

Syllabus - Spring 2021

MUN 1460/3463/6010 – String Chamber Music (1 credit)

Coordinator/Instructor: Dr. Steven Thomas (cellist@ufl.edu – 352-273-3169)
Office hours: online only, by appointment

Class Schedule

Classes are scheduled according students' and the instructor's availability. Once a weekly class period has been established it remains in effect for the remainder of the semester.

Prerequisites

Admission into the Chamber Music program is by audition and according to the needs of the program. Students enrolled in a studio are exempt from the audition requirement, however new students to the program must be recommended by their studio teacher. The University Orchestra audition at the beginning of each semester may be used as the Chamber Music audition. Other students must arrange an audition by Monday, January 11. Auditionees must prepare a piece or movement representing their best playing, be ready to play a 3-octave scale, and may be given a sight-reading test.

Objectives

Development of technical and interpretative skills as a chamber music performer in preparation for an end-of-semester public concert to be performed at the School of Music. Participants will be assigned by the coordinator to a group which will meet for weekly rehearsals and coachings.

Course content

Repertoire for each participant will be assigned during the first week of classes or before, and will normally be drawn from the standard literature of chamber music involving string instruments.

Grading

The following guidelines will be used in assigning grades at the end of each semester:

- **Attendance** (35% of grade)
- **Mid-term performance** (15% of grade)
- **Final performance** (35% of grade)
- **Preparedness for coachings** (15% of grade)

Attendance and performance expectations are explained in the "String Chamber Music Policies" attached to this syllabus.

Addendum to Syllabi for all String Chamber Music Courses – Fall 2020

- 1) **All classes** will be held in person. Students considering this class should take into account that there is no online option for string chamber music, except if the instructor is prevented from entering the UF campus for health reasons.
- 2) **EXAMS and PERFORMANCES:** the format and schedule of chamber music performances will be confirmed shortly.
- 3) **SAFETY IN CHAMBER MUSIC COACHINGS:** university regulations and safety protocols must be observed at all times. Face masks will be worn and social distancing observed at all times. No exceptions can be made *for any reason*. Failure to comply before or during a class will result in the immediate cancellation of the class and non-complying students will be reported to UF administration. Additional music-specific guidelines will be explained during the first studio class or initial chamber music coaching.
- 4) **PROCEDURES/RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ONLINE CLASSES:** should an online class be necessary it will be conducted on the *Zoom* platform. In the event communication through *Zoom* is not possible, students should be prepared to use *Skype* or *WhatsApp* as back-ups.
 - a) Desktop or laptop computers with an internal or external camera must be used – tablets and cell phones are only acceptable in a demonstrable emergency.
 - b) The use of an external microphone is highly recommended
 - c) In *Zoom*, “original sound” must be enabled
 - d) A single computer should be used for the entire group, with every effort made to find an angle from which each member of the group can be seen while maintaining social distancing.

STRING CHAMBER MUSIC POLICIES – Spring 2021

1. Attendance

- (a) Students are expected to attend all weekly coachings as scheduled and rehearsals as set up by members of their group. The schedule is sent to all participants by the end of the first week of classes.
- (b) At mid-term and final performances, ALL students must attend performances of ALL other groups except those immediately preceding and following their own.
- (c) Requests for excused absences must be made by e-mail as soon as the necessity for absence is known, and at least 3 days prior to the requested date. This includes absences for ALL religious observances (note: you must be a practicing member of the religion for which you are requesting an absence).
- (d) The legitimacy of excused absence requests will be determined solely by the Instructor.
- (e) No-shows will result in automatic lowering of a student's grade, unless the no-show is caused by medical emergency requiring an immediate visit to a medical facility (documentation must be provided) or by a catastrophic personal event.

2. Punctuality

Students must be ready to begin their coachings and rehearsals at the scheduled time. Following the first instance of lateness each semester, which does not carry a penalty, any subsequent occurrence from 5 to 15 minutes will be counted as 1/3 of a no-show. Lateness of more than 15 minutes will be considered a no-show. Excuses for and consequences of lateness follow the guidelines of 1(e) above.

3. Demeanor, dress code, etc

- (a) Students are expected to dress appropriately for all coachings, rehearsals and performances. Tank tops and mini-skirts are not permitted. Concert attire is mandatory for performances.
- (b) Cell phones must be turned off prior to entering the classroom.

4. School of Music events related to chamber music

Students are required to attend all chamber music performances and masterclasses by faculty or visiting artists which take place in the School of Music Building and at the University Auditorium. All events under this rule will be announced by e-mail by the instructor and posted outside the studio. In case of a conflict with a legitimate prior commitment, the instructor must be informed of the conflict within 24 hours of the announcement of the event. Legitimate prior commitments include academic obligations to the University and/or School of Music, religious observances, critical personal events that cannot be rescheduled and non-refundable travel.

5. Grading

Attendance: full credit will be given unless Section 1.(b) or Section 1.(d) above applies (lowering of grade by one full letter) and/or Section 2. (lowering of grade by one level - e.g. from A to A- or from A- to B+).

Mid-term and final performances: average of grades given by faculty in attendance.

Preparedness for coachings: instructors will assess progress and evidence of practice from each participant on a weekly basis – a grade will be assigned based on an aggregate of the semester's work.

6. Communication

The primary form of communication outside the classroom is e-mail. Students must check every day the e-mail address given to the instructor.

7. Academic honesty

When registering at UF, every student signed the following statement: *"I understand that the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in all their academic work. I agree to adhere to this commitment to academic honesty and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the University."* The String Chamber Music program fully supports the intent of the above statement and will not tolerate academic dishonesty.

8. Student code of conduct

Students are expected to obey the University of Florida's code of conduct at all times.

9. Course materials

(a) Students are encouraged to purchase printed sheet music of assigned repertoire, including study scores. Xeroxed copies are not permitted if in violation of copyright law. The instructor will make every attempt to provide participants with required materials.

(b) Recordings used for research and study must also be obtained in compliance with copyright laws.

10. Special needs

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office, which will provide documentation to the student which must be presented to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

11. Implicit agreement

Unless the instructor is informed *in writing or by e-mail* to the contrary by Friday, September 4 at 11:59pm, it will be assumed that the syllabus for this course and all above policies are agreed to, including attendance at mid-term and final performances.