



2026 Spring Session

Membership Handbook

Mr. Jeffrey A. Tylutki
Director of Bands & Performance Music
Secretary - PCBA
jeffrey.tylutki@keystone.edu
music@keystone.edu
570-945-8599
Office: 109 Brooks Hall
One College Green
PO Box 247
LaPlume, PA 18440

Mrs. Rebecca Hetzel
Assistant Director of Bands / Vocal Music Director
Director of Woodwind Instruction
music@keystone.edu



The Chorale at Keystone

The Bands at Keystone.

THE STUDIES AT KEYSTONE



HANDBOOK Constants:

Please read this document carefully, as its policies and principles will be applied:

- I. In all situations and at all times.**
- II. To every member, fairly and equally, regardless of age, student status, or musical ability.**

We currently have musicians ranging in age from late teens into adulthood. Whether you are a high school musician, Keystone College student, or adult community member, I will apply the policies outlined by this document FAIRLY and EQUALLY to each and every person. All of you deserve that equal treatment.

Thank you for your understanding as this ideal ensures equality within our program, and aids in the success of our musical endeavors.

- III. Decisions made by the Director of Bands in regards to music, performances, policies, procedures, events, enrollment, and attendance are to be upheld and fully respected.**

This semester, we reflect upon the sometimes difficult journey we and the College have been through in the past year. Our focus for 2025-26 is to maintain our own tradition of excellence, acceptance, joy, and welcoming musicianship so as to be ready for what we predict will be a large and excited Keystone class of 2030! All of you are a part of preserving this foundation.

Keystone College

Department of Performance Music

Staff Members:



Mrs. Rebecca Hetzel

Director of Vocal Music

Assistant Director of Bands

Director of Woodwind Instruction

music@keystone.edu

rebecca.hetzel@keystone.edu



Mr. Tyler Dempsey

Director of Percussion Instruction

tyler.dempsey@keystone.edu



Mr. Jason Zarnowski – **Bass Instructor**

Mr. Jared Zarnowski – **Guitar Instructor**

Assistant Jazz Instructors / Combo Instructors

Mr. Dieter Winterle

Jazz Woodwind Instructor

Combo Instructor

Ms. Alana Cross

Vocal Ensemble Accompanist

Keyboard Instructor

Work Study Students:

Walter Donohue

Candela Shollhammer



Fundamental / Guiding Principle:

ALL members of the Keystone College Performance Music community will ensure that respect for ALL is constant, dedication is evident, and that our determination will lead to success.

WE form Performance Music at Keystone.

As a member of the Keystone College Department of Performance Music, I will ensure that...

I. Respect for all individuals is continually maintained.

- i. This includes respect of ALL religions, faiths, lifestyles, gender identification, sexual orientation, political belief structure, controversial social issue position, denomination, race, culture, place of origin, pronoun preference, and anything else designated by the Director of Bands. Please share your preferences with your fellow musicians.
- ii. This respect must extend to how you SPEAK, act, and to the attire you choose to wear.
- iii. No propaganda regarding any of the above may be distributed or seen at any Keystone Performance Music rehearsals.
- iv. The propagation of “conspiracy theories,” particularly those with false medical information, and any without proven academic merit, is prohibited during Performance Music activities.

II. Everyone feels safe here.

III. The buildings and properties / equipment of Keystone College and this Department are cared for.

IV. I follow the instructions of all Keystone College faculty, staff, and official volunteers.

V. I do my part to help keep minors in our ensembles safe on campus.

I. **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

- **All rehearsals and performances are mandatory and required of all members.**
- **There are to be no unexcused absences.**
 - An unexcused absence from any official function will result in dismissal from the program (any exceptions are at the discretion of the Director of Bands & Performance Music).
- **Any need for absence must be excused by the Director of Bands & Performance Music**
 - NON-EMERGENCY:
 - Email music@keystone.edu or Jeffrey.tylutki@keystone.edu as soon as possible.
 - Ensure your email is returned as “EXCUSED”
 - If not submitted **as soon as possible**, it will not be designated as excused.
 - At minimum, 2 weeks prior to a non-emergency need is required.
 - Verbal requests will not be classified as excused
 - EMERGENCY:
 - Please simply inform the Director of Bands & Performance Music as soon as you can safely do so either via email, call 570-945-8599, or during an in-person conference.

IMPORTANT TO NOTE: You are allowed up to **EXCUSED** absences per concert in order to perform. Please do not exceed this number and expect to play in the concert. Additionally, it is at the discretion of the Director of Performance Music if you are ready to perform given any rehearsal absences.

