



CHIARTS MUSIC OVERVIEW AND AUDITION GUIDE



This guide is designed to help you prepare for the Music conservatory auditions and for considering ChiArts as an option for your high school. ChiArts is a wonderfully creative and educational environment, and we take our work seriously.

DECIDING IF CHIARTS MUSIC IS RIGHT FOR YOU

What can I expect from ChiArts Music?

Our programs are modeled on college-level Conservatory programs and tailored for high school students. It is a rigorous training program that is taught by professionals in their fields who have high standards of excellence and a commitment to training the next generation of artists. Classroom instruction is supplemented by a variety of performance opportunities in which training is put into practice. Whether or not a student chooses to ultimately pursue a career in the arts, the curriculum will provide a wide variety of learning opportunities and experiences that can benefit them throughout their lives and in whatever field they choose to pursue.

What does ChiArts Music expect from me?

The school day at ChiArts is from 8 am to 5 pm and includes some evening rehearsals and events. Students must have stamina and focus throughout the entire day and must be committed to both academic and arts education. Students are expected to arrive to each Dance class on time, fully prepared to work with all of their materials and dedicated to their craft and community. Students should be open to practicing sustained focus, taking risks, and providing a safe learning environment for others. Your attendance affects the work of your peers as well as yourself. So you must stay healthy, be organized and have your work completed and bring a positive and supportive attitude to every class, every day.

How do I decide which program(s) to audition for?

You can audition for two ChiArts programs. Select the one(s) that you have the most passion for. Once enrolled, transferring to another program at ChiArts is difficult if not impossible. So give serious consideration which program is going to be your first and second choice.

What is the difference between ChiArts and other high schools?

By coming to ChiArts, you receive fifteen (15) hours per week of free, intensive arts training. What we do, we do well. However, we are not all things to all people. We are different from some traditional high schools in that we do not offer as wide a range of activities as others may. For instance, we do not have a football team or a cheerleading squad or a drill team. Students need to think hard about the type of high school experience that they want. If you do come to ChiArts, you must readily accept that you will get a tremendous amount with regard to the arts but it means that there will not be some things that other high schools have.

AUDITION REQUIREMENTS FOR CHIARTS MUSIC

Required audition preparation

Instrumental (brass, wind, percussion, string, piano, guitar):

- Perform two contrasting solos or etudes (fast/slow), or one solo or etude with contrasting sections. Accompaniment is not allowed for instrumental auditions; each student must bring one additional copy of music to the audition for the adjudicators. Percussionists: bring your own sticks, and prepare the requested music on our website.
- Prepare two major scales of the student's choice and the chromatic scale.
- Sight-reading
- In some cases, students may be asked to stay or return for additional evaluation. No additional preparation is necessary.

Vocal:

- 2 contrasting (fast/slow) songs. An accompanist will be provided (bring sheet music in the appropriate key), or students may bring accompaniment on CD, MP3 player, smartphone, or tablet. (instrumental track only, no lip-synching). A capella (unaccompanied) singing is discouraged but permitted. Bring an additional copy of your music for the adjudicators.
You should perform songs (no matter how simple) that demonstrate the quality of your voice and clear articulation of the song's words. Patriotic songs, church hymns, some show tunes and art songs are appropriate. Popular music that imitates the style of a pop singer is not helpful in determining the quality of a young voice, and should be avoided. A piece that shows high notes and low notes is helpful. Students who are not sure about song choice should select from our preferred songs list, [which you can view here](#). Many Chicago Public Libraries have sheet music available for free checkout.
- Singers will participate in vocal exercises and warm-ups with the adjudicators for the purpose of determining vocal range.
- The audition will also include time for the adjudicators to ask the students questions about their training and goals.
- In some cases, students may be asked to stay or return for additional evaluation. No additional preparation is necessary.

Music: FAQ

Should students with very little Music experience apply?

Yes, ChiArts encourages students of all levels to apply.

If a student has many years of music training, should s/he apply?

Yes, students will be challenged no matter the experience they have had prior to attending ChiArts.

May students bring costumes or props to their audition?

Costumes or props are not allowed.

SCOPE & SEQUENCE BY MAJOR

Notice: In addition to coursework listed, ChiArts requires its music students to be enrolled in weekly private lessons starting in the freshman year for both instrumentalists and vocalists. Private lessons are to be taken outside of the regular school day.

