SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Syllabus
2015
GENERAL INFORMATION

Rehearsal Times

Regular rehearsals are held on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, from 2.30 – 4.10pm in Room 44 in the Fine Arts Center. Musicians should arrive at least 10 minutes early to warm-up. Tuning for the start of rehearsal usually begins 1 minute before rehearsal at 2.29pm. Additional rehearsals are usually added immediately before an upcoming concert. Please check the full orchestra schedule for details regarding these additional sessions. Rehearsals are open to interested family and friends, at the discretion of the conductor. Kindly inform him or her if you are bringing a guest to observe a rehearsal.

Auditions

All players interested in playing with the orchestra should sign up for an audition during the audition period at the start of each academic term. For the Fall 2015, auditions will be held between Sept. 8 and 11.

Each audition typically lasts 5 to 10 minutes.

During the audition, players will be asked to:

i. (Strings only) present a piece of their choice, preferably one that contains contrasting sections, that allows them to demonstrate their full expressive and technical range

ii. perform some scales on their instruments (not strings)

iii. sight-read a few simple extracts, usually taken from the repertoire for the upcoming season

iv. present a set of prepared excerpts for their instruments. (only for Music Majors and Minors). For all players, these excerpts are available directly from the orchestra website.

In addition, there will be a short interview (1 min) where players share with the Director of Orchestra his or her aspirations regarding orchestra, their orchestral background, and any intention to take on any leadership roles.

Registering for Orchestra at the other Five Colleges

Students from Amherst College, Hampshire College, Mount Holyoke College and Smith College who would like to join the UMass orchestras should sign up for an audition time, and print the Five College Instructor Permission Form. After it has been signed by the instructor, bring it to your respective registrar’s office to have the course added to your course load.
Rehearsal Space

The Symphony Orchestra’s main rehearsal venue is at Room 44 in the basement of Fine Arts Center, while the All-University Orchestra’s main rehearsal space is Room 36, also in the basement of the Fine Arts Center. The Symphony Orchestra performs primarily in the Fine Arts Center Concert Hall, while the All-University Orchestra performs primarily in Grace Episcopal Church in downtown Amherst. If and when sectionals are organized, different rooms will be assigned to each section, woodwinds, brass, 1st violin, 2nd violin, viola, cello, double bass and percussion. Please look out for the room assignment which will be posted via email and on the Orchestra Noticeboard.

Both rooms are open fifteen minutes prior to rehearsal for warm-up. Only water is allowed in these rehearsal spaces in deference to the many users of each of the spaces.

Kindly refrain from putting anything on top of pianos. Spilled-drinks often ruin perfectly fine instruments, and cases and bags often cause preventable scratches on the surfaces of the pianos.

In the event of an emergency, an evacuation alarm and/or an announcement will be made over the PA system. All students should immediately depart via the nearest exit. The exit routes are as follows: straight through the audience seats to through the front doors to Lower Lake Road.

Orchestra Library

The orchestra aims to have music and practice parts ready at least ten days prior to the first rehearsal. Folders and practice parts may be signed out from the Orchestra Librarian 15 minutes before any scheduled rehearsal. Winds, Brass, Percussion, Harp and Keyboard players may sign out her or his own folder. For String players, the outside stand players may sign out folders, while inside stand players can sign out a set a practice parts.

Once signed out, the folder and all its contents are entirely the player’s responsibility. After each rehearsal, a librarian will collect any folders left on stands and distribute them 30 minutes prior to the next rehearsal. While the folders should be safe, they and their contents remain the responsibility of the player using them.

In the event that the folder or any piece of music is lost, you will be charged by the Orchestra Library for the cost of replacing the part.

If you are absent and have arranged for another player to cover for you, you must ensure that your folder and the music it contains are present at rehearsal. Do not assume that the Performance Library holds extra copies of your part.
Only use pencil, preferably 2B or lighter to mark parts. Do not scribble, mark with pen or colored pencil, tape, glue, staple or cut up parts. Practice parts may be unbound but must be turned in after use.

At the end of a concert, return your music to the boxes outside the Orchestra Director’s Office. Please return the music as soon as is possible. This permits the librarians to take stock and arrange for all music to be returned to the Orchestra library, or where appropriate, the various music rental companies. Practice parts should also be left on the seat or returned as soon as possible to the Music Department Office after the concert in order not to incur a fine.

Your part is considered late if it is not returned more than a week after each performance. At this point, fees will begin to accrue.

