

# Major Possibilities: Music



## Summary

- A bachelor's degree in music, with its emphasis on performance, analysis, and critical interpretation, provides a foundation for careers in education, business, communications, and the arts.
- While music is a performing art, few individuals are able to support themselves as full-time musicians. Many music majors elect to combine performing with jobs that allow them to be closely related to music in the workplace.
- The study of music develops skills ranging from musical expression to analysis of musical works. Music also develops the ability to concentrate intensely, to listen introspectively, observe keenly, work under pressure, meet deadlines, and to maintain composure when faced with the unexpected.

## Music major synopsis

Within the Music curriculum, students may develop a high degree of proficiency in one or more instruments and study significant musical masterpieces from the Renaissance to the modern era in order to gain an understanding of the creative processes involved in composition and performance. They will also gain an appreciation for the role of music in both Western and non-Western cultures. The Music Department, accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music, offers two degrees, the Bachelor of Arts with a major in Music, and the Bachelor of Music with four possible emphases: Education, Literature, Performance, and Theory/Composition. Students can pursue teacher certification in music education as well. An audition/interview is required for all students desiring admission to a music degree program. Two music theory courses, Solfege/Ear Training and Music Theory I: Harmony in Practice, are required for all Music students. Music majors must pass the Sophomore Barrier Examination and keyboard proficiency examination to continue study.

## Sample occupational areas

### Music Industry

The music industry encompasses many career fields, including communication, business, sales, manufacturing, publishing, and more. The recording industry is also included in this category. Graduates who go into the music industry usually also have experience in business. The recording industry is huge, including technological careers that deal with the studio work of recording, production careers that include the duplication and packaging of the recordings and promotional material, and administrative careers that deal with promotion, research, and budgeting. Careers are also available dealing with sales or legal issues.

### Performance

It is difficult to professionally perform music of any kind. Advice given repeatedly is to develop musical talent, ambition, and showmanship. It is important to find internships, workshops, and competitions in which to participate and gain recognition. Research the performance options in your own community, read the local newspapers' calendar sections, and look for the entertainment listings on the web for your town, city, or region. All performance careers start locally!

### Media

There are many types of media in which a graduate with a degree in music can become involved: television, radio, internet, newspapers, magazines, and more. Careers are available in a variety of fields within each type of media. There are jobs in composition, scoring, production, editing, clearing copyrights, licensing, criticism, journalism, and performance. In order to jump ahead of the competition, many students take classes in journalism, communication, or broadcasting. Completing an internship at a television or radio station may also help in finding a job after graduation.

### Arts Management

Arts organizations, like most for-profit companies and non-profit organizations, have a number of administrative, business, or management functions. These roles require people with creativity and an understanding and passion for the arts, as well as skills in a range of areas from finance and marketing to education. Opera companies, concert halls, theaters, and symphonies and choirs are all in need of managers and other administrative workers to write press releases, market the productions in the community, and create visibility, among other things.

### Other

*Composers* often write works on commission. They may create music for movies, jingles, multi-media projects, CD-ROMs, Broadway revues, or they may arrange the work of other composers. Composers need knowledge of the latest technology in computer publishing and composing. They should also know how to play more than one instrument.

*Conductors* may not only conduct and perform, but also involve themselves in programming, supervising personnel, and working in educational programs. At the level of the smaller community and metropolitan orchestras, the conductor may have to function as a jack-of-all-trades, raising funds, rehearsing, scheduling, and performing.

*Music therapists* use music to restore, maintain, or improve physical or mental health. They can be found at hospitals, treatment centers, nursing homes, hospices, rehabilitation centers, prisons, and mental health clinics. Students should take classes in psychology and education and volunteer in rehabilitation settings.

*Music teachers* can teach at elementary or secondary schools as well as in colleges or universities or private studios. Students interested in becoming teachers should acquire a teaching certificate and gain experience working with children through volunteer or part time work.

*Music librarians* can be found in public and academic libraries, radio and television stations, music publishers, and professional music associations. They can work with collections of music books, recordings, musical scores, and periodicals associated with music.

*Music critics* are a unique combination of journalist and musician. Their views are published daily and affect both their audience and the music which they critique. Nearly half of music critics have earned at least a master's degree.

### **Sample job titles**

#### **Arts, Media and Entertainment**

Advertising Executive  
Arranger  
Choir Director  
Composer  
Conductor  
Critic  
Disc Jockey  
Film Music Editor  
Music Director  
Music Librarian

#### **Performer**

Promoter  
Publishing Specialist  
Recording Technician  
Reporter  
Software Programmer  
Sound Engineer/Mixer  
Therapist  
Voice Teacher

#### **Industry and Commerce**

Acoustical Engineer  
Architectural Acoustic Monitor  
Copyist  
Copyright Specialist  
Instrument Service & Repair  
Music Store Manager  
PR Specialist  
Private Instructor  
Software Programmer  
Stringer

