



Ensembles and Orchestras Handbook

2021-2022

Letter from the Music Director

Dear FWYO Musicians,

On behalf of the entire FWYO organization, congratulations on a successful audition! It is my pleasure and honor to welcome you to the FWYO family. The 2021-2022 Season will be the FWYO's 57th season, and we take pride in our distinguished history and reputation as a premier training ground for the next generation of orchestral musicians. Among FWYO's honors are being selected as one of four Youth Orchestras from America for the International Youth Orchestra Festival in Switzerland; performing under the baton of Leopold Stokowski, Samuel Adler and Morton Gould; and eleven international tours to the music capitals of England, Central and Western Europe, Asia, Japan and Mexico. Members of the FWYO go on to pursue their careers at some of the nation's finest collegiate programs in music and other fields of study. FWYO currently has alumni in the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra, as well as alumni occupying positions in top orchestras around the world. We hope you look forward to making the most of this opportunity to launch your own successful career in music or any other field you choose. Your membership is both a privilege and a responsibility. You will have enormous opportunity to create wonderful musical memories and experiences that you will carry with you for a lifetime. At the same time, all FWYO members are expected to maintain the organization's high standards and comply with the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook. We ask that both parents and students take time to read this handbook thoroughly. This handbook will answer most of your questions and will give you a head start on the adventures ahead. The staff is ready and willing to help you each step of the way, and we look forward to working together for a mutually rewarding 2021-2022 season.

With congratulations and best wishes,

Dr. Germán Gutiérrez
Music Director

About the FWYO Ensembles

FWYO Youth Orchestra (YO), conducted by Dr. Germán Gutiérrez, is the premier ensemble of the FWYO program. YO is a full orchestra that performs standard, professional-level orchestral repertoire, including complete symphonies, concertos, and overtures by classic composers, such as Tchaikovsky, Beethoven, and Brahms. Members of YO also have the opportunity to perform non-western repertoire and new music by contemporary composers. YO tours internationally every few years and collaborates frequently with the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, including intensive sectionals and side-by-side performances.

Recommended experience: Grade 9-12 (Must be under 19 at time of application)

FWYO Philharmonic Orchestra (PHIL), conducted by Mr. Nick Nixon, is an advanced intermediate orchestra that provides a full orchestra experience for advancing string players who previously may have only participated in string ensembles and for wind & percussion players who previously may have only participated in wind bands. PHIL performs a variety of standard and educational orchestral repertoire. Members of PHIL will experience performing professional repertoire by 19th-century composers, such as Verdi and Rossini, as well as 20th-century composers, such as Gould and Marquez. Mr. Nixon has been active as a teacher, conductor, and adjudicator of orchestras and bands for over 45 years. He was a co-founder and conductor of the Amarillo Area Youth Orchestra, conducted the Austin Youth Philharmonic Orchestra, and is the former orchestra coordinator for Fort Worth ISD.

Recommended experience: Grade 8-12 (Must be under 19 at time of application)

FWYO Wind Ensemble (WE), conducted by Mr. Brian Youngblood, is a premier woodwind, brass & percussion ensemble that performs professional-level works from the great band composers, such as Gustav Holst and Percy Grainger, while also embracing the modern band tradition of performing contemporary works. In addition to conducting WE, Mr. Youngblood is Associate Director of Bands at Texas Christian University, and is a leading drill designer, arranger and program coordinator for marching bands.

Recommended experience: Grade 8-12 (Must be under 19 at time of application)

FWYO String Orchestra (SO), conducted by Mr. Samuel Branch, is an intermediate string-only ensemble whose members will continue to develop their individual technique and ensemble skills in preparation for participation in full orchestras. SO performs a variety of standard and educational string chamber orchestra repertoire, including compositions by contemporary composers, such as Richard Meyer and Soon Hee Newbold, and by classic composers, such as Vivaldi and Telemann. In addition to conducting SO, Mr. Branch is an Associate Director of Orchestras at Martin High School in Arlington, TX.

Recommended experience: Grade 8-12 (Must be under 19 at time of application)

FWYO Jr. String Orchestra (JSO), conducted by Mrs. Amanda Musser, is a string-only ensemble designed for an introductory orchestral experience for young string players. JSO members will continue to develop their individual technique and ensemble skills in preparation for participation in full orchestras, and will perform educational string chamber orchestra repertoire, including compositions by Richard Meyer, Soon Hee Newbold, and Deborah Baker Monday. Mrs. Musser has been a music educator in the Arlington, TX area since 1975, and was Adjunct Professor of Music Education and Supervisor of Student Teachers at Texas Christian University for ten years. In 2018, Texas Orchestra Directors Association named Mrs. Musser Orchestra Director of the Year.

