**Proposal: Modification of the Bachelor of Arts in Music**

Date of implementation: August 2018

We propose a Bachelor of Arts in Music within one of the contexts for liberal arts degree programs, per the NASM guidelines.1 The new concentration in the Liberal Arts BA degree will include breadth of general studies in the arts, humanities, or the social sciences. Students who choose this degree program will earn a degree called *Bachelor of Arts in Music: Liberal Arts*. However, students in the current concentrations of the B.A. will continue to earn a degree called *Bachelor of Arts in Music* with an emphasis in an area of musicianship (e.g., performance, composition, musicology, theory, or jazz studies).

**Rationale**

The Bachelor of Arts in Music, as it now exists, requires an audition for entry into the major. The audition process facilitates placement with faculty for private lessons and participation in appropriate ensembles; however, this requirement excludes from the School students who do not have significant prior musical training. It also excludes students who specialize in performance traditions the School has not historically taught: most notably, popular music and the many traditional musics of the world. In addition, the requirement that students have prior expertise in Euro-American “classical” music has limited our efforts to increase the diversity of our School.

We receive 4-6 unsolicited inquiries per year from students who want to study music, but who cannot access our major programs due to the audition requirement. We believe such students should be given the chance to benefit from a broad curriculum about the theory, history, and cultures of music. The addition of a Liberal Arts concentration that does not require an audition, similar to tracks in the proposed BS in Music degree, will open the doors of our School to more students with diverse interests and experiences in music.

The proposed Liberal Arts concentration is flexible by design. All students complete a set of core courses in music theory, musicianship, and music cultures, and all participate in ensembles appropriate to their interests and experience.[[1]](#footnote-1) The core is designed to give the student basic knowledge of world music, Euro-American concert music, and African American music; facility with the skills and concepts of music theory; and keyboard skills. Beyond that core, one student might focus on the anthropology of music, choosing electives that expand the student’s knowledge of world repertories; another might choose elective courses in composition and audio recording. Still another might choose to develop skills across the musical disciplines, with coursework in conducting, advanced aural skills, composition, theory, and history. Our major curricula in Music are packed with requirements and relatively inflexible; this initiative adds flexibility. Unlike the BS in Music, this degree does not require a technical specialization such as computer science or music business; it allows the student to pursue humanistic knowledge in music under the direction of an advisor.

The proposed Bachelor of Arts leaves intact the existing BA program, which offers concentrations in music theory, jazz studies, musicology, and performance: an audition will remain necessary for these concentrations. We propose to add the option of a Liberal Arts concentration, which will serve students who want to focus on humanistic or other aspects of music. The proposed Liberal Arts concentration has modified core requirements and more room for electives. It does not require an audition or performance on a European musical instrument. The student must perform in ensembles, but these can be world music, band, orchestral, or chamber ensembles, depending on the needs and skills of the student. Several of our ensembles (West African drumming; Steel Pan; Andean ensemble; Gospel Choir; Kora) do not require prior musical experience. If the student in the Liberal Arts concentration wants to participate in ensembles that require an audition, or in vocal or instrumental studio instruction, the student is welcome to audition for that ensemble or studio by the regular procedures.

Whereas Music curricula have tended toward a pre-professional focus that is particular to Music, the proposed concentration more closely resembles humanities majors elsewhere on campus, such as those in History of Art, English (Literature concentration), or Comparative Studies. A student can arrive at Ohio State and then decide to major in one of these fields without extensive prior experience in that field; with the addition of the Liberal Arts concentration, that will also be true for Music.

Students who make inquiries about entering the Music major after their arrival at Ohio State are frequently those who, early in their academic careers, decide they do not like the major they initially chose. As a considerable number of students have not been exposed to formal music study before coming to college, some may be attracted to our program when they take a GE course in music. The Liberal Arts concentration is also very likely to attract double-majors with other disciplines. The School of Music lost a number of its double-majors in the semester conversion; having a more flexible major may help us gain back such students.

We anticipate that this concentration will attract 3-4 students in its first year of offering, then grow to approximately 7-10 concentrators per year. This is not a large number, but it would be a significant increase in the overall number of music majors. As the concentration requires no new courses or new faculty, even these modest numbers would justify offering it.

