Oberlin Conservatory of Music

Music is more than a profession.
It is a calling.
Oberlin opens a world of possibilities: Esteemed faculty mentors, exposure to resident and guest artists, transformative programs, exemplary facilities, and countless opportunities to perform on campus and beyond.
Oberlin Conservatory of Music is the only major music school in America that focuses on undergraduate education. At Oberlin, you do not line up behind graduate students for ensemble placements, opera roles, and competitions—you perform in productions and in ensembles large and small from your first semester on campus.

DEGREES AND MAJORS

CONSERVATORY

DEGREES

Bachelor of Music

Master of Music in Performance on Historical Instruments

Combined undergraduate and graduate programs leading to the Master of Music in Conducting or Historical Performance

Performance Diplomas and Artist Diplomas (PD and AD) are offered in certain departments

DOUBLE DEGREE PROGRAM

Completed in five years or fewer, leading to both Bachelor of Music and Bachelor of Arts

MAJORS AND MINORS

Performance

Historical Performance (MM)

Jazz Studies (Composition or Performance)

Contemporary Chamber Music (MM)

Composition Conducting

5-year BM/MM Integrated with Performance, Composition, or Musicology

Technology in Music and Related Arts (TIMARA)

Musicology

Music Theory (minor)

Piano Pedagogy (minor)

Ethnomusicology (minor)

Individual Major

PERFORMANCE PRIVATE STUDY

INSTRUMENTAL AND VOCAL

Flute

Oboe

Clarinet

Bassoon

Trumpet

Horn

Trombone

Tuba

Violin

Viola

Cello

Double Bass

Harp

Percussion

Classical Guitar

Organ

Piano

Voice

HISTORICAL PERFORMANCE

Baroque Flute

Baroque Oboe

Recorder

Baroque Violin

Baroque Cello

Viola da Gamba

Fortepiano

Harpsichord

Organ

Historical Keyboards

JAZZ PERFORMANCE

Trumpet

Saxophone

Trombone

Guitar

Double Bass

Percussion

Classical Guitar

Organ

Piano

Double Bass

Percussion

Voice

OBIE FACTS

Founded in 1865, Oberlin Conservatory is the oldest continuously operating conservatory in the United States.

Oberlin received the 2009 National Medal of Arts—a rare honor for a conservatory of music.

Nicholas King is playing a Liszt piano sonata during a lesson with his teacher, Angela Cheng, incorporating her advice and improving his performance. But then he leans in to read her score and discovers handwritten notes in its margins.

"Why don't I just steal your score," he jokes. "It has most of the answers I need." Cheng counters: "The problem with that is you haven't lived the life that I've lived!" The life Cheng has lived includes an illustrious performance career along with full-time teaching. And her charming admonishment is a reminder for King to develop his own path. "King already has founded a nonprofit to expose young people to classical music. "Why don't I just steal your score," he jokes. "It has most of the answers I need." Cheng counters: "The problem with that is you haven't lived the life that I've lived!" The life Cheng has lived includes an illustrious performance career along with full-time teaching. And her charming admonishment is a reminder for King to develop his own path. "King already has founded a nonprofit to expose young people to classical music. "When I chose Oberlin, I didn't choose it for any entrepreneurial hopes I had," he says. "But it has turned out to be very instrumental for me in that way."

Joshua Blue is a reminder for King to develop his own path. "King already has founded a nonprofit to expose young people to classical music. "When I chose Oberlin, I didn't choose it for any entrepreneurial hopes I had," he says. "But it has turned out to be very instrumental for me in that way."

Joshua Blue

Major: Voice

Professor Salvatore Cangemi invited Joshua Blue to explore Oberlin’s Vocal Studies program after hearing him compete at a national voice competition. A visit to campus sold Blue on Oberlin.

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"I felt Oberlin would be right for me because this is solely an undergraduate program. I knew I would have opportunities to perform," he says. In his first year, Blue earned the lead in Oberlin Opera Theater’s production of Die Fledermaus. Since then, he has performed in five more operas and taken part in Oberlin in Italy, a summer program in opera and Italian language. Shortly after graduating, Blue won first prize in the Oratorio Society of New York’s annual competition at Carnegie Hall. "Gaining practical experience on stage has been the best thing for me," he says. A visit to campus sold Blue on Oberlin.

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The conservatory’s extensive collection of instruments available for student use includes one of the world’s largest Steinway collections and one of its finest collections of organs.

