



MOREHEAD STATE UNIVERSITY
MARCHING BAND

STUDENT STAFF HANDBOOK



REMEMBER THE MSUMB CORE TENETS:

BE PRESENT

BE PREPARED

BE PROFESSIONAL

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Student Leaders,

I am incredibly excited to begin my third year at MSU and to taking on my new role as Interim Director of Bands. I am looking forward to working with each of you to help our band reach its highest potential. As the student leaders of this organization, please know that I will rely on you to fulfill your responsibilities to the fullest and to remain consistently proactive and solution-oriented. A positive attitude, initiative, and a solid work ethic will be your greatest tools. Your greatest resource will be each other!

I will be completely honest with you - leadership is hard. When things go well, you get no credit and when they go poorly, you get all the blame. Leadership is a SELFLESS and often lonely role in which you must always put others first and do whatever it takes to SERVE those for whom you are responsible. Despite this, the skills you will practice daily, the sacrifices you make on behalf of our band, and the satisfaction and fulfillment you will experience through your people-centric work will serve you the rest of your life and is exceptional preparation for your future teaching careers. Doing for others will always be more rewarding than doing for self. As a good friend once told me, "Band is a WE thing, not a ME thing." Adopt this attitude and good things will come your way - the lessons of leadership are LIFE lessons.

I am going to trust you from day one — you are not in these positions by chance or by accident, you EARNED them. I am going to be asking much of you and will send you to do your work without reservation, knowing full well that it will be accomplished successfully. At the same time, I am going to ask you to trust me. My role has a number of implied and explicit responsibilities undertaken on behalf of a variety of stakeholders (e.g., students, faculty, alumni, community, MSU, etc.). The decisions I make and the actions I take will always be in keeping with these responsibilities. I will ask you to exude a sense of "buy-in." Your peers will follow your lead! Group dynamics, especially in a large-group setting, are complex and it is vital that we have an exceptionally positive morale within our ensemble. Drama dies if it is not fed — your role in quashing drama and maintaining and/or improving group morale is unequalled. You are the front line!

In closing, I just want to reiterate my excitement and express my hope that you share it! We are going to have a great semester and I have no doubt we will all learn much. Thank you for your willingness to serve!

All my best,



DuWayne Dale, MSUMB Director
Interim Director of Bands
Assistant Professor of Music





STUDENT STAFF HANDBOOK

This handbook is meant to provide you with a clear, concise overview of your leadership role and how best to effectively serve our band program. Here are a few important first steps:

Before the first rehearsal:

- Read the contents of this handbook as well as the MSUMB Handbook
- Be sure that you have all the equipment and materials expected of band members
- Plan what you'll say and what you'll do the first time you're in front of the band or your section
- Consider goals you have for your section and for our band this semester - make all goals SMART (**S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **R**elevant, **T**ime-bound)

At our first ensemble meeting:

- Avoid the temptation to gravitate to cliques or to only speak to old friends - reach out to new faces!
- Circulate - don't confine yourself to your section or to one area of the room
- SMILE, it increases your face value (you never get a second chance at a first impression)
- Learn names - when you first meet, it's 100% OK to have someone repeat their name or for you to repeat it. Later, it becomes awkward, so don't miss your chance.
- As we near the start of our meeting time, move to your seats in a timely manner so that others are reminded to do so as well
- Always be ready to jot down notes about important things you can remind your section about later or so that, if someone asks, you'll know the answer
- Most leadership behaviors are at odds with our natural human tendencies - you must remain self-aware and consciously choose how to act until it becomes second nature. Your "performance" begins the moment you come in contact with other band members
- At the same time, most people can smell "fake" a mile away. Be sure that you are being genuine in your words and actions.

First sectionals/first rehearsals

- It can't be stressed enough how important the tone we set in the first sectionals and first large group indoor and outdoor rehearsals is to the success of our band this semester. Model appropriate behaviors from the start.
- If a behavioral issue arises, try to avoid addressing this with a member in front of others. Early on, when everyone is acclimating to one another and establishing social connections, this can cause the member to become defensive and may lose you their trust for the long term. Wait for a break and speak one-on-one.
- If one strategy doesn't work for you, these early rehearsals are a great time to experiment and discover ways that will. If it's not working try something else.



WHY DO WE DO EARLY WEEK?