Recommended experience: 2+ years of playing experience. Under 16.

Rehearsals

All rehearsals will be held at FWYO's Orchestra Hall, unless notified in advance.

- Youth Orchestra Sundays, 5:30–8:30pm
- Philharmonic Orchestra Sundays, 3:00–5:15pm
- Wind Ensemble Sundays, 12:45–2:45pm
- String Orchestra Tuesdays, 6:00–7:30pm
- Junior String Orchestra Mondays, 6:00–7:15pm

Concerts

The FWYO concert season consists of 3-4 major concert cycles. These concerts are typically scheduled in October, December, March and May, and take place in Bass Performance Hall and other venues around the DFW metroplex. Occasionally, FWYO ensembles will perform additional outreach and community concerts, including performances at Sundance Square and Cook Children's Medical Center.

Concerto Competitions

FWYO Concerto Competitions are held annually in November, and the winners will be invited to appear as soloists with their respective orchestras the following spring. Specific details, instructions & policies will be provided to each orchestra at the beginning of September. The following competitions are open to all members of the designated orchestra(s).

- Young Artists Concerto Competition (YO)
- Young Performers Concerto Competition (PHIL)

Tuition and Fees

Tuition is subject to change each year. Once offered a position in YO, a deposit of \$100 will be due in order to reserve your position, and will be applied to the tuition total. Tuition is set by the Board of Directors annually, and is non-refundable. Financial aid is available for those who apply and qualify. Tuition for the 2021–2022 season is listed below. Amounts are subject to change.

- Youth Orchestra (YO) \$710
- Philharmonic Orchestra (PHIL) \$610
- Wind Ensemble (WE) \$575
- String Orchestra (SO) \$460
- Junior String Orchestra (JSO) \$460

Auditions & Chair Placement

All positions in every ensemble are open to be filled by audition each season. All current members must re-apply and re-audition each year. Auditions will be held each spring for the season beginning in the fall. Acceptance into the FWYO ensembles is not necessarily based on raw ranking alone, but on a number of considerations that determine the most appropriate outcome for each applicant, and the final decisions are at the full discretion of the ensemble conductors. Chair placement and part assignments are also at the full discretion of the conductor, and are not necessarily based on ability level alone. At their discretion, the conductors may implement seating rotations and/or chair tests in an attempt to distribute opportunities equitably, but please remember that it is prudent to seat strong players throughout the ensemble – seating order is not a hierarchy of your section!

Student Code of Conduct & Ensembles Handbook

Students will be subject to the Fort Worth Youth Orchestra (FWYO) Student Code of Conduct and the Ensembles Handbook, which contains these policies as well as numerous other policies regarding conduct. In particular, the FWYO is a Drug, Tobacco, and Alcohol free institution. As well, students are expected to conduct themselves appropriately as well as dress appropriately for lessons, performances, and other FWYO functions. As well, students and parents/guardians are expected to treat all FWYO staff members as professionals and abuse will not be tolerated.

Failure to comply with the (FWYO) Student Code of Conduct and the Ensembles Handbook may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from any and all FWYO programs. Students and parents/guardians who are removed from the program for disciplinary reasons will not be refunded any tuition and fees already paid. Those who are behind on payments and removed for cause may be sent to collections.

Contact

The primary contact person for all orchestra members & families is David Warren, FWYO Director of Artistic Operations. Mr. Warren or his representative will be present at all orchestral rehearsals and performances, will provide pertinent information and specific instructions for all orchestral functions, and is your resource for any questions regarding the rehearsal & performance calendar, accessing assigned orchestral parts, or any other concerns related to the policies & procedures of the FWYO ensembles.

