

# Performing Arts Electives – Frequently Asked Questions

## GENERAL QUESTIONS

### **Should I take music, theatre, or dance?**

*Choosing among classes is a personal decision which should be based on your interests and goals. Freshman year is a time to explore. If your interests change, there are usually opportunities available to you in each area during your sophomore year.*

### **Do electives meet every day?**

*All electives are curricular and meet five days a week for a full period. (A possible three-day a week option for choral students is listed below.)*

### **I want to take two electives, how do I do that?**

*The best way to fit two electives into your schedule is to register for four core academic majors. Students who take two electives sometimes decide to take a summer school or early bird class, both options available after freshman year.*

### **Can I take performing arts classes as a major during my freshman year?**

*For students taking four core academic majors there is a major credit option for Music classes and for Theatre I which you may contract for in the fall. There are also options within departments to combine two electives for major credit. For upperclassmen, there are more options across the arts curriculum for taking classes for major credit. See the Program of Studies for more information.*

### **Are private music lessons available?**

*Students interested in studying voice or an instrument may take a lesson during their study hall, lunch period, or music class. Lessons are also available during the summer. Call the Performing Arts office for more information, 847-784-7521.*

### **If I am registered in a class at the Winnetka Campus, how does that work?**

*You will take the shuttle bus to Winnetka during your lunch period or after your period 8 class. By doing this, you will not miss a class period. Advanced Orchestras/Bands and Theatre Technology are available for freshmen and are only offered at the Winnetka Campus.*

### **Do I have to be in a performing arts class in order to be in a play or musical?**

*No, however, students who are in theatre and choral classes are usually more successful in auditions than students who are not. These students are building their skills on a daily basis and are more comfortable during auditions because they are familiar with the teachers who direct the productions and in the performance facilities, which double as our classrooms. There are at least 7 productions each year that welcome freshman students to the auditions. Two of these productions are specifically designed to showcase our freshmen and sophomores.*

### **As I plan for sophomore through senior year, are there any performances that are limited to students in a particular class?**

*Some performances are limited to students in particular upper-level classes. As examples, in dance, Kinesis Dance Company members must be enrolled in Dance Lab I or II; in theatre, directors of the Spring Plays Festival must be enrolled in Theatre 4: Advanced Acting and Directing; in musical theatre, cast members of the school musical in the spring must be enrolled in Choir Opera. The Program of Studies has the best information for future planning.*

## CHORAL CLASSES

### **How do I get involved with singing at New Trier?**

*Sign up for boys or girls chorus, which is open enrollment (no audition) for anyone who wants to sing. These choirs include singers that come in with varying levels of experience - from students who have never been in a choir to students who have been singing for many years. Please be aware that in order to sing and be part of choral performances at New Trier, you need to register for an elective choral class. Choirs do not meet before or after the school day.*

### **How do I prepare to be in the upper-level choral classes?**

*Freshmen chorus classes prepare students to enter Choir Opera (see above for more information about this musical theatre class), Concert Choir, and Swing Choir. Vocal technique, sight-singing, and music theory are a part of the freshman choral curriculum and are criteria for the audition for placement into these groups. More information can be found on the New Trier Choirs webpage - [www.newtrier.k12.il.us/choirs.aspx](http://www.newtrier.k12.il.us/choirs.aspx)*

### **Why are boys and girls separated in the freshman choirs?**

*Boys and girls are in separate choirs to effectively address issues of the voice that are gender specific and to perform literature that is written specifically for boys and girls. There are times during the year when the choirs have an opportunity to perform together.*

### **Is there a three-day a week option for freshman chorus?**

*When a student's schedule becomes full, Boys and Girls Chorus can be taken three days a week only when scheduled opposite a science lab. While still a valuable experience, the student will be exposed to only a portion of the five-day curriculum and receive partial credit. (Please note that chorus classes do not always coincide with science labs.)*

## DANCE CLASSES

### **Do I need to audition to be in a dance class?**

*Dance classes are open to all students. You only need to audition if you wish to be considered for a level higher than Freshman Dance I. Dance placement auditions are held in December and January. Check the Dance website for location and times - [www.newtrier.k12.il.us/dance.aspx](http://www.newtrier.k12.il.us/dance.aspx)*

