

Saint Paul Conservatory
FOR PERFORMING ARTISTS

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Student Handbook
VOCAL ARTS DEPARTMENT
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VOCAL ARTS DEPARTMENT STUDENT HANDBOOK

This resource is intended for use by students and parents/guardians as it contains much of the information regarding our departmental policies and grading practices that govern the classes and program activities in the Vocal Arts program. All classes within Vocal Arts abide by all schoolwide policies, in addition to those covered in this document. Additional information may be found in the SPCPA Student Handbook. Contents are subject to change.

SPCPA's CORE ARTS VALUES

The following are the Saint Paul Conservatory for Performing Artists' (SPCPA) core arts values. These values help guide the Program in Dance and Movement Artistry's instructional and programmatic activities.

- ❖ *TRAIN*: SPCPA educates and trains future practitioners of the arts.
- ❖ *DISCOVER*: SPCPA promotes individual discovery within the collaborative spirit of the performing arts.
- ❖ *LEARN*: SPCPA stimulates and sustains interest in dance, music, and theatre as a source of truth and insight into the human condition.
- ❖ *CREATE*: SPCPA constructs a creative environment where artistic risks may be safely taken and where creators take responsibility for their vision.
- ❖ *EXPLORE*: SPCPA encourages students to use their physical, sensory and intellectual potential to explore ideas and raise questions.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Vocal Arts Department is to unite each student's talent and passion with high-level vocal training and a comprehensive musical education.

The Vocal Arts Department trains students to become:

- **Knowledgeable Singers** who are lifelong students of vocal technique and the art of singing;
- **Solid Musicians** with the ability to read, analyze, and create music;
- **Sensitive Performing Artists** who have an interpretative opinion, and the skills to be effective, engaging performers;
- **Responsible Future Professionals** who are initially hired for their talents and abilities, and subsequently rehired because they are dependable, consistent, cooperative, and collaborative artists.

CURRICULUM

The Vocal Arts curriculum requires to take Fundamentals of Music courses including, but not limited to, Music Theory, Piano, Musicianship and Instrumental Techniques; History of American Song and an exploration and study of song in different languages; Studio courses; Song Writing; Vocal Technique; and Professional Techniques. In addition to this roster of required coursework, every student will rehearse in large ensembles, small ensembles, and have the opportunity to explore solo work.

Please note: Great musical works have an educational venue beyond their original purpose. All Vocal Arts class and concert repertoire, including both secular and sacred works, are selected solely for their historical and musical significance.

DEPARTMENTAL EXPECTATIONS

It is the expectation of the school that students enroll because they are serious about Vocal Arts. We expect students to be passionate about and committed to their art form. SPCPA is not for everybody, but students that have a love for singing, and possess the dedication to do what it takes to grow and improve, have found the best place for their training. It is not our expectation or requirement that each student will go on to pursue music after high school, but we will train and treat each student as if they will, because we are dedicated to providing our students with the necessary training they need to succeed beyond these walls.

CLASS PLACEMENT

Vocal Arts students are placed in skills courses consistent with their experience and training. All Vocal Arts students will be placed in a large ensemble comprised of students in their grade (Gr9/10 and Gr11/12). While we support and encourage students to continue their studies with private lessons or other outside training, it is not a requirement for participation in our department. Please note that a student's Academic scheduling needs/restrictions may play a role in a student's given course schedule.

DEPARTMENT DRESS CODE

SPCPA Instrumental Music students are expected to present themselves in respectful and appropriate ways both within the school environment and the downtown St. Paul community. It is imperative that the clothes students wear in their arts classes allow them to do the work they are being asked to do.

FACILITY USE POLICIES: Modules

Instrumental Music students are expected to abide by the following rules with respect to the modules ("mods"):

1. Modules are only to be used by current SPCPA Instrumental Music students.
2. Lights and fans will remain on at all times during the school day.
3. Students will close up, clean up, and be out of the modules 10 minutes before the end of class.
4. No food or beverages will ever be allowed in any of the modules.
5. Students may not allow any SPCPA student, other than those who have been authorized, to enter the module while they are using it.
6. The modules are to be used solely for music practice. The number of students admitted to any module will be under the sole discretion of the instructor.
7. Any damage to a module while in use by a student will be the direct responsibility of that student. Damage includes breakage, removing any part of the module, graffiti, and other behavior that compromises the integrity of the module.
8. The Vocal Arts Department has zero tolerance for violating any of these rules.

