

## CLASSICAL INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

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The NOCCA Classical Instrumental Music Department accepts talented students who have an aptitude and interest in pursuing classical music instrumental performance. Academic and performance standards are the same for all students, whether or not a career path is ultimately followed.

The Classical Instrumental Program offers extensive pre-professional training to intermediate and advanced instrumental students in Piano, Strings, Brass, Winds, and Guitar. Instruction will focus on areas such as exploration of the standard repertoire, chamber music, theory, musicianship/ear training, as well as scales, etudes, and accompaniment.

The Classical Instrumental Music Curriculum is designed to develop and maintain total musicianship, and prepare students for auditions and admittance into university colleges of music or conservatories. Applied classes in classical instrumental technique and repertoire are at the heart of the curriculum. Other curriculum elements include Music Theory, Musicianship (ear training and sight-singing), Chamber Music, Accompanying, Music Appreciation, and Music History, with the goal of developing fully educated musicians and effective performers. During a student's tenure, he or she undergoes periodic counseling sessions with music faculty to discuss progress and overall assessment.

### **Admission and Advancement**

Students currently in 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> grade can apply for the 3-day Prep Program offered for Middle School students. Students currently in 8<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> grade can apply for the 5-day High School Program. It is strongly recommended that all students first attend the NOCCA Classical Instrumental Audition Information Session before attempting the official NOCCA Classical Instrumental Audition. In order to have the necessary skills required to pass the NOCCA audition, students should have been taking private music lessons (one-on-one) for at least one full year with a professional and qualified classical instructor that is a specialist for their instrument.

**At the audition:** Any student applying for any instrument will need to prepare to perform (1) two \*contrasting pieces, such as a movement of a Sonata, Sonatina, Concerto, Two-part Invention, Etude, Characteristic Piece, etc., and (2) demonstrate skills in major/minor scales and sight-reading music. It is recommended that the audition pieces best demonstrate the student's ability to play in both technical and lyrical styles. Scales for all instruments must be performed from memory. (3) Students should be able to discuss their grades and express a strong self-drive and motivation to advance in their art form. (4) Students may be given a test in elemental music theory, so that they are placed at the most suitable theory level should they be accepted at the Classical Instrumental Program at NOCCA. Please see below for specific requirements concerning each instrument/area.

\*"Contrasting" refers to two different time periods (i.e. Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Impressionistic, Contemporary). In order to show different types of skills (technical, musical, etc.), students may choose one fast and one slow piece, but that is not a requirement and what is meant with "contrasting." Students should not play two pieces by the same composer or two movements of the same piece.

**Classical Piano:** In addition to preparing to perform (1) two contrasting pieces (see definition of contrasting above) from memory that best demonstrate student's good sound, technique, sense of rhythm, expression, and overall musicality, students will need to prepare (2) three scales of their own choosing and be able to perform them in a speed that is allowing the student to demonstrate evenness, good articulation, and correct fingering. It is highly recommended (but not mandatory) that the student is able to perform the scales in 2 to 4 octaves and hands together. In addition, (3) piano applicants may be given a short sight-reading test that is suitable for their level.

**Classical Strings (Violin, Viola, Cello, Double Bass):** In addition to preparing to perform (1) two contrasting pieces from memory, students will need to prepare (2) the following scales for the audition:

- Violin: G, A, B-flat major 2-octave scales for Prep; two 3-octave scales for High School (1 major/1 melodic minor)
- Viola: C, D major 2-octave scales for Prep; two 3-octave scales for High School (1 major/1 melodic minor)
- Cello: C, D major 2-octave scales for Prep; two 3-octave scales for High School (1 major/1 melodic minor)
- Bass: E, G major 1-octave scales for Prep; two 2-octave scales for High School (1 major/1 melodic minor)

And (3) string applicants may be given a short sight-reading test that is suitable for their level

**Classical Guitar:** Classical Guitar applicants will need to (1) demonstrate proper sitting position with a footstool showcasing good posture and left and right-hand position and function of the fingers as referenced in *Pumping Nylon* by Scott Tennant. (2) Perform two contrasting pieces from memory (see definition of contrasting above), such as a movement of a Sonata, Sonatina, Concerto, stand-alone piece, or Etude that demonstrate good sound technique, good sense of rhythm, expression, and overall musicality. (3) Demonstrate two-octave major scales (Segovia C-major moveable pattern) from 1<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> position and a first position chromatic scale on all six strings—alternation of index and middle fingers from the big knuckle should be evident. (4) Sight-Reading: students will need to successfully sight-read a short passage in first position.

