

Cornell University Chamber Orchestra (CCO)

MUS 4621; Spring semester 2019 Either 0 credits, S-U, or 2 credits, letter grade, each semester. Prerequisite: successful audition.

Teaching Staff: Timna Mayer, orchestra director (sabbatical replacement for Chris Kim for the spring semester) 332 of Lincoln Hall, Ithaca, NY 14853

Email: Timnamay@hotmail.de

Phone: 607-227-5632 (only call or text in case of emergencies)

Office hours: by appointment

Rehearsal Time and Place:

Tuesdays 4:45—6:15 pm Barnes Hall (rehearsal will be extended by 20 minutes on concert weeks)

Thursdays 4:45—6:45 pm Barnes Hall

Piazza Info

This term we will be using Piazza for class discussion. The system is highly catered to getting you help fast and efficiently from me and your classmates. Rather than emailing questions to the teaching staff, I encourage you to post your questions on Piazza. If you have any problems or feedback for the developers, email team@piazza.com.

Find our class page at: <https://piazza.com/cornell/spring2019/music4621/home>

Course Objectives

Be able to make musical decisions as an independent, integrated ensemble.

Learning Outcomes

Perform as an independent chamber group without a conductor

Display individual leadership skills (move, show entrances, etc.)

Be able to articulate musical ideas

Diversity Statement

Openness to ideas/interpretations from another perspective.

A safe environment in which everyone is respected and can express their own opinion.

A community of learners who give each other constructive feedback /criticism towards a common goal of the orchestra.

Expectations

In a conductor-less orchestra, every member of the group is expected to function as a leader to their stand partners. Leadership and movement are absolutely crucial in order to keep the ensemble together.

Rehearsals will be a time to discuss musical goals and find solutions to possible technical difficulties. Each player is expected to actively participate in rehearsals, not only as a player, but also as musician with individual artistic input and ideas. Individual

preparation is expected, this includes: listening to recordings, playing along with recordings, and practicing technically challenging sections. Every player should know their repertoire, especially entrances, since no one will be there to show when to start playing.

This ensemble fosters individual drive and a strong sense of responsibility for the group. Active participation in group discussions and concert preparation is strongly encouraged.

Grading

Since the Chamber Orchestra is a performance-oriented course, it is expected that each member will attend ALL rehearsals and performances. For any musical ensemble to be successful, every member must demonstrate a high level of commitment to the group. Lateness and absence are detrimental not only to the actual music making but more importantly, to the morale of the entire orchestra. Therefore, grades are based on attendance and your participation in the reflection journal and musical preparation. Attendance at all concerts and all rehearsals is required. Absence from rehearsals and concerts will be excused only in cases of incapacitating illness or family emergency (see "Absences"). Written notice is required, and a doctor's note may be requested. Absences for reasons other than the above will affect your grade and/or membership in the orchestra (see below). Every orchestra member is expected to help with setup and is supposed to be on stage by 4:40PM. At 4:45PM attendance will be taken. If an orchestra member is not present by 4:45PM they will be considered late or missing.

Absences (Including being late or leaving early)

Being late for rehearsal:

- Is generally not acceptable
 - If you absolutely have to be late, you have to let me know ahead of time
 - I may excuse being late for the following reasons:
 - An exam goes overtime
 - Immediate emergencies (death in the family, illness, lost apartment keys)
 - For no other reasons should you be late to rehearsals
- Late 1-5 minutes: acceptable one time without affecting your grade
- Beyond 5 minutes: will affect your grade
- Being late 3 times counts as an unexcused absence

Leaving early:

- If you have a prelim that starts 15 minutes after rehearsal, please contact me at least 24h ahead of time and let me know. If you do, you'll be allowed to leave 10 minutes early.

Absences:

- If you have to miss rehearsal for an excursion or school related event, let me know at the beginning of the semester
- If you have to miss rehearsal for any other reason, let me know at least 24h ahead of time

- In case you have to miss rehearsal because of an immediate illness related emergency, send me a text message and then scan and send me your doctor's note by the end of the semester. If you do so, your absence will be excused.

Side Note (Absences and Grading)

1 additional unexcused absence

- Write a rehearsal reflection of the following rehearsal and post it on piazza indicating the date of your absence. If you do so, the absence will be excused.

2 additional unexcused absences

- If you would like those absences to be excused, send me a recording of one of our orchestra pieces. If the recording is satisfactory (played to the quality level you should be playing on at that point of the semester) I will excuse both absences.

S/U

- 4 unexcused absences will lead to you failing the class

Detailed Definition of Expectations for A Students:

A+

No absences

Never late

Concertmaster, section leader, or soloist

Early for every rehearsal and concert to help set up

Actively contributing to the orchestra community (making posters, advertising concerts, motivating outside activities, such as orchestra dinners)

Outstanding written assignments (high quality writing, submitted early, detailed analysis of rehearsals and concert)

A

One unexcused absence

Second unexcused absence has to be made up for by writing a rehearsal reflection

Never late (or if indicated above)

Setting up whenever required

Actively contributing to the orchestra community by participating in group discussions

Post written assignments before the deadlines and display a high level of writing and insight into the rehearsal process

A-

Two unexcused absences

Never late (or if indicated above)

Actively contributing to the orchestra community by participating in group discussions

Post all written assignments by the end of the semester and display a good understanding of the rehearsal process

Attitude:

In order to make orchestra a positive and motivating experience for everyone, it's crucial that every player is active and engaged in the rehearsal process.

This includes not only knowing your part, but also contributing to group discussions by providing feedback.

We are a team, fellow musicians, and your musical input is valuable and appreciated.

Because there is no conductor this year, the person sitting on the right is responsible for leading the person sitting on the left. Leadership and movement is absolutely crucial when performing without a conductor.

Rehearsal/Concert Reflection journal (post on Piazza)

Members taking orchestra for a letter grade will be expected to write all of the following rehearsal/concert reflections throughout the semester. Members taking orchestra for S/U will only have to post a practice reflection by week 3.

- 1 practice reflection (Due in week 3): Play along with videos posted on piazza and comment on the following:
 - Leadership within the group
 - Musical expression and tempo changes
 - Articulation
- 1 rehearsal reflection (Due 1 week before the concert so we can utilize your suggestions). Include:
 - What we worked on
 - Two technical/musical aspects the orchestra has to work in the future (and how we can work on them)
 - Two comments on leadership and group dynamic
- 1 concert reflection (Due 1 week after the concert) including:
 - comments on your personal experience
 - two aspects that worked well (include leadership, musical expression, or technical proficiency)
- 1 peer review of concert reflection (Due 2 weeks after the concert)
- 1 practice reflection (Due in week 7): Play along with videos posted on piazza and comment on the following:
 - Leadership within the group
 - Musical expression and tempo changes within the group
 - Articulation
 - how playing along with the video improved your playing

Logistics**Concertmaster/section leader rotation:**

Concertmasters and section leaders will rotate every rehearsal for the first four weeks.

After four weeks, I will determine a concertmaster and section leaders.

I will make this decision based on the following:

- Leadership skills (visible entrances, movement, engagement)
- Level of playing (secondary to leadership skills)

Concert Dress

March Concert:

Black dress pants or skirt (covering the knees) and colorful dress shirt

Dress shoes

April Concert:

TBA