Thank you for your interest in being a part of the Georgia Southern Drumline! We look forward to seeing you showcase your talents and strengths you may bring to our ensemble. We stress that you read and understand the material provided below as it describes our technical approach. We strive to have a strong and educational audition process that will not only benefit us as an ensemble but you as a musician.

**AUDITION TIPS**

- The success of your performance at the audition will be directly related to the level of preparation of the audition material.
- Drum in a mirror when you practice and record yourself with some type of electronic device. Listen critically to the recording and work to perfect your performance.
- Always use a metronome, or music with a steady tempo when practicing. Be able to mark time to all material.
- Keep in mind that you are auditioning at all times. Be professional!
- Be sure to ask questions if you are confused about anything you are being asked.
- Prepare yourself to be involved in a tedious and competitive process. Your ability to stay mentally engaged in the process throughout the audition will be crucial.
- Strive to give off a sense of confidence in your audition. Everything is a performance. Convince us you are comfortable with what you’re doing.
- Be open to comments or suggestions given to you by our staff or section leaders and try to apply the information given to you throughout the day.
- Have fun! While this will be a competitive environment, we’re all here because we love to drum, don’t forget to enjoy the process.
GENERAL APPROACH

You should feel 100% relaxed and comfortable from your shoulders to your fingertips. The fewer muscles you engaged, the better your sound will be. Strive to achieve a full, warm sound at every dynamic level. Forte and piano won’t sound the same but the goal is to feel as similar as possible and play with the fullest, warmest sound. Be sure to breathe at all times while playing, this will help to keep yourself relaxed while playing more challenging literature. Always feel a soft touch in your hands. The stick should feel heavy and your grip never tight or squeezing the stick.

Grip:

Our grip is of course a common concept. Our entire hand will be wrapped around the stick and should remain as relaxed as possible. Squeezing the stick will produce a tenser, harsher sound as well as work against the natural rebound of the drums. Drum heads provide incredible amounts of rebound, our hands are only there to control the amount of rebound the stick will endure. For upper battery, our fulcrum will be the meeting point of our thumb and our middle finger, allowing for a more open, warm sound and keeping our back fingers on the stick more. The index finger will still be used for stopping the stick and faster, denser writing but we want to feel most of the weight in the back of our hands. For basses, the fulcrum will be a combination of the index finger and the thumb. Our main goal is to keep all of our fingers on the stick to provide us with the most control and weight possible.

Stroke:

Everything will be wrist/bead led. Meaning the wrist muscles are the primary contributor to our motion. It should be a hinge motion, much like knocking on a door, or turning a doorknob for basses and snare’s left hand. No matter what the dynamic level is, every motion will be imitated by turning the wrist first, but because of how relaxed we are, the arm will more naturally in result. Allow the stroke to be efficient as possible, minimize extra human interference.

Legato/Full Stroke:

- Think “8 on a hand”
- Sticks start and stop at the same point, letting the stick bounce back naturally
- Goal is to allow the rebound to do the work. Throw the stick down, DON’T lift it up
• Rebound should be the same speed as the initial movement (don’t stop it!)
• Grip will open a bit to allow for rebound inside your hand at higher heights

**Marcato/Down Strokes:**

• Think “tap accents”
• Should sound the same as full strokes, and feel the same prior to hitting the drum
• Once contact is made with the drum, the difference between full and down strokes is the stopping of the wrist motion, which prevents the stick from rebounding to the initial height
• Hand should feel like dead weight after bead strikes the head. Heaviness of the hands helps stop the stick in a warm manner
• Avoid squeezing the fingers to stop the motion

**Taps:**

• Taps will be played primarily with a wrist stroke.
• Taps are neither truly a “full” or “down” stroke. They will rebound, and like a full stroke, they will be played by only initiating downward and not pulling back up. The rebound, however, will not have the same velocity as a “full stroke”. To remain fluid, and not have awkward pauses at the top of our strokes, taps will be played slightly more “into the drum”
• The grip is slightly more “closed” than the “openness” felt at higher heights for full strokes. The hand must stay relaxed and heavy without being tense to ensure a controlled rebound and quality sound.
• Avoid trying to involve too much arm in attempts to get more sound out of your taps. The more arm used at the low end, the punchier the sound will be.

**Dynamics:**

We use a dynamic system that correlates to specific heights---this makes it easier to define, as well as balance and blend our sounds. We strive to have a consistent approach to the drum regardless of heights/dynamics. In general, consistency of heights dictate volume, however the music is the ultimate factor in defining volume (there will be situations in which players are asked to play a phrase stronger or lighter than normal for musical expression). Additional arm is added above 15”. The sticks will never travel past vertical but will be higher in the air because of the arm extension above 15”.
Approximate Heights:

- pp 1” (For incredibly soft passages, played from resting playing position)
- p 3” (Taps and grace notes, sticks parallel with the ground)
- mp 6” (Back of hand about parallel with the ground, sticks ~22.5°)
- mf 9” (Sticks ~45° from ground)
- f 12” (As far as wrist can comfortably turn without arm, sticks ~67.5°)
- ff 15” (Sticks vertical, start to “use” arm)
- fff Huge” (Sticks vertical, add additional arm for visual effect)

**How You Should Feel While Drumming**

- Relaxed
- Confident. Give the vibe that you deserve the spot you are auditioning for and will be a good fit for the line.
- Don’t aim to play “hard.” Play warm, resonant, and a quality sound will come
- Let the sticks feel “heavy” inside your hands---let the weight do the work
- Chops are important, but they mean nothing without a relaxed approach, a solid pocket, good control, and sound quality
- Learning to breathe naturally while playing anything regardless of difficulty will result in a more relaxed, healthy sound and approach
- Listen to what you are playing and self-diagnose yourself in order to correct issues
- Most importantly remember to enjoy yourself. None of us would do this activity if we didn’t find joy in it. Trust the process and information given and have fun with it!
Texas RollHouse

Cinnamon butter is a must

Score

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Snare

Tenor

Bass

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Snareline

Taparollaflamabuga

GSU Drumline 2013

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Taparollaflamabuga
Tenorline

Taparollaflamabuga

GSU Drumline 2013

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