, Thursday: 12:30 – 1:50 p.m. [FULL ORCHESTRA]
Additional rehearsals and sectionals as assigned by the instructor

Instructor: Dr. Jacob Sustaita	Phone: (936) 294–1370
Office: Room 220F, GPAC	Email: jxs115@shsu.edu
Office Hours: By appointment / via email	
Orchestra Manager: Clarence Frank	Phone: (936) 294–3595
Office: Room 204, SOM	Email: cxf007@shsu.edu

Symphony Performance Dates: (Dress Rehearsals are typically held one day before a performance. Check the Orchestra Schedule for details.)

February 10	[SAT]	7:30pm	Spring Concert 1
March 29	[THURS]	7:30pm	Chamber Concert
April 19	[THURS]	7:30pm	Contemporary Festival
May 5	[SAT]	7:30pm	Season Closer

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

To study and perform a wide variety of repertoire for Symphony Orchestra, Chamber Orchestra, and Opera Orchestra. There will be a particular emphasis on the standard literature for the full orchestral complement of instruments. This ensemble is a laboratory course that applies the musical skills being developed in applied studios and academic music classes.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. To gain wider access to technically challenging orchestral music.
2. To successfully pursue a wider variety of music such as orchestral overtures, tone poems, full symphonic works, concertos, operas, and musical theatre repertoire.
3. To develop more in-depth knowledge of musical styles and compositional techniques associated with major composers of each style period.
4. To develop more comprehensive ear training and sight-reading skills through prepared “reading” experiences using the major orchestral literature.
5. To develop skills which lead to more advanced ensemble routines, which will assist in the development of more musical independence and sensitivity in each performer.
6. To contribute to the development of skills in each student which helps guide the student into being a more active participant in more musically literate performances.

7. To refine skills from previously-learned musical and technical concepts which greatly enhance the students' abilities to generalize those concepts and skills and synthesize many or all of these concepts into musically-proficient and artistically-conceived performances.
8. To continue to develop and refine aural skills with, at least, regularly assigned listening to professional orchestral recordings of works assigned to prepare for each concert.
9. To help students develop an overall awareness of the larger purposes--musically, historically, and personally--to which they belong when becoming a part of a performing group at the university level.
10. To continue to develop an understanding and appreciation for the performance of music from within a performing organization which will stir the desire for continuing participation in such an organization after undergraduate (and graduate) degrees have been completed.

COURSE MATERIALS:

1. All music is the property of the University. Students may be assessed a fee for lost, damaged, or abused original parts. **Students are expected to bring assigned parts to ALL class meetings. Students are expected to make appropriate marks on the parts in pencil.**
2. Students are expected to provide the necessary accessories and equipment such as strings, fine tuners, mutes, reeds, valve oil, metronomes, etc. as required.

CONCERT ATTIRE:

Gentlemen: Black tuxedo coat (no tails) and trousers

- black formal bow tie and cummerbund or vest
- white tuxedo shirt
- black socks and dress shoes

Ladies: Black dress/dress slacks & blouse

- dress length should be to the floor
- sleeves should be long to the wrist or formal coat/long-sleeved
- no sleeveless blouses will be allowed
- black hose and shoes (no open toe shoes)

NOT ACCEPTABLE: black t-shirts, spandex or lycra-type pants; jeans or sweatpants; open toed shoes or sandals

INSTRUMENT CASES: Whenever possible, do not bring your instrument case on stage with you for rehearsals or performances. Leave them backstage or in the hall. Clutter onstage causes accidents and reduces rehearsal efficiency.

MOBILE PHONES: Your mobile phone should not be in the rehearsal with you. **Mobile phones should never be on stage during rehearsal or performance. (That includes your pockets.)** Please leave your phone in your instrument case, locker, etc.

PRACTICE: Each member of the Orchestra is expected to practice the repertoire outside Orchestra rehearsals on a regular basis, and to come to each rehearsal prepared for the music to be rehearsed that day. **Rehearsals are meant to work on our collective sound as an ensemble; they are not meant for you to learn your individual parts.**

ATTENDANCE POLICY: Members of the Orchestra are expected to attend all assigned rehearsals and performances. The final grade for the semester will be reduced one letter grade for each unexcused absence, as follows (based on a starting grade of A):

Number of unexcused absences	Highest possible grade
0	A
1	B
2	C
3	D
4 or more	F

All performances and dress rehearsals are mandatory. The final grade for the semester will be an F for any student absent from a performance or dress rehearsal without being excused.

