

## **Spring 2026 Ball State University College of Fine Arts / School of Music / Music Performance**

### **MUSP 435 Small Ensemble**

**Dr. Lori Rhoden, Professor of Music Performance, Coordinator of Piano Pedagogy and Group Piano**

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**Office Hours: TBA**

### **Course Description**

Students will have the opportunity to develop musical and technical skills through the study of collaborative piano performance with an individual singer or instrumentalist, a chamber music ensemble, or other large ensemble.

### **Course Objectives / Student Learning Objectives**

Students will study repertoire appropriate to their ability level in collaboration with other music students. At the completion of a semester of MUSP 435, students will be able to:

1. Master repertoire selections to demonstrate improvement in technique, expressive communication/ interpretation and historical style performance practices.
2. Demonstrate improved collaborative communication with other musicians through weekly rehearsals and lessons with one or more faculty.
3. Demonstrate professionalism in preparation, organization, and collaboration with other musicians.
4. Perform collaborative repertoire at least once in studio class, area seminar, general recital hour, juries, and/or other concerts/recitals as appropriate to the collaborative assignment.

### **Rationale**

All music majors should gain experience in collaborative performance on their principal instrument/voice as one of the essential skills defined in the accreditation requirements by the National Association of Schools of Music.

### **Communication**

I will respond to email from your official Ball State University email address as soon as possible during regular Monday-Friday work days within the semester. Responses will likely be delayed if I am out of town.

### **Lesson Schedule**

Lessons/coachings will be scheduled at the mutual convenience of all collaborative partners at the beginning of each semester. Students will work on their own parts initially during lessons and then be joined by the collaborators as soon as possible and as appropriate to the assignment.

### **Resources / Requirements**

1. Recording device to record weekly lessons and studio class performances.
2. Notebook
3. Pencil with eraser ☺
4. Metronome or metronome app
5. Music scores should be obtained as soon as possible based upon individual assignments. Many free domain scores may be found via the internet, such as the IMSLP/Petrucci Music library, found at [http://imslp.org/wiki/Main\\_Page](http://imslp.org/wiki/Main_Page). These are not necessarily the best editions. You must consult me on the choice of editions prior to purchasing your scores to avoid having to purchase more than one score. If free copies are not legally available, library copies or temporary photocopies may be used as long as the music score has been ordered.

### **Course Expectations / Grade Evaluation**

## Lesson Grades (100% of the grade)

Lesson grades – evaluated on the basis of quantity and quality of work (accuracy in pitch, rhythm, fluency, etc.), continual progress and improvement, attitude and effort, and public performances as appropriate. Specific goals will be mutually decided upon at each lesson to achieve during the following week. Tempo is not important, unless it is specific to one of the goals, but consistent and accurate performing will be essential.

## Summary of Accomplishments

Prior to each lesson, students must submit a list of the specific achievements for the week, such as 1) “learned all notes and rhythms with good fingering at a tempo of quarter note = 70 in a consistent tempo” or 2) “Memorized measures 1-32”, etc. This list should be in a continuous Word or Google document, with the most current lesson information at the top so that the document is in reverse chronological order. Each summary should be titled with the date of the lesson for which it is submitted. The summary should also indicate the total hours the student practiced since the last lesson report. **Failure to submit the summary of accomplishments prior to your lesson will result in the lowering of the lesson grade by one letter.**

## Minimum expectations for a grade of “A”:

(Note: completion of these requirements does not guarantee an “A” – your general progress this semester and overall performance for the semester will influence your grade as well.)

1. Attend lessons/coachings regularly without unexcused absences.
2. Practice a minimum of 5 hours per week for each course credit registration. (This includes rehearsal time with other students.) Practice journals are highly recommended for all students.
3. Prepare repertoire accurately for lessons/coachings with attention to correct notes, rhythms, fingerings, and interpretive elements. Demonstrate consistent improvement in repertoire on a weekly basis, with specific attention to those challenges identified in lessons/coachings. Solve or remedy specific problems identified in the previous week’s lesson/coaching and achieve required goals.
4. Obtain personal copies of all music studied as soon as possible.
5. Perform collaborative repertoire at least once in studio class, area seminar, general recital hour, juries, and/or other concerts/recitals as appropriate to the collaborative assignment.

## University Grade Appeal Policy

If you believe you received a final course grade that does not reflect your performance due to fairness or a procedural issue, you have the right to file an appeal within 5 school days after final grades are posted by the Office of the Registrar. Review the [University Grade Appeal Policy and Process](#).

## Practice Facilities

Students may practice in the designated practice rooms in the music building. Piano performance and principal level music majors should practice on the grand pianos in the locked practice rooms. Students need to secure a key to these rooms from the instrument room as soon as possible by paying the required fees. Students reserve practice rooms through the current policies determined by the School of Music office. Larger ensembles should reserve space for rehearsals.

