

Raiders Drum And Bugle Corps

Drum Corps Staff Handbook

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I. MISSION

The mission of Raiders Drum And Bugle Corps is to provide young adults, ages 14-21, from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, with musical, educational and character-building experiences through the vehicle of the performing arts.

This mission is our purpose for existing. We structure our teaching philosophy, branding, and experience around our mission; we are, indeed, purpose driven in all we do. No decision is made administratively, instructionally, or programmatically without this purpose in mind.

II. VALUES

Our members come to us as leaders in their high schools and colleges. Their parents have already done a great job, and it's likely that they're going to be tomorrow's leaders. To that end, we believe it our primary responsibility to teach these students to live their lives within a values-centered framework.

Our values are:

- **Commitment:** By committing fully to one another, the group becomes more important than the individual, and we can accomplish more than what is possible individually.
- **Accountability:** We value personal accountability over criticism of others.
- **Persistence:** Through persistence in the face of adversity, we can achieve the highest level of excellence.
- **Honor:** We recognize the contributions of our current and past members and staff, will engage in behaviors that honor the organization.

A drum corps isn't successful unless the members and staff embrace a common set of values to achieve a common purpose that is greater than the sum of its individuals. Within this context, our primary job is not to create the best drummers, horn players, and marchers; our job is to help our members develop into great people.

III. MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to the Raiders Drum And Bugle Corps Family! Because we have selected the drum corps activity as our vehicle for teaching these values, we accept that there are rules to be credible and successful on the field. In short, the drum corps activity is highly competitive, and we expect to be taken seriously.

Competitive success is not incongruous with a mission-centered experience. It is, and should be, the byproduct of good teaching, preparation, and design. It can't be the end, in and of itself, because we can't control the competition. We can't make the groups above us worse, and we can't control the opinions of the adjudicators. What we can do is be better everyday -- better teachers, better performers, better designers, better mentors, better leaders.

Overall Goal: Member Retention

The drum corps production is an 8.5 - 11-minute performance on a football field. The "stage" has big white lines and numbers on it; not an intensely artistic medium. This is why the purpose-driven experience is important. If we can't transcend the 11-minute show, if that show is the end-all of what we do, our best and brightest staff would tire of it soon, and our members' experience would seem hollow. For us, the drum corps activity is an adjunct experience that helps round out our lives. It gives us the opportunity to

work some of the most amazing young performers in the Atlantic Region, and provide them a life-changing experience they will never forget.

The most powerful way to measure our success is through member retention. Our objective is to retain 50 - 60 percent of our eligible members from one year to the next. We believe that creating a compelling and meaningful experience at The Raiders will result in that objective.

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IV. JOB DESCRIPTIONS – DRUM CORPS STAFF

Program & Staff Coordinator

- Manage the design and instructional teams
- Set rehearsal goals and objectives
- Develop long-range "game plan" for season
- Develop instructor teaching skills
- Participate in staff hiring and termination decisions
- Direct the audition process

Music or Visual Director/Coordinator

- Direct the work of the designers
- Collaborate with design team to create the program
- Participate in decision-making about the show concept and artistic vision

Designers

- Create the musical and visual program for the corps
- Participate in the development and definition of the show concept and artistic vision
- Create program in conjunction with others on the Design Team
- Submit program to Caption Heads and revise based on feedback
- Provide rewrites of the program as directed

Caption Heads

- Coordinate recruiting, and manage the audition process for their section
- Hire and supervise instructional staff
- Define rehearsal objectives and plan rehearsals
- Manage instruments and/or equipment
- Monitor and enhance member experience

Supervisors

- Participate in recruiting efforts, ensure audition process is being executed by the instructional
- Supervise and monitor instructional staff
- Ensure rehearsal objectives and rehearsal plans are executed by instructors
- Monitor and enhance member experience

Instructors

- Responsible for the day-to-day instruction of the members
- Teach members based on defined technique program
- Participate in and provide input during the audition process
- Communicate schedule conflicts with Caption Heads
- Participate in cross-caption rehearsal planning meetings
- Listen to judges' tapes and participate in judges' critique, where applicable

V. STAFF CONDUCT

Professional Behavior

For the purposes of this policy, the term “staff member” includes all instructors, consultants and volunteers. Staff members agree to:

