

# NATS Southern Region Fall Conference and Student Auditions Rules

## Purpose

The Southern Region Conference and Student Auditions of the National Association of Teachers of Singing furnish opportunities for musical growth, vocal understanding, and professional encouragement and recognition. Specifically, the auditions seek to provide the following benefits to students of NATS members:

1. Vocal and personal self-improvement.
2. Mastery of appropriate and challenging repertoire.
3. Performance opportunities combining the best elements of competitive and non-competitive endeavor.
4. Constructive criticism from qualified and impartial judges.
5. Recognition of outstanding talent and accomplishment.

## Organization

1. The Student Auditions are an annual activity officially sponsored by the Southern Region of NATS. The auditions are not affiliated with the NATS Artist Award (NATSAA) competition.
2. The auditions are under the supervision of the region's Auditions Chair, who administers policies adopted by the entire membership and set forth in this *Auditions Rules Book*.

## Eligibility and Participation

### TEACHERS

1. Teachers must be NATS members with dues paid for the current year. New members may be asked to provide proof of membership. Teachers with membership applications in process may attend the conference, but may not judge nor enter students in the auditions.
2. The District Membership determines conference fees and publishes them on the *Teacher Registration Form* and the *Request for Accompanist Form*. Registration fees for teachers and students are non-refundable after the postmark deadline.
3. Teachers who enter students are assessed a registration fee whether or not they attend the conference and auditions. This fee is used to defray conference expenses. Students will not be scheduled until the teacher's fee is paid.
4. Teachers entering students in the auditions are expected to attend the conference and serve as judges. Exceptions may be approved by the Auditions Chair upon receipt of a *Request for Judging Waiver* (a section of the *Teacher Registration Form*).
5. Waivers may be issued for two consecutive years. In the third year a teacher's students are ineligible to participate in the auditions. Emeritus teachers are exempt from this rule.
6. Teachers may not judge students with whom they have a significant relationship. These include present and former students, students enrolled at their institution, and family members.

7. According to the *NATS Code of Ethics*, "It is unethical to claim as a pupil one having studied less than eight months with the teacher except where there has been no previous training." Thus a teacher may enter a student who has not studied with him or her for eight months or more, provided that the name of any former teacher within the eight months immediately preceding the auditions is specified on the *Teacher Registration Form*. If a student studies or coaches on a regular basis with more than one teacher or coach, all names must be listed.

## STUDENTS

1. Students may participate in the auditions provided that they (1) are currently studying with a NATS member in good standing who is registered for the conference; (2) qualify for one of the classes described below; and (3) complete the *Student Registration Form* and pay the student registration fee.
2. The student registration fee permits students to attend all sessions of the conference.
3. Students must comply with the conditions set forth here and on the *Student Registration Form*.

## ACCOMPANISTS

1. Due to scheduling concerns, accompanists may play for no more than 20 student entries. Exceptions must be cleared with the Auditions Chair before entries are submitted.
2. The accompanist's name must be listed on the Student Registration Form. The form will not be processed until this is done.
3. Teachers may not accompany their own students.
4. Students must bring their own accompanist with them or contract for a NATS-supplied accompanist. Submit a completed *Request for Accompanist* form along with copies of all of the music as stipulated on the form. Also submit \$25 for each student entry: this fee covers the preliminary round only. If the singer advances, he/she must pay the accompanist \$10 in advance of each subsequent round.

## Conduct of the Auditions

### GENERAL

1. The motivating spirit of the auditions is one of cooperation in the pursuit of vocal artistry and technique, through hearing and being heard, judging and being judged, in a climate of mutual support and concern.
2. The Auditions Chair reserves the right to limit the number of entrants in any class that becomes too large. In such a case, earlier registrants have priority. Parallel classes (i.e., those with identical age and semester requirements) that have few entrants may be combined in order to ensure meaningful competition.
3. Previous first place winners in the College and Advanced Classes are not eligible to enter the class they previously won. They may enter the next highest class. In High School, Student Adult, Music Theater and Avocational classes, students are eligible to enter and win a second time. For unusual circumstances consult the Auditions Chair.
4. Certificates and cash awards are presented at the close of the final round. In case of a tie, each student will receive the higher place and cash award.

## PRELIMINARY ROUND

1. Singers in the High School, College, Student Adult, Music Theater and Avocational classes (all classes except 13-16) must sing two songs from their repertoire--one song of their choice and a second song selected by the judges. The total time for these two songs should not exceed eight minutes.
2. Singers in the advanced classes (13-16) must sing three songs from their repertoire--one song of their choice and two additional songs selected by the judges. The total time for the three songs should not exceed eleven minutes.
3. During the preliminary round only, judges write comments on their judging comment sheets. These sheets, containing constructive criticism, are returned to teachers prior to the semifinal round in order to be of immediate benefit.
4. On their individual sheets, judges recommend whether or not the student should advance to the semifinal round. The "yes" recommendation of at least two of the three judges is necessary for advancement.

## SEMIFINAL ROUND

1. The semifinal round is competitive. All semifinalists must sing in order to be considered for advancement to the final round.
2. Students perform on a first-come, first-served basis, with consideration given to the accompanist's schedule.
3. Students sing one song of their choice. Judges serve as scorers but not as commentators.
4. Judges score students according to the following system:

98-100 superb  
95-97 excellent  
90-94 worthy of finals  
85-89 not worthy of finals  
80-85 marginal semifinalist

5. The practice of "sandbagging" (assigning scores in the manner of 100,99,98,97,89,88,87....) is expressly prohibited.
6. In order to advance, students must score a total of 270 points and place among the top four scorers and ties.

