

Music Opportunities for Arts & Sciences Students at Oberlin

Introduction

Oberlin College, established in 1833, has a long and distinguished history of education, support and promotion of the arts in general, and music in particular. The music division, now known as the Conservatory, became part of the College in 1867 and continues to educate and train musicians for professional careers. The Bachelor of Music and limited Master of Music programs are offered in the Conservatory and a substantial number of students pursue two degrees in five years, completing the Bachelor of Arts and the Bachelor of Music degrees. In addition, the Conservatory has long provided musical opportunities for students in the Arts & Sciences division of the College. Within the Bachelor of Arts degree there is a major in music, called the College Music Major (see below).

Oberlin is rich with opportunities for musicians at all levels. The Conservatory presents over 400 concerts annually, most of them free and open to the public. Nationally known artists in the folk, pop, rock and jazz categories are also featured each year. The Oberlin Artist Recital Series showcases internationally known artists and offers tickets to students at a discounted rate.

Degree Opportunities

Each year, between 30 and 40 Arts & Sciences (A&S) students choose to pursue a major in music (commonly called the College Music Major) with an emphasis in performance, composition, theory/history or TIMARA (Technology in Music and Related Arts) through the Bachelor of Arts degree program. This program offers students the opportunity to study music within the liberal arts context. The requirements for the College Music Major are listed in the *Course Catalog*.

An A&S student wishing to declare the College Music Major may do so after the required audition or interview. Students wishing to declare the College Music Major with an emphasis in either performance, composition, or TIMARA must first pass an audition or interview in her/his specialty before an appropriate departmental committee. The theory/history emphasis has no mandatory audition or interview. (For information about entrance requirements,

please see the *Course Catalog*). Students need to schedule these auditions on a regular Conservatory Audition Day through the Conservatory Admissions Office. The Conservatory Admissions office will notify students of the results. Any time thereafter (but preferably prior to the end of the sophomore year), the student should pick up a "Major Declaration Form" from the Registrar's Office and meet with the Chair of the College Music Committee to discuss the program and apply officially to be accepted into the major. All prospective College Music Majors may, as early as the beginning of their first semester, audition for secondary study.

Applied Study

Many A&S students come to Oberlin with a strong musical background and interest and wish to continue private study on an instrument, which we call Applied Study (also referred to as Private Study or Applied Lessons). Applied Study takes several forms and may be taken for credit or no credit. Students in the Conservatory and the performance emphasis of the College Music Major take Principal Private Study for a minimum of four credit hours per semester. Many students choose to audition for secondary applied lessons. Auditions occur during the first week of classes each semester. Following the audition, faculty members recommend students for placement with a faculty teacher if space permits, in the supervised student teacher program, or in the approved student teacher program. Students placed for secondary study with a faculty member or a supervised student teacher receive two credits for the secondary lessons. Students recommended for placement in the approved student teacher program do not receive credit for the lessons and "contract" with the student teacher for \$7.50 per half-hour lesson. If you have questions please see Nicki Memmott in the Conservatory Dean's office at Bibbins 123, x58498, or email her at nicki.memmott@oberlin.edu.

Change of Status

Some A&S students come to Oberlin wishing to audition (or re-audition) for the Conservatory once they are enrolled. Students wishing to schedule an audition for the B.M. degree must contact the Conservatory Admissions Office

(Conservatory Annex 206, x58413). Those who are admitted to the Conservatory may choose to become Double Degree students or to transfer from the College to the Conservatory. Auditions for the B.M. will not be given at the beginning of the semester, but will take place during regularly scheduled audition dates. For a listing of those dates, please contact the Conservatory Admissions Office. A Change of Status application (available in the Conservatory Admissions office) must also be completed.

