Honors Ensembles

**Purpose** - the primary goal of this class is to provide musical students direct exposure to skills, which are critical for authentic musical achievement. Students will practice and engage in effective performance techniques, creative songwriting techniques, creative improvisation techniques, music theory necessary to their instrument or instruments, and the personal skills necessary for successful collaborative work. Where applicable, students will practice and engage in instrument playing, literacy through the study of music creation, music theory, music performance, music history, music appreciation, music technology, music improvisation, and other cross-curricular materials (i.e.-lyric writing.) Students will be encouraged to be multi-instrumental and be challenged by rigorous, but attainable goals set by both the teacher and student. Students will be assessed through research-based projects, multiple in-class performances and/or recordings, student to student and student to teacher conferences, peer collaboration, and at least one public performance or recording per year. An average of a 75, and/or approval of the instructor must be obtained to be able to retake the course.

**Structure** - All of the units in this course are thematic, meaning they are on going, intertwined, and occur throughout the course. In most cases, these units will occur simultaneously and are designed to demonstrate the importance of these connections. In most cases, musical topics and skills will be covered through small ensembles and individualized goal work.

**Unit 1 - Ensemble Performance**
Students will be separated into groups chosen by themselves or the teacher. Different combinations of groups will occur throughout this course. Students are forced to collaborate and use internet based research to solve the problems of learning their part within a group. The students use each other as resources and are to only consult the teacher for clarification of instructions, grading and direction. Individual success is determined by the success of the group. Each ensemble thematic unit will result in a live performance in front of their peers, the teacher and in some cases in front of a general audience. Peers and the teacher will always offer critiques of performance utilizing a standardized rubric and/or academic language. In most instances, ensembles are required to provide written reflections based on peer and teacher review and their performance and practice leading up to performance. Students also practice creativity as they often adapt to and/or change parts of songs to meet their difficulty level.

*Examples: small ensembles, peer collaboration, Q & A between teacher and group, student driven topics, music history and technique research, student accountability through team performance*

**Unit 2 - Individualized Goal Work**
Students will be placed into areas where they are able to practice an individualized performance goal. During this time, the student is able to practice and ask the teacher or other students for guidance and direction and use technology to research by using on-line tools to help attain the goal. Each goal is tailored to the student’s current level of proficiency and vetted by the teacher to insure a high degree of challenge for growth. Goal topics also vary; examples are instrument technique, performance of a solo song, music theory and ear training, research project, etc.

*Examples: student practice stations, student and teacher collaboration, teacher demonstration, YouTube usage, internet research, student to student collaboration*

**Unit 3 - Music Appreciation**
Students will complete a variety of assignments and/or research projects focusing on musical works and the artists who created the musical works. Topics are chosen based on the student’s individualized goals. For example, a student studying the bass guitar might study the techniques of a certain bass guitar player that is challenging and inspirational for their level of learning. Through the process of music appreciation students will be motivated to further explore their instrument and genres of music that have inspired highly technical players in order to further their own personal development. Students will also listen to, analyze, and discuss a variety of musical works from the past and present. Students will present their opinions with the teacher and others during reflective assignments and/or in a class discussion setting.

*Examples: “in-class” listening, analysis & discussion, reflecting assignments, style analysis, connecting past music to present life, project presentation, performance reflections*

**Unit 4 - Music Creation**
The epitome of education is the ability for students to create. Generally, creation requires students to have a great base knowledge of a multitude of techniques, theory, collaborative models and connective experience to produce a quality creation. This unit will more likely occur during the second half of the course as each student and/or group gathers the necessary tools during the other units to reach the ultimate goal of creation. Music creation can occur collaboratively or individually, with the sole purpose of performing the final creation in front of the class, teacher, and in some cases a large audience. Performing a creation in front of critics ultimately requires a high level of self-confidence and trust of peers. Creation in this course can be a written musical piece or a level of improvisation on one’s instrument. Creativity also often occurs during the ensemble unit, as students often change and manipulate their chosen song to fit the comfortability level within their group and with their instruments.
### Honors Ensembles

**Grade:** 9-12

**Unit 1: Ensemble Performance**

*Time frame: ongoing, changes each marking period*

### National Core Arts

https://www.nationalartsstandards.org/

- Performance: Anchor Standard #4. Select, analyze and interpret artistic work for presentation.
- Performance: Anchor Standard #5. Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.
- Performance: Anchor Standard #6. Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work

### Enduring Understanding

- Understand how to solve problems within a group
- Understand how to recognize levels of self-confidence, weaknesses, and growth awareness
- Understand how to develop the ability to communicate, think critically, and access information with others
- Understand why it is important to adapt to change within a group
- Understand how to adjust technique and behavior within a group to accomplish a task

### Essential Questions

- How will I learn this piece of musical work or expression, within a group?
- How can I succeed within a group and develop confidence to perform with or in front of others?
- What are my weaknesses within a group, and how can I improve them and adjust?
- What tools worked for me within a group and what tools did not work within the group?
- How did I differ from my teammates in regards to the difficulty of the task?

