

PEDAGOGY FOR YOUNG CLASSES CURRICULUM GUIDELINES

Undergraduates are very absorbed in their own lessons and musical development and often need practice in making the shift to what works with young children. Master teachers and directors can work with them in the following teaching techniques:

Imagery. Any experienced teacher knows that sometimes the “buck-toothed bunny” can communicate the correct shape of the bow hold in a much more effective way than describing the: contact point of the fingers to the bow, the angle of the various fingers, the need for everything to be curved and relaxed. Directors and master teachers can share these tricks of the trade and undergraduates may also invent their own immortal strategies!

Repetition. Undergraduates often can underestimate a young child’s need for repetition. Any parent knows the joy (?) of reading a bedtime story ten (or twenty times). The same is the case in a beginning string class. Children are comfortable with what they know and they arrive at that point through multiple repetitions.

Reinforcement. Undergraduates quickly grasp the concept of a teaching cycle:

- Introduce the material (only one new idea at a time!)
- Allow the children to practice it
- Give specific feedback based on the concept (don’t talk about intonation when the most immediate request was to play with a long bow)

These following are basic guidelines for which teachers and students may strive to achieve.

SKILLS FOR 1st AND 2nd YEAR STRING PROJECT CLASSES

INSTRUMENT CARE

- Be able to identify the principal parts of the instrument
- Properly care for his/her instrument

The following equipment is recommended:

Violin/Viola

- Shoulder pad for violins and violas
- Proper tension for bow hair
- Possess rosin and rosin rag

Cello

Rock stop

Bass

Rock stop

Stool

INSTRUMENT POSTURE AND POSITION

Violin/Viola

- Sitting position
- Front half of chair
- Feet flat on floor

Cello

- Sitting position
- Front half of chair
- Thighs parallel to floor
- Instrument rests on chest

Cello, cont.

- Correct cello height
- Knees slightly below lower corners
- ‘C’ peg near left ear
- Space between neck of instrument and neck and shoulder of player

Bass

- Sitting position
- Shoulder of bass against left hip socket
- Student should be able to balance instrument without holding it

LEFT HAND SKILLS

All instruments: Signal dots (dots on side of fingerboard for bass)

Violin and Viola at first and third; Cello at first, third, and fourth finger; Bass at first, third, and fourth and first finger in third position

- Fingers properly curved
- Thumb placement
- Arm elbow at correct angle
- Wrist properly aligned

Violin/Viola

- First finger base joint rests against neck
- Wrist is relaxed and straight
- Gravity is in the center of the hand
- Thumb is placed between first and second finger
- Contact point of the finger is between the fleshy pad and the tips

Cello

- Hand forms ‘C’ shape
- Fingers are perpendicular to strings

Cello, cont.

- Left thumb is behind second finger
- Left arm is suspended naturally
- The forearm and hand form a line without a bend to the wrist

Bass

- Hand forms ‘K’ shape
- The first and second fingers are spread
- The second and third fingers close
- Third and fourth fingers are slightly separated
- Thumb stays behind second finger

RIGHT HAND SKILLS

Violin/Viola

- Index finger rests on top of the bow near the second knuckle joint
- Second finger drapes over the side of the bow and touches the stick near the second knuckle joint
- Third finger drapes over the side of the bow and the finger print touches the concave side of the frog
- Little finger is curved and its tip rests near the inner side of the bow stick

Cello

- Traditional: All fingers draped over the side of the frog and bow stick
- Side of thumb tip where frog meets bow
- Index finger draped over bow at or near second knuckle joint
- Second finger (long finger) will extend to ferrule
- Ring finger over dot (or center of frog)
- Pinky may be on frog or stick next to frog depending on the size of student and/or bow.

Bass

- French bow hold is recommended in a class setting, unless the teacher has experience in teaching or playing with German bow hold
- Tip of thumb will contact the stick next to the frog
- Second finger will extend to ferrule, curved and relaxed around stick
- Third and fourth fingers will lie on frog
- Fingers should be slightly curved

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Rhythm

Quarter notes, eighth notes, half notes, dotted half note, combinations of these notes, three quarter meter

Scales

D scale (1st year)

G and C scale (2nd year)

AURAL SKILLS

Students will be able to echo simple four beat patterns using the skills appropriate for their level.