FACILITY USE POLICIES: Classrooms and other spaces

Vocal Arts students are expected to abide by the following rules with respect to the facility:

1. Students will use SPCPA's Vocal Arts Department equipment only under the guidance, direction, and supervision of an SPCPA faculty member.
2. The modules and all other Lowry classrooms will not be available for student use before the school day begins, during lunch periods, or after school. (At the discretion of the music faculty, rehearsals may be called during these times.)
3. Percussion equipment may only be used by current percussion students and under the supervision of an SPCPA faculty member.
4. Pianos are only to be used by permission under the supervision of an SPCPA faculty member. No student is permitted to move any piano.
5. Students who allow others to use their personal instruments (if applicable) do so at their own risk. The SPCPA music faculty strongly discourages this behavior. Any damage or loss that results of this behavior is solely the responsibility of the student who damaged or lost the instrument.
6. Students who use a personal instrument (e.g. guitar) may make arrangements with the Instrumental Music Department Chair to use an instrument locker. Student may then drop off and secure their instrument in an instrument locker between the hours of 7:30 AM – 7:55 AM. Students may then pick up their instruments from their instrument locker between 3:30 PM – 3:45 PM. SPCPA does not assume any responsibility for personal instruments not properly secured in an instrument locker.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Vocal Arts Department follows all SPCPA school policies regarding attendance and tardiness. For more information on school policies, please see the SPCPA Student Handbook.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is crucial for students' grades and intellectual progress. If a student misses a class period — whether excused or not — it is the **STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY** to obtain any information given during that class period and for any assignments/tests (given or due) during that period.

More than 10 *Excused or Unexcused Absences* will result in no credit for the class.

PREPAREDNESS & PARTICIPATION

A student's training can be physically and mentally taxing. Students should make every effort to come to class fully prepared to work and engage and wearing appropriate attire. Participation in class activities is not voluntary or at a student's discretion. It is **EXPECTED** that students will engage and participate in all of their classes with equal enthusiasm and effort. Sitting out or observing class is not allowed except in extenuating circumstances and/or with parent/guardian permission. Outside coursework/homework may not be worked on during students' arts classes.

VOCAL ARTS TARDY POLICY

Students arriving late to class must get a Tardy Pass from the attendance clerk *before* going to class. Students arriving with a pass from a teacher still need to check in at the attendance desk and will receive an excused tardy. Students arriving more than 15 minutes late to class may be required to complete a make up assignment, at the discretion of the instructor.

EARLY RELEASES

Students leaving with more than one-half hour left of class time for an excused reason may be responsible for completing make-up work.

ILLNESS

It is expected that if students are in attendance at school, they will be participating in their arts classes. Students who are too ill to participate in their arts classes even with modifications will be asked to go to the Lowry main desk to make arrangements to return home.

GRADING

Students receive a grade in each of their Vocal Arts classes that is reflected in their GPA. Although assessment of singing and performance can be subjective, the Vocal Arts Faculty does everything it can to ensure that grades are given in an objective manner. Students will be graded in each class on a combination of the Daily Five, Written Work, and Individual Performance.

DAILY FIVE

The Daily Five is a major component of the student's grade. Every day, each student has the opportunity to earn five points:

- 1 pt. for **Attendance**: Student is present, mentally and physically, in class
- 1 pt. for **Punctuality**: Student is on time, and ready to work when class begins
- 1 pt. for **Preparedness**: Student is dressed appropriately for class, has their instrument and/or all of the required materials, and has completed all assignments
- 1 pt. for **Participation and Engagement**: Student demonstrates effort and attentiveness, participates fully in all aspects of class, and takes responsibility for their learning
- 1 pt. **Collaboration**: Student works generously and cooperatively with others, and is accountable to their classmates

WRITTEN WORK & PERFORMANCE GRADES

Over the course of the semester, students will receive a handful of grades that provide an accurate representation of the student's skill level demonstrated in a performance, project, worksheets, test or quiz.

