



Middle/Upper School Music Handbook

Mr. Griffin Coombs

Welcome to Middle/Upper School music at AST! In this course, we will explore fundamental music concepts and skills by creating, performing, and responding to music of different stylistic, historical, and cultural varieties. The goal of this course is that each student leaves with a deeper appreciation for music as an art form, as well as the tools for choosing to engage in active music making throughout his/her life.

What You'll Need

- Pencil
- Folder or binder
- All class materials (inside folder/binder)

Topics Covered

**The curriculum of an exploratory music course at the secondary level tends to remain fluid, leaving opportunity to adjust goals and objectives based on the strengths and needs of the group at hand. Below is a list of topics that are typically explored in some way during the course:*

- World music traditions
- Elements of music and musical language
- Emotional responses to music
- Improvisation
- Group music making principles
- Ear training and harmony
- Careers in music
- Anatomy of a pop song
- Creating original music
- Foundations of singing
- Foundations of hand percussion

EXPECTATIONS

What am I not allowed to bring to music class?

- ✓ Gum
- ✓ Food or drink (except water)
- ✓ Phones
- ✓ Toys, games, or other distractions

What do I do when I arrive to music class?

- ✓ Bring your materials to your seat.
- ✓ You may talk with peers until Mr. Coombs begins class.
 - Countdown
 - Clapping patterns

What's the bathroom policy?

- ✓ Leaving in the middle of class can be a huge disruption to the flow of a class. If you ask me to go to the bathroom in the middle of class, I will ask you if it's a dire emergency. Please take care of it before class instead of having to let us all know how badly you need to go!

I'm just one person, and I just wanted an easy A. Do I really have to participate?

- ✓ Yes. This is an experience that depends on every single member working as a whole, much like a sports team. Some of you will become leaders, and most of you will learn from each other how to work as a team and how to become better-rounded musicians. No one, however, has the choice to not participate. If you signed up for this class, you signed up to be an active part of something!

How am I graded in music?

- ❖ *PAC (weekly)*
- ❖ *Arts - Performance*
- ❖ *Arts - Theory*

How is my participation grade calculated?

- ✓ Each student begins the week with an 80% in participation. To maintain this grade for the week, you must meet the minimum participation requirements:
 - Remaining quiet during instruction
 - Contributing appropriately to group projects
 - Arriving with and using all of your required materials
 - Respecting everyone in the room at all times

- ✓ Points are added during each class based on the following observable positive behaviors:
 - Contributing thoughtful questions and/or responses
 - Demonstrating leadership during group projects
 - Active listening (e.g. eye contact, affirmative gestures, etc.)

- ✓ Points are deducted based on observable behaviors that are inconsistent with class expectations, such as:
 - Talking during instruction
 - Arriving without required materials
 - Choosing not to contribute to group projects
 - Inappropriate participation or off-task behavior
 - Showing any form of disrespect to peers or staff
 - Chewing gum, eating, or drinking in class (except water)
 - Abuse of bathroom policy

What else happens if I don't follow expectations?

- ✓ Please refer to the AST handbook regarding consequences for specific infractions.

How am I graded in the “Arts – Performance” category?

- ✓ Attendance and appropriate participation in each AST performance
- ✓ Any performance-based projects will be graded in this category.

How am I graded in the “Arts – Theory” category?

- ✓ Any written assessments will be graded in this category.

So what's the most important thing I should take away?

- ✓ See the sheet titled “A Word on Support”

2017-2018 PERFORMANCES

Schedule of Events: TBA
See next page for attendance policies.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

ALL school music performances are required for each student enrolled in the course. Attendance and participation at these performances constitute a percentage of everyone's course grade. Helpful considerations are listed below:

- 1. Homework, sports activities, rehearsals or performances for other shows, and inappropriate last-moment obligations are not considered valid reasons for being absent from a concert. Every performance is considered a major exam.*
- 2. Students who are in school on the day of the concert and on the day following the concert will **NOT** be granted an excused absence for illness without a doctor's note.*
- 3. Any anticipated concert absence due to travel, etc. must be cleared with Mr. Coombs in writing **two weeks prior** to the concert. Travel plans must be consistent with school policy.*
- 4. An unexcused absence from a performance will result in a loss of credit for a performance assessment grade.*

DRESS CODE

*Semi-formal dress that complies with school dress code.
Detailed guidelines will be discussed prior to performance.*

Contact

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