



**ROOKIE PARENT  
HANDBOOK**



## ROOKIE PARENT HANDBOOK

What have we gotten ourselves into?

Welcome to the University High School Band!

The University Band is a comprehensive musical arts program that develops students as musicians, performers, and leaders. We believe in the importance of each student's personal dedication to excellence in every endeavor, whether it be in the concert hall, on the performance field, or in the classroom. Our members strive to fulfill our motto of "Committing to Greatness Every Day" by putting in the time, effort, and energy to achieve greatness in whatever we do.



There are many fantastic band programs in Orange County, but there are many unique opportunities you'll only find at University, and we are glad you'll be joining us on this journey.

The experiences your children will have in band will be great preparation for the real world that awaits them after high school. They will learn the value of hard work and learn how to handle both victory and defeat graciously. They will learn to manage their

time effectively and accept responsibility for their commitments. It is our goal to instill into our students confidence, dedication, and virtue as far as we are able.

This rookie band parent handbook will provide some answers to some of your questions, and hopefully some of the questions you didn't know you had, about different aspects of being part of the UHS Band, including:

- Time Commitment
- Band Fees
- Fundraising
- Uniforms
- Communication
- Parent Meetings



## Time Commitment

Over the summer, we have band camp. This is **mandatory** for everyone involved in the band program. The hours are as follows:

July 10 - 13 | 10 AM - 4 PM | Percussion & Guard Camp  
 July 17 - 20 | 10 AM - 6 PM | Band Camp  
 July 24 - 28 | 10 AM - 8 PM | Band Camp  
 July 31 | 10 AM - 8 PM | Band Camp

There are a few rehearsals the week before school begins, and then we fall into a weekly schedule that looks something like this:

| Sunday | Monday                 | Tuesday                  | Wednesday | Thursday                 | Friday                | Saturday                      |
|--------|------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
|        | Sectionals<br>3 - 6 PM | Rehearsal<br>3:30 - 7 PM |           | Rehearsal<br>3:30 - 7 PM | Football<br>5 - 11 PM | Competition<br><i>All Day</i> |

This schedule lasts through the end of marching band in November.

In the spring, there are some after school rehearsals depending on which ensemble your child is in, but these are generally only one day a week and done by 4 PM. The winter guard also rehearses most of the summer.

| Sunday | Monday                                | Tuesday   | Wednesday                             | Thursday   | Friday | Saturday |
|--------|---------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|--|--------|----------|
|        | Jazz Ens.<br>Rehearsal<br>2:30 - 4 PM | Big Band<br>Rehearsal<br>2:30 - 4 PM<br><br>Winter Guard<br>Rehearsal<br>5-8 PM | Sym. Band<br>Rehearsal<br>1:30 - 3 PM | Wind Ens.<br>Rehearsal<br>2:30 - 4 PM<br><br>Winter Guard<br>Rehearsal<br>5-8 PM |        |          |

In general, please allow about 30 minutes after a rehearsal or performance for your student to put away his or her equipment.

Please arrange family vacations, doctor's visits, jobs, and other events around the band schedule whenever possible. Band is the ultimate team sport, and if one member is missing, it has a negative effect on the entire group.



## How will my child have time for all this?

Without a doubt, band is a big time commitment. There are rehearsals at least twice a week, football games on most Friday nights, and competitions on many weekends. In the spring, the schedule may ease up a bit on an individual level, but there's All State, All County, Solo & Ensemble, Music Performance Assessments, Winter Guard, the school musical, and lots of other concerts and performances.

Students are also committing to summer band, fundraising, individual practice, and (hopefully) private lessons. In addition to all this, students still have classes, studying, tutoring, homework, recreation, family time, and at some point they're going to need to sleep, so how will they have time for this?



## Time Management

One of the most important skills your child will learn in band is excellent time management. There is no doubt that it can be done, and done well: many of our students are in Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) classes or dual-enrolled at Valencia College while being highly involved in the band, and we have band alumni at prestigious colleges and universities. In fact, many students find it easier to keep their grades up in the fall when the marching band schedule forces them to structure their time more proactively.