## FINAL ROUND

1. The order of class scheduling for the final round is as follows: Session: Classes 1-6 and 11; Session 2: Classes 7-10, 12, and 20; Session 3: Classes 13-16 Session 4: Classes 17-19.
2. Judges for a given finals session occasionally judge a class that contains a student with whom a significant relationship exists. For such a situation, write "Pass" on the entire ballot for that class.
3. Students perform one song of their choice, with duration not to exceed four minutes. Time begins when the accompanist begins playing. Cuts are permitted. Student are stopped without penalty after four minutes.
4. Scoring: Judges rank the finalists in order, 1-2-3-4, with 1 being best. Final rankings are determined by low total score.

## Registration, Classification, and Awards

1. Students may register for both classical and music theater divisions. Students who sing in two classes must complete separate registration forms and pay an entry fee for each class.
2. High school classification is determined by gender only.
3. College classification is determined by two factors--age and semesters of college vocal study--with the higher factor serving as the determining one.
4. Class 11 is designed for students with 1-4 semesters of study and ages over 21 (the upper age limit for classes 3-6). Similarly, Class 12 is designed for students with 5-8 semesters of study and ages over 24 (the upper age limit for classes 7-10).
5. There is no upper age limit for classes 11,12,15,16,19, and 20.
6. Avocational students study voice as a hobby and not as a profession. They must be over 25 and (1) neither hold nor be pursuing a vocal music degree; and (2) not derive their principal income from vocal performance or teaching.
7. All finalists receive award certificates. In addition, the top three finalists in each class receive the following cash awards:

Categories, Age and Semester, and Prize Money				
Women's Categories				
		<b>1st</b>	<b>2nd</b>	<b>3rd</b>
1	High School 15-18, grades 10-12	\$30	\$20	\$15
2	Freshman thru 21, 1-2 semesters	\$35	\$25	\$15
5	Sophomore thru 21, 3-4 semesters	\$35	\$25	\$15
7	Junior thru 24, 5-6 semesters	\$45	\$30	\$20
9	Senior thru 24, 7-8 semesters	\$45	\$30	\$20
13	Younger Advanced thru 25, 9+ semesters	\$50	\$40	\$25
15	Older Advanced over 25, 9+ semesters	\$50	\$40	\$25
Men's Categories				
2	High School 15-18, grades 10-12	\$30	\$20	\$15
4	Freshman thru 21, 1-2 semesters	\$35	\$25	\$15
6	Sophomore thru 21, 3-4 semesters	\$35	\$25	\$15
8	Junior thru 24, 5-6 semesters	\$45	\$30	\$20
10	Senior thru 24, 7-8 semesters	\$45	\$30	\$20
14	Younger Advanced thru 25, 9+ semesters	\$50	\$40	\$25
16	Older Advanced over 25, 9+ semesters	\$50	\$40	\$25
Mixed Categories				
11	Student Adult over 21, 1-4 semesters and undergrad mus mjr	\$35	\$25	\$15
12	Student Adult over 24, 5-8 semesters and undergrad mus mjr	\$45	\$30	\$20
17	HS Music Theater 15-18, grades 10-12	\$30	\$20	\$15
18	Music Theater thru 21, 1-4 semesters	\$35	\$25	\$15
19	Music Theater over 21, 5+ semesters	\$45	\$30	\$20
20	Avocational over 25, non-college and non-professional	\$40	\$25	\$15

## Repertoire

1. All repertoire must be performed from memory under penalty of disqualification.
2. **Accompanists must play from original scores. No photocopied music is allowed.** Photocopies of a few measures will be allowed, to facilitate difficult page turns.

### HIGH SCHOOL (1 & 2)

1. One old English or Italian classical song.
2. Two additional classical songs selected at the teacher's discretion, one of which must be in English. All songs may be sung in English.
3. The region membership urges that operatic arias not be sung.

### COLLEGE (3 - 6)

#### STUDENT ADULT (11)

#### AVOCATIONAL (20)

1. One American, British, Russian, Scandinavian or Spanish art song sung in English.
2. One Italian, French or German art song sung in the original language.
3. One additional art song selected at the teacher's discretion, or an opera or oratorio aria sung in the original language or English.
4. An optional fourth song sung only in an original foreign language other than Italian, French or German.

### COLLEGE (7, 8, 9, & 10)

#### STUDENT ADULT (12)

1. One American, British, Russian, Scandinavian or Spanish art song sung in English.
2. One Italian, French or German art song sung in the original language.
3. One opera or oratorio aria sung in the original language or English. This aria must be documented from an opera or oratorio and presented in acceptable performance practice.
4. Optional fourth song sung only in an original foreign language other than Italian, French or German.

### ADVANCED (13, 14, 15, & 16)

Four songs are required, including three art songs. Two foreign languages are required. One song must be in English, but no more than two of the four may be in English.

1. Two art songs in different languages.
2. One art song in English composed after 1975 (list year).
3. One aria or oratorio aria sung in the original language or English. This aria must be documented from an opera or oratorio and presented in acceptable performance practice.

### MUSIC THEATER (17, 18, & 19)

Songs should be in the original language and must be from the stage, not movie version, of the score. One song must be a ballad (a song in legato style in slow to moderato tempo). Songs that have been modified from their original form for revival purposes must carry the date of the revival. List the year for all songs.

1. One song from a music theater work composed through 1968.
2. One song from a music theater work composed after 1968.
3. One music theater selection from any time period.