**Classical Woodwinds (Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon, Saxophone), and Classical Brass (French Horn, Trumpet, Trombone, Euphonium, Tuba):** Students will need to prepare to perform (1) two contrasting pieces (see definition of contrasting above). Selected works may be chosen from standard works for the instrument (individual movements from a Concerto, Sonata, Etude or other solo work). Selections cannot be excerpts or individual parts from band or orchestra works. Audition pieces should best demonstrate the student's ability to play in both technical and lyrical styles. It is recommended (but not mandatory) that at least one of the selected pieces is performed from memory. (2) In addition, applicants must prepare at least three major scales of their own choosing (one or two octaves). Scales must be performed from memory. (3) Applicants should demonstrate proper posture and hand position for their instrument.

Accepted students for the regular 5-day **High School Program** 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, Musicianship, Music History, 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.

In certain cases, some High School students may be offered acceptance into the Classical Instrumental 3-day **Intro Program**, which is designed to help high school students prepare successfully for the regular High School Program. The Intro designation is only allowed for a one-year term. Students enrolled in the Intro Program would need to re-audition during the same school year in order to be considered for acceptance into the regular High School Program for the following school year, but acceptance is not guaranteed. Intro students are required to attend on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 4:00 to 6:30 p.m. during the regular school year at NOCCA. During the Intro year, students would be offered a group class in their area of specialization (for instance, guitar, violin, etc. or a close area of specialization); performance opportunities; and other classes delivered by the NOCCA Classical Instrumental Faculty that would benefit students' overall musical development. It is mandatory that the students continue to receive (or make arrangements to receive) regular private instruction with a NOCCA faculty approved specialist in their instrument of study at least twice a month; however, it is highly advisable that this individual instruction is on a weekly basis. This individual instruction is not provided nor paid for by NOCCA. Need-based financial aid may be available from the NOCCA Institute.

Accepted Middle School students are placed in the 3-day **Prep Program** offered for Middle School students. Prep students are required to attend on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 4:00 to 6:30 p.m. during the regular school year at NOCCA. Students enrolled in the Prep Program would need to re-audition when they are in 8<sup>th</sup> grade in order to be considered for acceptance into the regular high school program for the following school year, but acceptance is not guaranteed. During the Prep year(s), students would be offered a group class in their area of specialization (for instance, guitar, violin, etc. or a close area of specialization); performance opportunities; and other classes delivered by the NOCCA Classical Instrumental Faculty that would benefit students' overall musical development. It is mandatory that the students continue to receive (or make arrangements to receive) regular private instruction with a NOCCA faculty approved specialist in their instrument of study at least twice a month; however, it is highly advisable that this individual instruction is on a weekly basis. This individual instruction is not provided nor paid for by NOCCA. Need-based financial aid may be available from the NOCCA Institute.

### **Common Music Curriculum**

The Common Curriculum taken by all Music students is a course of musical study emphasizing the fundamentals of the 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, melodic and 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**

**Applied Lessons:** All students are required to take weekly applied lessons (commonly referred to as 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 Classical Instrumental Chair for approval at the beginning of the semester. Students who do not take applied lessons on a regular basis will be placed on probation and may be dismissed from the program.

**Chamber Music Class:** These classes focus upon learning chamber music works from various periods and styles in music history for the purpose of developing group 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. For the piano students, upon the decision of the Classical Instrumental Chair, the Chamber Music Class can be substituted with an Accompanying Class.

**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.

**Music Jury Requirement:** At the end of each semester, every student appears before a jury of faculty and guest artists to be evaluated, based on progress in Performance. Students are asked to perform scales, one etude (not memorized), and one memorized solo piece (or two solo pieces, in which case both pieces need to be memorized).

**Guest Artist Workshops and Masterclasses:** Classical instrumental students participate in regular guest artist Workshops and Masterclasses as part of their applied music training. The Workshops/Masterclasses 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.

**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 allowed without faculty's explicit permission.

## **Classical Instrumental Music Levels I-IV**

### **Classical Instrumental, Level I**

In addition to the Common Curriculum requirements noted above, by end of Level I classical instrumental students must:

- 1) Successfully perform a minimum of two solo pieces selected by faculty
- 2) Successfully perform assigned ensemble and chamber music
- 3) Display mastery of level-appropriate standard technique exercises
- 4) Master all assigned instrumental exercises in rhythm and harmony
- 5) Practice all major and minor scales from memory daily

### **Classical Instrumental, Level II & III**

In addition to the Common Curriculum requirements, by end of Level II & III, classical students must:

- 1) Successfully perform a minimum of four solo pieces more difficult content than Level I
- 2) Display mastery of level-appropriate standard technique exercises
- 3) Students must demonstrate awareness of theoretical, historical and performance practices associated with each of their pieces.
- 4) Practice all major and minor scales from memory daily
- 5) Perform any additional chamber music assignments that may be appropriate

### **Classical Instrumental, Level IV**

By end of Level IV, classical students must:

- 1) Present a minimum of 40 minutes long solo recital (by the end of the last semester)
- 2) Perform advanced chamber music that is deemed appropriate by faculty
- 3) Practice all major and minor scales from memory daily

## **Certificates in Music**

The Classical Instrumental 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.**