

MARCHING PERCUSSION TECHNIQUES FOR PROSPECTIVE BAND DIRECTORS:  
A COURSE DESIGNED FOR INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC EDUCATION MAJORS

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Table of Contents

**TABLE OF CONTENTS..... 2**

**ABSTRACT ..... 3**

**CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION..... 5**

    STATEMENT OF PROBLEM ..... 6

    STATEMENT OF PURPOSE ..... 7

    SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY ..... 7

    DEFINITION OF TERMS ..... 8

**CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW ..... 9**

    A BRIEF HISTORY OF PERCUSSION ..... 9

    CHALLENGES WITH EXISTING CURRICULUM DESIGN ..... 10

    THE GAP IN THE EXISTING LITERATURE ..... 13

    THE NEED FOR A SEPARATE MARCHING PERCUSSION COURSE..... 16

**CHAPTER THREE: METHODS ..... 19**

    INTRODUCTION AND DESIGN ..... 19

    RESEARCH QUESTIONS ..... 19

    HYPOTHESIS ..... 19

**CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH FINDINGS..... 21**

**CHAPTER FIVE: FUTURE RESEARCH..... 23**

**BIBLIOGRAPHY..... 24**

*APPENDIX A: CURRICULUM PROJECT ..... 28*

*APPENDIX B: SYLLABI USED IN RESEARCH..... 60*

*APPENDIX C: FINDINGS OF THE SYLLABI STUDIED ..... 61*

## **ABSTRACT**

Instrumental Techniques courses are imperative to prospective instrumental music educators. After all, it is not practical or possible to major in every instrument in a band or orchestra. These classes provide students with a chance to get a basic understanding of the fundamentals covered on each instrument. For wind instruments, these fundamentals include foundations such as embouchure placement and breathing/articulation techniques. Most of these lessons are covered in a limited course of study. Although the instruments are different, many of the techniques, like tonguing and articulation, are consistent. With regards to technical percussion techniques however, things like instrumentation, notation, and performance practices are much more diverse. Since Percussion Techniques courses have one of the widest array of instruments to be covered, one semester is barely enough time to cover all this required material. From marching band to indoor drumline, marching percussion (front line included) is a substantial part of the high school instrumental educator's focus. A middle school educator must prepare in these areas because they are training the next generation of high school percussionists, and many times they are assistants to the high school director for marching season. Middle school directors are active parts of building a firm musical foundation for the high school ensemble.

Still, preparation in this area is lacking. Students studying to become band directors are getting approximately two days of percussion instruction on marching percussion techniques in the general Percussion Techniques course, if any at all. This is too limited a time to devote to a subject that will affect half to all of a high school band director's year. With the growth of marching percussion popularity, the need to offer a separate Marching Percussion Techniques class should be required in the course offerings for prospective middle and high school band directors.

*Keywords:* Marching Percussion, Percussion Techniques Courses,  
Marching Percussion Techniques, Prospective Music Educators, Percussion Methods Syllabus

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Instrumental Techniques courses are necessary to the student studying to become a music educator. For prospective band directors, the knowledge in these courses is invaluable. Students receive fundamentals of sound production. They learn rehearsal techniques within instrument families and they benefit from a semester of best practices with hands-on experience. These are the foundational building blocks that future directors need in order to teach others.

The importance of these classes is not in dispute; the amount of time spent on a particular subtopic is the issue. Percussion, like any other topic of study, tends to be scaffolded. This means one skill cannot be added until the previous foundations are set. In the article, “A Well-Rounded Drum Set Curriculum,” Steve Fidyk notes the need for basic techniques to be mastered before new ones can be added. He speaks here specifically about the drum set. “Every good drum set player starts as a good snare drummer and then transfers those fundamentals to the set.”<sup>1</sup> Likewise, in order to teach marching percussion adequately, first percussion techniques need to be introduced and practiced. While it is unrealistic for educators who are not percussionists to double major in percussion, it is equally as unrealistic to believe they will have an adequate foundation in marching percussion in just one week of time. One week, or two classes, is the norm for marching percussion in Percussion Techniques classes from the literature reviewed in this study.<sup>2</sup>

Furthermore, with so broad a category as percussion, devoting a paltry week to the study of a style that encompasses at least half of an ensemble’s year is a major disservice to those studying to become band directors and their upcoming students. This must be addressed.

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<sup>1</sup> Steve Fidyk, “A Well-Rounded Drum Set Curriculum,” *Teaching Music* (2016): 48, accessed July 17, 2017. <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/1763722408?accountid=12085>.

<sup>2</sup> For a full list of all the syllabi studied, see Appendix B

### Statement of Problem

With a proper, semester-long course in marching percussion, prospective directors could be better prepared to equip students who will be percussionists for success on and off the marching field. But currently, with so little focus given to marching percussion, many aspiring band directors are not equipped for success when they complete their degree. Other technical classes do not have this unique problem facing percussion pedagogy. Their tonguing and breathing techniques stay similar for marching season and do not require extra training. Erik Janners reiterates this point. He states, “A trumpeter, for example, has to only learn one embouchure and fingering set, percussionists need to be fluent with snare drum and drums in general, drum set, timpani, and mallet keyboards, not to mention tambourine, triangle, and a host of other small instruments with specific techniques.”<sup>3</sup> Tom Keck addresses what can be seen as a necessity of teaching of marching percussion skills. He states,

The major differences between concert and marching percussion playing styles stem from the differences in equipment, and the role of the player. For volume and clarity purposes, marching instruments are tuned much tighter (higher in pitch) than concert instruments, and therefore require more control of the rebound off the drum head after impact. Marching drums are deeper than concert drums, and marching drumsticks are longer and have a greater circumference. Because concert percussionists are solo players, and marching percussionists are typically soli players, a specific technique is recommended to unify their approach to playing.<sup>4</sup>

This quote shows just a summary of some of the differences between concert style and marching style.

Marching percussion is neglected in methods classes. High school programs that cannot afford to hire a percussion instructor are at a disadvantage because of the prospective director’s

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<sup>3</sup> Erik Janners. “Perussion for the Non-Perussionist Band Director,” *Canadian Winds*, (2003): 29, accessed July 17, 2017, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/201100007?accountid=12085>.

<sup>4</sup> Gary E. Smith, *The System: Marching Band Methods* (Chicago: GIA Publications, Inc., 2016), 249.

limited knowledge. Students who are studying to become band directors thus are ill prepared from knowing a segment of their marching ensemble that is still their responsibility.

#### Statement of Purpose

Through a study of current literature regarding percussion techniques syllabi and methodologies, an analysis of current schedules in Percussion Techniques classes should reveal the average length of study covered in the marching percussion pedagogy. Specific instruments covered, rehearsal techniques, and other fundamentals such as grip and sticking patterns of marching pedagogy in this allotted time will also be examined. By exploring multiple syllabi, the development of a curriculum for a semester long Marching Percussion Techniques course will be able to take place.

#### Significance of the Study

A college degree is ideally designed to equip future professionals for their careers. Music education should be no different. Students expect to be equipped to teach all aspects of their ensembles once they leave college. They may not, however, be able to afford the luxury of a separate marching percussion ensemble teacher when they accept their first job. Even if they can hire a percussion teacher, these up and coming band teachers need to have the skills to adequately teach the whole ensemble in full group rehearsal and make sure a percussion instructor is doing an adequate job. Additionally, marching percussion ensembles are becoming a huge domain of performance. Marching seasons are now extending into “concert season” via indoor drumline. Training in this expansive medium is needed. Since there are so many percussion instruments and techniques, marching percussion should stand apart from standard percussion method courses.

### Definition of Terms

*Battery Percussion:* The marching drumline including snare drum, tenor drums, bass drums, and cymbals.

*Front Ensemble/Front Line/ "The Pit":* A group of musicians that are located on the sideline (or more recently on the field) who generally play the melodic percussion instruments (i.e. marimba), electronic instruments (i.e. synthesizer), and auxiliary percussion instruments (i.e. triangle).

*Marching Percussion Ensemble:* The group of instruments and their players that may include the instruments of the battery percussion and front ensemble. Will also use the shortened term, *marching percussion*.

*Splits.* Performance on bass drums or cymbals in which rhythms are divided into single player responsibilities.

*Stick Heights.* The distance from the drum head to the tip of the drum stick.

*Grip.* The position of the hands when holding a drum stick. There are two main grips for battery percussion: Traditional and match.



## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

### A Brief History of Percussion

The evidence of early drumming is almost as old as recorded history. Thomas Siwe outlines this history. He states that drums were “seen on Sumerian reliefs as early as 2500 B.C. [and that] drums performed various functions in numerous ancient cultures.”<sup>5</sup> These percussion instruments have been used for communication, dances, and death rituals. Before long, percussion ensembles were playing before Kings and in royal courts. In the early nineteenth century, when Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven called for tunable drums that had pitches other than tonic and dominant, Gerhard Cramer invented the tunable timpani. Siwe notes, “The machine-cranked timpani evolved into pedal-controlled, tunable drums.”<sup>6</sup> As the years progressed, more composers incorporated a diverse percussion section. “Percussion was used by composers not just to keep time or to mark the beat...but also to set the scene and to help end the musical phrase.”<sup>7</sup> By the 1950s, a substantial amount of percussion ensemble literature was in place for the college and public-school program. With the rise in popularity of the drum and bugle corps, musical styles changed, but instruction did not keep up. The focus was changing from mainly concert style of music to marching style of music.

