

Faith Academy Mindanao
BAND HANDBOOK
2010-2011

Introduction and Philosophy

The purpose of the Faith Academy Mindanao Band program is to provide an environment in which all students can reach their fullest potentials as musicians, and to use the God given abilities that they have been given.

Music is unique and necessary. All students should have the opportunity to take part in these elements that allow them to be more human. Welcome to the FA Mindanao Bands where unique opportunities are demanding and rewarding. They will require personal commitment and dedication to common group goals and discipline.

Fundamental to the group's success are respect, integrity, class, excellence, and God-centered musicianship. Respect for oneself, one's fellow bandsmen and other performers results in an attitude of cooperation and mutual support.

Acting with integrity leads one to accept the **responsibility** of commitment for being part of these organizations. Everyone depends upon all of the other members of the group for their individual success.

Success requires trust, honesty and sincerity; each member brings a sense of pride and class to the program by his/her attitudes and actions. Those who have pride in themselves will do their honest best to always give maximum effort. Band members should not engage in any activity which will degrade themselves or the organization.

As a band and as individuals, we will strive for excellence, serving the Lord in everything that we do, as Colossians 3:23-24 states: "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving". We will also continue to learn and excel in everything, as 2 Timothy 3:14 states: "But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it."

Research Findings that Support Music and Band

- According to the U.S. College Board, students involved with music score an average of 100 points higher on SAT tests than students who are not involved with music. The longer a student has been involved with music instruction, the greater the difference. *College Board Survey of SAT Test Takers 2000*

- Dr. James Catterall of UCLA analyzed the school records of 25,000 students from the NELS88 Database as they moved through school. He found that students who studied music had higher grades, scored better on standardized tests, and had better attendance records. *Dr. James Catterall, UCLA, 1997*

- Music making offers extensive exercise for brain cells and their synapses (connections). It would be difficult to find another activity that engages so many of the brain's systems. Synapses between brain cells strengthen with use just as muscles do, and there is good reason to believe that music making increases the brain's capacity by improving these synapses. -*"The Music in Our Minds"* by Norman M. Weinberger

Personnel and Duties

The Band Director (Nate Becker) is in charge of the band program, grades 5-12. His duties are to teach, direct, supervise, coordinate, set goals, maintain the curriculum and budget, and communicate these activities to the administration, students and parents in the community.

Mr. Becker grew up in eastern and mid-west United States and attended Taylor University, receiving a Bachelor of Music in Music Education (instrumental emphasis, majored in piano, minored in trumpet). He is currently pursuing a Masters in Christian Education. Mr. Becker has taught music at Faith Academy Mindanao for the past five years, since 2004. Prior to that, he taught for two years in Indianapolis, United States.

Ensembles

The **Middle School Band** is a nucleus of the entire school band program. All middle school students will be in the band and will all rehearse all-together once a week on Fridays 5th period. There will also be two other smaller Middle School bands, the advanced and intermediate middle school band ensembles, that will each additionally rehearse twice a week during 5th period (just before lunch). All middle school students will be in one or the other, depending on their ability levels and readiness.

The **5th Grade Beginning Band** is exciting because it is where most of our students learn to play a band instrument for the first time. The beginning band (elementary division) meets three days a week during the school day with the goal of coaching beginning instrumentalists in a constructive and welcoming manner. Beginners will also be the focus of individual instruction so that they can feel comfortable, develop correct habits, and have every opportunity to strive for musical success in the future. This is the foundation for their instrumental and musical development.

The **High School Instrumental Ensemble(s)** will meet for class every school day and will receive high school academic credit for their involvement and learning. These music classes are electives and are based somewhat on the interests of the students as well as the makeup/instrumentation of the class. This semester (possibly this entire school year) there will be two High School music classes offered daily (7th & 8th periods): one will be a worship ensemble class exploring ways to use and lead different types of music in worship. The other class will be a combined beginning Jazz and world drumming ensemble, where students will learn the elements of Jazz, improvisation, and drum circle.

Students in the band program can also participate in co-curricular (outside of class schedule) **solos and small ensembles** that are arranged during the school year. These small ensembles are more student-initiated and student-owned, though the director is more than willing to help those students with their progress and musical pieces.

Music Lessons

For students who either need extra help or want to go above and beyond, **after school band lessons and/or sectionals/combos/practicing** will be offered for students in the band room. These complementary lessons and group practice times will normally be 30 minutes long and are designed to help students succeed and do their best. They are largely based on volunteer teachers who want to help young musicians in this area. Students who participate in lessons are expected to be responsible to attend those lessons/sessions regularly and promptly. If you are interested in these, please approach Mr. Becker. These lessons will begin the second or third week of school.

