General Information 2025 - 2026

Program Information

The Southeastern Massachusetts Youth Orchestra (SEMAYO) is the affiliated youth orchestra of the New Bedford Symphony Orchestra (NBSO). SEMAYO also has an agreement with the UMass Dartmouth Music Department to use their facilities for rehearsals. All students registering for SEMAYO must be participating members in good standing in their school instrumental music programs. If your district does not have an instrumental program for your instrument then the participation requirement is waived.

We have three ensembles with increasing musical expectations so there is a place in an ensemble for every student regardless of age or ability.

1. Beginner Strings - Group Lessons
    a. This group is for students on Violin, Viola, or Cello that have never played an instrument before.
2. Preparatory Orchestra
    a. This ensemble is for string students that know 1 octave D, G, and C scales and wind/percussion students in years 1-2. This group consists of elementary and middle school students and focuses on early skill development and ensemble skills.
3. Debut (Intermediate) Orchestra
    a. Our intermediate orchestra is for string students that know 2 octave scales up to 3 sharps and 3 flats and wind/percussion students in year 3+. This group consists of middle and high school students and plays more challenging music comparable to most high school programs.
4. Symphony Orchestra
    a. This ensemble is for the most dedicated and talented students and consists of high school and college students. String players must know 3 octave scales to participate in this ensemble.

We also have a chamber program where students learn how to be a leader within the ensemble and perform without a conductor. These programs are only offered to students in the Symphony Orchestra.

1. Chamber String Ensemble
2. Chamber Wind Ensemble

SEMAYO has 3 concerts per year as scheduled on our website. The Symphony Orchestra is invited to perform at the NBSO's Holiday Pops concert every December.

Communication

All correspondence from SEMAYO is done via email. Please add youth@nbsymphony.org to your contacts to prevent messages going into a spam or trash folder.

All cancellations due to inclement weather will be sent via email as soon as the decision has been made. If the weather is looking impactful for driving please be checking your email.

Registration

New members are asked to submit a registration form with their placement audition request. They will be placed into the appropriate ensemble based on musical ability and be told of their ensemble at the end of their audition. All students are accepted. After the ensemble has been selected tuition payment can be made.

Returning members that are not looking to move up do not need to audition. Please send in a completed registration form and tuition payment for the appropriate ensemble.

Returning members that are looking to move up must submit a completed registration form and audition request. After the audition students will be told their ensemble placement and tuition payment can be made.

Tuition & Payments

Tuition information and deadlines can be found on our website. We schedule two payments per year, one per semester. Our first semester runs from September through December and our second runs January through May.

New members and move-up auditions may wait until after their placement audition before submitting a payment.

Tuition Assistance

Financial Aid is available. Please submit requests when you are submitting your registration. Forms can be found on our website: **www.semayo.org/registration**

Membership Policies

Attendance

Attendance at all rehearsals and concerts is required. SEMAYO is understanding of scheduling conflicts and asks that any conflicts are communicated with their ensemble's director to work out an individual plan for each conflict. Students with recurring scheduling conflicts (ie. sports and music every week) must communicate with the program director to resolve the conflict. SEMAYO is a student first program and is always looking for a solution to find the best possible outcome for students, families, and the ensemble.

Rehearsal

Rehearsals begin promptly at their scheduled time. Please plan extra time when arriving for individual warm-up and unpacking of your instrument.

Students are expected to bring all materials they need to play their instrument. This includes rosin, endpin stoppers, extra strings, extra reeds, water for reed soaking, valve oil, drumstick bag with necessary mallets or sticks, etc.

Performances

All ensembles will meet the day of the concert at the venue for an on site warm-up rehearsal. UMass Dartmouth's facilities are too small for us to have our concerts so we travel to local schools for each performance. A schedule of the rehearsals and concert location can be found on the SEMAYO website's calendar page.

Concert attire is required for all performances. All ensembles are asked to wear all black from the neck down to their feet. No skin showing below the neck for anyone (except for your hands). No sheer or see-through fabric (i.e. fishnet), no shiny or reflective materials.

Behavior

Students are expected to show appropriate behavior during rehearsal hours and concerts. Cell phones are not allowed in rehearsal unless being used to tune and then must be put inside instrument cases.

While using the facilities at UMass Dartmouth we must clean up any trash that is created during our building use and all students are asked to assist in putting chairs and stands away at the end of each rehearsal. Students are not to use the CVPA elevator unless needed and are to remain on the rehearsal room floor, in the seating area at the center of the building, or making a visit to the vending machines. Students are not allowed in all other areas of the CVPA.