

School of Music

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School of Music COVID-19 Policies

2021-2022 School of Music COVID-19 Policies

Last update 08.18.21

The University of Iowa School of Music will continue to make all COVID-19 safety protocol decisions based on guidance from the CDC (Centers for Disease Control), Board of Regents, and University of Iowa recommendations.

- [Current University of Iowa guidelines](#)

The University of Iowa strongly encourages students, faculty, and staff to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, in consultation with their health care provider.

The School of Music strongly encourages the wearing of masks in the Voxman Music Building.

Specific risk mitigation strategies for large ensembles will be communicated with students in those courses by the respective professor.

2020-2021 School of Music COVID-19 Policies

The previous academic year policies are posted here for reference.

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Letter from the Director

Because singing, brass and woodwind playing generate aerosol particles – sometimes at very high rates compared to regular talking -- the School of Music has worked with medical and exposure science experts to develop School-specific policies below. The University-wide policies apply, but they are supplemented by the policies below, which are specific to music practice and performance scenarios.

Larger droplets of respiratory secretions may fall to the ground over distance and time and are the impetus for social distancing recommendations. Smaller aerosols are invisible, may be infectious, and are the reason for additional precautions which must be observed by those who might produce aerosols during their performance activities.

For the purpose of these policies, aerosol-producing activities include singing, brass and woodwind playing.

Students, faculty and staff should not come to the Voxman Music Building or participate in any School of Music activity if they are symptomatic, or a person under investigation (PUI) or have active coronavirus infection until such time as local, state and national guidelines support a safe return to the UI community.

For aerosol producers: use common sense, protect others from your spit. This document does not cover all possible cases when potentially infectious aerosols or droplets might be produced. If you have questions, please ask.

While these guidelines are directed toward activities within the School of Music, students, faculty and staff should follow all state, local and university guidelines at all times and in all situations to minimize the spread of COVID-19.

Building-wide ventilation and air quality upgrades

- MERV 13 air filters will be installed in the Voxman Music Building.
- Wherever possible, increased fresh-air intake and increased exhaust modes will be employed throughout the building.
- The designated aerosol-producing practice rooms will be equipped with approved HEPA-filter air purifiers. Protocols regarding vacancy periods required for air-scrubbing between students will be clearly displayed.

Density and traffic protocols

- Each instructional space will be labeled with the maximum capacity for that room based on social distancing guidelines.
- Chairs/tables/desks will be spaced in each room with floor markings.
- Traffic patterns throughout the building will be clearly labeled.

Distancing

- Minimum 6-foot distancing is required in all spaces, including common areas.
- Congregating before/after classes and rehearsals is prohibited. Faculty are

requested to dismiss classes/ensembles in groups to minimize congregating.

- Plexiglass barriers (to control social distancing and droplets) will be in every instructional space in Voxman. Additional barriers (such as shower curtains) are not allowed as these can create pockets of air.

TA Offices

- Graduate Teaching Assistants who share offices must develop office schedules that allow for proper 6-foot distancing.
- TAs must wear masks at all times when inhabiting their office with another TA.
- All aerosol and non-aerosol producing private lesson rules outlined below apply to TAs.

Face coverings

- Face masks are required to be worn on the University of Iowa campus at all times. Official School of Music policy for syllabi, approved by CLAS Dean's Office:
 - Within the School of Music, the only exceptions to the University's mandated face covering policy are in relation to music making (woodwinds, brass, voice) when masks may be temporarily removed. In these situations, only the students or faculty who are required to sing/play may choose to remove their masks with proper spacing, protective barriers and other pre-established precautions in place.
- All University of Iowa students will be provided with two disposable face masks, two washable cloth face masks and one face shield. The use of the face shield only is not permitted in the Voxman Music Building.
- Signage reinforcing the importance of face coverings for virus control will be posted throughout Voxman.
- A supply of extra disposable masks will be available for those that need one.

