

Vista Murrieta High School

Instrumental Music Department

Fall 2019/Spring 2020 Wind Band Syllabus

Mr. Donald Wade, Conductor
dwade@murrieta.k12.ca.us
951-894-5750 x6747

Mr. William Fritz, Conductor
wfritz@murrieta.k12.ca.us
951-894-5750 x6749

Welcome to the Vista Murrieta High School Instrumental Music program!

You have chosen to participate in one of the most successful and well-recognized band programs in the state. The directors and staff of the Vista Murrieta band program are dedicated to offering a comprehensive music education experience to its students. While music literacy and performance is the main emphasis of the program, the student will also develop discipline, organization, and other life skill concepts. The marriage of musical and personal development makes the band program a great environment to grow musically, physically, and intellectually. This syllabus is intended to outline general classroom rules, policies, expectations and opportunities for members of our high school band program.

Course Description:

Wind Ensemble (1st/3rd Period)

The Wind Ensemble is dedicated to the performance of the finest wind literature, without regard to era or difficulty.

Concert Band I (4th Period)

Concert Band I explores traditional band literature, transcriptions, and contemporary works

Concert Band II & III (5th/7th Period)

Concert Band II explores traditional band literature with an emphasis on skill development in the areas of tone, intonation, and music literacy.

Course Objectives:

1. The student will develop an understanding of their role as a member of a performance ensemble.
2. The student will develop an understanding of their role in support of community and school functions.
3. The student will develop and demonstrate their musical ability through their performance in solo, small ensemble, and large ensemble settings.
4. The student will demonstrate continued learning and mastery of their instrument and literacy in music through the curriculum/literature.

Class Guidelines:

1. Students are required to come to rehearsal (class) with all of the necessary materials (instrument, music, tuner, metronome, pencil, and other necessary supplies – reeds, valve oil, mutes, drum sticks, etc.)
2. Students are required to come to rehearsal (class) with all their work completed and assigned music selections prepared. “Prepared” means performance ready (all rhythms, notes, articulations, and dynamics correct). Rehearsal (Class) is an opportunity for each individual member to share their part with the ensemble, not the time to work out or practice their individual parts.
3. Attendance is required at all rehearsals and performances. Sectional and full ensemble rehearsals will be scheduled before and after school. Students are expected to attend all rehearsals outside of class and should plan accordingly. Please use the “Absence Excuse Form” in accordance with the VMHS Instrumental Music Department attendance policy.

Class Expectations:

1. **PREPARE** – Students are expected to prepare during personal practice time at home and come to school prepared for rehearsal. An online SmartMusic subscription will be provided for each wind instrument student to help with daily practice.
2. **CARE FOR YOUR INSTRUMENT** – If you own your own instrument, you know how important it is to maintain its care. If you are using a school owned instrument, treat it as if it were your own. All instruments should be clean, in good working order, and properly stored in their cases and lockers.
3. **CARE FOR THE FACILITY** – This is your band room. Everyone is expected to pick up after themselves, store instruments in their proper location, and not bring food, drinks, or gum into the room. Storage areas in the band room will be used for instruments and band equipment only. Locks are required for all closed-door lockers.
4. **BE PROFESSIONAL** – This is, perhaps, the most important expectation of all since it embodies and encompasses everything we do from rehearsal, to practice at home, to performance, to attending a concert, to interacting with each other.
 - Be Prepared for Rehearsal - Practice at home, not at rehearsal. Amateurs practice until they get it right. Professionals practice until they cannot get it wrong!
 - Remain Quiet During Rehearsal - Create a focused rehearsal environment.
 - Mark Everything - If it’s important enough for to stop rehearsal for then it’s important enough to mark on your music.
 - No Phones – Rehearsal will be a cell phone free time where we can “be in the moment” and not worry about outside topics or issues.

Grading Guidelines:

It is the belief of the VMHS Instrumental Music Staff that the “PERFORMANCE” culminates everything that we work for in class and is a VITAL part of the student’s music education. Missing a performance is the equivalent of receiving an “F” on a major test in any other academic class. The experience gained from performing is NOT one that can be “made up”. Extreme special circumstances for missing a performance should be discussed with Mr. Wade or Mr. Fritz, on an individual basis, at least two weeks before a scheduled rehearsal or performance. In addition, students **MUST** use the “Absence Excuse Form” found on the band website (www.vmhsband.com) under the “Resources” link. If a student cannot make the commitment to attend rehearsals and/or performances, then he or she should consider dropping their instrumental music courses.

