

**TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY - COMMERCE**  
**DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC**

**PERCUSSION SYLLABUS**  
**FOR APPLIED PERCUSSION LESSONS**  
**(Lower Division 152, Upper Division 352, & Graduate 552)**

**Instructor: Brian Zator, Director of Percussion**  
**Room 125**  
**(903) 886-5299**

**Office Hours: TBA (Will be posted after lesson assignments)**  
**Brian\_Zator@tamu-commerce.edu**

**Percussion Studio web-site: [www.tamu-commerce.edu/music/percussion](http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/music/percussion)**

***University Mission Statement***

*Texas A&M University-Commerce nurtures and educates for success through access to academic, research, and service programs of high quality.*

***Music Department Mission Statement***

*The Music Department of Texas A&M University-Commerce promotes excellence in music through the rigorous study of music history, literature, theory, composition, pedagogy, and the preparation of music performance in applied study and ensembles to meet the highest standards of aesthetic expression.*

***“...Increase an awareness of the present and establish goals so changes become effortless and easy.” Barry Green***

### **Applied Percussion Lessons**

The Percussion Curriculum will be used for all applied lesson students in Lower and Upper Divisions in all degree programs including the Graduate level. Students will be placed in specific levels, according to their needs and will have twelve lessons throughout the semester. Each level has specific goals that students will be working to achieve in addition to any personal goals each student might have. Lessons will be divided up into two thirty-minute halves, each focusing on one instrument (i.e. keyboard and snare drum). It is the student's responsibility to prepare materials listed in the Curriculum according to their level of study and lesson week. Materials performed in lessons will be chosen at random from each assignment. Additional material may be assigned, according to the individual needs of each student.

### **Attendance**

Attendance at every lesson is mandatory. Students must give advanced notice if a lesson will be missed. In this case, the lesson can be re-scheduled. If no advance notice is given, the lesson will result in a “0” for that lesson. If you know you will be missing a lesson, call Mr. Zator at 886-5299 or your respective instructor **BEFORE YOUR LESSON TIME** to explain the situation. If Mr. Zator or your instructor is unavailable, please leave a message, call the Music office at 886-5304, or leave a note on Mr. Zator's office door. If the instructor misses with or without advanced notice, the lesson will be made up.

### **Juries**

Students are responsible for performing a jury piece for each instrument they are studying during that semester. Each piece will be assigned or approved by the instructor, then prepared over the course of the semester. Each student will then perform both jury pieces for a panel of faculty/staff members. A grade will be given for this performance and factored into the final grade. *The final grade will be lowered five points for not having originals at the jury performance.*

### **Performances**

In addition to the final jury, all jury pieces must be performed on a Percussion Area Recital or Studio Class for a grade (unless excused by the instructor). These performances account for 10% of your final grade. This percentage may change according to the individual and the performance on a joint or solo recital.

### **Sight-Reading**

All students, regardless of level, will take a marimba sight-reading mid-term and final exam. The exam will include sight-reading one short etude. This grade will be factored into the applied lesson average as the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> grades. The exam will take place at the beginning of the appropriate lesson (approximately week six and the last lesson of the semester).

To facilitate preparation, students will be expected to practice sight-reading for a minimum of 10 minutes a day with several method books available for students to use throughout the semester. Students are also encouraged to use their own materials. As a general rule, but very important for sight-reading skills, DO NOT put this off until the last minute; form a habit of doing this every day.

### **Research Report**

All students, regardless of level, will be responsible for writing a mini-research report on each of their jury pieces. Using resources from PAS, the library, message boards, and forums will assist students in finding information about the piece, composer, etc. Necessary information include composer dates, composition date, premiere performances, dedications and general historical information about the work and composer. Each report needs to be at least a ½ page with 12-point Times font, single spaced. Document all sources in whatever format you wish (MLA, Turabian, etc.). These reports are due at your jury.

## **Grading**

The second excused absences will drop your grade by five points. Any absences after that will result in further dropping of the final grade by five more points. Grading is determined by weekly preparation (50%), jury performance (30%), percussion area recital or studio class performances (10%), and research report on jury pieces (10%). A high level of weekly preparation is expected for every lesson. This preparation will be recorded each week and will account for your weekly preparation average.