Early Week is a concentrated program of conditioning (both mental and physical) and preparation for performances that will take place during the coming season. The goals include:

1. Review and sharpen student staff performance and teaching skills
2. Teach/Review the marching and playing fundamentals necessary for the success of our band
3. Help new members establish suitable standards for performances and develop a sense of dedication and commitment to the organization
4. Promote esprit de corps across the entire organization
5. Establish rehearsal attitudes and procedures that will allow for maximum accomplishment during our limited time frame and that will serve us well throughout the semester
6. Develop a uniform approach to both musical and visual performance

Our time is precious and we must accomplish much. The success of the entire fall semester rests on our ability to establish routines, behaviors, and attitudes conducive to the type of achievement we want. Student leaders play the MOST VITAL ROLE in making this happen. Although most of our time is directed toward developing performance skills, remember that a very special social development is also taking place. New members must feel that they are succeeding and are earning a place in the band through their accomplishments. At the same time they must feel that they are establishing friendships and special relationships that make them a part of the band family. Student leaders must make sure every new member is given the attention and support necessary to help he/she "survive" the transition to college life. Remember that other veterans in your section will be wonderful supports for these newest members, too.

As a staff member, which every student leader is, you are responsible for the morale and attitude of our band. It is important that leaders take the time to get to know everyone in the band (even in other sections) and to make the new members feel welcome and important. Your support will mean a great deal to these students, many of whom will be away from home for the first time. Think back to your first days at MSU. What made you feel good about being here? Being in the Marching Band? Take the time to discuss important issues with your section.

Consider two truths of leadership: 1) the best leaders are also the best followers and 2) the best leaders are those who empower and encourage others to become effective leaders.



TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION WITH BAND MEMBERS

Take the opportunity to discuss the following topics early on and, as the season progresses, revisit them often. Consider how important each will be for our success:

ATTENDANCE

EVERY person is important and contributes to the musical and visual elements of our performance. Attendance at each rehearsal and performance is required. Go over the Marching Band Handbook with band members for specific attendance policies. A class conflict is excused only if it is a single section offering or every other possibility for changing the time has been exhausted. The Director must approve such conflicts. Carefully go over the entire attendance and tardy policy with your entire section (veterans included). Remember the attitude of the veterans will influence the new members - help them to be effective leaders as well!

REHEARSAL AND PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Stress the importance of quality playing and marching in both rehearsal and performance. Performance, by definition, can be no better than the highest level attained in rehearsal. Rehearsals are structured to get the most done in the least possible time frame. Not only are we here to prepare for a fine performance, but to enjoy the social process of putting it together with our friends. It is important that student leaders develop that special ability that keeps people on task and concentrating without becoming a "Drill Sergeant." Learn how to balance fun and work so that optimum performance and rehearsal is always the product. When the attitude of your section is not the best, take a serious look at what you are doing that contributes to the situation. A good leader is flexible and is always willing to take responsibility.

TRAVEL

Though annual travel is not yet a tradition, it is important for student leaders to understand the dynamics of travel should such an event be scheduled. In the excitement trips can bring, it can be a tendency to forget the true purpose of travel for our band: recruitment, public relations, education, and (appropriate) fun. If we do travel, review travel policies and procedures found in the MSUMB Handbook with your section. Stress that failure to adhere to these expectations threatens future travel opportunities and can reflect poorly on our band; on the Department of Music, Theatre and Dance; and on Morehead State University. By extension, such negative PR can affect our ability to advocate for the needs of our Department.

ACADEMIC PRESSURES

Spend time with the new members explaining what they can expect during the first weeks of classes (syllabus, class assignments, semester calendar, exam schedules, etc.) and help them to understand that it is not all due TOMORROW! We can reduce the dropout rate from those who are psyched out by their first day of classes if you can reduce their "surprises" and let them know that everyone has felt like they do and survived. Remind the non-majors that student involvement activities look great on a resume! Be a family! Be sure to revisit academics throughout the season and find ways to help those who may be struggling.



TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION WITH BAND MEMBERS (continued)

UNIFORMS

As visible as our marching band is, we must do all we can to ensure that our appearance in uniform is crisp, clean, and professional. Review care and cleaning procedures (found in MSUMB Handbook) with your section throughout the season. Share tips that you've discovered for looking your best.