Seating

The following criteria are used to determine seating with the orchestra throughout the semester:

1. Student’s audition score
2. Faculty’s ranking of the repertoire and specific parts programmed that semester
3. The number of orchestral students in the student’s instrument group
4. The number of available parts for that instrument group
5. The level of performance experience of the student

Seating assignments and rehearsal information are posted on the Orchestra Noticeboard outside the Orchestra Director’s Office in the Music Department. Please check your seating assignment. Any change of seating is at the discretion of the conductor of the conductor.

String principals are assigned at the beginning of each concert cycle. Principal players may be asked to lead sectionals as necessary throughout the semester.

Instrument Storage

All lockers are property of the University of Massachusetts Amherst, Department of Music and Dance, and are loaned to individual students on a per-semester basis. While all students are eligible to apply, priority for locker assignment is given to those students who have auditioned, been accepted, and are actively pursuing a major or minor in Music in this Department. Please note that the contents of all lockers are to be removed within ten days of Commencement or within ten days of leaving the campus for any reason: i.e. earlier graduation, academic suspension, student teaching assignment, etc.. The University and Music Department assume no responsibility for theft and/or damage to any instruments or other personal property while they are stored or maintained in/on University property. Lastly, students must accept responsibility and pay for any damage to their assigned locker which may occur while the locker is assigned in their name.
To apply for a locker, please complete and sign the Locker Request Form available online here at [http://www.umass.edu/music/currentstudents/current_forms-lockerrequest.pdf](http://www.umass.edu/music/currentstudents/current_forms-lockerrequest.pdf), and return it to the Music Department Office at Music Department Office Room 273 FAC.

**Access to Practice Rooms**

Practice Rooms are located throughout the Fine Arts Center and are available on a first come first served basis. If you have need for a larger room for the purposes of extra sectionals for orchestra music, please get in contact with the orchestra teaching assistant.

**UMASS AMHERST STYLE**

**Rehearsal Protocol**

As a mark of respect to each other, all musicians should be in their seats and ready to tune five minutes before the beginning of each rehearsal, or rehearsal segment. Your grade will be impacted if you arrive after the five minute call time. Prepare to remain seated for a long period of time (i.e. avoid leaving the rehearsal; use the restroom before rehearsal or at the break)

**Breaks:**
- 1 hour 40 min rehearsal – no break
- 3 hour rehearsal – 15 minutes

Each musician is responsible for keeping track of the break time. Return promptly and be ready to play immediately at the end of each break. Find the location of the clock and note the possible time difference between that and your personal timepiece.

Please bring what is required for the rehearsal (instrument, auxiliary instruments, rehearsal pencil, music scores, mutes, tuner, rosin, swabs, valve oil etc) If you need to borrow any auxiliary instruments you do not already possess, please approach the orchestra teaching assistant for help.

Be responsible for learning and knowing your part for the first rehearsal. If needed, bring your music to your teacher for guidance. Take the time to learn about the music and composer you are playing. It helps us all to be better musicians.

While we support engaging deeply with the music, respect the conductor’s decisions and leadership and listen to what he or she has to say. Always address questions through your section leader. It is their job to ask the conductor. If your question can wait, please hold it until the break. Our conductor welcomes discussion on these musical decisions, but not when the whole orchestra is in rehearsal as it compromises the efficiency of the rehearsal process.

To be a strong orchestra community, be kind to and supportive of everyone.
**Concert Protocol**

In order to present our performances in the most professional way, the orchestra will utilize the following procedures:

All personnel are expected to be at the concert hall at the start of all concerts, regardless of program order.

The call for arrival before every performance is 30 minutes. You must check in with the Orchestra Teaching Assistant; if you do not, you will be marked late and your grade will be affected.

The stage lights will be set at its full concert level when the house opens to the public. You should be in your seat five minutes in advance of the advertised concert time.

If your chair or stand needs to be replaced, or you need a stand light, you must inform the Fine Arts Center’s Stage Crew no later than five minutes before the start of the concert. Needs communicated later than that may not be addressed until intermission.

When the performance is ready to begin, the house (audience) lights will be lowered. The orchestra should become quiet at this point. After a ‘go’ from the Stage Managers, the Concertmaster enters the stage. After tuning, the conductor sits down and the house lights go down to concert level.