## Performance Opportunities

### 1. Studio Classes and Studio Recitals

Students may perform in studio class when repertoire selections are adequately prepared. Students should perform collaborative repertoire in public at least once during the semester.

### 2. Other School of Music Recitals

Students will have the opportunity to perform in area recital hour, general recital hour, and other School of Music recitals as appropriate.

## Attendance Policy

Students are required to attend all lessons regularly and should arrive on time. Consistent with [University policies regarding student absences](#), absences will be excused for the following: funeral

and bereavement leave, jury duty, late course addition, military absences, observance of religious holidays, pregnancy leave, student-athletes participating in University- or department-approved activities, and university advisories. In addition, excused absences include a BSU-sponsored activity (travel notice required) or illness requiring absence from lessons. **If you wish to request an excused absence from any lesson for any reason, you must communicate with and receive approval in advance.** It is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor as soon as possible of anticipated absences, and to arrange for a make-up lesson for any excused lesson absence. **Both unexcused lesson absences and excused lesson absences that are not rescheduled will receive a failing grade.** Excessive tardiness may be considered as absences. Absence from 20% or more of regularly scheduled lessons for any reason may result in a failing grade.

### **Course Withdrawals**

Please contact your instructor before withdrawing from any university registration to discuss options to be successful in the course. You should also check with the Ball State Financial Aid office to see if a withdrawal affects your financial aid in any way.

### **University Syllabus Statements**

#### **Title IX**

Ball State University is committed to providing a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students. If you or someone you know has experienced sexual harassment—including sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, please know that you are not alone. The University offers support services and resources. For more information or to report an incident, please visit [www.bsu.edu/titleix](http://www.bsu.edu/titleix) or contact the Title IX Coordinator at 765-285-1545 or at [titleix@bsu.edu](mailto:titleix@bsu.edu).

**As your instructor, I am a mandatory reporter under the Title IX policy and required to report any information I receive about possible sexual harassment.** This includes information shared in class discussions, assignments, or private conversations.

**What happens after I report?** The Title IX Coordinator will email the person who experienced sexual harassment (complainant) and invite them to schedule a meeting. If the complainant **chooses** to meet with the Title IX Coordinator,

- Title IX Coordinator will offer supportive measures (e.g., counseling, extensions on deadlines, course-related adjustments, changes to work or class schedules, and/or referrals to campus offices), review the policy, and discuss options to move forward.
- If a complaint is filed by the complainant or the University, an investigation will begin following University policy.

#### **Student Academic Ethics Policy**

Honesty, trust, and personal responsibility are fundamental attributes of the university community. Academic dishonesty and other forms of academic misconduct threaten the foundation of an institution dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and will not be tolerated. To maintain its credibility and reputation, and to equitably assign evaluations of scholastic and creative performance, Ball State University is committed to maintaining a climate that upholds and values the highest standards of academic integrity. Visit the VPAA's [academic integrity website](#) (Students tab) for resources on understanding academic integrity, citing sources properly, and avoiding inadvertent academic dishonesty. To learn about BSU's academic integrity expectations and students' rights, please read the University [Student Academic Ethics Policy](#).

Academic integrity violations include giving or receiving an unfair academic advantage (cheating), presenting someone else's ideas or work as your own (plagiarism), and falsifying academic records. Unless otherwise indicated, you must work independently by yourself. Check with me if you are unsure

whether something constitutes academic dishonesty. Examples of academic integrity violations include but are not limited to:

- Using resources not authorized by the faculty member (including devices, AI tools, hidden notes, and open books)
- Using commercial study websites to find answers to graded assignments (Chegg, Course Hero, StudyPool, OneClass, etc.).
- Without the instructor's written permission, giving away, buying, or selling graded assignments class notes, exams, study guides, or other course materials to other students or to third-party vendors (Course Hero, Chegg, 24HourAnswers, etc.).
- Working with another person on any assignment other than authorized group projects.
- Sharing or allowing others to access your files, whether done with permission or not.
- Reusing your own work from another semester, course, or section.
- Sharing answers with others during exams (passing notes, texting, whispering, gesturing)
- Discussing exam questions and answers with students who have not taken the exam.
- Soliciting others to complete work for you.

### **FERPA and Privacy**

As a student, your educational records are considered confidential. Under FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act), your records are confidential and protected. Under most circumstances, your records will not be released without your written and signed consent. However, some directory information may be released to third parties without your prior consent unless a written request to restrict this is on file. You can learn more about student rights to privacy by reading [Ball State's FERPA and Privacy and Protection](#).

### **University Statement**

We are committed to ensuring that all members of the community are welcome, through valuing the various experiences and worldviews represented at Ball State and among those we serve. We promote a culture of respect and civil discourse.

### **Disability Statement**

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please contact the instructor of record as soon as possible. Ball State's Disability Services Office coordinates services for students with disabilities; documentation of a disability needs to be on file in that office before any accommodations can be provided. Disability Services can be contacted at 765-285-5293 or [dsd@bsu.edu](mailto:dsd@bsu.edu).

