

American Orff-Schulwerk Association

Handbook for Orff Schulwerk Teacher Education Courses

Compiled by Professional Development Committee
of the American Orff-Schulwerk Association

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Handbook for Orff Schulwerk Teacher Education Courses

“The American Orff-Schulwerk Association strongly encourages members to be positive and discreet when discussing our organization, specific courses and/or teachers and the Orff movement. The very nature of the Orff Schulwerk philosophy embodies a broad spectrum of expressions exploring different paths to arrive at artistic and educational goals. Members are encouraged to recognize and remain open to varied approaches and to celebrate both our differences and our similarities.”

This handbook has been created by the Professional Development Committee of the American Orff-Schulwerk Association. Its purpose is to provide a concise compendium of the best practices of level course participants, course directors and teaching staff members. Many of the practices listed in this document are also AOSA requirements meant to insure the high quality of individual level courses. Some of the practices mentioned have been requirements for many years while others are new. Please take note of any **highlighted information**. This is new information that requires the attention of level course participants or the course director.

Section 1: Level Course Participants Best Practices

1. Attend Level Courses in Sequential Order

It is important for the continuity of learning that participants take Teacher Education Courses in sequential order i.e. Level I, II, III, Master Classes. The skills and curricula from each level build upon each other; a participant needs to experience the Orff Schulwerk Teacher Education Curriculum sequentially in order for learning and mastery to occur.

2. Attend Only One Level per Summer

The amount of learning and assimilation of knowledge that is expected during an individual level course is extensive. Participants need time to process each of the new skills and concepts that have been taught. Additionally, time is needed for participants to work with their own students to gain a full understanding of how to implement these skills and concepts. Students should plan on attending only one level per summer and not enroll in other courses for the purpose of taking two or more levels in one summer.

3. Attend Level I as an Undergraduate only During the Senior Year of Study

Participants need career perspective when taking level courses. It is important that students have an opportunity to practice what he or she has learned with children and in the environment of an actual classroom. Student teaching is an excellent opportunity for this to happen for pre-service teachers. **Level I taken before the Senior year will be considered an Introductory Course and not an approved Level I.**

4. Make Every Effort to Complete All Three Levels Within 3 - 7 Years

It is vital that participants experience continuity within the training sequence. The flow of Orff Schulwerk concepts is sometimes obvious but often very subtle. The continuity and connections of understandings from one level to another is compromised if too much time expires between each level.

5. Enroll in Master Classes Only After Completion of Level III

Master Classes that are sanctioned as such by AOSA generally allow only enrollees who have completed three levels. Master Classes are intended to be a series of specialized, intense, and focused high level experiences. Participants who do not have the background knowledge from the three levels of Teacher Education courses will not benefit from the advanced ideas that are being presented in a Master Class situation unless they have the appropriate foundational learning. Their presence in a Master Class eliminates the possibility of someone else attending the class who may better benefit from the experience.

Section 2: Institution Best Practices

1. Correctly Complete the Course Approval Process

• Completing the Course Approval Form

Your application must contain the following to ensure the course will be approved:

1. Library subscription to the Orff Echo for the institution sponsoring the course
2. List of AOSA-approved instructors for your course, with their AOSA membership

number.

3. As you meet with the instructors, please make sure they have an updated vita form and supporting documentation on file with the Education Director.
4. If not, they must download and complete the required vita and curriculum outline forms, which are found on the AOSA website (www.aosa.org), under the Professional Development tab.
5. Site location and address for where the course will be held
6. Contact information for the Orff Course Director
7. Contact information for the Institution Contact Person
8. A daily schedule, including required minimum hours for Basic Orff/ Pedagogy, Movement, Recorder as well as Special Topics instruction. Indicate all breaks that are longer than 5 minutes on the schedule. **Breaks longer than 5 minutes are not to be considered as contact time.**
9. Non-refundable application fee of \$50 has been submitted to AOSA Headquarters

IT IS THE ORFF COURSE DIRECTOR'S RESPONSIBILITY TO MAKE SURE ALL COMPONENTS OF THE APPLICATION ARE COMPLETE IN ORDER TO BE APPROVED.

