MUPR 2600-33: Guitar Lessons for Non-Music Majors

Frequently Asked Questions

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Introduction

What are these guitar lessons and who are they for?
These are weekly, thirty-minute lessons in classical guitar. They are for any student who is not a major at the Lamont School of Music and who would like to learn to play the guitar or improve their skills.

What kind of credit are the lessons worth?
The lessons should be good for free elective credit in any degree, if that option is available in your degree. Check with your advisor if in doubt.
The course is worth 2 credits.

Who teaches this course?
You will have lessons with one of our Graduate Teaching Assistants. These are master’s students who have won scholarships in highly competitive auditions; they also receive teacher training from the faculty. There are usually three or four instructors available and they offer different times during the week, so which one you work with depends on which time you sign up for.

How long are the lessons?
Thirty minutes, once a week.

Registration

Which course should I register for?
Register for Classical Guitar MUPR 2600-33. MUPR 2600 has other sections, but you must enroll in sec 33.

I tried to enroll for this course, but there is some kind of restriction. What shall I do?
There should be no restrictions on section 33, but occasionally they are wrongly applied. Check that you didn’t try to register for a different section of MUPR 2600. If the problem persists, inform the faculty supervisor, Jonathan Leathwood, immediately (jonathan.leathwood@du.edu). Don’t delay because if the class fills up in the meantime there is nothing we can do.
The course is full. Can you sign a drop/add slip to let me into the class?

Unfortunately, no. The number of lessons we can offer is constrained by our funding. Our funding allows us to pay the instructors for a certain number of lessons. Once the class is full, we don’t have funds to pay them to teach more.

Keep checking back as often as you can. Usually several students drop the class, before or during the first week of classes, so you may be able to get in after all.

Is there a waitlist?

Yes. You can add your name to that if it is not already full. Students are automatically notified if they get to the front of the line and can register. Again, if the waitlist is full, keep checking the class, because students do drop. Sometimes, the waitlist fills up, and yet by the second week of classes we have unfilled places in the class, so it pays to be persistent.

Can you let me know if a place opens up?

No, because I don’t get notifications when this happens. Check yourself as frequently as possible and if there is an open place, grab it!

I see that the course MUPR 2600 has other sections, which are not full. Can’t I sign up for one of those instead?

No. Those are the sections for music majors, taught by faculty. The faculty loads are full, so we can’t take more students. These classes take the form of one-to-one meetings, and the size of the class that you see online is an arbitrary number, deliberately set to a much larger number than we can actually teach. That’s why it looks like there are open spots, when in reality there aren’t.

How many credits can I get?

This course is worth 2 credits. You might notice that other sections of MUPR 2600 are worth 4 credits, but those sections are intended for Guitar Performance majors (in the Bachelor of Music program), who receive longer lessons and are expected to prepare much more material very intensively each week.

But I really need 4 credits! What about those other sections? Or can’t I enroll for more credits?

The reason why you cannot enroll for the other sections is because they are taught by the professors and for music majors only. As explained below, MUPR 2600-33 is assigned to our Graduate Teaching Assistants. There is always full demand for this class, so we can only allow 2 credits per student.

If you are really at a loss to find those two extra credits, why not consider taking an additional course at the Lamont School of Music? The available instruments (plus voice, sometimes) vary from quarter to quarter. For more information, contact the Lamont student coordinator, Rachel Lim, at Rachel.Lim@du.edu.

I need 1 credit, not 2.

I checked into this and was told that you are not allowed to take the class for only one credit.
I'm a graduate student and I need graduate credit.

We can arrange this. Contact Jonathan Leathwood, jonathan.leathwood@du.edu.

Schedule and Location

How do I find out when my lesson is?

Lessons begin in **week 2** of classes. (We tried in the past to start in week 1 but it led to a lot of problems: both the students and the TAs had essential appointments yet to be scheduled until week 1 was over and we couldn’t make a clean start.)

We offer a wider variety of lesson times and allow students to sign up for one time online (using doodle.com). The link to the online sign-up sheet is communicated via an announcement on Canvas.

Before the quarter begins, I will contact all registered students through Canvas. I will let you know when the link to the online sign-up will be available. It will be in the middle of the first week of classes, but I will let you know the exact time to check Canvas for the announcement.

Where is my lesson?

Newman Center, room 305.

material and expectations

**I am a total beginner. Are these lessons appropriate for me?**

Yes! We teach any level and beginners are welcome.

**What style of guitar can I learn?**

It may be worth inquiring about this ahead of time. Although all of our instructors are specializing in classical guitar in their degree program, some of them are experienced in other styles. If you have some experience in a particular style and wish to take it further, you might want to inquire whether a particular instructor is more suitable than the others. If you are a beginner, I would advise you not to worry about style, but to accept basic instruction that will stand you in good stead for any style.

**Do I need my own guitar or will the School of Music provide one?**

You must provide your own guitar. If you would like to rent a guitar we suggest going to the Denver Folklore Center, 1893 South Pearl St, Denver CO 80210; 303-777-4786; denverfolklore.com.

**Is there a book I should get?**

Your instructor will advise you in the first lesson if you have to get any materials, or he/she may provide them.
What is expected of me in this course? How will I be graded?

Your instructor will provide a syllabus with detailed course requirements and grading policies. General policies such as attendance and grading rubric are set by the faculty.

In general, attendance is crucial and a large component of the grade. Although we do allow excused absences (family emergency, documented illness, religious exception), unexcused absences are heavily penalized from the first time onward. Students who are not good with attendance in general, or are unpunctual, or are likely to waver in their commitment to the lessons would do best to stay away from this course as they will not earn a good grade.

As far as the lessons are concerned, the instructors understand that different students will show very different rates of progress, so you will not be graded down if you make slow progress. Do understand, however, that at least 20 minutes of daily practice is expected between lessons. You may miss the occasional day and make up the time another day, but practicing for longer only at the weekends, say, is not acceptable. It is easy for an instructor to tell if a student has practiced regularly or not. You must practice to get a high grade.

The syllabus will go into more detail about grading and expectations but attendance and practice are the key elements.

Is there a final?

No. The only exception is if you take lessons for three quarters: at the end of the third quarter you will be asked to play a couple of pieces for your instructor and one or two of the guitar faculty. Your instructor might set a couple of tests in particular lessons.