

## **Spring 2014 WSU Band Program Auditions**

***Dear Returning, New, and Prospective WSU Band Students:***

This letter is to provide you with very important information about the **Spring 2014 Band Program Auditions**. The following will tell you what music to prepare, how to best prepare it, and how to sign up for your audition time, and hopefully answer any other questions you may have. **Please read ALL the following information CAREFULLY:**

**MUSIC MAJORS/MINORS:** If you are a full-time WSU music-major or music-minor, and your principal instrument is a woodwind, brass, or percussion instrument, you are **required** to perform the **Spring 2014 Band Program Audition**. Based on your audition, the Director of Bands, in consultation with your applied studio teacher, will determine which band will count as your **required primary ensemble**, and therefore which band you should enroll. If you are assigned to Wind Symphony, but also desire to play in another band such as Symphonic or Concert Band, you may do so—simply register for these additional bands as electives. **CAUTION**—it is departmental policy that all full-time undergraduate students, who are woodwind, brass, or percussion majors or minors, **must perform the Spring 2014 Band Program Audition**, and then play in the band assigned to you by the Director of Bands. Failure to appear for the **Spring 2014 Band Program Audition** *may result in being deemed ineligible to continue your private applied lessons with your studio teacher.*

**NON-MUSIC MAJORS:** Students attending WSU who play a band instrument, but NOT majoring in music, are welcome to participate in one of the university's bands. As a non-music major, you can play in our Symphonic or Concert Band without performing the **Spring 2014 Band Program Audition**—simply enroll in the class, and show up for the first regular class/rehearsal meeting. Through means of a short, easy, informal audition, Dr. Jagow will determine whether you should play in Symphonic or Concert Band. For those of you who wish to be considered for Wind Symphony, you must prepare and perform the **Spring 2014 Band Program Audition**, just the same as the music majors. If you're chosen for Wind Symphony, but also want to play in Symphonic and/or Concert Band, you may register for more than one group. Finally, if you personally know other students attending WSU who play a band instrument, please encourage them to contact Dr. Shelley Jagow directly, or the WSU Department of Music Office.

### **WHAT TO PREPARE & PERFORM AT SPRING 2014 BAND PROGRAM AUDITION:**

1) From the WSU Bands website (<http://www.wright.edu/music/bands/>), please **download and prepare the special instructions and audition music specifically for your instrument**. Prepare as many of the excerpts as you can, but if you can't play all the excerpts don't be overly discouraged—they are meant to test the limits of even the best players. Just prepare as many as you can, and if possible ALL the excerpts. Those players who perform ALL the excerpts at a high level of musical excellence will be those most strongly considered for membership in Wind Symphony and Chamber Players. Based on the same criteria, Wind Symphony section principal players will be designated, and parts assigned.

2) **Expect to sight-read.** The best way for you to prepare is to sight-read a lot of stuff on your own!

**HOW TO SCHEDULE YOUR WSU BAND AUDITION.** Audition time blocks for each instrument will be posted the week before classes begin. Dates are still being finalized.

Once time blocks are set, you may claim an audition time by contacting Aaron Jacobs, the Band Program Graduate Assistant. Office hours will be posted if you wish to meet with him in person, or you may e-mail him at [jacobs.85@wright.edu](mailto:jacobs.85@wright.edu). Audition slots will be six minutes in length. *Please be present at least one time slot early in order to keep the audition process moving along.*

\*Some Wind Symphony and Chamber Players rehearsals will not take place due to auditions, including Monday, January 13<sup>th</sup>. Please continue to watch the bands website for further updates to this letter for further details.

**WHAT ABOUT PEP BAND (Varsity Band)?** The Pep Band, comprised of both music and non-music majors, provides music & spirit for WSU Basketball games, earning scholarship money for each performance. **The band will be accepting new members during the Spring Semester 2014.** Auditions will be held for anyone interested in playing drum set. All wind instrument and electric bass players may enroll openly. Rehearsals are 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. on Wednesdays in CAC M152. If interested, please contact Mr. Aaron Jacobs at: [jacobs.85@wright.edu](mailto:jacobs.85@wright.edu).

**WHAT ABOUT JAZZ ENSEMBLE?** The WSU Jazz Ensemble, under the direction of Dr. Gretchen McNamara, is comprised of both music and non-music majors. A separate audition for anyone interested is required. If interested, please contact Dr. McNamara for details @ (937) 775-2541, or Email Dr. McNamara at: [gretchen.mcnamara@wright.edu](mailto:gretchen.mcnamara@wright.edu).

#### **MUSIC MAJORS – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:**

1) **As a music major or minor, must I audition if I just want to be in Symphonic Band, but not Wind Symphony?** Yes, you MUST audition! Please carefully READ this letter again!

2) **Do I have to play an audition on my major instrument?** Yes.

3) **May I audition on other secondary instruments?** Yes. In fact, for some sections, it's strongly encouraged. For example, clarinetists should consider also playing bass clarinet, or saxophonists might want to play tenor and/or baritone in addition to alto. However, this is optional.

4) **Should flutists also audition on piccolo?** While this isn't an absolute requirement, it's strongly recommended that you audition on both, especially if you wish to be seriously considered for Wind Symphony. Everyone MUST play flute (you can't just play piccolo and not flute also). If you don't own your own piccolo, please borrow or rent one.