When the Concertmaster enters and tunes the orchestra, s/he will generally ask for four A’s from the Principal Oboe. The first A is for the winds, the second for the brass, a third for the lower strings, and finally one for the remaining strings. When the orchestra tunes between pieces in one half of the concert, only two As are usually requested: one for the winds and brasses and one for all strings.

The orchestra tunes to A = 440hz.

In the event that there is a stage change requiring you to move from your seat, please go offstage completely and quickly. If you are not required to move (i.e., remain onstage), refrain from talking during the stage change.

In order to fully acknowledge the audience’s appreciation of the orchestra at the end of a work, please turn to face the audience and smile when you stand up. Downstage players (first violins and celli) may find it most practical to turn towards the audience.

Talking, putting away music or equipment, or entering or leaving the stage during applause is often regarded as a sign of disrespect to our audiences and is therefore strongly discouraged.
Concert Dress Code

The orchestra maintains a professional dress code for all public performances. The following dress code is in effect on stage and in the public areas of the concert hall, from 30 minutes prior to the performance through the end of the performance. Any deviations from the dress code will be announced and posted in advance of the performance.

Women
- Long sleeve black blouse or formal top
- Mid-calf or long black skirt or dress pants
- Mid-calf or long black dress
- Black socks or stockings/nylons
- Black closed-toed shoes

Men
- Well-pressed Black Tuxedo
- Clean long sleeve white shirt
- Black bow tie
- Solid black socks
- Polished black shoes

It is the individual player’s responsibility to obtain the proper concert attire. Please see the board if you need advice on procuring the dress code stated above.

Course Attendance Policy

Musicians are expected to attend and be punctual for all assigned sessions and contribute fully to the rehearsal. As a mark of respect to our fellow musicians, we are expected to learn and play the assigned music to the best of our ability.

It is mandatory to be in your seats five minutes before each session. You must be prepared to perform, listen to announcements, follow instructions of the conductor and tune. If the player is not in his or her seat five minutes before the rehearsal time, he or she will be marked late.

Do take responsibility for getting yourself to a rehearsal or concert on time. You are part of a community which requires every member to be present in order to achieve the best it is capable of. Showing up, being on time (or early) shows respect to yourself, your colleagues and the conductor.

If you know you are about to be late, call the Orchestra Teaching Assistant to inform him/her that you are on your way and your estimated time of arrival. Look for the Orchestra Teaching Assistant during the break or after rehearsal to explain why you were late, so the he/she can take note of that in the orchestra records. As a matter of courtesy, please approach the conductor and let him or her know why you were late too.

In the event of a schedule conflict, please contact the Orchestra Teaching Assistant and the Director of the Orchestra as soon as the conflict arises. Do not wait until the last minute to do this as this allows the Orchestra no time to react and help you resolve the conflict.

In the event of illness or emergency, contact the Orchestra Teaching Assistant and Director as soon as you are able to do so, to inform them about what has occurred.
In the event that a musician misses the dress rehearsal, the conductor reserves the right to bar him/her from playing in the concert, thereby causing the musician to fail the course.

Grading

Fall Semester: A - F

Factors that weigh in on the final grade awarded to the student include:

i. attendance
ii. music preparation (please remember that practicing your part is the musical equivalent of weekly assignments for all courses)
iii. contribution in orchestra

Students may be asked to leave Orchestra for the year, with a grade of Fail, at the discretion of the director, for any of the following reasons:

i. more than one unexcused absence from rehearsals
ii. any unexcused absence from a performance
iii. more than four excused absences in a two week period
iv. failing more than one part-check in a semester
v. missing the dress rehearsal

HELP FROM FACULTY

The orchestra is very fortunate to have the good will and assistance of the Music Faculty at the Department of Music & Dance. Should one encounter technical difficulties on your own individual instrument during the course of the year, one should approach a member of the faculty who will try to help you to succeed in your musical endeavour.

Please see this link for a list of faculty in performance studies.
http://www.umass.edu/music/faculty_discipline.php
CONTACT INFORMATION

University of Massachusetts Amherst Orchestras

A: University of Massachusetts Amherst
   Fine Arts Center East- 273
   151 Presidents Dr., Ofc. 1
   Amherst, MA 01003-9330

W: http://www.umass.edu/music/ensembles_orchestral.php

FB: BKB deleted our FB page, Christina has helped create a much smaller one, but I’ve written to FB to see if it can be reinstated.

Music Director

W: http://www.ngtianhui.com
E: tng@umass.edu
M: (203) 706-9349