

FALL 2026 SYLLABUS AND HANDBOOK

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Name, Number, Credit Hours and Description:

Marching Band (Large Ensemble)

MUS ENS 1180-01/P1 (30321/30857)

MUS ENS 3180-01/P1 (30236/30764)

MUS ENS 5180-01 (31141)

1 Credit Hour

Instrumental performance ensemble specializing in marching band repertoire and performance pragmatics.

Class Meeting Times and Location:

Monday and Wednesday 6:30-8:30pm

Friday 3:00-4:30pm

Saturday As announced ([see performance calendar](#))

Performances Dates and times vary ([see performance calendar](#))

Sectionals Mutually scheduled with section leadership

All class meetings are in the UNI-Dome unless we notify you of a location change.

In the later part of the season, some rehearsals may be extended and others canceled as we adjust to performance schedules.

Faculty:

Director: Dr. Justin J. Mertz

84 GBPAC

justin.mertz@uni.edu

(319) 273-6058

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday, 1:00-2:30pm

Professional Staff:

Color Guard Instructor: Amy Hunzelman, amy.hunzelman@uni.edu

Drumline Instructors: Prof. Matt Andreini, matt.andreini@uni.edu; Prof. Staci Toma

staci.tomacotten@uni.edu

Graduate Assistants: Timarie LaFoy, lafoyt@uni.edu; Andrew Yenzer, arnolaas@uni.edu

Secretary: Kelsey Williams, kelsey.williams@uni.edu, (319) 273-2024

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the semester/season, students will be able to:

- Evince mastery, in performance settings, of marching fundamentals, drill progressions, and visual maneuvers for 1 pregame and 5 halftime shows
- Evince mastery, in performance settings, of assigned music, some from memory, in varied settings with demonstrated mastery of notes, rhythms, articulation, style, and dynamics
- Synthesize the above visual and musical mastery into effective performance
- Demonstrate comprehension of and facility with the lexical structures and academic language of a marching performing ensemble

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

1180 Level:

By the end of the semester/season, students will be able to:

- Evince mastery, in performance settings, of marching fundamentals, drill progressions, and visual maneuvers for 1 pregame and 4 halftime shows
- Evince mastery, in performance settings, of assigned music, some from memory, in varied settings with demonstrated mastery of notes, rhythms, articulation, style, and dynamics
- Synthesize the above visual and musical mastery into effective performance
- Demonstrate a basic comprehension of and facility with the lexical structures and academic language of a marching performing ensemble

3180 Level:

- All of the 1180 level outcomes, plus demonstrate increased awareness of form, style, and expression and the ability to help improve the performance of others in the ensemble

5180 Level:

- All of the 1180 and 3180 level outcomes, plus lead two sectionals with the guidance of the instructor that demonstrate readiness to lead musicians in artistic performance

2026 PERFORMANCE CALENDAR AND INFORMATION

The official PMB Calendar is available [here](#).

Please mark your calendar with dates on the PMB Calendar and plan accordingly. Like rehearsals, all performances are required unless otherwise specified. All dates are on Saturdays except where otherwise specified. Game times are subject to change. Additional performance dates may be added as updated information becomes available. Game times are usually announced over the summer and will be placed on the above site as soon as announced

Game and other performance times are subject to change.

Game Day Rehearsals:

For a game at 4pm, rehearsal will be from 12pm-1pm. For games at 1:00pm, rehearsal will be from 9am-10am. For 6:00pm games, rehearsal is from 2pm-3pm. Pizza and soft drinks will be provided after rehearsal.

GRADING AND EVALUATION

PMB members are primarily graded on attendance, participation, and musical preparation at assigned rehearsals/class meetings and performances. All students are assigned to all rehearsals/class meetings and performances listed above unless notified otherwise.

Attendance Policy:

Like all college bands (and perhaps different from some high school bands), the PMB ***has a culture of attendance***. This not only means that attendance is required at assigned class meetings and performances, it means that attendance is one of our most basic expectations and you need to proceed with the attitude that absences from any PMB activity are scrutinized very heavily and excused only under very specific circumstances. This means that there will be times where a PMB obligation may prevent you from doing things that you would otherwise want/get to do. This is not an unusual thing in adult life and not a sign that the PMB is an unreasonable burden on your time.

