



# NACCC

THE NATIONAL A CAPPELLA CONVENTION

A decorative graphic of a musical staff with various notes, clefs, and a large yellow treble clef, set against a blue background that curves upwards from the bottom left.

CHORAL FESTIVAL RUBRIC  
& GUIDELINES



# WELCOME TO NACC!

**The NACC Choral Festival is the newest addition to the A Cappella Educators Association's National A Cappella Convention.**

Students who are passionate about singing will have the opportunity to experience both a traditional choral festival and a contemporary a cappella festival. In addition to the two full days of a cappella masterclasses and groundbreaking concerts, choirs will be able to perform for an esteemed panel of judges, and immediately following their performance, receive a thirty-minute masterclass from one of the panelists.

The best part about this experience is that the NACC Choral Festival is open to all choral ensembles, regardless of the style of music they perform or the difficulty of their repertoire. The festival is not a competition, but an exhibition designed to showcase talented choirs from around the country in a supportive environment and receive some of the best advice from some of the best clinicians. This is all included in the two-day/three-night festival package, along with the keynote presentations, interest sessions, concerts, and a hotel with a close proximity to the happiest place on earth.

**What does the National A Cappella Convention offer to my program?**

### Choral Festival All Access Pass

- Three evening headliner concerts
- Performance opportunity for your group in the Choral Festival
- 30 minute clinic for your Choral Festival Ensembles
- Access to 16 interactive interest sessions designed specifically for students AND teachers
- Access to pool and fitness center (18+)
- Boxed lunch on Friday and Saturday
- Social events for students and opportunities to network for directors

# REGISTRATION GUIDELINES

## Step One: Book a Call with our Executive Producer

Click [HERE](#) to schedule a 15 minute informational call with our Executive Producer, Shannon McNulty. Shannon can answer any questions you have about what NACC can offer your program, as well as share any specifics about the festival that may not have been released to the public yet.

## Step Two: Sign Your Customized Contract

You will have 60 days after your contract is signed to send a \$500 nonrefundable deposit. Final number of registrants is due by the last week in October and final invoices will be sent November 1st.

The \$500 will be applied to the cost of your All Access Passes when you pay in full by December 1st.

## Step Three: Register Each Student

When the outstanding balance for each student's All Access or VIP Pass is paid, you will be officially registered for NACC.

The All Access Pass is \$239/person.

Directors get one free pass for every 20 students registered.

### Need a Hand?

Reach out to Executive Producer, Shannon McNulty at [shannon.mculty@acappellaeducators.com](mailto:shannon.mculty@acappellaeducators.com) for registration questions.



# YOUR PERFORMANCE AT NACC

## Repertoire Guidelines

- There is no requirement of how many songs are performed within the 15-minute window. Ensembles are not required to fill the entire performance window.
- Directors are encouraged to select appropriately-graded music that challenges their ensembles.
- Additionally, in the spirit of the celebration of A Cappella music, we ask that ensembles include one contemporary a cappella piece.
  - This piece should be from a 20th or 21st Century composer or arranger and performed without accompaniment.
  - It does not need to be "popular" music.
- Directors must provide three original published scores with numbered measures for each selection being performed.
  - Photocopies are not permitted unless accompanied by a written-letter from the publisher.
  - Electronically purchased scores and custom arrangements should be accompanied by a copy of the receipt showing the purchase of at least three scores.
- Directors will be asked to provide information about your selections, composers and copyright information two weeks before the festival dates.
  - Failure to follow these guidelines and to have proper documentation by the festival performance may result in not being allowed to perform the selections in question.
- All music and lyrics must be suitable for a family audience.