Our orchestral instruments include Gagliano and Stradivarius violins, Heckel bassoons, and Lyon & Healy harps. TIMARA boasts cutting-edge digital equipment, analog and video studios, and a maker space. We have one of the nation’s best early instrument collections, spanning Medieval, Renaissance, and Baroque instruments. Our non-Western instruments include a full Javanese gamelan and what may be the country’s finest collection of exotic percussion instruments.

**Oberlin’s campus boasts exceptional facilities:** nine inspiring concert halls, more than 150 practice rooms, 240-plus Steinway pianos, and 13 organ practice rooms that contribute to one of the world’s finest organ collections. Students have access to important instrument collections, five electronic and computer music studios, one of the top conservatory libraries in the nation, and remarkable collections in jazz and American music history.

**HIGHLIGHTED SPECIAL COLLECTIONS**
- The Selch Collection of American Music History
- The James and Susan Neumann Jazz Collection
- The Milton J. and Mona C. Hinton Papers
- Violin Society of America/Herbert K. Goodkind Collection
- Oberlin Conservatory Library Collection of Musicians’ Autographs and Photographs

**OBIE FACTS**
- 100,000 Number of recordings in the James and Susan Neumann Jazz Collection
- 4,014 Number of pipes in Finney Chapel’s C.B. Fisk Opus 116 organ
- 270,000 Collection of materials in Oberlin’s music library, one of four libraries on campus
Oberlin fosters a culture of risk-taking that leads to high achievement. Our students and alumni earn top honors in major national and international competitions across the musical spectrum. Oberlin graduates perform in the world’s foremost concert halls and opera houses and with highly acclaimed orchestras. They excel as conductors, soloists, composers, producers, theoreticians, entrepreneurs, historians, and educators. The multiple Grammy Award-winning ensemble Eighth Blackbird was founded at Oberlin. Pianist Jeremy Denk ’90, flutist Claire Chase ’01, singer and multi-instrumentalist Rhiannon Giddens ’00, and public-radio host Jad Abumrad ’05 are among four Oberlin Conservatory alumni to win prestigious MacArthur Foundation “Genius” grants.

“The makeup of Oberlin students and faculty is diverse, eclectic, outspoken, and unafraid.”
—Lisa Kaplan ’96, Eighth Blackbird Pianist
Oberlin is the only major music school in the country that shares a seamless campus with a preeminent liberal arts institution. It’s no surprise that the double degree was invented here more than a century ago. Each year, about 40 new students elect to pursue degrees in both the Conservatory of Music and the College of Arts and Sciences. With practiced guidance from experienced advisors, students complete these degrees within five years. The double degree opens the door to an enormous array of professional possibilities for life after Oberlin.

**OBIE FACTS**

- **550** Number of students in the Conservatory of Music
- **2,300** Number of students in the College of Arts and Sciences
- **180** Number of students pursuing double degrees in the college and conservatory

**CELINE ODPYCKE MAJORS: JAZZ VOICE AND BIOLOGY**

It’s Thursday afternoon in La Tanya Hall’s Kohl Building studio, and Oberlin’s teacher of jazz voice is reviewing a few scat-singing subtleties with Celine Odpzycke. Try leaving a bit more space between your long legato lines, Hall suggests after playing a few phrases of a Richard Whiting tune on the piano. And Odpzycke picks up on it immediately. “The greatest thing for me has been to witness Celine’s hard work,” Hall beams with pride. “It has resulted in an experience of incredible growth for her here.”

Now in her third year, Odpzycke recalls the reasons she settled in Oberlin as if her decision had been made earlier today. There was the opportunity to earn a double degree, which has kept the Seattle native’s career passions—singing and surgery—equally wide open. There was the unfailingly supportive vibe on campus, where competition among students means striving to bring out the best in each other. And there was Hall, with whom Odpzycke quickly bonded. Last year, they even shared the spotlight in a performance of Billy Childs’ *Voices of Angels*—with Childs himself in attendance. Like so many of her faculty peers, Hall deftly balances time with students and the stage; for years, she has toured extensively with Steely Dan. “I live vicariously through her stories,” Odpzycke says, praising Hall for the road-warrior wisdom she routinely imparts. And on those days when her mentor happens to be on the road? “I listen to Steely Dan records while she’s gone!”

