PERCUSSION GUIDELINES

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Percussion Area Guidelines

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The following is an explanation of the expectations and procedures for percussion majors at Arkansas State University. The motivation behind these guidelines is the desire of the A-State Department of Music to ensure that graduates are qualified and prepared at the highest possible level for professional endeavors appropriate to the degree program sought. These criteria pertain to students whose applied area of concentration is percussion.

Entrance Requirements

Admission: Prospective students must meet the admission requirements of the university as noted in the bulletins.
Auditions: Prospective Percussion students must audition for Dr. Brian Graiser prior to initial enrollment; this audition also serves as the Band scholarship audition. Each student will be notified individually regarding audition results. For undergraduate and graduate audition requirements, please visit https://www.astate.edu/colleges/liberal-arts-and-communication/music/auditions-and-scholarships.html

Degrees
Bachelor of Music (BM)

- **Music Composition:** This degree prepares students to pursue careers as composers of acoustic and/or electronic music in the Classical (Western Art) Music tradition. Students can pursue careers as composers of classical, commercial, film, jazz, and/or video game music, and often seek graduate study if pursuing careers in higher education.
- **Music Performance:** This degree prepares students to pursue performance careers as soloists and ensemble members across a variety of genres. A heightened emphasis is placed on the development of solo and chamber skills as well as the acquisition of

professional and pedagogical tools. Most students seek graduate study before embarking on their performance careers, especially if pursuing careers in higher education.

- **Jazz Studies:** This degree prepares students to pursue performance careers as soloists and ensemble members specifically within the jazz idiom. Heightened emphasis is placed on the development of improvisational skills as well as a deep awareness of jazz's historical evolution and modern trends. Students often seek graduate study before embarking on their career, especially if pursuing careers in higher education.
- **Music Industry:** This degree prepares students for a large number of possible careers in the music industry, such as commercial music production, music retail, music equipment manufacture, recording technology, etc. In addition to their musical training, students will also study areas such as audio engineering and recording technology, entrepreneurship, marketing, and accounting. Most students will enter the workforce upon graduation, although some may continue with graduate study.

Bachelor of Music Education (BME) - Instrumental Music: This degree prepares students to teach music in grades K-12 in the state of Arkansas. Most students embark upon their teaching careers immediately after graduation, while some choose to continue with graduate study (most often in music education or performance), especially if pursuing careers in higher education.

Master of Music in Performance (MM): This degree provides advanced study in instrumental performance culminating in graduate-level research projects and performances, including a graduate recital. Students are encouraged to pursue professional activities during their studies and may fully embark upon their performance careers after graduation, or they may seek further study at the doctoral level if pursuing careers in higher education.

Levels of Study

Students should register for the appropriate Performance Applied Music course. Teacher permission is required for admittance:

● **MUSP 1111** is for students who are non-music majors or music minors.

● **MUSP 1112** is for freshman and transfer music majors, as well as those who have not tested or passed the proficiency for upper level study.

● **MUSP 3111** is for non-majors or music minors who are classified as juniors or seniors, or for music majors seeking study of a secondary instrument.

● **MUSP 3112** is for Music Education, Music Composition, or Music Industry majors who have passed the Proficiency Jury following the completion of the number of lower level applied lesson credits required for their degree plan.

● **MUSP 3113** is for Music Performance or Jazz Studies majors who have passed the Proficiency Jury.

● **MUSP 6111, 6112, 6113, and 6114** are for MM or MME graduate music students.

Important Studio Policies

A few of the most important Percussion Studio policies are listed below; **please refer to the Applied Percussion Syllabus, Percussion Schlep Policy, Equipment Use Policy, Curriculum, and Studio Handbook** for a complete list of all policies:

● All percussion majors who are required to register for applied lessons must participate in Percussion Ensemble. This may be done for credit or for no credit. The percussion faculty may grant an exemption to this requirement based on special circumstances.

● Due to its unrivaled access to educational and professional percussion resources, all percussion students are strongly encouraged to be active members of PAS**.** For more information on membership fees and benefits, visit https://www.pas.org/membership/individual#individual

● Attendance at all percussion activities (lessons, Percussion Seminar, guest clinics, recitals, concerts, etc.) is mandatory for all students enrolled in applied lessons. Please refer to the Applied Percussion syllabus for Attendance Policy details regarding excused absences, unexcused absences, and grade penalties.

● Percussion students are responsible for acquiring and personally owning a large number of materials, and should budget at least $200 per semester to obtain all necessary sticks/mallets, music, method books, and other items.

● Please refer to the Percussion Studio Handbook for policies regarding studio communication, the use of facilities and equipment, practice room reservations, facilities security, equipment transportation, and studio culture/behavior.

Performance Requirements

There are many performance requirements for students to fulfill each semester. Please refer to the information below, bearing in mind the requirements of your specific degree:

Percussion Seminar
All percussion majors registered for Applied Percussion must attend the weekly Percussion Seminar (Fridays from 12:00-12:50pm in FA 142) and perform in that seminar at least once per semester. Repertoire may either be finished projects or “works in progress.”

