

MUCD 340: Choral Conducting I

Units: 2

Spring 2021: Tuesday & Thursday 8:30-9:50 AM

Location: Online

Instructor: Heeseong Lee

Office: MUS 209 (not available in this semester)

Office Hours: By appointment (via zoom)

Contact Info: heeseonl@usc.edu, 323-610-1506 (cell)

Course Description

This course is designed to provide students with an introduction to choral conducting, score study, and rehearsal techniques. Students will develop an understanding of physical gesture as it relates to leading choral rehearsals and performances using a variety of literature. The course is divided into six units, with each unit corresponding to a particular gestural challenge that get increasingly complex as the semester progresses.

USC Thornton Classical Performance and Composition Program Objectives

Students will create a distinctive musical voice by...

- Developing musical excellence
- Connecting scholarship to music making
- Integrating the relevance of music to a diverse and inclusive society
- Erasing performance boundaries between different genres of music

And create a fulfilling musical career by...

- Navigating their way into the music profession to monetize their skills
- Mastering skills to share music through digital platforms and non-traditional venues
- Building a lifelong, global professional network
- Leading a healthy life as a musician

Prerequisite: None

Learning Objectives

- Demonstrate knowledge of conducting patterns in simple, compound and mixed meters
- Demonstrate cuing with breath and gesture simultaneously in homophonic and polyphonic works
- Distinguish between macro and micro conducting patterns in compound meter
- Demonstrate gestural competence in conducting passages with *rubato*, *allargando*, and *ritardando* tempo changes
- Demonstrate understanding of different types of articulation in conducting gesture, including *fermata*, *staccato*, *marcato*, *accent*, *tenuto*, and *legato*
- Develop usage of left hand to show cuing, dynamics, and phrasing
- Demonstrate understanding and application of score analysis methods
- Demonstrate understanding of the functions or musical effects that conducting gestures have on singers that modify an ensemble's tone, blend, and affect.

Required Materials

1. Scores and articles printed out in Blackboard
2. Three-ring binder for scores and handouts, pencil (or iPad)
3. Personal smart phone to record video
4. **Optional:** Phillips, Kenneth. *Basic Techniques of Conducting*.

Grading Scale

| | |
|-------------|-------------------|
| A = 95-100% | C = 73-76% |
| A- = 90-94% | C- = 70-72% |
| B+ = 87-89% | D+ = 67-69% |
| B = 83-86% | D = 63-66% |
| B- = 80-82% | D- = 60-62% |
| C+ = 77-79% | F = 59% and below |

Grading Breakdown

| | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|
| In-class work | 15 pts./day x 28 | 420 |
| Conducting Unit Evaluations | 40 pts/each x 5 | 200 |
| Conducting Self-Assessments | 40 pts/each x 6 | 240 |
| Score Analysis assignments | 20 pts/each x 5 | 100 |
| Reading Responses | 20 pts/each x 5 | 100 |
| Final Exam | 100 pts | 100 |
| | Total Possible Points: | 1,160 |

Description of Assignments

1. **In-class Work.** Students receive 15 points for being in class and ready to begin promptly at 8:30 AM. Students' in-class work will be assessed based on *punctuality* and *preparedness*. The following system will be used to assess participation:

- 15 points – prepared and participating entire class
- 10 points – prepared and participating part of class
- 5 points - absent with documented excuse
- 0 points - absent without documented excuse

Students who need to miss a class are required to notify the instructor at least 12 hours prior to the class meeting time (by 8:30 pm the previous day). Please refer to the Attendance Policy below for details.

2. **Score Analysis Assignments.** Students will submit a score analysis at the end of each unit. Comprehensive analysis methods such as the Margaret Hillis Method are preferred. Students may develop their own method of analysis if they choose, as long as their scores are marked thoroughly and consistently. Please refer to the score analysis guidelines document found in the "Content" folder on Blackboard.
3. **Conducting Unit Evaluations.** At the end of each unit, students will conduct the Unit repertoire in class all the way through, simulating a performance. The instructor will evaluate the student's conducting and provide a grade for the Unit. The rubric for each evaluation will be provided to students before the evaluation.
4. **Conducting Self-Assessments.** After each unit, students must watch the video of their conducting and complete the self-assessment assignment on Blackboard. The goal of these assessments is to offer a chance for reflection on 1) the process of preparing choral music to conduct and 2) the effectiveness of the student's gesture in communicating musical ideas. The assessment should only be completed after viewing the video recording of their conducting. The assignment is due the next class after the conducting evaluation.