### **Do boys take dance?**

*Absolutely! In fact, while all dance courses at the freshman level are co-ed, the Winnetka campus has both co-ed and two sections of Menz Dance.*

### **Can I take dance instead of Kinetic Wellness?**

*At the freshman level, you must take Kinetic Wellness. However, many freshman students take this requirement AND take a dance class (fine arts credit received). Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors may take dance to fulfill their Kinetic Wellness requirement.*

## **INSTRUMENTAL CLASSES**

### **If I am interested in the orchestra program where can I get information?**

*All incoming freshmen interested in pursuing orchestra at New Trier should access the New Trier High School Orchestra webpage "information" about the program - [www.newtrier.k12.il.us/orchestras.aspx](http://www.newtrier.k12.il.us/orchestras.aspx) All incoming freshmen should register for Freshman Orchestra. Adjustment for your orchestra placement will be made after your audition.*

### **If I am interested in registering for a wind ensemble, what should I do?**

*All incoming freshmen should register for Freshman Concert Band. Placement auditions for junior high band students will take place in early April. If needed, adjustment to your wind ensemble placement will be made after your audition. Go to the Wind Ensembles website for more information - [www.newtrier.k12.il.us/windensembles.aspx](http://www.newtrier.k12.il.us/windensembles.aspx)*

### **I am interested in the instrumental jazz program. Where can I get more information?**

*All incoming freshmen interested in pursuing jazz at New Trier should access the NT Jazz website for information about the program - [www.ntjazz.com/8th-graders](http://www.ntjazz.com/8th-graders)*

### **If I select Freshman Jazz Ensemble as an elective course, is it true I need to enroll in either Freshman Band or Orchestra as well?**

*Yes, however, pianists and electric six-string guitar players are exempt from the requirements. Many of these musicians choose to enroll in band and play other instruments. Please note, all bass students are required to be concurrently enrolled in orchestra.*

## **SPEECH/BROADCASTING CLASSES**

### **How do I get involved with Media and Broadcasting at New Trier?**

*The most reliable way to participate in media and broadcasting is to enroll in Media Workshop. In that class, you and your classmates will be responsible for creating weekly radio shows for WNTH Radio. Students in Media Workshop create a variety of media products including websites, podcasts, short films, and advertising campaigns. Media Workshop is the recommended prerequisite for the video production and broadcasting programs at the Winnetka Campus. All New Trier students are welcome to apply for a position on WNTH Radio in the fall.*

### **Should I take Public Speaking and Argumentation or Freshman Debate?**

*Both classes have many similarities. In each class, students will learn foundations for speaking in front of an audience. In the Freshman Debate class, students will gain more experience participating in actual debates against opponents on a variety of topics whereas in Public Speaking and Argumentation there is a developmental approach to different types of public speaking and the basic theory behind argumentation. These are both good classes to take if students are interested in participating on the debate team and/or individual events team, though students do not have to participate on either team to be in these classes.*

### **What class should I take in order to participate as a member of the Individual Events Speech Team?**

*Although students do not need to take any class to participate as a member of the Individual Events Team, some take either Public Speaking and Argumentation or Freshman Debate. Students in entry level theatre or media classes are also strongly encouraged.*

## **THEATRE CLASSES**

### **Do I have to have previous theatre experience to be in a theatre class?**

*No. We welcome students at all levels of experience and skills (including none at all) into our theatre courses. We focus on individual students and tailor our instruction and assignments to make sure every student is challenged and supported to do their best work.*

### **I have had a lot of performance experience in the children's theatre groups and/or junior high, do I really have to take Theatre I or can I just skip to Theatre 2 or 3?**

*All students, regardless of experience, begin with Theatre I: Theatre Workshop in order to get the breadth of experience at New Trier. The class is structured to meet students at their own expertise level, and therefore will challenge even the most experienced freshman student, while still remaining accessible to those who have not received prior theatre instruction. Students who do not take Theatre I will need departmental approval before attempting to register for Theatre 2.*

### **Can freshmen take Theatre Technology and Design? What is Theatre Technology and Design?**

*Yes, this course offers hands-on experiences in stage craft and design for freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors. Many students who take this class become student designers and leaders for stage crew. Freshmen in the Theatre Technology and Design class will commute to the Winnetka campus for period 9. Students who do not wish to commute should consider taking Theatre I at the Northfield Campus.*