Tuesday Morning Recitals

After their first semester, all percussion majors must perform every semester on the Tuesday Morning Recital Series, which takes place in the Recital Hall at 11:00am on Tuesdays. Students who perform on a degree recital (their own or someone else's), Honor's Recital, or other studio recital are exempt that semester from this requirement. The format is a traditional recital for which the appropriate attire is required. All performances require consent of the major applied teacher by filling out the Tuesday Morning Recital Form found on the A-State Music Department Website under Current Students.

Juries

All students taking Applied Percussion, except those presenting degree recitals, are required to give a **10-minute juried performance** during Finals week at the end of each semester, which will be given a grade based on the level of performance demonstrated at the jury (that grade accounts for 50% of the final class grade). The material performed during the jury will reflect the student's progress during the semester and current level of achievement, and is determined in advance by the instructor.

Assessments

All juried performances (including pre-recital hearings, as outlined later in this document) shall be assessed by a panel of faculty members according to the following rubric:

Musicality- phrasing, historical style, musical style (can include stylistic approaches to drum set and hand drums)

Technique- stick/mallet grip, body positioning, playing motion, level of control when playing

Rhythm- accurate and clear presentation of written rhythms

Tempo- includes tempo maintenance as well as internal timing, tempo identification, and effective tempo changes

Dynamics/Balance- overall dynamic range, voicing/balance in keyboard playing, appropriate balance of all individual components in multiple percussion, timpani, hand drum, and drum set playing

Accuracy- correct pitch or sound type (i.e. conga strokes), primarily applies to keyboard instruments but could apply to any multiple-component playing (it's possible to hit the wrong thing in timpani, multiple percussion, or drum set)

Sound Quality- stick/mallet/hand articulation (often dictated by implement choice), playing spots, stroke angle/speed/weight, instrument selection/placement

Intonation/Tuning- applies only to timpani unless an unusual instrument is involved (i.e. roto-toms, slide whistle)

Interpretation- can include aspects of the decision-making process, particularly in regards to multiple percussion setups, as well as stylistic interpretation (i.e. how much “swing” to play on drum set) and creative choices

Professionalism- communication, organization, attire, stage presence, appropriate equipment

A successful lower level student should demonstrate a basic understanding of all of the above areas throughout their performance, whereas a successful upper level student should demonstrate a strong basic approach throughout their performance and a successful graduate student should demonstrate an excellent approach throughout their performance. The Percussion Area benchmarks are that 75% of all music majors should meet the expectations listed above.

Upper Level Proficiency Exam

The **Upper Level Exam** is a double-length (20-minute) juried performance which must be passed in order to enroll in Upper Level Lessons (MUSP 3112 or 3113) and will take the place of the jury for those students who are attempting it. As with standard juries, the Exam will receive a grade which accounts for 50% of the final class grade.

BM/BME Upper Level Proficiency Exam Requirements

The Upper Level Proficiency Exam may be attempted at the conclusion of the second semester (for **Music Performance** majors) or third semester (for **Music Composition, Music Education, Music Industry, or Jazz Studies** majors) of lower-level study in place of a normal jury. The required materials for the Upper Level Exam are as follows (substitutions may be given at the instructor’s sole discretion):

Snare Drum:

● Demonstrate any of the 40 PAS International Drum Rudiments at a reasonable performance tempo, from memory **(this requirement may be passed off in lessons prior to the exam)**

● Demonstrate the musical application of various rudiments and concert techniques by performing an etude from Delécluse: *Douze Etudes*

Keyboard Percussion:

● Demonstrate any chromatic, major, or minor scale (natural, melodic, or harmonic), arpeggiated triad (major, minor, diminished, or augmented), or seventh chord (major, dominant, minor, half diminished, or fully diminished) at a reasonable performance tempo, ascending and descending two octaves, from memory **(this requirement may be passed off in lessons prior to the exam)**

● Sight-read melodic material using two mallets

● Demonstrate vibraphone-specific techniques by performing an etude from Friedman: *Vibraphone Dampening and Pedaling* **(this requirement may be passed off in lessons prior to the exam)**

● Demonstrate 4-mallet technical proficiency and interpretational artistry by performing a 4-mallet keyboard solo for marimba or vibraphone

Timpani:

● Demonstrate proper tuning and technique by performing a solo (I.e. works by Deane, Hochrainer, McCormick, or Bergamo) **OR** perform a stylistically diverse collection of three orchestral excerpts (I.e. symphonies by Haydn, Beethoven, and Tchaikovsky)

Drum Set (Music Industry majors only):

● Demonstrate swing drumming proficiency by playing a transcribed solo by a notable jazz drummer **(this requirement may be passed off in lessons prior to the exam)**

● Demonstrate stylistic versatility by playing rock/funk, swing, and Latin patterns with stylistically appropriate fills using examples from Igoe: *Groove Essentials* World Percussion/Hand Drums:

● Demonstrate basic hand drumming techniques (open/closed bass, tone, and slap strokes) and stylistic versatility by playing three varied conga patterns with appropriate fills or solos