There are 168 hours in a week; marching band practice accounts for just 10 of those. A football game adds another 6-7. In October, a Saturday competition may take up most of the day. However, even during our busiest week of the season, band will take up less than 20% of your time. That's a lot, for sure, but not unmanageable.

## Parent Involvement

*"Days go slow, but years go fast."*

Getting involved in the band is one of the best ways to support your child in this formative time in his or her life, the final four years of primary education. Soon, they will be moving off to college, starting careers, and building their own families. Many parents are not able to share this time with their children, so take advantage of the opportunity. Blink and you'll miss it. Teenagers may roll their eyes at your very presence, but deep down, they really do appreciate having you around and will thank you in the future.

# UNIVERSITY BAND



Beyond that, the University Band requires a high degree of parent involvement and support for our students to have a great experience. We need parents to help chaperone events, run concessions, assist at band camp, provide first aid, sew uniforms, drive trucks, build props, donate items, and do all sorts of other things to help make sure the kids have what they need to be successful. There are tons of opportunities... take advantage of as many as you are able!

On top of it all, more often than not, our parents get to meet each other, network, and build lasting friendships through their involvement and common goal of supporting their children.

Volunteer opportunities are posted at [www.UHSband.com/parents](http://www.UHSband.com/parents) where you can click on an event, see what positions are needed, and sign yourself up.

## Communication: Getting Information

There are several ways of keeping informed about what's going on in the band program, and you'll do best if you are getting information from as many sources as possible.

Students are told and told again about all upcoming events, and information is written on the board in the band room. However, teenagers can... occasionally... neglect to pass information on to their parents. Pry your kid for information, but also check out the following channels:

Primarily, be sure to visit our website at [www.UHSband.com](http://www.UHSband.com). This is our primary source for communication and announcements. In particular, regularly check the Calendar and the Parents Page for upcoming events and volunteer opportunities. Your child will also have access to the Members Page, where detailed itineraries and other information will be posted.

We have a Facebook Group (UHS Band and Guard Parents (Orlando)) and a YouTube channel ([YouTube.com/UniversityBand](http://YouTube.com/UniversityBand) and [YouTube.com/@UniversityBandParents](http://YouTube.com/@UniversityBandParents)), and we use the Remind App for real-time communication.

The band directors regularly send out emails with important details. Please check your child's member profile (on the Members Page of the band website) to make sure your email address is listed correctly.



Finally, there are band parent meetings just about every month. These are great opportunities to make sure you are informed about what's coming up, to find out how you can get involved, and to share any questions, concerns, or great ideas you might have.

## How much does all of this cost?

Running a program as active and successful as the University High School Band takes a lot of money. Our budget for the 2021-2022 school year was \$125,000. While that may seem high, we get by on a budget far lower than many other programs that perform at a similar level.

## Where does the money come from?

Although we wish band were free, or that it were sufficiently funded by the school district, it is not. Our band program therefore relies on several different sources for the money we need to run a successful program.

All members are assessed **Band Fees** as a “fair share” of approximately \$400. There may be additional fees (for example, if your child needs a pair of shoes, or a new uniform shirt, or uses a school instrument, or if we need to take a charter bus somewhere.) Please note that our band fees are about half what other programs at a similar level charge, and Band Fees make up less than half of our program's budget.

- The full fee schedule is in an appendix at the end of this document.
- There is a link at [www.UHSband.com/parents](http://www.UHSband.com/parents) that goes directly to SchoolPay, where you can pay band assessments online.
- If you would prefer to write a check, please make it out to Foundation for OCPS and bring it directly to the band office.

Our program runs the **Concessions Stand** at home JV and Varsity football games, and at various other events throughout the year. We are proud of the fact that our band parents have the know-how and manpower to do this successfully, and you'll find that our concession stand is one of the most efficiently run you'll see, with multiple payment options and a varied menu.



We **host events** throughout the year, including the University Classic, FFCC University Color Guard Regional, and occasionally FBA events like Marching MPA, Jazz, MPA, or Solo & Ensemble.

We have **fundraisers** and **paid performances** throughout the year.



We rely on **sponsorships** from our local community.

## How will I pay for this?

We have fundraisers throughout the year to put money directly into your child's band account. Every year, some students who take diligent advantage of these end up not having to pay a single dime out-of-pocket.

