

**San José State University**  
**School of Music and Dance**  
**MUSC 147C, Advanced Choral Conducting, Spring 2020**

<b>Instructor:</b>	Dr. Jeffrey Benson
<b>Office Location:</b>	MUS 262
<b>Telephone:</b>	408.924.4645
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:jeffrey.benson@sjsu.edu">jeffrey.benson@sjsu.edu</a>
<b>Office Hours:</b>	W, 11:00am-12:00pm
<b>Class Days/Time:</b>	MW 12:00-1:15pm
<b>Classroom:</b>	MUS 182
<b>Prerequisites:</b>	MUSC 147A or instructor consent. Concurrent enrollment in a choir is strongly recommended.
<b>Teaching Assistant:</b>	Noah Rulison, <a href="mailto:noah.rulison@sjsu.edu">noah.rulison@sjsu.edu</a>

### **Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging**

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on my faculty web page at <http://www.sjsu.edu/people/jeffrey.benson>. You are responsible for regularly checking email to learn any updates.

### **Course Description**

This course will focus on the foundations of choral conducting, with particular emphasis on rehearsal techniques. The course will also include a study of choral literature and repertoire from the Renaissance through modern day.

### **Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives**

#### **Course Content Learning Outcomes (CLO)**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- CLO 1 Demonstrate development as a conductor through work on breath, gesture, internal tempo and expression.
- CLO 2 Demonstrate the techniques of hand/baton position as they affect the choral ensemble.
- CLO 3 Demonstrate expressive use of both hands as related to the musical ideas in the score.
- CLO 4 Demonstrate professional stage presence and emotional communication while conducting in class.

- CLO 5 Conduct in a variety of styles including legato, marcato, staccato, etc.
- CLO 6 Conduct selected beat patterns and mixed meters.
- CLO 7 Identify a larger body of quality choral literature.
- CLO 8 Demonstrate the role of the teacher/conductor in a rehearsal and classroom.
- CLO 9 Develop the ability to analyze and prepare a score.

## **Required Texts/Readings**

### **Textbook**

Decker, Harold and Colleen Kirk. *Choral Conducting: Focus on Communication*. Waveland Press, Inc. ISBN 978-0-88133-876-8  
*Five Centuries of Choral Music for Mixed Voices*. G. Schirmer, Inc.

### **Other equipment / material requirements**

Baton

Assigned reading and scores (some provided by instructor, some obtained by students)

## **Course Requirements and Assignments**

SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, it is expected that students will spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on. More details about student workload can be found at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf>.

Grades are based upon the following formula. In order to receive a passing grade for this course, the student must satisfactorily complete each of the constituent parts.

### **Rehearsal/Conducting Presentations - 45%**

- Conducting assignments are necessarily cumulative and should reflect consistent improvement. Students will also be assigned warm-up presentations.

### **Self-Evaluations & Rehearsal Plans - 20%**

- Students will complete graded assignments throughout the semester. The student will also complete a written evaluation of each conducting experience.

### **Rehearsal Observations & Assignments - 15%**

- Students will complete a programming assignment where they will be expected to plan a full concert program.
- Students must observe two rehearsals, including one non-SJSU choral rehearsal (45-minute rehearsals). One of the two rehearsals must be focused on Direct Instruction.

### **Final Choral Literature Portfolio - 10%**

- The Final Choral Literature Portfolio will include music appropriate for various level ensembles from all of the major style periods.

### **Professional Behavior - 10%**

- Participation is essential for success in this course. Students must conduct and critique each day in order to earn full credit for participation.
- When not conducting, the student serves in the "performing ensemble."

### **Grading Information**

90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
60-69	D
59 and lower	F

### **Penalty for Late or Missed Work**

Assignments are due on the dates stated in the Course Schedule. Students may not make up a missed test or assignment due to an unexcused absence. Missed tests or assignments due to excused absences can only be made up at a time appointed by the instructor. You must notify the instructor of an excused absence *before* the absence occurs.

### **Classroom Protocol**

Class participation is essential. Students will be involved not only as conductors but as attentive and encouraging ensemble members. When your colleagues are conducting rehearsals, you are expected to sing and fully participate. You are expected to be in class on time (in your seat with all materials by 12:00pm). Cell phones and other electronic devices should be turned off.

### **University Policies**

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>.

### **School of Music and Dance Policies and Procedures**

#### **Music Use Fee:**

Music majors and minors must pay a music equipment use fee each semester. The fee must be paid directly to the Cashier's Office, and you must bring the receipt to the Music Office before completing registration. Applied music instruction will not be authorized until this fee is paid. Music 10B students, or students enrolled in any sound recording course, must pay a fee each semester that they are enrolled in one or more of these classes. The fees are included in the student's bill, with other registration fees.

## MUSC 147C, Advanced Choral Conducting, Spring 2020 Course Schedule

*The schedule is subject to change with fair notice. The instructor will notify students of changes in class or via email.*

### WEEK ONE

January 27	Course Introduction, Gestural Language	Read MTT on Abbado
January 29	Gestural Review	Read Decker/Kirk Chapter 1

### WEEK TWO

February 3	Developing Your Choral Sound	Read Decker/Kirk Chapter 5
February 5	Warm-ups, Score Study/Rehearsal Guide	Read Decker/Kirk Chapter 4

### WEEK THREE

February 10	Gestural Evaluation	Read Decker/Kirk pp. 31-41
February 12	Renaissance Era Discussion	

### WEEK FOUR

February 17	Renaissance Rehearsals	Gesture Self Evaluation due
February 19	Renaissance Rehearsals	Rehearsal Observation due

### WEEK FIVE

February 24	Renaissance Rehearsals	
February 26	Error Detection and Listening Skills	
February 27	Conducting Seminar with Dr. Rogers (12:30-1:30pm)	

### WEEK SIX

March 2	Baroque/Classical Era Discussion	Read Decker/Kirk pp. 41-55
	Positive Impatience & Layering	Self-Evaluation/Score due
March 4	Baroque/Classical Rehearsals	

### WEEK SEVEN

March 9	Baroque/Classical Rehearsals	
March 11	Baroque/Classical Rehearsals	

### WEEK EIGHT

March 16	Error Detection and Listening Skills	
March 18	Programming with Passion	Read Decker/Kirk Chapter 7
		Self-Evaluation/Score due

### WEEK NINE

March 23	Gesture: Mixed Meter & Recitative	
March 25	Gesture: Mixed Meter & Recitative	

***SPRING BREAK: March 30-April 3***

**WEEK TEN**

April 6 NO CLASS: Washington, DC Spring Concert Tour  
April 8 Romantic Discussion/Direct Instruction Read Decker/Kirk pp. 55-58

**WEEK ELEVEN**

April 13 Gestural Evaluation  
April 15 Romantic Rehearsals

**WEEK TWELVE**

April 20 Romantic Rehearsals Gesture Self-Evaluation due  
April 22 Romantic Rehearsals

**WEEK THIRTEEN**

April 27 Modern Era Discussion Programming Assignment due  
April 29 Modern Era Rehearsals Read Decker/Kirk pp. 58-69  
Self-Evaluation/Score due

**WEEK FOURTEEN**

May 4 Modern Era Rehearsals DI Rehearsal Observation due  
May 6 Final Conducting Evaluation

**WEEK FIFTEEN**

May 11 Final Conducting Evaluation

**FINAL EXAMINATION:**

Tuesday, May 19 9:45-12:00pm Final Literature Portfolio Presentation