**Comparison with other institutions**

The Liberal Arts B.A. in Music is not common in midwestern Schools of Music, but this kind of B.A. degree is commonplace at first-rank research universities and liberal arts colleges (Harvard, Cornell, Reed College).

The University of Minnesota’s School of Music has a B.A. degree of this type; we have consulted with faculty there in designing this concentration. At Minnesota, they found that a number of students who wanted to enroll in the Liberal Arts B.A. were interested primarily in popular and non-western music; these students were put off by the traditional music history and theory sequences. For this reason we are proposing a set of core courses that aims to give the student experiences with classical, world, and African American music.

**Resources**

The School of Music is responsible for the major. Other departments will play supporting roles. A useful course for Liberal Arts concentrators will be Music 2208.22, Andean Music Ensemble, which is offered by Michelle Wibbelsman and cross-listed between Music and the Department of Spanish and Portuguese.

The addition of this concentration requires no new faculty and no new courses.  The concentration represents a new and distinctive path through our existing offerings, relying on existing courses in which we have the capacity to add students. We can easily add up to 10 students without affecting the number of sections offered or the quality of instruction. If more than 10 students per year enroll, we may at that time need to add a section to a music theory course; this would be accomplished by reassigning a GTA position. A GTA would also need to be assigned to Music 2244 if that course grows sufficiently large.

Should this new concentration prove attractive to students, it will bring into the School of Music constituencies we have not served before, particularly those with a sustained interest in popular music, musical theater, or a variety of kinds of world music. Although we can support the proposed program with existing faculty, it would surely be stronger if we were also permitted to recruit faculty who could support these interests with courses in music theory, performance, and cultures/repertories. At this time, the School of Music offers courses in the history and cultures of music around the world, including several genres of popular music, film music, and video game music. We also offer performance courses in African drumming, African kora, and Caribbean Steel Pan. We could go further in offering performance courses in rock or musical theater, but at present we do not have the resources to broaden our instruction in this way. We will remain observant about the needs and wishes of our students as we move forward.

The new BA Liberal Arts concentration is advisor-driven. Several faculty members have volunteered to advise BA Liberal Arts concentrators in matters of course selection and future planning. There are enough willing faculty that the increase in advising load for each faculty member will be quite small. In addition, we have an undergraduate advisor for music majors (Dr. Stephanie Rinehart): she would also have a role in managing these students.

The BA Liberal Arts concentration will have little or no effect on our use of facilities. These added students would effectively replace students lost during semester conversion: we have seats for them.

**Faculty who would participate in offering the major**

Core courses:

Music Theory Area (Gawboy, Devaney, Stimson, associated faculty and graduate associates)

Musicology Area (Skinner, Fosler-Lussier, Ashby)

Keyboard Area (Williams, graduate associates)

Ensembles:

Requiring no prior experience: Steel Pan Ensemble, African Performing Ensemble--kora (Skinner), African Performing Ensemble—Drumming (Sy), Andean Ensemble (Wibbelsman), Gospel Choir (Ruffin)

Choral Ensembles (by audition): MacMullen, Ward

Bands (by audition): Mikkelson, Jones, Hedgecoth

Orchestras (by audition): TBD

Electives: students will be able to take elective courses with nearly all School of Music faculty. Upper-level courses are offered in Jazz, Media and Enterprise, Music Theory, and Musicology. Students may enroll in studio classes by audition and permission of the instructor.

Advisors:

Danielle Fosler-Lussier, Musicology Area (American music, classical musics)

Anna Gawboy, Music Theory Area (music analysis, performance, aural skills)

David Hedgecoth, Music Education and Ensemble Area (performance, conducting)

Kristina MacMullen (voice, choral studies, and conducting)

Ryan Skinner, Musicology Area (African and African-American music, world musics)

Shawn Wallace, Jazz Area (Jazz, popular music styles, careers in music performance)

Juliet White-Smith, Strings Area (performance, chamber music)

Ken Williams, Keyboard Area (performance, pedagogy)

**Entry into the BA Liberal Arts concentration; requirements**

After completing Theory I and one ensemble registration, the student and advisor will decide (based on the results of those courses and the student’s completion of a statement of purpose) whether the student is working toward a Liberal Arts music major or toward a music minor. The student completes the major application form (see appendix) and brings it to the advisor for discussion and possible approval. If the advisor believes the student should be admitted to the major, the advisor forwards the signed form to the School of Music advising staff so that they become aware of the student.

