



Handbook

**GEORGIA CHILDREN'S CHORUS
HUGH HODGSON SCHOOL OF MUSIC
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ATHENS, GA 30602
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WWW.GEORGIACHILDRENSCHORUS.ORG**

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Introduction

Welcome to the Georgia Children's Chorus! The purpose of the handbook is to provide you with basic information about the GCC. Please feel free to contact our office if you don't find the information you need at (706) 542.8711 or gcc@uga.edu.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the Georgia Children's Chorus (GCC) is to provide high quality choral training and performance opportunities for youth who reflect the community of Athens and Northeast Georgia. The GCC is designed to be a positive and non-competitive learning experience for the singers – one that they will carry with them throughout their lifetime. It is our intent to help children develop self-discipline, responsibility, and a strong self-image. A developmental training program leads to success in performance. The music we sing ranges from classical literature to popular and regional folk music from a variety of national and ethnic origins.

The Georgia Children's Chorus is a self-supporting, non-profit organization in residence at the University of Georgia (UGA) Hugh Hodgson School of Music. The University provides generous in-kind services such as rehearsal, performance, and office space through the School of Music. This enables UGA students to observe and participate in the training of the young singers in a lab setting. No actual monetary reimbursement from the University is received.

The Georgia Children's Chorus is governed by an active board of directors committed to diversity and multiculturalism with an emphasis on representation from the entire community. Individual and corporate support enables us to offer scholarship assistance to singers who cannot afford tuition and help make the program affordable for all.

Choir Descriptions

Our choirs exist to develop singers' musicianship and vocal artistry. Singers are placed through an audition process into one of our choirs based on their vocal and musical skills, maturity and attendance record. Our choirs include:

The ***Intermezzo Choir*** offers children opportunities for students to experience the JOY of singing with musical training specifically designed for their growing and developing minds.

Grades 2-6

This beginning choir will concentrate on unison and 2-part singing with attention to reading from the musical score with movement and music games to enhance musical development. The Intermezzo Choir will perform approximately five times during the year.

A refined ***Concert Choir*** gives young people the chance to focus on developing more advanced musical skills and singing more difficult repertoire, where performing and vocal development will have a major emphasis.

Grades 6-12

This advanced choir will apply higher level music reading skills with unison, 2, 3, & 4-part singing, sight-reading and performance skills with attention to expressive singing. The Concert Choir will perform approximately six times during the year.

An advanced ***Ensemble*** requires a higher level of commitment and performance skills with mandatory participation in the concert choir as a prerequisite.

Grades 9-12

This upper level treble choir will perform more advanced repertoire giving attention to a cappella singing, 3 and 4 part singing, and concentrating on expressive singing. The Ensemble will sing with the Concert Choir each time as well as participating in additional performances each year.

Standards of Behavior

It is necessary for children who are accepted into the Georgia Children's Chorus to commit themselves to a high standard of behavior. This is just as important as their musical ability.

1. Whenever students are representing the Georgia Children's Chorus, they will exhibit exemplary behavior.
2. Students will show their commitment to musical excellence by having a positive attitude and putting forth maximum effort in rehearsals and performances.
3. Students will cooperate with and respect GCC personnel at all times. Students will be respectful of each other at all times and will treat rehearsal and performance facilities with respect and care.
4. The use of cell phones or other digital devices is strictly prohibited during rehearsals.
5. Students will not be in possession of alcohol, drugs, tobacco products, or weapons at any time when they are under GCC staff supervision.
6. Students are not allowed to dispense any medication to each other.

Any student who is in violation of the above standards level is subject to have his or her membership in the GCC reviewed by GCC staff. This review may result in dismissal.

Safety and Security Protocols

In the event of severe weather, singers, staff and volunteers will abide by the Hugh Hodgson School of Music Severe Weather Policy. Individuals will vacate all areas of the building that have windows and solid glass doors, all large rehearsal areas and move to the more protected areas on 2nd, 3rd and 4th floors. GCC activities located outside of UGA will follow the weather policy of that site.

In the event of a singer becoming lost while in the care of GCC, the procedures below will be immediately put into place:

- (1) The rehearsal director, Chorus Coordinator, and Artistic Director will be alerted immediately.
- (2) Enquiries will be made to relevant parent volunteers as to when the singer was last seen and where.
- (3) If appropriate, enquiries will be made of the remaining singers as to when the child was last seen and where.
- (4) If the singer cannot be found within fifteen minutes, the parents and UGA Campus Police must be informed.

