

JMU School of Music
Fall 2020 Teaching Operations
July 31, 2020

The James Madison University School of Music is making preparations for students to return for the fall semester. Our primary concern is the health and safety of our students, faculty, and staff. Because of the variety of educational settings (individual applied lessons, ensembles, and classroom courses), there is no one-size fits all solution for teaching in a School of Music. Certain activities associated with studying music, like singing and playing wind instruments, may increase the conditions conducive to the spread of Covid-19. The decisions outlined here have been guided by federal and state government guidelines as well as best practices in each specific field of specialization. This document will be updated as information becomes available and as federal and state guidance changes.

Classroom courses in the School of Music that do not incorporate singing or playing will be taught in face to face, hybrid, or online modes. These courses and all instruction referenced in this document are in compliance with the [JMU Return to Campus Plan](#). The instructional scenarios outlined here require additional steps to ensure the health and safety of JMU School of Music students and faculty. It is important for students, faculty, and staff to follow all self-screening protocols before coming to campus (JMU Return to Campus B.1). All instructors are prepared to move to online synchronous instruction if the situation arises. Email addresses for area coordinators are listed at the end of each section for specific questions. General questions can be directed to Dr. John Allemeier, Director of the JMU School of Music, at allemejm@jmu.edu.

JMU Ensemble Area

The JMU School of Music ensemble **rehearsals** will take place during their regularly scheduled times (2.0 Schedule). Each ensemble will be divided into smaller groups in order to comply with social distancing recommendations. To maximize playing/singing opportunities, ensembles will have at least one additional rehearsal space, which will allow two groups to be rehearsing simultaneously.

Instead of traditional evening concerts, videos of **performances** will be posted online. When a piece is ready for performance, it will be recorded in the Concert Hall during class time. These recordings will be combined to create a “Concert Video,” which will then be posted on the School of Music website.

Physical distancing policy will be six-feet for musicians who can wear masks, ten-feet for wind players and twelve-feet for singers. In an effort to reduce shared surface issues, musicians will stand while playing/singing, except for those instruments that require sitting. School music stands will be available; however, students are encouraged to use personal portable music stands (as long as they are tall enough to use while standing). Brass players will need a cloth towel for draining instruments.

Assigned Ensemble **auditions** will be done through online submissions. While a virtual audition process is not our preference, we need to make this one-time adjustment to simplify the start of school, and to safely deal with the challenges created by COVID-19. Audition materials are available at: <https://www.jmu.edu/music/studentresources/audition-excerpts.shtml>. Please contact Dr. Stephen Bolstad (bolstasp@jmu.edu) with any questions about the Ensemble Area. Detailed plans for each ensemble can be found on the JMU Ensemble Area portion of the School of Music website. (<https://www.jmu.edu/music/areas/ensembles.shtml>)

JMU Jazz Studies Area

JMU's rehearsal rooms are large enough to accommodate a full seventeen-piece **jazz ensemble** ("big band") with 144 square feet (12' x 12') of space allocated per player. The JMU Jazz Ensemble and Jazz Band will utilize traditional rehearsals (with appropriate distancing) and sectionals. The JMU Jazz Ensemble and Jazz Band will present one or more outdoor concerts on the JMU Quad, which will allow for safe distancing of performers and a live audience. The JMU big bands will also record our semester repertoire, which will subsequently be broadcast online.

JMU's Jazz Chamber Ensembles ("**combos**") will rehearse, as always, with a faculty coach in rehearsal spaces large enough to allow safe distancing. JMU combos will resume live performances at Clementine Café in downtown Harrisonburg once circumstances permit, and may also perform at outdoor venues on the JMU campus.

Jazz Area **academic classes** (Jazz Improvisation, Jazz Arranging, Jazz Keyboard) will be taught using appropriately distanced face-to-face instruction. Applied Jazz lessons will utilize a hybrid instruction model, rotating weekly between synchronous online and in-person studio instruction. Weekly Jazz Studio classes will be taught primarily via synchronous online meetings. Jazz Area degree recitals will be live streamed using JMU facilities. Please contact Dr. Chuck Dotas (dotascj@jmu.edu) with any questions about the Jazz Studies Area.

JMU Voice Area

In terms of singing, the serious health issues and levels of transmission of Covid-19 have been well-documented. The formula for infection (amount of virus, projection of airflow into the environment, and duration of exposure) is significantly heightened while singing. Further, although wearing facemasks is an essential safeguard against transmission, it is not possible to adequately sing or model vocal technique while wearing one, thus directly impacting the capacity to safely teach voice in person.

