Calvin College Bands Audition Procedure

All students must audition at the beginning of the school year for placement in a concert band. This includes new and returning students, music and non-music majors. Even if a student is unable to play in the fall semester (due to scheduling conflicts, etc.), it is expected that he/she will complete an audition during the first week of the fall term. The only exceptions are given to those students who will be studying abroad during the fall semester, or those students who were not aware of the audition policy (i.e. other recruited members from on campus.) Auditions for the spring semester will be held BEFORE the first rehearsal, preferably during Interim. Dates and times will be arranged by mutual agreement of the student and the conductor.

Spring semester auditions for returning ensemble members will only be held if necessary. For example, a round of auditions may be scheduled if there are particular vacancies to be filled in Calvin Band. Other circumstances may arise that would warrant additional auditions; these cases will be determined at the discretion of the conductor. If spring auditions are to be held, the conductor will notify students of this opportunity well in advance (by the conclusion of the fall semester.)

Why do we have auditions?

Auditions are designed to fulfill the following objectives:

- Improve the quality of Calvin's concert bands
- Improve individual musicianship through additional preparation, performance experience, and constructive feedback
- Heighten levels of accountability and responsibility from each member
- Aid the conductor in placing each member in the appropriate ensemble
- Assist the conductor in the facilitation of part assignments.

What is different about this audition procedure?

At first glance, this audition procedure looks very similar to what has been used in the past. This is partly accurate, because most of the requirements will remain the same. This most fundamental difference is the fact that these auditions ill determine a student's placement in an ensemble. For instance, the old system has made the following guarantee: once you become accepted as a member of Calvin Band, you will *always* remain in Calvin Band. In the new system, the slate is wiped clean at the beginning of each school year. Thus, membership in a concert band is viewed not only as a considerable privilege, but a responsibility as well.

How does the audition process work?

To be eligible for a concert band, <u>all</u> students must complete the following audition requirements:

1. Prepared piece:

This literature can come from solo pieces (i.e. sonata, concerto) and/or etudes. The most important part is that the prepared literature reflects contrasting musical styles. Recommended length is between 4-6 minutes.

2. Band literature excerpts

These materials will be taken directly from the planned repertoire for the upcoming year. The conductor will mail these excerpts to students during the summer.

3. Sight-reading

This is short piece (shown for the first time at the audition) intended to assess the level of a student's sight-reading ability.

*In addition to the above components, the conductor may ask students to perform a major scale. This would be used for determining a student's comfortable playing range.

Incoming Calvin students will complete the audition requirements in two different segments. During their Passport auditions, freshmen will perform their prepared piece and sight-reading for Dr. Engle. They will then sign up for a 10-minute audition time during the first week of fall classes, where they will perform the literature excerpts for Dr. Engle and, when available, the applied instructor for their instrument.

Returning Calvin students will complete all requirements in sessions held during the first week of September. Please note that it is the students' responsibility to sign up for their own 10-minute audition time. In addition to Dr. Engle, applied instructors (when available) will be listening to these performances.

Results will be posted after all auditions are completed, with rehearsals beginning during the end of the first week of classes.