Length and format of aerosol-producing lessons (voice, brass, woodwinds)

- Aerosol-producing applied lessons will either be conducted virtually or in an outdoor space (60 minutes), or held in an approved large room (30 minutes) with the teacher masked. The remaining 30 minutes of instructional time for in-person

indoor (large room) lessons may be used for discussion/analysis (both persons masked), or the remaining 30 minutes of instructional “playing” or “singing” time may be held either outdoors, in-person (approved large room), or virtually at another time that week. No aerosol-producing lessons will take place in faculty studios until the data supports its safety.

- In an outdoor or large room lesson, only the student may have their mask removed and only when singing or playing their instrument; teachers will remain masked during lessons.
- Distancing of at least 12 feet should be maintained.
- If a piano accompanist is needed, faculty and students are encouraged to utilize one of our four Disklavier pianos or use pre-recorded tracks.
- Faculty/students are responsible for cleaning keyboards, music stands, chairs and other touched surfaces before and after lessons.

Length and format of non-aerosol-producing lessons (strings, piano/organ, percussion)

- Masks are required for teacher and student.
- Students and faculty must remain on opposite sides of plexiglass barriers to control social distancing of at least 6 feet.
- If a piano accompanist is needed, the pianist must wear a mask and observe appropriate social distancing from the faculty member and student.
- Faculty/students are responsible for cleaning keyboards, music stands, chairs and other touched surfaces before and after lessons.

Air-scrubbing between lessons and rehearsals (aerosol-producing)

- 30 minutes of room vacancy for air-scrubbing is required after any aerosol-producing activity.

Hand and equipment hygiene

- Everyone is required to practice good hand hygiene (sanitizing stations provided).
- Signage reinforcing the importance of hand hygiene for virus control will be

posted throughout Voxman.

- Students and faculty are responsible for surface cleaning of equipment/instruments used before and after lessons and rehearsals (supplies provided). Instruction on how best to clean your instrument and other equipment will be provided.
- Deep cleaning of the building will happen once daily, including disinfecting of high-touch areas.

Practice rooms

- Keep your mask on at all times. If you play a brass or woodwind instrument or are a vocalist, you may remove your mask to play or sing. If you play a keyboard or string instrument, you must keep your mask on while practicing, even when you are the only person in the room.
- Sign in on posted schedule to document or reserve your practice time. This is important information if contact tracing becomes necessary. Paper schedules are posted on the door of each room that is available for practicing.
- Abide by posted practice room schedule. This is for everyone's safety. In aerosol practice rooms, the half-hour between allotted practice times is necessary for the "air scrubbing" done by the air purifiers and air handling units to satisfactorily clean the air.
- Aerosol practice rooms are for brass, woodwind, and voice students only. Pianists and string players need to use the practice rooms reserved for their use.
- Aerosol practice rooms require a mandatory 10-minute HEPA-filter air-scrubbing period after practice ends and before the practice room door is opened. This is in addition to the 30 minutes required between practice times/occupancy.
- Do not congregate in the practice room hallways
- Students must follow all rules on published signage regarding aerosol-producing practice room "air scrubbing" times. This includes a mandatory 10-minute HEPA-filter air-scrubbing period after practice ends and before the practice room door is opened, followed by a 30-minute mandatory room vacancy for air-scrubbing after every aerosol-producing practice session.
- Only students in aerosol-producing rooms may remove their masks for practice. All other students – both in rooms and in the hallways – must wear a mask at all times.

COVID-19 Practice Room Cleaning

Aerosol producers (brass, woodwind, and voice)

- Aerosol practice rooms require a mandatory 10-minute HEPA-filter air-scrubbing period after practice ends and before the practice room door is opened. This is in addition to the 30 minutes required between practice times/occupancy.

Wind & brass players

- Students should collect water from their instruments responsibly and cleanly in a Lysol-soaked cloth stored in a plastic bag. No water will be expelled onto floors or common surfaces.
- No air should be forced through the instrument or its parts to expel water.
- No air should be used to clean waterlogged keys (i.e., blowing out tone holes).
- Instrument swabs should be handled with care.

Pianists

- Students should clean piano keyboards with the disinfecting wipes provided. Use caution, avoiding excess moisture on the keys. The disinfecting wipes should not be used on any other parts of the instrument except the keyboard.

