



2018

Marching Percussion Audition Packet



Dear Prospective Members,

Thank you for your interest in the St. Ambrose University Drumline.
Auditions for the 2018 season will be held August

During the audition, you will be evaluated on musicianship, technical ability, potential, and preparation. This will be the best way for the staff to evaluate you. If there is a conflict please contact me directly.

You should arrive with exercises prepared to the best of your ability on the instrument of your choice. Throughout the audition, the staff will move you around if necessary to find the best fit for you in the drumline. Finally, make sure you arrive with a great attitude and a willingness to be a team player. If you have any other questions please feel free to contact me.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K. Tran".

Kelvin Tran
Percussion Caption Head
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“The Three A’s”

- **Attendance/Work Ethic:** Attendance and work ethic are of utmost importance for the success and development of the group. A good work ethic includes having a great attitude and working relationship with players around you.
- **Attitude:** Critique is an integral part of the performance process. Members of the SAU FIGHTING BEE DRUMLINE will receive a lot of instruction from directors, staff members, and even student leaders. That instruction will come from a position of respect and compassion and should be reciprocated. We are looking for team players with consistently positive attitudes.
- **Ability Level:** A certain level of proficiency on your instrument is expected. This will guarantee a level of comfort and success for you in the section, and for others around you. This includes physical ability and mental ability. Your mental ability includes your ability to process new techniques, ideas, and absorb new music or changes.

“The Three Keys”

1. **Use a Fulcrum Based Grip** – The index finger and thumb should make contact with the stick at all times. This increases control over the stick, and allows the student to control the quality of the sound. All instruments in our ensemble employ a fulcrum-based grip. These instruments also rely on having a natural curve of the hand with relaxed fingers.
2. **Play From the Wrist** – Try putting the bead (tip of the drumstick) against the head of a drum. Then move only the bead first and you will find it impossible not to bend the wrist accordingly – this should be done while maintaining the proper grip. Your forearm and fingers should not be rigid or tense, but instead contribute to the stroke by adding weight behind the stick, and helping for more advanced and faster passages. The wrist makes up about 80% of your stroke.
3. **Use Natural Rebound** – It is often observed that new incoming members do not play with a clear, relaxed, rebound stroke – this can make or break any audition. All drumheads provide a tremendous amount of natural rebound when struck with a stick. To use this rebound to its maximum potential, it is important that you relax and let the stick do the work. This concept is crucial as it will allow you to increase fluidity, speed, and tone quality.

Other things to consider:

- **Sound Quality:** Playing aggressively will help you play with a **full sound**. This is also obtained by playing full rebounded strokes with minimal tension in your body. A good way to check if you are tense or over gripping is to click the sticks together. If they create an open clave-like ringing sound then you are in business – if not, then **RELAX!** Hug the stick, don't choke it.
- **Consistency:** It is important to remain consistent so that we can always move forward. Each rehearsal is met with new and higher expectations. Make sure you are conscious of what you are playing but more importantly, how you are playing. It is important that the allotted time we have together is used efficiently.
- **Make the Drumline:** It is recommended that new members choose a second and third choice instrument. Chances are that you may not get your first choice the first time you audition, so have a back-up plan. Think of it this way – what will help you make your first instrument of choice next year? Playing an instrument you didn't think you were going to, or not playing at all? As for veteran members, no position is guaranteed. There is no set number of how many personnel we will utilize this season. We are looking for quality over quantity.

Audition Procedures

Students will select a "Primary" and "Secondary" instrument for the audition. If snare drum or tenors are the "Primary" instrument, it is strongly suggested that the packet is memorized. If bass drum/cymbals is the "Primary" instrument, the student must be familiar enough with the music to execute any part within that section (memorization not required). Marking time is required for every selection.

Students will perform on their "Primary" instrument for the solo audition. The "Secondary" instrument should be prepared to the best of the student's ability. Personnel will rotate instruments throughout the group audition.

TECHNIQUE

The following guidelines will create a uniform setup and look for the battery. Combined with the grip guidelines and stroke guidelines, these rules will define the basic techniques and approach for the battery section at St. Ambrose University.