As such, during FA '20, the majority of **applied voice lessons** will be delivered in an online format. Individual faculty members may opt to teach from home, from their JMU studio, or another safe location with Internet connectivity. Recognizing that a singer and collaborative artist meeting in a small area is currently unsafe, the voice faculty are exploring viable alternatives for this component of instruction, so that safe social distancing is maintained.

Per our standard operating procedures, weekly **studio classes** will be delivered as predominantly synchronous meetings via an online conferencing application. **Friday Area Recitals** will continue to cover relevant topics and student performances. These performances will be either live-streamed from the Recital Hall or delivered via WebEx.

In closing, while moving applied lessons online is not our preferred manner of teaching, the Voice Faculty remain confident in the outcomes: students will continue to progress vocally, and we will continue to deepen community both within our studios and in the Voice Area as a whole. Please contact Dr. Jo-Anne van der Vat-Chromy (vanderjx@jmu.edu) for any questions regarding the Voice Area.

JMU Piano Area

It is important during this time of Covid-19, that both students and faculty feel comfortable in the lesson environment. With that in mind, **piano lessons** will be delivered in one or in a combination of the following formats:

1. Face-to-face Instruction. Everyone will be required to wear a facemask while in the Forbes Center, and this will also extend to the piano studio. The professor will, in addition, wear a face shield and pianos will be cleaned regularly. The SOM is exploring possibilities for some kind of transparent barrier separating pianos in the studio.
2. Synchronous Online Instruction. This is an extension of the policy from spring 2020, which would also include asynchronously submitting performances on a format such as YouTube.

It is important that piano majors have access to the grand piano **practice rooms**, which will be reserved for piano majors only. Policies are being drawn up outlining both safe usage, and maintenance of both the rooms and the instruments.

The number of **area recitals** will be reduced, and only those performing will be physically in attendance at the recital. The SOM is looking into ways of livestreaming these performances.

Studio classes will proceed in some form in the Recital Hall, the size of which will allow for the recommended social distancing.

For safety reasons, piano students must wash/disinfect their hands before and after playing any piano, whether in the Recital Hall, a practice room, or in a piano studio. Please contact Dr. Lori Piitz (piittle@jmu.edu) with any questions about the Piano Area.

JMU Woodwind Area

The JMU Woodwind Faculty are eager to provide as safe an environment as possible in order for woodwind students to continue their musical development and educational progress during this time.

Applied **woodwind lessons** will be taught in a hybrid mode, as determined by each Woodwind faculty member. Hybrid modality may consist of a combination of online synchronous and asynchronous delivery and in-person lessons. Face to face lessons will be held on a rotational basis in larger classrooms to allow for safe physical distancing and adequate air circulation and ventilation. Lessons may also include in-person discussion sessions, without playing instruments, on a rotational basis. These meeting may take place in faculty studios and outside, as weather permits. Each faculty member will determine what is best for their own studios based on individual circumstances.

For **online lessons**, woodwind faculty will conduct lessons from their JMU studio, home, or another location with good internet connectivity. Synchronous elements will be conducted via an online video conferencing platform. Asynchronous elements may include submission of audio/video recordings and other assignments. For any and all **in-person lessons**, faculty will wear masks and possibly face shields. Students will wear masks when not playing. Physical distancing will be observed as far apart as is feasible. Windows and doors will be open whenever possible. Additional precautions may be required by individual faculty members. Any combination of these scenarios will be combined for a total of 50 minutes of weekly time for each student.

Studio classes, reed classes, and orchestral excerpts classes may be online or in person, to be determined by each faculty member. In-person classes may be held dependent upon classroom capacity, topic, etc.

The Woodwind Faculty believe direct contact is important for many reasons, including high quality performance and discussion without technology/screen fatigue, and a greater sense of connectedness. However, we want to do everything we can to create a safe and healthy space for our students and ourselves. Therefore, we may opt to do more online than any of us prefers. Please contact Dr. Beth Chandler (chand2be@jmu.edu) with any questions you have regarding the Woodwind Area.

JMU String Area

Lessons will take place weekly either face to face or online. Face to face lessons will meet with the professor and the student wearing personal protective equipment and using safe practices according to JMU policy. Videos submitted by the student will serve as a point of departure for online lessons. Rooms specially equipped for online lessons will be available to the student. Individual instrument **studio classes** will meet synchronously each week, either entirely online or with a rotation of students performing in person with the professor and the rest participating online. Where studio classes are held in spaces large enough to allow recommended social distancing, they may be held with all students present.

Large spaces will be provided for rehearsing and coaching string **chamber music**. The culminating performance will take place either as a recording project, live performances at suitable outdoor locations, or a combination of both. Please contact Dr. Carl Donakowski (donakocp@jmu.edu) with any questions about the String Area.

