

**Texas Tech University**  
**Applied Trombone Policies/Procedures**  
**Fall 2023**

***James T. Decker***

Room 003

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**I. General Weekly Schedule**

- A. **Weekly Performance Classes:** Tuesdays, 5:00 – 5:50, beginning on August 29, 2023.
- B. **Trombone Choir** – takes place on Wednesdays at 5PM, beginning on Wednesday, August 30, 2023, in the Choir Room.
- C. **Weekly Lessons:** Students will be assigned regular **50-minute** time slots either with me exclusively, alternating between myself and our TAs, Haotian Quan or Julio Rivera, or exclusively with one of them.

**II. General Communication Policies**

- A. Most communication will be done in mass through e-mail, postings around the studio door and by general announcements at studio class.
- B. Response is expected **within 24 hours**, whether communication is via e-mail, or voice mail.
- C. Cell Phone Usage: Cell phone usage or text messaging is prohibited during lessons or studio class. **Make sure your device is turned to silent mode before entering class.**

**III. Web sites to bookmark – be sure to bookmark and review the following sites often:**

- A. [www.blackboard.com](http://www.blackboard.com) – Contains Applied Trombone info.
- B. [www.texastechtrombones.com](http://www.texastechtrombones.com) – The Official Trombone Studio website.
- C. [www.big12tromboneconference.com](http://www.big12tromboneconference.com) – The official conference website

**IV. Equipment needs**

- A. Adequate Professional Model Trombone (.547 bore) in good working condition.
- B. **Lesson/Practice Journal – hard copy or electronic file**
- C. **Straight/Cup Mute**
- D. Etudes Books, Solos and other sheet music as prescribed.
- E. Metronome\*
- F. Recording Device\*
- G. **Breathing Device**

1. **1<sup>st</sup> year students: Breath Builder**
2. **2<sup>nd</sup> year students and above: Breathing Bag – 5-liter anesthesia bag or greater**

**H. Intonation Repair Tool – 2<sup>nd</sup> year students and above**

\*can use an app equivalent

**V. Lesson Parameters**

**A. Modes of lesson delivery**

1. **Face to Face – in Room 003**
2. **Virtual/Zoom**
  1. **On Rare Occasions when traveling**
  2. **FaceTime or Google Duo could be viable alternates.**

**B. Lesson Activities and Formats**

1. **Lesson assignments and activities will take place in person, asynchronously, or synchronously.**
2. **All students will have a Flipgrid Account where they will be able to submit recordings of etudes or technical assessments.**
3. **Assignments and learning resources will be posted on [www.jamestdecker.com](http://www.jamestdecker.com) for review and assessment.**

**VI. Group Morning Routine**

**A. The Group Morning Routine provides an extra opportunity for students to interact with and get additional instruction from Professor Decker and the Graduate Teaching Assistants.**

**B. All undergraduates will be required to gather as a group at least once/week to go over their designated routine as an ensemble.**

1. **Year 1: Remington – “Warm-up Studies”**
2. **Year 2: Baker - “Tenor Trombone Method”**
3. **Year 3: Vernon – “The Singing Trombone”**
4. **Year 4: Routine adjusted according to the needs of the class.**

**C. The day and time of the weekly meeting will be mutually decided upon by the students of each class.**

**D. Students will need to meet a minimum of 12 full sessions to receive full credit for this portion of the grade.**

**VII. Iota Tau Alpha**

**A. Def- Trombone Service Fraternity, an organization which helps support, promote and champion the level of trombone playing through the sponsorship of:**

1. **Guest Recitals**
2. **Clinics**

3. Regional Festivals, such as the Big XII Trombone Conference

**B. Membership is a Trombone Studio Requirement**

1. You will be invoiced the dues amount.
2. Check, cash, or credit card payments are acceptable

**VIII. Performance, Education, Music Minor General Requirements**

**A. Practice Time: Generally, 2 ½ hours or more of practice time/day is expected. As a music professional, it is your duty to become the best musician possible, to make yourself marketable as a performer, to get familiar with repertoire that you are likely to teach, to effectively learn problem solving skills that you can share with your students, and/or generally demonstrate great musicianship to you students and otherwise serve as their role model.**

