



MUS 134 Elementary String Class

COURSE SYLLABUS: Fall 2026

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructors:

Dr. Hollie Dzierzanowski

Hollie.Dzierzanowski@etamu.edu

Course: Fall 2026 Elementary String Class (MUS-134-01E)

Professor RJ McDowell

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Course: Fall 2026 Elementary String Class (MUS-134-02E)

Preferred Form of Communication: Email

Communication Response Time: 1-3 Business Days

COURSE INFORMATION

MATERIALS – TEXTBOOKS, READINGS, SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS

Allen, M., Gillespie, R. and Tellejohn-Hayes, P. *Essential Elements 2000 for Strings Book 1* Teacher Edition. Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard Publishing Co, 2002.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is intended to provide a practical understanding of string performance and pedagogy. This understanding will encompass the actual performance and application of problems in teaching beginning string classes in public schools, private instruction and/or conducting a public school orchestra. Emphasis will be placed on playing ability and diagnostic techniques utilized as well as information from required. Regardless of prior experience, students are expected to learn the course content and show progress from their entry-level skill.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

In this course, students will:

1. Demonstrate fundamental technical skills on one stringed instrument and be able to talk about the differences of all other stringed instruments.
2. Develop accurate diagnostic and correctional skills for teaching basic posture, position and performance techniques in string playing.
3. Develop effective strategies for group teaching at the beginning level as would normally be encountered in school settings.
4. Acquire non-verbal teaching skills applicable to any string teaching situation.
5. Develop confidence in the ability to play and teach stringed instruments in group settings at the beginning level.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

MINIMAL TECHNICAL SKILLS NEEDED

Basic understanding of music including:

- Rhythm
- Pitch identification

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

Students will follow outlined activities for each week that include readings, performance tests, written tests and assignments. Class participation is crucial for success in understanding how to perform, demonstrate, and teach string classes. We will randomly choose students each week to do a performance test and then we will discuss as a class.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES OR TIPS FOR SUCCESS IN THE COURSE

ATTENDANCE IS THE MOST IMPORTANT INDICATOR OF SUCCESS FOR THIS COURSE.

Regular attendance, punctuality, and active participation in all scheduled classes, rehearsals, lessons, and performances are essential to student success and are expected of all students in the School of Music. Absences may result in grade penalties, loss of participation or performance opportunities, dismissal from the course or ensemble, or failure of the course. By enrolling, students agree to uphold these standards of professional responsibility and engagement.

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GRADING

A=90-100%; B=80-89%; C=70-79%; D=60-69%; F=Below 60%

Performance Tests	20%
Written Tests	20%
Class Participation	20%
Midterm	15%
Final Written Exam	15%
Final Playing Exam	10%

ASSESSMENTS

Mini Performances: There will be weekly small performance evaluations that will demonstrate your skills learned. This is to ensure that you are practicing consistently and will be able to both demonstrate and articulate the skills you learned.

Written Quizzes Assignments: Will happen occasionally throughout the semester. Mostly to demonstrate that you know the parts of the instrument and you can read treble, bass, and alto clef fluently.

Midterm and Finals: Be able to demonstrate all course material up to the point of the exams.

Course Outline/Calendar

Week	Content
Week 1: 8/25	Paper work, Syllabus, Classroom set up, Instrument Check out, posture, position, parts of the instrument (handout), left hand shape, bow hold.
Week 2: 9/1	Advanced Reading EE (Essential Elements Manual) pp. 10-71 Tuning skills, instrument handling, open string work, bow hold, tone production, principles, read and play from EE lines 1-29. <i>Written Test I – Naming Parts of the Instrument</i>
Week 3: 9/8	Advanced Reading EE pp. 71-92 Pizz. Practice – D major notes, left hand shape, finger patterns, reading notes (teaching), tunnels, bow hold, bowing open strings, open string cycle, 4 bows per string Read and play from EE 30-45
Week 4: 9/15	Advanced Reading EE pp. 93-102 8 th notes, bow speed, placement, 4 th finger, left hand pizz harmonics Read and play from EE 47 – 86 Note Reading Lecture