JMU Brass & Percussion Area

The health and safety of all students and faculty are of paramount importance as we engage in studio applied teaching during the re-opening of JMU in the Fall. Consortium studies are being undertaken concerning the transmission of coronavirus aerosols in wind and brass instruments, with conclusions hopefully being published in advance of classes resuming. The results of these studies will clearly influence the extent to which students and faculty can safely engage in face-to-face learning.

During Fall 2020, all **applied brass and percussion lessons** will be delivered in a hybrid format. By utilizing large classroom spaces and rehearsal rooms that are being used in rotation, students and faculty will be able to meet on a semi-regular basis in person with live instrumental performing. Lessons that are in off-weeks from the large classroom rotation will be given online. The JMU School of Music is addressing several options for hard-wired internet connected rooms in the building that students will be able to use to broadcast their lessons.

In cases where very large spaces are available (ie: recital hall, concert hall, or Rm 108) **studio classes** may meet in person, following the distancing and safety guidelines as per JMU policy. Otherwise, studio classes will meet synchronously online via conferencing software.

The Brass & Percussion Area is dedicated to providing the highest quality of music lessons regardless of format. Students will be nurtured, supported, and motivated, with individual progress constantly encouraged and personalized attention given to each and every student. Please contact Dr. Ian Zook (zookir@jmu.edu) for questions about the Brass & Percussion Area.

JMU Music Education

Music Education classes will be delivered in ways documented to reduce the risk of infection by COVID-19, in line with JMU recommendations. Individual instructors will contact students with specific plans as appropriate. Students may receive a combination of some in-person socially distanced instruction – potentially in smaller groups, and some in-person synchronous online instruction. Some asynchronous activity may also occur. Faculty will determine optimal delivery and learning formats, while considering health and safety needs of all.

Instrumental techniques classes will limit utilization of instruments to 2 (some requiring only 1), and ensure proper sanitation occurs before change-overs. Students may rent their own instrument/s if they prefer. Students not yet enrolled in fall techniques or methods classes should email their instructor to ensure correct numbers of instruments are prepared.

Practicums and student teaching will be offered as appropriate. Students in a high-risk group needing to protect their health may request alternate online practicums. Student Teachers with health concerns may postpone. Please contact Dr. Lisa Maynard, Coordinator of Music Education by Email: maynarlm@jmu.edu; if you require accommodations.

While seeing our students in person is what we love, the MUED faculty have also learned this past spring that meaningful learning can occur face to face online. The health and safety of our JMU community is important to us too, as well as the sense of community we share. We will be hosting our Music Education Convocation and Freshmen Interest Meetings online this fall.

JMU Music Theory and Composition Area

All **composition lessons** will be conducted remotely for Fall 2020. Students will be expected to send lesson materials to their instructor prior to the lesson starting time. Composition seminar will also be conducted online and may include a mixture of synchronous and asynchronous meetings and activities. Please email Dr. Eric Guinivan (guiniver@jmu.edu) with any questions pertaining to composition lessons.

All **aural skills classes** will be conducted online with a mixture of synchronous and asynchronous learning. This decision is based largely on two factors: (1) it would be unsafe to sing together in a classroom, and (2) it would be unsafe for an instructor to approach students at a close distance to offer feedback on in-class work. Both of these activities are important to aural skills classes, and it will be safer to do both in an online environment. **Written theory classes** will be offered in a mixture of in-person, hybrid, and online formats, depending on course content, class size, and room size. Please email Dr. John Peterson (peter2jr@jmu.edu) with any questions pertaining to theory and aural skills classes.

MUS 195 Recital Attendance

MUS 195 will consist be taught in a hybrid setting (online asynchronous for performance attendance and a combination of face to face and online synchronous studio classes) for fall 2020. **Performance attendance** requirements have been adjusted from 10 live performances to 5 online performances. Students will be asked to write a brief reflection on each online performance. While there will be no face to face meetings, the MUS 195 class time will continue to be used for **studio classes** and students should continue to hold that time in their schedules

Degree Recitals

Degree recitals will take place this semester. Attendance for those performances will be limited to the soloist's immediate family (no more than 10) and the required faculty. All other School of Music performances for the fall semester will be online or outdoors. **Rescheduled recitals** from the spring semester will be scheduled after all of the fall degree recitals are scheduled.

Practice Rooms

For the fall semester, there will be no general use **practice rooms**. All practice rooms will be assigned to specific areas for scheduling. Studio faculty will be responsible for working with the students to assign specific times in the practice rooms. The purpose of these times can be

general practice or for online lessons. Each student will be required to complete a practice room agreement form that outlines procedures and expectations for the use of those spaces, including sanitation protocols. Any violation of that agreement will be considered a violation of JMU student conduct policies. The School of Music will not be providing music stands in the practice room in order to cut down the number of touch points in these spaces.