

Marching Band Techniques MUE 4480-16577

Syllabus - Fall 2025

Time: M / W / F Period 5: 11:45am – 12:35pm

Class Location: SBH 005 / 102

Instructor: Prof. John M. Watkins, Jr.

Email: Watkins@ufl.edu

Phone: (352) 273-3152

Office: 107 Steinbrenner Band Hall

Office Hours: By appointment

Prerequisites:

- Music Education major
- Successful completion of at least one semester of MUN 1110

Course Description:

All of you are talented, skilled musicians and intelligent, well-educated individuals who will be a welcome addition to our profession. This course is designed to introduce you to the fundamental principles of effective instruction with respect to the contemporary marching band and to provide you with opportunities to practice applying these skills in learning how to prepare, organize, teach, and rehearse this type of ensemble. In addition, you will be challenged to examine your own expectations, aspirations and biases regarding the role of the marching band in music education. Through practical assignments, guest lecturers, and multimedia presentations, you will gain a command of the terminology, pedagogy, and structure of the marching band activity.

By the end of the semester, you will be able to:

1. Clearly articulate your philosophy of music education with respect to the marching band.
2. Display an understanding of the organization, administration and operation of a public-school marching band program.
3. Systematically analyze and evaluate marching band rehearsals and performances with respect to musical and visual components.
4. Design effective learning sequences with respect to movement as it relates to marching band.
5. Speak and write clearly and cogently; giving succinct instructions and direct positive and negative feedback.
6. Display an understanding of the concepts of marching band show design using both individual and computer assisted design software.
7. Display an understanding of the concepts of arranging for athletic bands, including voicings, copyright and clearance issues.

Specialized areas of study will include: Philosophy and Mission, Organization and Administration, Budgets and Purchasing, Lesson Planning and Teaching Strategies, Evaluation of Rehearsal Techniques, Performance Evaluation, Show Planning and Repertoire, Arranging for Athletic Bands, Copyright and Clearances, Drill Design and Computer Charting Techniques, Auxiliary Groups and Sections.

Required Materials

SOFTWARE:

Pyware College Subscription, 6 months on your laptop! (Paid for by fees)

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE TEXTS:

Bailey/Cannon/Payne. *The Complete Marching Band Resource Manual*, Univ. Penn. Press, 2015
Ryder, Dan. *Techniques of Marching Band Show Designing*. Austin, TX: Dan Ryder Field Drills, 2000.
Dunnigan, Patrick. *Marching Band Techniques*, 2nd ed.. Northfield, IL: The Instrumentalist, 2007.
Smith, Gary E. *The System: A Marching Band Guide*. Savoy, IL: 11 Magnolia Court, 2015.
Smith & Wolinsky. *Marching Band Techniques*. Schiffer, 2016

ACCESSORIES:

1. Flexi-curve, flexible-ruler, basic drafting tools
2. Large 3-Ring Binder notebook with dividers to organize all your materials

Procedures

All assignments must be organized, clear and neat. The nature of the marching band activity requires meeting deadlines; therefore, **LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED** unless extraordinary circumstances exist. The course schedule allows ample time for completion of all assignments.

Attendance Policy

You must contribute logical comments, thoughts, and questions during class discussion and demonstrations. To adequately do this you should miss no more than three classes *for any reason*. Each absence beyond three will result in a grade reduction of one letter. You must be on time for class due to the nature of assignments and information

Activity Summary

1. Complete assigned readings in text and other sources and submit brief summaries displaying your understanding of the material presented.
2. Complete observations of three different high school marching band rehearsals, providing a written summary per the Observation Guide (attached).
3. Design a handbook for your own ideal band program.
4. Design instructional sequences and present teaching demonstrations for a variety of marching fundamentals from your handbook through a series of teaching rounds, including lesson plans.
 - Throughout the semester the student will teach a variety of fundamentals (stationary, moving and combinations) to other students. Lessons will be recorded for self and teacher evaluation with respect to accuracy and organization of presented information, feedback, and peer-student achievement. Videos and self-assessments will be submitted at specific due dates throughout the semester.
 - Lesson plans must be submitted prior to each round and will be evaluated as to completeness, accuracy and achievement.
5. Demonstrate an understanding and competency of quality audio/visual programming for the marching band by presenting accurate and succinct analyses of marching band and drum corps shows.
6. Demonstrate an understanding and competency of arranging music for athletic bands. Students will prepare and submit an arrangement of a song of their choice for a standardized instrumentation.

