

Foothill String Orchestra

2019-2020 Syllabus

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ABOUT THE SYLLABUS AND COURSE

This syllabus contains important information about our class. Please note there are forms to sign in the back that need to be returned by Friday. Thank you in advance for taking the time to go through this syllabus.

This ensemble functions as the only ensemble in the Foothill High School String Orchestra Program (Course Catalog #7030). Basic experience with string instruments (violin, viola, cello, or bass) is strongly encouraged as a prerequisite for enrollment. Literature will contain classical and popular music. Students will perform both in small group ensembles and as a full string orchestra. Students participate in several formal concerts, solo and ensemble contest, orchestra contest and other performances. Out of school performances and activities are part of the course grade and are required for all members. These activities are integral elements that support and extend learning in the classroom. Private lessons are encouraged, but not required. Practicing at home is expected.

In addition, FHS Orchestra will deepen each musician's knowledge of music theory and classical music as a whole; active listening to the classical music genre (and any other genres that feature strings) is vital! A reasonable amount of home assignments and classroom drill will lead students to an understanding of more specific musical skills such as notation, sight-singing and familiarity with cultural/historical perspectives. While music performance is the direct focus, understanding from the course will make the student a better performing musician by increasing intuitive awareness, critical understanding and interpretation.

A FEW MORE THINGS

Ownership: Individually commit to owning your personal musical progress. Be active in: Individual practice, sectionals, chamber music, rehearsals and performances. Homework is not optional. Turn in those practice cards!

Leadership: While every musician is expected to lead through their musicianship, several will be placed in leadership positions. These are intended to be service-based roles; not jobs assumed through entitlement issues or superiority complexes. All student leadership roles are determined by the director and are subject to change at the discretion of the director. This includes distribution of parts within a section.

Respect: Please bring an attitude of respect when you enter the band room. The orchestra does not exist thanks to one student's individual talents or because one member chooses to grace the ensemble with their presence!

Music: Ultimately, everything starts and ends with the music. But music itself is not magic! You do not get better at music by simply wanting to...it takes hard work. As with any discipline that delays gratification, you must enjoy the journey and the process. It is my hope that a large majority of our musicians take this journey and that our program reflects this pursuit of musicianship in everything we do this year.

Thank you,

Mr. Bahr

Foothill High School Band Boosters

Every orchestra parent/guardian is a member of FHS Band Boosters. We are an organization of parents and volunteers with a two-fold purpose:

- To support and promote the FHS Instrumental Music program, its students and the director within the school and throughout the community.
- To conduct fund-raising activities which help supplement the program's operating budget.

FHS Band Boosters does **not** govern or make decisions regarding the operations or musical selections of the band program. That is the responsibility of the band director.

Membership is open to anyone with an interest in the welfare and success of our program. Our Booster Board is an indispensable part of our operations. These wonderful people are here to help you get plugged in, stay informed, and answer questions. I hope you take the time to use them as a resource as you go through the year with us!

GRADING POLICY

Students' grades will be posted in the following categories:

- **Performance (40%)** - This includes adherence to call times, proper attire and professional conduct at all performances. If a student misses a mandatory performance, their semester grade will be lowered 10%. If a student misses a major performance (CMEA Festival, Winter Concert, Spring Concert), their semester grade will be lowered 20%. In the event of an emergency, a grade may be allowed to be partially recovered. But, ultimately *nothing* can fully replace not attending a performance.
- **Rehearsal (20%)** - Towards the end of a grading period, attendance/rehearsal points will be placed in the Aeries grade book. Loss of points happens when students do not follow the classroom rules or attendance/tardy policies.. This portion of the grade also includes the timely return of letters to parents that are sent home. Any letter sent home will be on our band website. Included in this category are: Memory tests, quizzes, rhythm/theory worksheets, sectionals and semester finals (explained below).
- **Chamber Music (20%)** - Small ensembles (quartets/trios/duets) are known as chamber music...literally, a small group of musicians that were capable of fitting into a chamber/parlor/living room and entertain guests at someone's home. Each member of the orchestra will be assigned a chamber ensemble. Some may stay the same all year, while others will rotate. It is vital to our large ensemble that these chamber groups learn to collaborate and develop independence of parts.
- **Practice Sheets (20%)** - Students are to practice a minimum of 6 hours per month. This equals three 30 minute sessions of practice a week – an attainable goal; even for the busiest of student!

Semester Finals - Solo/Ensemble Performance: Students will perform a solo/ensemble that is at an appropriate difficulty grade level for the student(s). Throughout the year, students research and choose an appropriate piece. Once a selection is found, it is brought to the director for approval. Students are graded on CMEA Festival rubric: A - Superior, B - Excellent, C - Good, D - Fair, F - Poor (a C lowers a semester grade by 5%, a D or F 10% drop).