Even today, many directors notice that marching percussion is really important for the support and recruitment of the overall music ensemble.

As a lot of you know, marching percussion is big in Texas. More people are going to see you at a Friday night football game than at all your concerts throughout the year.

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<sup>5</sup> Thomas Siwe, *Percussion: A Course of Study for the Future Band and Orchestra Director* (Chicago, IL: Media Press, Inc., 2007), 12-13.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 12

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

Typically, we have 10,000–15,000 people at a game every Friday night who see my kids play, so I feel like that has to be a real strong point of my program. The kids love it, and it's a great recruiting tool.<sup>8</sup>

Even with its popularity, high school percussionists are often lacking in technical skills. Robert Buck states that high school percussion groups were often, “far behind the rest of the band members in musicianship and technical playing ability.”<sup>9</sup>

### Challenges with Existing Curriculum Design

Noting that groups were often far behind in their percussion instruction opens a need to see what the marching percussion curriculum offerings consist of in the average Percussion Techniques class. By studying topics like what major universities devote their time to, what text book(s) they use in their classes, or the amount of time they devote to the study of the marching percussion ensembles, insight should be gained into the strengths and weaknesses of the current system.

Iain Moyer developed a syllabus for the percussion methods class at The University of Northern Alabama (he taught at UNA from 2002 – 2014). This methods class has a semester long course that meets two times a week, fifty minutes a class. The recommended text for the class is *Teaching Percussion* by Gary Cook. Under course content, Moyer states, “The students will also acquire knowledge on the other percussion instruments that a teacher would encounter in a secondary education situation, these would include accessory instruments, marching percussion, drum set and Latin instruments.”<sup>10</sup> Of the twenty-nine times this class will meet

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<sup>8</sup> Pual Buyer, “Building a Powerhouse Percussion Program: Part 2,” *Percussive Notes*, October 2008, 63.

<sup>9</sup> Robert Buck, *Precision Marching Percussion Ensemble Method: Corps Style* (Sherman Oaks, CA: Alfred Publishing Co., Inc., 1978), 1.

<sup>10</sup> Iain Moyer, “MU 151 Class Percussion” (syllabus, University of North Alabama, Florence, AL, 2013): 1.

during the semester, two days are allotted to marching percussion. One of these days is solely devoted to stick uniformity.

Thad Anderson, currently at the University of Central Florida, teaches a class that meets twice a week for fifty minutes each meeting. The course's required textbooks include *Teaching Percussion* by Gary Cook and *Percussion: A Course of Study for the future Band and Orchestra Directors* by Thomas Siwe. There are twenty-eight class meetings in total for this course. The course description indicates the class will “provide music educators with basic information concerning teaching methods and performance techniques for musical instruments common to the percussion family.”<sup>11</sup> An individual class breakdown was not given. Marching percussion was not specifically mentioned. Therefore, half or none of the class may be devoted to marching percussion. The syllabus does not include this information.

Andrew Eldridge at the University of Texas Arlington is the professor instructing their Percussion Methods class. This class meets two days a week for fifty minutes each session. The course description indicates it will “instruct music education students on the best practices for teaching percussion in the secondary school music programs.”<sup>12</sup> *Teaching Percussion* by Gary Cook, *A Fresh Approach to Snare Drum*, and *A Fresh Approach to Mallet Percussion*, both by Mark Wessels, are the required textbooks. Two of the twenty-nine class meetings are devoted to marching percussion.

Adam Davis at the University of North Texas teaches Percussion Methods. The course was designed to “provide future band and orchestra directors with a rudimentary technique on

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<sup>11</sup> Thad Anderson, “MUE 2470: Percussion Techniques” (syllabus, University of Central Florida, Orlando, FL, 2015): 1.

<sup>12</sup> Andrew Eldridge, “MUSI 2104.001 Percussion Methods” (syllabus, University of Texas Arlington, Arlington, TX, 2016): 1.

many of the instruments labeled percussion, concentrating on those that are most common to today's elementary, middle, and high school band and orchestra literature."<sup>13</sup> The course uses *Teaching percussion* by Gary Cook as its only required text. The Percussion Methods course meets two days a week for a total of thirty-one sessions with each class meeting an hour and twenty minutes in length. Of these classes, three are devoted solely to marching percussion. One class serves as an introduction, while the other two are devoted to playing.

Joshua Haggerty instructed the Percussion Methods class at Youngstown State University. The class met twice a week for fifty minutes each session. This course used *Teaching Percussion*, by Gary Cook, as well as *Rhythm is our Business*, by Glenn Schaft. Of the twenty-eight class meetings, two were devoted to marching percussion.

Other syllabi were studied with similar results.<sup>1415</sup> Fifty-minute classes were the norm, with two or less courses being devoted to marching percussion. Hybrid classes have been developed at some institutions. These hybrid classes may include a Marching Band Methods course or Instrumental Studies for Secondary School Methods. These classes educate students in subjects that are highly specialized like drill design, color guard and percussion routine, administration and budget, etc. Some students may have a general knowledge of these areas if they were in a marching band in high school but running a marching show and managing every aspect can be daunting. Furthermore, marching percussion is relegated to a small-time chunk as these classes deal with information, not practice.

Murray State University's answer to this need is to offer an Instrumental Music in Secondary School course. It has marching band listed in the grading policy, but the individual

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<sup>13</sup> Adam Davis, "MUAG 1117 Percussion Methods" (syllabus, University of North Texas, Denton, TX, 2016): 1.

<sup>14</sup> For a full list of all the syllabi studied, see Appendix B

<sup>15</sup> For a full list of syllabi results, see Appendix C

week schedules are not listed. It is important to note that the marching band portion is ‘participation only’ to earn points and the other sections have projects or tests.<sup>16</sup>

### The Gap in the Existing Literature

In the literature reviewed, no one argues that the current method courses for percussion pedagogy are long enough or that the limited time devoted to marching percussion adequately covers the topic. What was discovered was that in addition to marching percussion, there is a significant learning curve, depending on personal experience, to marching band in general. Percussion Methods classes are full of information but still worth less course credit to the college student, possibly insinuating less work of value. In the article, “Factors Influencing Undergraduate Music Education Majors’ Investment in Instrumental Techniques Courses Taught by Graduate Student Instructors,” Joshua Russell notes that at the institution where the survey was conducted (institution name left anonymous), Strings, Woodwind, and Brass Methods classes were valued at two-credit hours while “Percussion Techniques was a one-hour course.”<sup>17</sup> Of the syllabi reviewed in this project, only two revealed their credit hours, both of which were an hour each.

Music educator responses from Lee David Legette’s study were very telling. Such responses like “Guard and percussion are the two weakest areas for most people.”<sup>18</sup> Legette also noted another study by F.C. Tracz, stating that “Band directors rated the areas of percussion... marching fundamentals..., and rehearsal techniques..., to be the 3 most important topics to a

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<sup>16</sup> “MUS 304 Instrumental Methods: Secondary School” (syllabus, Murray State University, Murray, KY, 2004): 2.

<sup>17</sup> Joshua A. Russell, “Factors Influencing Undergraduate Music Education Majors Investment in Instrumental Techniques Courses Taught by Graduate Student Instructors” *Music Education Research* 11, no.3 (2009): 337.

<sup>18</sup> Lee David Legette, “Marching Band Techniques Courses: A Survey of their Usefulness to First and Second Year High School Band Directors,” Order No. 8909940, The Florida State University, 1988: 66.

successful experience.”<sup>19</sup> Tracz has also stated that “Secondary instrumental teacher training programs should include training in marching band techniques.”<sup>20</sup>

In an article devoted to non-percussionists, Justin Preece begins with this common-sense observation: “Drumline instruction can be a special challenge for any teacher lacking a background in marching percussion.”<sup>21</sup> This statement is not disputed in any research compiled for this project. No one argues that the current method classes for percussion is long enough or that the limited time devoted to marching percussion adequately covers the topic. In a study of Ohio high school band directors, Brad Williamson noted, “It would appear as if future instrumental music educators would be best served through coursework in marching band techniques.”<sup>22</sup> Williamson states, “A course in marching band fundamentals should be required for the bachelor’s degree of instrumental music education majors.”<sup>23</sup>

Why do many new band directors not feel equipped to teach their programs with just a Percussion Methods course? Robert Buck may have found the answer. “The nature of orchestral percussion is unique in that every performer is a soloist.”<sup>24</sup> He goes on to state, “In marching band, more than one player plays each instrument and precision within the section is a necessity.”<sup>25</sup> Marching band is challenging enough on its’ own. Buck points out about marching visual aspects such as “Sticking, stick heights, marching, carrying of equipment, tempo,

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 82 – 83.

