

Southeast Visual Ensemble Member Handbook

Last Edited: 10/10/2017

Disclaimer: The contents of this handbook are subject to change at any time at the discretion of the Director of Southeast Visual Ensemble.

Every program is built on the integrity and dedication of its members and staff. Here are some guidelines that will help foster an environment that allows for the program to be successful.

Rehearsal Etiquette

- Every member is expected to be at rehearsal at least 15 minutes prior to the scheduled start of rehearsal.
- Every member is expected to attend every rehearsal unless preapproved by the director. The rehearsal schedule is provided at the beginning of the season. Please schedule other functions/obligations to allow you to be at rehearsal. Members are not permitted to be absent for more than one rehearsal in a week and the one absence must be approved. The rehearsal schedule is subject to change based on the needs of the program. Members are expected to be flexible if the schedule changes. If a member is going to be late or miss rehearsal then that member should contact a staff member.
- Members are expected to be respectful to one another and to the staff.
- Any issue not related to Southeast Visual Ensemble is to be left out of rehearsal.
- Members are expected to return promptly from break/meals and not interrupt the flow of rehearsal.
- Members should not speak or spin while a staff member is addressing the group.
- Members are expected to wear black form-fitting clothing that exposes the wrists and ankles. Members with long hair should have their hair pulled out of their face.
- Members are expected to bring all equipment to all rehearsals. Color guard requires equipment so showing up without it defeats the purpose.
- Members are expected to express any concerns or complaints to the staff in a constructive manner without disrupting rehearsal and if at all possible should be kept until after rehearsal. Any form of disrespect toward a staff member will not be tolerated.
- Deviation from these rules can result in a member being asked to leave rehearsal.

Shows/Performances/Travel

- All members are required to report on time when the guard is travelling. The ensemble will carpool and travel as a group to all local shows. After the show is over members are free to travel home at their leisure.
- Transportation to contests that are over 100 miles away will be provided by Southeast Visual Ensemble. When carpooling to local shows, it is a common courtesy for each member to share the fuel cost. The driver of each vehicle will calculate in advance the amount of fuel that is needed for the trip.
- Members are expected to be completely prepared when attending a show. This includes bringing all equipment, makeup, hair products, and costumes.
- Members are expected to learn the hair and makeup design so that each member can get his/herself ready for the show. It takes a lot of time for one or two people to be responsible for doing everyone's hair and makeup, and staff members often have other responsibilities to attend to prior to a show.
- When the guard travels the members are expected to wear presentable attire. No member is allowed to ride on a trip in costume. In clearer terms, please do not travel with the guard looking like a bum.
- Members are expected to be respectful to other guards and to keep any negative comments to themselves. You never know who is listening. Part of how the program recruits new members is by the members carrying themselves well at shows.
- Any disagreements between Southeast Visual Ensemble members at a show should be taken aside and discussed quietly. Any noticeable inter-guard tension at a show is unprofessional and unacceptable.
- During retreat all members are expected to be gracious and accept placement with class and respect. Any misbehavior during a retreat is unacceptable.

Actions Outside of Rehearsals

- What happens at rehearsals is the business of Southeast Visual Ensemble staff/members only. At no time is a member to discuss show concept, music, costume/flag design, or choreography with anyone outside of the ensemble. The program does require every member to sign a privacy agreement. Any breach of this policy is grounds for the member to be dismissed from the program.
- Members are expected to practice throughout the week. Coming to rehearsals unprepared will not be tolerated.
- Throughout the week members should:
 - Listen to the show music several times.
 - Run through show parts. Don't practice until you get it right, practice until you can't get it wrong!
 - Do some sort of physical training so that you are not exhausted after one run.
 - Participate in any fundraisers that may be occurring at the time.
 - Obtain supplies required for rehearsals/shows, as needed.

Online Media

- The posting of information pertaining to Southeast Visual Ensemble, its staff, members, show concept and design is expressly forbidden without the consent of the Executive Director. Members are expected to be responsible with any comments or info posted online. Remember that once it is posted online, it is out there forever.

