

Sam Houston State University  
School of Music  
Violin Studio of Dr. Javier Pinell  
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**Syllabus for Applied Violin Lessons, Spring 2018**  
**VILN 1201 – 02, VILN 3201 – 02, VILN 3202 – 02, VILN 5201 - 02**

**Course Description**

The long-term goal of the applied violin lessons courses, as they are taken over several years of undergraduate and graduate study, is to train students as self-sufficient and well-rounded violin players. In this process, students are provided with the appropriate technical training, focusing on fundamental aspects of violin playing. These include good set-up, good tone, smooth shifting, consistent intonation, clean articulation, etc.

The assignment of exercises and studies is done in a progressive sequence of difficulty, and each *etude* is given only after a detailed discussion of the particular technical skill at hand. Although studies are essential in the training of every violinist, they will not be assigned without specific purposes, or in a rigid sequence. There are no two students alike! The same applies to repertoire.

Also as part of their training, students are encouraged to attend live performances and to listen to audio and/or video recordings of the great masters. These practices help them in developing a concept of sound, style, stage presence, etc.

In addition to individual weekly lessons, violin students participate in Studio Class. The design of these meetings is three-fold: as a performance opportunity for all students in the studio, for addressing different aspects of violin technique, and for viewing documentary films of master classes and performances of renown violinists and pedagogues.

**Attendance**

Attendance at every lesson is mandatory. Excused absences may be granted for **serious** reasons such as illness, family emergency, a university-sponsored trip, etc. In order to be excused, students must give the instructor at least 24 hours notice prior to the lesson (**in case of illness, a doctor's note shall be submitted**). If there is insufficient notice, or a lack of documentation, that lesson will not be made up. Accordingly, the student will receive a failing lesson grade for that week. Three or more unexcused absences will result in a grade of "F" for the entire semester. It is the responsibility of the student to contact Dr. Pinell to schedule any necessary make-up lesson as soon as possible. If Dr. Pinell needs to miss a lesson, he will notify the student in a timely manner and make arrangements to meet at a different time.

The student is expected to be prepared and on time for the lesson. It is important to be punctual in order to allow everyone an equal amount of time. In addition, attendance to violin and chamber music faculty recitals is also **required**.

**String Faculty/Guest Artist concerts**

Please mark the following dates in your calendars for string faculty recitals and guest-artist master classes (there may be other events added to this list as they become confirmed):

**Master Classes with Jesus Reina and Anna-Margrethe Nilsen**

- Thursday, February 22, Room 217 2:00-4:00 pm (date to be confirmed)
- Thursday, March 1, Room 217 2:00-4:00 pm

## Faculty and Guest Artist Performances

- Thursday, January 25, 7:30 pm Recital Hall, Holocaust Memorial Faculty Recital
- Wednesday, February 28, 7:30 pm Recital Hall, Jesus Reina and Anna-Margrethe Nilsen; Josu de Solaun, piano
- Friday, March 2, 7:30 pm, Recital Hall, Jesus Reina and Anna-Margrethe Nilsen; Josu de Solaun, piano
- Monday, April 23, 7:30 pm Recital Hall: Kolonneh String Quartet

## Performance Requirements

**Semester Juries:** Students enrolled in Applied Music lessons must perform a jury at the end of each semester. The only two exceptions to this policy apply to students who performed a degree recital in the same semester, and students who are taking lessons in lieu of string methods.

**Contents:** Material for the Semester Jury should include two contrasting pieces (one of these could be an etude), and a scale for those students who have not yet taken/passed the Sophomore Barrier Exam. For speed purposes, the notes of the scale are to be quarter-notes bowed separately, ♩ = 60-70. Memorization is **optional** for non-performance majors.

*Students are expected to have a pianist for all the repertoire that requires one.*

**Time limit:** Although the time limit for the Semester Jury is ten minutes, students should prepare complete movements/single pieces/etudes. The faculty jury reserves the right to stop and/or skip portions of larger pieces. *Students should treat juries like a professional audition and should dress professionally. Please consult with your studio teacher if you have any questions about this policy.*

**Etude and Scale Day:** Three weeks before juries, we will have “Etude and Scale Day.” Everyone in the studio will play an etude during Studio Class, and those students who have not yet taken the Barrier exam will also play scales (at least one major and one minor scale). *This will be a longer Studio Class session.*

## Accompanists for Recital

Depending on the availability of pianists, students playing recitals may be assigned an accompanist, granted the timely submission of the proper forms, accompanist fee, and music to Dr. Ilonka Rus. Other students have the responsibility to hire their own accompanists in a timely manner (please check Dr. Rus’ door for a list of accompanists or ask your colleagues). Students are required to bring their accompanist **at least two times to their lessons prior to the jury.**

**SOPHOMORE BARRIER EXAM (Upper-level Proficiency Jury):** Usually at the end of the sophomore year, all music majors must pass an Upper-Level Proficiency Jury in order to advance to upper-division status (300-level). Students who fail any portion of this jury will be placed on probationary status and are given two more opportunities to raise their performance level to upper-division status. Transfer students **must** also pass the Upper-Level Proficiency Jury in order to register for upper-division status (3000-level).

