

MUN 2800 (26883)

Popular Music Ensemble (spring 2021)

Ensemble Director: Jason Mullen: jasonmullen@ufl.edu

Office Hours: Via zoom and by appointment

Class Time: Thursdays, Periods 10-11 (5:10-7:05)

MUB 121 (Orchestra Room – School of Music Building)

Objectives and Description:

Defining popular music is difficult. Generally, it can be considered as, “music that is mass-reproduced and disseminated via mass-media” which is listened to by “large numbers” and “typically draws upon a variety of preexisting musical traditions” (Starr, Waterman, 6). With such a broad definition popular music studies converge with diverse and profound issues such as: race, identity, gender, class, place, technology, aesthetics, and society. The Popular Music Ensemble explores popular music from all genres/subgenres and eras utilizing socially informed and musically creative methods towards investigating these issues through performance.

The ensemble is open to: drummers/percussionists, rappers, horn players, bassists, programming/sequencers/synthns, vocalists, keyboard players, guitarists, strings, etc. and aims to create a space for all UF students to develop musicianship, critical thinking, and performance skills.

Exact note-for-note recreations of popular songs, although possible and sometimes appropriate, are not always conceivable, nor desirable; rather, crafting an informed and ensemble-specific interpretation will be favored. There is no need to be able to read music for this ensemble. If it becomes a necessary tool for remembering a part, we'll write something down in notation for those who read it, but mostly we'll rely on chord charts, lyric sheets, and our ears.

The semester will be broken into **three phases**. Within the **first phase** we will decide on repertoire that we want to explore taking into account available instruments/singers, number of students, and desired message we may wish to communicate. The **second phase** will be the laboratory setting, where we deconstruct component parts of a song, exploring: structure, lyrics, timbre, instrumentation, and meaning. Students are encouraged to work together, with the instructor and one another, in developing parts that work for them individually and for the song as a whole. In the **third phase** we will begin learning and rehearsing interpretations of the song for performance. This phase will engage problem-solving skills and asks that you employ a communal sense of flexibility as we work through and polish our repertoire for performance.

The semester will culminate with a performance, which will be accompanied by a brief oral explanation that curates the arranging process, socio-historical background, and interpretations of a song's meaning.

In light of the distancing protocols due to Covid 19 our final performance will not have a live in-person audience. Let's work together throughout the semester to reimagine different ways we can share our work i.e., live stream, video, socially distanced outdoor performance, etc.

Requirements and Policies:

This ensemble is a group effort; for example, shaking the tambourine on eight bars is equally as important as someone singing lead vocals. With this spirit in mind, everyone is expected to learn and practice their parts and come to rehearsals prepared to cooperate, analyze, and perform.

Students requesting accommodation should first register with the Disability Resource Center. The DRC will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Here's the DRC's information: DRC@ufsa.ufl.edu (352) 392-8565.

This ensemble will often record audio and video as tool to help document and learn. These recorded materials will be kept only among those enrolled in the class and not shared outside of the group. If you are in anyway uncomfortable with this please contact me directly so we can make arrangements that you are comfortable with.

In case of scheduling conflicts including a date in which you cannot make a rehearsal, please inform the instructor in advance.

UF School of Music COVID-19 Policies and Protocols, Fall 2020

- ☐ Observe all signage populating the building on best health & safety practices, such as physical distancing, use of masks, avoiding touching of common surfaces before cleaning, etc. ^[1]_[SEP]
- ☐ *Masks are required everywhere inside SOM buildings*, including the MUB, Steinbrenner, and University Auditorium. This includes classrooms, hallways, practice rooms—all spaces. In addition to UF and SOM safety protocols, each student must have the necessary PPE (face mask, hand sanitizer, wipes, gloves) necessary to meet one's own comfort level. ^[1]_[SEP]
- ☐ Hand sanitizer dispensers are distributed throughout the building, and at north and south entrances. To control traffic, east and west doors will be *exit only*. ^[1]_[SEP]
- ☐ Alcohol and dry wipes are available in all practice rooms and faculty studios/offices for keyboards (not to be used on the black piano finish), doorknobs, music stands, etc. Use supplies in the practice room to clean surfaces you may touch during use (keyboard surface, music stand, chair, door handle). ^[1]_[SEP]
- ☐ Practice rooms have been allocated by performance area. Practice **only** in those rooms assigned to your instrument. This new procedure is in place for your safety and will assist

in contact tracing, if needed. Applied faculty will facilitate practice- time signup for their studio during the first week of classes. [L] [SEP]

□ Practice room use is limited to **40** minutes of continuous use during your assigned time, after which the room must be vacated for air refreshing until the start of the next class period. All practice rooms are limited to one-person-at-a-time capacity.