Member Contracts, Dues, and Documents

- Contracts: Every member is required to sign a membership contract, which contains several consents that the individual members should read and consider before signing.
- Dues: The amount each member is expected to pay is clearly outlined at the beginning of every season. Each member is expected to pay dues on time as outlined by the payment schedule. Each member will also be required to participate in mandatory fundraising based on the needs of the program. Any member not paying dues or participating in fundraising may be dismissed from the program.
- Documents: With IA/IO classes having an age-out rule, each member is required to provide either a copy of birth certificate or driver's license as age verification.

It is imperative that all contracts and documents be completed and returned to the Executive Director at the beginning of the season. Dues must be paid in order for the program to operate. **Paying dues late can result in necessary supplies not being purchased, which means the guard may be without equipment, costumes, floor, etc.**

Fundraising Responsibilities

Southeast Visual Ensemble is an independent organization which runs on a very strict budget. With the organization not being associated with an educational institution there is no funding for the program beyond the dues paid by members, and funds collected through donations or fundraisers. Therefore, the efforts of the members in regard to fundraising are crucial to the survival of the program. As mentioned in the handbook section in regard to dues, each member is required to pay the amount of dues outlined at the beginning of the season. Each member is given the opportunity to raise money through fundraisers. Each fundraiser provided will be given a minimum quota that each member is required to meet. If a member has paid his/her dues in full then that member is still required to meet fundraising quotas. Any funds raised above membership dues is placed in the general budget, and will be used to pay for rehearsal facilities, travel costs, supplies, and general costs of running the program. **Funding an independent program cannot be done by the efforts of the staff alone. Members are expected to play an active role in raising the funds necessary to run the program.**

Equipment and Costumes

Southeast Visual Ensemble provides the members with all necessary equipment such as sabres, rifles, silks/poles, and stoppers/weights. None of this equipment is the property of the individual members and is expected to be returned, in good condition, at the end of the season. If a member quits or is dismissed then that member is responsible for being sure that all equipment is returned. If any equipment is not returned then the member holding that equipment will receive an invoice for funds to replace the equipment. This statement includes costumes. The director may decide to allow members to keep costumes at the end of the season, but until that determination is made the members should assume the costumes must be returned.

Leadership Positions

Southeast Visual Ensemble typically has two captains every year. These captains are chosen by the staff based primarily on leadership quality, skill/talent level, and seniority. These captains may be called upon to run sectionals, full rehearsal, transport equipment, oversee general guard operations, and provide additional assistance to members in need of such help. When the staff members are not present then the captains are expected to maintain order. It is expected that members treat the captains with respect just as they would a staff member and captains will give respect in return.

Integrity

Integrity: A firm adherence to a code of especially moral or artistic values.

Synonyms: Honesty, character, morality, virtuousness .

Each member of Southeast Visual Ensemble is expected to act with the utmost integrity. Dishonesty of any kind between a member and the staff for any reason will not be tolerated. This program wants members who actually care about the program. Lying and deceit are not qualities of an Southeast Visual Ensemble member. Any member caught being dishonest with the staff is subject to immediate dismissal.

Member Supply List

There are a number of personal supplies each member will need for the season that are not covered in each member's dues. This is a list of such items. Keep in mind this list is general and may not be all inclusive.

- Proper under garments and/or body tights.
- Make-up.
- Hair accessories or products.
- Black rehearsal clothing – This will also be worn for the first few performances so be sure it is presentable.
- A notebook of some kind to make notes on counts, staging, show changes, etc.

General thoughts for the year

Winterguard is a fun and creative activity in which not a very large group of people get to participate. In this activity a member learns talents not developed anywhere else and builds lifetime friendships. However, it is not all fun. Winterguard is a competitive activity and groups are scored and given placements. Southeast Visual Ensemble is an up and coming group in WGI and is looking forward to participating in WGI Regionals and World Championships. This takes an incredible amount of time and dedication from members and staff alike. It requires everyone working together to create a product that can gain superior ratings at competitions. For anyone who has never felt the thrill of performing in front a large crowd and bringing that crowd screaming to its feet, it is hard to imagine that feeling. It is a feeling of absolute accomplishment and validation of the time and money committed to that show. This is the type of feeling that the staff at Southeast Visual Ensemble wants for its members and we pledge to work as hard as possible to create a show that can achieve this goal.