

RETURN TO LEARN
A-STATE DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC PANDEMIC PREPARATIONS AND POLICIES
Approved, 8/21/20

Policies will be updated as needed.

Please refer to the A-State Coronavirus & Department of Music Websites for Updated Information

[A-State Coronavirus Website](#)
[A-State Department of Music Website](#)

Introduction

As our Chancellor, [Dr. Kelly Damphousse noted](#), “Arkansas State University is committed to the health and safety of our faculty, staff, and students as our highest priority, while also seeking to continue delivering the highest quality learning and working environment possible. We have relied heavily on guidance from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Governor Asa Hutchinson’s Office, the Arkansas Department of Health (ADH), local health authorities, and input from our campus community.”

To that end, the Department of Music Faculty and Staff, in conjunction and collaboration with faculty, staff, and administrators, both locally and across the country, worked toward taking steps to promote health and safety within our field of music. In addition, research such as the [International Coalition of Performing Arts Aerosol Study](#) informed these recommended policies and procedures.

As we move forward as a music community, we must all do our part to protect ourselves and our fellow Red Wolves. As Rudyard Kipling stated, “For the strength of the Pack is the Wolf, and the strength of the Wolf is the Pack.”

Campus-Wide Safety Precautions – [see this website for additional information](#)

General Safety Practices

- All A-State students, faculty, staff and employees are required employees and students to wear masks (or where approved face shield) while on campus.
- Wash your hands often with soap for at least 20 seconds – use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid sharing supplies and equipment.
- Develop sanitizing procedures for common areas and equipment.

Physical Distancing

- Maintain at least a six-foot distance from others. A good rule of thumb is about two arm’s lengths away from you.
- Follow any signage that directs you where to stand or areas to avoid.
- Avoid gathering in groups in common areas in buildings.

- Continue to limit large group meetings –utilize distance communication tools like WebEx or Zoom.
- Utilize sign reminders to practice social distancing in shared areas.

Cleaning of Areas

While A-State's Facilities Management team will support enhanced cleaning of university facilities, to maintain the highest level of personal hygiene, we are depending on all individuals, students, faculty and staff, to utilize wipes and other sanitizer products provided. In some common areas or equipment needs, we ask students, faculty, and staff to wipe down apparatus and equipment after individual use to prepare it for the next person.

Vulnerable Populations

The CDC and ADH both identify specific groups that are vulnerable populations – those over 65 years of age and those with pre-existing conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, asthma/lung conditions, obesity, and clotting factor issues. If you wish to request a reasonable accommodation, students should contact [Access and Accommodation Services](#). Faculty and staff wishing accommodations should contact [Human Resources](#).

COVID-19 Overview – [see this website for additional information](#)

Common Symptoms

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever (>100.4 degrees)
- Chills
- Muscle pain/body aches
- Sore throat
- Fatigue
- Diarrhea
- New onset of loss of taste or smell (*without a stuffy nose*)
- **This list does not include all possible symptoms.**

For the most up-to-date information on COVID-19 symptoms, check the [CDC's website](#).

If you think that you may be contagious, have been in contact with someone who was known to have coronavirus, or have traveled to an area with a known outbreak, call your health provider in advance. Please do not show up at a clinic, urgent care or other health facility without calling first. Your provider will need to take special measures to protect other people in the clinic.

A student should immediately notify the [Student Health Center](#) at 870-972-2054 during this time frame. If you are experiencing symptoms do not report to the health clinic unless you have been directed to do so. Please call the Student Health Center and receive specific direction.

Please consult the [A-State Coronavirus Website](#) for additional information and guidelines and answers to frequently asked questions.

Masks – General and Music Specific

The university's Return to Learn plan requires use of face coverings by all students, faculty and staff for indoor common spaces, including classrooms. Cloth face masks will need to be maintained. Please see this [website](#) for additional details.

General Recommendations for Using a Face Mask

- Wash your hands before putting on your face covering.
- Put it over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin.
- Try to fit it snugly against the sides of your face.
- Make sure you can breathe easily.
- Keep the covering on your face the entire time you are around others.
- Don't put the covering around your neck or up on your forehead.
- Don't touch the face covering and, if you do, wash your hands.

Music Specific Recommendations for Masks

- All musicians must wear a mask when engaged in musical performance when indoors. Masks are recommended when performing outdoors.
- Woodwind and Brass musicians will need a second mask that has been adapted to facilitate sound production. This should be a multi-layer, surgical style mask with a small opening, or a mask specifically designed with a flap or overlap feature allowing facial contact with the instrument. The Music Department will provide one such mask to students
- All woodwind and brass **instruments** should also have a mask over the bell to prevent aerosol spread. A MERV 13 type of material is recommended to supplement cloth bell coverings. Non-stretchy materials should be avoided if possible.
- All students in vocal ensembles and applied vocal lessons will be provided a second mask adapted to remain secure while singing.
- Masks should be worn by all students, faculty and staff prior to entering any music classroom. Masks should continue to be worn at all times.
- No talking should occur in any music classroom without a mask being worn properly.

