

Olin Conductorless Orchestra Action Plan

Purpose of OCO

The purpose of the Olin Conductorless Orchestra is to provide Olin students a fun, open conduit for making music with other student musicians at advanced performance levels. The Orchestra provides opportunities for personal growth as well as growth as an ensemble.

OCO is a Project-Based Learning (PBL) course: students operate the classroom and the professor contributes as guide-on-the-side. In helping to run rehearsals, students develop leadership, teamwork, and communication skills in a large team environment.

The Orchestra connects Olin to the external world through its live performances, many of which are captured on YouTube.

OCO Core Values

Selectivity

OCO seeks to engage excellent student musicians who are committed to its core values. These values sustain a cohesive orchestra where members are on the same page with respect to skill level and commitment to OCO.

All OCO members are expected to have and maintain the following qualities so that rehearsals and performances remain focused, productive, and fun.

Qualities of an OCO musician

- **Respectful** – the musicians are considerate of others' opinions and willing to put down their own opinions in favor of others' opinions
- **Responsible** – the musicians do what is necessary in order to know their own parts
- **Encouraging** – the musicians are constructively critical and do not complain or whine
- **Inquisitive** – the musicians are open to change, both in terms of music and the operation of OCO
- **Actively participatory** – the musicians play their music, actively listen to others, and actively listen to the ensemble as a whole in order to share their experiences and opinions with the orchestra in a constructive and non-aggressive manner
- **Ambitious** – the musicians are passionate about playing challenging music at a high level

Musician-selected repertoire

OCO musicians will suggest and select their own repertoire. The musicians will strive to perform at least five pieces over the course of the semester and, once pieces are selected, will be working on at least two pieces at a given time. The musicians are open to playing music from a variety of eras and styles, depending on instrumentation and musician preferences. Possible options are symphonies, tone

poems, overtures, and concerti. The musicians suggest and select pieces that are challenging but attainable.

Community

OCO musicians value the camaraderie and thrill of playing with other talented musicians. They strive to uphold the core values of OCO and behave in such a way that strengthens the relationships built in OCO. OCO musicians are fellow musicians, peers, and friends.

Operation of OCO

Personnel

OCO Navigators: Kyle Emmi, Connor Novak, Emma Westerhoff

OCO Transcribers: Kyle Emmi, Marie-Caroline Finke, Anne Ku, Justin Kunimune, Junwon Lee, Brandon Zhang

OCO Librarian: Anne Ku

OCO Sight reading Preparation: Transcribers

OCO Professor/Re-orchesterations (arrangements): Diana Dabby

OCO Board: [your name here], Kyle Emmi, Connor Novak, Emma Westerhoff, Diana Dabby

Mechanics of OCO

NAVIGATORS: The navigators of OCO have a variety of responsibilities. They are elected by their peers during the Spring semester. They are responsible for the logistics and organization of the group (e.g., scheduling, allocating responsibilities, and overall leadership). The navigators, OCO Board, and OCO professor create rehearsal agendas, guide the direction of OCO, and make changes to rehearsals, group organization, etc., based on student feedback.

REHEARSAL LEADERS: The rehearsal leaders' responsibilities are to meet with the OCO Board in advance of the rehearsal they signed up to lead. Together with the OCO navigators and Diana Dabby, they help plan out and guide the upcoming rehearsal, facilitate discussion, and make executive decisions during rehearsal for the sake of progress. Interpretation, problem spots, cueing, improving rhythmic integrity, togetherness, dynamic contrast, and intonation all comprise agenda items for any given rehearsal.

PRACTICE GROUPS: To build cohesion, OCO members participate in practice groups, which usually sometime over a weekend. Agendas for practice groups are determined at the Board Meeting prior to the weekend in question.

BOARD MEETINGS: The OCO Board meets once a week with Diana Dabby in Studio 305 on **Thursdays at 6pm**. Everyone is welcome!

PIECE SELECTION: At the end of the first semester, the Board and / or the orchestra will choose the first two pieces for the next semester. During the semester, when a new piece is to be selected, the navigators will provide an online-forum for students to suggest and share pieces with each other. The orchestra will vote on which pieces to play next. Pieces may be selected from sight-reading material.

AUDITIONS: Individual auditions will be conducted with Diana Dabby, one or more navigators, and a possible external adjudicator. The material expected for the individual audition will be: randomly selected scales, a slow excerpt (provided by Diana Dabby), and a fast excerpt (selected by the auditioning student). Students returning to OCO after a semester away may take an individual audition.

ATTENDANCE POLICY: OCO is a performance class. Attendance at a performance class is not the same as attendance at a lecture class. If you miss lecture classes, you will only be affecting yourself. OCO is different; if you miss a rehearsal you are missed by everyone. Unlike larger, conducted orchestras, each musician in OCO carries an independent line that connects with the musical lines carried by other players. Decisions are made during rehearsals that affect the music and everyone making the music, e.g., cues, dynamics, balance, to name just a few. This is why our attendance policy is stricter than that of other courses (although we are not advocating you skip your other classes :)

If extenuating circumstances or illness force you to miss a sectional or a rehearsal, then one personal day per semester is available to you. In that case, **please email Diana Dabby and the navigators (Kyle Emmi, Connor Novak, and Emma Westerhoff) so they can make any necessary adjustments to the rehearsal agenda. Remember – every part is important in OCO!**

If you miss more than one rehearsal during a semester, then you will have to (1) check in with another OCO member in your section to update your part with any musical decisions that were finalized at the missed rehearsal, e.g., cues, dynamics, articulations, tempo, etc.; (2) you must record yourself playing your updated part for any works rehearsed at the missed rehearsal; and (3) send the recording to Diana Dabby and the three Navigators (Kyle Emmi, Connor Novak, and Emma Westerhoff).

Please note: An OCO personal day cannot be taken for dress rehearsals or concerts.

RECORDING: OCO will record itself during rehearsals and performances, play back any recordings and solicit constructive commentary.

PARTS: If you are having a hard time with your part, please let Diana Dabby know. As the orchestrator, she can adjust your part within the context of all the parts.

Rehearsals

Rehearsal may start with sectionals followed by a full rehearsal, or start directly with a full orchestra rehearsal. At the Board Meeting following each rehearsal, the navigators, Diana Dabby, and [your name here], will meet to decide which sections/pieces will be rehearsed the following week, and email the group.

Though OCO starts at 6:45pm, please arrive at 6:30pm to help set up AC 318. Please stay a few minutes after 9pm to help return the room to its classroom condition. If everyone arrives to help set up, then it can be accomplished by 6.40, enabling everyone to warmup before the tuning note at 6.45pm. This signals the start of the rehearsal.

Please have a pencil ready at all rehearsals!

Upcoming Concert Dates

- Friday, October 12: Family Weekend concert, Milas Hall Mezzanine
 - 2:45 – 4pm: setup and dress rehearsal

- 4:30pm performance
- Saturday, November 10: Admissions Fall Open House, Milas Hall Mezzanine
 - 12:15 – 1:30pm: setup and dress rehearsal
 - 2pm: performance
- Monday, December 17: Fall Expo [dress rehearsal + performance will occur sometime between 9am and 5pm]

All musicians must be present for OCO concerts.

Factoid: OCO has 8 constituencies! Admissions, President’s Council, Development, Olin Families and Alumni, Student Affairs and Resources, CORE, students/staff/faculty, and the neighboring communities.

Changing the Action Plan

In the spirit of Olin, OCO is constantly striving to innovate and self-improve. Your input on anything in the Action Plan is greatly appreciated, and the Board will continually revise the Action Plan based on musician feedback.