Theory I and II and Aural Training I and II (Music 2221 and 2222, 2224 and 2225) are part of the list of courses approved for the minor; if the student chooses not to continue in the major or does not qualify, that person can count these courses toward the minor.[[2]](#footnote-2)

Students in the Liberal Arts BA will have to pass the assessment or barrier exams that are part of our regular Theory I and II courses. Right now there are four exams (all of them timed) in Theory I and three in Theory II.[[3]](#footnote-3) If the student does not pass any of these exams, s/he is given an incomplete and must retake the exam within the first six weeks of the following semester (the time limit on incompletes), or the incomplete turns to an E. Students can use Music Theory Skill Builder and MacGamut independently to remediate their skills and/or hire a tutor. Students in the Liberal Arts B.A. will be given extra time to complete these exams, because some of these students will have less background coming into the course sequence.

By university rule, BA students must earn a C- or better in all courses in the major.

**Changes to existing offerings**

At this time, Music 2241 (Music History II, Bach to Debussy) requires Music 2240 (Music History I) as a prerequisite. We will amend the description of Music 2241 to no longer require this prerequisite; earlier music that is necessary to understand music taught in Music 2241 will be covered as necessary in brief online lessons.

**Accreditation**

The proposed degree conforms to the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) guidelines for a Liberal Arts degree in Music, as follows:

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|  | NASM guideline | Proposed B.A. in Music (Liberal Arts) |
| general studies and general electives | 55-70% | 56-59%  general education 48%  university electives 8-11% |
| musicianship | 20-25% | 21% |
| performance and music electives | 10-20% | 18-23% |
| combined musicianship, performance, and music electives | 30-45% | 38-43% |

The Ohio State University’s General Education curriculum requires coursework in mathematics and the sciences, the arts, literature, history, and writing, as well as basic competence in a foreign language (3 semesters).

Students in this degree program will develop the following skills, as articulated in the NASM Handbook (VII.D.2 and VII.D.3, p. 95):

* + - • “The ability to hear, identify, and work conceptually with the elements of music such as rhythm, melody, harmony, structure, timbre, texture” and “an understanding of and the ability to read and realize musical notation,” developed in Music Theory, Aural Training, and Musicology coursework and refined in elective courses. The BA student will not necessarily be expected to reach the level of fluency with notation that is demanded of the BM (professional) student. The BA student takes two keyboard skills courses instead of the four or more courses required of BM students. But the BA student should by the end of the core course sequence be able to make sense of notated music (for example, reading through a score slowly at the piano).
    - • “An understanding of compositional processes, aesthetic properties of style, and the ways these shape and are shaped by artistic and cultural forces,” as well as “an acquaintance with a wide selection of musical literature, the principal eras, genres, and cultural sources” and “an ability to address culture and history from a variety of perspectives.” The knowledge and skills described here are developed in Music Theory and Musicology coursework, including required courses that cover Western concert music, traditional and popular world musics, and African American traditions; and they are further refined in the many courses that require writing, two of which are required for the degree.
    - • “The ability to develop and defend musical judgments.” These skills are developed throughout the core required music courses, and strengthened in the elective courses that require writing.
    - • “Ability in performing areas at levels consistent with the goals and objectives of the specific liberal arts degree program being followed.” Four ensemble registrations will be required. All BA students are welcome to audition for the School’s many ensembles. If the student enters with little or no competence on an instrument associated with Western art music traditions, that student will enroll in our Ethnomusicology ensembles (African Drumming, African Kora, Steel Pan, Andean Ensemble) or the Gospel Choir, which provide meaningful performance experiences in a variety of styles and traditions. Students who wish to continue their participation in Ensembles past the required number may count two additional registrations as electives.
    - • “Understanding of procedures for realizing a variety of musical styles.” Students will develop the basics in two Keyboard Skills courses, in Aural Training, and through their participation in ensembles. Form and style are also investigated in the Music Theory and Musicology course sequences.
    - • “Knowledge and/or skills in one or more areas of music beyond basic musicianship appropriate to the individual’s needs and interests, and consistent with the purposes of the specific liberal arts degree program being followed.” Depending on the interests of the student, the knowledge gained through elective coursework may include composition, conducting, audio recording, anthropology of music, psychology of music, philosophy of music, music theory, music history, studies in particular world areas, or other related fields. Several courses concurrent with graduate courses in musicology (Music 4555.01-11) are open by permission, offering exceptional opportunities for advanced study.