VOICE

Freshman Year

Vocal Technique I
Choir
Music Theory
Keyboard Skills I
Acting I for Voice Majors

Sophomore Year

Vocal Technique II
Choir
Music Theory
Keyboard Skills II
Music History

Junior Year

Vocal Technique III
Choir
Keyboard Skills III
Professional Development
Elective

Senior Year

Vocal Technique IV
Choir
Music Technology
2 Electives

Electives may include:

Acting II for Voice Majors
AP Music Theory
Ballet/Movement
Composition
Musical Theatre for Voice Majors
Opera Workshop

Theatre Production

Vocal Jazz



STRINGS

Freshman Year

String Technique I
String Repertoire I
String Ensemble
Music Theory
Choral Experience

Sophomore Year

String Technique II
String Repertoire II
String Ensemble
Music Theory
Keyboard Skills I

Junior Year

String Technique III
String Ensemble
Music History
Professional Development
Elective

Senior Year

String Technique IV

String Ensemble
Music Technology
2 Electives

Electives may include:

AP Music Theory
Chamber Music
Chorale (by special permission)
Composition
Jazz Foundations and Repertoire
Keyboard Skills II/III
Movement

WINDS & BRASS

Freshman Year

Technique I
Repertoire I
Band
Music Theory
Choral Experience
Jazz Foundations & Repertoire by special permission

Sophomore Year

Technique II
Repertoire II
Band
Music Theory
Keyboard Skills I
Jazz by special permission

Junior Year

Technique III
Band
Professional Development
Music History
Elective

Senior Year

Technique IV
Band
Music Technology
2 Electives

Electives may include:

AP Music Theory
Chamber Music
Choir (by special permission)
Composition
Jazz
Keyboard Skills II/III
Movement

PERCUSSION

Freshman Year

Percussion Fundamentals
Drum Set Technique I
Music Theory
Keyboard Skills I
Jazz Foundations and Repertoire

Sophomore Year

Orchestral Percussion Technique
Music Theory
Choral Experience
Percussion Ensemble/Wind Ensemble (Band)
Option of Jazz Combo, Music History or Drum Set Technique II and Improvisation

Junior Year

Advanced Percussion Technique
Afro-Cuban Percussion
Music Technology
Percussion Ensemble/Wind Ensemble (Band)
Option of Jazz Combo, Music History or Drum Set Technique II and Improvisation

Senior Year

Audition Prep and Repertoire for Percussion
Keyboard Skills II
Professional Development
Percussion Ensemble/Wind Ensemble (Band)
Option of Jazz Combo, Music History or Drum Set Technique II and Improvisation



PIANO

Freshman Year

Piano Technique I
 Piano Repertoire I
 Piano Ensemble
 Music Theory
 Choral Experience

Sophomore Year

Piano Technique II
 Piano Repertoire II
 Piano Ensemble
 Music Theory
 Music History

Junior Year

Piano Technique III
 Piano Ensemble
 Professional Development
 Accompaniment Skills
 Elective

Senior Year

Piano Technique IV
 Piano Ensemble
 Music Technology
 2 Electives

Electives may include:

AP Music Theory
 Chamber Music
 Chorale (by special permission)
 Composition

Jazz
 Movement

GUITAR

Freshman Year

Guitar Technique I
 Guitar Ensemble
 Bass for the Guitarist
 Music Theory
 Choral Experience
 Jazz Foundations & Repertoire by special permission

Sophomore Year

Guitar Technique II
 Guitar Repertoire
 Guitar Ensemble
 Music Theory
 Keyboard Skills I
 Jazz by special permission

Junior Year

Guitar Technique III
 Guitar Ensemble
 Professional Development
 Music History
 Elective

Senior Year

Guitar Technique IV
 Guitar Ensemble
 Music Technology
 2 Electives

Electives may include:

AP Music Theory
 Chamber Music
 Chorale (by special permission)
 Composition
 Jazz
 Keyboard Skills II/III
 Movement

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

TECHNIQUE

Vocal Techniques I, II, III, IV

In this progression of courses, students will lay a lifetime foundation of healthy vocal habits. The class will cover exercises that develop posture, breath management, production of sound in the three vocal registers (head, passagio, and chest), diction (English, French, Italian and German), and musical expression. Students will also study solo vocal literature to actively apply these concepts.

Instrumental Techniques I, II, III, IV

Sections offered for Guitar, Piano, Strings and Winds

The techniques classes will allow students concentrated time to develop the vocabulary of their instruments. Material will include scales and arpeggios in all keys, from memory, over the full compass of the instrument, as well as regular etude assignments. As relevant, technique classes will also address healthy playing posture, breathing, tone and vibrato.

Snare Technique I, II, III, IV

Comprehensive snare drum study provides a technical foundation that students will apply to instruments throughout the percussion family. This sequence of courses will present the 40 International Drum Rudiments endorsed by the Percussive Arts Society and will also discuss how to apply these in context with musical expression. Snare Technique I & II will also include drum set and chart reading. Styles to be addressed include Swing, Big Band Jazz, Combo Jazz, Jazz Waltz, Mambo/Afro Cuban, Bossa Nova, and Samba.

