

Hello everyone,

As always, we hope for the continued health of all of our students and their families. Thank you so much for those who responded to our survey. Your input was valuable in helping us to create options for our young people and adult students.

In all that we do, know that the goal is for the String Project to remain viable during these trying times.

The following is an update on String Project procedures for fall. It is packed with information we hope will meet the needs of our students, and the mandates of the University of South Carolina, while creating the best possible environment to keep us all safe and healthy. If you decide you cannot participate in either model at this time, we will welcome you back when we are able to return to normal operations.

Virtual or Hybrid Option (combination of Virtual and Face-to-Face)

- **Virtual** – Instructors will deliver instruction to private students via an online platform. Classes and orchestra will be live-streamed. The streaming options for group classes and orchestra classes will be on Zoom or YouTube Live and we will have a teachers' assistant available to answer questions. That should provide more interaction than we had in the spring.
- **Hybrid** – Students will take part of their instruction on site at USC in the String Project building, and part virtually. The schedule is dependent upon the numbers of students enrolled.
- We will revisit the situation for spring semester and it may be possible for you to elect another model at that time.

Please be prepared to go 100% virtual at any time, given the current state of the virus. We cannot issue any refunds if the mode of delivery changes because we have a financial obligation to our teachers who will keep teaching, regardless of any change. I assure you, online instruction is much more time intensive than in person.

- If you choose the hybrid model and decide to revert to virtual, you may do so anytime by contacting uscsp@mozart.sc.edu.
- If you choose virtual, however, you will not be able to change to face-to-face because of the need to limit numbers in the building.

Beginning classes for both children and adults will be **virtual only**. We will have a combination of weekly classes for groups and supplement with small group lessons. Please help us spread the word because there will be no in-school recruiting.

Liability Waivers

I have attached the liability waivers (Virtual Release and COVID waiver) that the University of South Carolina is requiring both adult students and parents of students under 18 to sign in order for participation in the University of South Carolina String Project. Your registration **will** be void without the liability waiver for either model.

Please read carefully, sign and send to us in pdf format at uscsp@mozart.sc.edu. If you need to send via USPS, send to:

University of South Carolina
School of Music/USC String Project
813 Assembly Street
Columbia, SC 29208

These waivers can also be retrieved at: <https://tinyurl.com/SPLiabilityWaiver>

- If you select the hybrid model (virtual and some face-to-face), you need to return both waivers (the virtual release and the COVID waivers). If you are selecting virtual, you need send only the form for virtual release.
- The forms are different for children and adults.
- To reiterate, for this semester, once you choose virtual, we ask that you remain in that mode **for the entire fall semester** for our planning purposes.

Procedures & Expectations for On-site Classes

Entering building

- Each student entering the building must have an appropriate face covering (covering nose and mouth). No one will be permitted to enter without a mask.
- Additionally, there is no waiting area in the building. We ask that parents drop-off or accompany their children to the door and wait in the car.
- Parents should be able to observe the classes/rehearsals via the YouTube Live channels.
- Students will enter through the front door where they will have a temperature check, but will leave their classes by the exits that are in each room. We will inform you of room assignments when registration is complete.
- As indicated on the COVID liability form, we cannot lend instruments or music. Students must remember their materials.

Classrooms

- We can accommodate approximately 20 people in the “Large” room (206), spaced 6 feet apart, staggered rows. We will mark with colored tape.
- We can accommodate approximately 12-15 in “medium-sized” rooms (219 and 220), spaced 6 feet apart, staggered rows. We will mark with colored tape.
- ***The numbers we can safely teach are highly fluid at this time. There has been MUCH discussion in the [music education community on this issue](#). You may click on the hyperlink to read more, if you wish.***
- Students will wipe down chairs and stands at the close of class or rehearsal.

Lessons

- We have vinyl shields (Clear marine grade vinyl) in studios, placed at a diagonal so the teacher is on one side and the student can enter the room without crossing paths.

Safety Measures & Hygiene Supplies

- Please send 2 sanitizing wipes with your child (or yourself) each time they come to the building.

Students will need to wipe their pegs before and after a teacher tunes the instruments. If you can donate disinfectant spray or wipes, it will help the SP budget. We will also be happy to accept monetary donations:

<https://tinyurl.com/DonateUofSCSP>

Health Check

- We require families/adult students to complete the following form by Sunday of each week: <https://tinyurl.com/SPHealthCheck>
- For the safety of all, we will be relying on you to not send children or yourself with any of the symptoms of Covid-19. (Fever, cough, shortness of breath, etc).

Full disclosure

The building is being used by other School of Music faculty/students during the day to alleviate crowding in the main building. Appropriate measures are in place, but we believe you need to know this in order to make an informed decision for yourself and/or your child. At this time, there are only academic classes and one piano studio class (non-aerosol producing).

Action Needed

1. Register: <http://tinyurl.com/StringProjectRegistration>

Lesson times are:

Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
(1) 4:30-5:00	(4) 5:00-5:30	(6) 4:00-4:30	(9) 4:30-5:00,
(2) 5:15-5:45	(5) 5:45-6:15	(7) 4:45-5:15	(10) 5:15-5:45
(3) 6:00-6:30		(8) 5:30-6:00	(11) 6:00-6:30

(The numbering is an administrative tool).

I have revised the orchestra schedule based on the most recent data. If we are able to extend the length in the future, we will do so.

	Thursday
4:30-5:20	Intermezzo
5:30-6:20	Silver Strings 2
5:45-6:35	Concertino
6:00-6:50	Capriccio

2. Each student will need a \$20 Smart Music license You will purchase this at the same time as making payment online. The license will work for lessons or classes **plus** orchestra, but they are assigned to a unique email address.
3. Sign and send the liability waiver via email or USPS.
4. The parking passes are available and because of the 'current situation', we are able to offer for \$25 *each semester*. Because of the already *greatly* reduced price, there can be no refunds. You can, of course, wait to order closer to the start of the semester.

IF

- We need to go virtual, we have much more information and are better prepared than we were in March, when we were *all* in crisis mode.
- I will instruct the teachers on the use of the various applications (Smart Music, Google Classroom, Flipgrid, Soundtrap, Peardeck, Ed Puzzle, and Kahoot to name a few).
- We will do our best not to overwhelm families and students, but those who enroll will need access to adequate technology and internet speeds, both for the hybrid and virtual options.

We have set a registration due date of **August 21st** so we can inform you of times, teachers, groupings for classes and orchestras and room numbers at the webinar for returning students.

Calendar

August 27	Returning students webinar (in lieu of Open House) 6:30 p.m.
September 1	Private Lessons begin
September 1	Beginning student webinar 6:30 p.m.
September 8	Classes begin
September 10	Orchestras begin
November 17-18	Master classes (Virtual)
November 20	Last Day

In closing

Thank you so much for your patience and understanding. These are difficult times, but nothing that we cannot endure. We are doing our best to meet with our students, meet University of South Carolina mandates and keep us all healthy. If you decide you cannot participate in either model at this time, we will welcome you back at any time you choose.

With Warm Regards,

Gail V. Barnes, Ph.D.
Director, USC String Project

