

MUSIC DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

VOCAL, CLASSICAL INSTRUMENTAL AND JAZZ INSTRUMENTAL

The goal of the Music Department is for each student to develop over four years to their highest potential as a musician, including:

- Performance skills on their chosen instrument or voice, including tone quality, intonation, technical mastery, and interpretation.
- Music literacy, including reading and writing music and understanding all common musical indications and symbols.
- Aural skills, including musical memory, concentration, sight-singing and transcription.
- Collaborating with teachers and peers in an ensemble setting, including interpersonal skills.
- Awareness and appreciation of music history, the music of other cultures, and music's connection to other arts and academic disciplines.
- Audience and performer etiquette.

All Music students are strongly encouraged to take regular private lessons while attending the Academy.

All students will attend department master classes, which will include faculty and student performances, lectures, and visits by guest artists. Additional courses, by major, are listed below.

Each year, students will take music theory and a performance class on their instrument. Students will also choose among multiple elective courses and be assigned additional fundamentals or enrichment courses depending on each student's individual needs and goals.

CLASSICAL INSTRUMENTAL

(open to all Wind, String and Piano Instrumentalists)

- One Year: A student who attends one year will take: Level 1 instrumental Performance class, Theory 1, and an elective class either in music or another art form.

- Two Years: A student who attends two years will take: Level 2 or instrumental Performance class Theory 2, and an elective class either in music or another art form.
- Three Years: A student who attends three years will take: Level 3 Performance class, Theory Level 3, and elective class either in music or another art form.
- Four Years: A student who attends four years will take: performance class, Jazz Theory and an elective class either in music or another art form.

Classical Instrumental Performance Courses

STUDIO WINDS AND STRINGS

Studio Winds and Strings is an intensive class open to all music major instrumentalists. In this course students will play as a small ensemble, working on repertoire from the classical canon to the modern day, and work as a soloist. Students will receive a private lesson once a month and have ample time to practice on their own in one of the Academy's many practice rooms. Work in this class will highlight instrument facility (scales, sight-reading, etudes) and learn solo repertoire that will position them to join honor festival ensembles or prepare for college auditions.

ACADEMY ORCHESTRA

The Academy Orchestra is one of GHAA's premier instrumental ensembles and is a required class for all music major string and wind players. Academy Orchestra is a performance driven ensemble and strives to play repertoire at the highest level. Students will be exposed to music from the classical canon (Bach, Beethoven, Brahms, etc.) to the modern day. In rehearsing pieces students will also be exposed to various music theory concepts, as well as learn about the importance the works' composers play in music history. The Academy Orchestra is an active part in the Hartford music scene and is currently in collaboration with the Hartt School of Music's Composition Program, in which the Academy Orchestra premieres works by Hartt composers written for the Academy Orchestra.

PIANO PERFORMANCE

This course is for students who are either just beginning their study of piano, or those who have previously studied and wish to advance their skills. Students will be reading standard notation as well as chord symbols. The classes are structured to facilitate both group lessons and individual instruction. Students will be required to perform in various settings, including one-on-one with the teacher and in front of the class.

JAZZ INSTRUMENTAL

(open to all Wind, Piano, Percussion, Guitar, and Bass Instrumentalists)

- One Year: A student who attends one year will take: Rhythm Section Workshop, Theory Level 1 an elective class either in music, another art form or Big Band.
- Two Years: A student who attends two years will take Jazz Ensemble, Theory Level 2, an elective class either in music or another art form or Big Band.
- Three Years: A student who attends three years will take: Jazz Ensemble Level 3, Theory Level 3, and an elective class either in a music, another art form or Big Band.
- Four Years: A student who attends four years will take, Jazz Ensemble, an elective class either in music or another art form, and Jazz Theory, which includes: advanced ear training, transcription, improvisation, and jazz piano.

Jazz Instrumental Performance Courses

RHYTHM SECTION WORKSHOP

Students will learn the essential elements of performance, such as style, performance tips, and genres required for the solid understanding of what is required of a successful member of this vital part of the jazz group. The seven genres covered for rhythm section are: swing, Bossa-Nova, rock, shuffle, samba, funk and ballad. Additional topics include: standard chord progressions, volume, timekeeping, and how to develop effective comping, (accompanying), techniques.

JAZZ ENSEMBLE

This class is focused on jazz performance in a small group setting. Students will be guided in the craft of improvisation and ensemble playing. Students will gain an understanding of such skills as chord choice, improvising scales, rhythm section concepts and group cohesion. They will also play a variety of styles such as traditional, fusion, and free jazz.

VOCAL

(open to all voice types)

- One Year: A student who attends one year will take Intro to Great American Songbook; Musical Theater and Jazz & Pop, Music Theory 1, and an elective class either in music, another art form or Jazz Choir.
- Two Years: A student who attends two years will take Level 2 Great American Songbook (jazz and musical theater), Music Theory Level 2, and an elective class either in music, another art form or Jazz Choir.
- Three Years: A student who attends two years will take Level 3 Great American Songbook (jazz and musical theater), Music Theory Level 3, and an elective class either in music, another art form or Jazz Choir.
- Four Years: A student who attends two years will take Level 4 Great American Songbook (jazz and musical theater) including working with an instrumental jazz combo, Music Theory Level 4, and an elective class either in music, another art form or Jazz Choir.

Vocal Performance Courses

INTRO TO GREAT AMERICAN SONGBOOK: JAZZ & POP

This class is a beginner's introduction to popular music. In this class, students will gain a repertoire of swing, jazz standards, blues and pop. They will also start to learn how to improvise, changing the melody to better tell the story and even trying a bit of scat.

