

# Course Outline: Ensembles

BCA's chamber ensembles are comprised of accomplished musicians in smaller settings of 3-8 people: Flute Ensemble, Clarinet Ensemble, Saxophone Ensemble, Mixed Wind Ensemble (woodwind quintet), Brass Ensemble, Percussion Ensemble, String Ensemble (string quartet), Bergen Arts Ensemble (film, international, or experimental music). Ensembles may perform on campus and at special events off campus. Activities involving performance techniques, musicianship and creative/critical thinking skills are emphasized during rehearsals. Membership satisfies the participation requirement for county, regional and all-state honors ensembles. Course prerequisites: because the ensemble is focused on performing music in a selective and balanced setting, all students must audition.

## Course Goals and Objectives

Ultimately, students present several performances throughout the academic year. The style of music explored depends on the instrumentation of the particular ensemble for the trimester. Ensemble members explore applicable techniques and interpretive practices. Creative strategies are utilized in order to expose students to a variety of related musical concepts including history, foreign language, improvisation, critique, and music theory.

## Grading, Assessment and Course Responsibilities

Grades are based on the average of all class sessions, dress rehearsals, and performances. Points are awarded based on assessment for *preparation, participation, attendance* and *team work*- because they foster responsible adult practices.

A = 93 - 100	A- = 90 - 92	B+ = 87 - 89	B = 83 - 86	B- = 80 - 82	C+ = 77 - 79	C = 73 - 76
C- = 70 - 72	D+ = 63 - 69	D = 60 - 62	F = 0 - 59			

**Preparation (approx. 70%):** Students who are present and prepared earn 6 points each class session as follows: 4 points for bringing instrument and individual copy of sheet music, 2 points for preparing any assigned material and/or participating in class activities. If an instrument is "in the shop" students must make arrangements to use a school loaner at least one day in advance or they will not receive credit for that grade portion. Students who are not in class receive a zero. However, an *excused* absence can be made-up within one week by making an appointment to practice/review any missed material. Unprepared grades cannot be made up. Absences during the last week of the trimester must be made up within one school day after the trimester ends.

**Participation (approx. 25%):** Students who participate in a dress rehearsal or concert earn 12 points, each. Lateness is not excused- students lose 4 points every ten minutes. Those who are unprepared without instrument, sheet music or peripherals lose 4 points. Relevant dates are announced the first week of class before add/drop ends. Students should carefully check their after-school commitments before taking this course, as there is no make-up option for missing a dress rehearsal or performance.

**Return of sheet music (approx. 5%):** students must return all sheet music during the class session after the final performance of the trimester. Students earn 5 points for returning all sheet music. If all parts (originals or copies) are not returned during the session, they receive a "0" with no makeup option.

**Attendance:** Being proactive about attendance is essential to personal accountability and musical progress. Therefore, it is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor of any missed sessions and initiate a make-up, as described above. Lateness is not excused unless accompanied by a teacher's note. Otherwise, students will have 1 point deducted from their session grade every 3 minutes. Cutting class has a negative impact on everyone and is not tolerated. Students who cut class or have an unexcused absence lose full credit for that session and their "good standing" status for the academic year, which makes them ineligible for the music honor society, honors ensemble participation, and possibly the privilege to participate in future music electives and activities.

*Consistent attendance is crucial to keeping up with the coursework and overall academic success. Frequent absences (over 10%) can impact your academic performance in this course. Students who exceed 10% of absences will remain in the course. However, the student will receive a grade of "Incomplete" until credit recovery is completed in the summer.*

**Team Work:** Students are expected to cooperate with each other and maintain a positive attitude- especially in areas concerning *safety, trust, and mutual respect*. All students must bring home their instrument after each class, as this contributes to good practice habits and opens needed space in the storage area.