HENRY AND LEIGH BIENEN SCHOOL OF MUSIC

music.northwestern.edu

Overview

One of the oldest degree-granting music institutions in the United States, Northwestern University’s Henry and Leigh Bienen School of Music combines a nationally ranked music program of conservatory-level intensity with the academic rigor and scholarly resources found only at a world-class private research university. Entering first-year undergraduates show the highest level of achievement in music as well as academics. The school believes that by carefully developing outstanding musicianship and keen intelligence, while nurturing a curiosity about the world, we can best encourage the emergence of each student’s unique creative voice.

Key to all performance majors is intensive one-on-one training with a celebrated faculty that includes members of the Chicago Symphony and Lyric Opera of Chicago Orchestras, internationally acclaimed soloists, sought-after conductors, and distinguished scholars and clinicians. Students work in small classes with these dedicated teachers and artists in a curriculum that comprises music history and theory, aural and piano skills, instrumental and voice lessons, and advanced electives. Special programs include a five-year dual-degree curriculum—enabling students to earn a degree in music as well as one in communication, education and social policy, engineering, journalism, or arts and sciences—and the ad hoc (self-designed) major. Additionally, the world-class music making and other cultural resources of downtown Chicago provide exceptional opportunities for learning outside the classroom.

Facilities

The Bienen School of Music occupies three lakefront buildings. The Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Center for the Musical Arts houses the 400-seat Mary B. Galvin Recital Hall, the 150-seat David and Carol McClintock Choral and Recital Room, and the 150-seat Shirley Welsh Ryan Opera Theater as well as administrative and faculty offices, teaching studios, classrooms, and practice rooms. The building connects with Regenstein Hall, which houses the 200-seat Regenstein Masterclass Room, the Office of Bands, rehearsal facilities, faculty studios, and practice rooms. The 1,000-seat Pick-Staiger Concert Hall houses rehearsal facilities and the Concert Management Office.

Musical Organizations

As a part of their program of study, music majors are required to work in small classes with these dedicated teachers and artists in a curriculum that comprises music history and theory, aural and piano skills, instrumental and voice lessons, and advanced electives. Special programs include a five-year dual-degree curriculum—enabling students to earn a degree in music as well as one in communication, education and social policy, engineering, journalism, or arts and sciences—and the ad hoc (self-designed) major. Additionally, the world-class music making and other cultural resources of downtown Chicago provide exceptional opportunities for learning outside the classroom.

Music Library

Among the nation’s largest music libraries, the Northwestern University Music Library supports all areas of musical study with a broad collection of books, scores, sound recordings, periodicals, and online resources. The facility, located in historic Deering Library, offers a reading room rich in reference materials, a music listening center, and a computer lab equipped with specialized music hardware and software. The Music Library is also distinguished internationally for its extensive collection of contemporary music, which includes one copy of nearly every score published since 1945 as well as many original manuscripts by prominent composers such as Pierre Boulez, John Cage, George Crumb, and Iannis Xenakis. The Music Library’s collections and staff serve the Bienen School of Music, the entire Northwestern University community, and researchers from around the world. For more information see www.library.northwestern.edu/music.

Programs of Study

The Bienen School of Music offers programs leading to the professional degrees of bachelor of music, master of music, and doctor of musical arts. The school also offers two nonprofessional degrees, the bachelor of arts in music and bachelor of science in music.

The curriculum allows flexibility for students while providing an education that is foundational for all musicians. Applicants in all areas who are accepted by the Bienen School enter directly into a program of specialization that begins in the first undergraduate year. The music core studies, taken by all students, require the acquisition of fundamental competencies and provide fundamental and essential experiences that complement the specialized studies in the declared major. Students are also required to complete studies in a number of allied subjects throughout the University.

Bachelor of Music (BMus)

Courses of study leading to the bachelor of music degree include majors in piano, strings, voice, winds and percussion, jazz, music cognition, music composition, music education, musicology, and music theory. Candidates for the degree of bachelor of music must complete a minimum of 48 units. For bachelor of music degree requirements, see the program page specific to the area of study.

Bachelor of Arts in Music (BAMus) and Bachelor of Science in Music (BSMus)

The bachelor of arts in music and bachelor of science in music are nonperformance degrees that offer a broad liberal arts education with a major in music. The requirements of the BAMus are essentially identical to those for the BA in the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences; the requirements for the BSMus are the same as those for the BAMus except that the BSMus has no foreign language requirement. Within these degrees’ focus on music, there are a wide range of possibilities for study; students may choose to specialize in one of the available academic areas (music cognition, music composition, music education, musicology, or music theory) by fulfilling their Music Electives with courses in their area of interest, they may choose not to specialize (in which case the Music Electives are fulfilled with any music courses), or they may design an ad hoc specialization, consisting of 10 units which substitute for the Music Electives category below.

