The Michigan State University Orchestras
Kevin Noe, Music Director-Conductor
College of Music – Michigan State University – East Lansing, Michigan

Syllabus

PLACEMENT
An audition is required for placement into one of the orchestras at MSU. There are currently two full time orchestras in which students in the school of music may be placed: The Symphony Orchestra, and the Concert Orchestra. The two orchestras meet at different times and in different locations.

Music majors must take the Symphony orchestra audition unless previously cleared with Prof. Noe, and will then be placed in either the Symphony Orchestra or the Concert orchestra as a result of the audition. Preparation for these auditions is key if you would like to be placed in the Symphony. The Symphony Orchestra is a highly competitive group, and only advanced musicians who are prepared to commit practice time, energy, and focus to the group will be admitted.

REHEARSALS
The SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA generally rehearses Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 3:00 - 4:50 p.m., Room 120 Music Building. There are a few exceptions during the year including extra rehearsals for Opera performances during tech week, and one or two rehearsals for events involving choral artists such as “Home for the Holidays” and the final concert of each season. Dress rehearsals are often extended in length and all events are listed on the Symphony orchestra master online calendar.

The CONCERT ORCHESTRA currently meets on Wednesday nights from 7 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. in Demonstration hall. There are a few isolated exceptions during the year including an dress rehearsals in the late afternoon or evening on the of performances and those will be listed on the Concert Orchestra master calendar.

The OPERA ORCHESTRA, (assigned from members of the Symphony orchestra) when in session for two cycles per year, rehearses Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 3:00 - 4:50 p.m., in a combination of locations including Demonstration Hall, Hart, and Fairchild Theatre. The tech week rehearsals leading up to the performances, are evening rehearsals generally from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m.

SCHEDULING
Please check your rehearsal and concert schedule for all dates, times, and locations. Generally, these will be posted on the orchestra website and will be maintained regularly. It is your responsibility to stay up to date with all scheduled events through the website at:

http://orch.music.msu.edu

It is the responsibility of the student to know which works are being rehearsed, and to be present with the necessary instruments and music, on time.

HEARINGS
If you appear to be unprepared for rehearsal, or appear to be in heed of additional help, the conductor may ask you for a private hearing. The conductors reserve the right to schedule hearing times for all orchestra members each semester, or ask individual stands to play a given passage during rehearsals at any point during the semester.
CONCERTS

All orchestra members are to arrive no later than 15 minutes before all dress rehearsals and 30 minutes before concerts unless otherwise specified. No student will be excused from a scheduled dress rehearsal and/or concert. All College of Music and University dates take precedence over activities as is University wide policy.

GIGS

Generally, one regular rehearsal absence for a gig each semester will be approved by the music director. Gig absences will not be approved during the week of the performance when we are rehearsing in Wharton.

AUDITIONS AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Additional absences will be approved in advanced by the Music Director for significant opportunities outside the College of Music. An audition for an important group, an educational conference, a significant family event, all of these things can be approved on occasion by the music director, with plenty of advance notice. Any of these events should be approved before the beginning of the semester even takes place. Please contact Prof. Noe directly to ask about you particular request, and he will do everything he can to work it out with you in a timely manner. If you ask for an absence only a few days before the event takes place, it may not be possible to be excused at that time.

CONCERT DRESS

Women - black full-length dress or black blouse (sleeves full or 3/4-cut) and black long skirt or dress pants; black hose, and black dress shoes. No perfume, no jewelry. This is your responsibility.

Men – (Symphony Orchestra) - Concert Attire: black tuxedo, black tie, white shirt, black socks and shoes.

Men - (Concert Orchestra) All black.

Men - (Opera Orchestra) All black, tux, or a costume chosen by the opera director.

Formal attire is available for purchase at MW Tux, located in the Meridian Mall, Okemos. If you are in need of formal attire, please be sure to be fitted and place your order immediately at the beginning of the term.

Please be sure that your concert attire is cleaned and pressed.

ATTENDANCE

The orchestra manager is responsible for taking attendance and seeing that attendance policies are followed.

Punctual attendance at all rehearsals and performances is required. All "Request for Excused Absence" forms for orchestra members should be obtained from the orchestra manager and submitted to Professor Noe at least one week in advance of the absence, except in the case of illness.