Multiple Percussion (all majors except Music Industry):

● Demonstrate knowledge and application of multiple percussion techniques by performing a single movement from Kraft: *English Suite* or *French Suite*

Mid-Level Areas of Proficiency

Upon entering Upper Level lessons, all percussion majors must demonstrate continued growth in the areas of snare drum, keyboard, timpani, and multi-percussion/drum set, as well as proficiency in additional areas. These proficiencies may be demonstrated during a juried performance or during lessons, at the instructor's discretion. FAILURE TO DEMONSTRATE THESE PROFICIENCIES WILL RESULT IN THE INSTRUCTOR WITHHOLDING PERMISSION FOR STUDENTS TO REGISTER FOR DEGREE RECITALS. These additional proficiencies are:

World Percussion/Hand Drums:

● Demonstrate basic hand drumming techniques (open/closed bass, tone, and slap strokes) and stylistic versatility by playing three varied conga patterns with appropriate fills or solos

Multiple Percussion (Music Industry majors only):

● Demonstrate knowledge and application of multiple percussion techniques by performing a single movement from Kraft: *English Suite* or *French Suite*

Drum Set (all majors except Music Industry):

● Demonstrate swing drumming proficiency by playing a transcribed solo by a notable jazz drummer **(this requirement may be passed off in lessons prior to the exam)**

● Demonstrate stylistic versatility by playing rock/funk, swing, and Latin patterns with stylistically appropriate fills using examples from Igoe: *Groove Essentials*

Upper Level Areas of Proficiency

At the end of the required number of semesters of Upper Level lessons, all percussion majors (regardless of concentration) are expected to be able to perform a number of proficiencies. These requirements may be passed at any time prior to the conclusion of Upper Level lessons, in coordination with the instructor. In most cases, the successful completion of all Upper Level juries and recitals will satisfy these requirements. These requirements can include:

Snare Drum:

- Advanced repertoire comparable to that in Delecluse: *Douze Etudes* or *The Noble Snare*
- Noteworthy orchestral excerpts

Keyboard Percussion:

- Advanced 4-mallet techniques, artistry, and literature on marimba and vibraphone
- Ragtime xylophone literature
- Noteworthy orchestral excerpts for xylophone, glockenspiel, and vibraphone
- Jazz vibraphone: a 12-bar blues in Bb and F (following the complete form) and a standard jazz chart, learning additional scales as needed (i.e. pentatonic, octatonic, blues, etc.)

Timpani:

- Advanced pedaling, playing techniques, and literature comparable to Carter: *Eight Pieces*
- Noteworthy orchestral excerpts

Multiple Percussion:

- Advanced solo and/or chamber repertoire comparable to Rzewski: *To the Earth*, Xenakis: *Rebonds*, or Crumb: *Madrigals*

Drum Set:

- Diverse styles including swing, rock, and latin patterns
- Sight-read a big band chart with proper set-ups and kicks

World Percussion/Hand Drums:

- Diverse styles including Afro-Cuban, West African, Celtic, and/or other kinds of drumming

Recital Requirements

Percussion majors may perform a half- or fill-length recital, which may or may not be required depending on the degree pursued, with instructor permission. Note that all Lower Level and Mid-Level Proficiencies must be passed in order to secure the instructor's permission to register for a degree recital. **A Pre-Recital Hearing must be completed for Dr. Graiser 4 weeks prior to the recital itself;** the recital itself may be postponed as a result of failing this hearing. The Recital Hall should be reserved during the first part of the Fall semester for degree recitals, even if it takes place in the Spring semester. Please refer to the following guidelines for recital programming:

- **Bachelor of Music (Performance) students** are required to perform a Junior Recital (25 minutes of music) and a Senior Recital (45 minutes of music).

- **Bachelor of Music Education and Bachelor of Music Industry students** are required to perform a Junior Recital (25 minutes of music) and may perform an optional Senior Recital (25 minutes of music).

- **Master of Music (Performance) students** are required to perform a Graduate Recital (60 minutes of music) which must be accompanied by a scholarly document.

- **Any half-length recital** should include advanced repertoire for keyboard percussion, snare drum, and timpani. and either multiple percussion, drum set, or world percussion.

- **Any full-length recital** (with the exception of Jazz students) should include advanced repertoire for keyboard percussion, snare drum, and multiple percussion. Additional pieces for those instruments, timpani, drum set, or world percussion may also be included.

- **Performance majors are required to program a small chamber ensemble piece** on at least one recital; **all other students** may program a small chamber ensemble piece on their recital with the instructor's permission.

- **Students are highly encouraged to collaborate with student composers** to create and premiere new works for percussion on recitals.

- Recital programs should be tailored to the **specific professional goals** of the student (i.e. pedagogical literature for future educators, preparing for graduate school auditions, playing jazz vibes or drum set in combos, solo/chamber projects, etc.). Unless you attend graduate school, this will likely be the last time you have the chance to prepare a solo performance under the guidance of a percussion expert; make the most of this educational opportunity!

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