I also encourage students and parents to look into paying for extra private lessons from teachers in Davao or in the community. Whether it is piano, guitar, voice, or private lessons on one's band instrument, these can often help the musical development and advancement of young people and are extra to what the school provides.

Peer Teaching and Mentoring: It is said that "the teacher learns more than the student" and that students often learn more from their peers than from adults. With that in mind, I want to give students who have been playing their instrument for a while the opportunity to mentor someone who is younger or less experienced than them. Also, students who are beginners or who want coaching from a more experienced student can seek help in that way. If a student volunteers to do this, he/she will need to talk with Mr. Becker and set up a time to teach the other student(s) in the band room (or in one of the practice rooms) at least once a week and then communicate with Mr. Becker what is happening. The students involved should both be learning a variety of things as they journey together in music and on their instruments.

Concert Guidelines for Band Members/Performers:

- Be there!
- Be on your best behavior; be professional
- Be on time for when you are told to be there
- Stand, sit, and walk with good posture and poise
- Refrain from talking or making inappropriate sounds
- Look at the director when performing/playing
- Refrain from making gestures that would be a distraction in the performance (ex. Playing with one's hair, hands, or facial parts; waiving; turning head often...)
- Stay focused and relatively relaxed while performing
- Remember the great importance and balance of both confidence and humility.
- Enjoy performing and use it to glorify God, to edify others, and to develop your own personal growth.

Concert Attire for Performers:

Uniform dress at performances is very effective. Thus, each Middle School Band member/performer is expected wear a white plain dress shirt (no t-shirts and no printed words or large logos), black or dark slacks or skirts (no shorts), and dress shoes (no sandals or running shoes). If the concert attire for a specific performance/event is different than the above statements, students and parents will be informed well in advance of such changes.

Attitude

A positive attitude is characterized by an optimistic outlook toward rehearsals and performances, cooperation in preparation and maintenance of facilities and an eagerness to do what is necessary to be successful.

Regardless of your ability or experience, you should do your best to improve and to see the group be successful. Those who do not project a positive, cooperative attitude are asked to change their manner. You must care about the group.

Those who have pride in themselves will project a positive attitude. Discipline builds inner confidence and morale.

Morale is the spirit in which the members submit their services and derive pride in being a member of the group.

- When you are afraid to fail you deny yourself the opportunity to succeed.
- Plan for success. If you don't, you are planning for failure. Dream no small dreams.
- Excellence will not come to those who wait, only to those who pursue it.
- A great pleasure in life is doing what people say you cannot.
- Never, never, never quit!

Practicing and Effort

To achieve success on their instrument and in music, every person needs to put in the time and energy. Students are encouraged to practice their instrument at least 4-5 days a week (20-45 minutes for each practice) outside of band rehearsal/class and to be pro-active and intentional about their progress. Practicing is not just about quantity (amount of time) but also about quality (**how** one practices). The student who practices an average amount of time will achieve much more **if** his/her practicing includes focused energy, teachability, goals, desire, and purpose

Students who excel in these areas of attitude, practicing, effort, leadership, Christian character, and musical skill will be rewarded in band (ex. Individual awards, positive feedback, recognition, more privileges and opportunities, etc). But more importantly, they will be rewarded intrinsically, knowing that they have done their personal best and will thoroughly enjoy the music they are making.

The Superior Practicer Award

This award will be given every semester to the student who fulfills the following criteria:

Practices at least **180 minutes** (3 hours) each week.

Practices at least **5 days each week**.

Does the first two criteria for at least **15 weeks** in the semester.

The Commendable Practicer Award

This award will also be given every semester to students who fulfill the following criteria:

Practices at least **150 minutes** (2.5 hours) each week.

Practices at least **4 days each week**.

Does the first two criteria for at least **12 weeks** in the semester

Other Awards:

There will be other awards given such as "The Team-Player Award", the "Music Christian Character Award" and "Music Excellence Award" as well as various opportunities for recognition and celebration for those deserving students. Some of the most valuable rewards, however, are intrinsic and from within. Knowing that you have worked hard and learned lots, played beautiful music, or have achieved a personal goal, these are probably some of the greatest reasons why you should do your personal best.