IN “CLEAR TERMS”:

If you have something **PLANNED**, you need to provide us with a request for absence **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**, and with at least 2 weeks notice.

... and so, if you have – for instance – a pre-planned trip or academic function that you already know about now, but will not take place until October, that means you should submit your absence request **NOW**, and not wait until a day before the rehearsal.

*As an un-wavering and fundamental principle, all high school MUSIC functions will be immediately excused, but **still do require the aforementioned advanced notice**.

** Keystone College REQUIRED ACADEMIC functions will be immediately excused, but still **do require the aforementioned advanced notice (as soon as announced by the institution)**.

How do I make sure that my necessary absence is excused?

We certainly understand that life sometimes does create situations when you can't be here and I will be as accommodating and sensitive as possible while still protecting the integrity of our ensembles. Here's a simplified version of what you need to do:

1. Make sure the absence is truly necessary. Can I make HALF of rehearsal? Do I really have to miss?
2. Email Mr. Tylutki AS SOON as you know about this need for absence.
3. Make sure you get a confirmation email back that says "EXCUSED."
4. Please check with section members as to what you missed in rehearsal.



Any, (ONE) UNEXCUSED ABSENCE =

1. conference with Director of Bands
2. possible dismissal from that concert session
 - a. in this case you MAY join us again for the next concert session
3. possible dismissal from the program permanently

Please note: A specific or modified Attendance Contract or agreement can be established when submitted with due cause and reason. This must be submitted before the end of the first week of rehearsals in order to be considered for approval.

... expanded details RE: excused absences:

- I. You MUST inform the Director of Bands IN WRITING of the need for absence
 1. Email = "in writing"
 2. Verbal communication will NOT lead to an excused absence.
- II. You must inform the Director of Bands AS SOON AS POSSIBLE of the need for absence.
 1. For illness, family emergency, injury, etc. this obviously may not provide a large window of notice.
 2. **At least 2 weeks notice is required** for events other than emergency or illness.
 3. Examples of excused absences:
 - a. Illness, family emergency
 - b. Unavoidable occupation requirements
 - c. Unavoidable student / organization obligations (band event at high school, college audition / interview, etc.)
 4. Examples of absences that will NOT be deemed excused:
 - a. "I just feel run down" "I was just too busy"
 - b. Simple homework (part of development is accomplishing a multitude of tasks and obligations).
 - c. "I couldn't find a ride."
 - d. "My significant other NEEDED me to talk to..."
 - e. "My mom / dad / guardian / roommate / pet said I didn't have to go tonight..."
- III. If there are too many absences, you may be asked to not participate in that concert SESSION.
 - a. **You will NEVER be fully dismissed from the program for EXCUSED absences!!** After discussion with the Director of Bands, there simply might be a time when you've missed so much rehearsal that you aren't ready for that concert. ***We will fully and warmly welcome you back for the next concert session!***

ATTENDANCE POLICIES **NEW FOR 2024-2025.**

1. All of us within the program WANT you to perform within other ensembles and pursue other musical endeavors. However, it should not be assumed that a conflicting obligation with another musical entity is automatically excused with regards to your commitment to the KC ensembles. The following will be taken into account:
 - a. The size of the outside music ensemble.
 - b. The number of rehearsals this group engages in.
 - c. The performance obligations of this ensemble.
 - d. **NOTE / IMPORTANT:** This does NOT apply to high school music functions. Those remain automatically excused.
2. Any member who fails to inform of an intent to return with less than 1 week's notice will be ineligible to return for 3 semesters (a year and a half).
 - a. Detailed below in item III. Voluntary Abandonment.
3. Commencement participation is required of all members, and the requests to miss this important event have increased in recent years. Only requests involving unavoidable religious, major family events (weddings), true occupation necessities (actively working or attending a function), or required academic functions will be granted excused status.

I. REHEARSAL ETIQUETTE:

- Members are to report to rehearsals on time (AT LEAST 5 minutes prior to posted start time).
- Individual practice and preparation is required
- Appropriate rehearsal decorum is will be adhered to
- Rehearsal schedule is posted via email and the Facebook GROUP “The Bands and Chorale at Keystone.” <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1510422979188497/>



II. Cell phones are not to be used during rehearsals.

- Refusal to comply will result in dismissal from rehearsal.
- If there is an extenuating circumstance which requires you to have phone access, this should be submitted to the Director of Bands in writing via email.

