

McMaster University Percussion Ensemble Policies

Sheet Music: Printed music (or copies of printed music) will be issued to each student for every piece in which they are performing. Students are responsible for returning music in the condition in which it was issued. Parts should never be folded, shoved into a backpack, stuck into a textbook, hole punched, etc. Purchase a folder for transporting/protecting your sheet music. Financial costs of replacing lost/damaged music are the full responsibility of the student.

Rehearsals: The McMaster Percussion Ensemble rehearses for a three-hour block Tuesday evenings (5:45-8:45). Given that many other university ensembles rehearse 5 + hours each week, it is extremely important we be efficient with our time. The rehearsal begins at 5:45, so you need be setup and ready to go with your music on your stand, mallets in hand, etc. at that time. If you are scheduled to begin rehearsing at 6:45 then please arrive sufficiently early to have your instruments, sticks/mallets, music, etc. set up and ready to start playing at that time (I have reserved the room prior to our rehearsal for setup). If you do not rehearse until the second piece, leave sufficient time so as to be set up and ready to go at the time scheduled for the second piece. I will make every possible effort to set the rehearsal schedule so as to allow people to leave early/start late if they don't play in every piece. However, if you are participating in the ensemble you should be available during the duration of the time so that I can plan accordingly.

To allow maximum playing opportunities, the group will often be “split” into smaller ensembles rehearsing in parallel. This allows students more playing opportunities, but also requires a higher level of discipline and maturity to “self rehearse.” Students are expected to use this time for musical improvement and group rehearsal – failure to do so will be reflected in students’ final marks.

At the discretion of the director, additional rehearsals may be scheduled as needed to prepare for upcoming concerts. Failure to arrive on time for the dress rehearsal will be reflected in the “attendance and punctuality” component of the grading system. Failure to arrive on time for concerts jeopardizes the work done by other students in the ensemble, and will not be tolerated.

Attendance and Punctuality: By enrolling in the course you are making a commitment to be ready to play in all rehearsals on Tuesday evenings and the dress rehearsals on the Monday evenings detailed in the “Concerts” section below. As an official university academic course, your other professors should not require you to write exams during this time, and you are expected to be able to attend each and every week.

Please be respectful of your peers and your professors. While attendance and punctuality are important to any successful class, it is *essential* to performing ensembles. We cannot rehearse effectively without the entire ensemble, so by missing, arriving late, or coming unprepared to a rehearsal you are hurting not only yourselves but also your peers. Chronic issues of attendance and tardiness will not be tolerated, and will be reflected in final grades or dismissal from the group under extreme circumstances.

Equipment: Musical instruments are expensive, and we are fortunate that the university is able to provide a great deal of percussion equipment. Much of this is old and fragile,

and needs to be treated with a great deal of care. Be careful when moving instruments to lift the wheels over doorstops, avoid unnecessary “twisting” and pressure on marimba frames, refrain from bumping into doors and walls, etc.

All students must own a minimum of 2 black hand towels for use in the ensemble. These should not be towels used for other purposes (e.g. washing dirty hands). Towels can be purchase from local stores at a nominal cost.

Concert Dress: The percussion ensemble performs in concert black – an affordable and comfortable alternative to wearing tuxedos. All members of the ensemble should acquire a black shirt/blouse, dress pants (no jeans!) and shoes. Suitable clothing can be obtained from a variety of local retailers.

Concerts: Our concert dates are detailed below. Obviously, attendance at all concerts and dress rehearsals is mandatory. Parents and friends are warmly invited to attend and see the progress of the ensemble.

Preparation: Adequate preparation of individual parts is essential to the success of the ensemble. Weekly rehearsals are a time for the ensemble to rehearse as an ensemble, not for individuals to rehearse individual parts. Therefore it is expected members of this ensemble will put in sufficient practice time so as to arrive prepared for weekly rehearsals. Rehearsal measures and guidance tempos will be provided on a weekly basis to help clarify expectations.

Grading: Grades are based on a combination of attendance of all rehearsals and dress rehearsals, weekly preparation of the assigned material, a performance examination (submitted via audio recording), teamwork and willingness to assist your peers with equipment setup, etc., proper care and maintenance of university equipment (including sheet music), and general improvement throughout the course of the year. All students in the ensemble will receive access to the percussion studio in Wilson Hall, and are expected to use this studio as needed for practice and preparation. The grading breakdown for the ensemble is as follows:

- 35% Attendance and punctuality
- 15% Weekly preparation
- 20% Performance examination (via audio recording)
- 10% Teamwork
- 10% Proper care/maintenance of equipment and music
- 10% Musical growth throughout the year

Key dates:

Dec 3rd (Evening – exact time TBD). Dress rehearsal

Dec 4th (7pm). Fall concert

Jan 13 Possible trip to Day of Percussion (Toronto, ON). Details to follow

April 1st (Evening – exact time TBD). Dress rehearsal

April 2rd (7pm). Winter/Spring concert