#### **Government, Service & Educ.**

AmeriCorps Volunteer  
Attorney  
Church Choir Director  
Church Organist  
Ethnomusicologist  
Language Teacher  
Music Director  
Music Teacher  
Musicologist  
University Professor

### **Sample internship employers of SU students**

American Institute of Musical Studies (Austria)  
American Symphony Orchestra (Washington, DC)  
The American University (Washington, DC)  
Astralwerks Music Label (Manhattan, NY)  
Austin Lyric Opera (Austin, TX)  
First United Methodist Church (Georgetown, TX)  
Georgetown High School Music Department (Georgetown, TX)  
GLCA: Good Music (Sony BMG) (New York, NY)

Glimmerglass Opera (Cooperstown, NY)  
Kennedy Center for Performing Arts (Washington, DC)  
Lyric Opera of Chicago (Chicago, IL)  
The Magazine Publishers of America  
Maine State Music Theatre (Brunswick, ME)  
The Museum of Modern Art  
Pace University (New York, NY)  
Rock-It Science Music (Hollywood, CA)

### **Sample full-time employers of SU grads**

Accreditation and Research Assistant (National Association of Schools of Music)  
AmeriCorps Volunteer  
Assistant Choir Director (Canyon ISD)  
Assistant Director (Language Stars)  
Associate Instructor (Indiana University)  
Band Director (Troy ISD)  
Customer Service Representative (Guaranty Bank)  
Choir Director (Alvin ISD)  
Choir Director (Cypress-Fairbanks ISD)  
Credit Services Assistant  
Director of Music (First Presbyterian Church)  
Editor (Spring Hollow Press)

Educational Instruction Director (National Notary Association)  
English Teacher (Fulbright Scholarship)  
Mortgage Servicing (Bank of America)  
Music Specialist (Georgetown ISD)  
Music Teacher (KIPP 3D Academy)  
Office Manager (Fired Up)  
Program Coordinator (The Woodlands Township)  
Technician (Sullico)  
Technical Support Specialist (Southwestern University IS)  
Touring Technical Director (Kennedy Center)  
Voice & Piano Instructor (Albertson School of Music)  
Voice Teacher – Georgetown Music Studio

### **Professional associations**

American Federation of Musicians: [www.afm.org](http://www.afm.org)  
American Guild of Musical Artists: [www.musicalartists.org](http://www.musicalartists.org)  
American Music Therapy Association: [www.musictherapy.org](http://www.musictherapy.org)  
American Society of Composers, Authors & Publishers: [www.ascap.com](http://www.ascap.com)  
American Music Therapy Association: [www.musictherapy.org/careers/employment/](http://www.musictherapy.org/careers/employment/)  
Delta Omicron, Intern'l. Music Fraternity: [www.delta-omicron.org](http://www.delta-omicron.org)  
International Computer Music Assoc.: [www.computermusic.org](http://www.computermusic.org)  
National Association for Musical Education: [www.nafme.org](http://www.nafme.org)  
Production Music Association: [www.pmamusic.com](http://www.pmamusic.com)  
Recording Industry Association of America: [www.riaa.com](http://www.riaa.com)  
Songwriters Guild of America: [www.songwritersguild.com](http://www.songwritersguild.com)

### **Additional Web resources**

Careers in Music: [www.careersinmusic.com/](http://www.careersinmusic.com/)  
A Career Guide for Music Majors: [http://finearts.utexas.edu/sites/files/cofa/music\\_career\\_guide\\_july\\_2015.pdf](http://finearts.utexas.edu/sites/files/cofa/music_career_guide_july_2015.pdf)  
Musical America Worldwide: [jobs.musicalamerica.com](http://jobs.musicalamerica.com)  
Media Match Magazine: [www.media-match.com/usa/music](http://www.media-match.com/usa/music)  
U.S. Navy Music Program: [www.navyband.navy.mil](http://www.navyband.navy.mil)  
Warner Brothers, Careers: [www.warnerbroscareers.com](http://www.warnerbroscareers.com)  
Berklee College of Music: Careers: [www.berklee.edu/careers/](http://www.berklee.edu/careers/)  
Artists House Music: [www.artistshousemusic.org/](http://www.artistshousemusic.org/)  
Bureau of Labor Statistics: [www.bls.gov/ooh/Entertainment-and-Sports/Musicians-and-singers.htm](http://www.bls.gov/ooh/Entertainment-and-Sports/Musicians-and-singers.htm)

### **Career Services' print resources**

100 Careers in the Music Business  
All You Need to Know About the Music Business  
Beyond Talent: Creating a Successful Career in Music  
Career Opportunities in Education and Related Services  
Career Opportunities in Journalism  
Career Opportunities in the Music Industry  
Career Opportunities in Theatre and the Performing Arts  
Careers for Music Lovers and Other Tuneful Types

Careers in Social & Rehabilitation Services  
Great Jobs for Music Majors  
How to Be a Working Musician  
Opportunities in Music Careers  
Singing for Your Supper  
This Business of Music  
Vault Career Guide to Media and Entertainment