

**String Ensemble**  
**Grades 9 through 12**  
**Course Syllabus**  
*2011-2012*

**Course Overview:**

String Ensemble is for string instrumentalists. This course is designed to improve their skills as ensemble performers. Students will have a daily lesson emphasizing music literature from various periods of history. The ultimate goal of the string ensemble course is for all students to perform at a high level while being exposed to string orchestra literature thereby preparing them for their senior recital and college entrance auditions.

Specific objectives are as follows:

1. Correctly interpret and perform music literature according to historical timeframe or composer's intent.
2. Collaborate with other musicians to form cohesive ensemble music with attention to musical elements including tempo, balance, dynamics, phrasing, and interpretation.
3. Play a variety of repertoire, emphasizing all appropriate literature.
4. Develop sight-reading skills
5. Develop orchestral skills specific to string playing

**Content Standards:**

DCPS music content standards are basis for the core skills and concepts addressed in this course:

1. Undertake daily instrument technique exercises.
2. Learn to play through music notation and develop sight reading proficiency.
3. Develop proficiency in performing assorted etudes and compositions.
4. Learn to play a varied repertoire of music
5. Understand the history and culture of the instrument

## **Course Materials:**

1. Instrument
2. Instrument accessories (i.e. shoulder rest, mute, rosin, cloth to clean instrument off, etc...)
3. Pencil and music folder

## **Course Requirements**

1. All rehearsals and performances are mandatory. This includes after school rehearsals in preparation for performances (work scheduling and extra-curricular activity conflicts will not be acceptable reasons to miss rehearsals).
2. Prepare music through a rigorous daily practice schedule.

## **Grading Procedures**

Students will be graded by:

1. Quality of class and homework assignments.
2. Evidence of a consistent daily practice schedule
3. Class attendance and promptness. Any absence must be supported by a note from home signed by a parent or legal guardian. Tardiness without a pass will affect the student's grade. Three unexcused tardy equal one unexcused absence. Five unexcused absences result in the failure of the course.
4. Rehearsal protocol
5. Class participation
6. Preparation for and quality of performances.
7. See attached grading rubric for further explanation.

## **Dress requirements for performances**

Students will not be allowed to perform and will receive a failing grade for the performance if they are not in the correct performance attire as indicated below.

- Male – black tailored suit (no saggy cuffs), white collared shirt, long matching black tie, black bow tie, black socks, black shine-able dress shoes
- Female – black T-length dress, skirt with white collared blouse with sleeves-  $\frac{3}{4}$  length or longer, females who play instruments such as cello, guitar, bass clarinet must wear long skirts or full-flowing black dress culottes with white collared blouse with sleeves-  $\frac{3}{4}$  length or longer, black/off black stockings and black dress shoes. No cleavage, bare midriff, bare shoulders (strapless or halter dresses). Any dresses with bare shoulders (with straps) must be covered with a cardigan or shawl. All jewelry worn for performance must be modest and conservative. No pants/pantsuits allowed. For additional information, please seek advice from the designated department female advisor.

Grade	Tone Quality	Rhythm/Tempo	Rudiments/Technical Accuracy	Interpretation/Expression	Unexcused absences	Unexcused tardy
A to A-	In tune and distinct throughout with: accurate pitches, clear controlled tone, breath support, and correct bowing. Strong evidence of personal practice	All rhythms are performed accurately while performing at written metronome marking. Strong evidence of personal practice	Evidenced mastery of the music in performance of rhythm, melody, phrasing, articulation and intonation. Strong evidence of personal practice	Conveyed the theme and style of music with excellence; mood/dynamics very effective; maintained the integrity of the music as written. Strong evidence of personal practice	0 - 1	0 - 1
B+ to B-	In tune and nearly accurate throughout with pitches, controlled tone, breath support and correct bowing. Adequate evidence of personal practice	Most rhythms are performed accurately while performing at a given or altered metronome marking. Adequate evidence of personal practice	Evidenced near mastery in performance of rhythm, melody, phrasing, articulation and intonation. Adequate evidence of personal practice	Conveyed the theme and style of music most of the time; expresses mood and dynamics effectively most of the time; maintained the integrity of the music as written. Adequate evidence of personal practice	2	2-4
C+ to C-	Mostly in tune and accurate throughout with minor inconsistencies in one or two tonal components. Evidence of personal practice	The tempo is unsteady at times and some rhythms are inaccurate, not adhering to metronome marking. Evidence of personal practice	Evidenced some mastery of rhythm, melody, phrasing, articulation and intonation but performance is inconsistent. Evidence of personal practice	Somewhat conveyed the theme and style of music; limited development of music: dynamics, mood, style, and expression. Evidence of personal practice	3	5-7
D+ to D	Many pitches are played incorrectly and out of tune. Little evidence of personal practice	The tempo is noticeably faster or slower and the beat is inconsistent throughout. Little evidence of personal practice	Evidenced little or no mastery of rudiments/technique in performance. Little evidence of personal practice	Poor or no development of music; poor or no application of dynamics, mood, style, expression. Little evidence of personal practice	4	8 - 9
F	Unable to perform, completely unprepared. No evidence of personal practice	Unable to perform, completely unprepared. No evidence of personal practice	Unable to perform, completely unprepared. No evidence of personal practice	Unable to perform, completely unprepared. No evidence of personal practice	5 or more	10 or more

**\*\*MISSING A PERFORMANCE (UNEXCUSED) WILL RESULT IN FAILURE OF THE ADVISORY.**

**\*\*MISSING TWO OR MORE PERFORMANCES (UNEXCUSED) WILL RESULT IN FAILURE OF THE CLASS**

## **Performance numerical Breakdown of Rubric**

20% Tone Quality  
20% Rhythm/Tempo  
20% Rudiments/Technical Accuracy  
20% Interpretation/Expression  
20% Scales (all Major, and all forms of Minor)

*Attendance and Behavior will affect the overall grade.*

### **Attendance**

Unexcused absences and tardy will affect the student's overall grade as listed in the rubric and community handbook. All performances and performance rehearsals are mandatory.

### **Behavior**

Every five demerits will reduce a student's performance grade by one letter (i.e. Performance grade =B+, student receives 10 demerits for the advisory, student's grade for the advisory = D+).

Demerits will be issued for but not limited to the following infractions:

Unauthorized talking/conversations  
Eating food or chewing gum  
Being disruptive to class

Demerits may be removed by completing extra-credit at the discretion of the director.

I have received and read the String Ensemble Course Syllabus for the 2010-11 school year. I agree to meet all course requirements and objectives as listed in the syllabus.

\_\_\_\_\_  
STUDENT'S SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
PARENT'S SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

Please return this signed form to the teacher.