

Syllabus - Fall 2025

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

Coordinator/Instructor: Dr. Steven Thomas (cellist@ufl.edu – 352-273-3169)
Office hours 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 Wednesday, January 10. Auditionees must prepare one work, 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 and demonstrated at mid-term and end-of-semester public concerts at the School of Music.

Mid-term performance: October 8 – 7:20pm; **final performance:** November 17 – 7:20pm.

Course content

Participants will be assigned by the coordinator to a group whose repertoire will be assigned during the first week of classes.

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.

STRING CHAMBER MUSIC POLICIES

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: instructor 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 Tuesday, January 11 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.