

Field Commander Audition Training '17: Class 1 & 2

What is a field commander, and what does s/he do?

This week we are going to focus on what this position is, why you want it, and what you will be doing in the next month to prepare.

For the first few minutes of class on Monday (or Friday, if you were unable to be here Monday), please fill out the attached sheet and return it to me. I will give you about 10 minutes to do this. Focus on *YOUR* thoughts, not what you've heard others say, or what you think *I* want you to say... it's about *YOU!*

Part 1: What does it mean to be an FC?

- Experiences shared by returning FCs, Miss M., and graduating FCs
- Put in your own thoughts (voluntarily)

Part 2: Step 1 – Conducting – It's an Art: Using Your Patterns

Music is an art, and so is the way you portray it to an ensemble using your hands, arms, and body language. As such, we have some different patterns we use to show the basic beat, depending on the style of music we're conducting.

First, there is a very basic, non-subdivided pattern called **strict**. It consists of 4 beats without rebound, just a placed **ictus** on each beat. An ictus is the point where the beat falls in the pattern, simply put. Strict can also be performed in 3, in 2, or any other time.

The second pattern we will learn is called **Basic**. It is a smooth pattern based on curves, but has a slight bit of rebound. (Those of you in this class before may have learned this as "Flowing." Basic is the *proper* name, and you will learn the correct form of Flowing below.)

The third pattern we will learn is called **Ws**. This pattern has rebounds on each beat, which show **subdivision**.

The fourth of the basic patterns is **Flowing**. This pattern consists of a slight arc outward, followed by a sideways figure-8 and upward rebound on 4. (See pattern guide.)

Part 3: The VERY Basics of Cutoffs (Time-permitting, review on Friday)

Finally, for this week, you will learn 2 very basic **cutoffs**. Cutoffs are necessary to bring an end to musical phrases, movements, or entire works. These 2 cutoffs will both be learned on beat 4, but can be performed on any beat depending on prep.

Cutoff **A (Circle)**, for a basic 4 pattern with a cutoff on 4, you will conduct the downbeat normally, conduct 2 as a palm-up hit on the plane (prep), conduct 3 as a circle, hitting the bottom on 4 while closing your fists and pulling outward.

Cutoff **B (Cross)** is a cutoff executed on 4, performed in the following manner: downbeat is normal, beat 2 pushes *out* with your hands, beat 3 crosses in the middle, and beat pulls downward and out for the cutoff.

Part 4: The Practice Sequence (NEW for 17!)

This year, I’m going to give you a mini “routine,” which I’m calling a *practice sequence*, for you to utilize at home to help you learn these patterns. This process will also help you to familiarize yourself with following the music, and help you piece together how what you conduct fits with what you hear. We’re going to use a marching band arrangement of *Viva La Vida*, one of my favorite Coldplay songs. The publisher, Hal Leonard, has a feature on its YouTube Channel called ScorePlay. You will be able to look at the score while listening to the piece, if you so choose, and you will be able to start to see how I fit patterns to what is happening musically.

Viva La Vida: arranged for marching band by Michael Brown, published by Hal Leonard.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Msun9gF4AP0>

These are the patterns I’d like you to use, along with how many MEASURES of each you will perform:

- Strict – 8
 - Basic – 20
 - Strict – 4
 - Ws – 8
 - Flowing – 8
 - Ws – 4
 - Basic – 4
 - Strict – 8
- Cutoff will be on final measure, beat 4.

You will be adding dynamics and cues to this as we learn about them, so save this sheet!

Dynamics:

Measure(s)	Gesture

Cues:

Measure	Type

FC Questionnaire: 2017

Name: _____ Grade: _____

Email Address: _____

Years in Marching Band: _____ Have you held leadership positions? Y N

If yes, what positions have you held? _____

1) What is your favorite aspect of marching band? Why?

2) Why do you want to be a field commander?

3) What activities do you have currently happening that may present a conflict with audition training classes? (For my reference, so I know what to anticipate with planning course activities.)

4) Do you have other extracurriculars during marching season, and/or do you attend the Career Center?