

# ***Vista Murrieta High School Instrumental Music Department Performance Corps Syllabus***

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Welcome to the Vista Murrieta High School Instrumental Music Program!

You have chosen to participate in one of the most successful and well recognized band and color guard programs in the state. The directors and staff of the Vista Murrieta band and color guard program are dedicated to offering a comprehensive performing arts education experience to its students. While performing arts skill building and performance is the main emphasis of the program, the student will also develop discipline, organization, and other life skill concepts. The marriage of performance and personal development makes the band program a great environment to grow artistically, physically, and intellectually. This syllabus is intended to outline general classroom rules, policies, expectations and opportunities for members of our high school color guard program.

## **Course Description:**

### **Performance Corps (Period 6)**

This course combines dance, drama, performance, and the manipulation of flags, sabers, and rifles into one magical artistry of pageantry. This outstanding performing group is an intricate part of the marching band, which performs in the fall. In the spring, the students form a group called the “Winter Guard”, which performs in arenas in a presentation of a pageantry theater incorporating a wide range of visual performance arts and choreography. The students will gain an appreciation for the complexity involved in performing at a high level. To be an effective and successful member of this class, students must exhibit a strong work ethic and high level of discipline.

## **Course Objectives:**

1. The student will be able to perform basic to advanced dance movements and equipment maneuvers.
2. The student will develop an understanding of their role as a member of a performance ensemble.
3. The student will develop an understanding of their role in support of community and school functions.

### **Course Materials:**

1. Students should wear black dance pants/shorts, sweat pants, or athletic wear with a plain white t-shirt. You should also wear some kind of low top tennis shoes or dance shoes. Revealing clothing will not be acceptable. Students with long hair will need to bring a hair tie to hold it back. (School dress code is enforced.)
2. Students must bring all of their necessary equipment (flag bag, duffle bag, rifle, saber, etc.) to each class session.

### **Class Guidelines:**

1. Class will begin promptly after the tardy bell has sounded.
2. Students are required to come to rehearsal (class) with all the necessary materials.
3. Students are required to come to rehearsal (class) with all their work completed and assignments prepared. “Prepared” means performance ready. Rehearsal (Class) is an opportunity for each individual member to share their part with the ensemble, not the time to work out or practice their individual choreography/routine.
4. Attendance is required at all rehearsals and performances. Sectional and full ensemble rehearsals will be scheduled before and after school. Students are expected to attend ALL rehearsals outside of class and should plan accordingly. Please use the “Absence Excuse Form” in accordance with the VMHS Instrumental Music Department attendance policy.

### **Class Expectations:**

1. **LEARN YOUR ROUTINE** – Students are expected to prepare during personal practice time at home and come to school prepared for rehearsal.
2. **CARE FOR YOUR EQUIPMENT** – Color guard flags, equipment, and props are expensive. Please care for the school owned equipment check out to you.
3. **CARE THE FACILITY** – This is your band room. Everyone is expected to pick up after themselves, store equipment in its proper location, and not bring food, drinks, or gum into the room.
4. **BE PROFESSIONAL** – This is, perhaps, the most important expectation of all since it embodies and encompasses everything we do from rehearsal, to practice at home, to performance, to attending performances, to interacting with each other.
  - Be Prepared for Rehearsal - Practice at home, not at rehearsal. Amateurs practice until they get it right. Professionals practice until they cannot get it wrong!
  - Remain Quiet During Rehearsal - Create a focused rehearsal environment.
  - No Phones – Rehearsal will be a cell phone free time where we can “be in the moment” and not worry about outside topics or issues.

## **Grading Guidelines:**

It is the belief of the VMHS Instrumental Music Staff that the “PERFORMANCE” culminates everything that we work for in class and is a VITAL part of the student’s music education. Missing a performance is the equivalent of receiving an “F” on a major test in any other academic class. The experience gained from performing is NOT one that can be “made up”. Extreme special circumstances for missing a performance should be discussed with Mr. Wade and the head color guard instructor, on an individual basis, at least two weeks before a scheduled rehearsal or performance. In addition, students MUST use the “Absence Excuse Form” found on the band website ([www.vmhsband.com](http://www.vmhsband.com)) under the “Resources” link. If a student cannot make the commitment to attend rehearsals and/or performances, then he or she should consider dropping their instrumental music courses.

Students will be graded in the following three areas:

<b>Daily Participation/ Practice</b>	<b>60%</b>
Students start each class period with a perfect participation score. Participation points for the day can be lost, however, for the following reasons:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Not dressed out or not having proper shoes for class/practice.</li><li>- Late to class or practice.</li><li>- Missing proper equipment (flags, rifle, saber, gloves, fanny packs, etc)</li><li>- Poor Rehearsal Etiquette.</li><li>- Extreme Lack of Preparation, Punctuation and Participation.</li><li>- Not knowing choreography/not being up to par with basic techniques.</li><li>- Losing practice silks, fanny packs, equipment, dot books, etc.</li></ul>	
<b>Practice Videos</b>	<b>25%</b>
Students will be asked to complete and submit 4-6 videos of their progress in the course of one season. Failure to do so, will cause students to lose a letter grade.	
<b>End of Fall Season Final Project /End of Winter Guard Spring Showcase</b>	<b>15%</b>
<hr/> <b>Total</b>	<hr/> <b>100%</b>

In the unlikely event that the student is unable to maintain “C” level work, the grade of “D” or “poor” will be given with the suggestion that improvement must be made if the student wishes to remain in the program.

The grade “F” will be given in situations where flagrant violations of band policy exist, including, but not limited to:

- Unexcused absences from rehearsals or performances
- Extreme lack of participation or preparation

As per the attendance policy – Any unexcused absence from a rehearsal will lower the 6-week progress report grade by one letter grade per infraction. Any unexcused absence from a performance will lower the 6-week progress report grade to an “F”.