Financial considerations should not prevent your child from joining the band program. If your family has a unique financial situation, please schedule a meeting with the band directors and we will be happy to work with you to find a solution.

## Uniforms - What do they wear?

### Rehearsals

Marching Band rehearsals are outside, in the summer, in Florida. Students should wear comfortable closed-toe, athletic sneakers, with socks, athletic shorts, a light-colored T-shirt, a hat (one that keeps the sun off your face), and sunglasses. Students should be sure to wear sunscreen. Students must also have their own water bottle of at least 2



liters, and are

encouraged to have a change of clothes with them.



### Football Games and Parades

All students who play woodwind, brass, or percussion instruments will be fitted for a **Parade Uniform**. This is our formal marching band uniform, consisting of a feathered hat (the feather is called a "Plume" and the hat is called a "Shako"), jacket, gauntlets, pants (called "bibbers"), socks, and shoes (called "Dinkles.")

Under the uniform, students wear their Navy blue member t-shirt. They will be given one for free, and can purchase extras for \$10. Each member is also responsible for purchasing his or her own socks (\$5) and shoes (\$50.) We don't share those. (Yuck.) All the other parts of the uniform are included in general band assessments.



The parade uniform does not go home with students.

#### **While in Uniform...**

- No hair should show beneath the Shako.
- No jewelry (other than studs) or other visible accessories.
- No nail polish.
- No make-up (except for color guard.)
- No colored drinks, condiments, or greasy food may be eaten while in uniform.

#### **Color Guard**

Color Guard members get custom uniforms each year. The cost of these is included in the guard assessment in August.

#### **Competitions**

For our field show, we have custom uniform pieces (usually a shirt and headgear) that match the theme of the production. These go home with the student and should be washed (be careful to follow the instructions) after every performance. The cost of these is included in the general band assessment.

#### **Concert Ensembles**

Our **Symphonic Band** and **Wind Ensemble** dress formally in full tuxedo or black, floor-length dress. Students are required to purchase their own formalwear; details will be provided about specific requirements and some places where it can be purchased.



The **Concert Band** and **Jazz Ensemble** dress in semi-formal black.

The **Big Band** dresses in semi-formal black with gentlemen in blue button-up shirts with black neck ties.

### **Tips to Save You Time and Grief**

- Make sure your child is responsible for being prepared.
- Keep your eye on the communication channels (website, Facebook, email) to be sure you know what's going on.





- Meet other parents! Not only can you develop lasting friendships, but they will help keep you informed of anything you might have missed.
- Don't put uniform items away in a closet or drawer after washing them. Keep everything (socks, shoes, band shirt, uniform shirt, etc.) in a bag so you don't have to hunt it down every time it's needed.
- Keep extra socks and a band t-shirt in your car just in case.
- Visit the website often! It makes a great home page for your browser: [www.UHSband.com](http://www.UHSband.com).
- Come to the performances and CHEER! The students perform better when they are getting energy from the audience, and your children will appreciate you being there to see the results of all their hard work.

## Communication: Talking to the Directors

Beyond all the different channels of communication, the best way to get information is to email both of the band directors. Mr. Brown's email is [director@UHSband.com](mailto:director@UHSband.com) and Mr. Willis can be reached at [willis@UHSband.com](mailto:willis@UHSband.com). If you do not get a response in a timely manner, please simply email them again. Our directors are very busy and are not ignoring you on purpose.

The band office does have a phone and can be reached directly at (407) 482-8709. However, please be aware that the voicemail is NOT checked very often, so if you are asked to leave a message, it will be better to send an email.

The directors are also happy to speak with you in person about anything. If you need something beyond a quick question-and-answer, please feel free to email and request an appointment so they can give you their full attention.



## Paperwork

There are a number of important forms you will need to fill out each year.

