

Robin, Brian, and Duncan

## OUTLINE: Melody Makers

### MISSION

This after school program will enhance team-work and social skills, focus, dedication and motivation levels, and provide leadership opportunities (for both mentors and mentees). We hope to also instill a passion for music in general through one-on-one mentorship. The Melody Makers after school program is intended to be a collaborative effort between Hughes STEM High School and volunteers from The University of Cincinnati. Our primary goal is for students to improve their musical skills. We plan to lead by example and show these kids that music can be a rewarding hobby. This program would include both wind and string instruments, and would be molded according to the students' needs. Depending on the student's level, they may choose to learn a solo to play for an audience at the end of the year.

### MENTORSHIP STYLE

During a general meeting, the time will be split into two parts: general theory, and application. The mentorship style will be similar to a classroom style at the beginning, with all pupils seated in chairs facing a board where things can be drawn out for visual aid. Once the topic for that day has been explained, a period where questions can be asked in a one-on-one setting will ensue. This ensures that the students are able to voice concerns regarding how the material is being given to them. Things that didn't quite make sense the first time can be revisited at this time. This will be especially useful to students in band who may have already had questions about a specific topic.

This individual check in will allow students to practice and progress at their own level without feeling embarrassed. They will also have a mentor every step of the way to better explain things and who will function as a positive role model. If not enough UC volunteers are involved, students who are on the same level of mastery will meet with a single mentor in small groups. . Ashley Felts will be the liaison between the high school and UC, but aside from that the program will be student organized and led. Volunteers will collaborate with the Center for Community Engagement to affirm honors experiences and volunteer hours. Training for mentors is talked about in the next section.

### PROGRAMMING

Several "training" events will need to be hosted where each mentor's musical abilities are assessed. After reviewing the things they may have forgotten, the mentors will be given a set curriculum. They may each choose one (or more depending on the number of volunteers) topic to teach during a scheduled meeting. In this way, each mentor will have a chance to be the teacher. The program will meet once a week on Mondays after school, and there will be three and a half months' worth of meetings. An example of what that curriculum may look like can be seen in the Timeline section. Additional material may be added depending on the opinions of those mentors involved. Each UC volunteer who chooses to lead one of the meetings will be required to make a power point on the subject they choose. These power points will be checked by a board of the

more involved volunteers for flow and understandable content. Since the students will be functioning at different levels, the slides will need to have both easy and hard examples interspersed throughout the presentation. Mentors who are not teaching for that meeting will be stationed around the classroom near their mentees.

An end of the year event will be planned where all of the students are taken to a concert of some sort to celebrate their success. Another option would be to allow students who completed a solo and wish to perform it to do so for a small audience. This of course will depend on student ability and interest.

## APPLICATION PROCESS

*Mentees:* Unfortunately, for the first few years of this program, only students in grades 7-12 who own instruments are allowed to join the group, and members of the band will be strongly encouraged to come. Hopefully, if the program grows enough, instruments can be purchased and lent to students so anyone wishing to improve their abilities can join. Flyers will be posted around the school to raise awareness, and sign-in sheets will be passed around during the meetings to keep track of who is regularly attending. The program will meet only during the spring semester.

*Mentors:* Applications will be available during the end of fall semester. Requirements for applying are a music background of at least 3 years, consecutive or nonconsecutive, in either high school or college, and a minimum GPA of 2.0. As many students that apply and meet these standards will qualify and be eligible to join. Students may choose to be involved in the planning process that takes place during the fall semester to obtain additional service hours and show a higher commitment, or they can opt to not be contacted about the program again until training starts.

The students who show a higher commitment will help plan the final curriculum, and talk with people from Hughes and other organizations to maintain the program. These individuals are referred to in this text as the planning mentors. These mentors may choose to create an honors experience from the time they put into the program. The planning mentors will also review the participating mentor's applications.

When training starts, both the planning and participating mentors will review, and become comfortable with the program and their fellow peers. The training sessions will be a fast walk-through of all the material that will be taught that year, and involve group discussions and several work sheets meant to improve clarity of hand-written music (which they will need to draw on the board when teaching).

A consistency of participation is expected of all UC volunteers. Although if something comes up and a volunteer cannot make it to a training session or meeting that particular volunteer will not be penalized. However, college students who show a higher commitment will receive priority when choosing topics earlier in the process. It is strongly encouraged that the other volunteers are notified if for some reason a mentor can't be there for that week's session.

## **PROGRAM TIMELINE**

*August-November:* The program is advertised throughout Hughes STEM High School and UC's campus using flyers. A booth will be set up during UC's activities fair, and info sessions will be advertised and then held as well. The Hughes STEM High School band will be visited and those students will be encouraged to attend meetings in the spring.

*September:* Applications for planning and participating are made available to UC students.

*Early December:* UC planning mentors are chosen, and are contacted with information regarding the planning meetings.

*December-January:* Planning meetings take place at least once a week. Students who wish to participate at home can skype in. UC participating mentors are chosen by the planning mentors.

*The first academic week (for UC) of January:* Students who opted out of early involvement are contacted, and several training days are held for all involved.

*January- April:* Meetings start and continue to take place

*Late April:* Meetings end, and a concert is attended (and/or a series of solo performers play in front of an audience).

### **CURRICULUM (based on a 14 week time span):**

Weeks 1-8: Reading Music (rhythms, general music terms, notes, scales, “reading around the notes”, practicing, etc.)

Week 9: Sight-reading

Weeks 10-12: Group Work/ Instrumentation (time to not just practice but master the skills talked about during the first 8 weeks).

Week 13: What Goes Into Writing a Piece of Music/ Solo Perfection (final steps for students who chose to work on a solo, other students can choose to write their own pieces or learn about what things directors or composers have to know)

Week 14: End of the Semester “Party” (very relaxed meeting where students can talk, food may or may not be provided depending on funds)

Week 15: Attend a concert/ Perform solos

## **FEEDBACK AND ADVANCEMENT**

Feedback will be given during every meeting throughout the Hughes STEM academic year by the students to the volunteers involved. This feedback is encouraged so that the program can evolve and continue to do so throughout the year. Additional feedback will be given by

mentors who attend the planning meeting. This will allow the set learning outcomes to be modified and improve over time. What works and what doesn't work can be discussed by volunteers in a final planning meeting held before the end of the year trip (or performance).

Eventually this program may grow enough to where officer positions may be incorporated to better spread out the duties that need to be accomplished such as training, organizing the meetings, etc.