

# A-STATE COMPOSITION AREA GUIDELINES

[rev. January 14, 2018]

## I. LESSONS, SEMINAR, AND JURY

**Weekly Applied Lessons.** Students enrolled in composition courses will meet privately once per week with their teacher. These sessions will not only include a discussion and critique of the student's creative writing project, but also the study of contemporary music styles, and scores. Ear training and conducting challenges of contemporary music will also be considered.

**Seminar.** A student-organized seminar session will be held weekly and all composition majors are expected to attend. These classes provide an opportunity to discuss a variety of pertinent topics, listen and critique creative works of colleagues, and inform the class of upcoming performances. Seminar meeting time will be determined each semester.

**Composition Jury.** All composition majors are required to submit creative works to a Jury panel for the final exam at the end of each semester. This Jury is comprised of the theory/composition teachers and additional evaluators totaling to 3 or 4. The review by the committee provides students with additional critiques of their compositions and offers helpful comments to the teacher for the final semester grade. Students who have given a recital of their compositions during the current semester are exempt from this Jury requirement..

**Electronic Music Applied Lesson.** The A-State Electronic Music Studio is located in the Fine Arts Center, room 207. This lab offers the students the means of researching the parameters of music, such as texture, timbre, density, and spatialization, as the primary building blocks for a musical composition. The development of skills in this alternative method to complement the conventional process is required of all composition majors. Furthermore, the Senior Recital must include a mixture of acoustic works and at least one electronic piece composed in the A-State Electronic Music Studio.

## II. REQUIRED RECITALS

Recital production should include the following eight components:

- 1) Full Score and Individual Parts Production – Scores and parts should be prepared well in advance of the performance and should be at publication standard.
- 2) Recital Scheduling –The primary composition teacher/advisor will reserve a recital date using the Department of Music’s online scheduling form.
- 3) Acquiring Performers/A-State Composers–Performers’ Contract – See the primary composition teacher/advisor regarding this contract, which must be delivered and signed by all students involved in the composition performance (e.g. the students’ applied teachers, the composition student, the composition student’s applied professor).
- 4) Rehearsal Scheduling – Consult your teacher in forming a rehearsal schedule that is appropriate for a successful performance. Secure available spaces for rehearsal. Composers must attend every rehearsal, offering direction in interpretive issues.
- 5) Conducting – In some cases, a conductor is required although the student composer should always be prepared to conduct if necessary.
- 6) Promotion – Prepare flyers, take pictures, advertise through social media, arrange interviews with various media sources, and invite friends and family. Create the concert program well in advance.
- 7) Dress Rehearsal – Arrange for assistance with the consideration of stage changes, concert attire, and other necessary logistics.
- 8) Recital – Prepare a brief pre-performance talk that describes the music and presents the artistic statement. Consider having a reception or post-recital gathering/celebration for composers and performers.

**Junior Recital** –A Junior Recital is required, although no credit is received. This recital should consist of works written during the first three years of study at A-State. It should entail 25 minutes of music.

**Senior Recital** – A Senior recital is required. This recital should consist of works written during the study of composition at A-State. The program should be 45 minutes of music.

**Semester Composition Recitals** – These programs provide students with an opportunity to hear their works performed during a formal recital. Especially composition majors who are not preparing a junior or senior recital should participate in these programs.

### III. TOPICS CONCERNING REHEARSAL AND PERFORMANCE

**Rehearsals.** All rehearsals must be arranged by the composition student. Consult the *Scheduling Calendar* under *Important Links* on the Music Website to determine the availability of specific rooms for rehearsals. In consultation with the performers, establish a schedule and reserve the rooms using the *Event Scheduling Form* online. Remind the performers of the schedule well in advance of the first meeting. At the first or second rehearsal, provide rehearsal dates, times, and places along with recital information (date, time, place, and dress) IN WRITTEN FORM to each performer.

**Manuscript.** The composition student must make sure that pieces are completed in readable form and delivered to the performers in due time, which is agreed upon well in advance of the recital. Pieces of varying difficulty should be carefully considered for ample time resulting in optimum performance.

**Percussion Equipment.** Make arrangements for the use of ALL percussion equipment with the percussion teacher. Composition students may want to consult with the teacher regarding intentions to use certain equipment prior to actually writing the music. This may avoid problems with access or availability of necessary percussion equipment.

**Prepared Piano.** Discuss plans for a prepared piano piece with the Director of Keyboard Studies at A-State before beginning such a project. Be specific as to what would be done to the piano; if an agreement is reached, then composition may commence. Please note that composers are prohibited from placing marbles or other loose objects inside the piano.

**Professional Courtesy.** Any composition major who treats a performer in an unprofessional manner will be reprimanded by the composition faculty. All performers should be treated with the utmost respect. Should problems arise during the rehearsal of a piece, the composition student should report directly to the composition teacher. These problems include lateness, lack of practice, personality conflicts, and other unfortunate occurrences that disrupt the rehearsal. It is important that a student allow the composition teacher to deal with any problems concerning performers with the applied teacher if necessary.

#### IV. OTHER TOPICS

**Advisor.** Composition students should retain the same advisor for the entire program of study in music. The advisor is the student's primary composition teacher.

**Recital Attendance.** Composition students are expected to support student peers and composition faculty by attending all A-State performances of their works. Composition students should also attend programs involving faculty or students who have assisted in performances of their own works.

**CAI (Computer Assisted Instruction) Lab.** The CAI Lab is available for use by A-State student composers. The lab is equipped with Finale music notation software installed on every computer. The use of Finale or another program approved by the advisor is required for all students enrolled in composition.

**Score Study.** The A-State main library (Dean B. Ellis Library) has a substantial collection of new music scores, recordings, and videos. At the end of each semester, the student should be able to demonstrate knowledge of literature studied over the course of the semester and also articulate how that music influenced his or her music. This may be a topic of discussion during the jury at the end of the semester.

**Composition Message Board.** The Composition Message Board is located in front of room 206 in the Fine Arts Center. Students should check regularly for notices of recitals, performance possibilities, and competitions. All composition students are strongly encouraged to have their music played off-campus, and to attend new music performances in the area.

**Listserv Email.** The composition area has a group email address: [ASateComposers@mailman.astate.edu](mailto:ASateComposers@mailman.astate.edu). Each student's email address will automatically be added to the group upon enrollment in composition lessons. Announcements concerning A-State Composition Events, competition and festival calls for scores, and other pertinent information will be sent via this address. It should not be used to email specific individuals within the group.

Facebook Page – Please LIKE and FOLLOW the A-State SCI Chapter Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/asuscichapter/>

**Society of Composers, Inc. Chapter.** The A-State/SCI Student Chapter is a Registered Student Organization and a formal union of composers that helps to promote the creation, performance, understanding and dissemination of original music composition. The Chapter welcomes all A-State students who

either have an interest in composing music, or a desire to gain a deeper understanding of music and its architecture. Meetings are held each semester in addition to music composition workshops, presentations, and lectures. The SCI Student Chapter Webpage may be found at the following link:

<http://spio.astate.edu/scichapter/>