**B. Responsibilities**

1. **Performance and Education Majors: Iota Tau Alpha Membership, Technical Exercises, Chamber Music Requirement, Weekly Performance Classes, Studio Recital (except first year students), Concert Attendance, and Jury/Recital.**
2. **Education Members who have completed their Junior Recitals: Iota Tau Membership, Chamber Music Requirement and End of Semester Jury.**
3. **Non-Majors: Iota Tau Membership and Chamber Music Requirement**

**C. Practice Rooms**

1. **Practice Rooms for the Fall 2023 Semester will be available on a first come, first served basis.**
2. **Although there are no breaks mandated for air recirculation and usages has eased, please do take care of yourselves, and allow air to purify to some degree when possible.**

**IX. Grading Policies**


**A. Stated in Syllabus**

**B. EXTRA CREDIT/MAKE-UP OPPORTUNITIES:**

1. Serving as an officer for ITA (trombone services fraternity) will result in 50 points credit to your grade.
2. Everyone participating in **two trombone** chamber music groups will get 50 points added to their grade
3. Other musical enriching activities may be granted extra credit, at the discretion of Mr. Decker.
4. Students may earn a **maximum** of **150** points extra credit/semester (equivalent to raising your grade by a grade and a half)

- C. All students must participate in a heterogenous trombone ensemble – details and grade ramifications are stated below.

**X. Official Studio Event Attendance**

- A. Everyone is expected to attend trombone studio and/or Iota Tau Alpha sponsored events.
- B. Examples of such events include, but are not limited to, studio member degree recitals, studio recitals, trombone ensemble concerts, guest artist master classes, guest artists recitals, designated TTU Faculty Recitals and the Carol of Lights Celebration.
- C. A list of these official studio events are posted and updated on the TTU Trombone Studio Webpage, [www.texastechtrombones.com](http://www.texastechtrombones.com)
- D. In addition, studio members are expected to attend a representative number of diverse concerts and briefly share their impressions of the events.
- E. Details of the grading procedures and other logistics are documented here:  [Concert.Attendance.Fall.2023.pdf](#)

**XI. Trombone Chamber Music/Trombone Choir Component**

- A. Students are required to be in a trombone ensemble.
- B. Chamber Music Choice
  - 1. Everyone will be in one of two trombone choirs
    - 1. The TTU Trombone Choir (Wednesdays – 5PM)
    - 2. The ‘Red Raider Trombone Collective’ (Mondays – 6PM)
  - 2. Selected students may join the TA’s and Dr. Casadonte as members of the ‘Red Raider Trombone Collective’
    - 1. This trombone ensemble performs the most advanced literature and may tour or go to conferences in any given semester.
    - 2. Members from previous semesters will be invited to return as members of this ensemble.
    - 3. Openings for collective will be filled from the current semester’s concert auditions or via a private audition with Mr. Decker. Selections will be made to fulfill an optimal instrumentation as determined by Mr. Decker and the available qualified personnel.
  - 3. Everyone will register in at least one chamber or medium ensemble
- C. Non-Participation in one of these groups will account for 10-point deduction from your applied grade point total.
- D. Other Chamber Music Enrichment Opportunities

1. **Students are encouraged to read trios or quartets together to gain ensemble experience in a fun, relaxed manner**
2. **Trio and Quartet Folders are available for borrowing from Professor Decker's Office**
  1. **The sets of music may be borrowed for up to a two-hour period, normally during business hours.**
  2. **Make sure that all copies of the music remain in order and in the folders themselves**
  3. **If a group finds music they want to work on more, separate copies of the arrangement(s) will be made for your use.**

## **XII. Scale Requirements**

- A. **All first-year students will be studying both major and natural minor scales this semester. It is expected that they will practice these scales daily, 24 scales/day (12 majors, 12 natural minor), after being introduced to these forms.**
- B. **Second-year students and above will be expected to practice all 48 scales/day.**
- C. **All undergraduates may be examined on their scale knowledge during any lesson. The performance level of their scales will be considered for daily lesson grading purposes.**
- D. **The performance of scales will be evaluated each semester. Each student must competently perform the scales to pass their jury or recital.**