For BAMus and BSMus degrees, 45 units are required:
in the Bienen School of Music to acquaint themselves and comply for which they are registered. It is the responsibility of students enrolled. Students are expected to attend all sessions of courses and ensembles. Attendance Policy.

A maximum of six courses in non-music subjects taken under the P/N graded solely with P/N grades. (improved) grade does not replace the first, and the same course cannot be counted twice in the degree. If a student receives a D in a major course, then takes that course a second time and receives a C grade or above, the initial D grade remains on the permanent record and cannot count toward elective requirements. The second course in business or finance. The requirement does not add to the existing number of courses required for undergraduate degrees; depending on which course is chosen, the course counts toward the major, including all music core requirements and all specialization recommendations.

For all undergraduate degrees, students must also complete the Undergraduate Registration Requirement (https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/requirements-policies/undergraduate-registration-requirement) along with the degree requirements of their home school.

Grading

Music majors must earn a grade of C or above in all courses required in the major, including all music core requirements and all specialization courses, in order to count those courses toward graduation requirements. A grade of D or above (including P grades for non-dual degree students) may be used to fulfill distribution requirements and electives. If a student receives a D in a major course, then takes that course a second time and receives a C grade or above, the initial D grade remains on the permanent record and cannot count toward elective requirements. The second (improved) grade does not replace the first, and the same course cannot be counted twice in the degree.

A maximum of six courses in non-music subjects taken under the P/N grade option may be counted toward the degree. Music students may not take music courses under the P/N grade option, except for those courses graded solely with P/N grades.

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend all sessions of courses and ensembles for which they are registered. It is the responsibility of students enrolled in the Bienen School of Music to acquaint themselves and comply with the attendance policy of their departments, class instructors, and ensemble conductors. In addition, students who are absent from classes for three or more consecutive days because of illness are required to notify the Bienen School’s Office of Student Affairs.

Outside professional opportunities may arise for music students. If such an opportunity directly interferes in any way with curricular responsibilities, students must first obtain permission from the faculty of record for courses potentially affected, including classes, rehearsals, and performances, along with the signature of the program coordinator and a signature from one of the co-chairs of the Department of Music Performance. Noncompliance may be cause for failure in the courses or ensembles for which a student is registered during that quarter.

**Applied Music Study**

Bachelor of Music degrees require four years of individual instruction for performance majors in piano, strings, voice, winds and percussion, jazz, and in composition. One year is required for academic majors in music cognition, musicology, and music theory; three years are required for music education. Concurrent registration in a major ensemble (https://www.music.northwestern.edu/academics/ensembles) is required in each quarter of applied study, with the exception of piano majors and composition majors. Applied study must be with a faculty instructor in the program area to fulfill degree requirements.

**Applied Music Courses**

Students in degree programs outside of music may have a limit on the number of applied music courses that are allowed to count toward those degrees. The list below specifies courses offered by the Bienen School that are considered to be applied music.

**Applied Music Courses**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tr>
<td>CONDUCT 364-0</td>
<td>Choral Organizations</td>
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<tr>
<td>CONDUCT 374-0</td>
<td>Band Organizations</td>
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<tr>
<td>CONDUCT 378-0</td>
<td>Contemporary Music Ensemble</td>
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<tr>
<td>CONDUCT 391-0</td>
<td>Chamber Music</td>
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<tr>
<td>CONDUCT 395-0</td>
<td>Baroque Music Ensemble</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEN_MUS 115-0</td>
<td>Non-Major Piano and Organ</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEN_MUS 116-0</td>
<td>Non-Major Piano</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEN_MUS 120-0</td>
<td>Non-Major Strings</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEN_MUS 121-0</td>
<td>Non-Major Guitar Class-Beginning</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEN_MUS 125-0</td>
<td>Non-Major Winds/Percussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEN_MUS 130-0</td>
<td>Non-Major Jazz</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEN_MUS 133-0</td>
<td>Non-Major Class Voice-Beginning</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEN_MUS 160-0</td>
<td>Non-Major Private Voice-Beginning</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEN_MUS 260-0</td>
<td>Non-Major Private Voice-Intermediate</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEN_MUS 315-0</td>
<td>Non-Major Piano and Organ</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEN_MUS 316-0</td>
<td>Non-Major Piano - Graduate</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEN_MUS 360-0</td>
<td>Non-Major Private Voice-Advanced</td>
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<td>JAZZ_ST 162-0</td>
<td>Applied Jazz for Music Majors</td>
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<td>JAZZ_ST 262-0</td>
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Overlay Requirement in Business or Finance

All Bienen School undergraduates are required to complete an “overlay” course in business or finance. The requirement does not add to the number of courses required for undergraduate degrees; depending on which course is chosen, the course counts toward the student’s general education or free electives requirement. See the Office of Student Affairs in the Bienen School of Music for course recommendations.

