

Mus 1061

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Instrumental Ensemble

Professor Mary Findley

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Fall, 2012

MUS 1061, 0/1 credit

String/Keyboard Ensemble

Study

Course Description

Students are placed in small ensemble groups of varying sizes and instrumentation. Participation at this level will provide a challenging ensemble experience for advanced students, exploring a variety of repertoire, development of the skills necessary for successful ensemble performance, with a required public performance of repertoire studied. There will be an academic component, as assigned. Students should expect their study to include:

- Musical vocabulary: understanding all printed markings, regardless of language
- Tuning: initial instrument tuning as an ensemble; harmonic and melodic tuning
- Intonation: how to evaluate, correct and practice
- Score reading: appropriate use of a score for improved ensemble performance
- Bowing: coordination among string players of direction, articulation, and strokes; ending sound together
- Matching articulations with non-string instruments if applicable
- Communication and leadership: how to start and stop; how to direct musical line; how to keep the group together
- Balance: how to solve balance problems and other issues pertaining to dynamics
- Musical line: identification and enhancement; gesture as a musical concept
- Vibrato: its use as an expressive tool
- Performance etiquette: stage presence; presentation
- Historical reference: research of composer, time of composition; research of any standard forms or styles involved in the works being studied; preparation of program notes

Course Requirements

Repertoire will be determined following one or two sessions of reading of works appropriate for the ensemble. Selected work/s will then be used as a vehicle for discussion about, and work on, the above-mentioned items. Students *will be expected* to make choices and decisions of both technical and interpretive import for both their individual parts and for the group. Each member of the ensemble is expected to devote adequate individual practice time to learn his/her own part, and is encouraged to take any difficulties to his/her private instructor. There will be minimal time during coaching sessions to address individual technical issues. The ensemble shall rehearse together a minimum of once a week for 75 minutes and will be expected to perform on a concert during the semester.

Attendance-Department of Music Performance Study Attendance Policy

- Coaching sessions (75 minutes each) per semester: 12-13
- The department of music is not obligated to schedule make-up lessons for those missed due to student non-attendance (including illness, vacation, etc.). In the event of instructor cancellation, a make-up date will be scheduled.
- If a student registers or receives their ensemble assignment after the first (or second) scheduled ensemble meeting, that coaching session/s will not be taught, nor count against the student's grade or attendance.
- If you are unable to attend your coaching session, please notify me at home. Last minute cancellations may be made by calling the studio or leaving a message through the music department office. DO NOT make last minute cancellations by email. You are also obligated to notify all your colleagues in the ensemble if you will be absent from a coaching session. Coaching will still be held even when an ensemble member is absent.

General Lesson Protocol

Students are expected to attend all coaching sessions. All members of the ensemble should have pencils, their music, and their copies of the score available at all sessions. You are expected to have put in bar numbers and checked dynamics and articulations with the score, making necessary corrections, and to have begun putting cues into your individual part as a matter of course.

Email through your GWU account is the primary method of communication outside the studio. Please be sure to regularly check this account and to respond promptly when requested.

Grading

- All students will be graded upon attendance, preparation of materials, and completion of any supplementary assignments, such as concert attendance or preparation of program notes. Attitude towards assignments and cooperation during coaching sessions will be given significant weight in your grade. Failure to mark and/or copy your part as requested will be a factor in grading.
- Absences at coaching sessions have a very negative impact on your colleagues and may jeopardize performance options. Therefore, unexcused absences and tardiness will receive extra weight in my grading consideration.
- For 2000 level students, your ensemble grade will become 17% of your private lesson grade where chamber music is your designated ensemble.

Progress in Lessons

As it is possible to study chamber music multiple semesters, any student doing so would be expected over time to demonstrate increasing familiarity with a widening range of styles and periods of music, as well as showing technical and musical growth not only on his/her individual instrument, but in his/her ability to lead the group and identify group musical and

technical issues whose improvement would benefit the ensemble. Elementary concepts should become automatic so that more time and effort can be devoted to more advanced musical challenges. The comfort of performance should steadily increase as well as the ability to learn, interpret and prepare new compositions more quickly and efficiently. More initiative in presentation of musical ideas and technical solutions is expected of all members of the ensemble with each additional semester of study.

Support for Students Outside the Classroom

- Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact the Disability Support Services office at 202-994-8250, **Phillips Hall Suite 102**, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information refer to <http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss/>
- The University Counseling Center (UCC) offers 24/7 assistance and referral to address students' personal, social, career and study skills problems. Services for students include crisis and emergency mental health consultations and confidential assessment, counseling services (individual and small group), and referrals. <http://gwired.gwu.edu/counsel/CounselingServices/AcademicSupportServices>

I am always available between lessons to assist you in a musical matter, or in issues relating to my position as **chamber music** coordinator. You may contact me by email or call me, but please, no calls after **9:00 PM**.
mfindley@gwu.edu **202.337.7101**

Thanks to Lori Barnet for text.