All members are expected to be at all rehearsals and performances and to be on time. Attendance is required at all games, rehearsals, and performances. An unexcused absence from a performance or game will result in an "F" for the semester. An unexcused absence from a rehearsal will result in a one-letter grade reduction. Two tardies constitute an absence and will be counted as such in determining the final grades. Excessive absence from Sectionals can also impact your grade. Important details about the PMB Attendance Policy:

1. You should arrive early for each rehearsal and be in the assigned location at the exact start time for class. Section Leaders will inform you of the beginning location. **Rehearsal begins immediately after the last note of the percussion cadence and you are expected to be in your assigned position at that time.** Be sure to check your schedule and listen for announcements regarding rehearsal locations.
2. Acceptable reasons for absence or tardiness are limited to severe illness and family emergencies. Other reasons sometimes may include a rare special event or conflict with a requirement for another course (***the other course's instructor must contact Dr. Mertz ahead of time***) – this is at the discretion of the director.
 - a. Examples of unacceptable reasons for absence/tardiness include **but are not limited to:** being tired, having a lot of work to do, review sessions for other courses, having to work, needing to attend a "required" or "mandatory" event for another course without the other course's instructor contacting Dr. Mertz ahead of time, leaving campus for non-emergency family or relationship partner visits (even on Fridays), events at your high school, family or relationship partner visiting you (bring them to PMB!), hunting season, wanting to leave campus early on a Friday, parties, your parents telling you that you need to be at something that is not an emergency, etc., etc., etc....

3. In the event that you are absent or tardy, you may request that your absence or tardiness be excused. In order to be excused, the reason for your absence should be in accordance with the policy listed in #2 above.
4. PROCEDURE FOR REQUESTING AN EXCUSED ABSENCE:
 - a. Submit the [Excused Absence Request Form](#)
 - b. Emails or phone calls to the Director regarding absences are appreciated, **but do not take the place of submitting the Absence Request Form**. You must submit the form online even if you have already made contact via email, phone or in person.
 - c. This process should be completed at least two weeks in advance of the absence.
 - d. If you miss rehearsal due to an unforeseen event, such as illness or family emergency, you must complete this process immediately as soon as you are able to do so.
5. No other faculty member on campus can require you to miss PMB class meetings. If there is an event they would like you to attend please ask them to contact Dr. Mertz.
6. Instructors, Section Leaders, Student Staff and Graduate Assistants do not have the authority to excuse absences. Only the band director is authorized to excuse absences. All absences are dealt with individually. Extended absences may require a doctor's note.
7. Absences, even if excused, may result in decrease/removal from performance.
8. Attendance is taken via the youhere.org app. Download the app for [iOS](#) or [Android](#). Use the class code: pmb2026 (will be available on 8/17)

Participation Policy:

This area of your grade evaluation considers how you apply yourself during rehearsals (playing and listening), how well you prepare your music and marching (demonstrated by your individual progress in class and during performances), and proper performance dress. While all band members (with the exception of flags and percussion) are initially accepted into the marching band based upon prior experience, any student may be required to be assessed for continuance in this course if it is found that musical or marching performance is below minimal standards. The assessment may consist of a scheduled test performing current show music and demonstrating basic marching fundamentals. Grades may be lowered or the person removed from the course if the student's performance is deemed below minimal standards or once a grade of F is received.

Because improper attitude can be a subjective problem and is not always related to grading, the director will deal with a negative attitude on an individual basis. If, however, the matter cannot be resolved satisfactorily, grades can be lowered or the person expelled from the band if the director determines that the student's actions or lack of performance is detrimental to the band. Any language that is deemed offensive is strictly prohibited. You are expected to come to every rehearsal and performance with a positive attitude, enthusiasm, and a willingness to work.

You are expected to have all current music on a device (including warm-ups) whose battery is charged, drill charts, tennis shoes and socks, a pencil, **a lyre/device holder**, and an instrument (and all accessories) at each and every rehearsal. Failure to have this equipment during rehearsal will result in the lowering of the student's grade. During performances, your uniform should be worn in the appropriate and designated way (see section on uniforms) and in the

proper condition of cleanliness and neatness. You are expected to have your stands music available at all rehearsals and games. No food, drinks, books, or gum during rehearsals.

Musical Preparation:

This area of your grade evaluation considers musical preparation for performances. All music will be memorized, unless an exception is made by the director. Music check offs occur through one's section leader. Students may appeal a negative check off to the director by performing individually for him. A lack of music preparation will result in a letter grade reduction per show.

OTHER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Band's Image:

The band plays an important role on and off the performance field. We will play in the stands throughout the game (be sure to always have your stands music with you). We stay for the full game and stand all four quarters so we are ready to fulfill our role as the prime driver of energy and atmosphere at events. *No student is permitted to leave a game or other performance early without the permission of the Director.* It is important for the PMB to keep the crowd involved, and it is equally important for you to project the best image of the band to the audience in the Dome. We meet in the stands immediately following pregame and halftime field performance with Section Leaders maintaining a representative section while excusing members to use the restroom. Remember that we are musicians first and foremost. Any behavior deemed inappropriate in the stands will be dealt with severely. The PMB must represent the ultimate in class, pride, and professionalism at all times.

