



Fine Arts Center Percussion I/II 2011-2012 Course Syllabus

School Name: The Greenville Fine Arts Center

Course Name: FAC Percussion I/II

Instructor: Gary A. Robinson, D.M.A.

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Class Time/Room Number: 9:15-10:10 AM m-f

Course Description

FAC Percussion I/II is geared toward two kinds of percussionists: returning FAC students who will benefit from a review Percussion I before beginning materials for Percussion II, and new FAC students whose skills and/or experience place them at a higher entrance level than standard Percussion I. Goals for the class encompass elements of both Percussion I and II: to establish or reinforce a strong, fundamental snare drum technique; to gain conceptual and technical mastery of the 40 snare drum rudiments; to establish or reinforce a consistent method of counting, controlling, and reading rhythmic studies in both concert and rudimental styles; to establish or reinforce an elegant, ergonomic, and rhythmically controlled approach to rock, jazz, and Brazilian (samba) drum set playing; and to begin the study of mallet percussion. Students will also gain familiarity with the basic instruments of the band/orchestra percussion section through the study of music for percussion ensemble.

Required Textbooks



Publishing



Company



- Houghton, Steve *Essential Styles for the Drummer and Bassist, Book 1*, distributed by Alfred Publishing Company
- Reed, Ted: *Progressive Steps for Syncopation*, distributed by Alfred

- Peters, Mitchell: *Intermediate Snare Drum Studies*; published by Mitchell Peters, Los Angeles, CA
- Charlie Wilcoxon: *The All American Drummer*; Ludwig Music Publishing Company
- Mark Wessels: *A Fresh Approach to Mallet Playing*, Mark Wessels Publications (2nd semester only)

Fee

There a \$25 fee expected from each participating student. This fee will come back to students in the form of materials purchased for them throughout the year.

Required Materials And Equipment



- a drum set (own or have access to)
- a Remo practice pad and stand. The stand is mandatory, as all of our manual development is undertaken standing.
- a metronome and a set of earphones, such as the outstanding Boss DB-30 Dr. Beat Pocket Size Metronome. **STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE THEIR OWN METRONOMES FOR PRACTICING AT FAC.**
- hearing protection (foam inserts or muffs)
- a music stand
- one pair of Cooperman Nick Petrella snare drum sticks (stocked and available at local music stores) or the Innovative Percussion CL-2L, available online at vendors like Percussion Source (<http://www.percussionsource.com>)



- one pair of lightweight drum set sticks, such as almost any 5a or the equivalent stick with a wooden bead. Please do not buy nylon-tipped sticks.
- highly recommended: a mirror, like the kind you can purchase cheaply from a discount store (Walmart, Kmart, etc.) the drummer can use to watch him/herself play at the practice pad or the drum set.
- one pair of medium-hard marimba mallets such as the Innovative Percussion IP275

For students and families who foresee continuing in the FAC percussion program for a third and perhaps a fourth year, I recommend strongly that they begin looking into the purchase of a **marimba** for home practice. In fact, easy access to a marimba outside of my classroom would be highly beneficial for current Percussion I/II students. The Fine Arts Center percussion program has four full size and two smaller practice marimbas on hand for its students to use during classroom instruction. The presence of these instruments, however, does not answer the need for my students – or any student on any instrument, for that matter – to have an instrument at home to use for individual practice, for exploration, for personal expression, and for enjoyment. Student model instruments are available from manufacturers such as Adams, Korogi, and Majestic, for about the cost of a good quality drum set, and can be ordered from many vendors like those listed below. Used instruments also become available on occasion. I will be glad to help any family who decides to “take the plunge.”

Some Recommended Vendors

- Mallet Instrument Service, Charlotte, NC, (<http://www.malletinstrumentservice.com>)
- Steve Weiss Music (<http://www.steveweissmusic.com>)
- Percussion Source (<http://www.percussionsource.com>)
- Lone Star percussion (<http://www.lonestarpercussion.com>)
- Pecknel Music (1312 North Pleasantburg Drive, Greenville 244-7881)
- Palmetto Music (5 Wade Hampton Blvd, Greenville, 232-1726)
- Music innovations (150 Tanner Rd # G, Mauldin, 286-8742)

All Students Are Expected To Practice At Home

Progress and development as a musician always includes individual practice time. There are no exceptions to this “law” because the physical and neurological development that is a part of playing an instrument requires a great deal individual problem solving and repetition. Understanding that students have to balance many responsibilities and commitments, it is still vitally important that they find some time each day to practice. Two hours daily – combining studio time at the Fine Arts Center and home practice – is a good benchmark. (When I have the “liberty” of practicing as much as I need to, I personally find that three hours of practice a day insures that I will improve noticeably.) **Consistent and adequate practice may, in fact, require life style changes on the part of both the student and family.** Please be prepared for this! I can assure you, however, that the skill, poise, discipline, and intellectual acuity that is an outgrowth of regular and **correct** practice is well worth the time and effort.

