DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

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VCU Music: Educating musicians to shape the stage, the classroom and the world

The Department of Music is committed to the advancement of Western art music and jazz as academic disciplines, as fields of professional endeavor and as significant expressions of culture. Entrance and graduation requirements comply with the National Association of Schools of Music guidelines. The department offers degree programs at the baccalaureate and master’s levels, and each of them is described in detail on individual program pages within the Bulletins website. Students in the VCU Music community are involved in a musically rich environment of studio lessons, small classes, independent study and performances. They hear outstanding professional performers in the classical and jazz traditions and attend on-campus master classes with major touring artists. Student soloists also may appear with regional and university ensembles. Through the Mary Anne Rennolds Chamber Concert Series and other events, the department is one of the region’s major sponsors of music performances. Approximately 250 students choose to major in music, with many other students from throughout the university taking courses and participating in ensembles. There are 26 full-time faculty, more than half of whom hold doctorates, in addition to 45 part-time instructors. Among the faculty are internationally recognized performers, composers, researchers and teachers – musician-educators who are active in all facets of the professional music world. The faculty includes members and regular performers with ensembles that include the Richmond and Virginia symphonies, the New York Philharmonic, the Virginia Opera, Rhythm and Brass, and the Atlantic Chamber Ensemble. The faculty maintains a high level of recognition through each individual’s publications, recordings, international performances and lectures. The department is housed in two buildings. The principal facility is the W.E. Singleton Center for the Performing Arts, which includes the 502-seat Sonia Vlahcevic Concert Hall, faculty offices, rehearsal rooms and special studios for organ, percussion and piano. The James W. Black Music Center has a 347-seat recital hall, classrooms, practice rooms, rehearsal spaces, faculty offices and studios.

Admission and auditions

An audition and interview are necessary for admission to programs in the Department of Music. Students must also meet the general admission requirements of the university. For audition information contact Virginia Commonwealth University, Department of Music, 922 Park Ave., Box 842004, Richmond, VA 23284-2004; phone (804) 828-1169 or email apply4music@vcu.edu.

Music education candidacy

In order to achieve candidacy, music education majors must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.8 and must demonstrate satisfactory completion of the Praxis I, ACT or SAT. Music education students who do not achieve candidacy will not be allowed to continue in the music education program, but may continue in one of the other music degree programs provided they meet the requirements.

Courses for non-majors

Students majoring in a field other than music are welcome and encouraged to register for ensembles, private lessons and a variety of classroom courses in music specifically designed for the non-music major. Some courses require an audition.

Grades and achievement levels

All music majors are required to maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.0 and pass at least one applied achievement level within any two-semester period (not including summers) in order to continue as music majors. Jazz studies majors must pass one applied achievement level of classical instrument study per two-semester period (not including summers) and at least one jazz applied music level within the first three semesters in order to maintain a jazz studies concentration. All music students also must pass MHIS 145-MHIS 146 by the end of the fourth semester. Any student who fails to meet or maintain these standards will not be allowed to continue as a music major. A student may audition for readmission into the department as a music major only with permission from the Department of Music.

A cumulative GPA of 2.8 is required for music education students to qualify for student teaching placement. Music education students who do not maintain a cumulative 2.8 GPA will not be allowed to continue in the music education track, but may continue in the Bachelor of Arts program or the Bachelor of Music performance track if they meet the minimum requirements that apply to those respective degree programs.

Electives in music

Students majoring in a field other than music may register for ensembles, private lessons and a variety of classroom courses in music. Classes in music appreciation, African-American music, introduction to writing music, basic music skills and special offerings in music are specifically designed for the non-music major.

Internship in music

Interested students should consult with a faculty member closely associated with the appropriate field. As the student approaches junior academic standing, he or she may apply to the department for participation in APPM 493. Applications will be reviewed on the basis of academic GPA, instructor recommendation(s), professional promise, and demonstrated interest and competence in the area of study. The student must possess a minimum 2.5 overall GPA with a minimum 3.0 GPA in major course work in music. All students (including transfers) must have completed a minimum of 60 credits.

All internships for credit are approved by the Department of Music. The experience may also be coordinated by VCU’s Cooperative Education/Internship Program. The latter office requires completion of an application and resume.

Fees

All students registering for applied lessons (APPL 200) pay an applied lesson fee. Current fee rates for applied lessons (https://accounting.vcu.edu/tuition/fees/) can be found on the Student Accounting website.

Recital/convocation attendance

All undergraduate majors are required to pass four semesters of recital/convocation attendance for graduation. During each semester of
enrollment, the student must attend a minimum number of concerts or recitals plus departmental convocations in order to pass the requirement.

**Master class**

This requirement consists of participation in weekly master classes in the student's applied major area. For students in the Bachelor of Music program, enrollment in master class is required for each semester that students enroll for a two-credit lesson on their principal performing instrument. A minimum of eight semesters in the performance concentration (jazz studies majors take four semesters classical and four semesters jazz) and six semesters for the music education concentration are required. Students in the Bachelor of Arts in Music program must also enroll in master class each semester they take a two-credit lesson until they complete a minimum of four semesters of master class on the same instrument.

**Ensemble requirements**

To ensure consistent skill development in ensemble settings, only one large ensemble credit per semester will be counted toward a student's large ensemble requirements. Students whose principal instrument is a band or orchestral instrument must satisfy the large ensemble requirement by performing in a large ensemble on that instrument. Students whose principal instrument is voice must satisfy the requirement by performing in a large choral ensemble on voice. Those whose principal instrument is piano must complete four of their six elective credits by playing the piano in ensembles. Jazz studies majors must have ensembles approved in advance by their adviser or program director. Bachelor of Arts students must earn six credits in either large or small ensembles.