The following situations will be *considered* for excused absences:

1. Illness that prevents the student from attending a rehearsal or performance^[SEP]If at all possible, the student should notify the Director of the Orchestra in advance. The student should contact the Music Director upon returning to class. Any appropriate documentation (note from doctor, dentist, or Health Center, etc.) should be attached to the form.^[SEP]Note: Regular non-emergency medical or dental appointments should be scheduled at times that do not conflict with rehearsals or performances. Absences for such appointments will not be excused.
2. Death or serious illness in the student's immediate family^[SEP]If at all possible, the student should notify the Director of the Orchestra in advance. The student should contact the Music Director upon returning to class.
3. Approved conflicts, such as ensemble tours and run-out concerts, class field trips, required conferences, competitions, and approved professional activities. The Director of the Orchestra should be notified as far in advance as possible, normally at least two weeks. Appropriate documentation should be attached to the form.^[SEP]Note: For ensemble tours and run-out concerts, ensemble directors generally send a memo to the School of Music faculty. Even when this is the case, the student is responsible for notifying the Director of the Orchestra in advance.

Note: Scheduling a recital the evening before or after an Orchestra rehearsal is not appropriate grounds for an excused absence.

Being late for a rehearsal counts as one-half an absence, with the exception of the following:

1. If the student is detained by a University instructor^[SEP] The student should bring a note from the instructor OR ask the instructor to email the Music Director.
2. If the student has a class that regularly prevents the student from arriving on time - The student should notify the Director at the beginning of the semester.

When a student is late for a rehearsal, it is the student's responsibility to contact the Music Director. Otherwise, the attendance record may show an unexcused absence.

Any student whose highest possible grade drops to a C due to that student's being absent or late for rehearsals and/or performances may be dismissed from the Orchestra at the discretion of the Director.

The submission of a Request for Absence does NOT automatically result in an approved

excuse. The completed Request is a petition, and the Director of the Orchestra determines whether the excuse will be approved.

When it is necessary for a member of the Orchestra to miss a rehearsal, both the Director of the Orchestra and the appropriate Orchestra Principal should be notified as far in advance as possible.

If it is necessary for a woodwind, brass, or percussion player to miss a rehearsal, that player should arrange for a substitute, unless told otherwise by the Director of the Orchestra.

If it is necessary for a string player to miss a rehearsal, and if that player has the official stand part, its essential for that player to make sure the part is available at the rehearsal.

NON-CREDIT MEMBERS: Although most students participating in the Orchestra should be enrolled for credit, it is possible to be a non-credit member of the Orchestra. Non-credit members are expected to follow the same policies and procedures as those who are receiving credit.

GRADING POLICY:

Attendance, Coachings, and Sectionals (Group Projects):	40%
Daily Participation:	30%
Performances and Dress Rehearsals:	30%

1. no extra credit is available
2. a student who is unable to participate in daily rehearsals should drop the class
3. grades will not be curved
4. See information related to grading listed under "Attendance."
5. **Any student who fails to attend a dress rehearsal or performance will receive an F.**

SCHEDULE:

Rehearsal Schedules will be posted on the Orchestra Board on Friday for the following week. Preparation of these assignments will be expected and allows for the regular coordination of parts and a well-paced rehearsal.

Music will be distributed and checked-out to each player before and at assigned times during specific rehearsals. Should additional music be needed, each individual player must arrange, in advance (prior to the day of the rehearsal) of rehearsals, with the librarians to secure those parts.

Section Rehearsals:

Sectionals during normal rehearsal times will be scheduled as needed with the music director and/or applied faculty. Principal String Players must organize and schedule 1 weekly sectional with their section members lasting no more than 1 hour. This sectional will be part of the weekly Group Projects required by all string players. Principal Wind, Brass, and Percussion players are responsible for organizing (in collaboration with all other players in the section and faculty members who may be involved) weekly sectionals or as needed. "Emergency" rehearsals will be

scheduled only in extreme cases and should never occur more than once or twice in any one semester, if ever. Announcement of such a rehearsal would occur at least one week prior to that rehearsal.

Dress Rehearsals:

Dress rehearsals are most often scheduled one day before each performance. Typically, the rehearsals are scheduled for a three-hour time period (usually 7:00–10:00 p.m. or 6:00–9:00 p.m.) in the hall in which the performance is scheduled for the following evening.

Performances:

Performances are a culmination of the sectional and rehearsal process. Any conflict with a dress rehearsal or performance should be discussed with the Music Director within 2 weeks of the beginning of each semester.

Scheduled Coachings:

All members of the orchestra may be asked to schedule an appointment to play excerpts of the orchestra's repertoire for the Music Director. These assignments will usually last 15 minutes. This is an opportunity to ask and answer questions with the Music Director directly and in a private environment.

WHAT'S EXPECTED OF YOU AS AN ORCHESTRA MEMBER:

I expect you to do a certain amount of preparation *before* each and every rehearsal. How *much* preparation you do depends on your current skill level, the difficulty of the pieces, and where we are in the rehearsal process. But let's make one thing completely clear: the primary purpose of orchestra rehearsals is to learn how to play our parts *together* so that the entire orchestra sounds as good as possible. The purpose of an orchestra rehearsal is not for you to slowly learn your individual part one note at a time.

What's expected before the FIRST rehearsal of a concert cycle:

I do my absolute best to ensure that you have information before the first rehearsal about the repertoire we're playing. I also work to ensure that you have parts to practice at least one day in advance, if it's possible. We don't have full-time orchestra librarians here to serve you. You'll need to do some basic work on your own to be prepared.

