

Frequently Asked Questions from SYSO Virtual Town Hall, August 26, 2020

Adjudication/Feedback

- Is it true that you cannot get into Youth unless you were in the Junior or Youth in the previous year? I.e. if you skip a year, you don't get into Youth?
That is not true.
- Can we still request feedback from auditions? Or is it too late?
Please email Janice Gatti at Janice.gatti@syso.org. Due to the volume of requests, it is taking 6-8 weeks to reply to feedback requests.
- What about having been at syso for 6 years! and then skipped a year? (does this effect placement)
Skipping a year does not affect placement.
- Just to clarify, if there were two people who played the same instrument and had the same skill level, but one was a previous member of SYSO and another wasn't, then the kid who wasn't in SYSO previously was placed lower than the kid who was in SYSO before?
Yes, that is correct for this year.
- If I hear it correctly, there is 300+ people who wants to see audition result. The is also the first time you do this via video. It's virtually impossible that you made no mistake. Why not allow an appeal process? You'll only alienate frustrated students and parents by not allowing any change of audition result.
We do not accept appeals because we are not able to reconvene all of the panel and we need to provide the same process for every applicant. A unilateral decision about orchestra placement cannot be made without having all of the adjudicators involved.

In- Person Academic Year Orchestra

- Does this mean this year's ensemble size is also reduced correspondingly? Or does it mean the practice will be broken into different groups?
Ensemble size will depend on the facilities that are available for rehearsals but we do anticipate that ensembles will be smaller in order to comply with social distancing. It will depend on how long we can rent the facilities and our budget as to whether we can have rehearsals for multiple smaller groups.
- Can all students who have been accepted will be able to participate in the in-person rehearsal when resumed in January?
The number of accepted students who will be able to rehearse will depend on the capacity of the facility and the amount of time and budget we have to run multiple ensemble rehearsals. We hope to have more information about in-person rehearsals in

November/December.

- If I decide not to sign up for the terms with the virtual orchestra program, would that affect me in any way when I sign up for a term that resumes the in person orchestra?
No, your placement in the Academic Year Orchestra program remains whether or not you participate in the Virtual Orchestra. That said, participating in the Virtual Orchestra is a great way to keep learning about and playing orchestral repertoire.
- As a pianist, I auditioned into Youth. In anticipation of starting in January, hopefully, can I receive any music parts ahead of time so I can begin practicing?
Pianists can sign up for the virtual orchestras, repertoire for January will be announced November/December, only then we can send the parts to practice.
- Is every orchestra broken into small groups but learning the same repertoire?
Every orchestra splits up into sectionals by instruments.
- I heard that the orchestra size got smaller this year. How much smaller did it get?
We anticipate that orchestra ensembles will be reduced to space capacity limitations but because we are on hold with securing a space we do not yet know what the capacity is and therefore what the ensemble size will be.
- Were the sizes of the in person orchestras reduced (due to COVID), or are they the same as last year?
See answer to question above.

Virtual Orchestra Program

- The virtual orchestra program is not clear. Are you saying that students that did not get placed in an orchestra are invited to audition for this program?
- I don't understand the answer to the question about virtual orchestra program. My student submitted an audition video and did not receive a placement. So, are you saying that the conductor will re-view the rejected applicant videos to decide who is invited to enroll in virtual program?
Students who did not receive a placement for Academic Year Orchestra (in-person) can submit an audition for Virtual Orchestra placement **starting in Term 2**. Because this is a brand new program for SYSO, it was decided to wait to open enrollment for the declined students until Term 2 in order to ensure there is capacity in the program.
When invited to join Term 2, students who were declined for the Academic Year Orchestra program will have to submit an audition video for placement into the Virtual Orchestra program ONLY. The 2020-2021 audition process for in-person Academic Year Orchestra Program is closed and these students can try again for in-person orchestra next season.
- For Virtual Orchestra, is the deadline for Session 2 also on Sept 16th? What if a kid does Session 1 but then doesn't want to do session 2? Do we lose our payment for Session 2?

You pay for one Term at a time. The deadline for the early bird price of \$280/ term for Term 1 is September 9. The next deadline for Term 1 for the \$300/term price is September 16. You will receive an invitation to join Term 2 once you've engaged in Term 1. At that point you can decide whether or not to continue onto and pay for Term 2.

