

Jacksonville State University Marching Southerners Handbook

The Marching Southerners

For 50 years *The Marching Southerners* have been known as a premier university level marching band organization, and for good reason. This impressive musical-marching extravaganza has developed a national reputation for excellence through their dynamic show presentations and feature performances throughout the South. Founded in 1956 by Dr. John T. Finley, The Southerners contingent features the *Marching Ballerinas*, the *Southerners Colorguard*, and numerous wind and percussion instrumentalists. Their loyal alumni provide witness that *The Marching Southerners* represent one of the truly great university bands traditions.

The Marching Ballerinas

The Marching Ballerinas have been a tradition at Jacksonville State University since 1956. As a precision kick-line, they are well known for their unity and poise in the performance of both dance and drill. Alumni *Ballerinas* repeatedly exclaim how being a *Ballerina* was one of the most prestigious honors they received while at JSU. Being a *Ballerina* is demanding but full of rewards. Dedication, persistence, and perfection are coveted trademarks of this outstanding organization. These talented young women have dance, cheerleading, majorette or some other experience that lends itself to the skills required for membership. A head *Ballerina* and three group leaders lead the *Ballerinas*. Qualified coeds are encouraged to try-out for the ranks of this outstanding performance organization.

The Southerners Colorguard

The Southerners Colorguard includes both young men and women in its membership that usually have previous colorguard experience. However, students with dance, baton, cheerleading or some other similar experience usually have the basic skills to be successful members of the *Colorguard*. During the spring term *The Marching Southerners Colorguard* staff offers training classes for both experienced and inexperienced students.

Tryouts and Training Sessions

Information on how to enroll for tryouts and training sessions for *The Ballerinas* and *The Southerners Colorguard* may be obtained by contacting the JSU Band Office or via internet at www.marchingsoutherners.org

The Marching Southerners

Great marching bands are built on a foundation of traditions. Traditions become a reality through student ride and involvement. It is the responsibility of every member of The Marching Southerners to honor, uphold, and build upon the traditions of this outstanding organization. The regulations stated in this guidebook will better assist this organization to function as a cohesive unit and uphold the proud traditions of the Jacksonville State University Bands.

Leadership Staff

The Leadership model of The Marching Southerners is not just their trademark but also their formula for excellence. Leadership is a quality that starts with a positive team oriented attitude, a high level of motivation, and sincere respect for others. Great band leaders are often not always the most vocal but are usually those who combine their musical abilities with sensibility and a number of other tangible qualities.

All students in the band are expected to assume a responsible leadership role. **The strongest leaders lead by example (i.e. Take care of themselves and their own responsibilities before assisting others).** While it is not necessary for someone to be assigned a position or rank to be an effective leader, *The Marching Southerners* do follow a strict chain of command which is as follows:

The Director and Assistant Director of Bands

Responsible for the total band program at JSU.

Instructional Staff

Includes all assistants, instructors, and coordinators. They are directly responsible to the Director(s) of Bands and are given specifically defined assignments related to the development and implementation of the marching program.

Secretary of the University Bands

Directly responsible to the Director(s) of bands and has specific assignments related to the administration and management of the total band program.

Leadership Council

Headed by the Drum Major(s), it includes all section leaders and instructional staff. The Council will assist the Director(s) with problems not of a musical or marching nature. The Council will serve to promote esprit de corps and will also used as an advisory board.

Drum Majors

Responsible to the Band Director(s). They are directly responsible for leading the band in both rehearsal and performance as outlined by the Director(s). The Drum Major(s) is the ultimate student leader.

Section Leaders

Includes all captains, group leaders, and instrument section leaders. They are directly responsible to the Drum Majors. All section leaders are charged to be the principal performers and team members. Section Leaders have the responsibility to develop and maintain an outstanding section.

Student Management Staff

Includes Librarians, Equipment Managers, and Uniform Managers that are directly responsible to the Director(s) of bands and coordinated by the band secretary. Problems with music equipment and uniforms should be directed to the person in charge of each area. All other needs should first be directed to the band secretary.

Auditions

Auditions for the Southerners are held during the first days of Band Camp. The Audition will consist of marching and music being prepared for the Fall performances.

Woodwind and Brass Instrumentalists should be prepared to demonstrate skills of style, articulation, tone, technique, and intonation. The audition will be performed before a minimum of two (2) leaders. Seventy-five percent (75%) of the criteria for placement in the marching block is determined by the playing audition. Playing auditions determine part placement in trumpet, trombone, and any other divided part sections.

Percussionists should be prepared to audition on their instrument(s) of specialty whether it is on the battery or pit sections of the ensembles. Upon request, warm-up and technique building will be sent in advance. Auditions will test skills of performing scales and rudiments as well as reading. Placement will be based on the student's ability to demonstrate the required skills and needs of the section. The prospective members **may** be video taped during this portion of the audition.

Marching Auditions – The criteria for placement in the marching block will be determined by the marching audition. The audition will be performed before a minimum of two (2) leaders. This portion of the audition may be video taped.