Two Mallet Technique I

The mallet family of instruments includes xylophone, marimba, glockenspiel, chimes and the vibraphone. Their study will allow percussion students to develop the critical skill of reading notes. Students will begin this study on the xylophone with two mallets.

Two Mallet Technique II

This fall semester course will continue building the student's mastery of two mallet technique, focusing on the marimba.

Timpani I/Auxiliary Percussion

This spring semester course will introduce students to playing techniques for frequently requested auxiliary percussion instruments: bass drum, suspended and crash cymbals, tambourine, and the triangle. Students will also begin their study of the timpani, working on technique, tone production and tuning skills.

Four Mallet Technique

Focusing on the marimba, this course will develop the student's ability to play richer musical textures using four mallet technique.

Timpani II/Multiple Percussion

This course will have a two-part focus. Students will continue their mastery of timpani technique, with particular attention to aural skills and tuning. They will also learn how to juggle the coordination of playing multiple percussion instruments within the same piece, an increasingly frequent demand in modern ensemble literature.

MUSICIANSHIP

Music Theory Fundamentals

This course is for students with no previous experience in reading and writing music. It will introduce students to treble and bass clefs, rhythmic notation, simple meters, intervals, the construction of major and minor scales, key signatures, and triads. Aural recognition of these musical elements will also be a significant component of this course.

Music Theory I

This course is designed for students who demonstrate mastery of the material covered in Music Theory Fundamentals. It will introduce students to chord inversions, seventh chords, chord progressions, basic Roman numeral analysis, the function of non-chord tones, cadences, and compound meters. Aural skills training will continue to develop the student's accuracy in identifying intervals and chords at increasingly sophisticated levels and will also include sight-singing and rhythmic dictation.

AP Music Theory

AP Music Theory is a continuation of Music Theory I and is designed to prepare students to take the AP exam in Music Theory and to receive college credit. Emphasis is placed on the development of skills necessary to recognize, understand, and describe the basic materials and processes of music that are heard or presented in a score. Each unit will work with concepts of Melody, Rhythm, Harmony, Form, and Tone Color at increasingly complex levels. Students will engage with the concepts through a variety of rigorous musical activities including written work, sight singing, listening and composition. Students will ultimately, individually and as a collective, answer essential questions concerning the essence of musical creativity and expression.

Keyboard Skills I

This course is designed for students with no previous keyboard experience. Physically, students will develop strength and agility of all fingers and independent coordination of the two hands. Reinforcing the material taught in Music Theory Fundamentals, the class will incorporate tonic-dominant chords and major scales. The skill of note reading will also be emphasized. By the end of this class, students will be able to play simple right hand melodies accompanied by block chords or arpeggiated harmony in the left hand.

Keyboard Skills II

This course proceeds from the foundation established in Keyboard Skills I. In addition to introducing pieces with more complicated textures, course material also includes minor scales and chord progressions in all keys. Sight-reading will be a regular class activity.

Keyboard Skills III

In this course, students will continue to play solo piano repertoire but will also turn increasing attention

to using their keyboards skills to enhance musicianship in their area of concentration. By the end of this class, students will be able to fluently play chord progressions in chromatically ascending or descending keys (as used in vocal warm-ups) and will have experience in playing simple accompaniments to vocal and instrumental solos.

Choral Experience

This course will provide a positive and musically valuable singing experience for instrumentalists. Singing is invaluable for sharpening the inner ear and creating greater awareness of the body as an instrument. No prior singing experience is necessary and all students will be guided in how to make music with their voices in a healthy way. Sessions will include exercises on posture, breathing, singing in different registers of the voice, and diction, as well as exposure to a wide variety of choral repertoire.

Repertoire

Sections offered for Guitar, Piano, Strings, and Winds

The Repertoire seminars will broaden students' appreciation of their instrument family's repertoire and exemplary practitioners. It will be strongly centered around listening, reading and discussion. Students will also experience the material through performance within the class setting.

Music History

This course will provide a comprehensive overview of Western classical music from the Medieval, Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic and Contemporary periods. Through listening, reading, class discussion, and written assignments, students will develop an appreciation for different musical styles and the impact of social, political, and cultural influences on the musical product of each time period.

Music Technology

Technology touches almost all aspects of 21st century life and music is no exception to this. This course will offer a broad overview of the many ways in which technology can enhance the life of a professional musician. Students will gain hands-on experience with music notation software, creating high-quality recordings, sequencing software, blogging and podcasting.

