



W I C H I T A
S Y M P H O N Y

WICHITA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA CHORUS MEMBERSHIP HANDBOOK

2026 - 2027

Shawn Chastain

Conductor, schastain@usd259.net

Connor Klaassen

Chorus Assistant, chorus@wso.org

Helen Griffin

Collaborative Pianist

2026-2027 Concerts

Handel's Messiah

December 6, 2026, 3:00 PM

Repertoire: G. F. HANDEL: Messiah

Star Wars at 50

May 8, 2027, 7:30 PM

May 9, 2027, 3:00 PM

Repertoire:

MICHAEL GIACCHINO: Rogue One: A Star Wars Story - III. Guardians of the Whills Suite

JOHN WILLIAMS: Star Wars: The Phantom Menace - IV. Dual of the Fates

On behalf of the Wichita Symphony Orchestra Chorus's administrative and artistic staff, please accept our sincere welcome to another exciting season of music-making!

We greatly appreciate your dedication to the Wichita Symphony Orchestra Chorus and your willingness to contribute to the long-term sustainability of our organization.

We hope this handbook answers your questions and concerns about attendance requirements, rehearsals, performance etiquette, and concert attire. Please don't hesitate to ask questions at any time!

ABOUT THE CHORUS

Mission:

The mission of the Wichita Symphony Orchestra Chorus is to present choral masterworks of the highest caliber. The Symphony Chorus strives to maintain one of the finest mixed community choral ensembles in the area.

Brief History:

The Wichita Symphony Orchestra Chorus was formed in the 1970s. The first concert it performed was Handel's *Messiah*. The Chorus performs each season with the Wichita Symphony Orchestra. In the past, it has also performed in the Orchestra's Family Holiday Concerts and Pops Concerts. This season we are adding a stand-alone concert for the chorus.

WSO Chorus directors have included Randy Zuercher, Rod Walker, Dr. Cecil Riney, Dr. Michael Hanawalt, Dr. Ryan Beeken, and interim director Matthew Udland. The Chorus has performed, along with the WSO, under Music Directors Michael Palmer, Zuohuang Chen, Andrew Sewell and, currently, Daniel Hege. The Chorus has performed under guest conductors such as David Lockington and Jay Decker. In both 1994 and 2001, the Symphony Chorus traveled to New York and performed Handel's *Messiah* at Carnegie Hall under the direction of Robert Shaw. During the summer of 2019 the chorus traveled to Prague to perform *Carmina Burana*.

Rehearsal Information:

Rehearsals are at Wichita State University in room C107 of the Duerksen Fine Arts Building. Rehearsal time is 7:00pm-9:00pm on Thursday up until the week of the concert. Occasionally a rehearsal may be held at another location, Calvary United Methodist Church, 2525 N. Rock Road. Additional rehearsals may be called at the discretion of the director.

During concert week the chorus will rehearse multiple times at Century II Concert Hall. Comprehensive information about concert week, including dates and times of rehearsals and warm-up rooms, will be provided to chorus members prior to the week of the performance.

Membership Eligibility:

The Wichita Symphony Orchestra Chorus is open to members of the community and surrounding areas who subscribe to the purpose and principles of the organization.

At the discretion of the director, membership may be denied or revoked for failure to meet and maintain membership requirements, for consistent failure to comply with rehearsal policies, or lack of preparation.

The chorus administration and/or symphony management has the right to deny membership to any person they do not feel will be a productive member to the chorus.

Requirements to Maintain Membership:

1. Attend rehearsals as required.
2. Display a positive attitude.
3. Be a contributing choral member to the goals of the chorus.
4. Miss no more than 3 rehearsals per concert series.
5. Miss no rehearsals during concert week.
6. If you are going to miss a rehearsal, notify the Chorus Assistant.
7. Complete the online registration form.
8. Maintain good condition of any checked-out music.
9. Return all music and/or folder at the conclusion of each concert series.
10. Pay for any lost or damaged borrowed music or folder.

11. Purchase rehearsal scores as needed.

Rehearsal Policies:

1. Be on time, ready to begin at 7:00pm, and stay for the entire rehearsal.
2. Check in on attendance sheets at each rehearsal.
3. No gum, candy or food.
4. Turn all electronic devices off or on silent.
5. Bring a pencil.
6. Bring a bottle of water.

Choral Scores

When the choral scores are provided by the Wichita Symphony:

A choral score will be checked out to each member at your first rehearsal. You will be responsible for maintaining that score. It is to be returned at score check-in after the last concert of each series. If for some reason you are unable to continue with the rehearsals for a concert, it is your responsibility to return that score to the chorus assistant within a week of your last rehearsal.

Please use a pencil to mark any rehearsal notes in your assigned score. You may also use a highlighter, if you wish.

When each chorus member is to purchase a choral score:

As we look to the future, the Wichita Symphony organization will be transitioning out of purchasing, storing, and providing choral scores. Over time, chorus members will be asked to purchase their own scores.

Occasionally, you may be asked to provide a one-inch black binder in which to hold your music.

Additional Artistic Staff

Soprano Section Leader, TBD

Alto Section Leader, TBD

Tenor Section Leader, TBD

Bass Section Leader, TBD

Collaborative Pianist, Helen Griffin

Concert Etiquette:

1. Absolutely no cell phones on stage.
2. No gum or candy.
3. No perfume or cologne.
4. No talking.
5. No waving to the audience.
6. No smoking during intermission. Century II is a smoke-free facility.
7. Follow instructions for stage etiquette.
8. Enjoy the experience – you’ve earned it!!!

Chorus Participation Requirements:

1. Be a member in good standing.
2. Attend all regular rehearsals with no more absences than 3 rehearsals per concert series. Additional absences will be excused only at the discretion of the Choral Director or Chorus Assistant.
3. Be punctual for all rehearsals.
4. Attend all rehearsals at Century II for specific performance (unless *prior* approval is granted by the Conductor and Chorus Assistant).
5. Wear required concert attire.
6. Behave in a manner that is not detrimental or distracting to other performers at rehearsals and performances.
7. Make a musical and artistic contribution to the chorus.

Concert Attire:

Concert Black: Long black dress/skirt or black pants/slacks, long-sleeved black shirt/blouse (no sheer sleeves), if wearing a jacket, you may wear a short-sleeved shirt under the jacket; black hose/socks, black shoes, black tuxedo or suit with black oxford/wing collar shirt, black tie/cummerbund optional. General concept – a column of black, neck to floor.

Please do not wear/apply cologne, scented hairspray, perfumes, cream or oils. No jewelry except wedding rings please.

Tickets:

If you wish to purchase tickets for any concert you may call the Symphony Box Office at 316-267-7658 or you may order your tickets online. Tickets will either be emailed or held at Will Call. The Symphony Office is not currently open to walk-in traffic.

Contact Information:

Connor Klaassen – Chorus Assistant

Email: chorus@wso.org

Shawn Chastain - Conductor

Email: schastain@usd259.net