

Syllabus - Spring 2026

MVS 3433 - Cello Performance (2 credits)

Instructor: Dr. Steven Thomas (273-3169 - cellist@ufl.edu)
Office hours: by appointment / Class schedule: TBA

1. Prerequisites for all cello study

Students must pass an audition before at least three members of the string faculty. Students may audition during one of the regularly scheduled School of Music audition days or must arrange an audition before the end of the ADD/DROP session at the beginning of the semester in which they wish to enroll. Auditionees must prepare two contrasting pieces or movements representing different musical styles, and sight-reading will be given. Students who are neither music majors nor minors will only be accepted if space is available in the studio. **All students accepted for cello study must register and play in the University Symphony Orchestra or other approved ensemble.**

2. Prerequisites for MVS 3433

All music majors must pass a Pre-Professional jury at the end of MVS 2423 for admission into MVS 3433. In addition to performing their jury works, they are expected to speak for 5 minutes about one of their pieces and provide knowledgeable answers to questions from the faculty panel concerning both historical and theoretical aspects of the music they just performed. Additionally, sightreading will be given. Students must be passed by a majority of the faculty present at the Pre-Professional jury to be eligible to register for MVS 3433. Minors and non-majors will only be accepted into MVS 3433 if they meet the same technical standards. Note: Minors are required to take at least one semester of MVS 3433 to complete their Minor.

3. Objectives

Development of advanced technical and interpretative skills as a cellist, expansion of repertoire, significant presence as a performer, as demonstrated at a mid-term presentation and at a final end-of-semester promotional jury to be performed to members of the School of Music Faculty.
Mid-term: one movement from a solo Bach Suite played from memory – 2/24/2026 (12:50pm)
Final: a 15-minute performance which can include mid-term piece – 4/28/2026 (time TBA)

4. Course Content

Students develop fluency in advanced technique, including the ability to perform any 4-octave scale or arpeggio on demand. Etudes are more advanced and repertoire is expanded. Performances should not be restricted to studio classes and outside venues should be pursued. Semester-end juries must feature 2 different works for 15 minutes of playing. A junior recital must be given in the 2nd semester of MVS 3433, consisting of no less than 35 minutes of music of contrasting styles, and including 3 movements from one of the first 3 Bach Suites, performed from memory. A jury is not required for the semester in which the junior recital is given.

The following repertoire must be learned **each semester** and performed with a level of proficiency and fluency deemed appropriate by the School of Music Faculty:

- a)** Scales and Arpeggios - assigned according to individual students' needs
- b)** Etudes: assigned according to individual students' needs
- c)** Bach: 3 movts of Suites No. 2 & 3, BWV 1008-9 - 2 movts must be memorized
- d)** 1 movement of a standard concerto (memorized) or sonata -
sample concerti: Haydn D, Schumann, Elgar

sample sonatas: Boccherini A, Beethoven Op 69, Shostakovitch

- Additionally, students are required to attend and participate in a weekly studio class, performing three times during each semester and making two one-minute verbal "performance introductions" of a work to be performed

NOTE: These are MINIMUM requirements. Adjustments may be made depending on each individual's experience and needs.

GRADING

Semester grades are assigned according to the following elements:

- 1) Attendance (20%)
- 2) Weekly performance in cello lessons (35%)
- 3) Mid-term presentation grade (15%)
- 4) Final jury grade (30%)

Weekly progress may be discussed at weekly lessons and will be made available in writing upon request.

CELLO STUDIO POLICIES

1. Attendance

- (a) Students are expected to attend weekly lessons as scheduled. The schedule will be posted on the studio door.
- (b) 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).
- (c) The legitimacy of excused absence requests will be determined solely by the Instructor.
- (d) 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 or by a catastrophic personal event.

2. Punctuality

Students must be ready to begin their lessons 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 $\frac{1}{2}$ 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(d) above.

3. Demeanor, dress code, etc

- (a) Students are expected to dress appropriately for all cello lessons and studio classes. Tank tops and mini-skirts are not permitted. Knee-length (or longer) clothing is recommended.
- (b) Cell phones must be turned off prior to entering the classroom.
- (c) Gum chewing is not permitted during any performance related activity, including orchestra

and chamber music

4. Studio class

Attendance at weekly studio classes is mandatory. Students are expected to perform at least twice each semester during studio class.

5. School of Music cello-related events

Students are required to attend all cello recitals by fellow students enrolled in the cello studio, faculty or visiting artists, cello masterclasses, string chamber music masterclasses and other cello-related events. All events under this rule will be announced by e-mail by the instructor and posted on the studio door. 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.

6. Communication

The primary form of communication outside the studio and classroom is e-mail. Students must check their UF e-mail address every day and have a 24-hour window to respond. Text messaging should be used for urgent messages. Calls to the instructor's cell phone should only be made when necessary and urgent.

7. Course materials

- (a) Students are expected to purchase printed sheet music as required and recommended by the Instructor. Exact materials are determined by each individual student's semester assignment. Xeroxed copies are not permitted if in violation of copyright law. The total average annual cost of required sheet music should not exceed \$100.
- (b) Recordings used for research and study must also be obtained in compliance with copyright laws.

8. General

The cello studio adheres to all university-wide policies which may be accessed by following this link: <https://go.ufl.edu/syllabuspolicies>