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**Baylor School of Music**

***COVID Protocols 2021***

Dear School of Music,

As we prepare to open Baylor's campus and welcome back students for the Fall/2021 academic semester we share with you the School of Music's ***COVID Protocols 2021***. This document is intended to help promote understanding on how we will work together to mitigate the most serious health crisis the world has known in our lifetimes.  This webpage will contain our most current protocols as they apply to the Delta Variant of COVID that is currently present across Texas, the United States, and the world. This document will be updated whenever necessary.

***Covid Protocols 2021*** updates the 2020 document compiled by Associate Dean Randy Umstead. The 2021 revision is edited by Associate Deans Michael Jacobson and Michael Alexander with input from School of Music administrators, faculty, and staff; advice from administrators and offices throughout Baylor; and through careful examination of research-based knowledge shared across the nation and world. ***Covid Protocols 2021***represents our best effort to understand the current knowledge being disseminated on how music can be safely made at this *specific* point in time. As future developments become known to us, we will communicate them to all members of the School of Music.

Please read this revised document with great care and attention. The 2021 guidelines provide our best chance at staying open to in-person instruction. It will take our collective efforts to reach our common goal to safely make music together this semester.

With warm regards,
[Gary Mortenson](https://www.baylor.edu/music/index.php?id=951883),
Dean, School of Music
Baylor University

*August 13, 2021*

**General Information**

Singing and the playing of brass and woodwind instruments generate aerosol particles, particles smaller than respiratory droplets, in some cases at a comparable level to speaking.  In other cases, musical activity can produce aerosols at a much greater level than speaking or normal breathing.  While all Baylor University policies apply to the School of Music, the administration of the School of Music and Baylor University have developed policies specific to activities within the School of Music because of this particular aspect of our discipline.  These policies have been developed through a detailed review of the available scientific research, coordination with facilities management, and involve the collaboration of the dean, associate deans, division directors, and area coordinators.  While we intend to begin this semester as closely to “normal” as possible, as the situation on and around campus evolves, this guidance may change.  Please check our website for updates to these policies.

Since many activities in the School of Music are in a “high risk” category, we must adhere to more restrictive policies than the campus at large.  For the purposes of our guidelines, singing, woodwind, brass, string, keyboard, and percussion playing will be governed by the same policies when rehearsing/performing and in classrooms where such activities exist.

Faculty, staff, and students should not enter any School of Music facility or participate in any School of Music activity if they are symptomatic, have an active coronavirus infection, or are under investigation for a coronavirus infection until they have met Baylor’s criteria to return to campus.

**Face coverings**

* Students and faculty are required to wear masks when indoors.
* Masks are not required for outdoor activities.
* Individual practice (one person per room), and faculty members or graduate students working alone in their offices/studios do not require masking.
* Wind players must be masked except in the act of playing. Masks may be lowered or moved to the side when playing but must be in place otherwise.
* Bell covers must be used, as well as collection devices for brass instruments.
* Singers, keyboard, string players, and percussionists, should be masked at all times while in rehearsal / performance with others.
* Surgical-style facemasks will be provided by the School of Music.  Information on how to obtain these surgical-style facemasks will be provided later.

**Building Use**

* 3-foot distancing should be used in all spaces.
* Building use is restricted to current Baylor students registered for music courses, faculty, and staff ONLY.  School of Music facilities may NOT be used for teaching private lessons or lessons to minor children outside of approved Baylor programs (Such as Oso Musical, Piano Preparatory program, or Baylor String Project).
* Classrooms, performance halls, and sectional rooms may only be used if reserved in Astra.  If a room is vacant during the day, it is likely intentionally left vacant to allow for air exchange. Space usage without reservation is prohibited, with the exception of practice rooms (which are open to use without reservation).
* Students and faculty may reserve spaces from 6pm-11pm, Monday through Friday, 8:00am-11:00pm on weekends. Room reservations should be submitted through ASTRA to Ruth Tucker by 1:00om Friday for the subsequent Saturday through Friday (maximum of nine hours per week, no more than 2 consecutive hours). Exceptions must be approved by Associate Dean for Operations.
* Reservation requests must include a list of participants and the type of activity involved.
* Rooms should be returned to their original condition as a courtesy for those using it after.

**Ventilation/Mechanical Systems**

* All campus spaces have been reviewed by Aramark for ventilation to ensure adequate air exchange and increased input of fresh air.
* Supplemental mechanical solutions such as HEPA air cleaners and higher efficiency air filters have been installed where necessary.  These HEPA air cleaners must be kept running continuously on their highest setting and should not be moved from their assigned location.
* Air filter replacements should be requested via QR code forms posted around buildings.

**Classroom Teaching**

* Teacher and students must be masked.
* Distancing of 3 feet is encouraged.
* Classroom activities that involve singing, or other types of performing, should limit their consecutive contact time to 50 minutes maximum, with a 10-15 minute ventilation break to allow for an extended time period.

**Applied lessons**

* Teacher and student must be masked for applied lessons.
* Teaching studio must accommodate social distancing of 3 feet.
* 50-minute intervals are suggested, in a well-ventilated space, incorporating HEPA filters, allowing for 10 minutes of ventilation between lessons. Another option would be to provide two, separate, 25-minute lessons, under the same conditions.
* Students who are quarantined or symptomatic may participate in virtual lessons. The School of Music will have a variety of solutions for conducting virtual applied lessons with high-quality audio and low latency.  Additional information is available on our website at <https://www.baylor.edu/music/index.php?id=971832>.

**Rehearsals and Concerts**

* Indoor rehearsal periods should last no longer than 50 minutes, unless a ventilation break of at least 10-minutes is given.
* No concert should last more than 60 minutes (including intermission).
* For audiences, 3’ distancing (every other chair) should be encouraged in seating areas.