Music

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Academic Programs

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The Bachelor of Arts in Music introduces a student to the role of music in today's world, helps form personal goals, and provides the discipline, skills, and knowledge to accomplish those goals. The program develops musical skills, encourages creativity, and cultivates vision for the future. The University's polytechnic emphasis also provides an excellent opportunity to explore music in conjunction with a wide range of other fields. Graduates are prepared to begin specialized study at the graduate level and to enter a wide variety of professional careers.

The Music Department is a valuable resource for the non-music major. Its courses and performing ensembles are open to all students who wish to enrich their lives through music. Qualified students may explore the subject in depth by minoring in music.

The Music Department also serves as a cultural center for both the university and the community through a program of public performances by student and faculty groups and through clinics, workshops, concerts, and lectures by outstanding individuals from outside the university.

Acceptance into the music major program requires a demonstrated ability on an instrument, in voice, or talent through other musical media, plus the ability to read music at a fundamental level.

Undergraduate Programs

BA Music

Designed for the student who wants a broad education in music, the Bachelor of Arts degree offers a balanced program of study in a wide range of subjects. In addition to the traditional emphasis on music theory, history, and performance, Cal Poly's program includes American music, music of non-Western cultures, and the application of sound design. The program provides a large number of elective courses which allows the student to concentrate in a particular area or combine music with other subjects.

Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements

1. All new students will take placement examinations in piano skills, music theory, and musicianship. Students who audition in person for the major will take the placement exams at the time of their audition. Students who submit a recording with their application will be contacted by the Music Department to schedule the placement exams during the application period. Separate auditions are required for assignment to performing ensembles. Students who wish to take piano, theory, or musicianship courses beyond the beginning level must pass the appropriate placement test. Regardless of courses taken prior to coming to Cal Poly, students are required to remedy deficiencies before enrolling in advanced music theory or music history courses.

2. Each music major must be enrolled in at least 6 units of music courses each quarter, including a performance ensemble and lessons, until curricular requirements are met. (See the Department for details regarding appropriate ensembles and applied study policies.) Each student enrolled in private instruction must take an applied music jury at the end of Spring Quarter.

3. Each student is required to attend a minimum of 6 concerts per quarter.

4. At the end of the sixth quarter of enrollment a student must take a mid-point evaluation to verify progress and potential in music. External transfer students must take the theory and musicianship portions of the mid-point evaluation at the beginning of their first quarter of enrollment; they must take performance skills (jury) and piano proficiency exams by the end of their third quarter of enrollment. The testing timetable for internal transfers will be established on a case-by-case basis. The mid-point evaluation includes the following:

   a. individual performance skills (should be at the MU 250 level; tested through a jury)
   b. musicianship skills up through the level of Musicianship III
   c. knowledge of music theory up through the level of Theory II
   d. piano proficiency (see No. 5 below)

5. Each student must pass examinations in six areas of piano proficiency (repertoire, sightreading, transposition, harmonization of a melody, accompanying, score-reading) as part of the mid-point evaluation.

6. Use of Music Department instruments, scheduled practice rooms, electronic studio, or lockers requires a Music Use Fee. See the Music Department Office for details.

7. It is important that each student stay closely in touch with his/her advisor in order to progress through the music major program in the most efficient manner.

8. The Music Department is not able to offer the full complement of performing ensembles and private instruction during the Summer Quarter; it is important to take this into consideration when planning coursework for completion of the major.

A music major handbook giving complete details of the program, policies, and forms is available from the Music Department.

Music Minor

A minor is available to students who desire documented competency in music. An individualized curriculum (incorporating theory, history, and performance) based on the following guidelines is developed in consultation with a member of the music faculty. Students must complete one academic music lecture course at Cal Poly, such as MU 101 or MU 120, before applying for the minor. Information and application forms for the declaration of a Music minor are available in the Music Department Office, as well as online at www.music.calpoly.edu.