If a singer goes missing during an off-campus performance:

- (1) The staff will ask other singers to stand with designated parent volunteers and a headcount will be carried out to ensure no others are missing.
- (2) GCC Staff will speak with venue staff to have them conduct a search. Parents and police will be contacted if the child is not found.

In the event of an emergency situation on campus, updates can be found by visiting emergency.uga.edu. GCC staff contact information and the UGA Campus Police number are listed at the back of this handbook.

All singers are required to fill out and submit an Authorizations for Programs and Activities Serving Minors form prior to their first rehearsal. This form lists emergency contact information, medical information and authorization of medical care. Students who have not submitted this form will not be invited to participate in rehearsals, events or performances.

Rehearsals

Membership in the Georgia Children's Chorus is a commitment to faithful, consistent, and punctual attendance. It is expected that rehearsals take a very high priority in each child's life. Each child is holding a valuable place in his/her choir. All rehearsals are mandatory unless otherwise indicated on the choir calendar.

Intermezzo Choir

Intermezzo Choir rehearses on Tuesdays from 4:30 to 5:45 pm.

Concert Choir

Concert Choir rehearses on Tuesdays from 6:00 to 7:30 pm.

Concert Ensemble

Concert Ensemble rehearses on Tuesdays from 7:30 to 8:00 pm.

MEMBERS OF ALL CHOIRS must check in with the staff member or volunteer taking attendance when they arrive. *Please be in your seat and ready to rehearse at the start of your rehearsal. (This means you should arrive early enough to use the restroom or get water before rehearsal).*

Attendance Policy

1. Three absences per semester are allowed. Any missed rehearsal or performance, regardless of whether it is excused or unexcused, will count toward these three allowed absences. *All absences should be called into the GCC office prior to the rehearsal or performance or as soon as possible.* Singers are encouraged to make up any rehearsals they miss. Any absences beyond the allotted number will require a make-up rehearsal. *Exceeding the allowed number of absences may result in not being permitted to perform in concerts or, in extreme cases, dismissal from the GCC.*
2. Repeated tardiness or early departure will be considered in the total number of absences. Be sure to check in with a staff member if you arrive late or leave early.
3. In case of severe weather, rehearsal may be canceled and an email message sent. Feel free to call or e-mail the GCC office for confirmation.
4. Do not assume that rehearsal has been canceled just because your school is not in session. Consult the online schedule on our website or the information sent home from rehearsals if you have any questions. Again, feel free to call or e-mail the office and ask.
5. The staff of the Georgia Children's Chorus is very committed to both the members and the organization. While we do consider membership in the GCC to be a school-year commitment, we realize that there are times when students are unable to fulfill this commitment. We ask that this decision be brought to the GCC staff in a private meeting.
6. Parent Meetings are extremely important to the GCC program. We strongly encourage our parents to make every effort to attend these meetings. They are very brief and very informative.

Rehearsal Policy

1. GCC members should be in their seats and ready to sing at scheduled rehearsal times.
2. Please note that special **Combined Rehearsals** are important elements to the GCC program and members are expected to attend. Please see the online calendar at the GCC website for specifics <http://georgiachildrenschorus.org>
3. It is each GCC member's responsibility to **check in** with the attendance person and **pick up a name tag**.
4. Anyone who wishes to sit in on a rehearsal is welcome, but must get prior permission from the director.
5. We will sometimes send home printed information with singers, but our primary method of communication is through email and our website. **You will be held accountable for knowing this information.** It is vital that you check your email regularly for updates. Our ServiceU software makes it easy to access forms on our website and reply to GCC regarding attendance at new events added to our calendar. Check the GCC website often.
6. GCC Concert Choir members are allowed to take their music notebooks home. Intermezzo members must return their notebooks at the end of each rehearsal. Each singer is responsible for remembering to bring the notebook to every rehearsal. No stickers or other decorations should be added to the outside or inside of the notebook. Music should only be marked in pencil. You must turn in the notebook and the music at the end of the season. **You may be charged for missing music.**
7. Please, only water in rehearsal. **No food, candy, gum, or other drinks should be brought to rehearsals.** Keeping your vocal cords hydrated is very important. Only water should be in your water bottle!
8. Singers should be picked up promptly at the end of rehearsals and performances. GCC is not responsible for GCC members until 15 minutes before rehearsal/concert call time, and GCC's responsibility ends 15 minutes after the scheduled pick-up. If for some reason you are unavoidably delayed, please call the GCC office. Parents **MUST** come into the building to drop off and pick up their child. Students will not be allowed to leave the building without a parent or guardian. Parents of Concert Choir members have the option to sign a release form permitting their child to enter and leave the building unescorted. This waives GCC's responsibility to your child before they enter and after they leave the building. Intermezzo singers **DO NOT** have this option, even if they have a sibling in Concert Choir.

