

DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

June 12, 2020

To: CSB SJU Music Students
From: CSB SJU Music Department Faculty
RE: Announcement of Block Schedule for Academic Year 2020/2021

Dear Music Students,

On June 8, the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University announced the plan to move to a [block schedule with hybrid learning for the 2020/2021 academic year](#). The music faculty understands that you may have questions about music courses within the block schedule, which we will address below. Please know the health and well-being of students, faculty, and staff are of primary and critical importance.

Music Courses on the Block Schedule

Music courses that include music theory, history, literature, and topics courses will be offered on the block schedule. Applied lessons, ensembles, and other 1-credit courses will run on a semester system scheduled at times that do not conflict with the block courses.

As a hypothetical example, a first-year music education student might take the following schedule in fall 2020:

- Block 1: Learning Foundations (4 credits)
- Block 2: Comprehensive Musicianship I (3 credits*)
 - *Skills I (1 credit) offered during the whole semester, like other 1-credit classes
- Block 3: Biology plus lab (4 credits)
- Block 4: Intro to Teaching in a Diverse World (4 credits)

Additionally, enroll in an ensemble(s) for zero or 1 credit, applied lessons for 1 credit, and INTG 105 for zero or 1 credit, all of which would continue throughout the semester.

Lessons will continue to be offered based on schedule availability between each individual applied teacher and their students. The block schedule means that ensembles will need to be offered at different times than they have been in the past. The music department is currently working to redesign the schedule for ensembles and other 1-credit courses. We plan to have that information to you as soon as it is available.

Ensemble Auditions

At this time, the plan is to hold all ensemble auditions during the first week of classes in person as we have done in the past. [Ensemble audition material](#) will remain the same, however, the schedule will most likely be altered to accommodate the block schedule. If it is determined that in-person auditions are not feasible due to the recommended social distancing guidelines available in August, we will develop a system to submit pre-recorded video audition submissions or auditions via live video conferencing. Again, we are working on plans for each scenario and will have that information to you as soon as it is available.

COVID-19 and Music Performance

Below is an excerpt from the [College Band Directors National Association COVID-19 Response Committee Report](#) that addresses this topic:

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At this time, what we know about the potential impact of COVID-19 on [music performance] is largely anecdotal. Several media reports (especially of choirs) have suggested that COVID-19 can be transmitted via aerosols (microscopic water droplets too light to be affected by gravity) from asymptomatic persons. It has also been suggested that the current practices of ridding instruments of excess liquid will likely need to be modified. This includes emptying spit valves, removal of slides, and shaking or blowing water off keys. At the time of publication of this document, it seems likely to assume that the number of people occupying large rehearsal spaces will need to be reduced for some time. While scientific studies on virus transmission of aerosols in ensemble settings remain limited, two studies are underway. The first study, led by CBDNA and the National Federation of State High School Associations, and supported by over 30 professional organizations, will be conducted at the University of Colorado. The second study, supported by various arts organizations, will be led by a team of researchers and musicians at Colorado State University...In addition to measuring transmission of aerosols, each of the studies will also address ways to mitigate the aerosols produced while breathing and playing. These scientific studies will provide more information about woodwind and brass instrument aerosol emissions and will better inform the possibilities for large ensemble instruction.

The results of the studies listed above, as well as other relevant studies, will determine how we are able to approach instrumental music performance this academic year. Choral music performance will follow the guidelines and suggestions in coordination with American Choral Director's Association, Chorus America, National Association of Teaching Singing, and National Association for Music Education. All applied lessons in voice, strings, keyboard, woodwinds, brass, and percussion will adhere to recommended guidelines from their respective professional organizations. All aspects of music performance will be developed in coordination with guidelines provided by the Center of Disease Control and Minnesota Department of Health.

In short, there may need to be significant modifications to how lessons are taught, how ensembles rehearse, and how solo, chamber, and large ensemble performances are performed. The music department assures you that we will continue to stay up to date with all the current research conducted over the summer to make the best decisions moving forward in the fall.

COVID-19 and Instrument Cleaning

The music department recommends everyone follow the [NFHS, NAfME and the NAMM Foundation recommend guidelines](#) for handling musical instruments during COVID-19.

We understand that this information will take some time to digest. If you have additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact your music professors. We will work to provide answers as best we can with the current information that is available.

We wish you all well through the remainder of the summer and look forward to seeing you in the fall.

Sincerely,

The CSB SJU Music Department Faculty