



**SCHOOL OF
Music**

MUS – 161 – 01/02E
Clarinet and Saxophone Methods
Course Syllabus: Fall 2026

Instructor Information

Instructor:	Dr. Tyler Tashdjian (Tash)
Classroom Location:	Classroom 156
Office Location:	Classroom 156 or Reed Room
Office Hours:	Appointment only
Office Phone:	(903) 886-5303
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Preferred Form of Communication:	University email
Communication Response Time:	Within 24 hours

Course Information

Course Description

MUS 161 - Clarinet and Saxophone Methods

Instrumental Methods Class. Designed to provide functional performance abilities and beginning and intermediate pedagogy in clarinet and saxophone.

(2025-26 Undergraduate Course Catalog)

Course Expectations

- Preparation to succeed, demonstrate, understand, participate, and contribute to class culture.
- Participate in discussions, instructional sessions, demonstrations, and performances.
- Practicing and preparation outside of the classroom.
- Take quizzes and exams on the days they are offered and submit assignments on their due dates.
- Professionalism – practice using the language, terminology, behavior, and communication of a future educator you are preparing to become.
 - This includes writing in complete sentences, using the subject line in an email, starting with a salutation, writing the body of the email clearly and concisely using proper grammar, and an appropriate closing.
- Part of the requirements for this class is to have all listed supplies. The materials for this class are chosen and administered with the ultimate success of the students in mind.

Student Learning Outcomes

In this course, students will:

- Understand the sequencing of teaching a woodwind instrument and other musical elements to a beginning band student.
- Know reasonable expectations for a beginning woodwind student.
- Know instrument tuning tendencies and practical solutions for each woodwind instrument.
- Know the inherent technical problems for each woodwind instrument.
- Teach and demonstrate correct posture and hand position for each woodwind instrument.
- Teach and demonstrate correct breathing for a wind instrument.
- Teach and demonstrate correct assembly and maintenance of each woodwind instrument.
- Teach and model the correct embouchure for each woodwind instrument.
- Teach and model a characteristic sound for each woodwind instrument.
- Teach and model correct articulation for each woodwind instrument.
- Teach and demonstrate the correct fingerings for the practical range of the woodwind instruments.
- Be able to diagnose typical problems that may occur while a beginning band student learns a woodwind instrument both visually and aurally.
- Have a working knowledge of how to develop individual musicians past the beginner year.
- Have a working knowledge of brands of instruments, reed brands & strengths, mouthpieces, and other equipment used in a band setting.

Required Textbook

There will be no required textbook purchase. Students will maintain the files given by the instructor.

#tashmethods, A modern way to teach beginning woodwinds. The instructor for East Texas A&M University's woodwind methods created this course packet. All students will be required to maintain and add to the packet throughout the course as a personal method to the pedagogy of that woodwind instrument.

Required Course Materials

Appropriate instrument with case (clarinet or saxophone), cleaning swab, cork grease, and **2-4 reeds** per instrument that will be secured in a locker when not in use.

- The following are the reed brands that should be used in the course (reasons will be given during instruction):
 - Vandoren Traditional (blue), V12 (gray), or Juno (white/red) size 2.5-3.5
 - D'Addario Reserve (blue or purple for clarinet, green for saxophone) size 2.5-3.5
 - D'Addario Rico Royal size 3-3.5
- Reeds can be purchased through ETAMU's Clarinet Coalition for \$2 per reed
 - All proceeds go to this university group to assist with future endeavors.

If students do not use a personal instrument, they will use the provided instrument through the Yamaha program.

Small magnetic locker mirror (enough to see the entire face).

A Virtual (or physical) Notebook intended to be used during student teaching.

Access to a video recording device (phone, tablet, etc.).

Note-taking supplies as needed (pencil, highlighter, notebook/tablet/laptop).