**CONTENTS:** The String Area Sophomore Barrier Exam consists of two contrasting movements from standard works (concertos, sonatas, single pieces, etc.) and **all** major and minor scales. The two chosen movements can be from a single work or from different pieces.

The repertoire requirement for **music performance** majors includes three movements. Two of the movements must be played from memory.

*Note that memorization is required of performance majors only.*

**Scales:** The scale portion of the exam must be played from memory. For speed purposes, the notes of the scale are to be quarter-notes bowed separately, ♩ = 60-70. Performance majors may play the scales faster.

The barrier exam is an important performance in which the student demonstrates his/her level of preparation in front of the string faculty. The exam is graded as “pass” or “fail” based on **this single performance**.

*Note that the grade for the barrier exam is separate from the grade for applied lessons, and it is not included in official transcripts. Progress and efforts shown throughout the semester in combination with the policies in the teacher's syllabus are reflected on the student's applied lessons grade.*

Students who do not satisfactorily complete the Sophomore Barrier Exam requirements will not be able to register for upper division lessons (3000 level). In that case, they may register for lower division lessons and retake the exam.

**Expectations:** In order to pass, students are expected to show evidence of extensive practice on the assigned material. The repertoire pieces and scales should be nearly perfect.\*

*\* For grading purposes, nearly perfect means that the student must know the music sufficiently well, that good intonation is consistent, rhythm and memory are solid, and that the student has good control of her/his tone production.*

**Retaking the Barrier Exam:** Students can retake the exam toward the beginning of the following semester before the drop/add period ends. If they pass, this will allow them to register for the appropriate course number without delaying their graduation plans. Students who retake the barrier exam must play all portions of the exam, two contrasting movements (three for Music Performance majors) from standard works and **all** major and minor scales. It is at the discretion of the teacher to change or retain the repertoire pieces from a previous exam.

## Practice

Regular and productive **practice** is expected from all students registered for lessons. Although smart and targeted practice is most efficient (and it will require less time), generally non-performance majors should practice a minimum of 14 hours per week. Performance majors should practice a minimum of 21 hours per week.

## Grading

The student is responsible for all of the material assigned from week to week. Each lesson will be given a letter grade and later averaged to account for **60%** of the final grade. The remaining **40%** will be the jury grade. The weekly lesson grade is based on several criteria including the preparation and performance of assigned material, attitude and organization, technical progress, and participation/performance in studio class. An unexcused **absence from studio class** will result in the lowering of the weekly lesson grade by one letter. The same will apply to missed violin faculty recitals.

## Grading system:

- A = Exceptional
- B = Very Good
- C = Fair
- D = Poor
- F = Failure

Further definition of grading (as it applies to lessons):

- A = Evidence of extensive practice on the assigned material (Lesson near perfect\* and played musically)
- B = Evidence of substantial practice on the assigned material (Lesson played well, with minor flaws and lacking polish)

C = Evidence of moderate practice on the assigned material (Lesson played moderately well but with consistent note and rhythm problems)

D = Evidence that some practice has taken place on the assigned material (Lesson played rather poorly)

F = Evidence that little or no practice has taken place on the assigned material

*\* Near perfect means that the student must know the music sufficiently well, that notes and rhythms are not a problem, and that the student has made an effort to thoughtfully play the piece musically.*

**Studio Class** will be held from 2:00 - 4:00 pm on Thursdays in room 216, Music Building. Studio Class meetings are designed as a performance opportunity for all students in the studio. Everyone is expected to perform at least twice in the semester. In addition, some of these times will be reserved for addressing different aspects of violin technique, as well as viewing documentary and archival videos of master classes and performances of the great masters.

### **Student Handbook**

Please refer to the Student Handbook for more information about other degree requirements and procedures.

### **ALWAYS COME TO YOUR LESSON PREPARED AND WARMED UP!**

**Office Hours:** by appointment

**Keep a copy of this syllabus for your reference!**

**To order music, strings, shoulder rests, etc.:**

SHAR	1-800 248-7427, <a href="http://www.sharmusic.com">www.sharmusic.com</a>
Southwest Strings	1-800 528-3430, <a href="http://www.swstrings.com">www.swstrings.com</a>
Concord Music Supplies	<a href="http://www.concordmusic.com">www.concordmusic.com</a>

**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](mailto: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/dotAsset/187/9029-a4c6-4fb4-aea9-2d501f2a60f3.pdf>