**Proposed Catalog Description (if the Liberal Arts Concentration is described together with the existing B.A.)**

**Music**

**Degree: BA**

**Campus:** Columbus

**College:** Arts and Sciences

The School of Music offers the Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in music for students who are interested in the artistic and humanistic aspects of music. All B.A. students in music develop skills in **performing, listening, thinking and writing about music**. All become familiar with many kinds of music and approaches to music-making.

Two forms of the B.A. degree are available, one without and one with an audition requirement. **Without audition**, students may pursue a Liberal Arts B.A. in music, which is flexible by design. In the Liberal Arts B.A., one student might focus on the anthropology of music, choosing electives that introduce world repertories; another might choose elective courses in composition and audio recording. Still another might choose to develop skills across the musical disciplines, with coursework in conducting, advanced aural skills, composition, theory, and history. **Available by audition** is the B.A. degree that includes studio instruction in the performance of Western classical music or jazz. Within the B.A., students may concentrate in classical or jazz performance, musicology, or music theory, or develop their own specialized programs.

The B.A. student in Music will take 27-44 credits in the program’s music core, at least 58 credits of the program’s General Education (GE) requirements and 19 or more credits of electives.

**Proposed Catalog Description (if the Liberal Arts Concentration is described separately from the existing B.A.)**

**Music: Liberal Arts**

**Degree: BA**

**Campus:** Columbus

**College:** Arts and Sciences

The Bachelor of Arts in Music (Liberal Arts concentration) offers students a broad musical education. This degree does not require prior expertise in musical performance. Students gain basic skills in performance, music theory, and keyboard practice, and they become familiar with many kinds of music and approaches to music-making.

This flexible degree program allows a great deal of choice in defining a suitable program of study. One student might focus on the anthropology of music, choosing electives in world music or popular music; another might choose elective courses in digital music and audio recording. Still another might choose to develop skills across the musical disciplines, with coursework in conducting, composition, theory, and history. Students will leave this program as active and knowledgeable participants in musical life.

The B.A. student in Music will take 27-33 credits in the program’s music and non-music core, at least 58 credits of the program’s General Education (GE) requirements and 30-36 credits of electives.

**BA in Music (Liberal Arts) application form**

Student Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Name.# \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Current status at OSU: \_\_\_ First-year \_\_\_Transfer \_\_\_Current OSU student

Music courses completed to date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Please write a detailed paragraph describing your areas of interest in music and your goals in this degree program. What do you hope to achieve?

Approved:

Advisor’s name and .#: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Advisor’s signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) Handbook IV.C.4.b, p. 87, (‘Undergraduate Programs: Degree Structures: Liberal Arts Degrees’): “The music content shall include performance, musicianship, and elective studies in music. Normally, the orientation is toward a broad coverage of music rather than intensive concentration on a single segment or specialization.” As NASM specifies (VII.B.1.a-b, p. 93-94), a Liberal Arts degree in Music can either be characterized by “breadth of general studies in the arts and humanities, the natural and physical sciences, and the social sciences. Music study is also general; there is little or no specialization.” [or] “The degree focus is breadth of general studies combined with studies in musicianship and an area of emphasis in music such as performance, theory, music history and literature, music industry, and so forth.” Our proposed degree allows for either of these options, determined in consultation with the advisor. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. NASM HandbookII.H.1.b, p. 68: **“**As a matter of sound educational practice, institutions recruit and admit students only to programs or curricula for which they show aptitudes and prospects for success.” [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. NASM HandbookV.D.1, p. 90: “Auditions and Evaluations. At some point prior to confirmation of degree candidacy, member institutions must require auditions, examinations, or other evaluations consistent with the purpose of the degree as part of the admission decision.” V.D.2, p. 90: “The musical background required for admission to curricula leading to an undergraduate degree in music must include the ability to relate musical sound to notation and terminology both quickly and accurately enough to undertake basic musicianship studies in the freshman year.” Here we interpret “freshman year” to mean within the first year of participation in the program, as students may not enter as freshmen. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)