- Act in a way that represents the best interests of The Raiders and its members.
- Act in accordance with our contractual responsibility to our corporate partners.
- Establish and maintain a positive learning environment
- Be sensitive to the local community and to our housing agreements at all times, including rehearsals, warm-ups and performances. Noise concerns are the primary reason it’s difficult to find rehearsal and camp facilities -
 - Amplified metronomes are the #1 complaint of communities that host a corps. Don’t use them too early, too late, too long, or too loudly.
 - Whenever possible, point directional instruments away from homes and businesses.
 - Keep percussion sections as far from homes and businesses as possible.
 - Respect the private property of our host communities.
 - Most neighborhoods don’t follow the time schedule of a drum corps. Reduce the late night and early morning sound levels.
- Behave in a professional manner. Unprofessional behavior includes:
 - Sexual conduct with a member (See Sexual Conduct Policy for details)
 - Insulting or offensive language
 - Participating in or encouraging hazing or other demeaning behavior
 - Disorderly or violent behavior
 - Inability to perform assigned tasks due to alcohol or drug use
 - Substance abuse
 - Violation of housing policies regarding alcohol and tobacco use

Alcohol and Drug Consumption

Staff members shall not consume alcohol while at work with The Raiders. “At work” includes the time period between the beginning of the day, typically the start of rehearsal, and the close of the day, typically the end of rehearsal on rehearsal days and/or critique on show days.

Staff members shall not engage in the use of illegal drugs, including but not limited to marijuana, cocaine, amphetamines, tranquilizers, crack cocaine, barbiturates, and diet pills during the term of this Contract. The Executive Director may terminate a staff member immediately without the obligation for further compensation to Staff if this provision is breached.

Rehearsal Attendance

Rehearsal schedules are set collaboratively by the Program & Staff Coordinator, and Caption Heads, working within the parameters established by the Executive Director or Tour Management. Caption Heads are responsible for assuring that adequate numbers of staff are in attendance at each sectional, rehearsal and performance.

If you’re scheduled for a rehearsal and you’ll be late or you can’t attend, you must, as early as possible, contact your Caption Head, (or Tour Management if we’re traveling). We can work around nearly any situation if we know about it in advance.

Staff Conflicts

Passionate instructors will have disagreements. These disagreements should never be apparent to the members. Instructors are expected to resolve conflict through discussion and compromise, or by bringing the topic of disagreement to the Manager of Drum Corps Operations, Program & Staff Coordinator, or Executive Director. Staff should never involve members in any staff conflict.

VI. SEXUAL CONDUCT AND HARASSMENT POLICY

For the purposes of this policy, the term “staff member” includes all instructors, designers, coordinators, consultants and volunteers.

Staff members are expected to maintain a professional relationship at all times with all members. Inappropriate comments or behavior will not be tolerated.

Staff members who engage in sexual conduct with a current member of the corps (of any age), or any participant in our educational programs or auditions, will be dismissed for cause immediately. If the corps is on tour, dismissed staff members will be responsible for any resulting transportation costs.

Staff members who engage in sexual conduct with a member younger than 18 years of age will be dismissed for cause immediately and are subject to prosecution.

After the end of the season, staff members who date or engage in sexual conduct with a member (of any age) from a prior year who is still eligible for membership may not return.

Staff members who create, through word or action, a hostile work environment for corps members or other staff are subject to dismissal. Examples of inappropriate behavior include:

- Requests for sexual favors
- Demeaning sexual inquiries and vulgarities
- Discussion of sexual behavior
- Offensive language
- Other verbal or physical conduct of sexual or degrading nature
- Sexually offensive, explicit or sexist signs, images or literature in plain view
- Offensive and vulgar graffiti
- Inappropriate, provocative or revealing clothing

Decisions about what constitutes inappropriate behavior will be made by the senior staff member present at any time.

These behaviors are always inappropriate when they involve the members or when members are present. This includes, but is not limited to, rehearsals, performances, meals, and travel.

Note: When members are not present, not all sexual conduct is considered to create a hostile work environment. For a hostile work environment between instructors to exist, the conduct must be unwelcome and clear notice must be given that the conduct is unwelcome.

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VII. SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Introduction

Social media are powerful communications tools that have a significant impact on organizational and professional reputations. Because they blur the lines between personal voice and institutional voice, The Raiders has crafted the following policy to help clarify how best to enhance and protect personal and professional reputations when participating in social media.

Social media are defined as media designed to be disseminated through social interaction, created using highly accessible and scalable publishing techniques. Examples include but are not limited to LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and MySpace.

Both in professional and institutional roles, staff need to follow the same behavioral standards online as they would in real life. The same laws, professional expectations, and guidelines for interacting with students, parents, and other Raiders constituents apply online as in the real world. Staff are liable for anything they post to social media sites.