- Music, Master of (M.M.) with a concentration in music education (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/school-arts/music/music-mm-concentration-music-education/)
- Applied music (APPM) (p. 2)
- Music education (MUED) (p. 2)
- Music history, literature and theory (MHIS) (p. 3)

**Applied music**

APPM 585. Opera Theatre. 2 Hours.
Semester course; 1 lecture and 4 studio hours. 2 credits. May be repeated up to four times for credit. Prerequisite: Permission of instructor. Explores aspects of opera through study, written research and fully staged public performances of operatic scenes and/or one-act operas.

**Music education**

MUED 583. Special Workshop in Music Education. 0.5-3 Hours.
Semester course; 0.5-3 credits. Flexible term courses on selected aspects of music education. See the Schedule of Classes for specific topics to be offered each semester.

MUED 591. Topics in Music Education. 1-3 Hours.
Semester course; variable hours. 1-3 credits. May be repeated for a maximum of 6 credits with different topics. Flexible semester courses in selected topics in music education philosophy, curriculum, integrated and interdisciplinary arts, technology and selected topics of current interest or needs relative to music education. See the Schedule of Classes for specific topics to be offered each semester.

MUED 600. Seminar in Music Education. 3 Hours.
Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. May be repeated up to two times with different topics. Investigation of contemporary issues and problems in music education. Students will present oral reports and written papers, which explore new directions and implications for music educators and music education programs.

MUED 604. Choral Conducting and Rehearsal Techniques. 3 Hours.
Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. This course will seek to develop the skills of the choral conductor in rehearsal and performance. Instruction in rehearsal technique and pacing, conducting technique and interpretive gesture, choral diction, score analysis and preparation, performance practices, and the affective/effective conductor will be applied to individual student performance at the podium.

MUED 606. Choral Literature and Style. 3 Hours.
Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. This course will provide the practicing choral musician with a survey of choral repertoire through the ages, highlighting various genres within each historical period. Emphasis will be placed on stylistic considerations and performance practices. Students will be engaged in determining the standards which define quality choral repertoire.

MUED 608. Teaching the Adolescent Singer. 3 Hours.
Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. In this course students will study psychological, behavioral and developmental aspects of the young singer. An in-depth look at the characteristics of the changing male and female voice will include research and conclude with observations of adolescent voices. The class will also cover range, registration and choral repertoire appropriate for the various stages of the adolescent singer.

MUED 610. Psychology of Music. 3 Hours.
Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Provides an introduction of the psychological foundations of music behavior. Topics will include functions of music in human society and culture, psychoacoustics of musical sound, cognitive processes of music perception and the creation/recreation of music, affective response, music learning theories and measurement of musical ability and learning.

MUED 614. Instrumental Conducting Techniques. 3 Hours.
Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Students in this class will discuss literature, score study strategies, rehearsal techniques and ensemble motivation issues. Conducting technique and rehearsal technique will be developed by hands-on experiences with a workshop band, as well as through guided discussions and classroom sessions. The goal is personal musical growth and enhanced podium effectiveness for each participant.

MUED 616. Researching the Wind Band: Strategies and Resources. 3 Hours.
Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. This class is designed to enable students to gain greater access to information relative to all aspects of the wind band. Students will become familiar with a wide variety of sources including written materials, Web-based materials, recordings, video and organizations. There will also be assignments to acquaint students with methods used in the various facets of wind band research.

MUED 618. History and Literature of the Wind Band. 3 Hours.
Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. In this class students will study the historical development of wind bands and wind band repertoire. The result of this study will be to enable students to evaluate new repertoire by comparison to masterworks and to be able to place pieces into a historical continuum. Studying the history of wind bands is necessary to understand the current state of the profession and how wind bands fit into the broader spectrum of music history.
MUED 620. Introduction to Research in Music Education. 3 Hours.
Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Development of fundamental skills necessary to understand and evaluate research in music education. Focuses on the basic principles, concepts and techniques of research methodology applied specifically to music education. Includes introduction to quantitative, qualitative, ethnographic and historical methodology.

MUED 676. School Music Supervision and Administration. 2 Hours.
Semester course; 2 lecture hours. 2 credits. The study of the organization, curriculum, course content, administration, and personnel problems in public school music.

MUED 783. Final Project in Music Education. 1 Hour.
Semester course; 1 laboratory hour. 1 credit. May be repeated for a total of 5 credits. The final project is an intensive experience in identifying and developing a topic of interest and value to the student and the profession, and the final presentation of that topic. This course is part of the culminating process for the music education track in the Master of Music program. As an individualized project/course, the faculty chair provides initial approval and gauges progress toward completion of the final project. It is the responsibility of the student to maintain consistent communication with their chair throughout the semester to ensure adequate progress is being made. Completion is determined by the final approval of the faculty chair and committee (if applicable). Completion of the final project is not determined by total number of credits earned in the course. Graded as S/U/F.

MUED 799. Thesis. 1-3 Hours.
Semester course; 1-3 credits. May be repeated. Prerequisite: Permission of the music education coordinator. Preparation of a thesis based on independent research.

Musis history, literature and theory

MHIS 591. Topics in Music. 1-3 Hours.
Semester course; variable hours. 1-3 credits. May be repeated for a maximum of 9 credits. Flexible term courses in selected aspects of music performance, theory, literature, or history. See the Schedule of Classes for specific topics to be offered each semester.

MHIS 592. Individual Project. 1-6 Hours.
Semester courses; 1-6 credits. Prerequisites: permission of supervising faculty member, adviser and department chair. Open only to degree-seeking graduate students in music. Individual work in an area not otherwise available to the student.