The [Application for Course Approval](#) form is available on the AOSA Web site at:

[Application for Course Approval](#)

A nonrefundable \$50 application fee must be paid with each application form. No course will be approved until all fees have been received at Headquarters. Application for approval must be submitted to the AOSA Education Director in electronic format, who will email notifications regarding the status of course approval on a rolling basis as applications are submitted. Approval will be granted to each course that meets AOSA criteria.

The most common cause of application approval delay is often the long periods of time necessary for payments to move through institution payment systems. As an alternative, some courses pay their fees using personal credit cards and then submit a receipt for reimbursement to their sponsoring institution.

2. Observe Minimum Enrollment Requirements

The following minimum numbers of participants are required for approved Orff Schulwerk Teacher Education courses:

Level I – 14

Level II – 8

Level III – 8

A teacher education course that runs any level with less than the required minimum number of participants will be considered 'Under Review' if that level is offered again the following year.

If any level in the course runs for a second consecutive year under minimum enrollments, no level course at the sponsoring institution will be eligible for approval for at least one year. The course director should cancel courses that will apparently not meet enrollment requirements within a reasonable amount of time before the start date. AOSA recommends this should occur a minimum of 2 weeks before the course start date.

3. Follow the AOSA Teacher Education Curriculum for Levels I, II, III

Institutions applying for Orff Schulwerk Teacher Education Course approval must design their course(s) according to the recently adopted AOSA Teacher Education Curriculum:

AOSA Teacher Education Curriculum

The major philosophy and purpose of Education Courses submitted for approval will be that of Orff Schulwerk. NOTE: The content of Section 8 (Standards Basic Level II) and Section 9 (Standards Basic Level III) of the AOSA Teacher Education Curriculum corresponding to matrix category of ACCOMPANIMENT TEXTURE has been formalized. Please ascertain that instructors in these Levels are aware of these changes.

4. Grant only Certificates of Participation or Attendance at the Conclusion of Level I or II

No 'certification' documents should be granted in any Level other than Level III. It is appropriate to offer participants a document stating that the course was successfully completed, but it is not appropriate to state that the participant has achieved any type of 'certification' after Level I or II.

In effect there are two types of certification:

1) Local Certification: provided by the local institution after completion of Level III, and

2) AOSA Certification: the official registered AOSA certificate which is granted upon proof of completion of Level III and payment of corresponding fees. Participants should be made aware of the official AOSA certificate available to graduates of approved Level III programs.

<http://www.aosa.org/certificate.html>

5. Provide Adequate Teaching Facilities and Equipment

Each course director should discuss minimum teaching space requirements for ensemble, recorder and movement teaching spaces with their staff members and then convey these minimum requirements to institution contact personnel well in advance of the course's first meeting. Local equipment and instruments should be inspected before the course begins and provisions made for repair or replacement as necessary.

6. Observe Appropriate Scheduling and Staffing During the Course

The three areas of the core curriculum (Basic Orff / Pedagogy, Recorder and Movement) shall be taught separately at each level. **Each level must have at least two instructors. Courses offering two levels should have a minimum staff of 3 instructors. Courses running all three levels must have a minimum staff of 4 teachers.**

Class Schedule

The scheduling of a class has a direct effect on the sense of success students feel at the end of a course. Giving students enough time to process, practice and internalize information is critical in providing the exceptional experiences AOSA encourages in all teacher education courses. Therefore, there shall be a minimum of 60 contact hours per level, not including lunch periods or break times of more than 5 minutes. **Additionally, the course must meet over a minimum of 10 days (9 days if the course encompasses the July 4th holiday. See July 4th week requirement below).** Movement and recorder sessions must meet the minimum daily requirements in 1 uninterrupted session. Extra time may be added to these areas at other points in the scheduled day if desired.

July 4th Week Requirement

(adopted September, 2012)

In order to insure uniformity between programs, the National Board of Trustees of AOSA has adopted the following requirement concerning Approved Teacher Education courses that run under 10 days.