Some Supplemental Websites

www.beginningwoodwinds.weebly.com

www.disdnurturingculture.weebly.com

www.disdbandcurriculum.weebly.com

www.solidstartbeginningband.weebly.com

www.makingthemostofyourstudentteaching.weebly.com

www.tmea.org/resources/teaching-resources/music-curriculum

<https://nafme.org/publications-resources/>

<https://cml.music.utexas.edu/online-resources/habits-of-musicianship/free-music-downloads>

<https://www.nfaonline.org>

<https://www.idrs.org/?li=1>

<https://clarinet.org>

<https://cassgb.org>

<https://bretpimentel.com>

<https://teachfortexas.org>

<https://orchestrationonline.com/category/orchestration-tips/>

<https://andrewhugill.com/OrchestraManual/index.html>

<https://www.wfg.woodwind.org/index.html>

<https://www.tmea.org>

<https://banddirectorstalkshop.com>

<https://www.teacherspayteachers.com>

<https://www.weareteachers.com>

<https://sharemylesson.com/collections/backtoschool#resources>

Course Requirements

This course is meant to teach students how to teach woodwind instruments in a beginner band setting. This is done through performance, focusing on modern pedagogy, and applying it to playing the woodwind instruments. A new teacher needs to understand the physical mechanics and pedagogy of teaching and playing each woodwind instrument, which are learned in this course. Students will learn the basic facts and visual/aural diagnostics for each woodwind instrument and apply this knowledge through peer teaching.

Assessment

Participation:

Students are expected to attend every class and to be engaged during instruction.

UPDATE: Attendance will now be an item in D2L that affects the final grade. 16 weeks x 2 classes per week (roughly) = 32 possible points. *See attendance section.*

Instrumental Lesson

- Students will experience a 1-on-1 lesson with the instructor to learn how to help a beginner who may not be taking private lessons.
- BEFORE the lesson, students will fill out a “Weekly Practice Log” to come prepared with an issue, and they will work with the instructor on how to fix it. The lesson will be about 15 minutes.
- Students will sign up for at least 1 slot per instrument. These can be done before and after class, or on a separate day.
- Applied students are exempt unless they would like to play an etude or solo for feedback.

Quizzes*:

Content quizzes will be taken through D2L.

- Parts and assembly of the instrument
- Hands and keys of the instrument
- Embouchure
- Instrument facts
- Common problems and remedies

Weekly quizzes for each instrument will be administered in class and via video recordings.

- Tone production
- First notes
- Chromatics
- Diatonic exercises
- First tunes
- Finger Ninjas
- Finger Wiggles
- Tetrachords
- Level 1 scales (diatonic and chromatic)
- Lip/Register/Octave slurs

**Quizzes will always follow lectures, demonstrations, and student-led teaching done in class.*

Assignments:

Artist Spotlight Poster

- Students will create a poster featuring information about an artist for the instruments we are learning in class (one for the clarinet and one for the saxophone).
- One side will feature a photo, their name, fun facts, a QR code/links to recent performances, etc. Be creative and make it look inviting for beginners. The other side will be a biography of that artist. You may choose one artist from any of the lists provided. It is encouraged to listen to a few and choose someone whose voice you would like to influence your future students' sound.
- Students may utilize any online format. Canva is encouraged for its easy-to-find templates, and the Pro version is free for students and teachers.
- This is meant to create a visual for their future classroom, inspiring students by featuring the names of the artists who play their instruments, so they can learn about them and go listen to them.

The Virtual Notebook (a physical notebook is acceptable)

- Assemble and maintain a virtual notebook on your chosen device. This is for your reference and use during your student teaching and in your first job in the classroom. A setup guide is provided.
- Make a folder for each instrumental method class (Woodwinds, Brass, Strings, Percussion, Vocal).
- Create subfolders for each instrument (Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Saxophone, Bassoon, etc.).
- Make a folder for all critical Music Education courses (Conducting, Pedagogy, etc.)
- Include any handouts from your courses (events you may attend, Google search rabbit holes, etc.) in their respective folders.
 - For this course, you will only be responsible for handouts and materials from this class. Having all your information in one place will help you when you need quick access.

Paired Peer Teaching

- Students will be assigned a fundamental topic for teaching beginning woodwinds at the beginning of the semester.
- Students will choose a “co-band director” and create a lesson plan and outline/script for their lesson together.
- Each student pair will teach once during the semester.
 - Half the class will use Instrument 1, and the other half will use Instrument 2.
- Comments for all colleagues will be required for full credit.
 - Using the “Sandwich” method (Something liked—Something to be worked on—Another thing liked) is encouraged.
- A guide will be provided to help with the organization.
- It is highly recommended that video recording be used for self-evaluation.