Aeries (Electronic Grade Program): Aside from assignments, Aeries is a communication tool (especially when it comes to letters). If a letter hasn't been turned in (one that's needed to be read, signed and turned in), I enter it as a missing assignment for a very small, inconsequential amount of points - not designed to affect a student grade...but, rather, to communicate! Several parents immediately E-Mail and/or call, inquiring about the missing assignment. Please (with total respect)...what I would prefer that you do is simply read, sign and help your student turn in the letter.

PERFORMANCES

Orchestra members are required to attend performances. There are three things every musician must bring to every performance: All necessary materials/supplies/clothing, a clear focus on the task at hand, and a positive attitude. Students must be **on time** to all performances. A 5:00pm call time means that students are expected to be in their chairs, ready for the downbeat at 4:55pm. This is a realistic expectation! Families find a way to get their kids to appointments and athletic events on time...why should the discipline of music be any less important?!?

Excused absences (in cases of severe personal illness or a severe family emergency) are granted only by the director. If you are absent on the day of a performance, please call/e-mail and notify the director that you are extremely ill or have a severe family emergency. A written note signed by parent/guardian is required when you return to school. Unavoidable conflicts *will* at some point come up. I have a long track record of working with families who **communicate ahead of time**: A family wedding, an older sibling's college graduation, SAT test, etc...The following do not justify your absence from a performance: Work, a ride, or forgetfulness.

PERFORMANCE ATTIRE

1. **Casual:** Rallies, events on campus or feeder school concerts are examples of casual dress. We wear our FHS Orchestra polos and jeans (most of the time) for these events.
2. **Concert:** Concert attire is formal black and white dress.
 - All Gentlemen are required to have: Black tux pants, black suit jacket, white tux shirt, black bow tie and cummerbund (I am okay with black slacks and a black belt in lieu of black tux pants and a cummerbund), black shoes and black socks (calf-length).
 - All Ladies are required to have: Black dress, **AT LEAST knee length while seated** with a **modest** neckline, black nylons and black shoes. Jewelry and make up should look professional and not showy. Female cellists and basses may choose to wear a nice black pant suit.

CODE OF CONDUCT

As Foothill musicians, we must protect "Hogwarts"...with intentionality. We demonstrate this by keeping an eye on and taking care of **all** equipment (whether it is individual or school property), staying out of other's lockers at all times, cleaning up after ourselves (a BIG one in orchestra), keeping non-musicians out of the Kennel and abiding by all other classroom rules as related to food, drinks, **gum**, etc...

We need zero tolerance (out of respect for yourselves and the band) when it comes to PDA, theft, cheating, inappropriate language or conversation and illegal paraphernalia of any kind. A few years ago, former NBA head coach Mark Jackson restricted profanity in his practices or the locker room of the Golden State Warriors. If NBA players can do it, *you can too!*

1. Students are responsible to be in class on time ready to rehearse with their instrument (a luggage tag on their case handle is *very* helpful), folder, music, **pencil**, and necessary equipment.
2. There is no food, candy, soda, energy drinks, coffee or GUM allowed in the band room (this includes: Brunch, lunch, before school and after school). During rehearsals, water is the only exception.
3. Students are not allowed to talk or play instruments when the director is speaking. Students *must* display respect for and have pride in:
 - a. Band Room: Clean up equipment, pick up trash, keep the room clean, and clean lockers out regularly.
 - b. Instrument/FHS Instruments and Equipment: All instruments should be well-maintained, with students taking the time to care for their instrument. Students should be doing their part in keeping the room organized and clean.
 - c. Classmates: Our band is not just about you...it is about all musicians, not just the ones you like.
 - d. Director: The practical application of "respecting the director" is demonstrated by doing what the director says: In practice, in rehearsal and in performance.

- e. Yourself: Take pride in your musicianship at all times; aspire to be *great* at what you do!
- 4. No electronic equipment is allowed in the band room during rehearsals (a metronome/tuner is the only exception). Students should leave all phones, video games, whatever...in the Kennel. As you can imagine, this is an on-going, ever-present battle in modern education.
- 5. For everything else not covered, school rules and code of conduct apply at all activities, practices, rehearsals and performances.

Classroom rules are great...conceptually. However, at times, rules seem to be made to be broken! When they are, we start down this road: 1. Verbal warning and chair/stand duty for the day 2. Parent contact, chair/stand duty for 3 days, after-school Kennel cleaning 3. Parent conference with administration, room duty after school for an hour and loss of rehearsal points 4. In-House suspension, loss of all rehearsal points 5. Removal from class

PRACTICE CARDS

Homework/Practice is just as important in this course as others. If we don't believe that, we cheapen the discipline of the arts. I have heard story after story from students detailing how hard it is to turn in a piece of paper once a month (insert sarcasm here!). The number one excuse I receive is, "I practice, I just don't write it down." No more excuses...start writing it down! Simply put, turn in your homework, or the grade goes down.

