

Tamburitzans Audition Guidelines

BEFORE THE AUDITION

Prior to auditioning for the Tamburitzans, the auditionee (graduating high school senior, recent high school graduate, or college undergraduate) must fill out and submit:

1) *a Duquesne University Tamburitzans Scholarship Application*

and

2) *an application for admission to Duquesne University.*

All applicants must be in good academic standing and should either have applied, be in the process of applying, or been accepted to Duquesne University.

To obtain a Tamburitzans Scholarship Application, download from our web site at www.tamburitzans.duq.edu, or you may write, call, or e-mail the Tamburitzans at:

Duquesne University Tamburitzans

1801 Boulevard of the Allies

Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Phone: (412) 396-5185

e-mail: tamburitzans@duq.edu

For Domestic Students (U.S. residents), details regarding entrance requirements to Duquesne University may be obtained from:

Director of Admissions

Duquesne University

600 Forbes Ave.

Pittsburgh, PA 15282

Telephone: (412) 396-6220, 396-6221, 396-6222 or

(800) 456-0590 (Outside of 412 Area Code)

Fax: (412) 396-5644

e-mail: admissions@duq.edu

or, complete the Admissions Information Request Form at www.duq.edu/admissions

For International Students, details regarding entrance requirements to Duquesne University may be obtained from:

Office of International Affairs

601 Duquesne Union

Duquesne University

Pittsburgh, PA 15282, USA

Phone: (412) 396-6113

Fax: (412) 396-5178

E-mail: oia@duq.edu

or, complete the Admissions Information Request Form at www.duq.edu/admissions

ALL APPLICANTS, PLEASE NOTE:

The Duquesne University Tamburitzans Scholarship Application must be sent directly to the Tamburitzans office by February 1 and received by us prior to the first day of general auditions. The application for admission to Duquesne University must be sent separately and as soon as possible to the Director of Domestic Admissions (for American students) or to the Director of International Admissions (for international students) in order to receive early admission notice and possible opportunities for additional scholarship awards. Please contact the appropriate Admissions office for specific deadlines.

WHERE AND WHEN TO AUDITION

General Auditions at the Tamburitzans Building in Pittsburgh are held in early February. If the preset dates or the Pittsburgh location are not convenient, an audition may be videotaped and submitted to the Tamburitzans so that it arrives before the first date of General Auditions.

General auditions are set up in 15-minute time slots from 9:00 AM to 12:15 PM and from 1:00 PM to 5:15 PM on the designated audition dates.

THE AUDITIONEE MUST CALL THE TAMBURITZANS OFFICE TO SCHEDULE AN AUDITION TIME.

If you have a preferred time, you should call as soon as possible. On audition day, please arrive at the Tamburitzans Building at least one-half hour before your scheduled time to allow for warming-up and instrument tuning. If you do not appear at your designated time, you will be rescheduled either for the end of the day or for the next day.

Video Submissions

If travel to Pittsburgh for a live audition is not possible, the applicant may submit a VHS video audition. Pre-taped auditions may be done in the privacy of your own home or at any facility of your choice. Keep in mind that **the judging panelists are interested in viewing only you**, the applicant -- **Make certain that you are the only one in view during your presentation**, since it is very distracting and sometimes confusing for the judges (and possibly unfair to you) when individuals other than the auditionee are visible in the video.

Tips for auditionees assembling a video presentation:

- * Make sure that your audio levels are "just right" -- not too low, not too high.
- * It is good to begin with a close-up shot of yourself as you tell the panel what your audition program consists of. That way, you can proceed through your entire audition without stopping.
- * Speak slowly and clearly. **Do not give your name** -- just as all of the live auditionees are given a number, your video will be assigned a number when it is received in our office.
- * What to wear: Dark, solid colors are best for viewing. Avoid large prints and stripes.
- * Background: plain backgrounds work best; do not perform in front of a window or light source, as this will create a "silhouette" effect and make it difficult for the panel to view you properly.

All video auditions must be submitted in VHS format.

We have facilities to monitor both PAL (European) and NTS (American) formats.

All tapes must be received prior to the first day of general auditions.

NOTE: **All auditionees** will be assigned a identification number to be used by the panel of judges.