**ANDREW SANTIAGO MAJORS: FLUTE, PHYSICS, AND CHEMISTRY**

Like many who choose Oberlin, Andrew Santiago was attracted to the groundbreaking Double Degree Program. “Of all the schools I looked at, Oberlin has the strongest double-degree option by far in terms of its continuity and its flexibility between the college and conservatory,” he says. His passions result in a considerable—and considerably varied—workload, and that’s part of the reason he is so grateful to have caring mentors like flute professor Alexa Still.

For Still, the feeling is mutual. “One of the true joys of teaching is the opportunity I have to get to know each student so well,” she says. “And they are just amazing—I’ve yet to meet an Oberlin student who I wasn’t entranced by.”

“What I’ve loved is that throughout our lessons we’re always laughing,” says Santiago. “We’re creating music, and we’re learning to create better music. That should be an enjoyable experience. Even if what we’re conveying through music isn’t always a happy emotion, we should always be happy doing it.”
Performance is an integral part of Oberlin life. Each year, students, faculty members, and guest artists present more than 500 solo and ensemble concerts spanning the last five centuries of music. With more than two dozen ongoing ensembles and a focus on small ensemble culture, you will find ample opportunities to perform in a variety of styles on campus—and around the world.

In recent years, the critically acclaimed Oberlin Orchestra and Contemporary Music Ensemble have played in Carnegie Hall and important venues in Singapore, Beijing, Seattle, San Francisco, Chicago, and Los Angeles. Small jazz ensembles have recently performed in Italy and South Africa. In nearby Cleveland, student singers regularly appear with the Cleveland Orchestra at its home venue, Severance Hall, and the Contemporary Music Ensemble has replicated its campus series at the Cleveland Museum of Art.

In early 2019, the Oberlin Sonny Rollins Jazz Ensemble performed at Dizzy’s Club at Lincoln Center and in schools throughout New York City. That same week, the Oberlin Orchestra and Oberlin College Choir took the stage of Carnegie Hall (right).
LYLY LI
MAJOR: VIOLIN

Lily Li came to Oberlin to study violin, but it was an introductory class in violin study, but it was an introductory class in violin. Her professor, Marilyn McDonald, helped her to relax," says Li, enumerating the many lessons she took away from the class, which was taught by her versatile mentor, Professor Marilyn McDonald. Li arrived on campus a fine player but without a violin of her own. Like many students at Oberlin, she has benefited from the conservatory’s generous instrument-loan program, made possible through its extensive collection of modern and historical instruments. For her final two years, she played on a treasured 18th-century Gagliano.

"It means such a big difference in my playing," she says. "I’ve grown a lot just because of it."

Oberlin’s faculty maintain rigorous performance schedules while remaining accessible and committed to their students. They spend generous hours teaching lessons, coaching ensembles, and providing caring mentorship. Individual instruction is tailored to the unique needs of each student.
The musicians in drummer Emerson Hunton’s quartet have played together for only a semester, but they hope their effort will lay the groundwork for generations of Oberlin jazz students to come. The ensemble—which includes fellow students Noah Gershwin (guitar), Joe Suihkonen (trumpet), and Eric Krouse (piano)—devoted a winter term to studying and performing in Amsterdam, a hotbed of improvisation and free jazz. Through the experience they developed relationships with notable Dutch musicians—bonds they hope to fashion into a pipeline for ongoing international exchange.

Their plans earned the support of Oberlin’s Center for Innovation & Impact, an entrepreneurial accelerator that fosters career growth for enterprising students from the college and conservatory. The quartet was awarded a “FIG”—short for Flint Initiative Grant—that funded much of the trip. “We all were very interested in making the trip to Amsterdam, but we couldn’t have done it without the FIG grant,” says Hunton.

The Center for Innovation & Impact allows you to put your innovative ideas into action, in practice and preparation for professional life after Oberlin. This multidisciplinary, cross-campus initiative fosters a culture of strategic risk-taking and provides students with funding, coaching, and other resources to launch ventures, artistic and otherwise. And through the accelerator program LaunchU, Oberlin extends that support to students even after graduation.
Applying to Oberlin

How to Apply to the Conservatory of Music

Candidates who wish to prepare for careers as professional musicians need only apply to the Conservatory of Music, using the conservatory application found at go.oberlin.edu/admissions. The conservatory application fee is $100.

The most important factor in admission to the conservatory is the performance audition or, in the case of non-native English speakers, the TOEFL and/or IELTS exams. A full list of on-campus and regional audition dates can be found at the links below.