**Attendance Policy:**

You have made a commitment to be in the instrumental music program. In order to have a successful rehearsal and performance, it is essential that we have full attendance.

Attendance at scheduled rehearsals and performances is required for membership in the program.

**Attendance at Performances:** It is impossible to “make-up” the experience of a performance. Furthermore, the other members carry an extra burden because of someone else’s inconsideration. As a member of the VMHS Performing Arts Department, understand that the performance culminates everything we work so hard for during the year. It is therefore essential, to your fine arts education, that you experience the performance of your art.

Absences from performances are only permitted in the event of an emergency: SEVERE PERSONAL ILLNESS OR DEATH IN THE FAMILY. Even in those circumstances, a significant written make-up assignment will need to be completed to make up for missing a performance. ALL requests for excused absences must be electronically submitted on an “Absence Excuse Form” to the appropriate director, as soon as the schedule for the semester is received. Any absence submitted after the schedule is presented would have to fall under the “emergency” category. All other absences will be considered “Unexcused.”

“Absence Excuse Forms” can be found on the band website on the “Resources” page. Verbal approval, email, or handwritten notes are not sufficient – the “Absence Excuse Form” MUST be filled out.

**Unexcused Absence from Performance:** Being absent from a performance or leaving early due to work, homework, birthday parties, other non-essential school activities, non-emergency doctor appointments, tutoring, and vacations, are not considered excused absences. An unexcused absence from a performance is unacceptable and will result in the student’s grade being lowered to an “F” for that 6-week grading period and may result in automatic dismissal from the ensemble.

**Attendance at Rehearsals:** Absences from rehearsals are only permitted in the event of SEVERE personal illness, death in the family, or other special circumstances that are PREAPPROVED by the appropriate director. Absent students will be replaced temporarily whenever possible in order for the group to have a successful rehearsal. If there are problems with leaving early or unexcused absences from a rehearsal or performance, the appropriate consequences regarding performing opportunities will be enforced by the directors. Families should schedule appointments and other events on non-rehearsal days.

**Unexcused Absence from Rehearsal:** An unexcused absence from a rehearsal is unacceptable and will result in the student’s grade being lowered one letter grade per infraction, for that 6-week grading period. Excessive absences, whether excused or not,

will cause severe problems and could result in loss of position or rank within the organization.

**Tardiness:** Rehearsals and performances are scheduled at specific times and it is expected that you arrive before the start time. If there are problems with tardiness, the appropriate consequences regarding performance opportunities will be enforced by the directors. “To be early is to be on time. To be on time is to be late. To be late is inexcusable.”

In case of an emergency or sudden illness just prior to an after-school rehearsal or performance, please email the appropriate director.

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**Progressive Discipline Procedure:** All discipline policies set forth by the Murrieta Valley Unified School District, Vista Murrieta High School, and contained within the Vista Murrieta High School Instrumental Music Program Student Handbook will be followed and enforced at all times. These policies apply to all instrumental music department activities including, but not limited to: after school activities, off-campus field trips, out of state travel, summer/winter camps, or any time the student is representing Vista Murrieta High School or is under the supervision of Vista Murrieta High School staff or designees.

Any or all of the following disciplinary actions may be imposed for violations of district, school, or band policies:

- Student Correction/Counseling and Parent Notification
- Referral to the Discipline Office and/or Loss of Band Privileges
- Exclusion or Removal from the Band Program

In addition, a student’s “Citizenship” grade can be changed to “N” – Needs Improvement or “U” – Unsatisfactory.

The disciplinary action imposed in each instance will be at the discretion of the Band Director depending upon the nature and severity of the conduct, the circumstances of the conduct, its frequency, prior warnings or disciplinary action, and/or other relevant factors.

**Performance Calendar:**

A full calendar of all Band and Color Guard events can be found at [www.vmhsband.com](http://www.vmhsband.com). It can also be accessed in Charms. Full calendars will also be posted in each band room so students can stay informed on a daily basis. Stay up to date with band and color guard emails to make sure you get the latest information for each band and color guard event.

**Band Handbook:**

Please be aware that most questions can be answered by referring to the VMHS band handbook found on the band website [www.vmhsband.com](http://www.vmhsband.com) under the “Resources” tab. All student/parents should review the handbook. All students are responsible for the expectations and policies found in the handbook.

**In Conclusion:**

We look forward to amazing year of growth and performances. Our program has developed a reputation for excellence, and we are confident this year's students are up to the challenge of maintaining that reputation. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions. We can't wait to "band" together with you this year!

# Vista Murrieta High School Instrumental Music Department

## Color Guard Syllabus Signature Form

My child and I have read, understand, and agree to the rules, regulations, and expectations for membership in the Vista Murrieta Color Guard. He/She has my permission to participate in this elective course which requires attendance outside of the normal classroom day. I will assist my student in fulfilling the requirements and in meeting the course expectations.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

- \_\_\_\_\_ **We have read and agree to the policies and expectations outlined in the band handbook found on the band website.**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **We have read and understand the VMHS color guard attendance policy as presented in the syllabus and band handbook.**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **We have received the tentative schedule for the ensemble/group my student is enrolled in.**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **We have updated our Charms account and verified that our email address, phone number, and other information on file is accurate. We have also added our student's email address to the Charms system so that they can also receive the weekly notifications.**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **We are aware that we should be receiving a weekly newsletter from the band secretary every Monday. We also understand that we are to contact the band secretary immediately if we are not receiving the weekly emails.**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **We have read and understand the requirements to be recognized at the semi-annual awards ceremonies.**

**Student's Name (Please Print)** \_\_\_\_\_

_____	_____
<b>Student Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>
_____	_____
<b>Parent Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>