

Folsom Cordova Unified School District

CONTEMPORARY MUSIC ENSEMBLES

DATE: January 2009

CATEGORY: Visual and Performing Arts

PROPOSED GRADE LEVEL(S): 9-12

COURSE LENGTH: 1 year

GRADING: A-F

NUMBER OF CREDITS: 5 per Semester

SUBJECT AREA CREDIT: Fine Arts

PREREQUISITES: Previous experience on an instrument/voice and audition with instructor

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Contemporary Music Ensembles (CME) is a performing arts class where the emphasis is on performance. Students from the guitar program, band, orchestra, and choir can learn how to perform in small ensembles that address the growing trends in our music world today. Music students will be able to expand their knowledge and technique by being a part of smaller ensembles. This course is designed to provide continuing and more challenging musical instruction to new and existing music students. Students will learn how to apply their previous musical ability and knowledge in more contemporary ensembles. The course will present a strong emphasis on live performance, improvising, song writing, composing, arranging, editing and a hands-on approach in the recording arts. Students will learn applicable music theory that accompanies being a successful member of a smaller music ensemble. The course will also present the history and significance of music found in our contemporary music world.

GENERAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

The goals of this class are to further develop and engage the music student through performance in smaller contemporary music ensembles.

- Students will learn how to become confident, knowledgeable, and musical decision makers.
- Students will learn how to lead an ensemble.
- Students will learn how to work with other musicians in a smaller ensemble.
- Students will work as a class, independently and collaboratively in learning about ensemble playing.
- Students will learn how to become better live performers.
- Students will be able to engage in more contemporary styles of music.
- Students will learn advanced song-writing skills.
- Students will learn how to arrange and edit other artist's musical compositions.
- Students will be engaged in the recording arts- where they will learn how to record, edit, mix, master, and publish their own music.
- Students will learn about career possibilities related to music performance, composition, song-writing, and the recording arts.
- Students will develop creative skills in problem solving, communication and time management.
- Students will use many of today's music technology in aiding them to become successful guitar players and musicians. (Pro-Tools studio, MIDI, guitar pods, amplifiers, notation/tablature software, internet sites).
- Students will learn the music concepts and vocabulary found in today's music industry in order to write about, read about, and discuss with fellow students.
- Students will analyze and compare the different styles of music found in our present music world.

STUDENT READING COMPONENT:

- Students will be assigned readings from an array of sources including books, music-related magazines/publications, and internet sites/articles.
- Students will be required to follow written instructions on assignments and projects.

STUDENT WRITING COMPONENT:

- Students will describe, analyze, critique and write about music selections that will be heard during class through “active listening” assignments.
- Students will compare and contrast the different styles found in many of the significant artists in the music world.
- Students will be required to attend one live performance of an ensemble group, and write an essay critiquing the musical event, comparing and contrasting the actual performance to the techniques they are learning in the course.

STUDENT ORAL COMPONENT:

- Regular in-class discussions will be conducted in order to assess the student’s understanding of new concepts that have been introduced.
- Students will perform for each other the pieces of music that will be studied in class. Students will express and present the concepts being learned.
- Students will be working in groups- performing and presenting to the class an explanation of the process involved.
- Students will orally respond to musical pieces, examples, demonstrations, performances, etc. using vocabulary, concepts, and terms appropriate to performance.

DETAILED UNITS OF INSTRUCTION:

Unit 1- Orientation (1 week)

- General classroom procedures, processes, and standards.
- Function, use and care of all musical instruments, equipment, and supplies involved.
- Practice requirements.
- Attendance and performance expectations for concerts.
- Known dates of performances.
- Course expectations, standards, and grading policies.

Unit 2- Playing Position and Playing Technique (Continuous throughout the year)

- Demonstrate the proper techniques and playing positions found in playing their instruments.
- Demonstrate the proper techniques and playing positions found in playing their instruments when studying and performing other genres of music- being able to distinguish and demonstrate the differences.
- Apply and develop all playing positions and techniques learned from other music courses (orchestra, band, choir, and guitar).

Unit 3- Tone Production and Technique (Continuous throughout the year)

- Proper musical technique to produce the sound that is intended from the type of instrument being played.
- Proper musical technique and tone that is intended for the specific style and genre of music being studied and performed.
- Proper tone production and technique when using sound amplification, recording equipment, recording software, etc.

- Apply and develop all tone production and technique learned from other music courses (orchestra, band, choir, and guitar)

Unit 4- Note Reading and Notating Music (Continuous throughout the year)

- Read, understand, and interpret, verbally or by playing the system of symbols used to indicate pitch (standard notation); know appropriate clef sign.
- Read, understand, and interpret, verbally or by playing the system of symbols used to indicate pitch (guitar, bass, and other instrument tablature).
- Read and understand chord charts.
- Read, understand, and interpret verbally or by playing the many different strum and rhythmic patterns found in string instruments.

Unit 5- Chords & Accompaniment (Continued throughout the year)

- Guitarists will be able to play a variety of chords ranging from open chords to moveable bar and power chords.
- Pianists will be able to accompany other students by the use of chords.
- All instruments will understand the music theory behind chords and be able to form chords within ensemble playing.
- Read, understand, and be able to play chord charts.

