

Fundamentals of Conducting

MPAME-GE.2102.001 & MPAME-UE.1465.001

Class Day and Time: Thursday: 9:00 -10:40am
Room: Education Building Room 770
Professor: Michael L. Breaux - michael.breaux@nyu.edu
Office: 35 W. 4th Street, 1077-G
Telephone: (203) 530-9752 cell

Required Materials:

Course Text: Phillips, K., (1997). *Basic Techniques of Conducting*, Oxford University Press. (Bookstore)

Equipment: Baton – Mollard or comparable 12 or 14 inch baton
Instrument - for use in class so we may have an ensemble to conduct
Flip Video (*optional*) – so that we may video recording ourselves for analysis.

Course Objectives:

The purpose of this course is to acquire the basic knowledge and skills necessary to conduct choral and instrumental ensembles in rehearsal and performance. Special emphasis will be placed on the following skills:

1. Fundamental beat patterns – 4, 3, 2, 1, and other mixed meters
2. Preparatory Gestures: A single beat is the norm, but other preparatory gestures will be discussed
3. Communication of: articulation, dynamics, entrances, cues, and releases
4. Basic score preparation, analysis, and interpretation (Why These Notes?)
5. Basic rehearsal techniques and error detection
6. Function of the left hand and other non-verbal communication
7. Use of the baton, baton grip, posture, and stance

Attendance Requirement:

A maximum of one absence is allowed for the entire semester. Additional absences may result in a lower grade.

Procedures and Grading:

Since you will conduct during classes, you are expected to practice outside of class and prepare the chapters & music assigned. All conducting exercises in the class may be used for grading purposes, therefore class participation is an important factor in determining grades.

- Each of us will make-up the ensemble that we will conduct. Therefore, you will need to learn your vocal part as well as how to conduct the individual pieces.
- Class participation includes the ability of each student to perform as well as to conduct repertoire used in class. While conducting, you will need to be able to react to the ensemble performance so as to rehearse the ensemble.
- Preparation of musical examples is crucial to error detection and freedom of conducting gesture, so daily practice will be required. The use of technology (e.g., audio/video recording) as well as the use of a mirror will be necessary.
- As needed, you may contact Professor Breaux for individual assistance.
- Conducting performances will be graded using the performance rubrics provided in the text.

Grades

The following observable elements will be used to determine your grade:

- Class attendance
- Demonstrative class participation and engagement
- Performance on conducting exams (videotaped sessions) – rubric in text book
- Exams or quizzes
- Written assignments from observation

Baton Purchase

The Mollard Baton is standard for most conductors. They make a number of styles of baton, but the P and S are generally what most conductors use. The options are 12 or 14-inch lengths, a variety of woods used for the handle, and shaft material and finish. It is recommended that you get one that fits your body. We will discuss this in class.

It is possible to purchase a baton along with a few accessories directly from Mollard via the company website: [Mollard Conducting Batons](#). Getting your baton early in the semester will be a very good thing! Both the P and the S Batons cost: a) \$35.95 for wood shaft; and b) \$47.95 for carbon fiber shaft.

Course Calendar

January 25:	Introduction: Lessons 1 and 2
February 1:	Lessons 3 and 4 Articulation Exercises 3.1: A, B, D, & D Now the Day Is Over Chester Austrian Hymn Articulation Exercises 4.1 Daily Dozen – Articulation and Dynamics
February 8:	Lesson 5: Videotaping – Now The Day Is Over, Chester
February 15:	Lesson 6 and 7 Theme from Symphony No. 7, Movement 2 Hornpipe My Country, 'tis of Thee Ode to Joy
February 22:	Review 6, 7, and Introduce Lesson 10 Sing We and Chant It Chorale St. Antonii
March 1:	Christopher Bush - (Professor Breaux in England) My Country 'Tis Of Thee (Breaux and original) Star Spangled Banner
March 8:	Review 6, 7, 10, and Introduce Lesson 11 Theme A from Symphony No. 94, Movement 3 The B from Symphony No. 94, Movement 3 Erlaube mir
March 15:	Spring Break!
March 22:	Midterm Conducting Exam – My Country, Tis' of Thee, Breaux Arrangement of My Country, Star Spangled Banner
March 29:	Lessons 16 and 17
April 5:	Lessons 18 and 20
April 12:	Lessons 21 and 22
April 19:	Lesson 24 and 25 and 26
April 26:	Review for Conducting Final Exam – Alleluia, Handsome Butcher, Song of the Black Smith
May 3:	CONDUCTING FINAL (videotaping)