- 1) **Natural Curve of the Hand:** All fingers and the thumb should assume their natural position as if the arm was hanging down by the side. Relaxation of the fingers and hands is crucial.
- 2) **Starting Position:** For **tenors and snares**, both sticks should form a 90-degree angle (or slightly less) just above the surface of the drum head. The butt end of the stick should be slightly elevated. For **bass drums**, the mallet should form a 45-degree angle from the forearm. The forearm should be parallel to the ground
- 3) **Relaxed Elbows/Shoulders:** Start by exhaling and relaxing the shoulders. This will help the elbows to rest comfortably in a direct line downward from the shoulders. Avoid making contact with the elbow to the body or extending the elbow away from the body; this will cause tension

Instrument Notes

- **Tenors**, play each exercise on drum 2, focusing on sound quality, technique, and execution. Once the exercises are perfect on drum 2, then move around the drums without compromising anything from the “drum 2” version of the exercise.
- **Bass**, learn each warm up in unison rhythm and then focus on one part that you might want to play. (Keep in mind that you may be asked to play **ANY** part during the group audition process.) Rule of thumb is to learn the part above and the part below the one you want to play. In “1,2,3. 5, 2s, 3s, and 4s will substitute for eighth notes when split. (*Note: highlight your part*)

Exercise One (1,2,3)

This will be the first exercise we will play as a group when we warm up. The primary objective is to work on the "Rebound Stroke," which is when you play the drum and allow the stick to rebound back to its starting height. At slower tempos (Up to 132 bpm – Beats per Minute) you should strive for all stick heights to be "full," or at a height of 15". Another variation of this exercise is to change the height so that everything is at 3". This will then work on the "Tap Stroke," which is when you attack each note at 3" and only allow the stick to come back up to 3". Though this is still considered a Legato Stroke, you should hold onto the stick a little tighter with the back of the hand during the Tap Stroke to achieve optimum sound quality and stick control. B and C sections works on stick velocity (speed) of double and triple strokes on each hand. This is one of the most important skills of rudimental drumming and contains the building blocks to be able to play high-quality open-stroke rolls.

When playing this exercise, it's important to ask yourself the following:

- Are your sticks rebounding to the same height for each note
- Is the sound quality of each note consistent, not only from hand to hand, but first/second/third notes. Is the first note always the loudest? (This shouldn't be the case!)
- Does your stick spend more time "in the air" as opposed to near the drum head?
- Is your timing consistent? It's common to condense patterns of two notes and elongate patterns of three.

Exercise Two (Accent Tap)

This exercise works on putting together all four types of strokes of rudimental drumming. For the bass drums, this exercise also works on transitioning from split passages into unison passages. These types of transitions are a common source of "dirt" and require a great deal of listening. The type of stroke you play for each note on this exercise depends on two things: the height of the note and the height of the next note. The four types of strokes are:

- 1) Rebound Stroke: Stick starts at a certain height and rebounds back to where it started. An example of this is two consecutive accented eighth notes. The first note would be played with a rebound stroke so that the second one could be attacked from the same height.
- 2) Tap Stroke: Stick starts at a low height (usually 3") and rebounds back to the same low height. An example of this is two consecutive eighth notes at a dynamic of piano and neither one is accented. The first note would be played with a tap stroke at 3" so that the next note could be attacked from 3" as well.
- 3) Down Stroke: Stick starts at a certain height above 3" and only rebounds up to 3". An example of this is two consecutive eighth notes where the first one is accented, the second one is not. The first note would be played with a tap stroke so that the second note could be attacked from 3".
- 4) Up Stroke: Stick starts at a low height (usually 3") and rebounds back to a higher height. An example of this is two consecutive eighth notes where the first one is not accented but the second one is. The first note would be played with an upstroke starting at 3" so that the next note could be attacked from a higher height. Regardless of tempo, all non-accented notes should be played at a height of 3". Accent heights will start at 12" and will be slowly be lowered as tempo increases

Exercise Three (Stick Control)

This exercise incorporates the fundamental use of legato strokes while moving hand to hand (you'll see passages like this in your show and cadences). This is a basic exercise that was inspired by patterns similar to those in George L. Stone's book of the same name. It is important to be as relaxed as possible while maintaining proper fulcrum etiquette. As the tempo increases, you'll start to use different parts of your fulcrum to stroke out different patterns i.e. front fulcrum vs back fulcrum. Here are some things to think about:

- Are your movements fluid or choppy?
- Am I letting my stick rebound (floating) during hand to hand transfers? Am I locking my wrist? Am I using only wrist?

