

CERTIFICATE OF MERIT POLICY, 2009-2010

(Revised July 28, 2009)

The Certificate of Merit (CM) Policy is designed to help implement the CM Program and to establish uniformity throughout the State. Its purpose is to clarify and update the syllabus for each discipline. Where a syllabus and policy may conflict, the policy prevails.

I. TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

- 1) All teachers participating in the CM program are required to read the Syllabus for their discipline and abide by the procedures set forth in that Syllabus, the current CM Policy and the MTAC Code of Ethics. Failure to do so may result in the loss of their “good standing” status and the forfeiture of their privilege to participate in the CM program.
- 2) Active, provisional, student and Cal Plan teacher members in good standing may register students for all programs available through CM within the teacher’s MTAC-approved discipline as listed in the state directory.
- 3) The MTAC teacher must be the primary teacher of and be actively teaching all students he or she enters. The primary teacher is one who personally teaches a student on a regular basis for the majority of lessons.
- 4) Students must only be registered under the teacher with whom they study. Students registered under a teacher who is not their primary teacher will be disqualified, as well as all of the students of the teacher under whom the student is registered. Teachers registering students who are not their own will be disqualified from CM for a time designated by the CM Council.

II. STUDENT PARTICIPATION AND REGISTRATION

- 1) A CM student may be any age and must be studying with an MTAC teacher in good standing.
- 2) All CM Fees are nonrefundable.
- 3) A student may enter the program at any level, may skip levels, may remain at the same level or may move back to a previous level. The teacher shall make the determination of level, except that once a student receives a “Remain at Level,” the student must pass Path A of that level to continue to higher levels in CM.
- 4) A student registered for an upcoming CM evaluation, who takes the evaluation with a teacher other than the teacher with whom the student was registered, must have the consent of the previous teacher to participate in CM.
- 5) All students in any ensemble must be enrolled in CM Path A. Parents, Teachers, or non-CM students may not be part of an ensemble for the CM evaluation.

III. GENERAL POLICIES

- 1) All communication or questions regarding a student’s CM experience (including status of registration, evaluation, honors selection, panel, convention application or results) must be directed through this line of communication:

- a) Parent ... if needed, the parent will refer to the
 - b) Teacher... if needed, the teacher will refer to the
 - c) Branch Chair... if needed, the Branch Chair will refer to the
 - d) CM Council...the appropriate Chair; Evaluator, Recital, Database...if needed a referral will be made to the Conflict Resolution committee and/or
 - e) State Coordinator...if needed to the State Board of Directors
- 2) It is unethical for teachers or Chairs to question an evaluator's decision by any means other than outlined in Policy III, #1.
 - 3) Any teacher who violates CM Syllabus Guidelines, CM Policy or CM Procedures will cause his or her student(s) to be ineligible for selection for any CM program, including Branch Honors and all Convention Programs.
 - 4) Evaluators will not discuss students' evaluations with teachers, parents, students or door monitors. (See Policy III, #1)
 - 5) A *Conflict Resolution Committee* will mediate all written, dated, documented and signed complaints about any aspect of CM that are received by the CM Council at least five days before the Spring Council meeting.
 - 6) Photocopied music is appropriate only in the following situations: To facilitate page turns and for confirmed out-of-print material. Confirmed out-of-print material must be accompanied by written permission from the publisher. Outside of this policy, students and accompanists are not allowed to bring photocopies to CM evaluations. Any student who brings a photocopy into the CM evaluation room will not be heard by an evaluator and will not pass the evaluation.
 - 7) Students must bring an original, published score of each piece of music played to evaluations.

IV. BRANCH EVALUATIONS

- 1) Only registered Path A students and evaluators are allowed into the evaluation room. Exception: Accompanists for non-keyboard disciplines are allowed in the room only during the accompanied piece(s).
- 2) When Path A evaluations are held in homes or private studios, every attempt should be made to schedule students at locations that are other than their teachers' studios.
- 3) Branches may require the involvement of teachers who enter students in Path A CM, and may establish a fee for non-involvement. Should the teacher violate his/her Branch procedures and/or policy, and refuse to pay the fee by the deadline set by the individual Branch, the teacher will be disqualified from participating in CM, both Path A and Path B, until the fee is paid.
- 4) Teachers are required to review and give their students the results of their Evaluations soon after the results are released.
- 5) For strings, winds and voice branch evaluations, literature to be considered for branch honors or convention programs must be accompanied live by a pianist or other instrumentalist at all levels. Levels 8 through Advanced must use live accompaniment for all pieces using accompaniment. Recorded accompaniments will only be allowed through level 7 for pieces not considered for branch honors or convention performance.

- 6) The following are NOT ACCEPTABLE for evaluation:
 - a) A piece improvised by a student instead of a published repertoire piece
 - b) Arrangements of ragtime or pop tunes (Exception: all pieces within the current syllabus collection are eligible)
 - c) Original unpublished compositions
 - d) Arrangements of Classical pieces for keyboard (these *are* allowed for keyboard ensemble)
 - e) Concerti for keyboard students (Exception: Bach Concerti as listed in the current keyboard syllabus)

V. BRANCH HONORS, CONVENTION PROGRAMS AND SENIOR AWARD

- 1) Adults, as well as school age students, are eligible for State Convention programs; however, adults are not eligible for Panel. Exception: voice students are eligible for all programs, including Panel, up to age 25.
- 2) Teachers are responsible for complying with all rules printed on the online convention application and must complete the two-step online application.
- 3) Students may apply for only one CM convention program per year per instrument. However, Panel applicants may apply for Convention Festival, Materials or Theme Recitals in case they are not selected for Panel.
- 4) All Path A requirements must be met and administered in the manner set forth by the CM Council and State Board in order for the student to be eligible for any convention program. Any student who does not show up for a Convention Program without an adequate reason or notification of said absence, will not be allowed to participate in any Convention program for two years. Additionally, other students of that teacher may also be disqualified from Convention programs.
- 5) For convention eligibility, the theory score must be 80% or higher, and students must receive “good” or “excellent” ratings for technique, sight reading and repertoire. Panel students are not required to sight read.
- 6) For Branch Honors eligibility, branches may set their own requirements except that students must pass both the written and performance portion of the evaluation and must provide the original music for the evaluator.
- 7) A graduating High School Senior may receive a Senior Award.

VI. BRANCH OR REGIONAL PANEL AUDITIONS

- 1) Panel auditions are for outstanding students worthy of State recognition. Only students of exceptional quality should be enrolled for Panel consideration.
- 2) Teachers who enroll Panel students are responsible for the information found in the current *Panel Pamphlet*. It is available online at www.mtac.org.
- 3) Refer to the Panel Pamphlet for all other information.