Late Work

For full credit, all assignments are due before class (by 8:30 am) on the date listed on the course

schedule. Late assignments may still be turned in for half credit within 24 hours after the listed due date (by 8:30 am the following day). Exceptions and extensions may be requested and will be handled on an individual basis.

Unit Descriptions

Unit 1: Fundamentals of Conducting Gesture

Components of gesture, Simple meters and beat patterns, cueing/preparatory gestures

- Bach, *Jesu meine Freude*
- Vivaldi, *Laudate Dominum Omnes Gentes*

Unit 2: Compound Meter

Macro and micro beat patterns for compound meters, including 6/8, 9/8, 6/4

- Mozart, “Lacrimosa” from *Requiem in D Minor*, K. 626
- Bairstow, *I sat down under His shadow*

Unit 3: Left Hand Independence

Cueing, dynamics, syncopation, phrasing

- Tallis, *If Ye Love Me*
- Bruckner, *Os Justi*

Unit 4: Articulation & Dynamics:

Modifying gestures to show dynamics and articulation. Gestures showing rhythmic articulations including staccato, marcato, tenuto, accent, legato, and fermatas; and variations of tempo including rubato, ritardando, and accelerando

- Strimple, *Praise the Lord*
- Poulenc, “Laudamus te” from *Gloria*

Unit 5: Asymmetrical & Mixed Meters

Gestures that combine simple and compound subdivisions including 7/8, 5/8, and mixed groupings in 8/8; conducting scores that change meter

- R. Thompson, *Glory to God in the Highest*
- Lauridsen, *Sure On This Shining Night*

Unit 6: Final Exam

- Whitacre, *With a Lily in Your Hand*

| | Topics/Daily In-Class Activities | Deliverables / Due Dates |
|---------------|--|--|
| Week 1 | <p>1/19: Welcome; Introduction to Unit 1 – The Fundamentals of Conducting: Components of gesture, Simple meters and beat patterns, cueing/preparatory gestures</p> <p>1/21: Unit 1 continued – Gestural Rudiments; introduction to score analysis and overview of Score Analysis Assignment</p> | <p>For 1/21: Review terms and practice simple gestures from Fundamentals of Conducting handout (also in “Content” on Blackboard)</p> |
| Week 2 | <p>1/26: Unit 1 [cont.]</p> <p>1/28: Unit 1 [cont.]</p> | <p>For Week 2: Practice Unit 1 and Reading Response due 1/26 Margaret Hillis Interview, “Score Study”</p> <p>Due 1/28: Unit 1 Score Analysis</p> |
| Week 3 | <p>2/2: Unit 1 Evaluations</p> <p>2/4: Unit 2 – Compound Meter: macro and micro beat patterns for compound meters, including 6/8, 9/8, 6/4</p> | <p>Due 2/4: Unit 1 Self-Assessment</p> |
| Week 4 | <p>2/9: Unit 2 [cont.]</p> <p>2/11: Unit 2 [cont.]</p> | <p>Due 2/9: Reading Response: Colin Durrant, “Less is More: Conducting Gesture</p> <p>Due 2/11: Unit 2 Score Analysis</p> |
| Week 5 | <p>2/16: Unit 2 Evaluations</p> <p>2/18: Unit 3 – Left Hand Independence: cueing, dynamics, syncopations</p> | <p>Due 2/18: Unit 2 Self-Assessment</p> |
| Week 6 | <p>2/23: Unit 3 [cont.]</p> <p>2/25: Unit 3 [cont.]</p> | <p>Due 2/23: Reading Response: Alberto Grau, “Music</p> <p>Due 2/25: Unit 3 Score Analysis</p> |
| Week 7 | <p>3/2: Unit 3 Evaluations</p> <p>3/4: Unit 4 – Articulation: gestures showing rhythmic articulations including staccato, marcato, tenuto, accent, legato, and fermatas; and variations of tempo including rubato, ritardando, and accelerando</p> | <p>Due 3/4: Unit 3 Self-Assessment</p> |