INTRO TO GREAT AMERICAN SONGBOOK: MUSICAL THEATER

This class is a beginner's introduction to popular music. In this class, students will gain a repertoire from the musical theater canon. They will learn to incorporate acting elements into performance to gain an understanding of the character they are portraying.

MUSIC THEORY

All music department students are required to take a music theory class for all years they attend the Academy. First year music department students take a placement exam in their first week and are placed into an appropriate music theory course. Students will progress through the music theory curriculum by passing both their current course level and an end of the year exam.

Music Theory Courses

THEORY LEVEL 1

Focuses on the foundational skills of music literacy. By using solfege and Takadimi rhythm syllables, students will improve their sight singing and musical concentration. Students will learn basics of music notation and improve their ability to make connections between what is heard and what is seen, focusing on major tonality. They will gain a familiarity with the piano keyboard, including basic reading and two-hand independence, while gaining the ability to use the keyboard as a tool for greater theoretical understanding.

THEORY LEVEL 2

In addition to deepening the skills learned in Theory Level 1, students will learn about the acoustical foundations of Western harmony. Students will sing, read, and play melodies, bass lines, and harmonies to increase their understanding of multi-part music. Students will learn intervals and deepen their familiarity with minor tonality. They will explore more advanced keyboard skills such as basic tonic-dominant progressions and more advanced two-part reading.

THEORY LEVEL 3

In addition to deepening the skills learned in Theory 2, students will learn about chord progressions and how composers use harmony and traditional musical forms to satisfy or deny listener expectations. Students will study more complex rhythms and more advanced tonal concepts, including basic chromaticism. They will increase their keyboard skills, including harmonizing a melody and playing from a lead sheet.

JAZZ THEORY

Jazz Theory begins the application of concepts learned in traditional theory to the jazz art form. Students will reinforce basic theory skills which include the treble and bass clef, diatonic and chromatic intervals, major and relative minor scales, key signatures and chord

construction, through class and keyboard practice. Students will study the application of the major and minor pentatonic scale, the blues scale, the modes of the major scale, the harmonic minor scale and it's 5th mode in improvisation on II-V-I, the 12-measure major and minor blues, and the "So What" chord progressions. Students will build ear-training skills by dictation and singing of diatonic and chromatic intervals and selected standard song repertoire. Students will begin to learn the "jazz language" through listening and study of jazz melodic vocabulary. There will be a thorough investigation of common chord substitution, particularly pertaining to the 12 bar-blues and "I Got Rhythm" changes. Piano skills include 3-7-6-9 voicings with alterations, and the ability to play standard repertoire through 12 keys in a solo piano style. The sight singing/ear training will extend to all intervals within an octave, both diatonic and chromatic, ascending and descending. also get an in-depth view of the other art forms through frequent presentations by students from other departments.

ELECTIVES

Academy students, regardless of department, may participate in Music Department elective courses. Some courses are open to all students and some are audition based ensembles. Courses meet twice a week, either on Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday. Jazz Choir and Academy Big Band are exceptions to that schedule and meet all four days.

ALL WEEK ELECTIVE COURSES

JAZZ CHOIR /JAZZ CHOIR COMBO

Audition required

*(voice, guitar, bass, piano, drums only)

This vocal jazz ensemble travels to competitions and performs high-level jazz repertoire with tight jazz harmonies, often with one person on each part. There are lots of opportunities for solos, including vocal improvisation known as "scatting." This group is also open to instrumentalists who want to sing jazz. Audition required A small group of rhythm section instruments accompanies the jazz choir and travels with them to competitions.

ACADEMY BIG BAND

Audition required

*(trumpet, sax, trombone, guitar, bass, drums, and piano given preference)

This large jazz ensemble travels to competitions and performs high-level jazz repertoire. Students will work on music reading, improvising, and playing as an ensemble in the jazz style. Audition required

MONDAY/WEDNESDAY ELECTIVE COURSES

MUSICAL THEATER FOR NON-MAJORS

The course is designed to introduce both new and experienced students to the concept of working as an ensemble. Each class will consist of a vocal and physical warm-up, followed by music and lyric memorization and then staging and rehearsing the piece in preparation of an informal performance.

MUSIC TECHNOLOGY

*No experience or equipment is necessary for this course

In this course, students will learn basic computer music production and audio engineering. Students will begin working in Apple Garageband and then progress to Logic Pro X. Students who have interest in other major DAWs (FL Studio, Ableton Live, ProTools, etc.) may receive one on one training in those programs. All students will learn how to create, produce, mix and master music in a computer program. Alongside computer production, students will be able to explore hardware synthesis and production (samplers, sequencers, etc.), as well learn basic MIDI concepts and recording techniques. Students may take this course multiple times with approval from course teacher and administration.

BRAZILIAN ENSEMBLE

In this ensemble, students play on authentic Brazilian percussion instruments and learn rhythms from the traditional Samba Schools as well as explore the culture and history of Brazil. Players will learn all the parts, but also have to listen to, and respond to the lead drum in a call and response style.

TUESDAY / THURSDAY ELECTIVE COURSES

CONTEMPORARY VOCAL TECHNIQUE

Students will learn to sing contemporary music while employing healthy vocal technique. Vocal literature may include contemporary selections from the pop, R&B, country, and musical theater genres.

MOTOWN, R&B BAND

This mixed ensemble of voices and instruments rehearses and performs pop hits from the Motown era of music from the 50's through the 70's. Works by the Supremes, The Temptations, Gladys Knight and the Pips, the Jackson 5 and others will be performed.

MUSIC COMPOSITION

In this course, students will design and complete their own composition projects while learning many useful skills for composers. As they work to build their own portfolios of original compositions, students will study related topics such as orchestration, music notation, and music technology. When possible, students will perform each other's music and offer helpful feedback.