Professional Development

Being a professional musician today looks very different than it did even a few decades ago. Rather than following a prescribed formula, musicians must be prepared to create a unique career path that blends their strengths and interests. This professional life will likely be woven together from many strands such as performance, education, interdisciplinary collaboration, writing, business, and technology. Students need to cultivate their imaginations to find those paths that spark their passion, while also being useful to society and earning them a living. This yearlong seminar during the junior year will address polished self-presentation through a variety of mediums, exploration of career paths, and audition taking. The class will also prepare students to meet the senior solo recital requirement through discussions on programming, audience building, publicity, writing program notes, and coordination of behind the scene logistics.

PERFORMANCE

Accompaniment Skills

Sections offered for Guitar and Piano

This class will provide students with the necessary skills to accompany vocalists and other instrumentalists. Students will have multiple opportunities to gain confidence with these ensemble skills through accompanying peers and guest musicians.

Band

This performing ensemble will rehearse and present both repertoire for the full group as well as for smaller wind chamber groups. Students will take an active role in self-assessing the ensemble's progress through written rehearsal reflections. Wind Ensemble gives a minimum of three performances at ChiArts each year and also participates in external competitions and festivals as appropriate.

Junior and Senior Choir

These performing ensembles are for Vocal and Music Theatre majors. Other music students may elect these ensembles pending schedule feasibility and permission of both the Junior or Senior Choir Director and Music Department Head. Both choirs will explore choral literature from all periods and styles. Rehearsals will actively reinforce the concepts of good breathing, vocal tone production and diction, as taught in the Vocal Techniques curriculum. Junior and Senior Choir give a minimum of three performances at ChiArts each year and also participate in external competitions and festivals as appropriate.

Guitar Ensemble

This performing ensemble will rehearse and present repertoire in varied styles for guitar ensemble. Students will take an active role in self-assessing the ensemble's progress through written rehearsal reflections. Guitar Ensemble gives a minimum of three performances at ChiArts each year and also participates in external competitions and festivals as appropriate.

Jazz Foundations and Repertoire

This course will introduce students to a variety of jazz styles, as well as to the skill of improvisation. The primary goal of this course is to help students to start building a musical vocabulary for improvisation as they learn a core collection of jazz standards. Students will actively apply what they are learning in a combo. Enrollment for this course is limited and students may be required to audition to take the class.

Jazz Combo

Membership in this ensemble is by audition only. The ChiArts Combo typically gives numerous performances throughout the year, both at ChiArts as well as at outside venues. Ensemble members should be prepared for additional time commitments after school as well as occasionally on the weekends.

Piano Ensemble

This performing ensemble will rehearse and present repertoire in varied styles for four, six, eight and ten hands. Students will take an active role in self-assessing the ensemble's progress through written rehearsal reflections. Piano Ensemble gives a minimum of three performances at ChiArts each year and also participates in external competitions and festivals as appropriate.

String Ensemble

This performing ensemble will rehearse and present both repertoire for the full group as well as for

smaller string chamber groups. Students will take an active role in self-assessing the ensemble's progress through written rehearsal reflections. String Ensemble gives a minimum of three performances at ChiArts each year and also participates in external competitions and festivals as appropriate.

Wind Ensemble

This performing ensemble will rehearse and present both repertoire for the full group as well as for smaller wind chamber groups. Students will take an active role in self-assessing the ensemble's progress through written rehearsal reflections. Wind Ensemble gives a minimum of three performances at ChiArts each year and also participates in external competitions and festivals as appropriate.

INTERDISCIPLINARY

Acting I

All vocal majors will study Acting in order to develop their expressive performance skills. Using improvisation as a basis for the fall semester, students will explore a connection to the self and their ensemble. They will begin with exercises and techniques developed by Viola Spolin to explore and heighten their connection to sensory life, environment and relationship in order to develop their creativity, imagination and understanding of human behavior. They also will develop skills related to scenic objectives, listening, impulse, problem solving, physical and verbal communication and given circumstances. Building on the work of the fall, students will begin to work with text (existing and self-generated) such as monologues and short scenes in the spring semester. They will be expected to take all the skills they have developed in the first half of the year and to begin to apply them to the text.

Dance for Music Majors

Dance for Music Majors is a beginning dance class that will combine basic principles of classical ballet technique, modern dance, and folk dance. Class will consist of center floor warm-up, strengthening exercises, across the floor exercises and, musical theater and classical opera inspired dance combinations. This class is designed to benefit dancers of various levels ranging from beginning to advanced and it builds upon the foundation and the vocabulary of Modern Dance and Classical Ballet. Emphasis will be on developing body alignment, clarity of movement and musicality, and performance proficiency.

Elective opportunities for the junior and senior years include Composition and Chamber Music.