GRADE SCALE

The following grading scale will be used to assign a letter grade at the end of the term:

A	93-100%	= 4.00	C	73-76.9%	= 2.00
A-	90-92.9%	= 3.66	C-	70-72.9%	= 1.66
B+	87-89.9%	= 3.33	D+	67-69.9%	= 1.33
B	83-86.9%	= 3.00	D	63-66.9%	= 1.00
B-	80-82.9%	= 2.66	D-	60-62.9%	= 0.66
C+	77-79.9%	= 2.33	F	Below 60%	= 0

MAKE UP ASSIGNMENTS

The bulk of a student's grade is comprised of their participation and effort made in each of their classes every day. However, students are eligible to complete a make-up assignment for excused absences from their music classes. Students can find make-up assignment instructions on the following URL: <https://sites.google.com/site/spcpavocalartstrack/> and/or ask their instructor.

All missed work must be made up and is due **no later than 2 weeks** from the date of the excused absence in order to receive credit. Additionally, students may make up participation points by 1) submitting an article review assignment or 2) reviewing a performance or 3) writing about a performance in which they participated. The subject of the makeup assignment must be pre-approved by the instructor.

Students **can choose one from the following** make-up assignment options:

- a. Write a response to an article pertaining to vocal music. It can be an article from a newspaper, an online source, a publication/periodical, etc., and should include a short summary and reaction to the article. Students must cite the article they review, and include a link or a hard copy of the article for reference.
- b. Attend a performance and write a response about what you saw, what you gained from the experience, and how you can use the experience in your studies and musical growth moving forward.
- c. Write a reflection paper about a recent performance you participated in and describe what you learned from the experience.

For any of the options outlined above, students must write a minimum of a half page, typed, per absence. To receive credit, the assignment must include:

1. The student's full name
2. The course title and teacher name for which the assignment is intended
3. The date of the original excused absence
4. The date that the assignment is handed in
5. And the date, title and location of the performance OR the date, title, author, source, and URL (if applicable) of the article

Make up assignments are due within **TWO WEEKS** from the original date of absence in order to be eligible for credit. Please note that assignments cannot be replicated to cover more than one class. As with any written assignment, plagiarism will not be tolerated and will be addressed according to the Student Handbook.

Daily points that are lost due to unexcused and/or unknown absences are not eligible to be made up.

ARTISTIC CONTENT

PLAGIARISM, VIDEO AND AUDIO RECORDING

Videotaping, recording or taking photographs in class is strictly prohibited. Your teacher's materials/work product, compositions, and performances are their intellectual and creative property and will be treated as such. As with any written (or moved in the case of dance classes) work, plagiarism will not be tolerated. No videotaping, recording or taking photographs of your teacher or classmates is allowed unless you have their explicit consent/permission or it is covered under formal accommodations as part of an instructional plan such as an IEP.

MUSIC

Music played while in class, for a specific project, in common spaces, or that can generally be heard by others should be free of derogatory or disparaging terms. Additionally, music/lyrics cannot allude to or condone violence, drugs, or sexual acts. If you have questions, please consult your teacher(s).

COMPOSITION

Musical compositions created in class or to be shared within the confines of a student's course or performance requirements should also be of an appropriate content as outlined above. If you have questions, please consult your teacher(s).

J-TERM

For 13 days in January academics go on hiatus and students are immersed in rehearsals for an arts performance project. These rehearsals culminate in public performances. J-Term replicates the professional experience and engages students in the artistic energy of various professional rehearsal and performance venues. J-Term is a part of SPCPA training. It is required as part of the school year and earns a full credit for successful participation. Grades are Pass/No Credit. There are no academic classes during J-Term.

JURIES

SPCPA Vocal Arts students must participate in Juries. Juries give students the opportunity to demonstrate the application of the skills they have learned in class. Juries are presented in front of the Vocal Arts faculty. Students will be evaluated in a variety of categories that align with departmental rubrics.