CONSERVATORY APPLICATION DEADLINES AND NOTIFICATION DATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application Due</th>
<th>Notification</th>
<th>Reply/Deposit Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December 1</td>
<td>April 1</td>
<td>May 1</td>
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CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC ADMISSIONS

Director:
Michael Mandener
Associate Director:
Beth Weiss
Assistant Director:
Joshua Taester
Assistant Director:
Ryan Dearon
Admissions Counselor:
oberlin.edu/admissions-and-aid
Phone: 640-775-8143

How to Apply for the Double Degree

Oberlin offers a unique opportunity to combine rigorous pre-professional musical training with a broad liberal arts education in a program that can be completed within five years, and in as few as eight or nine semesters, leading to both BM and BA degrees. Students interested in pursuing both degrees must submit two separate applications, one to each division, and meet each division’s distinct deadlines and admission requirements.

For details, visit admissions.oberlin.edu/double-degree.

Transfer Applications

Oberlin welcomes applications from transfer students, including graduates of two-year colleges. For conservatory applicants, the deadline is December 1 for fall entry only.

Preparation

The Conservatory of Music seeks talented music students who have demonstrated records of achievement, potential for further growth and development, the ability to meet Oberlin’s demanding standards, and the dedication required to become professional musicians.

All applicants must submit results from SAT or ACT. Non-native English speakers whose secondary school coursework is conducted in languages other than English must also submit results from TOEFL or IELTS exams.

Financial Aid

We are committed to meeting 100 percent of the financial need of every admitted student. This past year, Oberlin committed more than $52 million to assist students with the cost of their education. Three-quarters of Oberlin students received some form of need-based financial aid. The average aid package was $51,000, with about 80 percent of that coming as scholarships grants directly from Oberlin. Details of the application process and downloads of all the forms you will need are available at financial.aid@oberlin.edu.

To contact the Office of Financial Aid, call 440-775-8142, or email financial.aid@oberlin.edu.

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Financial Aid for International Students

Non-US citizens who apply for admission to Oberlin must also submit results from the TOEFL, IELTS, or other approved English proficiency test. For more information, call 440-775-8142.

Visiting Oberlin

See for yourself what Oberlin is all about. You’ll find travel directions and information about events, accommodations, and parking at admissions.oberlin.edu.

Please consult the availability of tours and information sessions for your dates by visiting the links below.

CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC VISIT INFORMATION

go.oberlin.edu/conservatory

CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC TOURS AND INFORMATION SESSIONS

Information sessions and tours of the conservatory are held most weekdays at 11 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Please register at connect.oberlin.edu/visit. Please note that this tour covers the conservatory facilities only. For a general tour of campus that includes housing, dining, and other campus buildings, please also register for the College of Arts and Sciences tour at connect.oberlin.edu/visit.

Prospective students may attend rehearsals and classes and connect with faculty members.

SELF-GUIDED CONSERVATORY TOUR

If you visit campus at a time when the conservatory admissions office is closed, a printable version of a self-guided tour is available online at go.oberlin.edu/conservatory.

OVERNIGHT STAYS

All prospective students are invited to stay overnight in a residence hall with a current student.

Overnight stays are available on select dates during the academic year, in conjunction with formal visit programs. This is a great opportunity to sample dining hall food, experience the campus community, and attend evening events. Click on the Overnight Stay link at admissions.oberlin.edu/conservatory.

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Oberlin was the first school in the world to award a “double-degree” student in both liberal arts and music degrees. Students in the College of Arts and Sciences, with over 220 full-time faculty members. Oberlin was the first school in the world to graduate a “double-degree” student in both liberal arts and music degrees.

PERFORMANCES

500+

Number of performances on campus each year

CONSERVATORY LIBRARY AND COLLECTIONS

Oberlin’s conservatory music library is considered one of the nation’s top conservatory libraries, with a collection of materials, numbering more than 70,000.

100,000

Number of recordings in the James and Susan Feinmann Jazz Collection

4,014

Number of pages in Finley Chapel’s C.B. Fox Opus 116 organ

Oberlin Conservatory received the 2009 National Medal of Arts—a rare honor for a college that is a conservatory of music.

LOCATION

Oberlin Conservatory

Our 440-acre campus is 35 miles southwest of Cleveland and less than 30 minutes to Hopkins International Airport.

STUDENT/FACTOR RATIO

6:1

For the conservatory of Music, with more than 70 full-time faculty members, the student/faculty ratio is 6:1.

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