7. Demonstrate an understanding and competency of charting concepts by preparing and presenting charts designed by hand.
8. Demonstrate your understanding and competency of charting concepts and competency in technology using Pyware charting software.
9. Prepare and present a logical dissection of marching band music into appropriate phrasing and motion.
10. Prepare and present an in-class show design project, including instruction, using the students in the class.
11. Successfully complete a Practicum as assigned; completely planning a full-band marching band trip.
12. Meet criterion on written examinations concerning topics covered in class and homework

Independent Scholarship Project: Only students who meet all the criteria for a grade of B (see Grading) You have total control over the size and scope of the project. To qualify for a grade of A, the project must include printed musical score(s), flow charts, drill charts, a sample coordinate sheet, as well as an electronic file of animated, computer-generated drill. You are free to select music, size of ensemble, instrumentation, number and type of auxiliary personnel.

NOTES: Any assignments(s) may be changed with my prior approval. If you can demonstrate your knowledge of the material, do not waste time with busywork. All assignments must be completed and submitted on the printed dates to receive credit. No incomplete grades (X) will be given for any reason.

Grade Criteria:

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| A | Satisfy all criteria for B plus Independent Scholarship Project |
| B | Written course requirements completed with competence and accuracy <i>and</i> all criteria met with demonstrated competence on 4 of 4 teaching assignments |
| C | Written course requirements adequately completed, <i>and</i> all criteria met on 3 of 4 teaching assignments |
| D | One or more written course requirements not adequately completed, <i>and</i> all criteria met on 2 of 4 teaching assignments |
| F | One or more written course requirements not completed <i>or</i> failure to meet all criteria on any videotaped in-class teaching assignments |

See above for Attendance Policy and its relationship to the final course grade.

Information about University-wide resources can be found [here!](#)

Caveat: Scheduled discussion topics may change during the semester as guest speakers are available.

DATE			TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
F	August	22	Introductions / course outline / materials / policies	Dunnigan: Ch.1,2,12
M	August	25	Organization / Administration / Philosophy	Dunnigan: Ch. 7, 8
W	August	27	Leadership / Rehearsal Observations	Teaching Philosophy
F	August	29	Lesson Plans / Critical Analysis	
M	September	1	NO CLASS – LABOR DAY	
W	September	3	Handbooks / Fundamentals	Welcome Letter
F	September	6	Budgeting	MB Reh. Eval #1
M	September	8	types of drill movement / terminology	Stationary Fund.
W	September	10	Practice Teaching Round I – Stationary Fundamentals	Lesson Plan #1
F	September	12	Video examples / Forms / lines / shapes	Behavior Exp.
M	September	15	Lab: software overview / micro-drill tasks	Budget Project
W	September	17	Show planning	Moving Fund #1 (FM/BM)
F	September	19	Teaching Round 2 – Moving Fundamentals (fwd/back)	Lesson Plan #2
M	September	22	Micro-drill tasks	Lesson 1 video + Self-Eval #1
W	September	24	Sketching forms / lines / shapes by hand	
F	September	26	Flowcharting / story-boarding	MB Reh. Eval #2
M	September	29	Lab: software overview / micro-drill tasks	Moving Fund #2 (Adj. Step Sizes)
W	October	1	Selecting music	
F	October	3	Lab: software overview / micro-drill tasks	Lesson 2 video + Self-Eval #2
M	October	6	Tutorial Overview	
W	October	8	Practice Teaching Round 3 – Moving Fundamentals 2 (adj.step)	Lesson Plan #3
F	October	10	Copyright for athletic bands	
M	October	13	Lab: software overview / micro-drill tasks	
W	October	15	Arranging for the athletic band	Moving Fund #3 (Slides)
F	October	17	Lesson 3 video + Self-Eval #3	
M	October	20	Lab: micro-drill tasks	Lesson Plan #4
W	October	22	Lab: micro-drill tasks	
F	October	24	Practice Teaching Round 3 – Moving Fundamentals 3 (slides)	Tutorial Drill
M	October	27	Computer charting / class drill assignment	MB Reh. Eval #2

W	October	29	Computer charting / class drill assignment	Basic Forms
F	October	31	Computer charting / class drill assignment	
M	November	3	Computer charting / class drill assignment	Arranging Project
W	November	5	Computer charting / class drill assignment	
F	November	7	Computer charting / class drill assignment	Lesson 3 video + Self-Eval #3
M	November	10	Computer charting / class drill assignment	
W	November	12	Practice Teaching – How to Clean Drill	
F	November	14	Practice Teaching – How to Clean Drill	
M	November	17	Computer charting / individual drill project	
W	November	19	Computer charting / individual drill project	Lesson 4 video + Self-Eval #4
F	November	21	Computer charting / individual drill project	Class Drill Due
M	November	24	NO CLASS – FALL BREAK	
W	November	26	NO CLASS – FALL BREAK	
F	November	28	NO CLASS – FALL BREAK	
M	December	1	Lab: individual drill projects.	FINAL Handbook Due
W	December	3	Lab: individual drill projects	Final Project Due
F	December	19	10:00AM – 12:00PM FINAL EXAM	