

Danville High School 2017-18

Semester: Fall 2017

Dates: August - December 2017

Course Title: Guitar I

Course Description:

Students will learn the basics of playing acoustic guitar and related instruments, including ukulele and bass. We will explore the fundamentals of music through scales, chord progressions, and melodies. Students will read and create tablature and chord charts, and we will do some songwriting as well. There will be informal and formal performance opportunities for students to share their learning with classmates and others in the community.

Learning Objectives:

Congratulations, and welcome to the band. I hope you all remain guitarists throughout your lives. However, we've only got 4 months to work together, so here are our semester goals:

If you don't already think like a guitarist, you will. We'll go over the basics of tuning, care, and maintenance for guitar and related string instruments. You'll work on playing scales and chords and the fundamentals of reading tablature and chord charts for traditional and popular songs. Along the way, we will cover basic music theory and aspects of performance technique, especially creating a balanced sound as a group. You'll also have the opportunity to develop your skills on other string instruments along the way, so long as you're willing to put in the work.

Methods of Instruction

We'll spend much of our time playing (and singing) known, new, and improvised melodies on guitars, ukuleles, bass guitar, and whatever other instruments are on hand. We'll practice picking and strumming basic chords, and how to work together as a group to achieve a balanced sound. We'll read tablature and chord charts, play bass lines and scales, and other elements of string performance techniques.

If you want to learn or improve your skills on another string instrument (ukulele, mandolin, etc.) at the same time, let me know. Many things are possible. I want this class to work for you.

Course Requirements and Policies

1. Class meets every morning at 7:45. Be on time.
1. Instruments will be available for those who need them. Student and parent must sign a contract if an instrument is to be borrowed from me or from Danville School.
2. Bring instruments, folders and writing tools to each session.
3. If you have a smart phone, BRING IT. If you don't have a tuning app, GET ONE. I recommend "Guitar Tuna" or "DaTuner Lite," but there are many others out there. Only download thru a trusted source! I also have clip-on digital tuners students are welcome to use in class.
4. Phones and other e-devices are encouraged for tuning and other music-related apps we may use in class - just remember that privileges and responsibilities go hand in hand.
5. Please use the bathroom and get a drink of water before class if possible. If you need to leave the room during class, there is a sign-out sheet by the door..
6. Temperature and humidity extremes can damage string instruments, so follow the Goldilocks Rule: not too hot or too cold, not too wet or too dry.
7. I sometimes use email to communicate assignments, share video links, etc. Check your school email daily, and feel free to contact me with questions. If email is a challenge, let me know.
8. When you arrive at class, you have a few minutes to get instruments into tune (you'll get faster at this, no worries) and be seated in our circle. Seating may or may not be assigned.
9. As with any instrument, regular practice is the key to improvement. My guideline is at least 20 minutes per night, but feel free to develop a practice schedule that fits your needs - AS LONG AS YOU PRACTICE.. More practice = more improvement = better grades.
10. Written assignments will include research on guitar technique, video reviews, learning logs, and original compositions, among other things. Short assignments are due the next day; longer assignments will have set due dates. We will follow school policy on late/incomplete work.
11. HOW (Habits Of Work) will be based on the 4 "P"s:
 - Punctuality.** Class begins at 7:45 am. Be on time.
 - Preparedness.** Bring all necessary materials and complete all assignments.
 - Participation.** Whatever we do in class, give it your best effort.
 - Positive Attitude.** Respect will be given and expected.
12. We're all learners here. Supporting each other builds the whole team, so be a positive influence. Share what you know, and be open to learning new things.

Beginning Week 2 (Sept. 5), bring the following to each session:

- Guitar with a protective case (unless you're using one guitar here and another at home)
- Laptop (and earbuds/headphones if you have them)
- Folder with chord charts & tablature paper (I'll provide these)
- Pencil and paper or notebook for written assignments

Optional but Recommended:

- Guitar tuner or e-device with a tuning app
- Capo (I have a few to share)
- Pick(s) and extra strings

Standards Assessed (many of these overlap):

Creating Music (MU:Cr1:1:H:1a and MU:Cr3.1.H.1a)

- Generate, select, and develop melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic ideas for improvisations, composition and accompaniments, for defined purposes and contexts.
- Develop and apply criteria to evaluate and refine drafts of improvisations, compositions and accompaniments to create work that meets set criteria.
- Share creative musical work that conveys intent and demonstrates craft/originality.

Performing Music (MU:Pr5.1.H.1a and MU:Pr6.1.H.1a)

- Select musical works to present based on interest, knowledge, technical skill and context.
- Develop and apply criteria to critique individual/small group performances of a varied repertoire, and create rehearsal strategies to address performance challenges and refine the performances.
- Perform with expression and technical accuracy, in individual and small group performances.

Responding to Music (MU:Re7.1.H.1a)

- Apply criteria to select music for specified purposes, supporting choices by citing characteristics found in the music and connections to interest, purpose, and context.

Connecting (MU:Cn10.0.H.1a)

- Demonstrate how interests, knowledge and skills relate to personal choices and intent when creating, performing, and responding to music.

Course syllabus details are subject to change. Please refer to this document frequently.