GENERAL CRITERIA

There are four main points which dictate the judging criteria for the Tamburitzans audition process:

1. The auditionee's overall talent
2. The quantity of graduating seniors/departing members and type of talent to be replaced
3. The type of talent required by the style of show selections which are being prepared for the upcoming season(s)
4. The poise, stage presence and appearance of the auditionee.

It should be understood that the Tamburitzans ideally look for performers who are multi-talented. In this way, the performer's talents would be utilized according to the needs of the group and the demands of the performance. Despite this fact, however, there are some performers who will be instrumentalists most of the time; some who will be dancers most of the time, and some who will be singers most of the time. Also, outstanding talent in a single, specialized area does not guarantee a spot in the ensemble. For example, the Tamburitzans have little need for more than two performers who are stringed-bass specialists; however, if one of the Tamburitzans graduating seniors is a bass specialist then logically, a suitable replacement must be found.

THE JUDGING PANEL

A panel of at least five judges (comprised of Tamburitzans staff and local experts in the fields of musical, vocal, and dance performance) will be involved in the selection process. Each applicant will be given a listing and biography of the panel members on the day of the audition. This panel will be headed by the Managing Director of the Tamburitzans. All panel members have a professional obligation not to discuss the audition proceedings with anyone other than another panel member.

THE AUDITION

The categories of talent utilized in a Duquesne University Tamburitzans performance are:

- 1. Dance**
- 2. Vocal**
- 3. Instrumental**

Remember that you are in competition with other applicants. Because of the nature of a Tamburitzans performance and because of the limited number of scholarships, all auditionees should prepare their presentations in a way which demonstrates talent in as many categories as is possible.

Dance: The dance portions of a Tamburitzans production are mainly *folk* and *character* styles. Ballet training is also desirable, as many of the choreographies which the Tamburitzans present also utilize ballet techniques. If at all possible, the auditionee's dance presentation should be oriented towards these dance types; however, a jazz, tap, or ballet presentation is a perfectly acceptable means of conveying the auditionee's abilities, and will by no means be given less consideration. It is recommended that a modern (interpretive or non-rhythmic) dance presentation be avoided.

Vocal: Although the Tamburitzans show is based upon folk styles, the vocal presentation can be of any style or type - folk, pop, classical, etc. Even if your talent is strictly instrumental or strictly dance, it is recommended that your audition include a vocal presentation. If you do not include it, the judges may request that you sing something on the spot in order to determine your vocal abilities. If singing is not your specialty, then pick a song that you like and know fairly well ("Happy Birthday" would be fine). If your talent is strictly vocal, please know that although it is certainly possible, the Tamburitzans rarely select an auditionee solely on the basis of his/her vocal talent.

Instrumental: The Tamburitzans have a need for a wide variety of instrumentalists.

The following is a list of the musical instruments commonly used in a Tamburitzans performance:

1. Tamburitza Family: Prim, Brac, Celo, Bugarija, Berde
2. Accordion: Piano, Button
3. Woodwinds/Reeds: Flute, Piccolo, Oboe, Clarinet, Saxophone (soprano)
4. Strings: Violin, Viola, Cello, Bass
5. Fretted: Guitar, Mandolin
6. Brass: Trumpet, Trombone, Tuba/Euphonium
7. Percussion: (limited) Snare, Various hand drums, Tupan (folk drum)
8. Other East European Folk Instruments: Kaval, Balalaika, Domra, Bandura, Panpipe (Nai), Frula, Cimbalom (hammered dulcimer), Gadulka, etc.
9. Keyboard

If your instrumental specialty is not included on the list, still include it in your audition. For example, a piano performance will at least indicate an understanding of music and a level of musicality, but should be limited to a maximum of three minutes.

The time limit for the audition is exactly 15 minutes. If your presentation exceeds this time limit, you will be asked to stop. On the other hand, if the total audition is less than 15 minutes, this is not a problem; the auditionee will not be given less consideration. Occasionally, an auditionee may be asked to wait a few moments before continuing. In this case, the pause will not be counted towards the 15-minute total.