“All approved AOSA Teacher Education courses (i.e. ‘level’ courses) must meet for a minimum of 10 days. This includes courses that meet in the week that encompasses the July 4th holiday. The only exception is as follows.

- Courses that ran for nine days during the summer of 2012 may continue a nine day schedule for two more summer sessions (summer, 2013 and summer, 2014) assuming that their programs still meets over the July 4th holiday. No nine-day course will be approved after the summer of 2014.

No new or intermittent courses will be approved to run for nine days beginning in June 2013. AOSA suggests that alternate weeks be chosen for courses that fall in this category or that the ten-day requirement is fulfilled by holding classes on a Saturday, Sunday or the day the holiday is celebrated when July 4th occurs on a weekend.

Class Size

AOSA has required numbers for levels courses (Level I: 14; Level II: 8; Level III: 8), as outlined in the AOSA Teacher Education Curriculum. These numbers are important for a variety of reasons: the required class size provides participants an experience more closely resembling typical classroom numbers; it allows participants to hear and perform balanced choral and instrumental ensemble work and to create movement in small and large group settings.

AOSA does not determine whether a course will run. However, it is strongly urged that course directors voluntarily cancel if they will not have the recommended number of participants. If a level runs under required numbers, the entire course will be placed ‘Under Review’ the following year.

7. Supply Accurate Participant Information To AOSA at Completion of Course

Course directors are responsible for supplying AOSA with an accurate participant roster of each teacher education course no later than two weeks from the last class day. This roster should include participants names, email addresses, phone numbers, and physical addresses.

Course Directors should inform students by the first class day that enrollment in the course serves as permission to have name and contact information submitted as course participants. AOSA does not distribute or sell this participant information. It is used solely for statistical purposes.

8. Return One Evaluation Form to AOSA for Each Participant

AOSA evaluation forms for Teacher Education Courses must be submitted no more than two weeks after course completion. The actual number of evaluations returned to

Headquarters will be the sole determination of how many students are enrolled in each Level.

Therefore it is critical that each participant fill out an evaluation form. Participants not wishing to complete an evaluation form should check the appropriate box near the top of the form and sign their name.

Instructors Must Be Well Educated in Orff Schulwerk.

- a. All Basic Orff / Pedagogy teachers must have successfully completed an apprenticeship or must have taught Basic Orff / Pedagogy at any level of an approved AOSA course prior to 1993.
- b. Instructors of Level II must have taught Level I for a minimum of two years. Instructors of Level III must have taught Level II for a minimum of two years.
- c. Recorder teachers must have completed a Level III Orff Schulwerk course.
- d. Movement teachers must have completed a Level III Orff Schulwerk course or taught movement in an approved course before 2010.
- e. Basic Orff/Pedagogy, Recorder, and Movement teachers must be members of AOSA.
- f. In the event any course is canceled, AOSA Headquarters as well as the Education Director should be notified immediately.

Section 3: **I n s t r u c t o r B e s t P r a c t i c e s**

1. Avoid teaching in programs that do not meet AOSA requirements.

Approved teacher educators should not agree to teach in courses that do not meet AOSA requirements. These include enrollment minimums, participant prerequisites, minimum course hours, and quality of facilities.

2. Instructors Should Participate in Ongoing Professional Development.

Shortly, ongoing professional development will be required for recertification to teach in AOSA-approved Teacher Education Courses. Continued professional development in Orff-Schulwerk and related areas is strongly encouraged. It is important for teachers to be well versed in Orff Schulwerk by taking advantage of post Level III professional development. Opportunities for professional development are offered at the AOSA Professional Development Conference each year.

3. Update Vita and Other Approval Documentation Every Three Years

Instructors are to submit updated vita and documentation to the Education Director every three years. Forms may be located on the Professional Development page of the AOSA website located at:

http://www.aosa.org/vita_currforms.html.

Approved Teacher Educators must submit documentation in a timely manner to insure their name will remain the Approved Teacher Educator Roster:

[AOSA - Approved Teacher Educators](#)