The Panther Mini-Band:

A group of approximately 50 musicians representing every instrument of the band will sometimes perform in the parking lot prior to games and at other University functions. Each PMB member will perform with the Panther Mini-Band at least once per season. Assignments will be made by section leaders for each game.

Colorguard/Feature Twirler:

All rules that apply to the winds and percussion also apply to the colorguard and feature twirler.

Kappa Kappa Psi and Tau Beta Sigma:

These organizations are the national honorary band fraternity and sorority, respectively. They provide a valuable service to the UNI band program through a wide variety of projects throughout the whole year. If you wish to help serve the band program, you may choose to join [Kappa Kappa Psi or Tau Beta Sigma](#). These two organizations exist to serve the band and allow members to bond with one another through their common interest in music. KKPsi and TBS fundraise throughout the year to provide many things for the PMB, including but not limited to providing you food items after performances, band bags, and the band banquet at the end of the year.

Instructors and Graduate Assistants:

The Instructors and Graduate Assistants will be in complete charge in the event the director is absent. The assistance of the band staff should be utilized and appreciated by all band members.

Uniforms:

The Panther Marching Band uniforms represent the largest student organization on the UNI campus, a prestigious ensemble with over 120 years of tradition – please take care of them! You will be charged replacement costs on missing parts. The following are basic expectations:

- You are either in uniform or you are not. This means that you have to wear all of it (except hat and gloves) if you're going to wear any of it. When traveling, we wear official T-shirts and take our coats and hats off.
- Please do not wear pins, buttons, masks, shakers, balloons, hats, (except UNI hats), sunglasses, bandannas, etc. on your uniform, body, or instrument. They detract from the overall appearance and uniformity of the band. All members are required to wear long hair up inside their band hat. Face painting/tattoos/stickers are allowed provided that they are minimal, not excessive, and do not draw undue attention to an individual band member. They may not dirty your uniform.
- No smoking, use of vape pens, or consumption of alcohol or other controlled substances in uniform at any time.

Shoes, band baseball hat, and gloves are part of the uniform and should be new in appearance at all times and kept impeccably clean and white. In order to keep our uniforms looking sharp and clean for years to come, we ask that you adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Do not eat food other than what we supply to you or drink beverages other than water while in uniform. In the event that you do get something on the uniform, you will be obligated to pay the cost of having it cleaned.
2. Please refrain from any horseplay or rough-housing while in uniform. You are responsible for the cost of repairs in the event that damage is caused to your uniform.
3. You are responsible for your uniform and all its parts. You will be charged for replacing lost parts.
4. At the end of the season, you will be asked to return your uniform in the condition in which it was received. Please be certain that you maintain the uniform and parts that were assigned to you.
5. In the event that you need to hem your uniform, please contact the Uniform Managers. If you choose to do it yourself, please do so using like-colored thread only. PLEASE, no duct tape or safety pins.
6. Remember all of your uniform parts at each game/performance: gloves, hat, shoes, pants, coat, gauntlets, cape, drape, and white socks.
7. Wear your Panther Marching Band t-shirt and shorts under your uniform and undress after the game. Your shorts won't be seen through the white pants.

8. LONG WHITE SOCKS MUST BE WORN WITH THE UNIFORM – ankles cannot be exposed.
9. Hang up your uniform when it is not being used.
10. Never put your uniform in the garment bag if it is wet.
11. Don't forget your uniform parts after a game. You will be charged to have them returned to you.
12. The cost of any uniform article not returned by the announced deadline will be added to your U-Bill.

Game Day Rehearsal:

Members must wear their black band t-shirt, black band shorts, and white marching shoes for game day rehearsals. At times Aussie hats may be worn during game day rehearsal at the request of the Director.

Uniform Replacement Costs:

Jackets-\$280.00, Pants-\$100.00, Hat-\$50.00, Cape-\$75.00, Setting Fee for Manufacture-\$400.00

Equipment:

You are responsible for all equipment checked out or issued to you. All equipment and uniforms are to be returned at the announced times or charges will be added to your U-Bill. Damage to any equipment is the responsibility of the student, including repairs and replacement costs.

All University-owned instruments must be stored and transported in the case assigned to you. You may not transport or store instruments in make-shift cases or bags

Music and Drill Charts:

We use the flipfolder app for electronic sheet music. Download it for [iOS](#) or [Android](#). Instructions for joining the PMB on the app and populating the music on your device will be provided during Band Camp. Be sure to think about your device's battery life. Bring a charging cord to every PMB rehearsal and performance as we can provide you with external batteries to charge your device if needed.