Performances

- The majority of performances this fall will be live-streamed.
- All audiences will be invitation-only in the Voxman Music Building until COVID-19 restrictions are lifted.
- Maximum audience capacity will be 50 persons as per University guidelines.
- All audience members must wear masks, follow labeled traffic patterns, and use only designated seats.
- The first five rows of the Recital Hall and Concert Hall will be unavailable for audience use.
- Aerosol-producing performances with a masked audience present will be limited to 30 minutes in length followed by a required 30-minute vacancy for air-

scrubbing.

- Aerosol-producing performers must be a minimum of 12 feet apart and masks must be worn when not playing (that is, keep a mask under the chin and replace it during rests or breaks in playing). Decisions on bell covers, instrument bags and modified masks are currently under review.
- Data on optimal stage placement and/or Concert Hall balcony use is currently in progress.
- Non-aerosol-producing performers (including conductors) must remain masked for the entirety of performances. The only exceptions during a performance would be temporary, such as a drink of water from a covered bottle, etc.

Course modalities

- No aerosol-producing activities like singing should be done in a class situation without having prior approval.
- Courses will be taught in a variety of in-person, hybrid, blended and online versions this fall.
- Students are encouraged to reach out to their professors directly with questions re: the specifics of their courses as each professor is handling instruction differently.

Group Piano

Instruction in group piano (MUS:1211, 1212, 2213, 1001, and 1002) will be in the hybrid format. Classes, which normally meet twice per week, will be split into two groups, each only meeting once per week in person. This will allow for maximal social distancing when in the piano lab (VOX 3303). The educational content of the course will be delivered asynchronously in video format by Dr. Huckleberry. Students will be required to watch this content and prepare it for the in-person class, which will be with a TA. These sessions will be used to answer questions, provide practice strategies, and to check assignments.

Details:

- Weekly video content will be provided by Dr. Huckleberry
- One 50-minute weekly in-person session with a TA

- Practicing: you will sign up for two or three 30-minute practice sessions in the piano lab. This will be your reserved time and will be consistent throughout the semester. There will be a maximum of four students in the lab at a time for practicing.
- You will be assigned to a specific instrument. This will allow us to have the minimum number of students touching the same instruments.
- You will be responsible for cleaning the instruments before and after each practice or class session. Materials for this will be provided.
- Students are required to supply their own headphones. These will be needed both for practicing and for class. These **MUST** be wired headphones. Wireless headphones will not work. The School of Music will supply you with an adaptor which will allow a mini headphone jack to plug into the piano lab instruments. This adaptor will be yours to keep for the semester and you will be expected to return it once the in-person portion of the semester is over. This requirement has been instituted so that students will not need to share headphones in the piano lab.
- If you do own a keyboard, please bring it with you to campus to allow for further practicing and/or more flexibility in your schedule.
- You will be required to wear facial coverings at all times when in the piano lab.

Ensembles

All ensembles will follow these basic guidelines:

- There will be no large ensembles in Fall 2020 – all ensembles will be divided into various chamber groups with rehearsals and performances held either in outdoor spaces, large spaces, or virtually.
- Masks are required for everyone unless specified in the syllabus with detailed precautions and procedures in place.
- Bell covers are required for every aerosol-producing instrument in the ensembles and will be provided for each student.
- Social distancing of 6 feet is required for all non-aerosol students (strings, piano, percussion).
- Social distancing of 12-18 feet is required for aerosol students when masks are temporarily off (voice, brass, woodwinds). Student placement within specific physical spaces is currently under discussion based on ventilation/circulation

research being conducted in Voxman.