<sup>20</sup> F.C. Tracz, “Marching Band Techniques in Music Teacher Education Curriculum: A survey of High School Band Director Needs and Current University Offerings and Practices,” *Dissertation Abstracts International*, (1987): 107.

<sup>21</sup> Preece, Justin, “Drumline Essentials,” *Instrumentalist* 72, no. 2 (2017): 22.

<sup>22</sup> Brad A. Williamson, “A Study of Ohio High School Band Directors’ Perceived Preparation for Teaching High School Marching Band Through Participation in a Collegiate Marching Band, Marching Band Techniques Classes, and Methods Courses,” UMI No. 3376116, The Ohio State University, 2009, iii.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>24</sup> Buck, *Precision Marching Percussion Ensemble Method*, 3.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 3.

dynamics, as well as all musical aspects that are common demands for the rest of the band.”<sup>26</sup>

These exist for the drum line and front ensembles in ways that do not happen in other percussion settings such as concert band and orchestra. Look at the focus Tom Keck, as mentioned earlier, places on grip alone for marching percussion. “Because concert percussionists are solo players, and marching percussionists are typically soli players, a specific technique is recommended to unify their approach to playing.”<sup>27</sup> These techniques are difficult to master for seasoned percussionists. Would it be practical to assume non-percussionists can attain these skills in two to three lessons?

This is not a new problem. Percussion skills are often an alien concept to non-percussionists. Robert Buggert reviews in the *Music Education Journal* Harry Bartlett’s “Guide to Teaching Percussion”, published in 1964. He notes that it is designed for “The music educator who is not a percussion specialist.”<sup>28</sup> Another article by John Beck notes this need for more training. “Twenty years ago, the percussion instructor could be satisfied with advancing only the symphonic style of percussion playing – not today! The student wants more- he needs more if he is to do an adequate job in a professional career.”<sup>29</sup> This keen observation was made over fifty years ago. As great as the need to restructure or add to the Percussion Methods course was needed fifty years ago, today’s percussion pedagogy needs to include an added emphasis on marching percussion ensembles.

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Smith, *The System*, 249.

<sup>28</sup> Robert W. Buggert, “Guide to Teaching Percussion by Harry R. Bartlett,” *Music Educators Journal*, 56, No. 6 (Jun. – Jul. 1966): 2, accessed July 17, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3390729>.

<sup>29</sup> John Beck, “The Many Faces of the Percussion Instructor,” *Music Journal*, 23, No. 4 (April 1965): 63, accessed July 17, 2017, <http://ezproxy.libertyedu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/1290858accountid-12085>.

## The Need for a Separate Marching Percussion Course

“The quality and content of the undergraduate music education curriculum has been under scrutiny across the country for years (Ammann, 1989; Leonhard, 1984), and many young teachers in secondary instrumental music education feel unprepared as they enter the profession (Colwell, 1985; Conway, 1997; Taylor, 1970).”<sup>30</sup> Wayne Bailey and Thomas Caneva note, “Marching bands today have expanded percussion sections, so it is important that marching band directors have a basic knowledge of the role of the drum line within.”<sup>31</sup> “The reason for an entire unit being devoted to this area is that contemporary arrangements for marching band drum lines are quite often technically demanding and musically complex. Public school band directors can easily become overwhelmed without such knowledge.”<sup>32</sup> This article points out the need for additional training due to technical passages in the contemporary literature.

When learning music technique, a hands-on approach is needed. “Students typically rate ensemble experience more valuable in their preparation for music teaching than methods courses.”<sup>33</sup> What is needed is a methods course that bridges the two and allows much needed hands-on development and teaching opportunities.

Marching percussion, like any other developing skill, needs to be scaffolded. Grip must be mastered before a diddle can be performed. Strokes must be developed before forming a

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<sup>30</sup> Williamson, “A Study of Ohio”, 15.

<sup>31</sup> Wayne Bailey and Thomas Caneva, *The Complete Marching Band Resource Manual: Techniques and Materials for Teaching, Drill Design, and Music Arranging* (Philadelphia, University of Philadelphia Press, 2003), 114.

<sup>32</sup> James K. Ackman, “Percussion Skills Class: Preparing for the Future,” *Percussive Notes*, April 1999, 44.

<sup>33</sup> Williamson, “A Study of Ohio”, 28.



smooth roll, etc. Like constructing a building, the third floor will not last long, or be attractive, without a firm foundation underneath the entire structure.

Even students who might have some previous percussion experience could benefit from this course. William Frederickson et al., makes the observation that “Good teaching techniques was not obvious and needed to be taught...good performers were not necessarily always good teachers.”<sup>34</sup> Methods courses should teach both performance practices and teaching strategies. This way everyone will learn from the class no matter their level of percussion experience.

Also, by establishing a marching percussion course, advanced skills, such as hybrid rudiments that might have been overlooked in a two-class session, can be focused on and practiced in the group setting. These intricacies include having students mark time as they practice their parts. Steve Fidyk feels this is very important. “Insist on this approach from the onset so they become accustomed to moving their feet in time while playing.”<sup>35</sup> What about the hearing loss that can occur from drumline? Montana Haygood reminds us, “It seems as if some high school and college band programs may neglect to inform their students about the potential hearing loss they might encounter in their musical careers, should they not use hearing protection.”<sup>36</sup> What sense is more important to a musician than their hearing? It is paramount in a percussion class, especially a marching percussion class, that these issues be reiterated over

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<sup>34</sup> William E. Fredrickson, Russell B. Gavin, and Christopher R. Moore, “Attitude of Members of the National Association of College Winds and Percussion Instructors Toward Their Own and Their Students’ Teaching of Applied Lessons,” *Journal of Music Teach Education*, 21, No. 2 (2012): 43, accessed July 17, 2017, DOI: 10.1177/1057083711411715.

<sup>35</sup> Steve Fidyk, “Developing an Educated Marching Drum Line,” *Teaching Music*: 51, accessed July 17, 2017. General OneFile, [http://link.galegroup.com/apps/doc/A319228468/ITOF?u=vic\\_liberty&sid=ITOF&xid=286ccd3](http://link.galegroup.com/apps/doc/A319228468/ITOF?u=vic_liberty&sid=ITOF&xid=286ccd3).

<sup>36</sup> Montana Haygood and Bruce N. Walker, “Temporary and Permanent Hearing Loss Among College-Aged Drumline Members,” *Proceedings of the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society 2016 Annual Meeting*, 60, No 1 (Sept. 15, 2016): 1012: accessed July 17, 2017, <https://doi-org.ezproxy.liberty.edu/10.1177/1541931213601234>.

multiple sessions to press their importance on students. “The marching percussion unit should cover the basics of rudimental (double stroke) snare drum performance, tonal (“pitched”) bass drums, tenor drum (four, five or six drums) combinations, special cymbal techniques, and mallet percussion, and the assembly of instruments (e.g., timpani, chimes, drumset) referred to as the “front ensemble” or “pit.” Field placement of the drum line in relation to the band proper may also be discussed in this unit.”<sup>37</sup> These can be some of the most important skills taught in this course.

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<sup>37</sup> Ackman, “Percussion Skills Class”, 44.

## CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

### Introduction and Design

The primary research design that was employed in this study was historical research. By seeing what is currently offered at most Percussion Method classes and what other fundamentals are being neglected steered the development of the curriculum project. Drumline instruction textbooks were also analyzed. Syllabi were selected from universities and colleges that had online access to these documents and timelines for their percussion methods curricula.

The aim of this project is to devise an avenue to better prepare future instrumental music educators with the task of teaching marching percussion ensemble techniques. Different college/university syllabi were studied to find similar patterns or common gaps. Questions that were examined include how many lessons and how much time, if any, did the syllabus allow for marching techniques? Was there a common textbook used? Did the syllabi outline what topics would be discussed within the marching percussion ensemble lessons?

### Research Questions

Research questions for this project include:

RQ1: How many class meetings are allocated for the instruction of technique(s) utilized in marching ensembles?

RQ2: What topics does the standard marching pedagogy entail?

RQ3: How can the strengths and shortcomings discovered in the first two research questions be best addressed in a Marching Ensemble Course?

### Hypothesis

If I can research and compare percussion curriculum that is being taught, I can discover what is being covered thoroughly and what is being neglected. This will lead me to develop a

curriculum for a marching percussion course that greatly enhances a future instrumental music educator's knowledge of marching percussion and job preparedness (relevance and meaning through deeper engagement).

## CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH FINDINGS

Fourteen college and university syllabi were used for analysis in this curriculum project. They were studied in order to find common patterns or gaps in relation to marching percussion instruction. Of the fourteen syllabi studied, five categories were specifically targeted for analysis. These areas were: the class length and number of classes per week, textbook(s) used for instruction, number of classes specifically dedicated to marching percussion, and topics covered during those marching percussion classes. Ten out of the fourteen syllabi noted their classes met two times per week. One class met once per week, two syllabi did not specify, while one class only listed the number of weeks (fifteen) instead of the per week class meetings. Of the ten colleges/universities that met twice a week, seven had fifty-minute-long classes. Two of these ten did not list their ‘in class’ time, while two held class for an hour and fifteen and an hour and twenty minutes respectively. The class that meets once a week only meets for fifty minutes. Nashville State, which only lists their total weeks of classes, did not list class time. Mississippi State and Murray State also did not list this time.