Instrumental Performances

- Students will apply their skills and knowledge to performing on woodwind instruments.
- Using instrument 1, students will perform a level 1 solo with online accompaniment.
 - This will either be a video submission or an in-person performance. For full credit, students must include comments on 2 colleagues.
- Using instrument 2, students will perform as a class in a small ensemble.

Exams:

- Mid-term – the mid-term exam will cover Instrument 1. Questions will be selected from homework assignments, instrument quizzes, class lectures, and information from the required textbook.
 - The format will be multiple-choice and essay questions. It will cover Content, Visual Diagnostics, and Fingerings.
- Final – The final exam will cover Instrument 2. Questions will be selected from homework assignments, instrument quizzes, class lectures, and the required textbooks.
 - The format will be multiple-choice and essay questions. It will cover Content, Visual Diagnostics, and Fingerings.

Grading

Participation – 25%

Quizzes – 25%

Assignments – 25%

Exams – 25%

University Policies and Statements

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.

University Mission Statement:

East Texas A&M University provides a personal educational experience for a diverse community of lifelong learners. Our purpose is to discover and disseminate knowledge for leadership and service in an interconnected and dynamic world. Our challenge is to nurture partnerships for the intellectual, cultural, social, and economic vitality of Texas and beyond.

Syllabus Change Policy

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

School of Music Engagement Expectations

Students are expected to actively participate in all assigned components of this course. Active participation includes being present, engaged, responsive, cooperative, respectful, and professional. It may also include providing feedback, asking questions, and supporting class members and faculty during instruction.

Student Expectations

Students are expected to actively participate in all classes. Notification for excused absence must be received in advance. It is the individual student's responsibility to notify the instructor of a legitimate absence in advance. It is also the individual student's responsibility to acquire any missed notes and assignments from other students and/or the instructor.

Students are expected to actively participate in all classes by coming prepared and with all assigned materials. This course is a graduate research course. Bibliographical material, repertoire, library resources, applied techniques, and research techniques applicable to graduate study in music, specifically flute/woodwind pedagogy, will be surveyed and discussed. Be prepared to spend a significant amount of time doing research and reviewing materials outside of class.

Students are expected to demonstrate pedagogical skills through their observation, analysis, discussion, and feedback on other students' performances. Students are expected to gain skills in this area by observing teaching techniques in their private lessons and in studio classes, guest artist classes on campus, and optional conference attendance or online observations of master teachers. Students will need to submit teaching videos and acquire a waiver from the student(s) in their videos.

Texas Education Code – Music Education

This course content is aligned with the standards established by the Texas Education Code, covering areas such as Music, the Commissioner's Rules, Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities, Technology, and English Language Proficiency. To review these standards, please visit the Music Education Program D2L Shell and select "Standards and Objectives."

Attendance Policy

ETAMU SoM Attendance

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.

ETAMU Attendance

Students are expected to attend all classes. It is the individual student's responsibility to notify the instructor of a legitimate absence in advance. It is also the individual student's responsibility to acquire any missed notes and assignments from other students and/or the instructor. After one (1) unexcused absence, the student's final grade will be dropped by one (1) letter grade for each additional unexcused absence.

For more information about the attendance policy, please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

ETAMU Woodwind Methods Attendance

Students may not miss more than 3 classes in the semester.

3 absences could result in a failing grade in the course.

- 2 tardies (10 minutes late) will equal 1 absence.
- Students will be responsible for promptly making up any in-class work and obtaining information from a colleague.

For university-excused absences, it is the student's responsibility to obtain the appropriate documentation and present it to the instructor.

Excused absences include:

- Religious holiday
- Military service
- Official university function (with prior approval)
- Illness (with documentation)
- Family emergency
- Pregnancy and parenting under Title IX
- When the university is officially closed

At the instructor's discretion, allowance may be made for a professional audition or an interview.

Courtesy dictates notifying the instructor in advance of an absence whenever possible.

Late Assignments or Work

Students should acknowledge the given due dates whenever possible.

If an assignment is missed, the student has one week to submit it. Make-up quizzes should be done in person and require scheduling an appointment with the instructor during office hours using their university email.

Students cannot make up work once a new instrument section begins.

