

CLASSICAL INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

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The NOCCA Classical Instrumental Music curriculum is designed to develop and maintain total musicianship to prepare all students for auditions and admittance into colleges of music or conservatories. Applied music classes (repertoire, sight-reading, performance technique) are at the heart of the curriculum. Common Music Curriculum courses such as Chamber Music, Music Theory, and Ear Training build a fully educated, literate musician and ultimately a more effective performer.

Admission and Advancement

Audition Expectations: Students currently in 6th-11th grades are eligible to apply and audition. Auditioning students are expected to display professionalism, discipline, and experience with a private instructor concerning their instrument. Students prepare to perform two *contrasting pieces from memory such as a movement of a sonata, sonatina, concerto, etude, and demonstrate skills in major/minor scales and sight reading music (“contrasting” pieces are those of two different time periods such as Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Impressionistic, Contemporary). In order to show different types of skills (technical, musical, etc.), students may choose one of the pieces to be fast and the other slow, but that is not a requirement and it is not always what is meant by “contrasting.” One cannot play two pieces by the same composer and two movements of the same piece.

Accepted students are placed in Level I. Advancement into subsequent levels is based on satisfactory completion of a full school year’s study in the current level. Students should maintain a B average GPA to remain in good standing. Any student who fails any class during a quarter is placed on probation. While at NOCCA, students undergo periodic counseling sessions with music faculty to discuss progress and overall assessment. Faculty may request that an individual repeat any level of Applied, Music Theory, Ear Training, or Chamber Music; all decisions by faculty are final. Students must pass comprehensive exams for all classes including juries at the end of each year to qualify for placement in the next level. Good behavior, attendance, punctuality, preparation, and self-discipline are absolutely critical for continued enrollment at NOCCA.

Common Music Curriculum

The Common Curriculum taken by all Music students at NOCCA is a course of musical study emphasizing the fundamentals of musical language through the study of Music Theory and Musicianship.

Music Theory focuses on the concepts, language, and rules of standard musical practice, instilling an understanding and practice of basic piano fundamentals in relation to these theory

concepts. Theory is taught sequentially in levels I-II-III with a review course in level IV. Concepts begin with note reading and progress through all major and minor keys/scales, chords, and inversions (including seventh chords and secondary dominants), figured bass, diatonic harmonic progressions with Roman numeral analysis, functional harmony, four-part voice leading (including non-chord tones), modulations, augmented sixth chords, and various twentieth-century compositional practices including Impressionism and twelve-tone serialism.

Musicianship develops the ability to hear and discern musical elements through melodic singing, rhythmic dictation, and oral dictation exercises. Musicianship is taught sequentially in levels I-II-III with a review course in level IV. After the course of study, students are able to sing major and minor scales with correct scale degrees and solfege syllables, write dictation of diatonic and chromatic melodies as well as two-part exercises with their correct rhythms, read advanced syncopated rhythms up to and including sixteenth notes, identify intervals and chords (including seventh chords) by ear, aurally identify the sections of musical forms (ABA, rondo, sonata, binary, etc.), hear chord progressions and inversions modulating to closely related keys, and sing modal melodies, symmetrical scales, and other exotic scales.

Additional Classes and Requirements

Private Lessons: All students are required to take weekly private lessons. Classical instrumental students must take lessons from current NOCCA Classical Instrumental Music faculty unless NOCCA does not have an instructor for a specific instrument, in which case an outside teacher who meets the expectations and requirements of NOCCA faculty will be recommended. In such cases, students must submit the name of the private instructor to the lead teacher for approval at the beginning of semester. Students who do not take private lessons on a regular basis will be placed on probation and may be dismissed.

Practice Rooms: Practice rooms are reserved for NOCCA-related work. Students who are given practice time are expected to work diligently on NOCCA-related assignments and performance material. No more than one student per practice room is without faculty permission.

Applied Class: The classical instrumental program offers extensive training to intermediate and advanced classical instrumental students. Instruction focuses on areas such as exploration of standard literature for solo as well as ensemble work, and skills including scales, etudes, sight-reading, and accompanying.

Music Performance Class: Music Performance Class, held every Friday at 4:00 p.m., is mandatory for all students. Faculty members carefully select inspiring and educational performances by student peers, featured faculty, guest artists, and other public performers either on campus during school hours or off campus afterhours. These performances are mandatory.

Chamber Music Class: These classes focus upon learning chamber music works from various periods and styles in music history for the purpose of developing sight-singing, performance skills, and overall musicianship. This class encourages a spirit of cooperation, self-discipline, and dedication. Every student must belong to at least one ensemble group.

Music Jury Requirement: At the end of each semester, every student appears before a jury of

faculty to be evaluated, based on progress in Performance and in mastery of Theory and Ear Training. Students are asked to perform scales, one etude, and one memorized solo piece. All repertoires for jury must be played for faculty prior to the jury date.

Guest Artist Workshops: Classical instrumental students participate in regular guest artist workshops as part of their applied music training. The workshops alternate among classical instrumental, classical vocal, and jazz artists, and all students are required to attend all workshops as well as performances by the guest artists.

Certificates in Music

The Music Department awards three levels of certificates.

Certificate of Artistry represents the highest level of attainment for a music student; it is the culmination of three or more years of intensive music study at NOCCA. This level of artistry is demonstrated by the successful retention of specific musical skills acquired through class work, performance, and comprehensive examinations in Music Theory and Ear Training. Students must also perform in a faculty-endorsed senior recital.

Certificate of Performance is conferred upon students who have successfully completed two years of study at NOCCA but have not completed the full musical curriculum. Students must also perform a faculty-endorsed senior recital and pass comprehensive examinations in Theory and Ear Training at their current level.

Certificate of Recognition is granted to students who have attended NOCCA for one or two years but have not presented a senior recital. Students must pass a comprehensive exam at their current level.

In all cases the judgment by the core music faculty regarding the awarding of certificates is final.