Performance Opportunities

There are many other ways to take part in the musical life of the Conservatory. Ensemble participation is one of the most common options. A&S students are welcome to audition for any Conservatory ensemble. Most often these students participate in the Musical Union (a large choral ensemble), Oberlin College Choir, Oberlin College Singers, Collegium Musicum, Women's Chorale, College Community Winds, or College Community Strings. Other ensembles include the Oberlin Orchestra, Oberlin Chamber Orchestra, and Contemporary Music Ensemble. Although these ensembles are generally populated by Conservatory students, they are open to all students. In addition, each semester the ethnomusicology program offers ensembles such as the Mandinka Ensemble, the Javanese Gamelan or the Indian Music Ensemble.

Outside the Conservatory, student-run ensembles thrive as well. Oberlin Steel, a steel drum ensemble, is a popular campus group. Several *a cappella* choral ensembles exist such as the Obertones, Nothing But Treble, and In A Chord. Gilbert and Sullivan productions are a staple of Winter Term and many rock and alternative music bands are active throughout the academic year.

Courses

Although most courses in the Conservatory are open to qualified A&S students, in reality some Conservatory courses become filled with Conservatory students. Two introductory courses are offered each year specifically for College students: *Introduction to Music* (CMUS 100) and *Introduction to Musics of the World* (ETHN 100). Both of these courses accept students with little formal training. In

addition, MHST 101—*Introduction to the History and Literature of Music*—is an introductory course, which accepts college students with advanced musical preparation. Students interested in course work in Music History must begin with the MHST 101 or CMUS 100 course and may then proceed to 200-level Music History courses.

A&S students at an advanced level of musicianship may wish to enroll in Music Theory courses. Any student who wishes to enroll in courses in the Music Theory Division must take a placement examination before being allowed to register. The theory placement exam is given over the summer and the first aural skills exam occurs during Orientation. College students should note that spaces in Music Theory courses are limited and Conservatory students are given first priority. A&S students interested in taking the theory placement exam should contact the Music Theory department secretary (440/775-8297), or the Conservatory Associate Dean's office (440/775-8293) during the summer months, for details on taking these exams.

Miscellaneous

FACILITIES

The facilities of the Conservatory include practice rooms, classrooms, electronic and computer music studios, two concert halls, and many teaching studios or offices. The Conservatory Library has a wealth of audio recordings, musical scores and books. The library also includes listening facilities with compact disc players, turntables, tape decks, video playback units, and CD-ROM equipment. A&S students may use the library and practice facilities as well as other rooms in the Conservatory. Please see the current *Oberlin College Student Handbook* for policies relating to the use of Conservatory facilities.

INSTRUMENTS

It has been the practice for many years at the Conservatory to provide instruments for various functions, including secondary instrument study, class lessons, and special performance needs to name a few. Although the instrument inventory exists primarily for use by Conservatory students,

A&S students may have access to certain portions of the collection under the circumstances outlined below.

Conservatory instruments will be loaned to college students enrolled in classes and/or ensembles that require their use. Specialized instrument collections are under the direct supervision of the major faculty member in that area. In general, these collections are only available to Conservatory students enrolled in a class, ensemble, or lesson that requires access to those specialized instruments. The faculty member in consultation with the Associate Dean can make exceptions for A&S students enrolled in certain classes.

Unfortunately, the Conservatory cannot loan or rent instruments to A&S students for activities other than those described above. In cases where an instrument cannot be provided, instruments are often available from local music shops at reasonable rates. Information about these rentals can be obtained from Sharon Brown (Bibbins 123, x58293).

If a student is allowed to check out a Conservatory instrument the following procedure should be followed: Upon securing the permission of the appropriate faculty person, the student must come to Bibbins 123 to complete an *Instrument Loan Agreement* form. The staff will make sure the student understands his/her obligation as regards rental fees (if any), insurance, and care of the instrument. Students using instruments loaned for participation in Conservatory ensembles, or needed because of a class requirement, will not be required to obtain insurance, but will be held liable in the event of damage to that instrument beyond what is considered normal wear.

Unless other arrangements are made with the faculty member and the Associate Dean, students are expected to store instruments in the room and locker provided for that instrument. The Conservatory has very limited general locker space for use by A&S students. Inquiries about locker availability should be made in the Concert Production Office (Bibbins 234).