III. VOLUNTARY ABANDONEMENT:

- Any member who leaves during a concert preparation session (not at the end of the year / after a concert) OR if you miss a performance for unexcused reasons will be ineligible to re-join the groups for one year.
- Any existing member is asked to give at least a 2 week notice if they are returning to the roster in the fall, spring, or after any performance. A conference with the Director of Bands is preferred. **Failure to do so may result in not being able to participate in the program for 2 semesters. Failure to report within one week will result in not being able to participate for 3 semesters.**
- **If you receive services which require funding from the department, you must maintain active membership throughout the following semester or you will charged for said services.** To be clear: if we repair your personal instrument in the fall and you do not return in the spring, you will be charged for that repair in its entirety. These services include:
 - Instrument repair for personally owned instruments.
 - Intercollegiate Band participation fee, hotel fees, meals, etc.
 - Lessons for community musicians
 - Lessons with anyone whom the department has to compensate monetarily
 - Any travel opportunity that the department funds
 - Services that will not be charged for, regardless of return:
 - Reeds, valve oil, etc.
 - Sheet music

IV. INDIVIDUAL INSTRUCTION

- Weekly half-hour lessons are required of Keystone students; more sessions are available upon request.
 - To sign up for a lesson with Mr. Tylutki:
 - Sign up at the first rehearsal and await email confirmation. Lessons begin 9/9/2024.
 - To REQUEST a lesson with a staff member:
 - Email Mr. Tylutki said request and await a confirmation / denial.
- Practice rooms are available on campus. 570-945-8989 if Mr. Tylutki is not available.
- **Rewards for practicing are frequently distributed.**

- Community musicians / high school are welcome to sign up for lessons and use said practice rooms as well.
 - NOTE: Community musicians and high school students should refrain from requesting lessons if they are not planning on participating in the next concert session.

Keystone College
Department of Performance Music

SPRING DATES :

SUNDAY MARCH 1ST: (Tuesday March 3rd @7:30 pm WEATHER DATE)

Recruiting event, dress rehearsals, and concert Sunday @ 7 pm with guest high school(s).

SATURDAY, April 25th – MORNING DRESS REHEARSAL for Symphonic and Chorale 8-10 AM

SUNDAY, APRIL 26TH :

Recruiting event, dress rehearsals and concert Sunday @ 7 pm – Symphonic Band and Vocal Ensembles

SUNDAY MAY 3RD :

Recruiting event, dress rehearsals, and concert Sunday @ 7 pm – Jazz Ensemble(s)

Commencement - **SATURDAY, May 16th** – ALL MUST ATTEND, or forfeit future participation. MORNING, usually done 1 pm.

JAZZ ENSEMBLE ONLY EVENTS:

- a. Saturday March 21st open house (morning)
 - b. Sunday, April 12th - accepted student day (morning)
 - c. Pocono Mountain East Jazz Festival - **FRIDAY, April 17th** - evening, after 4:30 PM exact time **TBD**
 1. This change of date only just came to my desk. Inform me of any issues by Monday 1/19/26.
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FALL of 2026 SAVE THE DATES:

Sunday, October 18th – FALL concert

SATURDAY, December 5th – off campus Holiday Concert

SUNDAY, December 6th – on campus Holiday Concert

Points of emphasis this semester:

1. Appropriate “modesty” and willingness to improve amongst musicians. There is always someone better, and we are all here to serve the program!
2. Reminder of political / social / potentially confrontational subject matter.
3. Individual, independent practice must be an element of your participation.
4. Respect and acceptance of all.

Reminders:

- I. Slander / Libel occurrences: If any member of the program engages in any communication which would be classified legally as slander (oral) or libel (written) towards any other musician, or staff member, they will be immediately dismissed from the program without warning.
- II. Attendance policy: As a reminder, please know that the Attendance Policy must be followed as written. While compassion will be shown, please do not ask any staff member to truly contradict written policy.
 - a. *NOTE: There are some instances of modified attendance agreements within the program. Rest assured, these are only granted to those who have committed many years to the program, and when a situation is absolutely unavoidable. Additionally, these agreements are temporary and do have a period when they will expire.*
- III. **If there is any instance necessitating it, a TITLE IX investigation WILL absolutely take place, with all of the legal / criminal / appropriate repercussions appropriate therein. However, if a false claim is made and found to be made intentionally so, all appropriate actions will be taken, as well.**

Keystone College

Department of Performance Music

I acknowledge receipt of this handbook and understand the policies and details held within. I will do my best to uphold my responsibilities as a member of the Keystone College Department of Performance Music.

Member Name: _____

Instrument / voice part: _____

Email: (if we don't already have it/ has changed) _____

Phone Number (optional) : _____

(if a minor, please provide HOME / PARENTS cell number, not your CELL PHONE)

Date: _____

Member signature: _____

If minor, Parent / Guardian Signature: _____