Good Practice Habits:

Establish a DAILY routine:

Warm-up

Winds: long tones, tonguing exercises, finger exercises

Brass: buzzing, long tones, lip slurs, melodic phrasing

Strings: Tuning instrument, Ear-training and Finger Positions, Bowing techniques

and Posture for best sound possible.
Percussion: rudiments and drumming patterns (with metronome)
Scales, etudes, technical studies
Use entire range of instrument and in different keys
Use a variety of dynamic levels and articulations
Rhythmic studies
Sight-reading
Band Pieces and Solo/Duet/Trio Pieces of various styles & genres
Old favorites

Practice diligently:

Strive for correct posture, hand positions, breathing, embouchure, tone and intonation.
Regulate length of daily practice with quality, not quantity. Don't just practice what you **can** play; also practice what you **can't** play.
Listen intently and work for improvement.
Stop practicing when you are fatigued – don't injure your embouchure, fingers, or muscles by overdoing

Keep your practice record tablet in your band folder so it is easy to record your daily practice time.

General Conduct

- If you think the director will not like it, don't do it!
- Members of the Faith Academy Mindanao Bands are expected to conduct themselves in an upstanding manner and to exercise common sense.
- All band members are expected to follow the instruction of any teacher, instructor or chaperone.
- Band members should not play on or play with the instruments or equipment of others. This leads to potential damage and a general disrespect for the belongings of others.

Attendance

Attendance at all rehearsals and performances is expected (except for illness, funeral or wedding of immediate family member, or family emergencies).

CLASS MATERIALS

Every band student is required to bring the following materials to band class every band day:

Band Method Book(s)

Music folder with all necessary music (the folder needs to be big enough so that music does not get damaged).

*Some might need a special binder for all their music and notes

Pencil

Instrument and Equipment (Supplies for the instrument to function well)

Percussionist: Need to own their own snare sticks

Rehearsal Procedures

- Every Band member is important!
- Rehearsals are the place to try, correct mistakes, ask questions, listen and learn. Practice is done individually, at home, and rehearsals are done to put the group together at school.
- Group warm-ups and fundamental skill builders are posted on the whiteboard at the beginning of rehearsal/class. Have the material arranged in order for quick access.
- When the class begins (when the clock is at the time when class should begin), you should be in your assigned seat with your instrument assembled, with a pencil on your music stand, and ready for announcements or warm-ups.
- There should be no talking when the conductor is in front of the band (on the podium). Refrain from talking or playing during announcements, questions or explanations of the music during a rehearsal. Raise your hand if you have questions or comments.
- Be aware of and give attention to; good tone, proper warm-up, appropriate articulations, appropriate fingerings (including alternate and trill), a clean and well-maintained instrument, correct dynamics, correct posture, correct hand and instrument position, concert pitch transpositions, vibrato, phrasing, correct intonation, interval recognition and performance skill, enharmonic understanding, musical form, musical terminology, and significance of performed literature. This is your job!
- Do not prepare to leave until the Director dismisses the class.
- Keep all books, music, and instruments in their assigned places. Cases should be returned to the spaces provided during rehearsal. Clean your area every day before you leave. Pride will show through in our attention and care for facilities. Everyone would much rather rehearse in a clean facility.
- Do not study materials for another class during rehearsal unless given specific instructions for a study hall by the Director.
- Throw away your gum when you enter the band room. Except for a closed water bottle for hydration purposes only or for very rare group eating occasions, food and drinks are not allowed in the band room.
- You are assigned equipment/music and will be held responsible to check in those items at the appropriate time. You are charged for any missing or damaged items.
- Our goal of excellence in performance can only be reached if each band member looks at the rehearsal as the means to an end. Anyone missing a rehearsal doesn't gain and affects everyone.
- Everyone shares in the responsibility of setting up for rehearsal and helping to clean up afterwards. Expediting the set up will provide a more efficient rehearsal and allow everyone to contribute to the betterment of the whole.
- Every Band member is expected to have his/her instrument in good working condition and all necessary music, pencils at all rehearsals.

Grading System

FA Mindanao Middle School Band Program will use a portfolio for purposes of grades. Please see that handout for information regarding the grading system.

Facilities and Equipment

- The school has provided us with facilities and equipment that meet our needs to be successful. It is our job to maintain what we have as well as stay current with future needs and requirements of our facilities and equipment.
- Everyone must be sensitive to the security of the band room, individual belongings and the school building. Do not leave money or valuables in the band room.
- There are areas to store your instruments and music related items. Please store your instrument in the band room during the school day. If you store it near your school lockers, make sure it is in a safe place and out of the way.
- Instruments must not be left outside overnight—they must be either taken home or left in the band room.
- **Take care of your instrument!** Always know where it is and don't leave it in a vulnerable position where it could be easily broken.
- Students should have permission from a music director before using common equipment such as pianos, computer, keyboards, and drums.
- Students should have their instrument in good playing condition and all the necessary equipment in order to maximize their playing sound and success.