MUSIC LITERACY

Know and recognize notes in the appropriate clef for the instrument as presented.

Know history of specific instrument

Terms

Beat	ledger lines	upbeat
music staff	down bow	D.C. al fine
bar line	up bow, arco	natural sign
measure	bow lift sign	staccato
notes	1 st and 2 nd endings	hooked bowing
rests	allegro	multiple measures rest
sharp	moderato	forte
clef	andante	piano
time signature	repeat sign	rehearsal numbers
double bar	tie	solo
repeat sign	slur	
counting		

SKILLS FOR 3rd AND 4th YEAR STRING PROJECT STUDENTS

INSTRUMENT CARE

Demonstrates skills learned in years one and two

Is able to make tuning adjustments with fine tuners

INSTRUMENT POSTURE AND POSITION

The student will continue to demonstrate correct playing habits at all times

LEFT HAND SKILLS

(all instruments)

Review of D, G and C major finger pattern

B-flat on G string

C-sharp on G string

G-sharp on D string

E-flat on D string

Elementary shifting

Violin

F-natural on E string

Third position on D and A strings

Viola

Extended third finger F-sharp on C string

E-flat on C string

Third position on D and A strings

Cello

Forward and backward extensions

Fourth position

Second, third, half, and extended positions

Bass

Bass shifting to half position

Bass shifting to fourth position

RIGHT HAND SKILLS

Review of detaché, two note slur, staccato	Hooked bowing
Slur four notes to a bow	Legato bowing
Bowing eighth notes	Understanding of bow distribution
Bowing dotted quarter, followed by eighth note	Bowing two strings

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Rhythm

Dotted quarter note followed by eighth note
Four sixteenth notes in a beat
Two sixteenths, one eighth note in a beat
Triplets
Syncopation
6/8 time

Scales (and corresponding arpeggios)

F major
D minor
A major
B-flat major
G minor

AURAL SKILLS

Students should be able to echo patterns using the appropriate skills. Patterns may extend to two measure sequences.

MUSIC LITERACY

Terms

ritardando	legato	triplets
intonation	lento	double stops
allegretto	a tempo	bariolage
sightreading	cantabile	improvisation
fermata	accent	shifting
andantino	time signature	composition

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

- Cooperation	- Participation	- Responsibility
	- Enthusiasm	- Reliability

SKILLS FOR 5TH AND 6TH YEAR STRING PROJECT STUDENTS

INSTRUMENT CARE

Manipulates tuning pegs
Replaces strings
Performs minor adjustments

INSTRUMENT POSTURE AND POSITION

The student will continue to demonstrate correct playing habits at all times

LEFT HAND SKILLS

Plays familiar basic melodies in higher positions
Basic vibrato motion
Demonstrates control over whole and whole step finger patterns

RIGHT HAND SKILLS

Detaches slurs, spiccato, accents
Performs crescendo, diminuendo and other dynamic markings
Broadens dynamic range to include *pp* and *ff*

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Plays familiar basic melodies in high positions

Rhythm

Triplet rhythms
6/8 meter and rhythms

Scales

Violin/viola/cello/bass—two octave scales
Demonstrates control over half and whole step finger patterns
Plays one octave minor scale(s)

AURAL SKILLS

Distinguishes aurally between major and minor triads
Identifies melodic intervals
Bass/cello—Tune instrument by matching harmonics
Violin/viola—Tune instrument by fifths
Play simple double stops in tune
Identifies by ear all orchestral instrument families
Student can adjust faulty intonation by quickly changing finger patterns

MUSIC LITERACY

Reads 6/8 meter
Identifies 2/4, 3/4, and 4/4 conducting patterns
Defines vocabulary in music being learned
Writes major scales
Identifies written intervals of seconds and thirds

Terms

enharmonics	con sordino	flat
chromatic scale	senza sordino	intonation
louré	rubato	simile
trill	sharp	dolce

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

Socially cooperates in small and large ensemble settings
Demonstrates responsibility