## **XIII. Studio Technical Requirements**

- A. **Technical Goals: A list of general technical goals may be found by clicking on the following link: [Technical.Guidelines.Goals.doc](#) These will be the basis for weekly assignments given for the semester.**
- B. **Fundamentals**
  1. **All students will be required to perform technical facility exercises to fulfill the studio technical requirements. These exercises will be worked on generally in various keys during weekly lessons. The proficiency of the exercise will be demonstrated live in the lesson that takes place during the week the assignment is due.**
  2. **Technical requirements (all the material below will be studied during the first half of the semester and will be graded during the second half of the semester):**
    - a. **First Year Students: Major Scales in Modal Form**
    - b. **Second Year: Thirds – Major and Harmonic Minor**
    - c. **Third Year: Triads – Major and Harmonic Minor**

3. **Technical Assignments**—Two assignments, combined with tune memorization, will total 100 points to be potentially earned.

Details to be documented here: [Technical.Fall.2023.doc](#)

- 1) If a student misses a lesson during a submission week, they will need to submit their assignment through Flipgrid by the end of that week. All assigned keys will be recorded in this case.
- 3) Every individual needs to be registered on Flipgrid (now known as 'Flip').

**B. Solo Repertoire for an upcoming jury or recital.**

**C. Etude books, as assigned**

#### **XIV. Practice Journal Maintenance**

**A. All undergraduates are required to maintain a journal. You may have the journal be hard copy or in an electronic file of your designation. Use it for**

1. **Planning of practice**
2. **Evaluation of current practice sessions**
  1. **Successful strategies**
  2. **Positive achievements**
  3. **Areas that need improvement**
  4. **Musical goals**
3. **Recording of assignments given during lessons**
4. **Taking notes during lessons (you may also record your lessons in lieu of actual note taking)**

**B. The journal will be checked periodically.**

#### **XV. Big 12 Trombone Conference**

**A. EVERYONE is expected to attend clinics/concerts and assist with the administration of the Big 12 Trombone Conference, which is January 12 – 14, 2024.**

**B. ATTENDANCE WILL BE TAKEN AT ALL EVENTS! Students will be graded based on the percentage of events attended or worked.**

**C. Grading to be accounted for in the Spring Semester.**

#### **XVI. Recital Preparation**

**A. All students who are giving recitals for this semester will be given schedules for completion of essential recital preparation tasks.**

**B. Each phase of preparation must be completed in a timely manner.**

#### **XVII. Orchestra Soloists Competition**

**A. Eligibility**

1. **Juniors or higher class or grade students are eligible to enter the preliminary round of the solo competition to represent the studio**

2. **If a student is a member of the Symphonic Wind Ensemble or Orchestra, they are eligible to enter the solo competition, regardless of class level.**
- B. Procedure**
1. **All interested, eligible students will submit a 5-minute recording to Mr. Decker by November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022.**
  2. **The studio will listen to all recordings anonymously at a chosen studio class towards the end of the semester.**
  3. **The top 2 vote getters will represent the studio in the Solo Competition**
  4. **The soloists not chosen will perform their repertoire at their jury for the semester.**
- C. Entry into the solo competition will take the place of the jury for all students representing the studio.**

### **XVIII. Juries**

- A. Everyone, other than current semester recitalists, will be required to play a jury.
- B. Repertoire: Selections from one of the following categories:**
1. **Solo repertoire with accompaniment**
    - 1) **Live pianist**
    - 2) **Pre-recorded accompaniment**
    - 3) **Music notation generated accompaniment**
  2. **Unaccompanied solo**
  3. **A solo plus a selection of four orchestra excerpts, minimum**
- C. The total time of the juries will be 8 minutes maximum, including entry and exit from the jury space.
- D. Grading Parameters
1. **Any performance of a trombone/piano work unaccompanied will result in a one grade deduction on the jury grade.**
  2. **The accompanist requirement is waived if the student decides on the solo/excerpt option for jury performance**
- E. Preparation/Performance Guidelines
1. **Everyone needs to have three copies of the performance grading form filled out for their jury.**
  2. Students must sign up for a jury time before “Dead Day”
  3. All students should arrive at the jury **at least 10 minutes before** their scheduled jury time.
  4. **Treat the jury as a performance.** Dress accordingly. **You may be penalized a letter grade if dress is too sloppy or casual (i.e. no jeans, t-shirts, sneakers, etc.).**