NOTE: Final dress rehearsals and pre-performance rehearsals are always closed to the audience, including families. Only designated chaperones will be allowed in the rehearsal area prior to a performance. This allows the singers to concentrate on the music, the director, and any necessary final instruction.

Performances

Performances require the very best conduct, appearance, and musicianship. Information concerning specific concerts will be emailed to you and posted on our website. It may also be found in the GCC newsletter, the Chorister.

Performance Attendance

All performances are mandatory unless special permission has been given well ahead of time. The sooner the better! If a school performance conflict occurs, the absence must be reported to the Chorus Administrator and the Director in person and in writing well in advance of the performance. School performances which conflict with a mandatory GCC performance will not count as an absence against the singer if the singer completes a prearranged absence form and has it signed by both the school director and the GCC director. An unexcused absence from a performance may result in dismissal from the GCC.

Performance Procedures

1. Singers should always eat a nutritious meal and get plenty of rest before a performance. Be sure the singer has used the restroom prior to arrival at the performance site.
2. Singers should arrive ten minutes before the performance call time and immediately check in with the chorus administrator or parent assistant.
3. Tardiness to a performance may exclude a singer from participation at that performance.
4. All performers must arrive wearing proper concert dress attire. Failure to wear proper concert dress will result in non-participation in the performance. Singers should remain in their complete uniform until they have left the performance site.
5. Singers should conduct themselves at all times in a calm, polite, and professional manner. They must give their undivided attention to the GCC staff and appointed chaperones at all times.
6. All singers must know the music. Each musician must have a confident command of the performance repertoire.
7. If a singer feels ill during a performance, he/she should quietly sit down on the riser and rest for the remainder of the song. Then, if feeling better, the singer may get up and sing again, or if not, quietly leave the stage. Chaperones are always watching and will help if necessary. Once a singer leaves the stage he/she may not return.
8. Remember that singers represent the Georgia Children's Chorus at all times.

Uniforms

Intermezzo Choir

The GCC Intermezzo Choir members wear white tux shirts, red and black cummerbunds, black pants, button cover for top button of shirt, and chorus pin for formal concerts. The tux shirts will be ordered for all members. Girls will also have their pants ordered for them. Boys should provide their own black dress pants. Cummerbunds are property of the GCC and should be returned at the end of the season. Approximate prices for the uniform are as follows:

Formal Uniform

1. Cummerbund/Vest \$15 (Rental Fee)
2. Tux shirt \$25
3. Pants (girls only) \$35
4. Button Shirt Studs and Gold Button Cover \$10
5. Chorus Pin and Year Bar \$15

All boys should wear black dress shoes and black socks. All girls should wear black tights or socks and black dress shoes or flats. No sneakers, sandals, clogs, or open-toed shoes should be worn.

Casual Uniform

1. Red GCC Polo Shirt \$20
2. Casual Dress Black Pants - see below

Each singer is asked to get a pair of nice black pants to use as a part of our casual uniform. Thrift stores and hand me downs are great ways to obtain pants at a minimal cost. Pants should have a waist and if belt loops are present, singers are asked to wear a belt - shirts will be tucked in. No stretch or yoga style pants, please. Casual dress black pants and black socks and shoes. Girls - try and get black flats that will work with both formal and casual uniforms.

**We do have some used Intermezzo Choir formal attire in stock. Those items can be sold to members of the GCC for a reduced price. Anyone who wishes to return a uniform they have previously used can do so by contacting the GCC office.*

Concert Choir

The GCC Concert Choir members wear white tux shirts, red and black vests, black pants, button cover for top button of shirt, and chorus pin for formal concerts. The tux shirts will be ordered for all members. Girls will also have their pants ordered for them. Boys should provide their own black dress pants. Vests are property of the GCC and should be returned at the end of the season. Approximate prices for the uniform are as follows:

Formal Uniform

1. Vest \$10 (Rental Fee)
2. Tux shirt \$20
3. Pants (girls only) \$35
4. Button Stud and Button Cover \$12
5. Chorus Pin and Bar \$12

All boys should wear black dress shoes and black socks. All girls should wear black tights or socks and black dress shoes or flats. No sneakers, sandals, clogs, or open-toed shoes should be worn.