Exercise Four (Triplet Rolls)

Building on the technique established in the first three exercises, exercise four starts to put it all together combining different types of strokes at different heights, diddles using the double stroke technique, and consecutive hand-to-hand diddles (also known as double stroke rolls).

- 1) Is your stick motion consistent between the check pattern and diddle patterns? Are you approaching your stick motion differently during diddle patterns, because you shouldn't be!
- 2) Does every tap have the same sound quality? How about every accent? Are you "pounding" the accents, or are you using the correct down-stroke technique?
- 3) Is your diddle interpretation consistent and rhythmically accurate? It's common to "crush" your diddles, which is where the space between the first and second note of your double-stroke is too short. Triple diddles should be perfect 24th note (sextuplet spacing)

We may add some variations such as:

- Starting off the left
- Play crushed buzz rolls instead of open-stroke diddles

Tenors – Prepare this on drum two for the sake of auditions

1, 2, 3.5

Jim Ancona/Andrew Veit/Kelvin Tran

A ♩=85-140

Snare
Tenor
Bass

B

S. D.
T. D.
B. D.

S. D.
T. D.
B. D.

C

S. D.
T. D.
B. D.

S. D.
T. D.
B. D.

Accent Tap

Kelvin Tran

$\text{♩} = 100 \text{ } \& \text{ } 120$

Snare

Tenor

Bass

4

S. D.

T. D.

B. D.


7

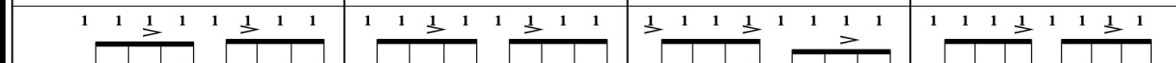
S. D.


T. D.

B. D.


10


S. D. 


T. D. 

B. D. 

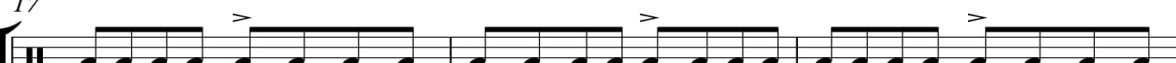
14

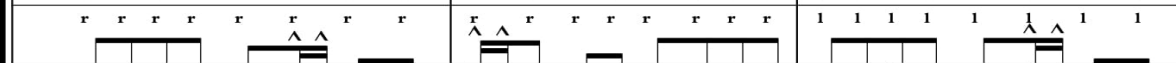
S. D. 


T. D. 

B. D. 


17

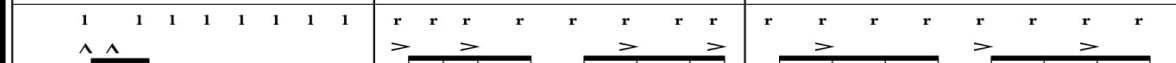
S. D. 


T. D. 

B. D. 

20

S. D. 

T. D. 

B. D. 

23

S. D. 

T. D. 

B. D. 

Stick Control

Gussek/Tran

$\text{♩} = 70-100$

Snare
Tenor
Bass

Stick patterns:
Snare: r l r l
Tenor: r l r l
Bass: r r r l r r r l r r r l r r r l

4

S. D.
T. D.
B. D.

Stick patterns:
S. D.: r l l l r l l l r l l l r l l l
T. D.: r l r l
B. D.: r l l l r l l l r l l l r l l l

7

S. D.
T. D.
B. D.

Stick patterns:
S. D.: r l r l
T. D.: r l r l
B. D.: r l l l r l l l r l l l r l l l

Accents: ^

Hand indicators: R, L, R

2

10

S. D.
T. D.
B. D.

Stick patterns:
S. D.: r r r l r r r l r l l l r l l l
T. D.: r r r l r r r l r l l l r l l l
B. D.: r r r l r r r l r l l l r l l l

Hand indicators: V

Triplet Rolls

Kelvin Tran

♩. = 100 - 140

Snare
Tenor
Bass

4
S. D.
T. D.
B. D.

7
S. D.
T. D.
B. D.

11
S. D.
T. D.
B. D.

14
S. D.
T. D.
B. D.

18
S. D.
T. D.
B. D.