

**BIO: Walter B. Birkedahl**  
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Walt Birkedahl is Division Dean for Fine and Performing Arts at Ohlone College, a California bay area community college serving the cities of Fremont and Newark. The division includes academic programs in art, interior design, graphic arts, broadcasting, dance, music, radio and television, speech, and theatre. The college's award-winning Smith Center for the Fine and Performing Arts houses instructional programs and sponsors student, community, and professional performances and exhibits.

Walt was assistant director of the School of Music at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. He coordinated scholarships, recruitment, admissions, taught string bass, conducted two evening orchestras, and was division coordinator for strings. From 1989 to 1993 he was director of BYU's Young Musicians Summerfest, a week-long summer music conference for 300 high school students. He is a past president of the Utah Chapter of the American String Teachers Association. Before coming to Utah he was a member of The U.S. Army Band in Washington, DC, where he performed monthly for White House State Dinners during the Carter and Reagan administrations. He also worked as project director for Music Performance Trust Funds in the Washington, DC area.

He holds two master's degrees; one in music from Catholic University of America (Washington, DC), the other, an MBA from George Mason University (Fairfax, Virginia). He received a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Texas at Austin. A bassist, his main teachers were Stuart Sankey and Homer Mensch.

Walt's professional career as a bassist includes both solo and ensemble playing. His 1983 Corcoran Gallery solo recital, sponsored by the Washington Friends of Handel, received a favorable review in The Washington Post. He was a frequent performer as principal bass for oratorios and operas at the Kennedy Center, Wolf Trap Farm Park for the Performing Arts, and the National Gallery of Art. He has performed with the National Symphony Orchestra (Washington, DC) and with the Baltimore, Richmond, San Antonio, Austin, and Utah Symphonies. In Utah he was principal bass for the Mormon Tabernacle Choir's recording of Handel's Messiah and for many film score and album recordings (including Sandlot, Gettysburg, Murder in the First, Jefferson in Paris, Picasso.. As a substitute member of the National Symphony Orchestra he recorded the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto with Isaac Stern (solo violin), conducted by Mstislav Rostropovitch.