

AUSO modifications for COVID-19
this particular list of items was updated on August 7, 2020

- Thankfully, all of our regular rehearsals will occur on the HPAC concert hall stage to facilitate recommended social distancing. Exceptions to this may include occasional sectional rehearsals in other locations TBD, still with social distancing & mask wearing.
- Final details for our performances are still being discussed and finalized. Our performances are *most likely* going to be video recording sessions without an in-person audience present. Any potential plan to invite some in-person listeners at some point during the year will be in strict compliance with CDC and State of Michigan regulations, and will need to be approved by our orchestra's members.
- Auditions will still occur during the first week of school, but this year they will be held over in HPAC's rehearsal room, ensuring that your audition experience is safe and Hamel Hall doesn't become overcrowded.
- There are a number of additional modifications that will make the rehearsal environment safer, including:
 - Each rehearsal will contain a 15 minute break when all musicians will be expected to leave the stage to maximize air flow and personal space. Musicians may carefully use the restroom while distancing during these times, and may want to bring and refill their own water bottle. During these breaks, going outside to breathe fresh air will be encouraged.
 - All musicians will be provided with their own music stand and thus will need to use their own binder, sheet music and pencil. AUSO's music will no longer be stored at the Howard Performing Arts Center, as you will keep it and transport your music to and from each rehearsal.
 - String, harp, and percussion musicians will be required to wear masks and will sit approximately 6 feet apart from one another (for string players, 6 feet of social distancing actually exceeds recommendations stemming from research completed by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra - a summary of their [study can be found here](#) - and also by the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra in Germany - a video demonstrating their process can be [viewed here](#)). Our string players will certainly be much farther apart than the 3.3 feet that they recommend).
 - Wind & brass musicians will be placed 6 feet apart and with additional space in certain situations. For example, we plan to create additional space to the right of each flutist, behind french horn players, and in front of other brass musicians. Therefore, a trombone player would have someone seated 6 feet to the side of them, but likely more than 10 feet of clearance in front of them. And since flutists' aerosols project sideways, they unfortunately will not be seated next to other flutists. As a reference, our setup is most likely to resemble that currently being used by Amsterdam's Concertgebouw Orchestra, as [explained by them here](#), with some additional adjustments such as for flutes. Wind & brass players will be expected to wear a mask whenever they are not playing their instrument, and will be asked to avoid discharging their condensation on the floor.
 - (Update for August 7): In accordance with recommendations stemming from a peer-reviewed study coordinated by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) and the College Band Directors National Association (CBDNA), the Andrews University Department of Music will provide additional safety equipment for our woodwind and brass musicians. Each of our musicians will be provided with a fabric cover for their instrument's bell and also a customized mask with a slit for your embouchure (a summary of that study can be read [here](#)).
 - Musicians will be expected to provide a binder for their orchestra music (one that includes pockets), as most of your music will be hole-punched for you, with the possible exception of some original published parts. Music will not be shared, and we will therefore not be using the music cabinet or its folders/shelves
 - Dr. Wild plans to always wear a mask while teaching during the fall semester, and will give you the required amounts of social distancing
 - Stage crew will wear both masks and gloves whenever moving music stands, chairs, or

percussion instruments. Chairs and stands will mostly be left in place between rehearsals/ensembles

- Our first meeting together will be on Tuesday, September 1, so that the only orchestra activity during the first week of classes will be auditions. We will go over plans together and also play/rehearse beginning on September 1. Like last year, rehearsals are on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7-9pm.

If you have additional comments or questions, please direct them to Dr. Wild at wild@andrews.edu