- For aerosol producers, masks should be worn while in rehearsal or performances but not playing (that is, keep a mask under the chin and replace it during rests or breaks in playing).
- Rehearsal times will be limited to 30 minutes in length followed by a required 30-minute vacancy for air-scrubbing.
- Students should collect water from their instruments responsibly and cleanly in a Lysol-soaked cloth stored in a plastic bag. No water will be expelled onto floors or common surfaces.
- No air should be forced through the instrument or its parts to expel water.
- No air should be used to clean waterlogged keys (i.e., blowing out tone holes).
- Instrument swabs should be handled with care.
- No instrument reeds should be shared.
- No buzzing on mouthpieces as this may produce more aerosols and droplets than most other activities.
- Aerosol minimization strategies for pieces requiring extended techniques should be discussed with the course instructor.
- Students are responsible for cleaning music stands, keyboards and other touched surfaces before and after rehearsals (supplies and instructions provided).

Preliminary plans for each major ensemble

All plans are subject to change, and questions should be directed to the respective ensemble conductor.

Bands (statement from Dr. Heidel and Dr. Bush):

- Students will be asked to record and submit their audition material electronically before the start of the first week of classes.
- Students will be assigned to ensembles no larger than 15 members each.
- Each ensemble will rehearse in segments of approximately 30 minutes, followed by a break of approximately 30 minutes. Multiple rehearsal rooms will be utilized so the HVAC system has an adequate amount of time for the proper exchange of air in rehearsal spaces.

- The Hawkeye Marching Band has five scheduled rehearsals throughout each week. A reduced number of students will be present at any given rehearsal, so that we can strategically execute our rehearsal plan to meet our learning outcomes. Because we have a dedicated outdoor practice field, an additional outdoor rehearsal space, and a large indoor facility (Iowa Turf in the HTRC) at our disposal, we will be able to socially distance during our meeting times, especially with a reduced number of students present. The HMB will be divided into pep bands for rehearsals and virtual performances to be presented online in the fall and in Kinnick Stadium in the spring. Precautions will be taken, such as: use of PPE while rehearsing, bell covers for all instruments, regularly sanitizing mouthpieces and other equipment, and not sharing instruments among members of the band. We will also use an alternate uniform to support healthy, minimal sweating and respiration during performances. These actions are aligned with the plans of the other marching band programs in the Big Ten conference, as well as many marching bands around the country.

Choirs (statement from Dr. Stalter and Dr. Puderbaugh):

- All four University of Iowa choirs will be meeting this fall with various modes of delivery. Women's Chorale and Camerata (now an all tenor/bass choir) will be working online only with a number of exciting virtual choir projects. The Kantorei and University Choir ensembles (supervised by Drs. Stalter and Puderbaugh, respectively) will be divided into subgroups of 8-12 singers, each rehearsing their own repertoire 1-2 times per week with online learning on the days when not in rehearsal. Kantorei and University Choir will rehearse with masks on, carefully distanced throughout each large rehearsal hall for the safety of the singers, pianist, and conductor. Our spacing will exceed public health recommendations and follow the current scientific data for singers/musicians in rehearsals. All ensembles will present pre-recorded performances via the web over two evenings following Thanksgiving break.

Jazz (statement from Dr. Phillips):

The University of Iowa jazz groups intend to meet "in person" for the fall semester. Until such time as the University or School of Music's precautionary policies dictate otherwise, all jazz-area ensembles will meet with the following adjustments to protocol:

- The securing of large rehearsal spaces for all groups, ensuring that there is adequate space for proper distancing measures.
- Per UI School of Music policy, all ensembles (big band or combos) that include aerosol-producing instruments will meet for a maximum of 30 minutes in any one sitting. The traditional 2-hour rehearsal block will be broken into 30-minute sections that alternate between 30 minutes rehearsal and 30 minutes of break.
- All big bands will rehearse in the “square” set-up for the duration of the semester. This configuration ensures maximum distancing between ensemble players/director while remaining both practical and effective for the ensemble. Guarantees a minimum of 12 feet (side-by side) distance between players of like instrument and 12-30 feet between the four different sections of the ensemble.
- Small groups (combos) will rehearse and perform with similar measures of distancing included in their daily set-up.
- All ensembles will perform only twice per semester to compensate for the reduced rehearsal time. All off-campus performances for jazz groups have been suspended for the fall semester. All fall jazz performances will take place in Voxman and adhere to the SOM’s precautionary policies.
- Auditions for all jazz groups will take place per normal – during week 1 of the semester. Please contact any jazz faculty member for more information.