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 Policies:

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

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a “0” for the assignment or exam in question (or specify alternative sanction, such as course failure). Additionally, the incident will be reported to the Dean of Students, who may impose further penalties. The term “cheating” includes, but is not limited to, a) use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; b) dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; c) the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university; d) dual submission of a paper or project, or resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor(s); or e) any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage. The term “plagiarism” includes but is not limited to a) the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment and b) the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

This course assumes that all work submitted by students will be generated by them, working individually or in groups. Students should not have another person/entity write any substantive portion of an assignment, hire a person or company to write assignments, or use artificial intelligence tools such as ChatGPT, Ask AI, Liner, MIA, etc.

East Texas A&M University acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, Chatbots, or other software that can generate text or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the course instructor. Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes academic dishonesty (plagiarism). Individual instructors may disallow the use of such software entirely for assignments or 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 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 a source.

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 reasonable accommodations for their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

East Texas A&M University

Velma K. Waters Library Room 162

Phone: (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

East Texas A&M University Supports Students' Mental Health

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connections 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.

Student Conduct and Tenets of Common Behavior:

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 in the Current University Student Guidebook. Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>.

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 East Texas A&M University 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.

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>. 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.

Nondiscrimination Notice

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

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 the technical requirements:

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

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 coursework in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs a backup method to handle these inevitable problems. These methods might include having a backup PC at home or work, temporarily using a computer at a friend's house, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, or an ETAMU campus open computer lab.

Communication and Support

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please get in touch with your instructor.

Technical Support

If you are experiencing technical difficulties with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options are available here:

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

Musician Health and Safety

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 and resources related to physical and mental well-being, as well as assists in offering preventive measures that students can take to avoid severe and/or chronic conditions: [Musician Health and Safety - East Texas A&M University](#).

***Tentative* Course Calendar (it will change)**

Weeks	General Content
Week 1: AUG 20	Introduction; Syllabus; Daily Teaching Elements; Breathing Chant; Classroom Culture, Expectations, Setup, Systems, and why they're important
Week 2: AUG 24	Instrument Parts, Assembly, Hands & Keys; Position and posture; the reed and its parts; Reed Rotation; Maintenance; Embouchure; Articulation; Mouthpiece and Barrel/Bocal (aka Neck); Initial Sounds
Week 3: AUG 31 <i>Fall Census SEP 04</i>	Artists and Recordings; First Sounds; Tone Production; Hand Placement, helpful stickers and "Home Base;" First Notes
Week 4: SEP 08 <i>No Classes SEP 07</i>	Finger Ninjas and Wiggles; First Tunes and Mini Etudes; Tetrachords and building Scales; Daily Warm-ups for Beginners
Week 5: SEP 14	Instrument Basics; Register/Octave Slurs; Low Notes; Building Scales
Week 6: SEP 21	Level 1 Scales; Chromatic Scales; Level 1 Solos; Vibrato
Week 7: SEP 28	Visual Diagnostics; High Note Fingerings; Extension Notes; Different Registers
Week 8: OCT 05 <i>No Classes OCT08+09</i>	Review and Wrap-up; Exams; Instrument supplies and recommendations for beginner woodwinds; Making a Jazz and Classical Sound; What is a Bass Clarinet
Week 9: OCT 12 <i>Instrument Switch</i>	Review Daily Teaching Elements; Breathing Chant; Instrument Parts, Assembly, Hands & Keys
Week 10: OCT 19	Position and posture; the reed and its parts; Reed Rotation; Maintenance; Embouchure; Articulation; Mouthpiece and Barrel/Bocal (aka Neck)
Week 11: OCT 26	Artists and Recordings; Tone Production; Hand Placement; First Notes; First Tunes
Week 12: NOV 02	Finger Ninjas and Wiggles; Tetrachords and building Scales; Instrument Basics
Week 13: NOV 09	Register/Octave Slurs; Level 1 Scales; Chromatic Scales; Vibrato
Week 14: NOV 16	Visual Diagnostics; High Note Fingerings; Extension Notes; Different Registers
Week 15: NOV 23 <i>No Classes NOV25-27</i>	How to make a Jazz and Classical sound; What is a Bass Clarinet; Holiday Music selection
Week 16: NOV 30 <i>Last Class DEC03</i>	Review and Wrap-up; Exams; Final Questions; Holiday Music Concert practical exercise
Final Exam Schedule <i>University given dates</i>	8 AM = Tuesday, December 08 @ 8AM-10AM 930 AM = Thursday, December 10 @ 8AM-10AM

