

# Percussion Ensemble Syllabus

## Music 0009

**Dr. Glenn Schaft, Director**

**Office Hours:** Five hours per week are posted outside my studio. Use these for assistance with percussion ensemble music.

**Ensemble admittance:** Admittance is granted by either permission of the instructor or an audition. Percussion majors are automatically admitted. The Dana ensemble auditions at the beginning of the year are, in part, used to determine part assignments. Non-majors must audition.

**Rehearsal times:** Tuesday and Thursday 11:00-11:50 a.m. and Thursday 5:30-7:30 p.m. Rehearsals will occur in the band room and percussion studios A & B. Simultaneous rehearsals are typical.

**Part assignments:** are made considering the following.

1. Effective artistic programming requirements.
2. Individual student aptitude and experience - every effort is made to effectively match part assignments to a student's ability - challenging, yet attainable.
3. Demonstration of past preparation and achievement will be considered.
4. Every effort is made to balance, throughout the year, the amount of repertoire assigned each member.

**Ensemble objectives:**

1. Develop effective teamwork skills.
2. Development of fundamental performance skills and excellence in chamber music performance practice, including: Pre-rehearsal preparation, Positive attitude in all situations, Ensemble precision, Phrasing sensitivity, Tempo selection, Dynamics, Versatility and flexibility of instrumentation and musical interpretation, Reading and memorization, Performing with and without a conductor, Stage presence and concert etiquette.
3. Foster an understanding of diverse percussion ensemble literature through listening, individual practice, group rehearsals, and performances. Styles include: 20th century American and European compositions, West African, Brazilian, Afro-Cuban, and original compositions.
4. Experience improvisation, both as a group and individually.
5. Seniors and graduate students are expected to serve as conductors or musical directors on selected repertoire, including demonstration of effective leadership skills.

**Rehearsal preparation:** Every rehearsal is conducted as a professional experience. You are responsible for arriving at each rehearsal prepared. This includes: punctuality, learning your part before rehearsal, having the correct instruments, mallets, music, pencil, and contributing a positive attitude and a seriousness of purpose.

**Music:** You are responsible for the care of all music and the folder lent to you. Be sure that each piece of music and your folder has your name on it. You must buy any music you lose or damage. Bring the music to your lessons. Return all music and folders as requested.

**Final Exam:** We typically use the final exam period to listen to concert tapes, collect music, distribute new music, and to clean house.

**Instrument set-up and transport:** Everyone is expected to assist with rehearsal and concert equipment set-up and transport. No one is excused from a service until we have returned everything to its proper storage place. Meeting times, to load equipment, for gigs will be posted on my bulletin board.

**Grading policy:** The process of evaluating each individual's work in a musical ensemble is subjective.

A. I grade according to our expectation of appropriate level repertoire for your course level, your potential, and the realization of that potential. I expect a positive attitude, ability to establish clear and realistic goals, self motivation, consistency of effort, punctuality and reliability, attention to detail,

receptiveness to criticism, and the inevitable accomplishment that comes from nurturing these traits.

B. Letter grades range on a continuum:

Letter grade "A" = will include - constant positive attitude, mastery of part assignments through outside preparation, flawless (or nearly) attendance and punctuality, superior accomplishment of almost all rehearsal and semester goals, constant openness to criticism. A complete commitment to attaining your potential and a complete contribution to the ensemble. You love what you do and it shows.

Letter grade "B". Slightly less than letter grade "A" above.

Letter grade "C" = may include - combination of positive and negative attitudes, partial learning of part assignments through outside preparation, flawed attendance or punctuality, partial accomplishment of ensemble rehearsal and semester goals, partial openness to criticism. A partial commitment to attaining your potential and a partial contribution to the ensemble. Your love of what you do is, at times, questionable and it shows.

Letter grade "D". Slightly less than letter grade "C" above.

Letter grade "F" = may include - total disregard for any one of the above categories in letter "A", or a serious lack of attention to a combination of them. A minimal commitment to attaining your potential and contributing to the ensemble. You obviously do not love what you do and it shows.

**Attitude** - A professional attitude consists of arriving with a specific purpose in mind, quiet attention to rehearsal instructions, enthusiasm for the task at hand, having a pencil at every rehearsal, and demonstrating a courteous demeanor towards your colleagues. All the above demonstrate your discipline and value as an ensemble member.

**Outside preparation** - Master your individual parts through regular individual practice. Failure to adequately prepare music before a given rehearsal will result in a grade reduction for the given rehearsal.

- If you must be removed from a part assignment due to lack of outside preparation your grade will be reduced by a minimum of 20%.

- If a piece must be canceled from a performance due to a lack of individual preparation, that individual will receive an "F" in the course.

**Attendance policy** - All absences are determined to be either excused or unexcused. If at all humanly possible, you must notify your instructor before the event to be missed. You will then be notified if your absence will be deemed excused or unexcused. You will also be notified about what to do about your music and a substitute player.

When a student misses a rehearsal, two things happen. First, the student misses the experience unique to that particular period and cannot be recreated. Second, an absence reduces the learning potential of the other ensemble members and delays their progress.

1. **Excused absence.** Serious illness or family emergency is usually the only reason to grant an excused absence. Documentation may be requested by the instructor.

2. **Unexcused absence.** One unexcused absence will lower your grade by 10%. Two unexcused absences will result in a grade of "F" and dismissal from the ensemble. Missing a concert or dress rehearsal will result in a grade of "F".

3. **Punctuality.** You should be set-up and ready to play at the beginning of rehearsal. Three tardies equal an absence.

4. **Rehearsal observation.** All freshman will be required to attend all rehearsals until notified otherwise, in order to learn rehearsal protocol, techniques, and chamber music repertoire.

**Concert Dress:** Appropriate dress will be discussed preceding each gig. Generally, we wear dress quality garments - slacks, shoes, socks, and shirt with a collar. No tennis shoes, ball caps, jeans, tee shirts, athletic wear, or clothing with large logos.

**Concert Call Times:** Everyone should be available for the entire call period. All call times will be posted on the percussion studio calendar well in advance. Generally, our call for an 8:00 p.m. concert will be 5:00 p.m. - for set-up and sound check. The call for a 12:15 Butler Concert is generally 11:00 a.m and returning gear afterwards is usually completed by 1:30 p.m.