Ballerina Auditions – During the Spring semester *The Ballerinas* hold training sessions and two rounds of tryouts which result in the selection of a new edition of this traditional dance/drill team organization. Young women must enroll for the *Ballerina* class for one (1) hour of university credit. Successful candidates who advance through auditions will become members of the line and are obligated to participate in May mini-semester training sessions. Both successful and unsuccessful candidates are evaluated upon attendance; therefore, the letter grade received in the course reflects only the student's attendance record and not on her ability to perform at a required level.

Colorguard Auditions – Colorguard auditions are held during the spring semester. Students wishing to take part in the Spring training sessions must call the band office prior to the Spring semester. The remaining positions are open to qualified individuals who audition at band camp. Auditions consist of a marching routine and an equipment routine taught by the Colorguard staff. Prospective members must demonstrate basic flag maneuvers and the movement skills required to perform effectively in the JSU Colorguard.

Drum Major Auditions – A candidate for Drum Major must march as a playing or auxiliary member of the block for at least one (1) year to be eligible to audition for Drum Major. Auditions are held annually.

Preliminary Auditions are held in November and are open to all interested band members. The Leadership Staff, through the preliminary audition process, will select qualified candidates to participate in the final audition. Candidates will be adjudicated on the following items: leadership potential, musicianship, conducting skills, and marching ability.

Final Auditions are held during the last two weeks that the band is together as a unit. The finalists will perform the skills stated in the preliminary auditions for the entire band with the addition of a brief interview. A vote by the band and the staff will determine the drum majors (A plurality of votes is needed).

Membership

The Marching Southerners membership is representative of all departments, colleagues, and schools encompassed by the University and all class levels from freshmen through graduate. The band consists of Winds and Percussion instrumentalists, Colorguard, the Ballerinas, and three Drum Majors.

Alternates

As deemed necessary, students that do not meet the requirements for full admission into the marching block will be assigned to the alternate positions. This entitles the student to continue working on the skills to gain full admission. Alternates are included in all performance activities except field shows until full admission is obtained. Alternates are ranked from the playing and marching auditions and are placed in the block by this ranking as appropriate positions open.

Band Camp

All persons interested in becoming a member of *The Marching Southerners* must attend the pre-season camp. The camp is held two (2) weeks prior to the beginning of classes. **Students are offered free assigned University housing during band camp. Students provide their own meals.** All band students will receive a band camp informational mailer by mid- July. After arrival on campus, all instrumentalists will have a playing and marching audition (see auditions) to help set the marching block and to determine part placement.

Rehearsals and drill will occupy the morning, afternoon, and evening of each camp day prior to the first day of classes. **All part and block assignments will be posted by the second full day of band camp.** Ample time will be allotted during band camp for students to purchase books, see counselors, and change enrollments.

EVERYONE IS EXPECTED TO BE AT ALL REHEARSALS

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NO EXCEPTIONS!

Instrument and Equipment check-out procedure:

The University provides the following instruments for marching band: Tubas (20-J's), percussion equipment, mellophones, marching euphoniums, as well as a limited selection of other band instruments. Only the band secretary or designated equipment manager can issue equipment. Section Leaders assist in the initial check-out process at band camp registration. All equipment must be returned at the close of the season. Any equipment not returned to University Bands at the close of the season will be charged to that individual's university student account.

All students using a university owned instrument are responsible for any major or minor damages and theft when the instrument is under the student's care. When the instrument is not in use it must be properly stored and secured in the assigned storage area. It is recommended that the student contact the underwriter of their (or parent's) homeowner's insurance policy to secure coverage for the instrument for the period of usage. All university instruments must be returned in good working order with necessary repairs, cleaning and greasing done prior to the check-in of the instrument.

All students should come to band camp with their instruments in good working order. The band has a very busy schedule and the University cannot provide you with a horn while yours is being repaired. Fortunately, the band is well serviced by our local music merchants "road men" (i.e. *Gadsden Music Company*). Please take advantage of their services and patronize these fine members of our music community.

Band Policies

All policies, rules and regulations apply to ALL members of the Marching Southerners! They also apply to ALL performances (parades, pep rallies, bonfires, games, exhibitions).

Memorization and Play-off Policy

All music should be memorized during camp with the exception of new music that arrives during the regular season. This will be checked by a "Play-Off" system. **Section members will play for the section leaders and section leaders will play for the Drum Major(s).** This system is designed to encourage superior performance standards for each member of the band. Failure to memorize music or perform up to standard will jeopardize the student's position in the marching block.

Hazing Policy

The Marching Southerners **DO NOT** hold any type of hazing/initiation for new members. This type of activity is not condoned or allowed by the band directors or the administration of Jacksonville State University. Anyone caught participating in this type of activity will be dismissed from the band program immediately.