## **Barriers**

At the end of each semester, all students must pass a “barrier exam” covering the material from the Percussion Curriculum. Selections from the weekly assignments will be chosen from random and the student must show a thorough knowledge of the material. All barrier materials will be graded pass or fail, but not included in the final lesson grade. If a student fails the barrier exam, the level must be repeated. If a student fails a level three times, that student will not be allowed to continue the music major degree at TAMU-C.

Students will be required to play and pass off all 48 scales (12 major, natural minor, harmonic minor & melodic minor) by the end of their sophomore year. (See lower/upper division section below for additional details.) This is accomplished by passing off the scales required in lessons during the barrier exam.

**Practice:**        *“I never practice, I always play.” Wanda Landowska*

Minimum daily practice time should equal the credit amount of the lesson (i.e. two credit lesson = two hours a day of practice). Daily practice is essential for musical and technical growth and advancement.

## **Practice Logs**

All students are encouraged to bring their practice logs to each lesson. These logs will document your practice times for the previous week and proposed times for the upcoming week. Although Mr. Zator writes down pertinent information on two pages (one for him and one for you), your personal logs can also be used to record questions you might have and could ask at your lesson. Add any other information to your own lesson notebook as soon as the lesson is over. Use this material and organizational tool to help you better prepare for your next lesson and your barrier and jury performances.

## **Lower/Upper Division Applied Percussion Lessons (152, 352)**

All new students (freshman and transfers) will take lower division lessons (152). After completing level II on snare drum, level III on keyboard (which includes passing off all 48 scales), level I on timpani, level I on drumset, and writing a short percussion-related research paper, students may then take upper division lessons (352). These lower division requirements must be met by the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> semester of study (2<sup>nd</sup> semester for transfers). A one long semester grace period is allowed, but if these requirements are not met by the given deadline, one will not be allowed to continue the music major degree at TAMU-C.

## **Recitals**

Music Education majors are required to perform one 1/2 recital during their senior year. Additional recitals (i.e. Junior, Special, Joint or full recital) may be performed, but must be with the approval of the instructor. This will be on an individual basis. Those performing recitals will not be required to perform a jury, but will need to perform in studio class. Grading will be adjusted to the following: weekly preparation (60%) recital performance (30%), and research report on recital pieces (10%). If one is performing a recital and studying a barrier instrument, the jury and studio class performances will be required on that particular instrument. Grading will be adjusted to the following: weekly preparation (50%), recital (30%), jury (10%), and research report on recital and jury pieces (10%).

Students performing a recital must play a hearing of all their pieces no less than 10 days prior to their recital date. Pieces not passing the hearing will either be taken off the recital or given a few more days of preparation and heard once again. Depending on the hearing, the recital can be completely cancelled if the music is not at a performance level for the hearing.

### **Percussion Studio Class, Area Recitals, and Masterclasses**

All percussion majors taking 152, 352 and 552 applied lessons are required to attend ALL studio classes, area recitals, percussion masterclasses, and percussion student recitals unless otherwise instructed by Mr. Zator. Advance notice will be given for all such events. Those missing any of these activities without giving advanced notice to Mr. Zator will have 5 points taken off their weekly preparation average for every missed event.

### **Levels of Study**

Below is an *approximate* schedule of what instruments will be studied each semester. This list will differ between individuals and will be adjusted by the instructor to fit each student's needs and personal goals. Every semester will include some keyboard work, whether it is working on a certain level or working on different repertoire and/or techniques.

	<u><b>Fall Semester</b></u>	<u><b>Spring Semester</b></u>
Fresman	Keyboard Snare Drum	Keyboard Timpani
Sophomore	Keyboard Drumset or Snare Drum	Keyboard Drumset or Snare Drum
Junior	Vibes Timpani or Drumset	Recital Material or Elective
Senior	Orch. Excerpts Any deficiencies	Recital Material
2 <sup>nd</sup> Year Senior	Elective	<i>Student Teaching</i>

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All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment (*Student's Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct.*)

***Students with Disabilities:*** The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services  
Gee Library, Room 132  
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835; Fax (903) 468-8148  
StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu