

**San José State University  
School of Music and Dance  
MUSC 147A, Beginning Conducting, Fall 2018**

**Contact Information**

<b>Instructor:</b>	Dr. Jeffrey Benson
<b>Office Location:</b>	Music 262
<b>Telephone:</b>	(408) 924-4645
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<b>Office Hours:</b>	Thursday 12:30-1:30pm
<b>Class Days/Time:</b>	Monday, Wednesday 12:00pm-1:15pm
<b>Classroom:</b>	Music 150
<b>Prerequisites:</b>	Students are required to be of junior standing and a music major, or have instructor consent.
<b>Teaching Assistant:</b>	Beth Nitzan, <a href="mailto:beth.nitzan@gmail.com">beth.nitzan@gmail.com</a> Amy Young, <a href="mailto:aey812@gmail.com">aey812@gmail.com</a>

**Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging**

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on my faculty web page at <http://www.sjsu.edu/people/jeffrey.benson>. You are responsible for regularly checking email to learn any updates.

**Course Description**

Through the development of sound basic conducting technique, students will begin to appreciate the relationship between gesture and sound. Students are required to be of junior standing and a music major, or have instructor consent.

**Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives**

The students will demonstrate musical ideas clearly and efficiently through fundamental conducting gesture. The conducting gesture includes appropriate posture, the use of the baton, expressive and independent use of both hands, beat patterns, cueing, and control of tempo, dynamics and phrase shaping. The student will also study and/or review elements of instrument transposition and musical terminology.

**Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

CLO 1 Explain and demonstrate proper posture for the conductor.

CLO 2 Explain and demonstrate appropriate use of the baton, hand position and conducting plane.

CLO 3 Demonstrate expressive use of both hands as related to the musical ideas in the score.

CLO 4 Demonstrate professional stage presence and emotional communication while conducting in class.

CLO 5 Conduct in a variety of styles including legato, marcato, staccato, etc.

CLO 6 Conduct selected beat patterns and mixed meters.

CLO 7 Effectively cue parts of the ensemble.

CLO 8 Define musical terms as appropriate to the knowledge of a conductor.

CLO 9 Understand the transpositions of instruments as related to the score.

CLO 10 Describe the role of the conductor.

## **Required Texts/Readings**

### **Textbook**

Online packet

### **Other equipment / material requirements**

Baton (12" or 14")

Assigned reading and scores (some provided by instructor, some obtained by students)

### **Optional Textbook**

Green, Elizabeth A.H. and Mark Gibson. *The Modern Conductor*. Prentice Hall, 7<sup>th</sup> edition. ISBN 0-13-182656-5

## **Course Requirements and Assignments**

SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, it is expected that students will spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on. More details about student workload can be found at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf>.

Grades are based upon the following formula. In order to receive a passing grade for this course, the student must satisfactorily complete each of the constituent parts.

### **Conducting Presentations & Self-Evaluations - 45%**

- Conducting assignments are necessarily cumulative and should reflect consistent improvement. The student will also complete a written self-evaluation of each conducting experience.

### **Examinations - 20%**

- The midterm and final exams will include a prepared conducting assignment and a written component. More information will be announced in class as the dates approach.

### **Written Assignments - 25%**

- Students will complete graded assignments throughout the semester. These assignments are due on the date noted on the syllabus.
- The student will submit a rehearsal observation form upon observing of three (3) conductors in rehearsal. The observations must meet the following requirements:
  - Two observations must involve the conductor of a recognized SJSU ensemble or a PROFESSIONAL conductor in the Bay area. The third

observation may include a church or public school conductor. You must observe the conductor rehearsing an ensemble for at least 45 minutes. In addition, one of the rehearsal observations must be a conductor of an instrumental ensemble; one of the observations must be a conductor of a choral ensemble.

- You may not evaluate a rehearsal in which you participate.

#### **Participation - 10%**

- Participation is essential for success in this course. Students must conduct and critique each day in order to earn full credit for participation.
- When not conducting, the student serves in the "performing ensemble."

#### **Grading Information**

90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
60-69	D
59 and lower	F

#### **Penalty for Late or Missed Work**

Assignments are due on the dates stated in the Course Schedule. Students may not make up a missed test or assignment due to an unexcused absence. Missed tests or assignments due to excused absences can only be made up at a time appointed by the instructor. You must notify the instructor of an excused absence *before* the absence occurs.

#### **Classroom Protocol**

Class participation is essential. Students will be involved not only as conductors but as attentive and encouraging ensemble members. When we are conducting vocal music, you are expected to sing. When we are conducting instrumental music, you are expected to bring your instrument and play (if you are an instrumental major) or sing one of the assigned instrumental parts. You are expected to be in class on time (in your seat with all materials by 12pm). Cell phones and other electronic devices should be turned off.