- Minimum 6 hours a month (when totaling monthly hours, please round to the nearest half hour) for students enrolled in one high school music course.
 - 6+ hours – 60 points (5.5 hours is NOT 6)
 - 4-5.5 hours – 40 points
 - 2-3.5 hours – 20 points
 - 0-1.5 hours – 1 point (I place 1 point in the gradebook, so you can tell that it was turned in)
- Practice can include: The visual study of music, completion of assignments and the study of music theory.
- Practice may include work on a secondary instrument. But, only with prior authorization from the director. My expectation is that the majority of practice takes place on the instrument they play in class. However exceptions will be made.
- Practice does not include individual private lesson time with an instructor.
- Practice does not include simply listening to music. Active listening is important, and exceptions with prior authorization will be made.
- I am much more interested in consistency more than the length of practice. If a month or two comes up a little short, I will be accommodating. Life gets busy sometimes.
- If a student lives a great distance away from school, and therefore does not have the time at home to log the time, or has hardship in transporting their instrument to and from school, I will be accommodating. Foothill has a unique issue when it comes to geography!
- Exemptions:
 - Practice cards begin in September (August is waived).
 - All members of the Club Cougar cast are exempt in February.
 - An injury (i.e. broken arm) completely justifies an alternate assignment. In extreme cases of illness or hospitalization, the assignment may be waived.
- Practice cards are due over the first three school days of each new month. Late practice cards will not be accepted.

SUPPLIES, INSTRUMENTS AND EQUIPMENT

Supplies: Every musician needs equipment to play their instrument effectively. The following items are *bare minimum essentials* that every musician is **required** to have in their possession: Rosin, cleaning cloth, quality bow and well maintained strings.

FHS/SUHSD Instruments: These instruments will be distributed to students according to the needs of the orchestra, under the discretion of the director. *Students are not allowed to play a school instrument unless the director has a current Instrument Rental Contract on file.* Members are solely responsible for these instruments at all times. They are not allowed to let anyone else play their school instrument. These instruments are offered for a small reasonable fee. A violin or viola may be rented for \$25 for the entire school year. A cello or bass may be rented for \$50 for the entire school year. If a student does not practice or shows negligence to their instrument, the instrument will be reclaimed by the director. In the case of malicious damage to an instrument, repair costs will be assigned to the student. These are further explained in the SUHSD/FHS Instrument Rental Contract.

CLUB COUGAR

Foothill High School's Performing Arts Production, "**An Evening at Club Cougar**" is an event to raise money to support FHS music and drama departments, while educating music students in the art of performance skills. It is a step back in time, as we recreate a 1930's Chicago-style jazz club; featuring authentic dress, music and decor. This evening of dining, drama and dancing to big band music is made possible by the extraordinary talents and commitment of our music and drama students, as well as their parent volunteers. Please look for information about how to get involved, and please make it a point to attend Booster meetings (meetings are on our calendar).

BAND COUNCIL

The Band Council exists to provide: fun activities, a positive atmosphere and to assist the director. The council consists of the Drum Major and an elected council from members of Band II, *including one elected member of the Orchestra.* Officers will preside over the FHS Band Club, and will assist the director in decisions throughout the year. They will support the Band and Orchestra at all times by fulfilling the roles they are elected to perform. Any officer may be replaced at any time if they do not do their job, or if they are a negative influence in any way.

STUDENT ACCOUNTS

The FHS Band Boosters provide a student account for your band student. Student accounts may be used to pay for anything band-related: Registration fees, trips, lessons, instruments, accessories, instrument repairs and attire. Funds are added to student accounts through booster fundraising activities. Our Band Booster Treasurers work very hard to keep student records current.

Money earned by a student is not to be treated as a personal savings account. By law, money cannot be "withdrawn" to a student/parent when a student decides to leave the band program; whether this is prior to their senior year or after graduating. Furthermore, monies cannot be used to cover outside FHS fees: Parking tickets, library fees, student store fees, other course/club trips/fees. Any money that remains in a student's account after that student has graduated high school may be passed onto an upcoming sibling or be transferred into the Band Booster Scholarship Fund.

SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Each year, the Foothill High School Band Boosters sets aside \$3,000 to be given to deserving graduating seniors (maximum scholarship per senior is \$500). Scholarship Applications will be available in the FHS Counseling Office in April...seniors, don't forget to remind me! ☺ Applications are due to the FHS Counseling Office in May (exact date and time will be included on the application). Late applications will not be accepted.