David Warren

Fort Worth Youth Orchestra
Director of Artistic Operations
dwarren@fwyo.org
817.923.3121 x12

Rehearsal Expectations

Members of FWYO Programs & Ensembles are expected to be familiar with their rehearsal schedule, which is regularly communicated and distributed by the staff and conductors, and readily available at fwyo.org. Orchestra Hall will be open and rehearsal spaces will be prepared 15–30 minutes prior to the rehearsal start time, to allow members to arrive early and prepare for their rehearsal in a timely manner. Members are expected to understand and abide by the following rehearsal expectations:

- arrive 15 minutes before rehearsal start time to unpack, tune, and ensure you have all necessary materials for rehearsal;
- members are responsible for providing all equipment necessary for the successful operation of their instrument(s), including backup supplies;
- bring all assigned orchestral parts and a pencil to all rehearsals;
- printed copies of orchestral parts must be secured in a black binder or folder (no loose pages please!);
- if a member does not have their orchestral parts at rehearsal, they may ask the Director of Artistic Operations for an extra copy;
- respect your conductor and peers by listening and remaining quiet when you are not playing your instrument – when the conductor is working with another section, it is always relevant and valuable information for you to consider as well;
- cell phones, headphones/earbuds, chewing gum, sunglasses, hats/hoodies will not be permitted during rehearsals;
- food & drink is not permitted inside the Orchestra Hall auditorium or on the stage, with the exception of water that has been properly secured inside an enclosed bottle or other vessel;
- members are responsible for cleaning up after themselves at the end of rehearsals – please remove all personal belongings, and clean/dispose of any trash accumulated or any moisture from wind instruments on the floor or chair;
- members are not permitted to leave FWYO property during their scheduled rehearsal times;
- members & families are responsible for arranging transportation to and from rehearsals and other FWYO functions – please be considerate of the staff by arranging for transportation to be available to pick up members on time at the end of rehearsals (building will remain open and staff will remain present until all members have departed);
- minors left unattended for 45 minutes after the end of rehearsals will be referred to Child Protective Services
- PERCUSSION – Percussionists are expected to furnish their own personal mallets, but FWYO can procure equipment if there is a need. If any percussion equipment requires repair, replacement, or if an instrument needs to be purchased or rented for specific repertoire, please notify the Percussion Coordinator or Director of Artistic Operations as soon as possible. Percussionists are expected to arrive at rehearsals and performances early; it is their responsibility to appropriately set up the

relevant equipment and ensure the equipment is accounted for and appropriately stored at the end of the rehearsal/performance.

Attendance Policy

A musical ensemble is a unique team requiring attendance by every one of its members. Any single absence has a negative impact on the quality of preparation and performance, and multiple absences can be detrimental, no matter the reason. It is the responsibility of members & families to be familiar with their ensemble's rehearsal schedule, and to report expected absences well in advance. To report an absence, contact the Director of Artistic Operations via email or by completing the Absence Notification form on the FWYO website.

1. Attendance at all rehearsals is required. However, we do understand that absences will occur due to occasional illnesses, familial situations, religious conflicts, school activities, etc. In the event of these and other extenuating circumstances, each member may be permitted to miss up to two (2) rehearsals per concert cycle.
2. **FOR 2021-2022:** With the safety of everyone at FWYO as our key focus, students **MUST** adhere to the FWYO public health protocols. **Students who fail the FWYO COVID-19 self-screen tool MUST declare an absence.** While absences due to COVID-19 may affect a student's ability to perform in an individual concert at the ensemble conductor's discretion, absences for COVID-19 will not count toward item 1, 3, or 5. Absences for COVID-19 will also not be considered when making decisions for current or future ensemble placement. **For the safety of our students, staff, & visitors - Failure to declare an absence for a student who fails the self-screen will result in removal from any and all FWYO Programs without refund.**
3. An ensemble member will be considered tardy if they are not in their seat when the rehearsal initially begins, when the rehearsal resumes after break, or if the member leaves rehearsal early. Three (3) instances of tardiness equal one absence.
4. An ensemble member will be ineligible to participate in an upcoming concert if more than two absences occur during the concert cycle, for any reason. If more than two absences occur, the conductor and administration will evaluate the ensemble member's eligibility on a case-by-case basis, and participation in the upcoming concert will be at the discretion of the conductor.
5. Attendance at all concerts is required. If an ensemble member is absent for two performances, for any reason, it is grounds for dismissal from the remainder of the FWYO concert season, at the discretion of the conductor.
6. Ensemble members are required to maintain their presence for the entirety of all concerts that feature multiple FWYO ensembles. Members will remain together as a group before and after their performances, and will be seated together in the audience when possible. Members will not be permitted to leave the concert venue after their performance without advance notice and prior approval. This policy is enforced to ensure the safety of all members, to show respect for fellow musicians, and to display the professionalism of our orchestras at performance venues.

Please plan ahead! An unexpected illness or conflict may arise later in the concert cycle, preventing you from attending a rehearsal or performance, so be diligent not to miss for an imprudent reason in the early stages.