- **Band Handbook** | All students and parents should sign the last page.
- **Winter Guard Handbook** | All students who participate in Winter Guard (from November through March) should sign the last page.
- **Online Athletic Clearance** | There are two forms you'll need to download and have a doctor fill out: an electrocardiogram (ECG) form, which only needs to be done once and is good for four years; and a physical form, which needs to be done every year. Make sure your doctor fills out **these particular** forms and not whatever standard forms his or her office uses. Upload the completed forms to the athletic clearance website. Details about all of this are available at [www.UHSband.com/members/athletics](http://www.UHSband.com/members/athletics).  
*Important: Students will not be allowed to participate after July 17 until these forms are uploaded.*
- **UHS Band Health Packet** | This should be uploaded to your member profile on the band website. This includes the emergency treatment card, model release, and health authorizations. (In other words, if a student has a headache but hasn't uploaded the health packet, we cannot even give out a Tylenol.)

Required paperwork can be printed out from [www.UHSband.com/members/forms](http://www.UHSband.com/members/forms).



## Appendix A. Some Important Acronyms

**BOA** - Bands of America. This is a nation-wide organization that hosts marching band competitions at major venues across the country, culminating with the national championships in Indianapolis. Since 2018, we have regularly attended the BOA Orlando Regional competition at Camping World Stadium.

**FBA** - Florida Bandmasters' Association. This is the professional organization for band directors across the state, and the organization behind our Music Performance Assessments and the Solo & Ensemble Festival.

**FFCC** - Florida Federation of Colorguards Circuit. This is a competitive circuit that hosts winter guard competitions in the spring and just this year announced a series of outdoor marching band competitions in the fall.



**FMBC** - Florida Marching Band Coalition. This is the competitive circuit that oversees most of the school-based regional competitions in Florida, culminating with the state championships in November.

**FMEA** - Florida Music Education Association. This is the parent organization of FBA, and responsible for all the various All State ensembles.

**MFA** - Music for All. This is the parent company of BOA, and also runs concert festivals in the spring.



## Appendix B. Fall Marching Band Calendar

Regularly scheduled rehearsals are not included in this list. For the full calendar, please visit [www.UHSband.com/calendar](http://www.UHSband.com/calendar).

|              |              |                           |
|--------------|--------------|---------------------------|
| July 10 - 13 | 10 AM - 4 PM | Percussion & Guard Camp   |
| July 17 - 20 | 10 AM - 6 PM | Band Camp                 |
| July 24 - 28 | 10 AM - 8 PM | Band Camp                 |
| July 31      | 10 AM - 8 PM | Band Camp / Premiere Show |
| August 1 - 4 | 3 - 8 PM     | Rehearsal                 |
| August 8     | 3 - 8 PM     | Rehearsal                 |
| August 18    | Evening      | Football vs. Evans        |
| August 25    | Evening      | Football @ Cypress Creek  |
| August 26    | 10 AM - 8 PM | Rehearsal                 |
| September 1  | Evening      | Football vs. Lewisburg    |
| September 8  | Evening      | Football vs. Oak Ridge    |
| September 9  | 10 AM - 8 PM | Rehearsal                 |
| September 14 | Evening      | Football @ Winter Park    |
| September 29 | Evening      | Football vs. Lake Howell  |
| October 6    | Evening      | Football @ Horizon        |
| October 7    | All Day      | FFCC Outdoor (Oviedo HS)  |
| October 13   | Evening      | Football vs. Timber Creek |
| October 20   | Evening      | Football vs. Hagerty      |
| October 21   | All Day      | BOA Orlando               |
| October 26   | Evening      | Football @ Colonial       |
| October 28   | All Day      | The University Classic    |
| November 3   | Evening      | Football vs. Freedom      |
| November 4   | All Day      | FBA Marching MPA          |
| November 11  | All Day      | FMBC Championships        |



## Appendix C. Fee Schedule

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### FOR ALL

The following fees apply to everyone in the program.

|                    |       |                 |
|--------------------|-------|-----------------|
| Deposit            | \$100 | Due June 1      |
| Fall Assessment #1 | \$100 | Due September 1 |
| Fall Assessment #2 | \$100 | Due October 1   |
| Fall Assessment #3 | \$100 | Due November 1  |
| Spring Assessment  | \$50  | Due February 1  |

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### FOR SOME

The following fees apply to some members based on their section.

|                       |       |                            |
|-----------------------|-------|----------------------------|
| Guard Assessment      | \$100 | Due August 1               |
| Percussion Assessment | \$50  | Due August 1 and January 1 |
| Equipment Maintenance | \$50  | Due August 1 and January 1 |