Casual Uniform

1. Red GCC Polo Shirt \$20
2. Casual Dress Black Pants - see below

Each singer is asked to get a pair of nice black pants to use as a part of our casual uniform. Thrift stores and hand me downs are great ways to obtain pants at a minimal cost. Pants should have a waist and if belt loops are present, singers are asked to wear a belt - shirts will be tucked in. No stretch or yoga style pants, please. Casual dress black pants and black socks and shoes. Girls - try and get black flats that will work with both formal and casual uniforms.

**We do have some used Concert Choir formal attire in stock. Those items can be sold to members of the GCC for a reduced price. Anyone who wishes to return a uniform they have previously used can do so by contacting the GCC office.*

Performance Dress Standards

Just as the chorus' sound is important, so is the chorus' appearance. A well-groomed, neatly uniformed chorus is essential for a truly professional and artistic experience. Good personal hygiene is a must for all singers. Shirts must be tucked into pants.

1. Singer's hair should not be in his or her face. No bows, ribbons, or colored barrettes should be worn. All ponytail holders should be black. No unusual colored hair dye, The director reserves the right to request a singer to change his or her hair if it does not meet the standards.
2. Singers should not wear any dangling earrings, visible necklaces, or bracelets. Rings should be small and tasteful. Watches that make audible signals *must not* be worn.
3. Do not bring a digital device or cell phone to rehearsals or performances. They will be taken up!
4. Any makeup worn should be discreet and tasteful. No brightly colored nail polish is permitted for performances.
5. Please do not use any perfume, cologne, or scented lotions. We often perform in close quarters and those scents may make it difficult for some people to breathe, especially if they have allergies or asthma.
6. Any singers who arrive for a concert with incomplete or incorrect uniform may be charged for replacement pieces or may be unable to perform. A missed performance **will count** as an absence.

Music

The GCC Music Library is one of GCC's greatest assets. Great care should be taken to keep the music in good condition. Individual music notebooks are issued to all singers and they are expected to take good care of them. If music or notebooks are lost or irreparably damaged, an additional fee will be charged to cover replacement costs. The fee will be \$50 for a notebook and music. Please make sure that the sticker with the singer's name is still on the notebook to receive proper credit.

You should also take care to remove all personal items from your notebook at the end of the season.

Handling and Care of Music

1. Never fold or roll music.
2. Never write on music without the permission of the director. Any markings should be done lightly, in pencil, and only at the direction of the music director. Do not deface any piece of music. Blank pages or portions of the music are NOT for drawing pictures, writing personal notes, etc. Photocopied music is done with permission and should be treated the same as an octavo.
3. If for any reason a piece of music needs repair, please bring it to the attention of the chorus administrator or one of the rehearsal assistants.

Fees Annual Payment Options

Choir	Annual	Two Payments (Sept. & Jan.)	Monthly Cost (9 Payments)
Concert	\$651.00	\$325.50	\$72.34
Intermezzo	\$541.00	\$270.50	\$60.11

Annual financial commitment consists of tuition fees, fundraising fees (\$60), and concert ticket fees (\$96 for 4 tickets to each concert). If you have more than one child in GCC, your annual commitment will be reduced per additional child by \$156.

Acceptance into the GCC requires a **season-long commitment**, regardless of how fees are paid

Other Fees:

Registration Fee	One-time payment required before your child's first rehearsal. This fee is non-refundable.	\$60.00
<u>Intermezzo Choir</u> Uniform Fee Due upon receipt of items	Ordered through GCC: GCC polo, white tux shirt, choir pin, button cover and studs, palazzo pants (ladies) and cummerbund (rented annually). ----- Each singer will need to provide: black school uniform style pants and belt for casual uniform, black opaque socks and black flat dress shoes for all performances. Boys may wear the same black pants for casual and formal performances.	Estimated Cost: \$88.00 (girls) \$57.00 (boys) <i>Invoices will be sent out in October</i>
<u>Concert Choir</u> Uniform Fee Due upon receipt of items	Ordered through GCC: GCC polo, white tux shirt, choir pin, button cover and studs, palazzo pants (ladies) and vest (rented annually). ----- Each singer will need to provide: black school uniform style pants and belt for casual uniform, black opaque socks and black flat dress shoes for all performances. Boys may wear the same black pants for casual and formal performances.	Estimated Cost: \$98.00 (girls) \$67.00 (boys) <i>Invoices will be sent out in October.</i>