Distribution Courses (13 units): Area I Natural Sciences (2), Area II Formal Studies (2), Area III Social/Behavioral Sciences (2), Area IV Historical Studies (2), Area V Ethics and Values (2), Area VI Literature/Fine Arts (2), and English Composition (1) Non-Music Electives (12 units, 6 of these are foreign language courses for BAMus students)

Three quarters ensemble (1.5 units)

One 300-level elective in MUSCOL, MUS_COMP, MUS_TECH, MUS_THRY, or MUSIC_ED

Music electives (10 units)

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**Double Majors**

Students may earn a double major in four years by fulfilling the requirements of both majors. Typically, the double major within the Bienen School of Music combines a specialization in a performance area with one in an academic area, although double majors in two academic areas are also possible. A double major in two performance areas is not permitted.

Four-year music students may also complete a second major outside the music school but may earn only one bachelor's degree. Second majors from the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences are available to Bienen School of Music students without transferring into that school. Majors in the other four undergraduate schools at Northwestern may only be completed by students in that school; in these cases, interested music students may either pursue a dual degree with the second school, or
transfer to the other school and complete the music major as a second major, in which case no degree from the Bienen School is awarded.

**Ad Hoc Majors**

It is possible to design an ad hoc (self-designed) major that cuts across specializations to meet a particular student’s needs and career ambitions. Bachelor of Music degree students may design an ad hoc major as a second major; 12 units are required, and may not be double-counted in the primary major. Bachelor of arts in music and bachelor of science in music degree students may pursue an ad hoc concentration within the degree; 10 units are required for the concentration. Ad hoc programs are designed in consultation with faculty with expertise in the particular area of interest. Specializations have included areas such as arts administration, music criticism, and popular musicology.

**Dual Bachelor’s Degree Programs**

The Bienen School of Music offers dual bachelor’s degree programs with the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences (music and liberal arts), the School of Communication (music and communication), the School of Education and Social Policy (music and education and social policy), the McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science (music and engineering), and the Medill School of Journalism, Media, Integrated Marketing Communications (music and journalism). For information on program requirements, see Dual Bachelor’s Degrees (https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/dual-bachelors-degrees).

**Minor Programs**


Minor programs include a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 9 courses, of which a minimum of 5 courses are not double-counted toward the major. Students must receive a grade of C or above in all courses counted toward the minor; P/N grades in courses used for minor requirements must be approved by the assistant dean. Students who wish to complete a minor program should fill out a Minor Declaration Form, available in the Office of Student Affairs, and should fill out a minor petition form one year before graduation. Students may pursue more than one Bienen School of Music minor.

Requirements for minors in general music (for non-majors), music cognition, music composition, music education, musicology, music technology, and music theory can be found on the corresponding program page. See below for requirements for minors in arts administration, commercial music, and music criticism.

**Minor in Arts Administration (8 units chosen from the list below, music majors only)**

- ECON 201-0 Introduction to Macroeconomics
- ECON 202-0 Introduction to Microeconomics
- MUSIC 360-0 Career Innovation in Music and the Performing Arts
- MUSIC 398-0 Internship
- Any courses from BUS_INST (Business Institutions), IMC (Integrated Marketing/Communication), or ENTREP (Entrepreneurship)
- Any courses in ORG_BEH (Organizational Behavior), ACCOUNT (Accounting), MKTG (Marketing), or ADVT (Advertising) through the School of Professional Studies

**Minor in Commercial Music (8 units, open to music majors and non-majors)**

- JAZZ_ST 330-1 Jazz Composition and Arranging I and JAZZ_ST 330-2 Jazz Composition and Arranging II
- RTVF 383-0 Introduction to Sound Production
- MUS_COMP 111-0 Class Composition or MUS_COMP 311-0 Class Composition
- MUS_COMP 314-1 Instrumentation
- One course in popular music chosen from GEN_MUS or MUSICOL
- Two courses chosen from MUS_TECH

**Minor in Music Criticism (6 units, music majors only)**

- MUSICOL 399-0 Independent Study or MUSIC 398-0 Internship
- JOUR 201-1 Reporting & Writing
- JOUR 201-2 Multimedia Storytelling
- JOUR 301-0 Journalism in Practice
- JOUR 202-0 Philosophy of Modern Journalism or JOUR 370-0 Media Law & Ethics
- JOUR 310-0 Media Presentation: News, JOUR 311-0 Media Presentation: Magazine, or JOUR 312-0 Media Presentation: Video Producing for Broadcast & the Web

**Program Honors**

Each year faculty are invited to nominate graduating students for program honors. To be eligible for program honors, students must have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above and be outstanding contributors to their respective programs. Additional criteria govern the selection of voice majors; see the coordinator of the voice and opera program for details. Faculty select only a small number of students in each program for program honors in a given year; for more information, contact the Office of Student Affairs in the Bienen School of Music.