5) **How do you get into Chamber Players?** Chosen from within the Wind Symphony, membership is by invitation only, and depends on instrumentation requirements that change each semester. At your audition you will have a chance to indicate whether you are interested in being considered for Chamber Players. Chamber Players meets 1:25-2:20 p.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

6) **Trumpet Players: Should I play my excerpts on B-flat AND C trumpets?** Please prepare all excerpts on your B-flat trumpet.

**NON-MUSIC MAJORS – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:**

1) **As a NON-music major who just wants to be in Symphonic or Concert Band, do I have to play the Fall 2013 Band Program Audition?** No. Just register for “**MUS 2660 - Concert Band**,” show up for the first day of class, and then Dr. Jagow will determine whether you should be in Symphonic or Concert Band. For further info, contact either Dr. Shelley Jagow ( [shelley.jagow@wright.edu](mailto:shelley.jagow@wright.edu) ).

2) **When does Symphonic Band and Concert Band meet?** Tuesdays & Thursdays, 2:00 – 3:20 p.m.

3) **Is there a minimum ability-level required for NON-music majors who wish to play in Symphonic and Concert Band?** For Symphonic Band there is a minimum ability-level requirement, but not for Concert Band. Regardless, Dr. Jagow will determine which band is best for you. Just sign up for the class, and she'll make that determination after the first class meeting.

4) **As a NON-music major, can I be in Wind Symphony?** Yes, but you must audition along with the music majors at the **Fall 2013 Band Program Auditions** (see page 2).

5) **When does Wind Symphony meet?** Mondays, Wednesdays, & Fridays at 2:30 – 4:00 p.m.

I hope the above information answers your questions, but should you have others, please feel free to Email me at the address below. Please direct all your communication toward me through Email! Good luck in your auditions. We look forward to seeing you this coming fall and hearing you play. Looking forward to yet another musically exciting year with WSU Bands!

6) **When does Chamber Players meet?** Mondays, Wednesdays, & Fridays at 1:25-2:20 p.m.

Sincerely,

Dr. David M. Booth

Director of Bands & Wind Conducting Studies

Professor of Music

Email: [david.booth@wright.edu](mailto:david.booth@wright.edu)

**NOTE: Other Important Information & Audition Also Included !!!!!**

***HOW TO PREPARE YOURSELF FOR WSU Spring Band Auditions...***

1. **Prepare, prepare, prepare.** Don't put off practicing until the last minute. Instead, practice your instrument at regular intervals, and thoroughly learn all the audition excerpts, as well as any other music recommended by your studio or private teacher.

2. **Observe the tempo indications (metronome markings)** provided for all excerpts. Practice with a metronome. If you're unable to play a passage at the indicated tempo, then slow down, be patient, and practice it diligently at slower tempos until eventually you can perform the passage up to speed.

3. **Practice singing the passages, especially slower lyrically ones.** This is a very good idea no matter what instrument you play, as singing trains your ears and increases your ability to play in tune. You may be asked to sing at your audition, in addition to playing your instrument. Singing is also a very good idea for percussionists, as it will be required at the percussion auditions to determine ability to tune timpani.

4. **Count the RESTS, as well as the rhythms!!!** Your ability to intensely and precisely count the music's silences (rests), as well as the music's sounds (notes), is extremely important. As you practice the excerpts do NOT treat rests arbitrarily, but count them with absolute precision and accuracy.

**REMEMBER:** The silences (rests) are as much a part of the music as the sounds (notes).

5. **Work with a tuner.** Learn the pitch tendencies of your instrument by asking a partner to record your pitch tendencies as you slowly play an ascending chromatic scale. Your assistant can right down whether a particular pitch is flat, very flat, sharp, very sharp, or in tune. **IMPORTANT:** You need an assistant to look at the tuner while you play. YOU should NOT look at the tuner while you play, but rely solely on your ears. Once your assistant has written down your pitch tendencies, you can review his/her findings, and learn to adjust the pitches of concern.

6. **LISTEN to recordings of the excerpts.** There are recordings of nearly ALL the compositions from which the excerpts have been extracted in the WSU Music Library (located in the Paul Laurence Dunbar Library, WSU's main library building next door to Creative Arts Center). You can also access recordings on NAXOS through <http://guides.libraries.wright.edu/music>. Between the library and NAXOS, there are recordings of nearly every piece, with nearly every excerpt. A picture is worth a thousand words, so listen, listen, listen!!! This is how you learn style, and get the pitches, tempi, and expressive elements "in your head."

7. **Sight-read everything you can.** You learn to sight-read by doing it. Don't forget that sight-reading is an important part of the fall audition. Go through a method book that systematically presents progressively challenging material rhythmically and harmonically.

8. **Warm up with scales daily.** It's not that hard to learn your scales. You just have to do it regularly. If you don't know them, start with all your majors, learning them by the Circle-of-Fifths. Then learn all your minor scales in their natural form (and how they relate to the major keys with the same key signature). Once you've thoroughly learned all natural minor scales, begin to practice them in the harmonic and melodic forms.

9. **Make playing IN-TIME, IN-TONE, and IN-TUNE a priority!!!** At auditions, what are we looking for? Players with great sound, who can play in tune, and can play with superb rhythmic precision. TIME is incredibly important. Again, work with a metronome, and KNOW the rhythms.