What should you know before the first rehearsal?

- Which pieces we're playing, and whether or not you're playing each of those pieces ^[L]_[SEP]
- Whether you're going to need extra equipment for those pieces: mutes, piccolos, Eb trumpets, etc. ^[L]_[SEP]
- You should at least *listen* to the pieces we're playing before the first rehearsal, so you're already familiar with the styles, tempos, and general feel of the pieces. It's NOT OK to come into the first rehearsal of a standard work and have no idea how fast the third movement goes.

- You should look up the meaning of unfamiliar words *before* the first rehearsal. **WRITE THE MEANINGS IN YOUR PART.** I.e. “*cedez peu a peu*” or “*am Griffbrett*” or “*schalltrichter auf*” or “*poco allegretto quasi larghetto ma non troppo.*” It is crucial to know and understand music terminology used in your parts.
- Find the tricky parts of the piece *before* the first rehearsal. If you’ve at least looked at them before, you’ll find that they’re much easier to master later after you’ve played them in a group. ^[1]_{SEP}
- You’re not expected to be *perfect* at the first rehearsal, but you are expected to have a basic knowledge of the pieces and roughly how they should sound. ^[1]_{SEP}

What’s expected of you at the rest of the rehearsals? ^[1]_{SEP}

- Constant improvement. If something doesn’t go well for you in rehearsal, you should actively work to make it go better in the future. If you flub a note, or fake your way through a difficult arpeggio, or repeatedly play an incorrect rhythm, you should take responsibility for the errors and then **PRACTICE** to improve them. ^[1]_{SEP}
- **COME TO REHEARSALS WITH MUSICAL IDEAS!** Why do professional orchestras play at such a high level with so few rehearsals? Because their musicians all show up to rehearsals with ideas about how the music should be played. If you have a big solo, you should have a strong opinion about the style, phrasing, articulations, etc. Don’t just wait around for the conductor to ^[1]_{SEP}tell you what to do. Try something out!
- Give all of your attention and effort all of the time. We rehearse to play the greatest music possible at the highest level possible. So work to be perfect in the first rehearsal! If the first rehearsal isn’t perfect, work for constant improvement. Perfection is a constantly moving ideal – as we get stronger as an orchestra and as musicians, our understanding of what’s possible will change. Our understanding of what’s musically or physically possible will change.
- Make **MUSIC** in rehearsals. Every note from every instrument is important. If you think your part is boring, then you’re not doing enough to make music. Listen to how your part works with others. Listen to which parts you’re supporting, and figure out when you switch from a supporting role to a leading role. I’ve said it before and I’ll say it again: “If you’re bored, it’s *your fault*.” There’s no such thing as an “easy” piece of music, and only boring musicians get bored.
- **PERFORM!** Let’s get rid of the complete dichotomy between rehearsal and performance. Too often we make a mental separation between the two. But isn’t a rehearsal just a series of performances for a smaller audience? Change that mindset that says “it’s OK to not play well right now, because I’m going to turn it on in the performance.” ^[1]_{SEP}

What’s expected of you in performance? ^[1]_{SEP}

- **PERFORM!** Pour your heart into getting the piece across the front of the stage to the audience. Imagine the composer sitting in the room and work to play the piece better than that composer will ever hear it again. Just make music! ^[1]_{SEP}

- If something doesn't go well in performance, LET IT GO. It's in the past. If you played a D# instead of a Db, there is nothing you can do to change what just happened, so keep your mind and your music focused on the rest of the piece. Let go of frustration. Let go of self doubt. Just perform. Make music on every note. Be great!

ACADEMIC HONESTY:

The Faculty Handbook states that "the University expects all students to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is, simply, above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. **Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action.** Furthermore, it is expected that the University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials."

Should such a situation be found to exist in the work in the SHSU Symphony, students would immediately be reported and disciplinary proceedings would be initiated.

PROPER CLASSROOM DEMEANOR/RULES OF CONDUCT:

"Students will refrain from behavior in the classroom that intentionally or unintentionally disrupts the learning process and, thus, impedes the mission of the university. Please turn off or mute all cellular phones and/or pagers before class begins. **Students are prohibited from eating in class (except on specified occasions), using tobacco products, making offensive remarks, reading newspapers, sleeping, talking among each other at inappropriate times, wearing inappropriate clothing, or engaging in any other form of distraction.** Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result in, minimally, a directive to leave class or being reported to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action in accordance with university policy."

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES POLICY:

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance should register with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Lee Drain Annex (telephone 936-294-3512, TDD 936-294-3786, and e-mail disability@shsu.edu). They should then make arrangements with their individual instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired.

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may affect adversely your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with the SHSU Services for Students with Disabilities and to talk with me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: No accommodation

can be made until you register with the Services for Students with Disabilities. For a complete listing of the university policy, see:

<http://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/documents/aps/students/811006.pdf>