Policies for all Social Media Sites, Including Personal Sites

- **Protect confidential and proprietary information:** Do not post confidential or proprietary information about Raiders, students, staff, or alumni. Staff must still follow the applicable federal requirements such as FERPA and HIPA. Staff who share confidential information do so at the risk of disciplinary action or termination.
- **Age-Inappropriate Content:** Due to participation by students under the age of 18 on personal social networking sites, any sexual or otherwise age-inappropriate content is grounds for termination. Staff is responsible to monitor sites under their control for inappropriate content posted by others.
- **Respect copyright and fair use:** When posting, be mindful of the copyright and intellectual property rights of others and of The Raiders.
- **Don't use Raiders logos for endorsements:** Do not use the Raiders logo or name on personal social media sites or to promote a product, cause, or political party or candidate.
- **Terms of service:** Obey the Terms of Service of any social media platform employed.

Best Practices

This section applies to those posting on behalf of The Raiders, though the guidelines may be helpful for anyone posting on social media in any capacity.

- **Think twice before posting:** There is no privacy in the world of social media. Consider how posts may reflect both on the poster and The Raiders. If you are unsure about posting a comment or response, ask the Executive Director for direction.
- **Strive for accuracy:** Review content for factual, grammatical and spelling errors.
- **Remember your audience:** A presence in the social media world is or easily can be made available to the public at large. This includes prospective students, current students, parents, etc. Consider this before publishing to ensure the post will not alienate, harm, or provoke any of these groups.

- **On personal sites, identify your views as your own.** If you identify yourself as a Raiders staff member online, it should be clear that the views expressed are not necessarily those of The Raiders.
- **Photography:** Photographs posted on social media sites easily can be appropriated by visitors. Consider posting images at 72 dpi and approximately 800x600 resolution. Images at that size are sufficient for viewing on the Web, but not suitable for printing.

Section 3: Institutional Social Media

If you post on behalf of The Raiders, the following policies must be adhered to in addition to all policies and best practices listed above.

- **Notify the Executive Director:** Captions that have a social media page or would like to start one should contact the Executive Director coordination with all other Raiders media. All institutional pages must have an authorized Raiders staff identified as being responsible for content.
- **Acknowledge who you are:** If you are representing The Raiders when posting on a social media platform, acknowledge this.
- **Link back to the Organization:** Whenever possible, posts should be brief, redirecting a visitor to content that resides within the Raiders Web environment.
- **Protect the institutional voice:** Posts on social media sites should protect The Raiders by remaining professional in tone and in good taste.

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VIII. REHEARSALS: GENERAL GUIDELINES

Objectives and Priorities

Rehearsal objectives and priorities are determined in advance by Caption Heads and Program & Staff Coordinator. During the winter and spring these are typically determined by conference call prior to a camp. During the competitive season lead staff will meet each night to discuss the next day's rehearsal. It's critical that caption heads communicate rehearsal objectives to their staff in advance of rehearsal.

Time Management

Rehearsals are expected to begin and end on time. Transition time (from one activity to another) always comes from the preceding block. ***So, if a full corps rehearsal follows a sectional, the sectional must end in time for the members to move to the new location and be ready for the new rehearsal.*** This includes time for discussion or announcements.

Rehearsals before meal breaks should not run late with the ***expectation that the after-meal rehearsal can begin late.***

Processes

In a full corps rehearsal, ensemble priorities take precedence over section priorities. There will always be a predetermined focus. While some visual comments are expected during a music rehearsal, and vice versa, all instructors, especially on the field, should be aware of and support the focus of the rehearsal.

For the first 10 minutes or so of a full corps rehearsal, on-field instructors may be asked to remain off the field while the tone of the rehearsal is being set.

The initial comments in a full corps rehearsal always come from the primary voice upstairs ("the box" or "the tower"), followed by other upstairs comments. On-field instruction should only be made if/when the tower announces "Field." This will not always happen. Remember that rehearsal pacing is critical.

All instructors should be sensitive to the number of instructions or corrections members are given in a short period of time.

Rehearsals should always conclude with a brief summary by the primary voice of the rehearsal.

Wrap-Ups

A staff meeting of 20 - 30 minutes will follow each camp and regularly during the summer All-Days and on ***tour. Wrap-up meetings with members after rehearsal should always be brief.***

Cross-Caption Instruction

Modern drum corps demands that members meet multiple simultaneous responsibilities. Instructors and Caption Heads are expected to ensure that:

1. Each individual responsibility is mastered.
2. Simultaneous responsibilities are achievable and mastered.

Instructors are expected to collaboratively analyze and address issues as they arise.

Emphasis on Achievement of Excellence

Excellence has three dimensions:

- 1. Technique:** Performers must demonstrate identical musical and/or visual techniques.
- 2. Assignment:** Performers must be in exactly the right place, doing exactly the right thing, at exactly the right moment.
- 3. Performance:** Finally, performers must have the confidence and context to communicate their roles in the production to the audience and judges.