Rehearsal Policy

1. **Rehearsal begins promptly at 4:15 excluding Thursday when rehearsal begins at 6:00** (Miscellaneous Ensemble section rehearsals are arranged). Students are expected to display a **PROFESSIONAL ATTITUDE** toward all rehearsals.
2. Due to the large number of members in *The Southerners*, talking must be kept to an absolute minimum. When the band has stopped, immediately cease **playing and/or** marching, and listen to the instructions being given. When there are instructions being given from the top (the scaffolding) all talking stops, including talking amongst the staff and section leaders. This is the only way to efficiently use rehearsal time to meet our high performance standards.
3. **ABSOLUTELY NO SMOKING WHILE IN PARTIAL OR FULL UNIFORM OR AT ANY BAND RELATED FUNCTION.** Anyone caught smoking in uniform will automatically be dismissed from the program.
4. **ABSOLUTELY NO DRINKING OF ALCOHOL BEFORE PERFORMANCES OR BAND RELATED FUNCTIONS.** Anyone caught drinking before or during band related functions will automatically be dismissed from the program. It is university policy that no student can drink alcohol on a university sponsored trip.
5. **THE USE OF ILLEGAL DRUGS WILL NOT BE TOLERATED AT ANY TIME.** Anyone caught under the influence of illegal substances during rehearsals, performances, or travel will be immediately dismissed from the program.
6. Foul or abusive language will not be tolerated.
7. Be ready to play in the stands at ALL times. Students may stand when they play.
8. Hats of any type, other than those previously approved, are not permitted in the stands. Black JSU hats are permitted in the stands at football games.
9. Sunglasses are not permitted during pre-game, halftime, postgame, or exhibition performances. Sunglasses are permitted during parades and in the stands at football games.
10. Only current members of the Marching Southerners are allowed in the stands during football games.

Grooming

The following grooming guidelines have been established to ensure a uniform and clean-cut appearance of *The Marching Southerners*.

- Hair – Excessively long hair, both male and female, must be put in a ponytail and worn inside the shako. It is preferred to have hair cut to a manageable length.
- Facial Hair – Must be closely trimmed and well kept.
- Jewelry - No jewelry is to be worn while in uniform. Earrings, with the exception of studs, will not be worn while in uniform. No tongue rings or facial piercings are allowed during performances. If you have large ear piercings, they must be removed and you may use clear spacers. Wedding bands and engagement rings are permitted and can be worn under the gloves; however, any worn while in uniform will not be the responsibility of the University Bands, or JSU if it is lost or if any damage occurs.
- Cosmetics – With the exception of the Colorguard and the Ballerinas, the use of cosmetics is to be kept to an absolute minimum while in uniform.
- Tattoos- All tattoos must be covered completely during all performances.

Uniform Policy

Uniforms should be neat and wrinkle free for all performances. Winds and percussion must have the specified shoe type (black patent leather shoe) and calf-length black socks at all performances. Each member is expected to wear their current member shirt at all performances. When not wearing the jacket, bibbers must be worn properly (straps over the shoulder) with shoes.

Attendance and Grading Policy

(Based on Department of Music)

The Music Department Policy states that you are allowed the number of hours plus one (1). However, all rehearsals and performances are required. So if at all possible don't schedule any kind of appointments or classes during rehearsal times. As stated before you are expected to be at rehearsal on time, if you are late to rehearsal you are to report to the Drum Major(s) to correct the absence for the day.

Two (2) tardies equal one (1) absence

One (1) unexcused absence – You are side lined for the next performance.

Two unexcused absences – You will be released from the ensemble.

Unexcused missing of a performance will result in a failing grade (F) and is grounds for dismissal from the program.

Excused Rehearsal Absences

Granted only with advance notification and requires the approval of the section leader and/or the Band Director(s). Students must call their section leader, band office, or email the Drum Majors.

Band Office

Room 304 Mason Hall

Phone – (256)782-5562

Calling from campus – 5562

- **Illness** – To be certified in writing by a JSU physician or your own personal physician. (Must contact your section leader or the Drum Majors).
- **Death or Tragedy** in your immediate family.
- **Missing a performance is grounds for immediate dismissal from any ensemble and a letter grade of 'F'.**

Perfect attendance is the norm. Anything less than this will be construed as a lack of interest on the part of the student and will result in a lowered grade and/or reassignment out of the marching block.

The student assumes the responsibility for any unexcused absence. PLEASE DO NOT ASK TO BE EXCUSED for work, studying for exams, fraternity or sorority functions, make-up lessons, etc. Our demands on your time will be announced enough in advance that you can make arrangements to be at all functions.

Performances

(The schedule may be subject to change at any time.)

Members are required to participate in all performance events listed on the performance calendar at the beginning of the semester. All members are expected to arrange their schedules to meet these commitments. Extra events may include: Pep Rallies, Parades, Special Exhibitions or other community or University events.

Disabilities Act

Please notify the Band Director(s) if you have any special needs that need to be met.

THE BAND DIRECTORS RESERVE THE RIGHT TO REMOVE ANYONE FROM THE PROGRAM FOR ANY REASON THAT THEY DEEM NECESSARY.

Any infraction of policies, rules or regulations may result in the termination of any band scholarship.