## Facility & Schedule

- Please arrive to the Key Ballroom area no earlier than 15 minutes prior to your warm-up time.
  - There are no dressing facilities available. Students should arrive and depart the Choral Festival in their performance attire.
- All warm-ups, performances and clinics will take place in the Key Ballroom facilities.
- The following equipment is available in the choral performance venue:
  - One professional digital electronic piano
  - Up to eight sets of three step choral risers
  - Sound system with stereo plug cable connection for a playback device
- Each choral ensemble is scheduled as follows:
  - 30 minute window for your warm-up and performance.
    - We suggest allotting 15 minutes for your warm-up and 15 minutes for your performance
  - 30 minute clinic with our esteemed panel of choral adjudicators
- Adjudicators will not be in the performance space during the allotted warm-up time.
- We strongly encourage the use of an in-person accompanist for pieces that require accompaniment. Please contact our Choral Festival Coordinator, John DeFerraro at [john.deferraro@acappellaeducators.com](mailto:john.deferraro@acappellaeducators.com) for a list of accompanists local to Orlando.
  - In the event that in-person accompaniment is not available, recorded instrumental accompaniments are permitted.
    - Recordings should not include any vocal tracks.
    - We encourage directors to bring recorded accompaniments on a playback device such as an iPad/iPod, smartphone or laptop.
      - If using a smartphone, please turn on airplane mode and mute the ringer to avoid interruptions to the performance.
    - A representative of the ensemble will need to operate the playback device
    - Please bring your own adapters to allow connection with a standard stereo headphone jack.
    - Please compile all music tracks in performance order to one playlist to assist in avoiding timing and playback challenges.
- Your performance and adjudicator feedback will be professionally recorded by an audio engineer.
  - Only NACC representatives are permitted to operate the mixing board and audio system.
  - During the 15 minute performance window, no one should approach the audio engineer.

# ASSESSMENT & FEEDBACK

## Adjudication Status

- Ensembles can opt into either of two adjudication formats:
  - Ratings & Comments
    - Ensembles will receive a NACC Choral Festival Award recognizing their participation. This award will include the ensemble's name and festival rating and will be announced and presented at the Saturday Night Headliner Concert.
  - Comments Only
    - Ensembles will receive a NACC Choral Festival Award recognizing their participation. This award will include the ensemble's name and will be announced and presented at the Saturday Night Headliner Concert, but no festival rating will be provided or announced.

## Adjudication Scale

- The following scale will be used for all ensembles, based on the average of the adjudicators' number scores.

ADJUDICATION SCALE:	
SUPERIOR	41 - 45 PTS
EXCELLENT	32 - 40 PTS
GOOD	23 - 31 PTS
FAIR	14 - 22 PTS
NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	1 - 13 PTS

- In an effort to provide a positive experience for all attendees, "Fair" ratings will be automatically announced as "Comments Only" during the Awards Ceremony.
- In addition to their NACC Choral Festival Award, Directors will receive the judges original ratings and feedback recordings in their Festival Results packet.
- Additional special awards may be presented at the discretion of the adjudicators.

## Awards Ceremony

- All participating ensembles will receive their recognition and awards on stage at the Saturday Night Headliner Concert.
- Directors will be asked to select representatives from each performing ensemble to receive the awards. Casual attire is acceptable.
- If groups are unable to attend the awards ceremony, please inform John DeFerraro at [john.deferraro@acappellaeducators.com](mailto:john.deferraro@acappellaeducators.com) as soon as possible. Awards and feedback not collected before departing the festival will be subject to shipping fees.



	<b>SUPERIOR</b> 5 POINTS	<b>EXCELLENT</b> 4 POINTS	<b>GOOD</b> 3 POINTS	<b>FAIR</b> 2 POINTS	<b>NEEDS IMPROVEMENT</b> 1 POINT
<b>INTONATION</b>	Intonation and tonal center are consistent throughout vocal registers.	Intonation is often accurate, with adjustments made in extreme ranges.	Pitch is sometimes correct, with problems caused by lack of support or vocal faults.	Intonation is seldom accurate, showing a lack of listening skills and understanding of vocal adjustment.	Tonal center is never established. Basic pitch matching skills are absent.
<b>TONE QUALITY</b>	A healthy and free tone that is consistently well-supported and stylistically appropriate. Register changes are properly made.	<b>A healthy tone that is often well-supported and is stylistically appropriate. Extremes in register are inconsistently handled.</b>	A generally healthy tone but may have faults (such as excessive vibrato or tension) and may not be stylistically appropriate. Problems sometimes occur in extremes of volume or range.	The tone of the ensemble is not consistently healthy or free. Tone is not stylistically appropriate. Problems often occur in extremes of volume or range.	The tone of the ensemble is not consistently healthy or free. Tone is not stylistically appropriate. Registers and range are inappropriate for voice parts.
<b>BALANCE &amp; BLEND</b>	The ensemble achieves a pyramid balance in dynamics and ranges throughout the performance. Evidence of vowel matching can be both seen and heard.	The ensemble achieves a pyramid balance in dynamics and ranges throughout the performance. Evidence of vowel matching can be both seen and heard.	The ensemble has a proper blend. There are some lapses when sections are overpowering other sections. Evidence of vowel matching can be both seen and heard much of the time.	At times, the ensemble achieves proper balance. There are some lapses when individuals are overpowering the choir. Evidence of vowel matching can be both seen and heard some of the time.	The ensemble is consistently out of balance. Sections and individual voices are overpowering other sections. Evidence of vowel matching is rarely seen or heard.
<b>MUSICALITY</b>	The performance exhibits an exceptional dynamic plan that develops with the song. Articulations are appropriate and unified. Phrasing is artistic and musically fulfilling.	The performance exhibits a dynamic plan and articulation choices that are very appropriate and frequently unified. Phrasing is well executed and engaging.	The performance exhibits frequent dynamic contrast and some appropriate articulations. Phrasing is inconsistent.	The performance exhibits some moments of seemingly planned dynamics and phrasing. Articulation is rarely unified and appropriate.	The performance exhibits no clear musical plan. Dynamics, articulation and phrasing are inappropriate and not executed musically.
<b>STYLE</b>	The ensemble's performance adheres perfectly or almost perfectly to performance practices and are appropriate to the era or style.	The ensemble's performance includes musical choices that are well made in regards to appropriate performance practice and style.	The ensemble's performance includes musical choices that are somewhat well made in regards to appropriate performance practice and style, with some errors.	The ensemble's performance infrequently includes musical choices that are appropriate to the performance practice and style.	The ensemble's performance does not adhere to performance practices and includes musical choices that are inappropriate to the era or style.



	SUPERIOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	FAIR	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
RHYTHM	Rhythms are precisely aligned and tempos are accurate throughout the performance. Rhythmic interpretation is appropriate for the music.	Rhythms are aligned and tempos are accurate most of the time. Variations are infrequent and only occur in the most difficult passages.	Rhythms are aligned and tempos are accurate some of the time. Rhythmic precision is inconsistent.	Rhythms are rarely aligned and tempos are inconsistent. There is little sense of rhythmic accuracy in simple passages and rhythms are often weak in rapid or complicated passages.	There is little or no sense of rhythmic accuracy displayed throughout the entire performance. Rhythmic interpretation is improper for the performance. Little or no attention is paid to the tempo or internal pulse.
LYRICAL INTERPRETATION	The ensemble exhibits a masterful understanding of the lyrics by way of their phrasing, emotional context, and musical choices.	The ensemble exhibits a great understanding of the lyrics by way of their phrasing, emotional context, and musical choices.	The ensemble exhibits an understanding of the lyrics by way of their phrasing, emotional context, and musical choices.	The ensemble exhibits a rudimentary understanding of the lyrics by way of their phrasing, emotional context, and musical choices.	The ensemble does not exhibit an understanding of the lyrics, by way of their phrasing, emotional context, and musical choices.
DICTION	Diction is clear, stylistically appropriate and flawlessly integrated into the song resulting in a cohesive performance.	Diction is mostly clear, stylistically appropriate and integrated into the song resulting in a mostly cohesive performance.	Diction is mostly clear, somewhat stylistically appropriate and integrated into the song resulting in a somewhat cohesive performance.	Diction suffers from a lack of clarity and stylistic choices are confusing, resulting in a performance with occasional moments of cohesiveness.	The performance exhibits no appropriate or unified diction. Pronunciation and vocalizations distract and detract from the performance.
PRESENTATION	The ensemble exhibits an exceptional and deep understanding of the emotion of the song. The ensemble presents itself with a professional demeanor, and cultivates an exciting and engaging performance.	The ensemble exhibits a clear emotional performance plan that is mostly unified with occasional distractions. The ensemble presents itself with a professional demeanor and cultivates an exciting and engaging performance.	The ensemble has an inconsistent emotional performance plan. The ensemble presents itself with a mostly professional demeanor and cultivates a performance that is engaging with some moments of excitement.	The ensemble appears to be emotionally disconnected from the performance. The ensemble does not present itself with a professional demeanor that detracts from the music and makes the performance less engaging and exciting.	The performance exhibits no emotional understanding or cohesion within the ensemble. The ensemble is explicitly unprofessional in their demeanor that detracts from the music and makes the performance uncomfortable for the audience.
PENALTIES	<p>In order for the NACC team to plan a consistent and equitable festival, up to five penalty points may be assessed for any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Missing or late NACC Choral Festival forms (if not received 2 weeks prior to the festival date)</li> <li>• Ensemble performance exceeding the total allotted time</li> <li>• Failure to adhere to NACC Choral Festival policies, procedures &amp; performance guidelines</li> <li>• Unprofessional conduct by members of the ensemble and/or persons related to the ensemble</li> </ul>				