Of the fourteen classes noted, six used the common textbook, *Teaching Percussion* by Gary Cook. Two programs use *Percussion: A Course Study for Future Band and Orchestra Directors* by Thomas Siwe. Two classes use *A Fresh Approach to Snare Drum* by Mark Wessels. Two programs use *Snare Drum Method – Book 1* by Haskell Harr. Two of them use *The Complete Percussionist* by Robert Breithaupt. While other programs used other books, these were the only ones used in more than one class across universities/colleges.

Five of the classes in this study met for marching percussion instruction a total of two sessions. Two classes met for three sessions. Four of the percussion methods classes did not address marching percussion at all, while three addressed the topic, but did not list the number of

classes they would devote to the subject. Thus, there were a total of seven syllabi in the study that specified an amount of sessions (two or three). Of these, only three listed the specific topics that would be covered in these sessions. The topics covered included stick uniformity, overviews of marching, and playing practice/warm-ups.

These syllabi give insight into the current preparation music majors are given in regard to marching percussion. It is eye-opening to see that at least seven programs of study are not or may not be discussing marching percussion. If marching percussion is discussed, it is not clear what topics are covered. No course gave marching percussion over three classes. With marching band being such a big responsibility to so many band directors, the need for a marching percussion course is evident.

## CHAPTER FIVE: FUTURE RESEARCH

As a result of this project, future research for the need of a separate marching percussion methods curriculum is warranted. Reading percussion magazines such as “Percussive Notes” can offer another source of research toward the curriculum project. Interviews with current band directors to assess what is needed in a marching percussion methods curriculum will be very beneficial. Also, inquiry needs to be done as to why a separate marching percussion course is not being currently offered. Additionally, the current percussion instructors of the syllabi chosen need to be interviewed as to why they have chosen what to include and what to omit on marching percussion and other topics in their percussion curriculum. At the conclusion of this research, the next step will be to present the material in workshops and music conference sessions to instruct the gaps that currently exist in the curriculum from a standard percussion methods course. From these workshops and sessions, feedback can be gathered from band directors on how beneficial the subject matter would be toward developing their marching percussion ensembles. The number of participants at these workshops and at the state music conference sessions can also help gauge the interest and need for a separate marching percussion techniques course that covers information not included in the standard percussion pedagogy.

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## APPENDIX A: CURRICULUM PROJECT

### CURRICULUM PROJECT – ANALYSIS CHART

<b>Student:</b> William Garrett	<b>Course for which you are creating curriculum:</b> MUSC 363 Marching Percussion Techniques
<p><b>Required Textbook for Class:</b> Hannum, Thom and Robert Morrison. <i>Championship Concepts for Marching Percussion</i>. Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard Publishing Corporation. 1986.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Casella, Jim and Jim Ancona. <i>Up Front</i>. Portland, OR: Tap Space Publications. 2003.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Lluvera, John and Mark Perrett. <i>Drumline Fundamentals</i>. St. Petersburg, FL: Final Designz Studios Publishing. 2017.</p>	
<p><b>Identify the problem:</b> <i>(What does the student not know how to do? What is the student’s gap in the training or experience?)</i></p>	
<p>With marching ensembles being a huge part of instruction for many secondary instrumental music teachers, there is a need for a separate class for marching percussion. This course can help with the different pedagogy for marching and non-marching percussion ensembles.</p>	
<p><b>Who are the learners and what are their characteristics?</b> <i>(Age, major, pre-requisites, residential, online, or a hybrid of the two)</i></p>	
<p>This course is a residential program for all music education majors regardless of percussive skills. The only pre-requisite will be Percussion Techniques. The course is intended for prospective band directors that will teach a marching ensemble.</p>	
<p><b>What is the new desired behavior?</b> <i>(Overall, what is the main change or new addition to the student’s demonstrated ability?)</i></p>	
<p>The student will be able to demonstrate the basic techniques such as marching and sticking’s with the skills needed to teach and perform on marching-style percussion instruments. The student will also understand the basic vocabulary of percussion terms (i.e. hybrid rudiments) from the marching realm that will help with future curriculum.</p>	
<p><b>What are the delivery options?</b> <i>(Explain the materials you will develop for the course.)</i></p>	
<p>This is a residential course offered for 12 weeks on Tuesdays and Thursdays each semester for an hour and fifteen minutes.</p>	
<p><b>What are the pedagogical considerations?</b> <i>(Describe your general content and methodology for the course.)</i></p>	

This course will include listening examples, performance opportunities, and lecture-based activities. We will have discussions, but the main content will be through hands-on learning. Listening examples will include instances of judges' tapes from different marching percussion ensembles as well as other examples. Performance opportunities will include demonstrations from the students of lessons like straight sticking's.

**What adult learning theory considerations apply? Why?**

The course will consider the action learning theory. It will translate the information studied into direct interaction with the instruments. Learning will come through different dimensions like the praxial, musicianship, and attitude dimensions of action learning.

**Learning Outcomes**

**At the end of the course, the student will be able to:**

1. Identify the basic types of exercises needed to develop different rudiments in a marching ensemble.
2. Summarize the different marching techniques for marching drumline.
3. Demonstrate the basic stick heights when used in accent-pattern exercises.
4. Differentiate between the skills needed to perform with traditional or match-grip style.
5. Organize a front ensemble section according to the instrumentation given. Think about the different types of sounds in the list of instrumentation.

# ***COURSE SYLLABUS***

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## **MUSC 363**

### **MARCHING PERCUSSION TECHNIQUES**

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This class is designed to teach students with the development of basic skills, techniques, and terminology needed for teaching and performing on marching percussion instruments. At the conclusion of the course, students should be able to perform using the skills of each instrument mentioned in the course and teach percussion students the techniques needed to perform and/or march with the instruments. Students will also be able to make choices of the instruments needed and tuning of the marching percussion instruments and be able to effectively tune the instruments to their choosing. Emphasis in the course will be placed on performance techniques of mallet and battery percussion instruments.

#### **RATIONALE**

Many instrumental music teachers struggle with teaching marching percussion skills because of the lack of advance skill training. This class will teach the techniques needed for all instrumental music education majors. Music education majors will acquire the knowledge and terminology needed to teach and perform on the marching percussion instruments. This is very helpful for non-percussionists, because there are many bands that hire instructors throughout the school year. This is a hands-on class that requires every student to teach and perform on different instruments.

#### **I. PREREQUISITES**

Percussion Techniques

#### **II. REQUIRED RESOURCE PURCHASES**

Casella, Jim and Jim Ancona. *Up Front*. Portland, OR: Tap Space Publications. 2003. ISBN: 0976434423

Hannum, Thom and Robert Morrison. *Championship Concepts for Marching Percussion*. Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard Publishing Corporation. 1986. ISBN: 073999440980

Lluvera, John and Mark Perrett. *Drumline Fundamentals*. St. Petersburg, FL: Final Designz Studios Publishing. 2017.

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. Current ed. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

#### **II. ADDITIONAL MATERIALS FOR LEARNING**

A. Remo RT-0008-00 8" Practice Pad

B. Vic Firth SRH Ralph Hardimon Corpsmaster Snare Drum Sticks

### **III. MEASURABLE LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- A. Identify the techniques and situations needed to teach and perform with traditional or match-grip style.
- B. Summarize the different marching techniques for marching drumline.
- C. Demonstrate the basic techniques of performing on various marching percussion instruments.
- D. Discuss the use of electronics in front ensemble performance.
- E. Organize a front ensemble section according to the instrumentation given. Think about the different types of sounds on the list of instrumentation.

### **IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

- A. Textbook readings, lecture presentations, performances, and video clips.
- B. Quizzes (2)  
We will have 2 quizzes during the 12 weeks. One will cover basic battery percussion tuning and the other will cover front ensemble ranges.
- C. Traditional and Match Grip-Style Paper.  
At the end of week 2 of the course, students will need to turn in a 3 – 5-page paper in Turabian format comparing and contrasting the traditional and match-grip style of snare drumming. Students will need to include any historical aspect to the grips as well as advantages and disadvantages of using the grips. This assignment is to help shape the understanding of when to use the grip.
- D. Individual Performances (4)  
Students will demonstrate these techniques by performing a short excerpt on the respective instrument. Grading will be based on correct sticking, rhythmic accuracy, and correct techniques. These will take place during weeks 7, 8, and 11. Snare Drum and Bass Drum excerpts will be performed during the same weeks. Each will be on snare drum, bass drum, tenor drums, and mallet equipment.
- E. Front Ensemble Planning:  
The students will be given a list of different instrumentations and will design a setup for the front ensemble. A short paragraph should be attached with rationale. This will take place on week 10.
- F. Final: Accent-Pattern and Summative Exam  
During the last week of the course, students will submit a written-out accent-pattern warmup to be used for snare drum, 5-drum tenor drums, 4 tonal bass drums, and 2 cymbals. Music must be 16 measures and have unison accent parts as well as accent split throughout the ensemble. 95 points for warmup and 5 for performance of another student's pattern on selected drum. There will be a

summative exam over information presented throughout the semester. A study guide will be handed out on week 10.