Opera (statement from Prof. Theisen):

This semester of Opera Workshop will be an in-depth study and analysis of the aria. Topics included will be:

- Discussion of the literary background of the opera.
- Exploration of the character considering physical characteristics, personality traits, relationships, emotional range, goals, obstacles, flaws and strengths.
- Contrasting and comparing the character to yourself and define what similarities and differences you share.
- Breaking down the text and using monologue work to find a greater depth of the storytelling aspect involved with aria presentation.
- Full staged realizations of each aria to best convey the character arc, both in the original opera context as well as in an individual performance of each aria for recital or audition needs.

Orchestras (statement from Dr. Jones):

- In order to meet the restrictions in place to assure the health and safety of our student musicians, the UISO/UICO string players will be divided into three small ensembles of equal abilities, and will perform string repertoire only for the September 30, 2020 concert. October repertoire will be decided after the semester progresses when we have a better understanding of COVID implications. Reading sessions will be planned for the remaining rehearsals following the October 28 performance.
- For safety precautions, in lieu of two days of in-person Fall auditions, UI string studio professors have been asked to submit a ranked list of their students. Players will be distributed equally and assigned to one of three string orchestras. Each string orchestra will be coached/conducted by a DMA orchestral conducting major as part of their recital requirement. The concert will be approx. one hour in length without an intermission, but will have short intervals between each conductor set for personnel exchange. Entrance and exit flow will utilize opposite doors to minimize congestive passing.
- Wearing of masks and distance placement among players will be observed at all times.
- UISO/UICO rehearsals will be held MWF 3:30-5:00p in room #2400, #2451, and Concert Hall. The TTH 1:30-2:20 rehearsal will be in #2400. Each MWF rehearsals will be 30 minutes long with 30 minutes in-between. (3:30-4:00 rehearse, 4:00-4:30 safety break, 4:30-5:00 rehearse.) TTH rehearsal will be 50 minutes long. A venue sharing rotation schedule will be structured for conductors as well as student acoustic experiences and safety considerations.
- AUSO rehearsals are Mondays 6:30-8:00p in #2451. The orchestra will be divided into two groups, one rehearsing 6:30-7:00 and one rehearsing 7:30-8:00 (7:00-7:30 safety break). Each group will rehearse the same repertoire with anticipation of combining them for the concert. AUSO was originally scheduled to perform in concert December 5, but due to classes moving to on-line after Thanksgiving, their performance will be moved to October 11.

Letter from the Director

August 3, 2020

Dear School of Music Community,

I hope this letter finds you well. The School of Music has been working tirelessly this summer to prepare for an optimal return to instruction this fall. We are committed to honoring the tradition of excellence at Iowa by basing our decisions on research. Working with a team of experts, the Voxman Music Building has been transformed into a science lab this summer, studying ACH (air changes per hour), ventilation, and aerosol behaviors in our unique spaces. We believe we are going to be as prepared as current science allows when we return to our building.

Tremendous thanks is due to the team leading this research:

- Adam Schwalje, MD, DMA (University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics)
- Henry Hoffman, MD (University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics)
- Charles Stanier, PhD (University of Iowa Professor, aerosol expert)
- Matthew Nonnenmann, PhD (University of Iowa Professor, aerosol expert)
- Dwight Schumm (Design Engineers, Cedar Rapids)
- University of Iowa Facilities Management (esp. Tom Slaubaugh and Katie Rossmann)

As our understanding of COVID-19 evolves, so will our policies. Flexibility and understanding is going to be critical as we navigate this new landscape together. The School of Music webpage will be updated as policies adapt and change, based on data.

No decisions will be made in the School of Music that do not meet both of these criteria: optimal health/safety and optimal pedagogical impact. Please join me in celebrating the resources available to us at a major research institution and the confidence this brings to our decisions and behaviors, challenging as they may be.

My best wishes,

Tammie Walker, D.M.A.
Director, School of Music

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