Payments may be made via cash or check at rehearsals or online by visiting our website: www.georgiachildrenschorus.org/forms. Please note that our system does not have automated billing, you will be required to input your payment information each month. Account statements will be sent out via email the first of each month.

Scholarships

Need-based tuition scholarships are available to those who qualify. Scholarship applications will be due by the following schedule:

- (1) September 15th at noon for singers starting in Fall semester.
- (2) January 19th at noon for singers starting in Spring semester.
- (3) May 1st for singers with difficulty paying final balances due to extenuating circumstances.

Scholarship application forms may be found on our website. All scholarships are reviewed anonymously by our GCC Scholarship Committee, formed by members of our GCC Board of Directors. All tuition payments will be deferred until October 1st. For more details, please contact the GCC office at 706-542-8711 or gcc@uga.edu. Please note: these are hard deadlines.

Registration

To register, please complete the registration form and pay the \$60.00 fee. Go to the GCC website, <http://georgiachildrenschorus.org>, go to the Singers tab, then click the Registration page.

To make tuition payments, please go to the GCC website at <http://georgiachildrenschorus.org>, go to the Singers tab, click forms and then tuition 2023-2024.

If special payment arrangements are needed, you may contact the GCC office. Financial assistance is available for those who qualify. Contact the office for an application.

Fundraising

The GCC continues to be grateful for the support we receive from parents, families, alumni, and friends. Tuition covers approximately 30% of the expenses incurred by the Georgia Children's Chorus. Charitable contributions are tax-deductible and are deeply appreciated. If you have donated to the GCC this year, thank you.

Singers are expected to participate in fundraising efforts held throughout the season and \$60 as part of the annual fees goes towards this.

Concert Tickets

Concert Ticket Price - \$12 each

1. Each family is required to buy or sell 4 tickets to each concert. Everyone attending the concert must have a ticket.
2. Tickets will be available for pick-up at several rehearsals prior to the concert. You will be notified when they are ready.
3. Singers are encouraged to sell extra tickets to friends, family, teachers, etc. It is always fun to sing to a full house!
4. The GCC families are asked to return all unused tickets by the Friday before the concert so that tickets may be reissued and sold on the night of the concert to ensure that no one is turned away. Accounts are not credited for returned tickets.

Tour Information

The GCC plans to provide tour opportunities bi-annually for the Concert Choir. All tour costs are additional to the tuition and ticket fees.

Standard GCC rules of conduct apply on tour. However, given our increased visibility, the singers will be expected to maintain an even higher level of discipline. In the most severe discipline cases, the director may send the singer home before the completion of the tour at the parents' expense.

*We will not be touring until further notice.

Important Numbers & Contact Information

Georgia Children's Chorus
Hugh Hodgson School of Music
250 River Road
Athens, GA 30602
706-542-8711
gcc@uga.edu
www.georgiachildrenschorus.org

Staff

Erin Towe, Artistic Director
Sophie Haskell, Chorus Coordinator
Katy Atkins, Operations Coordinator
Ben Pozo, Principal Accompanist

GCC Office: 706-542-8711
School of Music Main Office: 706-542-3737
UGA Campus Police: 706-542-2200

Board of Directors

Slate of Officers

Dr. Rebecca Atkins - **President**
TBA - **Vice-President**
TBA - **Secretary**
TBA - **Treasurer**
Emily Escoe - **Past President**

Board Members

Jackie Campbell	Marco Hull
Amanda Farmer	Cindy McKoy
Leslie Gordon	Wick Pritchard
Doris Granum	Charlotte Sosebee
Ellen McLemore	

Signature Page to Handbook

I have carefully read the Handbook. I fully understand, and agree to abide by, its terms as a singer or parent/guardian, as the case may be, associated with Georgia Children’s Chorus.

SINGER: _____

Signature: _____

Print Name of Singer: _____ Date: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN: _____

Signature: _____

Print Name of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____