Music Books and Literature:

We are grateful to have a rapidly growing music and band literature library here at Faith. Band students are provided with one to three band method and literature books as their music “textbooks”—some of these books will also have coinciding CDs that students can play along with. They will also be provided with various band literature sheet music as the year progresses. Students are responsible for all music that is owned by the school and will be charged for any missing or damaged music/books/CDs/resources. They should have a nice band folder to keep all their music in good condition.

If students want to borrow an extra music book or music to play solos and extra music to play with fellow musicians, they may do so by signing it out on the music sign-out sheet with Mr. Becker. Similar to the library, when they are finished borrowing the music/book, they should return it promptly so that others may use the music in the future. Students will be charged for any missing or unreturned music that is owned by the school.

Instrumental Rental

Students are encouraged to own their own instrument. I encourage parents and students who can foresee playing an instrument for at least a couple more years to seriously look into purchasing or getting their own instrument. This will help students take more ownership of their instrument and it can go with them anywhere and for as long as they want.

Yet, we at Faith Academy Mindanao are blessed to have several band instruments that students can rent for a reasonable price. The proceeds from the rental fees goes into the school band budget for purchasing and maintaining/repairing instruments and instrument supplies to help sustain and build the band program.

Rental fees are Php 4,000 for the entire school year (or Php 2,000/semester). Students who rent instruments need to fill out and return an instrumental rental form to Mr. Becker. Following that, after a couple of weeks, students who rent will be charged in their school student account and will then need to pay the school business office. Students who rent instruments that stay in the band room, such as percussionists, electric bass, sousaphone, will be charged half the normal rental fee (ie. Php 2,000 for the entire school year).

The school will pay the cost of school-owned instruments for routine maintenance and repairs needed as a result of normal use. However, any repair costs from damage caused by improper care or abuse of the instrument will be charged to the students account (ex. If the instrument was dropped or lost).

Supplies

Students are responsible for their own instrument supplies, such as reeds, valve oil, cleaning swabs, drum sticks, etc. Students who play a reed instrument (clarinet, saxophone) are expected to supply their own reeds from a local music store (see below). They will be provided one reed at the beginning of the school year to get them started, but after that they will need to purchase their own.

Recommended Equipment and Accessories:

Heavy plastic or cloth carrying case to hold music, band folder, pencils, and practice record.

Nice Band Folder to hold music.

Two sharpened pencils and eraser.

Instrument in good working order. If you do not have your own instrument, you may rent one from the school. The band teacher will give you an instrument rental form to fill out. See information above.

General Equipment for all students for home practice.

Music stand (make sure you have a good place at home to put your music on so that you practice with good posture habits...)

Mirror for viewing posture and embouchure

Metronome to help with steady tempo and rhythm

Tuner so that you can play better in tune

CD and/or DVD Player to play along with songs

Woodwinds only. Swab (cleaning utensils), cork grease, reed holder, reeds, mouthpiece brush, polishing cloth. Most of these items may be purchased at one of the local music stores.

Brasswinds only. Valve oil, slide grease, polishing cloth, mouthpiece brush, flexible cleaning snake, slide cream and water sprayer for trombone only. Most of these items may be purchased at one of the local music stores or in the band room.

Violins only. Rosin, bow-hair, extra strings.

Percussion only. Stick/mallet bag, personal drumsticks, rubber bell mallets, practice pad, a set of bells.

Recommended Local Music Stores

Music Factory Outlet (Better Components)

- NCCC Mall, 2nd Floor, near food court
- Phone Number: 297-2757
- E-mail: Bettercom26@yahoo.com.ph
- they might possibly also offer private lessons

Sound Chaser

- On Querino Blvd., not too far from the Shell Gas Station or “The Venue”
(*Directions from Faith Academy*)
 - Take Ruby/Mabini St. all the way until it ends
 - Turn left onto Querino Blvd.
 - Sound Chaser store is a small store on the right, about 200-300 meters after turning left onto Querino
 - If you see Shell Gas Station on right, then you’ve gone too far
- Phone Number: 227-2789 / 224-5823

Victoria Department Store Music Section

- Victoria Plaza, 1st Floor, between grocery store and Kodak

JB Music

- SM Mall, 2nd Floor (it’s near another music store there, “Perfect Pitch”)
- Phone Number: 297-8266

Yamaha Music

- On J. P. Laurel St., across from Victoria Plaza
- More on Keyboards and Pianos and Yamaha made instruments
- They might also offer private music lessons