

University of Chicago A Cappella Auditions Rules & Procedures Handbook

Last Updated: 10/4/2014

To Auditionees: These rules and procedures exist to make sure you are treated fairly throughout the auditions process and are primarily intended for current members of UChicago a cappella groups (i.e. you don't need to worry about adhering to them). However, we want to make this information available to you so that you know what to expect during the auditions process, and know what interactions with current members are and are not allowed. If you ever feel that you have been treated unfairly, please refer to these rules and procedures, and if you feel a violation has occurred, contact acacouncil@uchicagoacappella.org immediately. Good luck and we can't wait to welcome you into our family!

Definitions:

- AcaMatch: A matching algorithm that assigns auditionees as new members to groups. Put simply, auditionees will be "matched" with the group that they would most like to join that also accepted them.
- Arbitration: A meeting held on Saturday after 1st week where representatives from every group convene to run the AcaMatch system.
- Group: A member group of The University of Chicago A Cappella Council and all of its individual members.
- The Showcase: A concert held on Monday night of 1st week featuring all member groups of the A Cappella Council.

Rules:

1. At no point between the beginning of O-Week and the conclusion of Arbitration is a member of a group allowed to discuss *other* groups in any way. While it is perfectly fine for members to tell auditionees all about the great reasons to join their group, those reasons must not include any sort of implied or explicit comparison between groups. If an auditionee pressures a member of a group to discuss other groups, the most appropriate response is to explain this rule, say that every group has its own priorities, personality, and style (most of which will make itself apparent during the auditions process), and if people still want more information, they can do independent research to find out more (ask people not in a group, search online, etc.).
 2. Members of a group must not contact their auditionees after their callback ends unless the auditionee initiates the communication. If the auditionee initiates contact, discussion about the actual audition/callback (results or otherwise) is prohibited.
 3. All information revealed in Arbitration about which groups would or would not have accepted an auditionee must remain confidential.
 4. Upon the conclusion of Arbitration, groups are free to welcome their new members whenever and however they like. A group may also contact auditionees that were not placed into their group after 10 PM to allow the group into which they were assigned the opportunity to make first contact. Exception: Auditionees that were not placed into any group may be contacted after 5 PM.
- Violations should be reported to acacouncil@uchicagoacappella.org and will be handled on a case-by-case basis by the A Cappella Council. A group found to be in violation may be penalized in one or more of the following ways to be determined by the A Cappella Council: a warning, reassignment of any affected auditionee to another group (only if desired by the auditionee), revocation of privileges to use the sound system, and exclusion from future events coordinated by the A Cappella Council (e.g. The Showcase concert, AcaMatch/Arbitration, etc).

The Auditions Process:

- O-Week: Welcome back to campus!
 - Thursday or Friday: The RSO Open House. The A Cappella Council will coordinate reserving a time and place on behalf of each group so that prospective auditionees can meet all the groups at once. Additionally, The RSO Open House is typically when groups will start accepting sign-ups for audition timeslots.
- 1st Week:
 - Monday: The Showcase Concert. Each group performs 2 songs. Audition sign-ups continue.
 - Tuesday & Wednesday: First round auditions.
 - Thursday @ 2 AM: The deadline for all groups to e-mail their callbacks list to the A Cappella Council listhost.
 - Thursday & Friday: Callbacks. At some point during each callback, each group should briefly explain the AcaMatch system (consider summarizing the description below and directing them to this document for more information).
 - Saturday: Arbitration followed by celebration!

The AcaMatch System:

- This system was designed to maximize happiness and minimize conflict and hurt feelings throughout the auditions process. The algorithm used during Arbitration is described in detail below, but in essence, the system “matches” auditionees with their highest-ranked group that accepted them.
- Before callbacks begin, each auditionee with at least 1 callback will receive an e-mail with a link to a ranking form. This form will allow the auditionee to indicate which group(s) they would like to join in order from their first to last choice. If an auditionee does not want to join one or more groups under any circumstance, those groups should not be ranked at all. Auditionees are free to change their ranklist until the scheduled start of the Arbitration meeting, after which their ranklist will be locked.
- If an auditionee wants to join more than one group, that preference should be indicated in the comments field of the ranking form. However, some groups are unwilling to have members in more than one group for logistical reasons and will communicate this during their callback. It is critically important for auditionees considering being in multiple groups to have this information, since it could lead to the ONLY possible circumstance in which they could be accepted by their first choice group, but not be matched with it. Specifically, the scenario in which an auditionee indicates a preference for joining two groups, is accepted into both, but the higher-ranked of the two does is unwilling to have members in more than one group would result in the unwilling higher-ranked acceptance being withdrawn, leaving the auditionee matched ONLY to the lower ranked group of the combination (i.e. almost certainly not the auditionee’s actual preference).
- An auditionee that is successfully matched with a group will be considered a member of that group immediately following the conclusion of Arbitration, and will be contacted by that group directly on Saturday.