BAND LIBRARIAN

Much of what you will need in terms of music will be available digitally. If, however, the band librarian(s) is needed, be sure all members understand proper procedure: the band librarian must be given any requests for music in writing (text/email is acceptable if not sent during rehearsal) either prior to or after rehearsal. The band librarian will respond to all such requests before the subsequent rehearsal.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR RUNNING AN EFFECTIVE SECTIONAL

Procedures

- Warm-up exercises/tuning: 3-5 minutes
- Announce the goals for the sectional
- Announce the order of rehearsal
- Begin music rehearsal
- Be thorough, patient, concise, professional, and enthusiastic
- Ask for help when you need it
- Start and end on time
- If there is problem, fix it; things will not get better on their own! Repetition alone is only useful if problems have been eliminated. Is it better? Really?
- Treat every member as if he/she was the most important person on earth! Know every member's name.
- Always ask yourself if you would be proud of how you conducted your rehearsal had it been videotaped for a future job interview

Possible areas of concern:

- Key signatures (e.g., key changes within a piece, accidentals, etc.)
- Meter (define the note value for the beat and the division - Compound? Simple?)
- Rhythm (try slow to fast, mark primary beats, clap it, sing it, etc.)
- Musicality (tone, balance, intonation, articulation, dynamics, style, note length, etc.)



BAND STAFF JOB ASSIGNMENTS

Please review the following job assignments and be sure you understand all the details/logistics of accomplishing these tasks. Also consider that it will be important for you to take initiative whenever and wherever there exists a job that needs doing, regardless of whether or not you've been assigned to do it. "That's not my job" never solves the problem.

Band Librarian(s)

- Prepare music for rehearsals
- Maintain the organization of the band library
- Never use the Band Library as your personal locker or study room
- Always verify that all parts are available and easily read
- Provide scores for drum majors and directors
- Prepare flip folders
- Keep track of assigned folder numbers

Drum Majors

- Assist Dr. Dale and Dr. Mason in whatever is needed
- Prepare scores for rehearsal
- Be a role model and provide an example of professionalism in all situations
- Attend all student leadership meetings (3 pm Monday)
- You are responsible for your podiums and ladders
- When you are on the podium, you are in charge - stay focused at all times
- Work as a unified team so that the band always sees clear, well-defined patterns
- Metronome at every rehearsal
- Help to clear any excess materials from the rehearsal area after every rehearsal
- Be the last to leave the field

Section Leaders

- Assist Dr. Dale and Dr. Mason in whatever is needed
- Assist with teaching music and marching fundamentals (take notes in full rehearsals)
- Assist with field assignments. On Monday of Early Week, we will march. Assess your section and indicate in writing the marching abilities of each player. Provide a list to Dr. Dale indicating the rankings for each student: A - superior, B - Excellent, C - Fair, D - needs help
- Assist with instrument assignment of rentals and with uniform fitting of your section
- Attend all student leadership meetings (3 pm Monday)
- Supervision of care of rental horns
- Section warm-ups/tuning
- Assist with concessions/snacks - procedure TBA
- Supervise stadium seating and the behavior of your section in the stands (see MSUMB Handbook)
- Follow procedure to ensure all members of your section have music
- Be a role model and provide an example of professionalism in all situations
- Assist with/supervise post game/rehearsal cleanup



BAND STAFF JOB ASSIGNMENTS (continued)

Assistant(s) to the Director/Band Graduate Assistant(s)

In Rehearsal

- Assist Dr. Dale and Dr. Mason in whatever is needed
- Assist with setting drill
- Assist with fundamental block and consistency of visual style
- Circulate around field during drill rehearsals and address musical/visual issues
- Stadium storage room key/combination - help with access as needed
- Sound system/field PA
- Extra coordinate sheets/drill charts
- Assist with development and teaching of visuals
- Close rehearsal lot gates at 4:10pm
- Record attendance with assistance from Section Leaders
- Handle any vehicle/parking problems
- Periodically take candid shots/video during rehearsal

Trips/Exhibitions/Parades

- Create and post bus sign-up sheets for any trip
- Supervise loading
- Final bus check upon our return (for trash, lost items, etc.)
- Call to line up for field approach
- Periodically take candid shots/video during performances

Home Games

- Prepare script (due to Dr. Dale on the Tuesday before a home game)
- Post reserved signs for stadium seating
- Assist with/supervise post game/rehearsal cleanup
- Organize and administer all aspects of providing snacks/concessions to members
- Prepare stand tunes signs (binder)
- Only one car is allowed at the stadium during games (Dr. Dale)

In General

- Dress professionally for any public appearance of the band
- Model appropriate rehearsal attire
- Be courteous and professional in all communication on behalf of the band or when it can be reasonably construed that you are associated with the band
- Plan for periodic meetings with Dr. Dale, Dr. Mason



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