Disinfectant Supplies and Procedures

A-State will be providing a limited amount of disinfectant supplies such as hand sanitizer and wipes. Students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to supplement these supplies with their own personal disinfectant supplies and products, some of which may be specific to our needs as musicians. If using supplies not provided by Facilities Management, be sure they are on the EPA-approved list. There will be limits on the number of individuals who can be in common areas such as instrument storage rooms. Additionally, individuals entering common areas should have a sanitizing wipe to clean surfaces before and after touching them. The wipes should be discarded properly upon leaving the area. Other disinfecting procedures, such as for instruments that should not be cleaned by sanitizing wipes, such as percussion or string instruments, will be developed by faculty in those specific areas.

Students and faculty should bring water bottles for personal use.

Students should disinfect chairs, desks, music stands, and shared equipment both before and after class sessions with sanitation materials. Safety is everyone's responsibility. Please do not assume that other people disinfected the materials or that someone else will disinfect them.

Instruments

Students should not share wind instruments. A-State faculty and staff will check out university-owned wind instruments as needed to students at the start of the semester. String instruments should not be shared, if at all possible. For instruments that must be shared (e.g., pianos, percussion), please adhere to the specified disinfectant protocols.

Musicians should not release water keys onto floors. Instruments should be emptied away from others and with minimal airflow. Individuals are responsible for carrying their own absorbent, disposable materials (such as a Puppy Pad) or a container to catch condensation. Reusable items for condensation, such as towels or containers, should be changed and disinfected daily.

Applied Lessons and Studio Classes

The default instructional method for applied lessons for vocal, woodwind, and brass musicians will be online. Other lessons may also require this delivery format. It may be possible for other lessons to occur with face to face instruction as outlined below.

Remote lessons conducted with students in practice rooms and faculty at another location will not exceed 30 minutes in duration, and general protocols for masks and cleaning practice rooms will be followed, see below. Remote lessons conducted with the student playing/singing from a location other than FA may last up to 60 minutes.

Students may be able to practice their instruments within their dorm room, but only for piano, strings, percussion, and guitar. We encourage the students to speak with their roommate/roommates and follow guidelines for quiet hours. Also, string, percussion, or guitar students may practice as a group in larger campus housing areas, as long as they mask, social distance, and do not sing.

Voice, Woodwind, and Brass Lessons

Directives from the Arkansas Department of Health regarding [music performance](#) and the released research from the [International Coalition of Performing Arts Aerosol Study](#) support the practice of not having lessons indoors. Face to face lessons outdoors could be a possibility based on space available and adherence to safety and distancing guidelines (6 x 6 foot spacing for most instruments, 9 x 6 foot spacing for trombones). Also, when remote lessons are played from indoor locations, there will be a 30-minute period between lessons in a particular room, to allow for air ventilation and filtration. Canopies with open sides have been purchased for outdoor use. Tents with side flaps lowered are not allowed.

For lessons played in FA rooms, students will be required to wear performance face masks and use bell covers on their instruments.

All Other Applied Lessons (Piano, Strings, Percussion, Guitar)

Most faculty offices are not large enough to provide adequate physical distancing. Music faculty and staff will determine lesson location. All individuals will wear masks, and distancing and cleaning protocols will be required. Face-to-face lessons indoors will be 30 minutes, and there must be a 30-minute buffer between lessons, during which the room will be vacant, to allow for air exchange. Percussion lessons will occur in the Percussion Annex or Minx Rehearsal Hall. Prof. Collison will be teaching remotely. Please check with him for details about the schedule and cleaning guidelines for these instruments and spaces.

Piano students will have their lessons in Dr. Clark and Prof. Henkelmann's studios with mask, distancing, and cleaning protocols.

When possible, instructors should sit/stand perpendicular to the student at a distance that exceeds the minimum of six feet. Students should face away from the instructor when playing. Instructors should wear face masks in lessons when not needed to demonstrate for performing. Singers should wear masks at all times, including while singing. No speaking should occur without a mask. Faculty and students will be responsible for keeping instruments and spaces clean and sanitized. Wipes and hand sanitizer will be available. Everyone should wash or sanitize their hands before and after each lesson.

Collaborative Pianists

All students should read and be familiar with the Collaborative Pianist Guidelines (p. 16 of Music Student Handbook). Students should follow the Applied Lesson guidelines above for their various instruments. Collaborative pianists will provide recordings for singers, brass, and woodwinds. For other lessons, physical distance between pianists, student performers, and faculty members should be at least 6x6 feet. Pianists will be responsible for sanitizing keys before and after use.