Arbitration:

- A maximum of 5 representatives from each group will meet to use the following algorithm to match auditionees with groups. It is highly encouraged for each group to send at least one musical leader and one A Cappella Council representative.
- A Google spreadsheet (“Audition Arbitration Meetings”) will be used to work through the process and maintain the official lists for each group (described below). The spreadsheet has been shared with every group’s Google account to allow everyone to view it during Arbitration. Only the A Cappella Council google account will have permissions to modify the spreadsheet. Prior to the start of Arbitration, a new sheet should be added to the spreadsheet for the current year.

- Every group will have two lists, "confirmed" and "tentative". There will be also be a single "unlisted" list which will contain all auditionees not present on either of any group's list. At the start of Arbitration, the "unlisted" list will contain all auditionees, and all groups' lists will be empty.
- Every group is entitled to two 2-minute "timeouts", which may be used at any time.
- The following process will be repeated, alternating between genders (initial gender can be chosen randomly):
 - In alphabetical order by group name, each group who still wishes to take people of that gender states their top choice amongst those who have yet to be added to either list of any group.
 - Starting with the auditionee named most frequently and working down to the auditionee named the least (if ties occur, order doesn't matter), the following will happen:
 - The A Cappella Council president will ask all groups that called back that auditionee if they would like to accept them into their group. All groups that called back that person must reply "yes", "no", or "maybe."
 - The auditionee's ranklist is opened and viewed only by the president of the A Cappella Council and the next-highest ranking officer who is not in a group with the president (for verification). From the moment the sheet is viewed by the two officers, until the the person is placed in a list and all objections have been resolved, neither officer may communicate with his or her own group in any way (this is important only when the auditionee wants to join more than one group and there may be objections).
 - If all groups say "no" but one, and that group is ranked, the auditionee is automatically added to that group's confirmed (if "yes") or tentative (if "maybe") list, otherwise the following occurs:
 - Skip to the highest ranked group that said "yes" or "maybe".
 - If that group said "yes", the auditionee is added to the confirmed list of that group.
 - If that group said "maybe", the auditionee is added to the tentative list of that group.
 - If all groups that said "yes" or "maybe" were not ranked, the auditionee is returned to the unlisted list.
 - If the highest-ranked group is included in one or more multiple-group combinations indicated in the comments field, skip to the combination where the highest-ranked other group in the combination said "yes" or "maybe", and add the auditionee to the second groups list (confirmed if "yes", tentative if "maybe"). If more than two groups are included in one or more combinations, do the same for the additional groups.
 - In the event that one or more groups included in a multiple-group combination finds the combination unacceptable, they may object, resulting in the following:
 - If the objecting group is the highest-ranked group of the combination and the auditionee has indicated that their individual rankings take priority over their combinations, the auditionee is removed from the confirmed and tentative lists of all other groups but the highest ranking group. Otherwise, the auditionee will be removed from the confirmed/tentative list of the objecting group.
 - If any group listed in the combination feels that there is ambiguity in the auditionee's wishes, they may request that Arbitration is paused and the auditionee is called by someone who is not a member of any group listed in the combination to clarify.
 - If the auditionee cannot be contacted, the auditionee will be added to each listed group's confirmed/tentative list, and the conflict will

be resolved after Arbitration.

- A time out may be used to determine if a group will object, but the two officers who have seen the ranklist may not initiate the objection, time out, or participate in this discussion in any way, even if they represent a group considering an objection.
- At this point, any group may request to do one of the following:
 - Move auditionees from their tentative list to their confirmed list.
 - Remove auditionees from their tentative list, returning them to the unlisted list and making them eligible to be named by a group in the next round of the appropriate gender.
- The process will be complete when every group's tentative list is empty, and either no groups have auditionees left they would like to take or the unlisted list is empty.
- Groups are encouraged to be considerate to other groups by removing auditionees from their tentative list (either to their confirmed list or back to the unlisted list) as soon as they have enough information to make a decision.
- The A Cappella Council president will delete all ranking data from the database one week after Arbitration.