### Priority Standards

1. Students will think critically
2. Students will communicate effectively and creatively
3. Students will access, evaluate, and use information for a variety of tasks and purposes

### Performance Expectations (Student outcomes)

Students will learn how to:

- Research musical technique, theory, and performance ideas within a musical group.
- Adjust their own parts and difficulty levels to succeed in a musical group.
- Develop self-confidence by solving problems with a musical group.
- Differentiate between their own talents and the talents of others
- The type of role they play in different musical groups
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies/Modes (examples)</th>
<th>Materials/Resources (examples)</th>
<th>Assessments (examples)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Differentiation</strong> - each group is allowed to choose their own songs to adequately meet the groups difficulty needs</td>
<td>Musical Instruments, appropriate spacing for group work and privacy, Technology for research (phone or computer), light and portable chairs and music stands, teacher created supplemental materials where necessary</td>
<td><strong>Formative Assessments</strong> - occur daily through teacher direct observation, listening and feedback necessary to encourage student growth. <strong>Example</strong> - teacher Q&amp;A while walking from group to group, teacher modeling, peer evaluation. Group participation rubric to encourage students to remain on task.</td>
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<td><strong>Q &amp; A</strong> - students ask for clarification, or teacher reteaches as necessary, teacher provides immediate feedback</td>
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<td><strong>Summative Assessments</strong> - a 5-tier performance rubric modified from accepted NAFME examples. Current rubric measures the musicality, rhythm, organization, technique, teamwork, and preparation for their final performance</td>
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# Unit 2: Individualized Goal Work

**Time frame:** on going, changes each marking period

## National Core Arts

https://www.nationalartsstandards.org/

Performance: Anchor Standard #5. Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.

Responding: Anchor Standard #7. Perceive and analyze artistic work.

Responding: Anchor Standard #9. Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.

## Enduring Understanding

- Understand that study and practice on a musical instrument will improve performance
- Understand that achieving or almost achieving a rigorous goal will improve self confidence
- Understand that failing a rigorous goal can still benefit growth, and help future preparation and planning
- Understand how to find appropriate on-line tutorials when learning how to accomplish a goal

## Essential Questions

- How does practicing my instrument improve my overall ability and performance?
- Why is choosing a rigorous goal important for helping me improve, and how do I feel if I accomplish it?
- Is it OK to not succeed at a goal, and why will that benefit me when choosing a future goal?
- What are the best tools to help me achieve my goal?

## Priority Standards (SHS Learning Expectations)

1. Students will think critically
2. Students will communicate effectively and creativity
3. Students will access, evaluate, and use information for a variety of tasks and purposes

## Performance Expectations (Student outcomes)

Students will learn how to:

- Accurately assess their own areas of difficulty while preparing for a goal
- Develop more confidence in themselves after achieving a goal
- Fail if necessary to improve future planning and execution of goals
- Develop internet awareness by finding appropriate web based applications to aid learning

## Strategies/Modes (examples)

- **Differentiation** - students choose their own goals to work on as long as the rigor level is acceptable to the teacher
- **Research** - students will use technology to find appropriate online learning tools to help them complete their goals.
- **Independent practice** - students will practice the necessary parts to help improve their technique, knowledge or learn their songs.
- **Q & A** - students ask for clarification, and/or teacher helps students decipher primary and secondary resources

## Materials/Resources (examples)

Musical Instruments, appropriate spacing for privacy, Technology for research (phone or computer), teacher created supplemental materials where necessary

## Assessments (examples)

- **Formative Assessments** - occur daily through teacher direct observation, listening and feedback necessary to encourage student growth. Example - teacher conferences with students to check current level of growth met to a given point. Participation rubrics are utilized to help keep a student on task
- **Summative assessment** - Students are assessed on a 5-tier grading rubric, which identifies strengths, weaknesses, work ethic, communication and accomplishment. Other examples can include a public performance or a digital portfolio.
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<th>Unit 3 : Music Appreciation</th>
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<td>Grade: 9-12</td>
<td>Time frame: (on-going)</td>
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**National Core Arts**
https://www.nationalartsstandards.org/