GENERAL INFORMATION

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic conduct. Academic dishonesty in any student work submitted for a grade will result in a grade of F for all parties involved. Consequences for plagiarism will be followed as described in the school's Student Handbook.

CALL BOARD

Department events and activities as well as outside audition or educational opportunities will be posted in vocal arts classrooms.

CLASS CONDUCT

Students are expected to take responsibility for their own behavior and contribute to a productive learning environment. Failure to comply with classroom expectations will result in consequences outlined in the school's Student Handbook.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is key to facilitating a positive learning experience and we will do our best to communicate important information to students and families. Email is the best and most efficient way of contacting teachers.

- For Students: Please talk with your teacher and let us know what is going on if you are having difficulties in class—we want to hear from you! If you need to get in contact with a parent/guardian during the school day, please make arrangements with your teacher to go to the Lowry Main Office.
- For Parents/Guardians: Parents and guardians in need of getting in contact with their student should make arrangements through the SPCPA school directory service. Please avoid texting and calling your student on their mobile devices during class time. Students will still be penalized for using their phones during class even if the call/text is from their parent/guardian.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

If the student chooses to ignore the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook, the following consequences may occur (not limited to just one action):

- Verbal/Nonverbal reminder from instructor
- Loss of Daily Points/Negative consequence for grade
- Contact with home
- Student meetings with Teachers and/or Director(s) and/or Deans
- Write up and referral to administration

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Cell phone or tablet use (texting, making a phone call, snapchat, etc. etc. etc.) during class without permission will result in the loss of all of a student's Daily 5 points for that class period. Faculty/Staff reserve the right to confiscate any electronic device at their discretion. (Confiscated electronic devices will be returned to the student at the end of the class period.) Students needing to contact their parents/guardians should ask permission from their instructor. Parents/guardians needing to contact their student must contact their student through formal SPCPA channels.

FIELD TRIPS

All SPCPA students are excused one time per semester from their academic classes in order to attend an arts-based field trip. Students are required to make-up any academic work that is missed for this purpose. **In order to attend, students need to submit a signed permission slip and funds (if applicable) to Nancy Galatowitsch by the given deadline.** Students on Educational Benefits will be exempt from the cost of the trip though a signed permission slip will still be required. *All students are greatly encouraged to attend these field trips; seeing and critiquing live professional performance is a vital part of our training.*

PRACTICE AND STUDY

Students are expected to make regular progress in acquiring vocal technique, musical skills, and performance skills. Progress is only possible through consistent practice and study outside of the classroom. Vocal Arts faculty instruct students in best study and practice methods for each subject.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Students are expected to have a notebook, a 3-ring binder, and a pencil with an eraser. The student is expected and to bring all of these materials to every class period.

WHO DO I SPEAK WITH?

Please talk to your teacher with questions about:

- ◆ Your grade, assignments, and tests
- ◆ What to call your teacher
- ◆ How to make up classes for excused absences

Please talk to the Department Chair with questions about:

- ◆ Juries
- ◆ J-Term
- ◆ Departmental policies and procedures
- ◆ Curriculum
- ◆ Placement

Please talk to an Administrative Assistant with questions about:

- ◆ Signing in/out of the building
- ◆ Early Release
- ◆ Needing a Tardy Pass

If your concern/question does not fall into any of the categories listed above, please contact your department chair and that person can help direct your question to the appropriate person/parties.

VOCAL ARTS FACULTY

Email is the best and quickest way to reach us.

Ilah Raleigh raleighi@spcpa.org

Ashley Sievers sieversa@spcpa.org



VOCAL ARTS HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The student is expected to share this handbook with their parent(s)/guardian(s). By signing below, student and parent(s)/guardian(s) are acknowledging that they have read and understand the described departmental policies, procedures, expectations and responsibilities.

Any violation of the policies and guidelines contained herein may result in immediate disciplinary action that may include, but is not limited to, detention, losing privileges to use equipment or the facilities, and requiring a student to pay for replacing/repairing damaged property.

Please use ink, not pencil, to complete this form. Thank you.

Student Name Printed _____

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____