Unit 6- Music Theory and Improvisation (Continued throughout the year)

- Demonstrate music theory knowledge in the key of a given piece of music.
- Demonstrate music theory knowledge in the key of a composed piece of music.
- Able to improvise melodies and/or solos in a given piece or composed music by applying music theory.

Unit 7- Musical Heritage (Continued throughout the year)

- Understand the historical significance of music being performed
- Understand the stylistic characteristics of music being performed.
- Understand the stylistic differences of the music being performed when compared to different music found in different time periods and cultures.

Unit 8- Active Listening & Aesthetic Valuing (Continued throughout the year)

- Understand musical concepts found in listening assignments and examples
- Critically evaluate other performances being studied/viewed/listened to
- Form and defend their own judgments of various musical styles, composers, artists, and bands as they perform or listen to music.

Unit 9- Ensemble Playing (Continued throughout the year)

- Learn to work as a unit within the ensemble and sub-groups of sections.
- Learn to work individually.
- Learn to work with others either in duets, trios, quartets, or other small ensembles.
- Learn the importance and significance of the many types of instruments that are found in smaller more contemporary ensembles.
- Learn to cooperate, show respect, and create a positive learning environment.

Unit 10- Composing, Arranging, and Writing Songs (Continued throughout the year)

- Create their own compositions/songs.
- Compose their own melodies and accompaniment.
- Ensembles with vocals will learn how to write lyrics.
- Learn how to perform, arrange, and cover another artist's music.

Unit 11- Technology (Continued throughout the year)

- Use websites that aid in instruction.
- Use software that aid in instruction.
- Use guitar pods, amplifiers, and PA systems.
- Use microphones, microphone stands, headphones, cables, and other devices associated with technology used for ensemble playing.
- Record their performances digitally through Pro-Tools recording software.
- Create their own completed recordings.

Unit 12- Ensemble Performance (Continued throughout the year)

- Be able to lead, direct, and make musical decisions in a small ensemble.
- Be able to follow directions and cooperate with other music directions and decisions given from other members of the ensemble.
- Learn to understand your specific role in the ensemble and/or the ensemble's specific songs and compositions.
- Learn to treat all members of the group and class positively and respectfully to ensure group success.
- Learn how to perform live in front of an audience.

SUBJECT AREA CONTENT STANDARDS TO BE ADDRESSED:

Artistic Perception

1. To further enhance the musician's processing, analyzing, and responding to sensory information through the language and skills unique to music.
2. To compare, analyze, and discuss the different styles of ensembles found in our music world.

Creative Expression

1. To apply instrumental music skills in performing a varied repertoire of music.
2. To compose original music.
3. To arrange, edit, and perform music created by another artist.
4. To perform creatively and musically in small ensembles through the use of improvisation.
5. To utilize modern technology, such as Pro-Tools recording software, and other music related software, to aid in creative expression, reflection, and assessment.
6. To learn advanced music theory that will aid in creative playing and composing.

Historical and Cultural Context

1. To analyze the role and significance of our contemporary music throughout the world, noting cultural diversity as it relates to music, musicians, and composers.
2. To identify the significance of the musical genres found in the United States, trace the evolution of those genres, and cite well-known musicians associated with them. (Country, Blues, Jazz, Rock, Pop, etc.).
3. To perform music from various cultures and time periods.

Aesthetic Valuing

1. To respond, analyze, and make judgments about works of music associated with various artists when listening/viewing music examples.
2. To evaluate a performance, composition, arrangement, by comparing each with an exemplary model.
3. To describe the means used to create images or evoke feelings and emotions in musical works from various artists.

Connections, Relationships, and Applications

1. To develop competencies and creative skills in problem solving, communication, and time-management that can be used to contribute to lifelong learning and career skills.

2. To explore various careers in the areas pertaining to ensemble performance, composing, song-writing, editing, arranging, and the recording arts, through research projects, technology, and in class exercises, assignments, and performances.

THIS COURSE WILL PREPARE STUDENTS FOR THE CAHSEE AND/OR CSTs:

Language Arts

LAB FEE, IF REQUIRED:

None

DISTRICT ESLER'S TO BE ADDRESSED:

Students will be:

- **Self-Directed Learners:** Able to apply the significant musical concepts found in successful ensemble playing. Students will use techniques learned in class to analyze and solve a variety of musical problems presented to them in class.
- **Effective Communicators:** Able to articulate with confidence the musical concepts and skills learned in the ensemble class. Students will be able to discuss music viewed or listened to. As students learn these concepts and skills, they will gain confidence that will help them be more self-assured and professional in other areas of their lives.
- **Quality Producers/Performers:** Able to develop an appreciation for the discipline required by the performing arts, thereby enhancing their work ethic and study skill. Students will be able to demonstrate creative ability and technique found in ensemble playing.
- **Collaborative Workers:** Able to learn how to work together in ensembles as well as a class. Students will learn that they need to work together to perform their pieces, compose, and write songs, thereby enhancing their work ethic and study skills.
- **Constructive Thinkers:** Able to analyze their own performance and solve ensemble playing problems, using techniques that they learn as the course progresses.
- **Responsible Citizens:** Able to demonstrate that their individual effort and participation is crucial in successful ensemble playing. The students will also learn that all individual effort is essential to the group and/or any ensemble's product.