- Performance: Anchor Standard #4. Select, analyze and interpret artistic work for presentation.
- Responding: Anchor Standard #8. Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.
- Connecting Anchor Standard #11. Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural and historical context to deepen understanding.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enduring Understanding</th>
<th>Essential Questions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Understand that it's important to use examples of past works to further your own</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Understand that it's important to identify quality musical aspects to incorporate into your own creation</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Understand that it's important to identify quality musical aspects and to use musical vocabulary to defend quality</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Understand that it's important to respect musical quality even if it's not one's preference</td>
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<tr>
<th>Priority Standards (SHS Learning Expectations)</th>
<th>Performance Expectations (Student outcomes)</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Students will think critically</td>
<td>Students will learn how to:</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Students will communicate effectively and creatively</td>
<td>• Evaluate different levels of quality in musical selections to use in their own</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Students will access, evaluate, and use information for a variety of tasks and purposes</td>
<td>• Identify different styles of music to guide their musical growth</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Create appropriate discussion and argumentation to help modify opinions utilizing musical academic vocabulary</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Respect the importance of different styles, or genres, of music that might not be their favorite</td>
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<tr>
<td>Differentiation - in many cases, students choose their own artists to study</td>
<td>Listening device, a classroom setting to listen to music, appropriate seating to listen through stereo, pen, paper</td>
<td>Formative Assessments - Q&amp;A by teacher and students during listening exercises and musical presentations. Individual and group opinions shared in an open forum session in the classroom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening - students will listen to respected musical selections</td>
<td>Reflection - students will explain, analyze and share opinions about musical selections</td>
<td>Summative assessments - a presentation and communications 5-tier rubric to grade slideshows and communication skills. A reflective writing, or short answer piece during listening exercises designed to identify musical elements while listening, and sharing opinions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research - students will use YouTube or their phones to share music with the class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independent or collaborative practice - depending upon the assignment students will share a song individually or in a group</td>
<td>Q &amp; A - students ask for clarification and opinions, teacher provides guidance and opinions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentations - in groups, students present musical selections to class</td>
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<td></td>
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06.30.20
| Honors Ensembles  
Grade: 9-12 | **Unit 4 : Music Creation**  
*Time frame: on going usually second half of the course* |
|---|---|
| **National Core Arts**  
https://www.nationalartsstandards.org/ | Anchor Standard #1. Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.  
Anchor Standard #2. Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.  
Anchor Standard #3. Refine and complete artistic work. |
| **Enduring Understanding** | ● Understand that creation is the ultimate form of utilizing skills  
● Understand that creation is a form of self-expression  
● Understand that creation can come in many facets  
● Understand that collaboration can enhance creation |
| **Essential Questions** | ● What skills do I know and need to learn to improve creation?  
● How can I be creative and demonstrate my own unique style?  
● In what ways can I be creative, and what are my strengths and weaknesses?  
● How will collaborating with a partner or small group enhance and perhaps improve my creativity? |
| **Priority Standards**  
(SHS Learning Expectations) | 1. Students will think critically  
2. Students will communicate effectively and creatively  
3. Students will access, evaluate, and use information for a variety of tasks and purposes |
| **Performance Expectations**  
(Student outcomes) | Students will learn how to:  
● Use existing skills to develop something new  
● Understand and identify their own style while creating  
● Use different approaches and to identify strengths and weaknesses while being creative  
● Work collaboratively while creating a product. |
| **Strategies/Modes (examples)** | **Materials/Resources (examples)**  
Musical Instruments, appropriate spacing for group work and privacy, Technology for research (phone or computer), light and portable chairs and music stands, teacher created supplemental materials where necessary.  
**Assessments (examples)**  
*Formative Assessments* - occur daily through teacher direct observation, listening and feedback necessary to encourage student growth. *Example* - Q & A during group meetings. Teacher constantly walks from group to group to check and address errors.  
*Summative assessment* - a digital recording, in class performance or online post demonstrating the students creation |
| Differentiation  
- students choose collaborative partners to create music with  
Research  
- students will use technology to find appropriate online learning tools to help them complete their creation  
Q & A  
- students ask for guidance while creating  
Class Discussion  
- teacher provides mini lessons on music composition and theory  
Conferencing  
- teacher meets with groups to discuss progress |