Students will be graded in the following five areas:

Daily Participation **20%**

Students will evaluate themselves and be evaluated in the following areas: attendance/punctuality, having their instrument and other necessary supplies, rehearsal etiquette, tone, time, tuning, and preparation.

SmartMusic Assignments **25%**

Students will be assigned a wide variety of weekly online assignments that can be completed with their provided SmartMusic subscription. Students are strongly encouraged to complete these assignments at home. However, students can sign up for a time to complete their assignments at school. SmartMusic assignments may include, but are not limited to: Proficiencies, Band Literature, Sight Reading, and Rhythm Reading.

Written Assignments **15%**

Can include, but not limited to: Vocabulary, Article Summaries, Music Theory and Worksheets

In Class Playing Tests **20%**

Jury/Final **10%**

“A” Grade Effort **10%**

It is the expectation that the “average” or “C” level band student attends regularly, has their instrument and all their necessary supplies, and is prepared for rehearsal. To receive an “A” grade, or above average grade in the class, students must demonstrate a desire to perform at an above average level. Each semester, students will have an opportunity to show evidence of “extra effort” they have done. “A” Grade Effort can be demonstrated by doing one of the following each semester:

- Regularly takes private lessons
- Attends a professional level “classical” concert and completes a concert report
- Earns an average score of 95% or higher on SmartMusic assignments for the semester
- Regularly participates in a community band or community orchestra program
- Completes a Research Paper (instructions to be handed out)

Total **100%**

In the unlikely event that the student is unable to maintain “C” level work, the grade of “D” or “poor” will be given with the suggestion that improvement must be made if the student wishes to remain in the program.

The grade “F” will be given in situations where flagrant violations of band policy exist, including, but not limited to:

- Unexcused absences from rehearsals or performances
- Extreme lack of participation or preparation

As per the attendance policy – Any unexcused absence from a rehearsal will lower the 6-week progress report grade by one letter grade per infraction. Any unexcused absence from a performance will lower the 6-week progress report grade to an “F”.

Attendance Policy:

You have made a commitment to be in the instrumental music program. In order to have a successful rehearsal and performance, it is essential that we have full attendance.

Attendance at scheduled rehearsals and performances is required for membership in the program.

Attendance at Performances: It is impossible to “make-up” the experience of a performance. Furthermore, the other members carry an extra burden because of someone else’s inconsideration. As a member of the VMHS Performing Arts Department, understand that the performance culminates everything we work so hard for during the year. It is therefore essential, to your fine arts education, that you experience the performance of your art.

Absences from performances are only permitted in the event of an emergency: SEVERE PERSONAL ILLNESS OR DEATH IN THE FAMILY. Even in those circumstances, a significant written make-up assignment will need to be completed to make up for missing a performance. ALL requests for excused absences must be electronically submitted on an “Absence Excuse Form” to the appropriate director, as soon as the schedule for the semester is received. Any absence submitted after the schedule is presented would have to fall under the “emergency” category. All other absences will be considered “Unexcused.”

“Absence Excuse Forms” can be found on the band website on the “Resources” page. Verbal approval, email, or handwritten notes are not sufficient – the “Absence Excuse Form” MUST be filled out.

Unexcused Absence from Performance: Being absent from a performance or leaving early due to work, homework, birthday parties, other non-essential school activities, non-emergency doctor appointments, tutoring, and vacations, are not considered excused absences. An unexcused absence from a performance is unacceptable and will result in the student’s grade being lowered to an “F” for that 6-week grading period and may result in automatic dismissal from the ensemble.

Attendance at Rehearsals: Absences from rehearsals are only permitted in the event of SEVERE personal illness, death in the family, or other special circumstances that are PREAPPROVED by the appropriate director. Absent students will be replaced

temporarily whenever possible in order for the group to have a successful rehearsal. If there are problems with leaving early or unexcused absences from a rehearsal or performance, the appropriate consequences regarding performing opportunities will be enforced by the directors. Families should schedule appointments and other events on non-rehearsal days.

Unexcused Absence from Rehearsal: An unexcused absence from a rehearsal is unacceptable and will result in the student's grade being lowered one letter grade per infraction, for that 6-week grading period. Excessive absences, whether excused or not, will cause severe problems and could result in loss of position or rank within the organization.