Arrange the audition so that little time is wasted. Instrumental and vocal presentations should be presented first, and the dance presentation last. In this way we will not have to wait for you to catch your breath. It is recommended that the presentation be balanced in such a way so as to give an adequate sampling of each talent category - no one talent category should exceed 10 minutes. For example, if you will be making presentations on more than one instrument in addition to dancing and singing, make sure that the total instrumental portion of your audition is 10 minutes or less. Remember: the Tamburitzans is a performing ensemble, so above all, *perform* your audition - do not just present it. It is a plus for the auditionee to show that he or she already knows how to smile and gesture for the stage. Also, do not expect the judges to respond like an audience (i.e., applause, laughter, etc.). Much of the time, you can expect them to be looking down at their rating sheets and writing.

Any accompaniment to your audition must be pre-recorded onto a cassette tape only.

DO NOT BRING TAPE PLAYERS AND/OR CD PLAYERS.

The Tamburitzans will have a variable speed audiocassette player available.

ANY MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT FOR YOUR AUDITION MUST ONLY BE RECORDED ON AN AUDIO CASSETTE TAPE. NO LIVE ACCOMPANIMENT, ASSISTANTS OR PARTNERS CAN BE INVOLVED IN YOUR AUDITION.

The auditions will be video taped for the purpose of review by the panel. Copies of video tapes will not be available to applicants.

Your Audition Program

In order to better judge each audition, there is one important requirement. **The auditionee must provide at least five (5) copies of an information packet which relates to their audition.** This packet should include an outline of the audition (the order of the presentation and the names of the songs, dances and instrumentals to be performed), and should include copies of the written music to be sung or played. **WRITE YOUR ASSIGNED NUMBER ON THE PACKET. DO NOT GIVE YOUR NAME.**

CALL-BACKS / FINAL AUDITIONS

Soon after the in-house auditions are held, all applicants will receive either a request to attend the final audition or a notice of rejection. Call-backs will be held in Pittsburgh shortly after general auditions. There is actually very little you can do in preparation for the final auditions. All finalists will be taught the same songs, dances and instrumental pieces (in relation to your experience). In this way, everyone can be compared under the same circumstances. The final audition will be very similar to the process which the Tamburitzans performers go through during their production camp. It will last an entire day and will consist of separate sessions for dance, vocal and instrumental work. If needed, additional demonstrators may be present for teaching purposes only. They are not part of the judging panel.

INTERVIEWS

Shortly after call-backs, a group of finalists will be selected for interviews with the Managing Director; others will receive notices of exclusion. Before this step of the process takes place, all determinations for scholarships will have been made by the panel. However, more applicants may be invited to the interview phase than are actually needed. Thus, applicants under final consideration will not be offered a Grant-in-Aid at this time. The interview is intended primarily to discuss in great detail the responsibilities of the applicant and of Duquesne University in the event that the Grant-in-Aid is offered to them later. The interview also allows the Managing Director to learn more about the prospective student. At least one parent must be present at the interview. During this phase, students will be informed of the responsibilities of a Tamburitzan on and off stage, and will be asked questions concerning character and personality, as well as to determine if there are any health-related concerns which might prevent him or her from being successful as a Tamburitzans performer.

It is only under unusual circumstances that the Managing Director would report back to the judging panel with negative findings. In that case, a second interview would take place with all members of the panel present.

THE FINAL STEP

From this grouping of interviewed students, scholarship winners will be chosen, and all others will be notified that vacancies have been filled. In most situations, determinations will be made by April 15.

It should be understood that the Tamburitzans Managing Director may reopen the final or even general audition process if:

- a notified finalist declines the scholarship
- additional opening(s) need to be filled before the beginning of the new season

In this situation, the remaining interviewed applicants, as well as possible new applicants will be reviewed by the panel, and determinations will be made until all vacancies are filled.

If at any time during the audition process you receive a notice of rejection, please understand that this is not necessarily an indication of a lack of talent. Realize that we are limited by the number of available scholarships and by the particular talent needs for the upcoming season. Also note that the Tamburitzans Scholarship could be offered to college sophomores, juniors and seniors as well as to incoming freshmen. Thus, we encourage those who didn't receive a Tamburitzans Scholarship on their first attempt to try again the following year.

Thank you for your interest in the Tamburitzans, and Good Luck!