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MUSE 275.01: Techniques - Lower Brass

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Low Brass Methods

Spring 2014

MUSE 275, Sec. 01; 1 Credit

Music Building Room 1

Tuesday & Thursday 8:10 – 9:00 a.m.

Instructor: *Dr. Kevin Griggs* kevin.griggs@umontana.edu 406-370-8730
Office Hours: Music Building Room 3 - by appointment

Grading: 90% & up = A 80% to 89% = B 70% to 79% = C
 60% to 69% = D 59% & below = F

I. Goal: Students will develop a working knowledge and understanding of brass instruments in the lower brass family, specifically the trombone, euphonium and tuba, and become proficient in individual performance and pedagogical techniques for these instruments.

II. Course Aims and Objectives:

Aims: This course presents an opportunity for students to learn the history, commonalities, and basic playing techniques for lower brass instruments. Students should be able to perform at a prescribed level on each instrument and possess the skills necessary to teach a new musician how to play these instruments.

Specific Learning Objectives:

By the end of this course, students will:

1. Develop and demonstrate a characteristic, fundamental tone and basic technical proficiency, including embouchure, tonguing, posture, etc., on the trombone and tuba through individual practice and performance on the instruments.
2. Demonstrate mastery of the correct fingerings on the trombone and tuba.
3. Exhibit a correct understanding of the proper transposition for each of these instruments.
4. Possess an understanding of the history and/or development of lower brass instruments.
5. Show knowledge of the commonalities in the brass family and an ability to teach basic technique, including problem solving in all areas of brass playing, to beginning students.
6. Demonstrate an understanding of correct placement of brass instruments within an ensemble and any special considerations that must be made.
7. Possess a working knowledge and list of resources of appropriate brass repertoire, equipment, and recordings.

III. Format and Procedures:

Classroom time will be devoted to lectures, individual playing (both practice and evaluation), demonstrations, and quizzes/examinations. Students are expected to do the majority of their preparation outside of class time. This includes readings from the required text, individual practice time on the instruments, and completion of assignments. Class time will be used for presentation of new material, testing, assistance with individual problems, and discussion of relevant information.

IV. Assumptions

As music majors, I expect all students to possess an extensive knowledge of music fundamentals such as: note names and values, rhythm, meter, musical terms, tempo, and key signatures, to name a few. I understand that students will enter this class with varying levels of knowledge about brass instruments but I expect an honest effort by each student to master the material presented.

V. Course Requirements:

1. Attendance for this class is required in order to receive a passing grade. Following the 2nd unexcused absence, your grade will be lowered one (1) letter and drop another letter grade for every 2nd unexcused absence thereafter. Two (2) tardies will be counted the same as an unexcused absence.

2. Instruments: Trombone, Baritone and Tuba – To be arranged.

3. Course readings:

Required text: *A Complete Guide to Brass: Instruments and Technique*, third edition, by Scott Whitener, published by Schirmer Books. This text should be available in the bookstore at the University Center or can be purchased online if you wish. (ISBN 978-0534509880)

4. Assignments

Various assignments will be given during the semester which will be drawn from class discussions, lectures, readings, or handouts. Assignments may also include listening to be done outside of class time. You will also participate in a field experience where you will work with beginning brass students in the public schools. Participation in the Lab Band on one of these instruments is strongly encouraged.

5. Beginning band instrument method books. (to be provided by instructor)

6. Paper and pen for class notes and a binder for organization of class materials.

V. Grading Procedures:

Grades will be determined using the following assessments:

Instrument proficiency	30%
Tests/Quizzes	30%
Field Experience	20%
Assignments	10%
Participation	10%

VI. Academic Integrity

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at http://life.umt.edu/vpsa/student_conduct.php.

VII. Communication

When outside of class communication is necessary, I will use the Cyberbear or Moodle class email list to send messages. This will send a message to your university e-mail account. If you do not check this account regularly, you should forward messages to your private email account.

Tentative Course Schedule

Dates	Readings/Topics	Playing/Written Assignments
January 27	Review syllabus. Basics of brass playing.	Embouchure & Buzz
January 29	Get Instruments & Chap.1	Begin work on long tones and 7 fingerings/positions, posture, etc.
February 4	Chapter 11 - Playing Position	Mouthpiece Song/Sirens
February 6	Tongue usage	Playing Test on #32
February 11	Trombone Slurs	Begin etude. Bb Major Scale.
February 13	Breathing	Method book up to #90
February 18	Air usage	Playing Test on #57
February 20	Mini-Lessons	
February 25	<i>UM Concert Band Festival</i>	<i>No Class</i>
February 27	Multiple Tongue	(Switch Tuba/Baritone)
March 4	Chapter 13 - Instrument Care	Method up to #116
March 6	Troubleshooting	Etude, Playing Test on #89
March 11	Chapter 5 or 6/7 depending on the instrument you have.	Remainder of Method Book
March 13	Specifics for Tuba	Playing Test on #116
March 18	Review for Mid-Term	Prepare for Mid-Term
March 20	Mid-Term Exam. Written and Playing.	Begin work on long tones and 7 fingerings, posture, etc.
March 25	Chapter 2 – Anatomy of the Mouthpiece	Long Tones, Posture, 7 Fingerings Method Book to #37
March 27	History of Low Brass	Chromatic Scale
March 31 - April 4	<i>Spring Break</i>	<i>No Class</i>
April 8	Performance Practice	Playing Test on #37
April 10	Chapter 5 or 6/7 depending on the instrument you have.	Method Book to #63
April 15	Chapter 8 – Other Brass	Begin etude
April 17	Specifics for Trombone	Playing Test on #63
April 22	Purchase/Design Considerations	Method up to #131 (Switch Tuba/Baritone)
April 24	Selecting Method Books	Tongue Exercises, Etude, Method
April 29	Starting a New Class	Playing Test on #131
May 1	Mutes and Special Effects	Remainder of Method Book
May 6	Chapter 14 – Notes for Conductors	Playing Test on #
May 8	Review for Final Exam	Prepare for Final Exam
May 14	Final Exam. Written and Playing	8:00am-10:00am in Music Rm 1