

## **Delivery of Ensemble Instruction**

The ensemble directors considered three possible scenarios under which ensemble instruction would occur: a) no instructional impact from the coronavirus and, therefore, normal operating procedures; b) hybrid instruction including elements of social distancing combined with online instruction; and c) social distancing in some iteration required for entirety of the Fall 2020 semester. The ensemble directors agreed given the current uncertainty of adequate testing, ventilation, sanitizing protocols, and rehearsal space limitation that the safety of our students, faculty, and staff during rehearsals could not be guaranteed. Therefore, we propose the following options for delivery of conducted ensemble courses in Fall 2020, knowing that our circumstances are fluid and instruction may need to be adapted throughout the semester. We request administrative input on the appropriate course(s) of action.

### Option 1

Operate face-to-face, in normal conducted ensemble configurations

*Pros:* sense of community for students, musical experience, system in place, performances could be streamed or recorded and posted

*Cons:* greatest circumstances for spreading the virus, largest concentration of students in one space (likely not allowable with social distancing requirements), sanitization of rehearsal spaces between classes impossible (no time), no system for testing of students prior to rehearsals, no performances with audiences

### Option 2

Operate face-to-face, in mixed chamber ensembles of  $\leq 10$  students. See the addendum at the end of this document for information regarding implementation for the bands and orchestras.

*Pros:* individualized musical experiences for students, continuity of playing and singing together, maintains some level of community experience, performances could be streamed or recorded and posted

*Cons:* logistically impractical with possibly insurmountable issues including high workload demands on faculty to manage multiple smaller ensembles within the conducted ensemble paradigm, constant access to multiple rehearsal spaces with pianos and increased GA assignment to conduct/coach and accompany, limitations of student population (varied ability levels, instrumentation and voicing, dividing large numbers of students into many groups, some students required to play in multiple ensembles, etc.), faculty exposure to virus could be equal to Option 1 unless online coaching is implemented

### Option 3

Operate in blended fashion, with students rotating between mixed chamber ensembles and online experiences

*Pros:* most flexible option, allows faculty to be responsive to student needs and other circumstances, ensemble auditions could be delayed until mid-fall (after which activities could become more specific in preparation for spring), maintains some level of playing and singing through the course of the semester, allows all students to be continuously involved in some fashion, smaller rotation of students through rehearsal spaces (potentially lower viral spreading), performances could be streamed or recorded and posted

*Cons:* highest demand on faculty to manage two concurrent curricula (in-person and online) through the semester, still would require multiple rehearsal spaces simultaneously, unequal experience - some students would be needed to play much more (oboes/bassoons) while others might play on one piece the entire semester (clarinets, violins, basses)

#### Option 4

Begin the semester online, with flexibility to transition to some face-to-face delivery

*Pros:* potentially balances both student experience and health concerns if circumstances improve, flexibility of approach could be adjusted as needed

*Cons:* uncertainty makes it difficult to plan

#### Option 5

Operate entirely online, in modules: musicianship, collaboration, and repertoire knowledge. See the addendum at the end of this document for information regarding online implementation.

*Pros:* places health and safety of students and faculty as highest consideration, student development could be tailored individually, ensemble auditions not needed until mid-fall (after which activities could become more specific in preparation for spring), potential for student-led discovery of virtual creative outlets, potential for holistic and/or philosophical experiences and discussions which are not typically addressed in face-to-face instruction due to time demands of preparing performances.

*Cons:* significant and possibly insurmountable issues including technological challenges for students and faculty, access and equity issues for students who do not have appropriate technology and internet access, less sense of community through virtual connection only, discouraging to students with possible impact on recruiting and retention, limitations of technology for virtual gatherings, limitations on performances (learning curve/time intensive nature of pre-recorded virtual performances), online content fatigue, less-than-conducive learning environments

## Questions to be Answered Prior to Decisions/ Announcements

### Building Policy Questions

- What will the health and safety protocol be for anyone entering the building?
- How will the number of people entering the building be monitored and restricted?
- Will masks be required when feasible? Gloves?
- How will stairways and elevators be restricted/utilized to ensure safe social distancing?
- How will social distancing be implemented/enforced in hallways during passing time between classes?
- What cleaning protocols will be in place for door handles around the building? How frequently?
- What is the responsibility of the faculty when any student breaks any of the above protocols?
- How will restrooms and water sources (faucets, fountains, etc.) be maintained to insure health and safety?
- What will the protocol for safe usage of practice rooms and locker rooms be?
- How will the necessary time requirements for safety protocols be managed? Will the time be taken from current in-class time, or will schedules be adjusted to accommodate these procedures?

### Rehearsal Environment Questions

- How will social distancing be monitored in and out of any rehearsal space? By whom?
- How will cleaning of chairs and stands be accomplished? How often and by whom?
- When will floors be cleaned following rehearsals and who will clean them, particularly in areas where brass players sit?
- How will music be sanitized before and after use, and by whom?
- Will there be a plexiglass shield (as in the grocery store) between the podium and the ensemble, to prevent droplets from the conductor reaching the players (or vice-versa)?
- Are there funds to purchase folding music stands for students to use individually?
- How will school-owned instruments that are sometimes shared between students be managed? (Contrabassoon, contrabass/alto clarinet, bari sax, English horn, etc.) Purchase new instruments, sanitize, restrict use to individual students, etc.?