**V. COURSE GRADING AND POLICIES**

A.	Points
Quiz (2 at 50 points each)	100
Traditional vs. Match Grip Paper	100
Performances:	
Snare Drum	85
Bass Drum	85
Tenor Drums	85
Mallet Percussion	85
Marching Skills	90
Front Ensemble Planning (2 at 100 points each)	200
Final (Accent-Pattern Warmup)	100
Summative Assessment	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>1010</b>

B. Scale

A = 940–1010    A- = 920–939    B+ = 900–919    B = 860–899    B- = 840–859  
 C+ = 820–839    C = 780–819    C- = 760–779    D+ = 740–759    D = 700–739  
 D- = 680–699    F = 0–679

C. Late Assignment Policy

All assignments should be completed and turned in on time during the course time. Assignments turned in after the scheduled course time will be assessed a 5% penalty deduction per school day late. Assignments will not be allowed to be over 8 school days late.



## Curriculum Project – Design Chart

### First: Evaluate the Analysis Chart and Learning Outcomes

<b>Student:</b> William Garrett		<b>Course for which you are creating curriculum:</b> MUSC 363 Marching Percussion Techniques	
<p><b>Concept Statement:</b> Since many instrumental music teachers spend half or more of their school year teaching marching ensembles, there is a need for a more comprehensive marching percussion study. Instrumental music teachers may not have the budget to hire a specialist to work with their marching percussion ensemble, so the course will give the basic knowledge needed to self-instruct. Music education majors will acquire the skills and terminology needed to correctly teach and perform with marching percussion instruments. This is very helpful for non-percussionists because there are many percussion instruments that each require a specific, varied playing techniques. This is a hands-on class that requires every student to teach and perform on the different percussion instruments that are found in a standard marching music score.</p>			
<b>Learning Outcomes</b> <i>(List in the order you plan to address in 12 weeks)</i>	<b>Content</b> <i>(What must be learned to reach this objective?)</i>	<b>Learning/Training Activity</b> <i>(How will you teach the content?)</i>	<b>Assessment</b> <i>(How will you know that the student has met the objective?)</i>
1. Identify the curricula and situations needed to teach and perform with traditional or match-grip style.	Weeks 1 and 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding of basic parts of the drumline equipment.</li> <li>• Identify how to tune each drum and pitches for different drums.</li> <li>• Understand the different stick height levels.</li> <li>• Recognize the best use of match or traditional grip.</li> </ul>	Weeks 1 and 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worksheet identifying parts of the drum.</li> <li>• DVD of drumlines with good and bad stick heights.</li> <li>• Practice Pad performance using different grips for each warmup.</li> </ul>	Week 1: Formative assessment of pitches and tuning methods of the drumline equipment.  Week 2: Research Paper over the two different grips and their uses for the snare drum.
2. Summarize the different marching techniques for marching drumline.	Week 3: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize the marching skills needed to be taught for drumline.</li> </ul>	Week 3: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outdoor work through marching fundamentals.</li> </ul>	Week 3: Ungraded examination of students understanding of marching fundamentals.

<p>3. Demonstrate the basic techniques of performing on various marching percussion instruments.</p>	<p>Week 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate the correct playing positions on snare drum (i.e. different grips, correct strokes)</li> </ul> <p>Week 5:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate the correct playing strokes on marching bass drums.</li> <li>• Understand the different sounds that can be made on marching bass drums.</li> <li>• Demonstrate understanding of split bass drum parts.</li> </ul> <p>Week 6:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the basics of Tenor Drums. Included are different sound effects and playing positions.</li> <li>• Demonstrate understanding of different sound effects/playing positions on marching cymbals.</li> </ul> <p>Week 7 - 8:</p>	<p>Week 4 – 6:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Praxial performance on snare drum, bass drum, tenor drums, and cymbals.</li> </ul> <p>Week 7 – 8:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Videos of drumline warmup routines.</li> <li>• Practice of warmups.</li> </ul>	<p>Week 4 – 6:</p> <p>Playing performance rubric on each instrument. Grade based on knowledge of basics, such as playing positions and correct strokes.</p> <p>Week 7 – 8:</p> <p>Ungraded examination of warmup understanding.</p>

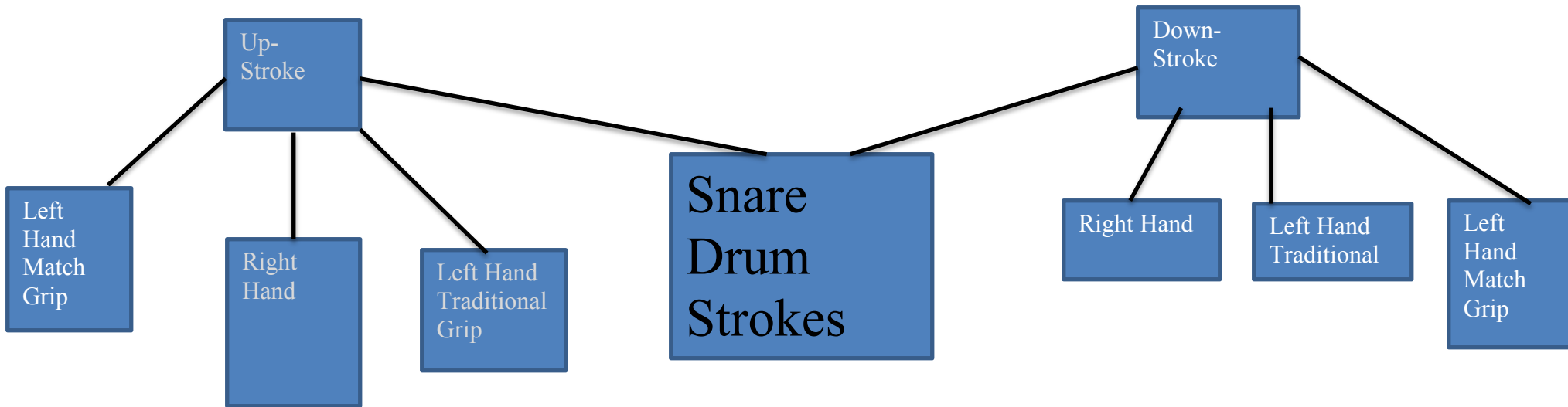
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practice the basic exercises/warmups for marching drumline on each instrument.</li> </ul>		
4. Discuss the use of electronics in front ensemble performance.	<p>Week 9:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognize the use of electronics in front ensemble.</li> <li>Understand the equipment used in front ensemble (i.e. tuning).</li> </ul>	<p>Week 9:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hands-on work with mallet equipment.</li> <li>Discussion on use of electronics in marching band.</li> <li>Show different mallets for instruments.</li> </ul>	<p>Week 9:</p> <p>Quiz covering instrument ranges of mallet instruments.</p>
5. Organize a front ensemble section according to the instrumentation given. Think about the different types of sounds on the list of instrumentation.	<p>Week 10:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Articulate different front ensemble set-ups.</li> </ul> <p>Week 11:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrate basic exercises for front ensemble.</li> </ul> <p>Week 12:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compose accent-pattern exercise.</li> </ul>	<p>Week 10:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Front Ensemble setup chart.</li> </ul> <p>Week 11:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Peer Performance teaching opportunity.</li> </ul> <p>Week 12:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accent-Pattern exercise composition.</li> <li>Summative final exam.</li> </ul>	<p>Week 10:</p> <p>Summative Assessment of front ensemble setup.</p> <p>Week 11:</p> <p>Assessment of understanding of exercises on mallet instruments. Grade based on correct stroke types and playing positions.</p> <p>Week 12:</p> <p>Composition of accent-pattern exercise. Summative final also.</p>

<p><b>Learning Outcomes</b> <i>(List them in the order you plan to address during the 12 weeks of curriculum.)</i></p>	<p><b>Rational for Sequence</b> <i>(Describe why you believe this sequence is the most effective.)</i></p>
<p>1. Identify the techniques and situations needed to teach and perform with traditional or match-grip style.</p>	<p>Students need to be taught the basic fundamentals of grip and the percussive stroke to advance to the other instruments in the percussion section.</p>
<p>2. Summarize the different marching techniques for marching drumline.</p>	<p>Included in the basics of marching percussion performance is the movement aspect. Students will be taught the basic marching fundamentals of outdoor, as well as indoor performance.</p>
<p>3. Demonstrate the basic techniques of performing on various marching percussion instruments.</p>	<p>Next, the students need to learn the different techniques of different marching percussion instruments from snare drum, bass drum, tenor drums, and cymbals.</p>
<p>4. Discuss the use of electronics in front ensemble performance.</p>	<p>Students will next look at the front ensemble. This is a natural progression throughout the ensemble. Electronics will be discussed due to the advancement of technology use in the marching realm.</p>
<p>5. Organize a front ensemble section according to the instrumentation given. Think about the different types of sounds on the list of instrumentation.</p>	<p>Lastly, students will need to be able to look at setup of the front ensemble, staging of the on-field percussion will also be discussed.</p>