Rehearsal & Performance Cancellations

FWYO reserves the right to cancel rehearsals and/or performances in the event of inclement weather or other states of emergency, and will notify orchestra members and families accordingly, via email and Remind. FWYO leadership will consider the decisions of local school districts, but will ultimately make an independent decision.

- To sign up for Remind notifications, text your respective ensemble's code to – 81010
- YO – @fwyoyo PHIL – @fwyophil WE – @fwyowe SO – @fwyoso JSO – @fwyojs

FWYO Ensembles & Orchestras Performance Dress Code

Formal concert dress attire is required on concert days (not at dress rehearsals or regular rehearsals). Ensembles dress in formal attire out of respect for the audience and for the art that is being created on stage. It is essential for all members to follow the formal concert dress code so that no individual draws attention away from the whole. Many members will have access to appropriate tuxedos or dresses from their school ensembles, but FWYO staff will also be prepared to make recommendations for acquiring the necessary attire. FWYO staff may have extra bowties/socks/hosiery on concert days, but this is not guaranteed. If concert attire is determined to be inappropriate, FWYO staff reserves the right to request changes to be made prior to the performance, and failure to follow the dress code may jeopardize a member's opportunity to perform on stage. All FWYO members must adhere to the following formal concert dress code options:

Youth Orchestra

- Option #1 – Full tuxedo with black bowtie & cummerbund
- Option #2 – Full-length black dress OR full-length black skirt/dress pants with black blouse. Dress/blouse must be a modest cut without ornate designs, must not be strapless, sleeves must be at least elbow length, and must extend to the skirt/pant waist;
- ALL – Black dress shoes with closed toes/heels and black socks/hosiery; neatly styled hair; jewelry and hair ornaments should be modest and should not interfere with playing your instrument; avoid perfumes, colognes, etc.

Philharmonic Orchestra

- Option #1 – Full tuxedo with black bowtie & cummerbund OR black dress pants with tucked-in long-sleeved black dress shirt and black bowtie
- Option #2 – Full-length black dress OR full-length black skirt/dress pants with black blouse. Dress/blouse must be a modest cut without ornate designs, must not be strapless, sleeves must be at least elbow length, and must extend to the skirt/pant waist;
- ALL – Black dress shoes with closed toes/heels and black socks/hosiery; neatly styled hair; jewelry and hair ornaments should be modest and should not interfere with playing your instrument; avoid perfumes, colognes, etc.

Wind Ensemble

- Option #1 – Full tuxedo with black bowtie & cummerbund OR black dress coat & pants with white tucked-in long-sleeved white dress shirt and black bowtie
- Option #2 – Full-length black dress OR full-length black skirt/dress pants with black blouse. Dress/blouse must be a modest cut without ornate designs, must not be strapless, sleeves must be at least elbow length, and must extend to the skirt/pant waist;
- ALL – Black dress shoes with closed toes/heels and black socks/hosiery; neatly styled hair; jewelry and hair ornaments should be modest and should not interfere with playing your instrument; avoid perfumes, colognes, etc.

String Orchestra & Junior String Orchestra

- Option #1 – Black dress pants with tucked-in long-sleeved white dress shirt and black bowtie
- Option #2 – Full-length black skirt or black dress pants with white blouse. Blouse must be a modest cut without ornate designs, must not be strapless, sleeves must be at least elbow length, and must extend to the skirt/pant waist;
- ALL – Black dress shoes with closed toes/heels and black socks/hosiery; neatly styled hair; jewelry and hair ornaments should be modest and should not interfere with playing your instrument; avoid perfumes, colognes, etc.

FWYO Ensembles & Orchestras Dress Code - Casual Uniform

FWYO ensembles occasionally perform outreach/community concerts, which may be held outdoors. Members are typically permitted to follow a more casual dress code for these performances. Event-specific requirements for these performances (such as matching t-shirts) will be communicated in advance by FWYO administration, but the following guidelines can be expected:

- Tops – must have sleeves, must not be strapless, and must extend to the waist of bottoms;
- Bottoms – tan khaki shorts, capris or pants
- Footwear – closed toes/heels with socks/hosiery;
- Specifics will be communicated in advance, including style/color-coordination, sleeve length, tucked/untucked, pants/skirts, etc.
- Neatly styled hair; jewelry and hair ornaments should be modest and should not interfere with playing your instrument; avoid perfumes, colognes, etc.

Dress Code – All other FWYO related events

See the FWYO Code of Conduct Dress Code.