Accompanists are not permitted to rehearse in a practice room with a student. [L] [SEP]

□ Accompanist rehearsals have been designated to specific rooms where physical distancing can be maintained. Please consult accompanists for scheduling. [L] [SEP]

□ Ensemble rehearsals have specific limitations for continuous rehearsal time according to the type of ensemble (ours will be 45 minutes in the orchestra room and 15 minute breaks). Breaks will be built into your rehearsal schedule to allow for the room air to refresh. Please consult your instructor/syllabus. Do not arrive to your ensemble rehearsal early. Enter only at the start of the class period. Consult your professor for the appropriate Class Entry Time. [L] [SEP]

□ Vacating a room for air refreshing means ***leaving the building***, whether the MUB, Steinbrenner, or University Auditorium. Although the main SOM building is open- air, it is not outdoors, and hallways do not provide adequate space for physical distancing. Please plan accordingly (umbrella, etc.) [L] [SEP]

□ Do not congregate in hallways prior to classes or ensemble rehearsals or during class/ensemble breaks. Stay outside of the building to ensure plenty of distance from classmates. [L] [SEP]

□ A wash station for wind instruments (with hot water) will reside in the MUB atrium once the remainder of equipment from the summer renovation has been removed. [L] [SEP] □ [L] [SEP]

□ For all performance activity (lessons, ensembles, practice), masks must be worn at all times by voice, percussion, keyboard, and string students. Masks must be worn by wind students when they are not performing. Faculty, GAs and all support personnel must maintain masks at all times while teaching. [L] [SEP]

□ SOM Physical Distancing Guidelines are as follows: strings/percussion/keyboard: 6ft with masks; winds: 10ft with masks (when not performing); voice: 15ft with masks. [L] [SEP]

If at any time you feel ill: [L] [SEP] **1. Contact the Student Health Care Center at 352.392.1161 to schedule an [L] [SEP] appointment. [L] [SEP] 2. Inform your instructor and make arrangements to stay away from face-to- [L] [SEP] face meetings until you are well. [L] [SEP] If you feel you have been in *close contact with someone who has COVID-19: 1. Contact the Student Health Care Center at 352.392.1161 to schedule an [L] [SEP] appointment. If you're symptomatic, this appointment will be conducted via [L] [SEP] tele-medicine. [L] [SEP] 2. At your appointment, you will be told of the next steps you should take. [L] [SEP] *A close contact is defined as someone who has been within 6 feet of an infected person for at**

least 15 minutes, starting from 48 hours before the start of symptoms until the time they are isolated. UF has established a three-tiered approach to our safe return to campus: Education, Engagement, and Enforcement (<https://policy.ufl.edu/policy/student-behavioral-expectations-in-response-to-covid-19/>).

Bell covers for all wind instrument studio students, marching band, and wind faculty members have been ordered. They should be available and distributed as soon as they arrive. They will be required during all practice and performance activity.

Enforcement of behavior found to be a violation of the Student Conduct Code may result in sanctions. Let's all join together to promote a safe campus by joining the #IPledgeFlorida campaign (<https://sg.ufl.edu/IPledgeFlorida/>).

Assessment/Grading:

Your grade is determined by attendance and effort in this class. If you attend rehearsals and performances, practice your parts and try your best you will receive an A for the course. If you do not show up to rehearsals or come consistently late to rehearsals, you will receive less than an A. Attendance: 50%; Effort: 50%.

Information on current UF grading policies for assigning grade points may be found at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx#calculating>

GRADING: A 95% A- 90% B+ 87% B 83% B- 80% C+ 77% C 73% C- 70% D+ 67% D 63% D- 60% E 0-59%

Preliminary Performance Dates: • (time/location TBA)