## CURRICULUM PROJECT – DEVELOPMENT CHART

<b>Student:</b> William Garrett	<b>Course for which you are creating curriculum:</b> MUSC 363 Marching Percussion Techniques
<i>Consider the 3 advance organizer methods below. You must create an advance organizer for <b>each</b> method below to use as a pre-instructional strategy (to prepare the student to link what they <b>do</b> know to what they <b>do not</b> know).</i>	
<b>Expository</b> <i>(You are verbally describing the new content you are about to cover; enter below what you will say. This can be done in a script or YouTube video)</i>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Good afternoon. Last week, we looked at the different types of grips for basic stick holding. We also learned what are the best situations to use each grip (match or traditional). This week we are going to tie all that information into how to translate the appropriate strokes to the snare drum. The snare drum is seen as the leader of the drumline. The types of strokes from legato to staccato will translate to all the other battery drums.</p>	
<b>Narrative</b> <i>(You are presenting the new information in a story format; enter below what you will do or say.)</i>	
<p style="text-align: center;">The lesson will begin with a review of the different parts of the snare drum. Next, I will draw four quarter notes on the board. On the practice pads the students are asked to play them according to the tempo. A close look will be focused on sticking pattern and stroke quality. Next, an explanation will be made about where to start the stroke. We will also look at up-strokes and down-strokes. Careful consideration will be made to make sure the students understand the differences.</p>	
<b>Graphical Organizers</b> <i>(You are presenting an original visual pictograph, chart, or concept pattern.) Describe the visual below and then copy and paste your original graphic.</i>	
<p style="text-align: center;">The graphic shown below represents material from previous lesson that contributed to this lesson on grip and sticking patterns. Main topics in snare drum strokes come from previous week discussions on grip and stick heights.</p>	

Copy and paste your original visual pictograph, chart, or concept pattern below:



### Gagne's Nine Events of Instruction

Instruction Event	Describe how each instructional event will be addressed in your instructional unit. Cite a reference from you text as to why this approach will be effective.
1. Gain attention	I will have the students realize how some students did it with one stick playing and others alternated but may have started with right or left. This will be an “attention grabber for the new material.” <sup>38</sup>
2. Inform learners of objectives	I will clearly demonstrate the objectives of each class meeting by posting them on the board.
3. Stimulate recall of prior learning	I will point out how to manipulate the grip of the stick or vary depending on the situation and now we will look at the correct sticking’s and situational sticking for snare drum. This statement reviews previous learned materials. <sup>39</sup>
4. Present the content	The lesson will be presented in active learning format with teacher/student performance-based activities. The teacher will begin with presenting basic rhythmic patterns that grow increasingly complex throughout the lesson. Many visual examples will be shown as part of the body of the lecture/presentation. <sup>40</sup>
5. Guide learning	As the students practice together, I will review the basic rhythms and grips and practice with both. This will be done using restatements. <sup>41</sup>
6. Elicit performance (practice)	Students will be asked to come up with their own rhythmic patterns using rests for the class to perform. The students will use quarter note rests, as well as, quarter, eighth, and four sixteenth note patterns. This could be done through the use of pair and compare group work. <sup>42</sup>
7. Provide feedback	I will deliver constant feedback based on real-time performance. This will give a good model of feedback for group work. <sup>43</sup>
8. Assess performance	I will use a CAT (classroom assessment techniques) that is ungraded but prepares students for upcoming graded assessments. <sup>44</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Nilson, *Teaching At Its Best*, 115.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 115.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 115.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 116.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 118.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 162.

<sup>44</sup> Nilson, *Teaching At Its Best*, 49.

9. Enhance retention and transfer

Each student will have to perform one of the examples at the end of the class. This is basically an ungraded quiz to check for retention.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Nilson, 116.



## CURRICULUM PROJECT – IMPLEMENTATION CHART

### Part I: Evaluate and revise the analysis, design, and development charts and the learning objectives

For this assignment, identify all items and tasks that must be prepared before you begin teaching your instructional lesson List at least 6 necessary, physical items and provide a rationale for its use (e.g., flashcards, PowerPoint presentations, handouts, activity sheets, flipcharts, etc.)

<b>Student:</b> William Garrett	<b>Course for which you are creating curriculum: MUSC 363: Marching Percussion Techniques</b>
<b>Physical Item</b>	<b>Rationale for Use</b> Cite a reference from your text for each item indicating its effectiveness
<b>Rudiments Handout</b>	<b>Examples of different sticking examples for commonly used rhythms. This is great for visual learners also. “The object is to portray knowledge in two-dimensional spatial relationships that reflect the logical, chronological, or mechanical links among concepts, processes, and events.”<sup>46</sup></b>
<b>Student Music Presentation on Practice Pads</b>	<b>Students will perform on their practice pads exercises written out by other students. Grading will be based on correct accent performance and differentiated stick heights. Student presentations are great for determining student understanding. The book says, “these activities rank even higher than discussion on a continuum of student engagement, ranging from moderately engaging to extremely so, and the intense emotions they often evoke cement the experiences into students’ memories.”<sup>47</sup></b>
<b>Videos of Marching Drumlines</b>	<b>This will give the students a chance to see what a percussion judge may see when judging drumlines from a good line with correct sticking’s throughout and one with incorrect sticking’s. This will help the visual learners. “Students who lean more toward visual and kinesthetic styles often face difficulties in the traditional college classroom.”<sup>48</sup> This will help those students.</b>

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<sup>46</sup> Nilson, *Teaching At Its Best*, 233.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 145.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 233.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Flipcharts</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>I will use flipcharts to have the different rhythmic patterns pre-written on. These allow teachers to “write out much of their material in advance and in any color marker. Then the teacher can annotate it and add to it during class.”<sup>49</sup></b></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Rhythm Activity Sheet</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>This will be guided practice of figuring out the correct sticking’s for different rhythms. The guided learning “involves acquisition and comprehension of knowledge.”<sup>50</sup></b></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Programmable Metronome</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>This is great for having tempos programmed in for practicing at slower and faster speeds. “The technology may help students acquire the technological literacy that their future occupations will require.”<sup>51</sup></b></p>

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<sup>49</sup> Nilson, 255.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 176.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 256.

**Part II: List at least 6 necessary tasks and provide a rationale (e.g., jobs to be done in advance, such as arranging chairs in a specific formation, photocopying, etc.).**

<b>Task</b>	<b>Rationale for Task</b> <b>Cite a reference from your text for each task indicating its effectiveness</b>
Print and copy rudiments handouts.	Gives good examples of different rudiments. Copy prior to class meeting to “avoid the copying machine bottleneck (and often resulting malfunctions.)” <sup>52</sup>
Figure out how much time students will have for reading and performing other student’s examples.	Time limits per performance must be figured out to allow the students to think through the examples given to them and be able to perform. If time runs out before a student gets to perform, I will carry this assignment over to the next class. I must “plan a schedule” when designing my lesson/unit. <sup>53</sup>
Collect video examples showing good and bad drumlines sticking’s.	There are many videos online showing different drumlines. “With little additional preparation, you can easily supplement your teaching presentations with aids for visual learners.” <sup>54</sup>
Write out Flipcharts containing different rhythms to perform correct sticking’s.	Preparation must be made to write out all the rhythms. “For another benefit, you can preserve the material, both what you prepare and what evolves during a class, from term to term.” <sup>55</sup>
Create rhythm activity sheets using Finale and make an adequate amount of copies.	Good for guided practice. Nilson states, “write what you can before class to save time and energy during class.” <sup>56</sup>
Program different metronome tempos for students to perform rhythms off of flip chart.	I will pre-program different tempos for the students to perform the rhythms of the flip chart. “Instructors should choose a technology for sound pedagogical reasons, not just because they think their students think it’s cool.” <sup>57</sup>

<sup>52</sup> Nilson, *Teaching At Its Best*, 43.

<sup>53</sup> Harro W. Van Brummelen, *Steppingstones to Curriculum: A Biblical Path*, (Colorado Springs, CO, Purposeful Design Publications, 2002), 171.

<sup>54</sup> Nilson, *Teaching At Its Best*, 233.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 255.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 254.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 256.

**Part III: Describe in 4–6 sentences 1 type of Formative Assessment that you would choose to implement and detail its effectiveness for your course.**

<b>Formative Assessment Type</b>	<b>Assessment Details</b>
Student performance of accent-pattern examples written by other students.	The students will perform the accent-pattern examples with correct stick heights written out by other students. This will give “instant feedback to students and instructor on their understanding and retention” of the materials <sup>58</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Nilson, *Teaching At Its Best*, 121.

