



WIND SYMPHONY

Helix Charter High School

Michael Bengé, Associate Director of Instrumental Music

COURSE PROFILE

Wind Symphony represents the most advanced members of the program, open by audition only. The goal of this music performance course is to provide the opportunity for you as a woodwind, brass, or percussion performer to come together with other like-minded (and like-spirited) musicians in an ensemble setting to rehearse and perform standard and emerging literature from the wind ensemble repertoire.

In this course we will focus on overall concepts of self and ensemble expression, engagement, participation, and performance. We will also address musical concepts of ensemble and individual balance, blend, intonation, phrasing, dynamics, articulation, tone, rhythmic precision, color, and ensemble clarity. We are going to LISTEN – to ourselves, to each other, and to the music. **All members also concurrently enroll in Marching Band or Marching PE during the fall semester to take part in the Helix Highlander Marching Band.**

THE HELIX INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC HANDBOOK

All students are expected to thoroughly read and familiarize themselves with the content of our department handbook. It will be addressed during the first few days of school and is always available online at http://helixinstrumental.org/images/uploads/2015:16_Fall_Handbook_copy.pdf. All instrumental music students are held to the policies in this handbook, regardless of prior knowledge or understanding.

DROPBOX

Our department disburses materials via Dropbox on a regular basis. You can also get your own account for free. Please email Mr. Bengé (benge@helixcharter.net) for the Dropbox link if you haven't already received it.

CURRICULUM

Wind Symphony is a smaller ensemble composed of a majority of, but not limited to, 11th and 12th grade students. Assessment and grading are LARGELY performance based, but individual student ability and individual effort on their instrument are also assessed.

All members of this course are expected to commit to personal and ensemble excellence. Regular and faithful attendance to all rehearsals, dress rehearsals, and concerts is understood. This is a comprehensive performance-based class. You are expected to learn notes and rhythms *before* attending the next rehearsal. Rehearsals are not for learning your part, but for learning how your part fits into the score.

Please bring a pencil to every rehearsal and use it regularly to mark your music. Be early for rehearsal. Warm up and be mentally prepared before we begin. ("If you are on time, you are late.") Commit to being an integral part of the ensemble. That means being supportive of each other, patient, and helpful.

If you are a section leader, you have the added responsibility of LEADING your section. That means guiding your section both technically and musically, not only during sectionals, but also during every rehearsal. Section leaders are expected to organize and lead sectionals at least once every two weeks and to communicate with the conductor regarding the progress of sectionals.

Section members are expected to help create high-functioning, efficient sectionals by being on time, prepared, and engaged.

Required performances include participation in major concerts throughout the school year, participation in local and national festivals and competitions, and participation in Highlander Marching Band (1st semester) and Pep Band (2nd semester).

PRIMARY TEXTS

Wind Symphony primarily studies wind band literature. However, students may use a level 2 and 3 band method addressed care of as soon as possible. All students can benefit greatly from these basic studies and should look at them as an opportunity to hone their fundamentals.

A classroom set will be provided, but students should consider buying their own copy for use in home practice. Nick Rail Music provides us a special rate and a road rep who can deliver to school. Alan's Music in La Mesa is a local alternative.

STUDENT MATERIALS

Required materials for participation in the Helix Bands are specifically defined in the Helix Instrumental Music Handbook, viewable at http://helixinstrumental.org/images/uploads/2015:16_Fall_Handbook_copy.pdf. However, for general daily purposes please have the following:

- Student's individual instrument and all equipment necessary to play.
- Sheet music, both provided and downloaded/printed from Dropbox.
- No. 2 or equivalent mechanical PENCILS (NEVER mark on sheet music in pen). A pencil is expected to be on your music stand at every rehearsal.
- Each student will need to supply his or her own black tux or long black dress for concert performances. If necessary, a packet with ordering information will be distributed to families who missed Paperwork Day in the summer.

CONCERTS AND PERFORMANCES

Below is a typical, tentative list of performances in which the bands will participate. These are subject to change but generally follow the same rough weeks/dates every year. See the calendar at www.helixinstrumental.com/pages/calendar for final information and dates.

- ALL home football games and marching band competitions throughout the fall.
- SCSBOA Championships and Disneyland Parade overnight trip in November.
- A Fall concert, Veteran's Day concert, and/or Veteran's Day parade.
- Winter concert in December and La Mesa Christmas in the Village.

- Various concerts and concert festivals in the spring, with the traditional entire department POPS! Concert toward the end of the school year

EVALUATION

Performance assessments will mostly be done through the use of Smart Music (www.smartmusic.org). All students will need their own home subscription for Smart Music. Students who are unable to have access to Smart Music at home may do their assignments at school. Students are required to use SmartMusic for their individual performance assignments.

Attached to this syllabus is an excerpt from the Helix Instrumental Music Handbook detailing grading policy. Please familiarize yourself with it and the practice expectations outlined therein. Students are trained to practice effectively and, as such, it is the responsibility of each student to prepare for all performance evaluations.

It is especially important to note that the departmental grading policy has shifted to 1/3 Participation and Attendance, 2/3 Performance Evaluation. See the handbook for details.