Press Kit

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History of the Sound of Class

The Marching Sound of Class numbers 150 members, which includes instrumentalists and auxiliary units. Members represent a variety of majors at the university, and come from various parts of North Carolina and other eastern U.S. states.

The band program has been an integral part of the Music Department at Elizabeth City State University since its inception. The first band was organized under the presidency of Dr. John H. Bias in the 1930s, and was led by Mr. James Clark, a Biology teacher at ECSU (then named the State Normal School), who was also well-known as a band director in the Tidewater area of Virginia. The first band uniforms were made by his wife.

The school was without a program for a while when Mr. Clark left to go to Booker T. Washington High School in Norfolk. In 1948 Mr. Leon Prather, a History teacher, took over the job and reorganized the band program, serving on a part-time basis.

Ms. Ester Marie Cooke, a native of Atlanta, Georgia, became the first full-time Band Director at ECSU in 1959. She was later succeeded by Mr. Donnell Cooper, former director at P.W. Moore High School in Elizabeth City, and then by Mr. William H. Ryder. Under Mr. Ryder’s leadership (1960-1965), the band increased in size and continued to extend the level of its performance literature as the institution added other curricula, which included a Music Education Major. During this time, the band made its first appearance at an Inaugural Parade for the Governor of North Carolina. The band continued to struggle to acquire additional instruments and uniforms.

In September 1965, Mr. Ryder left to pursue his doctoral studies at the University of Michigan, and was succeeded by Mr. David W. Williams. Dr. Edna L. Davis became the new Department Chairperson, and through her support and the leadership of Mr. Williams the “Marching Vikings” grew in size from 45 members in 1965 to 100 members in 1968. New uniforms were purchased for the band in 1967 with the help of Student Activity Funds. The award of a Federal Grant that same year enabled the college to secure many of the larger, more expensive instruments, and some of the less commonly used instruments needed for balance and tone quality in marching and concert situations. The band continued to grow, and increased to 126 members, consisting of students of various majors representing all departments of the University. Through Mr. Williams’ tireless efforts, the Band extended its performance realm to include more parades and spectacular Halftime shows, including first-time performances in 1969 at professional football games.

In 1971, Mr. Floyd L. Robinson (later Dr. Robinson) took over as Director of Bands, and under his leadership, the Marching Vikings increased its membership to 130. His goal was to have a marching band of 150 members, and that goal was achieved in 1978. In addition to increasing the size and quality of the marching band, Dr. Robinson also sought to improve the quality of the concert band. He put strong emphasis on recruiting outstanding musicians to the University. The Concert Band has toured throughout the East Coast, exemplifying its superior musicianship to various audiences in South Carolina, Georgia, Washington, D.C., Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina, and New York. The Marching Band also traveled throughout the East and South, from New York to New Orleans, and had several of their performances broadcast on National Television.

The Band program has made tremendous strides over the years, and has continued to strive for excellence in marching and musicianship. Today the band is under the leadership of Mrs. Tomisha L. Brock, who took the helm in December, 2011, and now leads the 150 member Marching Sound of Class, the Viking Pep Band, Concert Band, and Symphonic Wind Ensemble.
## Performance Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 22, 2015</td>
<td>1:00 p.m. EST</td>
<td>Back to School Celebration</td>
<td>N'Telos Pavilion, Portsmouth, VA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 29, 2015</td>
<td>7:00 p.m. EST</td>
<td>Queen City Battle of the Bands</td>
<td>Memorial Stadium, Charlotte, NC</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 5, 2015</td>
<td>6:00 p.m. EST</td>
<td>Football Game vs. Virginia University at Lynchburg</td>
<td>Roebuck Stadium Elizabeth City, NC</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 12, 2015</td>
<td>6:00 p.m. EST</td>
<td>Football Game vs. Benedict College</td>
<td>Charlie W. Johnson Stadium, Columbia, SC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 19, 2015</td>
<td>1:00 p.m. EST</td>
<td>Football Game vs. Saint Augustine’s University</td>
<td>Raleigh, NC</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 19, 2015</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>Exhibition Performance @ Greensville County High School HS Band Competition</td>
<td>Greensville County High School Emporia, VA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 20, 2015</td>
<td>4:00 p.m. EST</td>
<td>VA/NC Battle of the Bands</td>
<td>Virginia Union University-Hovey Field Richmond, VA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 26, 2015</td>
<td>4:00 p.m. EST</td>
<td>Down East Viking Football Classic vs. Winston-Salem State University</td>
<td>Municipal Stadium Rocky Mount, NC</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 3, 2015</td>
<td>1:00 p.m. EST</td>
<td>Football Game vs. Livingstone College</td>
<td>Alumni Memorial Stadium Salisbury, NC</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 10, 2015</td>
<td>1:00 p.m. EST</td>
<td>Football Game vs. Virginia State University</td>
<td>Roebuck Stadium Elizabeth City, NC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 17, 2015</td>
<td>1:30 p.m. EST</td>
<td>Homecoming vs. Lincoln University (PA)</td>
<td>Roebuck Stadium Elizabeth City, NC</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 18, 2015</td>
<td>3:00 p.m. EST</td>
<td>Adrian Carroll Battle of the Bands</td>
<td>Durham, NC</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 24, 2015</td>
<td>1:00 p.m. EST</td>
<td>ECSU SOC Band Fest</td>
<td>Roebuck Stadium Elizabeth City, NC</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 31, 2015</td>
<td>1:00 p.m. EST</td>
<td>Football Game vs. Virginia Union University</td>
<td>Hovey Field Richmond, VA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 7, 2015</td>
<td>1:00 p.m. EST</td>
<td>Football Game vs. Bowie State University</td>
<td>Roebuck Stadium Elizabeth City, NC</td>
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