## Curriculum Project – Evaluation Chart

### Your Evaluation Plan

In the chart below, describe your plan for a formative assessment for each learning outcome in this unit  
(This is something you would do before a summative assessment or exam to gauge the learner’s grasp of the learning objective)

Student: William Garrett	Course for which you are creating curriculum: MUSC 363 Marching Percussion Techniques	
Learning Outcomes	Your Formative Assessment Plan	Rationale for Formative Assessment Type <i>(Describe why you believe this assessment is the most effective and cite a reference from your text for support)</i>
1. Identify the techniques and situations needed to teach and perform with traditional or match-grip style.	After working through the warmup packet given during the lesson, students will perform using match and traditional grip on the snare drum. This will help them identify how each grip is used and in what situation based on the music performed.	Performing the grips and understanding how each hand moves is key to understanding the best situations for performance of the grips. Also, “people learn when they actively monitor their learning and reflect on their performance – a mental operation called metacognition or self-regulated learning.” <sup>59</sup>
2. Summarize the different marching techniques for marching drumline.	Students will demonstrate the basic marching fundamentals of outdoor and indoor percussion.	This is another great example of active learning. This is a kinesthetic learning style. “It uses active involvement as the primary learning mode.” <sup>60</sup> This helps those that excel in this learning style.
3. Demonstrate the basic techniques of performing on various marching percussion instruments.	After reviewing the different performance techniques of the instruments, students will	This assessment also involves physical involvement. This is better than just lecturing and reviewing. “People learn less

<sup>59</sup> Nilson, *Teaching at Its Best*, 4.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 233.

	perform excerpts of music on various marching percussion instruments.	by reviewing material and more from being tested or testing themselves on it.” <sup>61</sup>
4. Discuss the use of electronics in front ensemble performance.	Students will openly debate the use of electronics in marching percussion as well as the marching realm. Students will also do a Kahoot over different front ensemble percussion instruments.	This assessment will be good for student motivation. Competition amongst each other, as well as retention of knowledge, will be great motivators. “Compared to a traditional lecture, incorporating clicker breaks enhances student learning substantially, often by an entire letter grade on tests.” <sup>62</sup>
5. Organize a front ensemble section according to the instrumentation given. Think about the different types of sounds on the list of instrumentation.	After looking at different list of instrumentations, students will draw a chart of different staging scenarios for the given instrumentation.	This assessment is good for helping those intending to become band directors see how to assign percussion students to the parts from looking at the score. “Active learners gain the most out of doing something with the materials.” <sup>63</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Nilson, *Teaching at Its Best*, 4.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 121.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 234.

### Evaluation and Reflection

Consider all of the charts and stages of development in order to create your syllabus. List at least 6 issues or strategies that must be addressed to make your unit stronger and more concise. Provide a rationale for your choice.

Issue/Strategy	Rationale for Changing
There may be too much material to cover in the twelve-week course.	In a twelve-week course, only so much information can be given. Figuring out the amount of course content that will prepare prospective band directors with opportunities to effectively instruct percussionists will be challenging. Knowledge of the basic techniques of percussion performance will be important. <sup>64</sup>
Must have alternatives to the technology use in the lesson.	The instructor must be prepared for students that do not have adequate technology needed for the game show lesson. Use of the material should be for learning, and not to use because it is available. <sup>65</sup>
Clear expectations must be given before each performance activity.	Students will need to know exactly what they are being graded on for each performance. The grading techniques must follow the “procedures of deductive holistic grading – focusing on four or five assessment criteria.” <sup>66</sup>
Whether the students can write using Turabian style.	With a focus on more performance type evaluations, having a writing segment can be challenging to the students. Turabian format may not be known by the students. Having a book that reviews the format will help the students know the format. <sup>67</sup>
The curriculum of this course is not designed to cover teaching basic rhythm because it is for music majors who are expected to have a basic understanding of reading rhythms.	The course focus is mainly on the techniques of getting correct performance sounds on the instruments but being able to read the basic rhythms will be necessary for performance. Students are required to have at least one semester of music theory <sup>68</sup> , but additional materials may be given out to assist with any student who is a struggling music reader.

<sup>64</sup> Nilson, *Teaching at Its Best*, 28.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 256.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 307.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 34.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 33.

<p>However, it is necessary that this important element be addressed.</p>	
<p>The syllabus will have to be revised according to the number of percussion major students who are taking the course.</p>	<p>It is important to know the students' strengths and weaknesses. "Knowing both who your students are and how their minds learn is the starting point for teaching at its best."<sup>69</sup> Many of the activities in this course involve a collaborative effort of students with their peers. When more percussion majors take the course, the pairing of students can be changed to allow one stronger player to work with a weaker one or even a Percussionist with a non-percussionist.</p>

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<sup>69</sup> Nilson, *Teaching At Its Best*, 3.



# ***COURSE SYLLABUS***

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***MUSC 363***

## **MARCHING PERCUSSION TECHNIQUES**

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is designed to assist the students with the development of the basic skills, techniques, and terminology needed for teaching and performing on marching percussion instruments. At the conclusion of the course, students should be able to perform using the basic techniques of each instrument mentioned in the course and teach percussion students the basic skills needed to perform and/or march with the instruments. Students will also be able to understand the basic instrument choice and tuning of the marching percussion instruments. Emphasis in the course will be placed on Mallet and Battery percussion instruments performance techniques.

### **RATIONALE**

Many instrumental music teachers struggle with teaching marching percussion skills because of the lack of advance skill training, this class will teach the techniques needed for music education majors. Skills for the class will also be relevant for non-music education majors (i.e. drumline instructors). Music education majors will acquire the skills and terminology needed to teach and perform on the marching percussion instruments. This is very helpful for non-percussionists, because there are many bands that hire instructors throughout the school year. This is a hands-on class that requires every student to teach and perform on different instruments.

### **VI. PREREQUISITES**

Percussion Techniques

### **VII. REQUIRED RESOURCE PURCHASE(S)**

Casella, Jim and Jim Ancona. *Up Front*. Portland, OR: Tap Space Publications. 2003.  
ISBN: 0976434423

Hannum, Thom and Robert Morrison. *Championship Concepts for Marching Percussion*. Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard Publishing Corporation. 1986. ISBN: 073999440980

Lluvera, John and Mark Perrett. *Drumline Fundamentals*. St. Petersburg, FL: Final Designz Studios Publishing. 2017.

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. Current ed. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

### **VIII. ADDITIONAL MATERIALS FOR LEARNING**

- A. Remo RT-0008-00 8” Practice Pad
- B. Vic Firth SDH Ralph Hardimon Corpsmaster Snare Drum Sticks

### **IX. MEASURABLE LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- A. **A.** Identify the techniques and situations needed to teach and perform with traditional or match-grip style.
- B. Summarize the different marching techniques for marching drumline.
- C. Demonstrate the basic techniques of performing on various marching percussion instruments.
- D. Discuss the use of electronics in front ensemble performance.

Organize a front ensemble section according to the instrumentation given. Think about the different types of sounds on the list of instrumentation.

### **X. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

- A. Textbook reading, lecture presentations, performances, and video clips.
- B. Quizzes (2)  
We will have 2 quizzes during the 12 weeks. One will cover basic battery percussion tuning and the other will cover front ensemble ranges.
- C. Traditional and Match Grip-Style Paper.  
At the end of week 2 of the course, students will need to turn in a 3 – 5-page paper in Turabian format comparing and contrasting the traditional and match-grip style of snare drumming. Students will need to include any historical aspect to the grips as well as advantages and disadvantages of using the grips. This assignment is to help shape the understanding of when to use the grip.
- D. Individual Performances (4)  
Students will perform the different techniques to play a short excerpt on the respected instrument. Grading will be based on correct sticking, rhythmic accuracy, and correct techniques. These will take place during weeks 7, 8, and 11. Each will be on snare drum, bass drum, tenor drums, and mallet equipment.
- E. Front Ensemble Planning:

The students will be given a list of different instrumentations and will design a setup for the front ensemble. A short paragraph should be attached with rationale. This will take place on week 10.

F. Final: Accent-Pattern and Summative Exam

During the last week of the course, students will submit a written-out accent-pattern warmup to be used for snare drum, 5-drum tenor drums, 4 bass drums, and 2 cymbals. Music must be 16 measures and have unison accent parts as well as accent split throughout the ensemble. 95 points for warmup and 5 for performance of another student's pattern on selected drum. Plus, there will be a summative exam over information presented throughout the semester. Study Guide will be handed out on week 10.

**XI. COURSE GRADING AND POLICIES**

D.	Points
Quiz (2 at 50 points each)	100
Traditional vs. Match Grip Paper	100
Performances:	
Snare Drum	85
Bass Drum	85
Tenor Drums	85
Mallet Percussion	85
Marching Skills	90
Front Ensemble Planning (2 at 100 points each)	200
Final (Accent-Pattern Warmup)	100
Summative Assessment	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>1010</b>

E. Scale

A = 940–1010    A- = 920–939    B+ = 900–919    B = 860–899    B- = 840–859  
 C+ = 820–839    C = 780–819    C- = 760–779    D+ = 740–759    D = 700–739  
 D- = 680–699    F = 0–679

F. Late Assignment Policy

All assignments should be completed and turned in on time during the course time. Assignments turned in after the scheduled course time will be assessed a 5% penalty deduction per school day late. Assignments will not be allowed to be over 8 school days late.