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Week 5: 9/22	Advanced Reading EE pp. 130-161 G string, ties, slurs Read and play from EE: lines 87-115 <i>Playing Test I – Rolling Along from memory, with bow</i>
Week 6: 9/29	Advanced Reading EE pp. 130-161 Changing Finger patterns (low 2), slurring 3 notes, changing keys Read and play from EE lines 116-136
Week 7: 10/6	Advanced Reading EE pp. 34-101, plus lecture notes
Week 8: 10/13	Advanced Reading EE pp. 162-185 Repair Class <i>Midterm</i>
Week 9: 10/20	Review Lines 1-53 Principles of Bowing Lecture
Week 10: 10/27	Advanced Reading EE pp. 195-231 Reading C string (vla and cello), E string (vln and bass), staccato, hooked bows, dynamics Read and play from EE: lines 144-182 Teaching Evaluations
Week 11: 11/3	Advanced Reading EE pp. 231-235 and 244-249 Skill builders- D, G, and C Major Scales Final Exam Piece- #188 Cripple Creek Teaching Evaluations
Week 12: 11/10	Skill Builders- D, G, and C Major Scales #188 Cripple Creek Advanced Skills: Shifting, Extensions Teaching Evaluations
Week 13: 11/17	Skill Builders- D, G, and C Major Scales #188 Cripple Creek Advanced Skills: Vibrato, Off-the String Bow Strokes Teaching Evaluations
Week 14: 11/24	Skill Builders- D, G, and C Major Scales #188 Cripple Creek Advanced Skills: Vibrato, Off-the String Bow Strokes
Week 15: 12/1	Final Playing Evaluation - #188 Cripple Creek, One Scale Repair Lecture Review for Final Exam
Finals Week Week 16: 12/8	Final Exam

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TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool

https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@etamu.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR COURSE

CWID AND PASSWORD

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@etamu.edu.

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TECHNOLOGY-RELATED ISSUES

Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a ETAMU campus open computer lab, etc.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS AND SUPPORT

MINIMAL TECHNICAL SKILLS NEEDED

Students will need reliable computer and internet access for this course. Students must be able to effectively use myLeo email, myLeo Online D2L, and Microsoft Office.

LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (LMS) – D2L

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are the technical requirements:

- View the [Learning Management System Requirements Webpage](#).
- Learn more on the [LMS Browser Support Webpage](#).

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found on the [Brightspace Support Webpage](#).

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

INTERACTION WITH INSTRUCTOR STATEMENT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your instructor. Correspondence will always be through university email (your “myLeo” mail) and announcements in myLeo online (D2L). You will not RECEIVE email through D2L, so be sure to check your ETAMU email for communication. Students are encouraged to check university email daily.

INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING IN EMAILS WITH INSTRUCTOR:

- Course name and subject in the subject line
 - Salutation (Good afternoon, Dr. Jackson)
 - Proper email etiquette (no “text” emails – use proper grammar and punctuation)
 - Student name and CWID after the body of the email (possibly add to student signature on email)
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COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

SYLLABUS CHANGE POLICY

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

STUDENT CONDUCT

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The [Code of Student Conduct](#) is described in detail online in the [Student Guidebook](#). Students should also consult the [Rules of Netiquette Webpage](#) for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum.

ETAMU ATTENDANCE

For more information about the attendance policy, please view the [Attendance Webpage](#) and the [Class Attendance Policy](#).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students at East Texas A&M University are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.10](#)

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

East Texas A&M University acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES-- ADA STATEMENT

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
East Texas A&M University

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Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
Email: studentdisabilityservices@etamu.edu
Website: [Office of Student Disability Services](#)

NONDISCRIMINATION NOTICE

East Texas A&M University will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

CAMPUS CONCEALED CARRY STATEMENT

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M University buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and ETAMU Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all East Texas A&M University campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

EAST TEXAS A&M SUPPORTS STUDENTS' MENTAL HEALTH – COUNSELING SERVICES

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M University, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

The university aims to provide students with essential knowledge and tools to understand and support mental health. As part of our commitment to your well-being, we offer access to Telus Health, a service available 24/7/365 via chat, phone, or webinar. Scan the QR code or go to https://studentsupport.telushealth.com/us/about#download_app to download the app and explore the resources available to you for guidance and support whenever you need it.



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As an Institutional Member of the National Association of Schools of Music, East Texas State A&M University supports the Association's commitment to student health and wellness. The following web address provides links to information for resources related to physical and mental well-being, as well as assists in offering preventative measures that students can take to avoid serious and/or chronic conditions: [Musician Health and Safety - East Texas A&M University](#)

DEPARTMENT AND ACCREDITING AGENCY STATEMENT:

School of Music Mission Statement:

The School of Music at East Texas A&M University 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.

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