Teaching Lessons to Pre-College Students in the Fine Arts Building

Until directed otherwise, current A-State students, faculty, and staff will not teach face to face lessons in the Fine Arts Building to anyone but current A-State students. Teaching these lessons is important, which is why virtual, online lessons for these individuals are highly encouraged.

Ensembles

Students should check with individual faculty members regarding the method of rehearsal and instruction for each ensemble. Indoor rehearsals and performances for wind instrument and vocal ensembles will not occur. Outdoor rehearsals and performances, when possible and appropriate, will be provided. Ensembles rehearsing indoors (at this time, only ensembles that do not include voice, woodwinds, or brass) should all be masked, distanced, and arranged in lines facing the same direction due to aerosol spread by normal breathing. In addition, all ensembles rehearsing indoors should rehearse no longer than 30 minutes, followed by a 20-minute break before continuing or starting the next rehearsal.

Other Music Classes

Students should check with individual faculty members regarding protocols for each class. Please refer to the [A-State Coronavirus Website](#) & [A-State Department of Music Website](#) for updated information. An indoor class or lesson in a classroom must be a 30 minutes, with a 30-minute buffer between classes or lessons, during which the room will be vacant, to allow for air exchange.

It is recommended that faculty teaching classes use a portable amplifier to keep their voices at a low conversational volume. These have been purchased. Students should also keep their voices as low as possible. Amplification devices used on the Band Practice Field or elsewhere and microphones used by multiple people should be disinfected between users.

Recital Attendance Class will largely be conducted remotely. Dr. Ed Owen will distribute plans and protocols.

Practice Rooms

If students have an alternate place to practice outside of FA practice rooms, they are encouraged to use it.

Students must follow all masking and disinfecting protocols. These include washing hands, wiping down stands, piano keyboards, doorknobs, light switches, and all high-touch surfaces before and after each use of the room. The use of personal wire stands is encouraged, but students must still wipe down all surfaces.

For lessons taken by vocalists and woodwind/brass players in Fine Arts Center locations, students will be required to wear performance face masks and use bell covers on their instruments.

Individual rooms may not be occupied for more than 30 minutes, with a 30-minute buffer in which the room is vacant, to allow for air exchange. Even-numbered rooms will be occupied on the hour to the half-hour (e.g., 10:00-10:30). Odd-numbered rooms will be occupied from the half hour to the next on the hour (e.g., 10:30-11:00). Music faculty and staff will post practice room schedules on each room, with break times listed. Keep doors open when exiting. Students must sign in on a sign on the door each time they use a practice room.

If protocols established by the Department of Music are not adhered to, the use of practice rooms may be significantly restricted or prohibited.

Technology Suggestions – [see this website for additional information](#)

Students should communicate technology challenges with their professors. A small amount of technology, such as webcams, microphones, and WiFi hotspots, may be available. If the university transitions to all online instruction, campus housing will likely remain available for students who do not have a safe place to move or who do not have access to the internet elsewhere. Students off-campus will need to ensure that they have reliable access to the internet to continue their course work.

Please check this list to be certain you have the following technology.

- Internet Access—You should make arrangements to have access to the Internet, preferably high-speed Internet, for the duration of this course. A wired, high-speed, Internet connections (ethernet cable), is highly recommended especially when taking a test.
- Computer Operating Systems
 - For PCs: Windows 8+
 - For MACs: OS 10.13+
 - For Cellular Phones: iOS or Android
- iOS Devices, any of these options should work; however, completing most course assignments will need a computer:
 - iPhone 6s or later, iPad Air 2 or later
- Android Devices, any of these options should work; however, completing most course assignments will need a computer:
 - Samsung Galaxy (S9+, Note 9+), Google Pixel (3A+), OnePlus (7T+)
- Software—You will be the most successful in this course if you have access to a computer with the following software installed:
 - Microsoft Office –**Excel, Power Point and Word.** . A-State has secured for you access to the latest MS Office software for both Mac and PC users. For more information, please visit the [software download](#) page where you will find other tools needed to be successful in this course.
 - Students are welcome to use Mac Applications such as Keynote, Numbers, and Pages, but please plan to convert these documents to the Microsoft file types prior to assignment submission. This course technology requirement also applies to Google Slides, Sheets, and Docs.
 - Browsers, Plug-ins, Players and Viewers—to take full advantage of all the features in this course, be sure you have the right technology at your fingertips. This includes:
 - Blackboard-supported browser - Firefox 60+, Chrome 74+, and Safari 12+ (Internet Explorer is no longer supported) are compatible with the current version of Blackboard.
 - [Acrobat Reader](#)
 - It is recommend running the [Blackboard Browser Check](#) to verify installed plug-ins on your computer
- Additional Computer Hardware: web camera, microphone, and speakers (can be internal hardware already available on your computer)