You will need to be sure you have a **lyre/device holder** that can hold your device so that you can play your instrument with proper technique and *not use one of your hands to hold the device*. Drill charts are not to be placed in music cases. Placing these items in your case will damage the instrument.

Students will be provided with paper drill charts and should have them at every rehearsal.

If you need additional drill at any time during the season, visit <https://bands.uni.edu/pmb/current-members> or visit with a Graduate Assistant who may have extra copies.

Post-season Games:

In the event that the football team is involved in play-off games after the regular season, all members will be expected to attend as an automatic extension of the season. If a post-season game is scheduled during the Thanksgiving weekend or after finals week, a band will be formed on a volunteer basis.

Problems and Leadership Hierarchy:

The Director is always available to speak to you individually and welcomes the opportunity to speak with you at any time. However, the majority of problems that arise can be solved using staff and student leadership. Depending on the nature of the problem, we ask you to try to solve your problem by going to your section leader first. If your section leader cannot solve your problem, you should take the problem to the next level in the leadership hierarchy (staff managers, field coordinator, or drum major). If the problem is still not solved, you should see a graduate assistant or the colorguard/percussion instructor (as applicable to you). If they are not able to solve the problem, they will help you to address the concern with the Director. Every issue is different – so please use your best judgment in handling concerns.

PANTHER MARCHING BAND ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

We are committed to providing a safe and welcoming experience for all students. We are also an organization that represents the university with the highest level of respect and professionalism. The Panther Marching Band has a zero-tolerance policy for behaviors that contribute to an unsafe, unprofessional, or unwelcoming environment. Our zero-tolerance policy includes:

1. Alcohol and Controlled Substances

The use of alcohol or any controlled substance taken recreationally before or during any band-related activity is strictly prohibited. Any band member found to be under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance at a rehearsal, performance, meeting, or during an off-campus trip will be subject to severe disciplinary action including dismissal from the band. The incident will be reported to the proper university authorities. Prescription drugs taken as directed by a physician or other medical professional are allowed and do not need to be reported to PMB faculty or staff unless the student chooses to do so.

2. Discrimination, Harassment, and Abuse

The University of Northern Iowa does not discriminate in employment or education. Visit 13.03 Equal Opportunity & Non-Discrimination Statement (<https://policies.uni.edu/1303>) for additional information. Sexual abuse or harassment, as well discrimination based on disability, gender, race, ethnic origin, religious preference, sexual orientation, or gender identification is not tolerated in our program. Every student is welcome in the Panther Marching Band and will be made to feel welcome by all members and staff. Actions and behaviors of an inappropriate or sexual nature are not tolerated.

The University of Northern Iowa (UNI) complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Fair Housing Act, and other applicable federal and state laws and regulations that prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability. To request accommodations please contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS), located at ITTC 007, for more information either at (319) 273-2677 or Email accessibilityservices@uni.edu. Visit Student Accessibility Services (<https://sas.uni.edu/>) for additional information

Always remember that you are a member of a “class” organization that takes pride in representing the University of Northern Iowa and conduct yourself accordingly, including with respect to how you relate to and interact with your peers and colleagues.

REHEARSAL REQUIREMENTS

1. For music rehearsals, there is NO TALKING. During marching rehearsals, talking will be kept at a minimum. This will also save time for all and result in a better marching band.
2. In order to properly execute all marching maneuvers, *sneakers/tennis shoes are a must* at all rehearsals. Your shoes should be flexible at the toe and comfortable to be in for the duration of rehearsal.
3. All members of the band should follow the instructions of your staff drill assistant, field conductors, section leader, and graduate assistant. Everyone should remain in position with feet together while these individuals are giving instructions.
4. We realize that the “time factor” is important in college life. For the benefit of everyone—BE ON TIME FOR ALL REHEARSALS AND BE PREPARED WITH THE PROPER EQUIPMENT: pencil, music, instrument/flag, flip folder/lyre, and drill charts. These materials are to be kept in your individually assigned band bags that will be provided for you courtesy of Kappa Kappa Psi and Tau Beta Sigma. Your band bag is to be worn at all times during rehearsal.
5. We have hired some of the best arrangers from across the country to write our music. For this reason, we ask that our performers play only the written music or music added by the director. *Ad lib* or improvised performance of music will create a weaker ensemble balance and will also negatively impact the sound of the band. The UNI Panther Marching Band is recognized across the state of Iowa for its professional and exciting sound.
6. Personal Responsibilities:

Know your assignment and do it well.	Try to do everything right the first time!
Attend all rehearsals and arrive on time (early).	Be attentive to all staff and instructions
Teamwork is essential for a successful group performance.	

HAVE FUN! ☺ YOU ARE THE PRIDE OF PANTHER NATION! GO PANTHERS!



PRIDE. STRENGTH. CHARACTER.

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