All three must be mastered to create a successful production that generates the maximum amount of effect. Typically, in the winter, instructional emphasis should be primarily on Technique and secondarily on Assignment. Later, in the spring and early summer, the emphasis switches to Assignment, while always still working on Technique, and developing the Performance. Still later, at the end of season, the emphasis in rehearsal should switch to Performance, while never neglecting Technique and Assignment.

A Staff of Bosses

We are fortunate to have a staff with many instructors who run their own successful programs in other contexts. This expertise is invaluable but can sometimes lead to frustration. We can all learn from each other, and open discussion, away from the members, is the key to growth and further success.

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Know Your Rehearsal

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Type	Description	Purpose	Possible areas to work on
Sub-Sectional	A rehearsal broken down into the instrument/equipment sections, such as a trumpet sectional or rifle sectional. It can further break down into parts of a section, such as a 3rd baritone sectional.	To teach and refine skills at the individual performance level. Teaching strategies should be geared towards the individual member. Instruction should be differentiated depending on the individual's need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Individual needs ● Understanding vocabulary ● Fundamental skills ● Quality of tone and expressiveness ● Articulation ● Pitch and intonation
Sectional	A rehearsal at the caption level, such as a percussion rehearsal or a guard rehearsal.	To teach skills and refine performance at the caption level. This type of rehearsal should address concerns that are consistent from performer to performer or to address wider design/writing/vocabulary concerns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Clarity and uniformity of style, interpretation, and articulation ● Ensemble sonority and intonation ● Balance and blend ● Quality of expressiveness and musicianship
Visual	A marching/movement rehearsal mainly involving the brass and battery sections	To teach and refine marching/movement skills with a focus on the individual performance level. While group instruction can occur, there is a heavy reliance on field techs to differentiate instruction to the individual.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consistency and uniformity ● Expression ● Timing and articulation of body, form, and equipment ● Precision ● Concentration, recovery, stamina
Visual Ensemble	A rehearsal that combines guard, battery, and brass captions and focuses on the visual program	To teach and refine visual performance at the ensemble level. Rehearsal should address concerns of visual coordination, ensemble clarity, and other visual ensemble categories.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Clarity of form, body, and equipment ● Quality of orchestration and transitions ● Unity of design ● Range of expression ● Environmental challenges
Music Ensemble	A rehearsal that combines battery, brass, and front ensemble captions and focuses on the music program	To teach and refine music performance at the ensemble level. Rehearsal should address music coordination and ensemble concerns. Could be standing still or on the field.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Clarity ● Ensemble sonority and intonation ● Uniformity of style and interpretation ● Balance and blend ● Vertical alignment ● Unity of design ● Quality of orchestration ● Range of expression
Full Corps	A rehearsal that combines all captions and focuses on the overall product, musically and visually.	To refine the overall product at the corps ensemble level. Should address concerns of the design coordination between visual and musical compositions. General effect is the priority.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engaging the audience ● Delivering and sustaining effects ● Embody and sustain character, role, identity, style ● Communicating artistic qualities ● Unified interpretation of the product

IX. CHART: REHEARSAL TYPES

**Raiders DBC
"The Way"**

Instill Cooperative Norms

- You have a duty to help others.
- You have the right to ask for help.
- No one is better than all of us together.

Communicate Clear Expectations

- Assign homework between camps/rehearsals.
- Communicate expectations prior to camps.
- Hold members accountable.
- Hold yourself accountable. Plan!

Follow the Process

- Walk time comes from the preceeding block.
- "Box" talks first.
- "Field" makes comments to individuals.

Know Your Rehearsal

- Sub-Sectional
- Sectional
- Visual
- Visual Ensemble
- Music Ensemble
- Full Corps

Give Clear Instructions

- Wait 'til members are quiet and watching you.
- Pause after a repetition before talking.
- Be specific when giving instruction.

Build Muscle Memory

- Break skills into smaller easily learned units.
- Teach each dependent skill in the necessary sequence.
- Nothing "sticks" without 5 - 7 correct repetitions.
- Review in future rehearsals.
- Multiple responsibilities can't be added to poor fundamentals.
(There's no such thing as multi-tasking.)

Correct and Praise

- Make corrections to individuals, not sections or groups.
- Follow up after a correction.
- Tell them what they're doing right.
- If it's not right after 3 times, you missed a step.

Watch for Diminishing Returns

- No more than 10 repetitions!
- Disguise repetitions to prevent boredom e.g. run a drill move in reverse.
- Don't repeat mistakes.

Motivate and Inspire

- The members aren't trying to make mistakes.
- Inspire them to greatness.
- Be a mentor.
- Make members feel valued.

X. CHART: TEACHING PHILOSOPHY