TRAVEL

Students in the band program will travel to many different locations this year. It is important that we have “SUHSD District Approved Parent Drivers” that can transport students locally. (I will explain more about this at our first Booster meeting.) When we do not travel locally, students must travel to and from the event on a bus. If a parent chooses to take their **own child** home from a performance, the parent must sign the student out through Mr. Bahr. Then and only then is the student released from the band activity.

Chaperones are selected jointly by the Band Booster Board and the director. If you would like to be considered as a chaperone for an event, you may inform the Board at a Band Booster meeting. Chaperone Slips will be made available at meetings. These are to be filled out and turned in at the end of the meeting to one of the Board members. You must be present to notify the Board of your desire to chaperone a specific trip. The Board will announce chaperones for an event a month or two prior to each event.

If you are a parent who chooses to drive to an event on your own, you are welcome to join us, and cheer us on in all band-related events and performances...*we genuinely appreciate your support!* But, keep in mind, your child is not on a family vacation. They are a part of a SUHSD-sanctioned field trip, under the supervision of the director. At all times, students are to remain together, following the rules and itinerary of the trip. Students are not allowed, outside of a medical emergency, to leave with a parent in the middle of a field trip. Also, the FHS Band Boosters are not responsible for providing hotel accommodations, meals, tickets to performance venues, or tickets to any other event/activity.

The Off-Campus Activity Release Form in the back of this syllabus is important to get signed. This form is essentially our athletic Blue Card – and it must be on file. Students will not be able to perform if the form is not turned in.

CLOSING NOTES

If you’ve stuck it out through the syllabus, thank you! I hope you have some clarity about how the program runs...It does take a small army to pull off everything. To that end, if you want to “enlist,” please attend our Booster Meetings...we’d love to see you there.

Thanks again,

Mr. Bahr

P.S. If you want to get to know a little bit more about me (background, education, whatever) you can find my information on www.fhscougarband.com/director. Please refer to our website often to stay “in the know!”

Foothill Orchestra Expenses

The following are Foothill Orchestra. Not all are required. Please select carefully.

Student Name: _____

FHS Instrument Rental Fee *	\$25	_____
Violin, Viola		
FHS Instrument Rental Fee *	\$50	_____
Cello, Bass		

* FHS Instrument will not be distributed to student until rental fee is paid in full & Instrument Rental Contract is turned in.

	Quantity	Size(s)	Price	
<u>Orchestra</u>				
Orchestra Polo Shirt	_____	_____	\$25	_____
<u>General</u>				
Hogwarts Baseball Tee (if desired)	_____	_____	\$20	_____
<u>Other FHS Band Gear</u>				
Men's Band Polo Shirt (if desired)	_____	_____	\$25	_____
Women's Band Polo Shirt (if desired)	_____	_____	\$25	_____
Band Track Jacket (if desired)	_____	_____	\$30	_____

TOTAL AMOUNT PAID: _____

Paid with:

- Check # _____ (please make check payable to: FHS Band)
- Cash
- Student Account

(For Office Use Only)

Date Paid: _____ Rec'd By: _____



**Shasta Union High School District
Foothill Instrumental Music
Emergency Information and Field Trip Permission**

Student I.D.#: _____

Parental Permission

I hereby give my permission for _____ (print student name) to attend an FHS Orchestra Performance off campus during school hours.

Parent Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian E-Mail: _____

Please print neatly and legibly!

In the event of illness or injury, I do hereby consent to whatever x-ray, examination, anesthetic, medical, surgical or dental diagnosis or treatment and hospital care are considered necessary in the best judgment of the attending physician, surgeon, or dentist and performed by or under the supervision of a member of the medical staff of the hospital or facility furnishing medical or dental services. I understand that I am responsible for any expense incurred as a result of obtaining the necessary medical care. Transportation is arranged in most cases. Students shall ride both to and from the event in District-approved transportation.

As stated in California Education Code Section 35330, I understand that I waive all claims against the Shasta Union High School District, its officers, agents and employees for any injury, accident, illness, or death occurring during or by reason of this field trip or excursion, including acts of negligence by the Shasta Union High School District, its officers, agents or employees.

I fully understand that participants are to abide by all rules and regulations governing conduct during the trip. Any violation of these rules and regulations may result in that individual being sent home at the expense of his/her parent /guardian.

Parent Signature: _____

Phone: (Home) _____
(Emergency) _____

Insurance Policy: _____

Policy/Group # _____

Family Doctor: _____

Family Doctor Phone # _____

Indicate Specific Medical Problems or Allergies: _____

*** A Special note to Parent:/Guardian:**

1. If any medication or drugs are to be taken by student, list them here: (Name reason): _____
2. If your son/daughter has a special medical problem, kindly attach a description of that problem to this sheet.