Tardiness: Rehearsals and performances are scheduled at specific times and it is expected that you arrive before the start time. If there are problems with tardiness, the appropriate consequences regarding performance opportunities will be enforced by the directors. "To be early is to be on time. To be on time is to be late. To be late is inexcusable."

In case of an emergency or sudden illness just prior to an after school rehearsal or performance, please email the appropriate director.

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Progressive Discipline Procedure: All discipline policies set forth by the Murrieta Valley Unified School District, Vista Murrieta High School, and contained within the Vista Murrieta High School Instrumental Music Program Student Handbook will be followed and enforced at all times. These policies apply to all instrumental music department activities including, but not limited to: after school activities, off-campus field trips, out of state travel, summer/winter camps, or any time the student is representing Vista Murrieta High School or is under the supervision of Vista Murrieta High School staff or designees.

Any or all of the following disciplinary actions may be imposed for violations of district, school, or band policies:

- Student Correction/Counseling and Parent Notification
- Referral to the Discipline Office and/or Loss of Band Privileges
- Exclusion or Removal from the Band Program

In addition, a student's "Citizenship" grade can be changed to "N" – Needs Improvement or "U" – Unsatisfactory.

The disciplinary action imposed in each instance will be at the discretion of the Band Director depending upon the nature and severity of the conduct, the circumstances of the conduct, its frequency, prior warnings or disciplinary action, and/or other relevant factors.

Concert Attire:

Gentlemen:

- Black Tuxedo Pants and Jacket
- White Long Sleeve Tux Shirt
- Black Bow Tie and Cummerbund
- Black Dress Shoes
- Plain White Undershirt (no printing)
- Long Black Socks (no athletic style ankle socks)

Ladies:

- Solid Black Shirt with $\frac{3}{4}$ - Full Length Sleeves (no sleeveless or short sleeve tops; may have decorative beading etc., on the front but must be black in color)
- Solid Black Dress Pants (no black jeans no skirts)
- Black Low-Heeled Shoes
- Black Nylons

Private Instruction:

One of the most important ways to improve on your instrument is through private lessons. There is no substitute for weekly sessions of individualized instruction by an instrumental specialist. Private lessons instructors serve as an ideal model and mentor to assist your child's improvement in the areas of tone, technique, and general musicianship. Speak with Mr. Wade or Mr. Fritz to get contact information for local private instructors.

Performance Calendar:

A full calendar of all band events can be found at www.vmsband.com It can also be accessed in Charms. Full calendars will also be posted in each band room so students can stay informed on a daily basis. Stay up to date with band emails to make sure you get the latest information for each band event.

Band Handbook:

Please be aware that most questions can be answered by referring to the VMHS band handbook found on the band website www.vmhsband.com under the "Resources" tab. All student/parents should review the handbook. All students are responsible for the expectations and policies found in the handbook.

In Conclusion:

We look forward to amazing year of growth and performances. Our program has developed a reputation for excellence, and we are confident this year's students are up to the challenge of maintaining that reputation. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions. We can't wait to "band" together with you this year!

Vista Murrieta High School Instrumental Music Department

Wind Band Syllabus Signature Form

My child and I have read, understand, and agree to the rules, regulations, and expectations for membership in the Vista Murrieta Instrumental Music Department. He/She has my permission to participate in this elective course which requires attendance outside of the normal classroom day. I will assist my student in fulfilling the requirements and in meeting the course expectations.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

- _____ We have read and agree to the policies and expectations outlined in the band handbook found on the band website.
- _____ We have read and agree to the VMHS band attendance policy as presented in the syllabus and band handbook.
- _____ We have received the tentative schedule for the ensemble/group my student is enrolled in.
- _____ I understand, as outlined in the MVUSD Instrument Checkout Form that we are responsible for any damage done to the school owned instrument we borrowed from the school. In addition, we also understand that it is our responsibility to return the instrument to the school in the same condition it was checked out to us in. We understand that the instrument was checked out to us professionally sanitized and that there is a cleaning fee assessed upon returning the instrument back to the school.
- _____ We have updated our Charms account and verified that our email address, phone number, and other information on file is accurate. We have also added our student's email address to the Charms system so that they can also receive the weekly notifications.
- _____ We are aware that we should be receiving a weekly newsletter from the band secretary every Monday. We also understand that we are to contact the band secretary immediately if we are not receiving the weekly emails.
- _____ We have read and understand the requirements to be recognized at the semi-annual awards ceremonies.

Student's Name (Please Print) _____

Student Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date