

Music 9512/9612. Advanced Orchestration.

I. Course Information.

Schedule and Instructor Contact Information

Schedule information to be found on the OWL site

Dr. Troy Ducharme, TC231

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Office Hours: Mondays 5:30pm; Thursdays 12:30pm

Course Description and Learning Objectives.

This course provides a forum for building on students' existing knowledge of instrumentation by reviewing and refining familiar concepts and introducing new ones. Information will be gleaned from detailed study and discussion of seminal orchestral works, primarily from the 20th and 21st centuries, along with representative analytical and explanatory writings. Skills in instrumentation as well as score and part preparation will be developed through the completion of preparatory exercises that focus attention on each section of the orchestra in turn. These exercises will then form the basis of a short transcription or original work for orchestra or wind ensemble.

The approach taken is designed to inform composition practice and will be primarily of interest to students in composition, and to prepare those students for completing large ensemble works as part of their composition studies. Students with interests in conducting, education, or performance are also likely to find value in the course.

II. Course Materials:

1. Scores, recordings, and readings accessed online through electronic resources owned by Western's library system or through open access resources, or through the library's physical collection.
2. Access to the OWL Brightspace course site for this course for the sake of communication, accessing materials, and submitting work.
3. Professional-quality music notation software or the professional tools required to make handwritten scores and parts.
4. Easy access to a printer or scanner, or to a tablet with accurate and fine-point stylus for viewing and annotating scores, will be useful.
5. Suggested: Any decent, modern orchestration textbook as reference. The instructor prefers and recommends Samuel Adler's *The Study of Orchestration* but does not require it. Some such texts will be found in the course reserves.

III. Evaluation.

Term Project		65%
Prep Stages (4)	20%	
Final Submission	50%	
Attendance, Preparation and Participation		30%

Evaluation Details:

Term Project. The term will be either: (a) an original work written for band or for orchestra; or (b) a transcription or arrangement for band or for orchestra of a work originally written for smaller or simpler forces (solo instrument, chamber ensemble, voice and piano, choir, etc.). The work will be due **9 December 2026** and will be submitted as a fully and professionally formatted score and a complete set of parts.

The student will also complete preparatory work in four (4) stages, focusing in turn on each section of the orchestra or band. This preparatory work will be due 19 September, 3 October, 24 October, and 14 November.

Reading sessions with the Wind Ensemble or the Orchestra may be available in the spring (late March or early April). The instructor will forward more details before the term is over.

Attendance, Preparation, and Participation. A list of repertoire and readings for each topic will be provided through the OWL Brightspace course site. Students are expected to arrive at each week's seminar (3 hours) having carefully reviewed all required materials and prepared for a detailed and probing discussion of those materials. Students will also be asked to create particular items—instrumental parts, reductions of orchestral textures to short score, analytical or other kinds of summaries, and the like—for each class to inform and guide the discussions and as demonstration of engagement with the readings and repertoire.

Students should also attend, independently or in small groups outside of class time, several large ensemble rehearsals (Wind Ensemble, Orchestra, or Symphonic Band) throughout the term. These take place each afternoon, Monday through Thursday, 3:30-5:30pm, usually in the Music Building. Information about the repertoire being performed, accessing scores, and rehearsal rooms will be shared with the students. Students will be asked to report on their findings.

Any lapses in class attendance or preparation will result in significant deductions from this portion of the grade unless discussed with the instructor in advance so that appropriate accommodations can be made.

Schedule of Topics

Detailed repertoire and reading lists will follow
Topics may change with notice

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| 1. Mon 14 Sept | Introduction |
| 2. Mon 21 Sept | Percussion: Topic, Structure, Colour and Weight |
| 3. Mon 28 Sept | Formal Organization and Instrumental Sections |
| 4. Mon 5 Oct | String Techniques and Texture |
| 5. Mon 19 Oct | Principles of Layering, Counterpoint, and Balance. |
| 6. Mon 26 Oct | Wind Techniques and Textures |
| 7. Mon 2 Nov | Instrumentation and Motivic Development |
| 8. Mon 9 Nov | Brass Techniques and Textures |
| 9. Mon 16 Nov | Focal Pitches and Pivot Tones |
| 10. Mon 23 Nov | Acoustic Principles and New Tonalities |
| 11. Mon 30 Nov | Freedom and Constraint: Indeterminacy in Large Ensembles. |
| 12. Mon 7 Dec | Review and Summary |

IV. Notes.

1. **Enrolment Restrictions.** Enrollment in this course is restricted to graduate students in Music, as well as any student that has obtained special permission to enroll in this course from the course instructor as well as the Graduate Chair (or equivalent) from the student's home program.
2. **Statement on Scholastic Offences.** Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic offence, as found at https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf
3. **Health and Wellness Services.** Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health Support for a complete list of options about how to obtain help: <https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental-health/index.html>.
4. **Accessible Education (AE).** Western is committed to achieving barrier-free accessibility for all its members, including graduate students. As part of this commitment, Western provides a variety of services devoted to promoting, advocating, and accommodating persons with disabilities in their respective graduate program

Graduate students with disabilities (for example, chronic illnesses, mental health conditions, mobility impairments) are strongly encouraged to register with Accessible Education (AE), a confidential service designed to support graduate and undergraduate students through their academic program. With the appropriate documentation, the student will work with both AE and their graduate programs (normally their Graduate Chair and/or Course instructor) to ensure that appropriate academic accommodations to program requirements are arranged. These accommodations include individual counselling, alternative formatted literature, accessible campus transportation, learning strategy instruction, writing exams and assistive technology instruction.

5. **Statement on Gender-Based and Sexual Violence.** Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts on the Wellness and Wellbeing website: <https://www.uwo.ca/health/gbsv/index.html>

To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca

6. **Statement on the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI).** It is expected that all work in this course will represent the original thoughts and ideas of the student, and/or represent their development of applicable skills, and that students are always aware of and acknowledge pre-existing sources. So long as those expectations are met, the use of generative AI is, in principle, permitted as a tool or support for the development of thoughts, ideas, or skills. On the other hand, the submission of any work which has, in whole or in part, been **authored** by such AI is emphatically **not permitted**.