### **Freedom of Expression**

In this course, we are committed to fostering a learning environment that values intellectual diversity, encourages free expression, and promotes open inquiry. As members of the Ball State Community, we treat each person in the Ball State community with civility, courtesy, compassion, and dignity and respect and learn from differences in people, ideas, and opinions. Please review Ball State University's [Statement on Freedom of Expression](#), the resources on Ball State's [Freedom of Expression webpage](#), and [Ball State's Beneficence Pledge](#).

### **Engagement Expectations**

To support a respectful and engaging academic community that encourages the free exchange of ideas and civil discourse, we will follow these ground rules:

- **Respect different perspectives.** Share your ideas and let others share theirs.
- **Challenge ideas, not people.** Disagree respectfully. No personal attacks or put-downs. Focus on exploring ideas critically and constructively.
- **Listen to understand.** Stay curious, ask questions to understand, and give others space to speak.
- **Assume good intentions.** Approach discussions with curiosity and compassion.

- **Keep it private.** What is shared in class stays in class. Do not share others' words or work without permission.
- **Be respectful.** Avoid hurtful language, stereotypes, or content that may demean others. Keep feedback constructive.

## **University Student Services**

### **The Learning Center**

The Learning Center offers free tutoring for many courses. We also provide writing and study skills tutoring. Students can make appointments for virtual (Zoom) or in-person (NQ 350) appointments.

To make an appointment, visit [my.bsu.edu](http://my.bsu.edu) and click on "Navigate" in the Additional Tools section, or just go directly to <https://bsu.navigate.eab.com> [Links to an external site.](#). You can also download the Navigate Student app.

The Learning Center also has drop-in tutoring (no appointment necessary) for math, chemistry, and biology. Check our website for more information.

Testing accommodations for students with disabilities are available for students who have received the appropriate documentation from Disability Services. Tests may be administered in the Learning Center.

For more information about all of our programming visit [www.bsu.edu/learningcenter](http://www.bsu.edu/learningcenter) [Links to an external site.](#) or call 765-285-1006. Email us at [learncenter@bsu.edu](mailto:learncenter@bsu.edu).

Follow us on Instagram and X: BallStateLC

### **The Writing Center**

All writers improve with practice and feedback, so as a student in this course, you are encouraged to use the Writing Center (in Robert Bell 295 during weekdays, Bracken Library First Floor West in the evenings, or online during any of our regularly scheduled hours) to get additional feedback on your writing.

The Writing Center offers free planning, feedback, and accountability sessions (in person and online) to all students composing essays, reports, reflections, research projects, web content, lesson plans, slideshows, poster presentations, resumes, and other digital or print texts. To schedule a free appointment to discuss your writing, go to [bsu.edu/writingcenter](http://bsu.edu/writingcenter). Online and in-person appointments are available; however, plan ahead because appointments book quickly!

### **The Basic Needs Hub**

If you are having difficulty affording enough food, do not have a safe and reliable place to sleep, and/or experiencing an emergency or crisis, help is available through the [Basic Needs Hub](#). The Basic Needs Hub has information, resources, and provides individualized support to students. To talk with a supportive staff member about your experience, receive one on one assistance, or learn more about resources, you can submit a [Basic Needs Assistance Form](#).

### **The Counseling Center**

The Ball State University Counseling Center offers free and confidential services to all students. The Counseling Center is located in Lucina Hall, Room 320. To schedule an appointment, you can contact us at 765-285-1736. Ball State also offers a 24/7 Crisis Line, which can be reached at 765-285-HOPE (4673). The Crisis Line is a mental health resource for those who are struggling with any mental health concerns, including thoughts of self-harm and/or suicide.

At the Ball State Counseling Center, we see students for a variety of reasons, some of which include homesickness, relationship concerns, anxiety, and depression. At your first appointment, you will work with a therapist to create a plan that will connect you with resources that best fit your needs. We assist

students with getting connected to therapy at our Center as well as connecting students to self-help resources, other on-campus resources, and community-based resources. All Ball State students also have access to several on-demand, self-help resources through a variety of different platforms. All of these resources, including a direct link to our website, can be found [here](#).

### **The Speaking Center**

The [Speaking Center](#) is a free resource available to all members of the BSU community wanting to improve their public speaking abilities. We offer personalized coaching designed to help you become a more confident and effective speaker. Our trained coaches provide constructive feedback and support throughout the entire speech preparation process, whether you are in the early stages of brainstorming ideas and organizing your thoughts, or you need to practice your delivery and refine your message.

The Center is in the David Letterman Communication and Media Building, room 302. To schedule an appointment, please access us through your Navigate app. Appointments are available in person, on Zoom, and in virtual reality (VR) for those interested in practicing in an immersive speaking environment.

### **Subject to Change Statement**

This syllabus and schedule are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.