Students should call the orchestra office (355-7670), and speak with Professor Noe to report an absence (or for dress rehearsals in Wharton Center, backstage telephone 355-1907). Roll will be taken seven (7) minutes before all rehearsals and dress rehearsals begin. String players should not move up to fill vacant seats until the manager has completed taking roll. Woodwind, brass and percussion players must provide their own substitutes when ill or excused. It is your responsibility to provide the substitute musician with the music for the rehearsal well in advance, is prepared to play the part, and knows all the tempos.
SPECIAL NOTE: Attendance at all Musique 21 performances (currently 2 per semester, is strongly encouraged. Performances are generally one hour in length, so the total time commitment is roughly 2 hours per semester. In an effort to offset an additional load this places on already demanding schedules, musicians who attend both Musique 21 performances in a given semester are allowed to be absent from a normal Symphony Orchestra rehearsal once per semester for any personal reason for choosing (not during the week of the performance). Simply email Professor Noe at least one week ahead of time and explain that you need to take a day off from orchestra for personal reasons, and that you have been or will be in attendance for both Musique 21 performances. The absence will automatically be excused. Wind, brass, and percussion musicians must still have a substitute for these absences, and absences will not be granted for rehearsals in the Wharton Center, during the week of the show, or the final dress rehearsal or performance itself.

**TARDINESS**

Persons not seated and ready to tune by seven (5) minutes before starting time will be marked tardy. Being late has a definite effect on your grade. Late arrival of more than fifteen (15) minutes will be considered an absence. (If circumstances prevent you from honoring this policy fully, please let the orchestra manager know your problem.) If an unexpected tardy or absence occurs, it is your responsibility to see the orchestra manager, or otherwise your tardiness or absence will be considered unexcused.

**PROCEDURE FOR OBTAINING AN EXCUSED ABSENCE OR TARDINESS:** You must email Professor Noe and copy the orchestra manager a minimum of one week ahead of time to request and absence or lateness. Only the conductor can approve an excuse or an absence, and the likelihood of approval goes up considerably the earlier the request is made. If at all possible, please try to request absences occurring on a given concert cycle during the cycle previous.

**GRADING**

The final grade is a combination of several factors: preparation, contribution, concentration, and attendance. Each unexcused absence from a rehearsal will lower your grade by one letter. Two tardies are considered equal to one unexcused absence. Missing a dress rehearsal will exclude the musician from being able to participate in the concert, and a missed concert will result in a failing grade for orchestra. Therefore, missing a dress rehearsal constitutes a failing grade. It is expected that students arrive at rehearsals well prepared. Those obviously not prepared should not expect nor will receive the optimum grade and will be asked to play for Professor Noe privately in order to catch up. If you are concerned about how you are being evaluated, please schedule an appointment with Professor Noe and he will be happy to go over this with you at any point during the semester.

**MUSIC**

All Orchestra members must pick up their assigned music prior to the first rehearsal following a performance, at the Orchestra Library.

All music must be returned at the conclusion of each concert. You will be assessed the full amount, plus postage & handling fee for each piece of music that is damaged or lost from your folder. Rental music parts could be as high as $100.00 a part. Should the folder itself be lost or damaged, you will be assessed a $15.00 fee. If not paid for, a "hold credit" will be placed on your student account. Orchestral music is available only after the personnel list for the orchestra is posted.

**EQUIPMENT**

Percussionists and harpists must arrive early enough to set up their instruments to avoid unnecessary delays. At the conclusion of all rehearsals and concerts, all percussion instruments and harps must be covered and placed in their proper cabinets or space, both in the rehearsal hall and at Wharton Center.
NOTES AND

CONCENTRATION

All important notices will be posted on the website, and may supplementally be emailed or posted.

There is a zero tolerance policy on the use of cell phones during any rehearsal, at any time, for any reason. Please turn off your cell phone before you arrive to rehearsal. Likewise, newspapers and other reading materials may not be used during rehearsals. Some of the most important learning that can take place during these rehearsals is concentrating when you are not playing. During pauses, please consider bringing a score to the work being rehearsed in there. There is a wealth of information, joy, and learning to be found in its pages :)

Should you desire to discuss any musical matter, problem or conflict, please email Professor Noe at noekevin@msu.edu to make an appointment. All requests for appointments will be honored as soon as possible at a mutually convenient time.