- where do we go to sign up for the two terms you just talked about? looking on syso website now
To enroll in the Virtual Orchestra Program, you will receive an email from SYSO inviting you to enroll. At that point you can either accept or decline this invitation. If you accept, you can pay or apply for financial aid at that point.
- If a student doesn't participate in T1, can they still participate in T2 or T3?
You will receive an invitation to enroll each Term, so yes, a student can enroll for a later Term if they did not participate in Term 1.
- Is there a place for pianist in virtual orchestra program?
Yes, pianists are welcomed and will be participating with the percussion sectionals
- If you want to do the entire year, do you do that in Sept or do you pay and commit for each term separately? We'd opt for full-year, but just curious.
This year it will be pay per term. There is not a full year payment option. The cost per term could be different depending on whether the term is virtual or in-person.
- How many students in virtual orchestra for each level?
There is no cap for the number of students in a virtual orchestra but we will strive to maintain an low student to coach ratio of around 1:10.
- Just to make sure we understood it right, so, are all levels will be invited to virtual in fall? including the Prelude? and if students decide not to enroll for virtual in fall, are their place gonna be held till we can safely meet in person?
Yes, all Academic Year Orchestra levels are invited to be in one of the 3 Virtual Orchestras. (see chart below). Their Academic Year Orchestra placement (e.g. Prelude) will be held for when we resume in-person whether or not they participate in Virtual Orchestra.

Academic Year Orchestra Level	Virtual Orchestra Level
Prelude String Orchestra	Young String Virtual Orchestra (YSVO)
Symphonette Orchestra Debut Symphony Orchestra	Intermediate Virtual Orchestra (IVO)
Junior Symphony Orchestra Youth Symphony Orchestra	Advanced Virtual Orchestra (AVO)

- I joined late (from work sorry): For virtual orchestras, how will we know when rehearsals are for our student's level? Will that information be sent out with the registration?
Below is the schedule for Virtual Orchestras that was presented at the Town Hall:

SATURDAYS

9 a.m.-10 a.m.- YSVO

10:30 a.m.-12 p.m.- IVO

12:30 p.m.-2 p.m.- AVO

(Seattle Conservatory of Music Classes Online in afternoon)

WEDNESDAYS

4:30 p.m. - 5 p.m. YSVO - Practice Time with Mentor

5 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. YSVO p.m.- Practice Time with Mentor

POSSIBLY FRIDAYS

(2-3 TIMES PER TERM)

4:30-5:30 p.m.- Masterclasses, Guest Lectures, Collaborations

- Is there any repertoire in mind for the online orchestras?
Repertoire for the 3 orchestras will be announced the week of September 14th, parts will accessible on the SYSO Virtual Orchestra web page.
- I assume you are NOT asking students to submit another audition video -- this feels very redundant.
That is correct, students who received a placement for an Academic Year Orchestra will NOT have to submit another audition video to participate in the Virtual Orchestra Program.
- How will the virtual collaboration with other youth orchestras work? It sounds like such a great way to connect with players in other cities!
We are still working out the details of this great opportunity for our students to connect virtually with other peers from other youth programs, Q&As, masterclasses, collaborative sectionals are some of the initial plans.
- to clarify. does the virtual orchestra "take place of" the "normal" AYO?
Virtual Orchestra Program is a new program that we are running until we can safely resume in-person Academic Year Orchestra rehearsals. In other words, "normal AYO" (Prelude, Symphonette, Debut, Junior, and Youth orchestras) will resume when we can meet in person in accordance to all public health guidelines.

Seattle Conservatory of Music

- are you able to offer chamber ensemble virtual similar to virtual orchestra?
We are at this point, we will assess whether is it feasible and safe to run in-person chamber ensembles in term 2, details will be announced in October.

- For SMC, similar question: we want to go the whole year - is content separated out by term or does it build throughout the year? We are committed either way, but just curious. Looking forward to it - SMC is amazing :)
The Academic track (Musicianship and Composition classes) builds content throughout the year and chamber ensembles goes by term.
- Regarding Conservatory Chamber classes...I just completed a chamber camp where our trio met at our home while the coaches coached virtually via zoom...is there a chance we could do conservatory chamber classes this way vs wait...?
We looked into this format as a possibility. If we hold a SYSO program in an alternative space, such as a private home, SYSO is still liable for any potential harm. Given the extent of precautions needed for a safe environment during COVID, we were advised to not locate our programs in a private home. The health and safety of students, faculty and staff is our top priority.

Concert Competition

- I would like to find out the audition repertoire will be a movement or an entire concerto. Thank you!
To participate it could be a movement or the entire concerto, winners might play only a movement though depending of the artistic plan for the season.
- Would students newly admitted to the virtual orchestra be able to audition for the concerto competition?
The Concerto Competition is an annual tradition at SYSO and is open to students placed in an Academic Year Orchestra or enrolled in the Seattle Conservatory of Music.

Other

- What can the community do to mitigate financial impacts on SYSO and keep this great organization going?
This is, indeed, a very challenging time for SYSO and we truly appreciate your concern for sustaining SYSO. Making a charitable donation will greatly support our programs and staff, and provide a baseline of funds to be able to restart our normal level of operations when it is safe to do so. Donations can be made at <https://syso.org/support/make-a-gift/>