#### **University Policies**

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>.

#### **School of Music and Dance Policies and Procedures**

##### **Music Use Fee:**

Music majors and minors must pay a music equipment use fee each semester. The fee must be paid directly to the Cashier's Office, and you must bring the receipt to the Music Office before completing registration. Applied music instruction will not be authorized until this fee is paid. Music 10B students, or students enrolled in any sound recording course, must pay a fee each semester that they are enrolled in one or more of these classes. The fees are included in the student's bill, with other registration fees.

## MUSC 147A, Beginning Conducting, Fall 2018 Course Schedule

*The schedule is subject to change with fair notice. The instructor will notify students of changes in class or via email.*

### **WEEK ZERO: August 22**

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Wednesday: Course Introduction, Choosing a Baton, Role of Conductor, Basic Pulse, Connection to Breath, Terms, Patterns

Assignments: Purchase baton

### **WEEK ONE: August 27, 29**

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Monday: Conducting I: Exercises in Three and Four

Wednesday: Conducting I: Exercises in Three and Four

Readings: Ormandy, "The Art of Conducting" (August 27)  
Gibson, "The Nature of Conducting" (August 27)  
Gladwell, *Blink* "Introduction" (August 29)

### **WEEK TWO: September 3, 5**

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Monday: NO CLASS—LABOR DAY

Wednesday: CONDUCTING I EVALUATION

### **WEEK THREE: September 10, 12**

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Monday: The Baton

Wednesday: Conducting II, Expressive Gestures

Readings: Green: The Expressive Gestures  
Assignments: Self-Evaluation I due (September 12)

### **WEEK FOUR: September 17, 19**

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Monday: Conducting II, Phrasing and Tempo Changes

Wednesday: Conducting II, Phrasing and Tempo Changes

Assignments: Rehearsal Observation I due (September 17)  
Terms Assignment I due (September 19)

### **WEEK FIVE: September 24, 26**

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Monday: CONDUCTING II EVALUATION

Wednesday: Left Hand Independence, Introduction to clefs and transposition

Readings: Hunsberger & Ernst: Clefs and Transposition

### **WEEK SIX: October 1, 3**

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Monday: Left Hand Independence, Clefs and Transposition, Conducting III

Wednesday: Conducting III

Assignments: Self-Evaluation II due (October 1)  
Clefs/Transposition Assignment I due (October 3)

### **WEEK SEVEN: October 8, 10**

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Monday: Conducting III

Wednesday: CONDUCTING III EVALUATION

Assignments: Clefs/Transposition Assignment II due (October 8)

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**WEEK EIGHT: October 15, 17**

Monday: WRITTEN MIDTERM EXAMINATION (Terminology and Transpositions)  
Wednesday: The Fermata

Assignments: Self-Evaluation III due (October 17)  
Fermata Handout Practice

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**WEEK NINE: October 22, 24**

Monday: Melded Gestures, Conducting IV  
Wednesday: NO CLASS—Choraliers Tour

Assignments: Rehearsal Observation II due (October 22)  
Fermata Handout Practice

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**WEEK TEN: October 29, 31**

Monday: Melded Gestures, Conducting IV  
Wednesday: Melded Gestures, Conducting IV

Assignments: Fermata Handout Practice

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**WEEK ELEVEN: November 5, 7**

Monday: Score Study, Preparing the score  
Wednesday: CONDUCTING IV EVALUATION

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**WEEK TWELVE: November 12, 14**

Monday: Score Study, Preparing the score  
Wednesday: Two, One, Six and Five Patterns

Readings: Score Study Handout  
Self-Evaluation IV due (November 14)

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**WEEK THIRTEEN: November 19, 21**

Monday: Asymmetrical and Irregular Meters  
Wednesday: NO CLASS—THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

Assignments: Terms Assignment II due (November 19)

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**WEEK FOURTEEN: November 26, 28**

Monday: Conducting V, Final Conducting Music  
Wednesday: Conducting V

Assignments: Score Study Assignment due (November 28)  
Rehearsal Observation III due (November 28)

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**WEEK FIFTEEN: December 3, December 5**

Monday: CONDUCTING V EVALUATION  
Wednesday: WRITTEN FINAL EXAMINATION

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**WEEK SIXTEEN: December 10**

Monday: FINAL CONDUCTING EVALUATION

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**FINAL EXAM:**

**Thursday, December 13, 9:45am-12noon**  
*Conducting Evaluation Presentation*