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|----------------|---|---|
| Week 8 | 3/9: Unit 4 [cont.] 3/11: Unit 4 [cont.] | Due 3/9: Reading Response: Aaron Copland, "From Composer to Interpreter to Listener" Due 3/11: Unit 4 Score Analysis |
| Week 9 | 3/16: Unit 4 Evaluations 3/18: Mixed Meter Exercise | Due 3/18: Unit 4 Self-Assessment |
| Week 10 | 3/23: WELLNESS DAY 3/25: Unit 5 – Asymmetrical & Mixed Meters: Gestures that combine simple and compound subdivisions including 7/8, 5/8, and mixed groupings in 8/8; conducting scores that change meter often | |
| Week 11 | 3/30: Unit 5 [cont.] 4/1: Unit 5 [cont.] | Due 3/30: Reading Response: Daniel Barenboim, "Sound and Thought," Due 4/1: Unit 5 Score Analysis |
| Week 12 | 4/6: Unit 5 Evaluations 4/8: Unit 6 – Review and Preparation for Final Exam | Due 4/8: Unit 5 Self-Assessment |
| Week 13 | 4/13: Unit 6 [cont.] 4/15: Private lesson for Final Exam | |
| Week 14 | 4/20: Conducting Challenge 4/22: WELLNESS DAY | Due 4/22: Self-Assessment |
| Week 15 | 4/27: Unit 6 [cont.] 4/29: FINAL EXAM | |

Synchronous session recording notice

As required by USC, the synchronous sessions for this course will be recorded and provided to all students asynchronously. This policy does not apply to individual lessons.

Sharing of course materials outside of the learning environment

USC has a policy that prohibits sharing of any synchronous and asynchronous course content

outside of the learning environment. Please do not share or otherwise distribute class materials, music scores or recordings produced by me or any students in the conduct of this course without expressed permission.

SCampus Section 11.12(B)

Distribution or use of notes or recordings based on university classes or lectures without the express permission of the instructor for purposes other than individual or group study is a violation of the USC Student Conduct Code. This includes, but is not limited to, providing materials for distribution by services publishing class notes. This restriction on unauthorized use also applies to all information, which had been distributed to students or in any way had been displayed for use in relationship to the class, whether obtained in class, via email, on the Internet or via any other media. (See Section C.1 Class Notes Policy).

Zoom etiquette

I expect you to demonstrate your presence and participation in class by your being on camera in all Zoom sessions. If you will be unable to keep your camera on during the synchronous Zoom session, please contact me prior to the class session to discuss.

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required

Each student will be required to video record for assignments on a video recording device (e.g. iPhone, iPad, etc.)

Attendance Policy

In keeping with the professional objectives of the program, the Department of Choral and Sacred Music at the University of Southern California enforces a *strict* policy regarding participation and punctuality. Since punctuality is important to musical professionalism, a strict punctuality policy is in place and will affect the participation portion of the grade. Students who late to class will receive a 5pt deduction to their in-class work grade for that day (15 pts).

Unavoidable emergencies will be handled on an individual basis. If an emergency occurs, (including acute, but brief, illness) the student must contact the instructor within 12 hours of the class start time (by 8:30 pm the previous day) via email. If written notification is not received, the absence will not be considered excused. Text messages, phone calls, and voice messages are not an appropriate method of notifying the instructor of your absence. The instructor will determine whether the emergency is acceptable for excuse. If the instructor does not recognize the reason as acceptable, the student may appeal.

Absences for the following reasons are considered EXCUSED:

- Institutional excuses given five days in advance.
- Extended illness with doctor's verification.
- Death in the immediate family.
- Religious holiday.

USC technology rental program

We realize that attending classes online and completing coursework remotely requires access to technology that not all students possess. If you need resources to successfully participate in your classes, such as a laptop or internet hotspot, you may be eligible for the university's equipment rental program or other assistance. To apply, please [submit an application](#) on the Student Basic Needs portal.

USC Technology Support Links

[Zoom information for students](#)

[Blackboard help for students](#)
[Software available to USC Campus](#)

Academic Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

Support Systems

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call

studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call

suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press “0” after hours – 24/7 on call

studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) - (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298

equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298

usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity |Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776

dsp.usc.edu

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Campus Support and Intervention - (213) 821-4710

campussupport.usc.edu

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101

diversity.usc.edu

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost’s Diversity and Inclusion Council,

Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call
dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call
dps.usc.edu

Non-emergency assistance or information.