**MUS 171—Applied Organ Lessons for Organ Scholars**

**Organ Scholar Syllabus and Grading Rubrics**

**Instructor: Dr. Jonathan Bezdegian**

Organ Scholars must actively practice the organ in the Chapel of the Holy Spirit during designated practice sessions (coordinated at the start of each semester). When the Chapel organ is not available, the Rodgers organ in Founders 44 should be used to keep up with note learning.

Each organ Scholar is expected to practice a minimum 15 hours per week. More may be required (and expected) for larger scale pieces assigned to increase technique, endurance, and aptitude. If lessons are not satisfactory based on the initial range, more practice will be necessary.

Ideally, piano playing required for Chorale and Music Ministry should not be included in the minimum organ practice allotments; organ repertoire and hymn playing are the essential elements of grading success. Piano music required of Chorale and Campus Ministry should be considered part of the training required to work in an active musical setting.

Organ Scholars will receive 10, one-hour lessons each semester.

**Grading**

Each week, Organ Scholars must present repertoire and hymn playing assignments given at the end of each weekly lesson. Cumulative grades are based on the following categories (25% each):

1. Note Accuracy (including pedals)
2. Understanding of musical style (articulations, fingerings, dynamics, registration changes, phrasing, etc…)
3. Progress. Scholars must push to not only perfect previous passages in their assigned repertoire, but also, to learn more and more of each organ piece on their own after each weekly lesson.
4. Sight Reading (including pedals—mainly, 4-part hymns. Other organ accompaniments may be assigned based on needs in Campus Ministry and Chorale).

**Community Involvement**

Participating in Masterclasses by guest organists hosted by the University, or in the surrounding community by the Worcester Chapter American Guild of Organists is strongly encouraged when opportunities arise.

Assistance of guest organists and recitalists in the Chapel of the Holy Spirit when applicable (page turning, etc…).

**End of Semester/Year Assessments**

Large events such as Lessons and Carols, and end of the year departmental recitals will be used to determine overall work ethic and preparedness. Participation and attendance in both events are required.

**Instrument care**

While all organs require maintenance, this is the job of a qualified organ technician. Due to liability concerns, Organ Scholars are not to perform any maintenance work on the University’s instruments.

If technical problems are encountered, they should be immediately reported to Dr. Bezdegian.

**Helpful suggestions:**

While jobs and creative projects both on and off campus are important, they should not conflict with adequate practice and study or with Chorale/VOCE/Campus Ministry events and rehearsals on campus.

Please reach out to respective faculty in the Department of Art & Music for any questions, ideas, and concerns. Organ Scholars are expected to select an advisor from the Department of Art & Music for better guidance and formation.

Even when classes conclude (semester breaks and summer “vacation”), Organ Scholars should still practice repertoire (which will be assigned at the end of each semester) and sight-reading skills on their own. Please understand that music is a diminishing skill set. Regular practice is essential. The more you do on your own, the more productive you will be each semester. Please don’t wait until the start of the semester to begin practicing assigned repertoire. Begin in small increments over your break time.

Humbleness. Being humble goes much further than being unnecessarily overconfident—especially at this stage of your educational formation. Organ Scholars should act in a manner that will support growth and involve support of their peers and provide a positive image on the University and their respective departments. Please keep an open mind and treat others the way you want to be treated. This includes peers, colleagues, instruments, and instrument builders. Rise above negativity and turn the negative energy into positive motivation.