Formative Assessment:

MUSC 363: Marching Percussion Techniques

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. When tuning the marching percussion heads, you should go from one lug to the next (side-by-side). (3 points)

- a. True
- b. False \*

2. Marching Bass drums are typically tune to what intervals (according to the Yamaha tuning guide)? (5 points)

- a. Unison to Major 2<sup>nd</sup>
- b. Unison to Perfect 5<sup>th</sup>
- c. Minor 3<sup>rd</sup> to Perfect 5<sup>th</sup> \*
- d. Tri-tone to Minor 6<sup>th</sup>

3. According to the Yamaha tuning guide, tenor drums are generally tuned to what interval? (5 points)

- a. Minor 3<sup>rd</sup> \*
- b. Perfect 4<sup>th</sup>
- c. Perfect 5<sup>th</sup>
- d. Minor 7<sup>th</sup>



4. On the drum to the right draw the lug to lug tuning pattern. (3 pts)

5. Each lug should be turned no more than one full turn (according to the Yamaha Tuning Guide). (3 points)

a. True \*

b. False

6. What are some good items to use to lubricate the lugs when changing heads, according to the Yamaha Tuning Guide? Name 2. (6 points)

\_\_\_\_\_ Petroleum Jelly, Valve Oil, Lithium Grease \*

7. What are the two typical setups for four drum tenors, according to Vic Firth video series? (6 points)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- \* 8,10,12,13" and 10,12,13,14"

8 Brass polish is recommended for crash cymbals. (5 points)

a. True

b. False \*

9. It is recommended to play on new drumheads immediately after installation to allow the drums to seat properly. (3 points)

a. True

B. False \*

10. You should always detune a drum at the end of the season. (5 points)

a. True \*

b. False

Summative Assessment:

MUSC 363: Marching Percussion Techniques

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Final Exam

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Name two situations where playing match grip would be preferred for the snare line. (8 points each)

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- \* Multiple answers, player ability, difficulty of music.

2. Most rhythms on the snare drum lead with the right hand. (3 points)

a. True \*

b. False

3. You should always detune a drum at the end of the season. (3 points)

a. True \*

b. False



4. On the drum to the right draw the lug to lug tuning pattern. (8 pts)

5. The best exercise to use for flam building is... (5 points)

- a. Double Beat.
- b. 8's.
- c. Bucks. \*
- d. Roll.

6. Describe the best way to tie cymbal straps. (8 points)

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\* variable answers, but looking for weaving pattern.

7. It is okay to clean vibraphone bars with warm soapy water. (3 points)

- a. True \*
- b. False

8. What type of mallet should you stay away from on a marimba? (5 points)

- a. Vibraphone Mallet
- b. Yarm Mallet
- c. Rattan Mallet
- d. Metallic Mallet \*

9. Double Beat exercises are good for building what? (5 points)

- a. Rolls. #
- b. Flams.
- c. Accents.
- d. Single Stroke Rolls.



10. Describe the best way to transport mallet instruments. (8 points each)

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\* Variable answers, should include removal of bars.

11. Is okay to use furniture oil on the marimba bars. (3 points)

- a. True \*
- b. False

12. Tenor players should play each warmup exercise on one drum, before playing around the drums. (3 points)

- a. True\*
- b. False

13. When plugging in the speakers from the amp, make sure to plug into which port of the amp? (5 points)

- a. AC
- b. Pedal
- c. Output \*
- d. Input

14. What is the best way to stage mallet instruments? (10 points)

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\* Keep like instruments together or stagger according to material (wood/metal).

15. Chart out stick heights according to dynamics? (8 points)

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- \* Multiple answers, 4 inch or 3 inch system.

16. A metronome should be used for every warmup exercise. (3 points)

a. True \*

b. False

17. When marching crab step to the left, which foot crosses over the front? (3 points)

a. Left

b. Right \*

18. When marching crab step to the right, which foot crosses over the front? (3 points)

a. Left \*

b. Right

19. The top head of the snare drum is called the batter head. (3 points)

a. True \*

b. False

20. The bottom head of the snare drum is called the counter head. (3 points)

a. True

b. False \*

## References

Nilson, Linda B. *Teaching At Its Best: A Research-Based Resource for College Instructors*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2010.

Van Brummelen, Harro. *Steppingstones to Curriculum: A Biblical Path*. Colorado Springs, CO, Purposeful Design Publications, 2002.

## APPENDIX B: SYLLABI USED IN RESEARCH

<u>College/University (Instructor Name)</u>	<u>Course Name (Year)</u>
1) Angelo State University (Trent Shuey)	Percussion Methods (2017)
2) Lindsey Wilson College (Tony Patterson)	Percussion Methods (2014)
3) Mississippi State University (NL)	Class Percussion (2014)
4) Murray State University (NL)	Instrumental Methods: Secondary School (2004)
5) Nashville State Community College (Ed Mummert)	Class Percussion (NL)
6) Stephen F Austin University (Brad Meyer)	Percussion Methods (2012)
7) Texas A&M University – Commerce (Kevin Luken)	Percussion Methods (2015)
8) University of The Arts (Keith Hodgson)	Percussion Instruments/Methods (NL)
9) University of Central Florida (Thad Anderson)	Percussion Techniques (2015)
10) University of North Alabama (Ian Moyer)	Class Percussion (2013)
11) University of North Texas (Adam Davis)	Percussion Methods (2016)
12) University of Texas Arlington (Andrew Eldridge)	Percussion Methods (2016)
13) Vandercook College of Music (Kevin Lepper)	Percussion Techniques (2015)
14) Youngstown State University (Joshua Haggerty)	Percussion Methods (2009)

NL = NOT LISTED

## APPENDIX C: FINDINGS OF THE SYLLABI STUDIED

Example: At Angelo State University, the class meets twice a week, though the class length was not listed in the syllabus. The textbook used was Siwe's *Percussion: A Course Study for Future Band and Orchestra Directors*. Of the classes that semester, 2 were devoted to marching percussion, though the specifics of those marching lessons were not specified

NL =Not Listed in the syllabus

<b>University/College</b>	<b>Class Length (Classes Per Week)</b>	<b>Textbook(s) Used</b>	<b>Number of Classes Dedicated to Marching Percussion Instruction</b>	<b>Topics Covered</b>
Angelo State University	N/L (2 times a week)	<i>Percussion: A Course Study for Future Band and Orchestra Directors</i> by Thomas Siwe	2 total classes	Not Specified
Lindsey Wilson College	N/L (2 times a week)	<i>Snare Drum Method – Book 1</i> by Haskell Harr  <i>Basic Tympani Technic Book</i> by Thomas McMillan  <i>Fundamental Studies for Mallets</i> by Garwood Whaley	NL	Not Specified
Mississippi State University	24 Class Hours total	<i>The Complete Percussionist</i> by Robert Breithaupt  <i>15 Progressive Snare Drum Solos</i> by Jason Baker	0	None
Murray State University	N/L	N/L	NL	Not Specified
Nashville State Community College	(15 weeks of classes)	<i>Snare Drum Method – Book 1</i> by Haskell Harr  Book TBA	NL	N/L
Stephen F Austin University	1 hour 15 minutes (2 times a week)	<i>Teaching Percussion</i> by Gary Cook	3	Marching Percussion in General

				(Not fully covered)
Texas A&M University – Commerce	50 minute classes (2 times a week)	<i>Fresh Approach to Snare Drum</i> by Mark Wessels  <i>Simple Steps to Successful Mallets and More Percussion</i> by Kennan Wylie	2	Warmups
University of the Arts	50 minute classes (1 time per week)	<i>The Complete Percussionist</i> by Robert Breithaupt  <i>Percussion Audition Etudes</i> by Garwood Whaley	0	None
University of Central Florida	50 minute classes (2 times a week)	<i>Teaching Percussion</i> by Gary Cook  <i>Percussion: A Course Study for Future Band and Orchestra Directors</i> by Thomas Siwe	0	None
University of North Alabama	50 minute classes (2 times a week)	<i>Teaching Percussion</i> by Gary Cook	2	Stick Uniformity
University of North Texas	1 hour 20 minutes classes (2 times a week)	<i>Teaching Percussion</i> by Gary Cook	3	1 – General Instruction 2 – Playing
University of Texas Arlington	50 minute classes (2 times a week)	<i>Teaching Percussion</i> by Gary Cook  <i>A Fresh Approach to Snare Drum</i> by Mark Wessels  <i>A Fresh Approach to Mallets</i> by Mark Wessels	2	Not Specified
Vandercook College of Music	50 minute classes (2 times a week)	<i>Fundamentals of Rhythm</i> by Joe Maroni	0	None
Youngstown State University	50 minute classes (2 times a week)	<i>Teaching Percussion</i> by Gary Cook  <i>Rhythm is our Business</i> by Glenn Schaft	2	Not Specified