Tentative Course Outline

TERM I: AUGUST 17 THROUGH OCTOBER 21

The nine students enrolled in this class bring with them a diverse collection of backgrounds, abilities, strengths, and areas of relative weakness. Because of this, we will need to find common ground as snare drummers and drum set players so that students can work on shared assignments. Where it is impossible to this common ground, assignments and projects will be given that address that best address the needs of individual students.

- Study, rehearse, review, and learn, in detail, snare drum rudiments from the “40 standard,” starting with single and double strokes, rolls, and paradiddle rudiments; review stroke varieties (The Seven Deadly Strokes)
- Learn one rudimental solo each week in Wilcoxon’s *The All American Drummer*
- Learn four or more concert snare drum etudes from Mitchell Peters’ *Intermediate Snare Drum Studies*
- Explore rock and pop drumming styles using selections and exercises from Steve Houghton’s *Essential Styles* (for example, selections 1 through 7) and, when needed, additional coordination exercises from Ted Reed’s *Syncopation for the Modern Drummer*

TERM II: THROUGH JANUARY 13

- Continue study and review of snare drum rudiments, especially flam and, if possible, drag rudiments
- Learn one rudimental solo each week in Wilcoxon's *The All American Drummer*, prepare one for recital performance
- Learn four or more concert snare drum etudes from Mitchell Peters' *Intermediate Snare Drum Studies*, prepare one for recital performance
- Continue to explore rock and pop drumming styles using selections and exercises from Steve Houghton's *Essential Styles* (for example, selections 8 through 13) and, when needed, additional coordination exercises from Ted Reed's *Syncopation for the Modern Drummer*
- Time permitting: learn one percussion ensemble piece for recital
- Recital No. 1; Wednesday, January 18, 2012, FAC Recital Hall, 7:00 PM

TERM III: THROUGH MARCH 16

- Conclude study of snare drum rudiments
- Learn one rudimental solo each week in Wilcoxon's *The All American Drummer*
- Learn four concert snare drum etudes from Mitchell Peters' *Intermediate Snare Drum Studies*
- Explore Latin and jazz drumming styles using selections and exercises from Steve Houghton's *Essential Styles* (for example, a variety of selections from 14 through 26) and, when needed, additional coordination exercises from Ted Reed's *Syncopation for the Modern Drummer*
- Begin marimba studies: mallet grip, technical foundations, rote exercises, reading, and major scales from Mark Wessels' *A Fresh Approach to Mallet Playing*

TERM IV: THROUGH MAY 18 (LAST DAY FOR UNDERCLASSMEN AT FINE ARTS CENTER)

- Prepare snare drum and drumset works as appropriate for May recital
- Prepare one percussion ensemble work for performance in Recital No.2 and In-School Showcase
- Continue reading, and major scales from Mark Wessels' *A Fresh Approach to Mallet Playing*; prepare one selection for May recital is possible
- Recital No. 2 Wednesday, May 9, 2012, FAC Recital Hall, 7:00 PM
- Spring In-School Honors Showcase: Friday, May 11, 2012; 9:20 AM, FAC Recital Hall

PERFORMANCES: Summary

- Recital No.1: Wednesday, January 18, 2011; 7:00 PM, FAC Recital Hall (possible inclusion of Perc. I)
- Recital No.2: Wednesday, May 9, 2012; 7:00 PM, FAC Recital Hall
- Spring In-School Honors Showcase: Friday, May 11, 2012, 9:20 AM, FAC Recital Hall

Major Assignments and Projects

- Each week, students will perform parts of ongoing projects for each other, and will receive a grade based upon incremental achievement.
- At the end of the first and third quarters, each student will be responsible to perform, for his/her peers, a program consisting of materials representative of the preceding nine weeks, and will receive a grade based upon their achievements. Performance in the quarterly recital may be substituted for this in-class performance.
- At the end of the second and fourth quarters, each student will be responsible to perform, for his/her peers, a program consisting of materials as representative of the preceding semester. This performance will be counted as a semester exam. Performance in the quarterly recital may be substituted for this in-class performance.

Grades are weighted as follows:

Term: weekly assignments = 80%, term test or recital performance = 20%

Semester I: Term I = 40%, Term II = 40%, semester or recital performance = 20%

Semester I: Term III = 40%, Term IV = 40%, semester or recital performance = 20%

Final: Semester I = 50% and Semester II = 50%

Other

Attendance and Tardy Policy: refer to Fine Arts Center handbook

Classroom Rules and Expectations:

- Report on time to each class. Please let me know in advance if you must miss the class for any reason.
- each class, bring all appropriate sticks and mallets, your class anthology, other current class materials, and a pencil.

- If you are asked to work on your own or in a small group, use your time wisely and constructively.
- No food or beverages – with the exception of water – are allowed at the Fine Arts Center
- Be kind and thoughtful to your classmates.
- Strive always to do and to be your best

Plan for Routine Communication With Parents:

- Periodic e-letter sent to my students and families with assignments, schedules, and notices of events
- Occasional posting of the above and additional information on my blog: <http://www.facorchestra.blogspot.com/>
- **Quarterly Fine Arts Center Newsletter is mailed to all parents of Fine Arts Center students.**
- Parents are contacted promptly in the event of academic or disciplinary problems.
- A log of parent phone calls is maintained in teacher's office.