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thers start shouting aren't included in nal category of clas- ans. But Ham knows r this debate isn't im-

says 'Classical,' and is stressed," he ex- re really haven't sat e the limits. le bit of jazz is OK."

## s Sunday

The band is mostly men, Allen said. They have two women saxophone players. Along with them, the band has trumpets, bass guitar, keyboard, a flute, trombones, and drums, Allen said. The band could use one more trombone, he said.

Anyone can join the band, Allen said. Normally auditions are not necessary. Those that come but "can't cut it" usually back out on their own, he said.

Some members will be leaving the group after this concert and there are even more people wanting to get in, Allen said, so auditions might have to be held.

There is a constant changing of people in the band, especially at the beginning of each semester, he said. This limits their progress too because the group is re-learning its music each time.

Their repertoire consists of about half jazz and half jazzy arrangements of popular tunes, he said.

For their concert on Saturday the band has worked up about 16 numbers, Allen said. Among them will be tunes like "Never on a Sunday," "Saturday in the Park," by Chicago, Glenn Miller's "In the Mood," and "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy." They're trying to bring something for everybody, Allen said.

Normally they don't reach their full ability until three or four weeks before the end of the semester, he said, but the concert is forcing them to work harder to be ready earlier.

Some of the members, he said, wonder if they're good enough to charge a dollar for a concert, but, "I think we're as good as any music group here on campus."



Members of the Texas A&M University Symphonic Band practice in the Adams Band Building. The band, under the direction of Maj. Joe K. McMullen, practices on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Photo courtesy of John O'Keefe.

# 'Other' campus band open to all interested students

By Frank L. Christlieb

Battalion Reporter

The Texas A&M University Symphonic Band is the "other" band at Texas A&M, open to students who enjoy playing and performing in a musical group.

The "other" band is not connected to the Aggie Band in any way, although members of the Aggie Band may also participate in it.

The Texas A&M Symphonic Band, under the direction of Maj. Joe K. McMullen, is a non-academic credit musical organization which meets in the Adams Band Building Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:30 p.m. to 1:45 p.m. Since its formation in 1974, the band has used these two, and only two, rehearsals each week to perfect the music it performs at different concerts during the year.

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"There are no grades, no discipline problems — it's just an enjoyment, and that is the ultimate in music — just to enjoy," McMullen said.

There are currently 69 people in the band, and McMullen said he likes to keep the number of musicians around 70 because it makes for a "better symphonic, compact sound — it's not too thick."

He said the quality of musicianship in the band is high; about half of the members were in all-area or all-state bands in high school.

The band's music ranges from Broadway showtunes to classical symphonies, from

military marches to contemporary pop. The band usually performs on campus each De-

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cember as well as each spring, and also takes an off-campus trip each spring to perform.

Over the past few years, the band has performed at the Superdome in New Orleans, and in Corpus Christi, Kingsville, Houston, Pasadena, Dallas and Fort Worth.

McMullen said the band has a limited performance schedule because its activities cannot interfere with academics. Two rehearsals a week go by quickly, he said, but they give the band enough time to work up the music it performs.

"We perform enough that it makes it interesting and challenging and we play challenging enough material that it keeps the interest going," McMullen said.

Each year band members elect officers who are responsible for formulating attendance policies, which currently allow for two unexcused absences before action is taken. If a member is absent more than twice during a semester, he is taken out of the band.

"The officers are a tremendous benefit — they're kind of like a board of directors," McMullen said.

Band President John O'Keefe said he and the other officers are trying to bring band members closer together by organizing such activities as banquets, parties and fund-raising projects.

O'Keefe said, "Little things like these help to make the band a good, tight group,

but it takes a lot of time to become a closely-knit family."

Auditions for the band are held at the start of each fall semester. Students who are interested are given a piece of music to practice for about two weeks before auditioning.

"I'll issue a page of characteristic literature which is usually something that we're going to play during the year," McMullen said.

He said his system of chair placement in the band is one in which the better players are not necessarily at the top of each instrumental section. Instead, the more talented players are spread throughout the different parts of each section so that the band has a better overall balance and the lower parts can be heard.

McMullen said after he has heard all student auditions, interested faculty members are invited to "sit in" during rehearsals. He said he will not hear faculty auditions because he does not want any student to feel that he has been "deprived of a chair by a faculty audition."

However, he said, "Once they sit in, they must perform with us. In other words, they can't just come over and enjoy a rehearsal."

In April the band will perform on a tour through Waco, Round Rock, Killeen and

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San Antonio. The band also plans to give an informal concert in front of Rudder Tower late in April.