



# The Music Education Major

## A Five Year, Integrated Bachelors/Masters Program

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### Overview

This course of study takes five years to complete and leads to three degrees: a Bachelor of Arts in Music degree from the School of Fine Arts, a Bachelor of Science in Education degree from the Neag School of Education, and a Master of Arts in Curriculum and Instruction degree from the Neag School of Education. UConn refers to this program as the Integrated Bachelor's/Master's (IB/M) program. Completion of the IB/M coursework, given that the student has earned an acceptable grade on the Praxis II exam, leads to PreK-12 certification to teach music in Connecticut.

The program consists of the following:

- Two years of core music classes and introductory music education classes
- Two years of advanced coursework in music, education, and music education while assisting with music classes in area schools (including a semester of full-time student teaching)
- One year of graduate coursework, including an internship and an inquiry project.

Entering students are classified as Pre-Music Education students in the School of Fine Arts. Students formally enter the Neag School of Education upon program acceptance in their fifth semester. Formal school placements also begin in the fifth semester. Student teaching occurs in the eighth semester. A part-time internship occurs in the ninth and tenth semesters.



## Coursework

### The First Two Years

Entering students are classified as “Pre-Music Education” students in the School of Fine Arts. Students enroll in the same courses as any other underclassman music major.

This coursework includes:

- Four semesters of Harmony and Ear Training
- Four semesters of Class Piano (Piano students may substitute Accompanying)
- Two semesters of Music History
- Weekly one-hour lessons on the students’ primary instrument or voice. (Voice students may also participate in Opera Workshop, diction classes, etc.)
- Ensembles (Symphonic Band, Concert Choir, Orchestra, Chamber Music, etc.)
- Introduction to Music Education
- Five Applied Techniques courses in Voice, Brass, Woodwinds, Strings, and Percussion.
- General Education requirements (Information on the University’s General Education requirements can be found at <https://catalog.uconn.edu/general-education/>)

Students formally apply to the Neag School of Education in their Sophomore year. See Application to the Neag School of Education for details. Though not part of the Neag School application, students must also pass a promotional jury on their primary instrument at the end of their fourth semester in order to graduate on time.



## The Third and Fourth Years

Beginning in the third year, students are classified as Music Students in the School of Fine Arts, and Music Education students in the Neag School of Education.

Coursework for these years includes:

- Courses in Educational Psychology, Classroom Management, Exceptionality, Assessment, etc., taken with Neag IB/M students from all subject areas
- Courses specific to Music Education majors in Elementary, Choral, and Instrumental methods
- Two semesters of Conducting
- Ensembles and weekly one-hour lessons continue until full-time student teaching commences
- Remaining music history courses
- Remaining general education courses

Each semester, the student will observe and assist with classes in a different public school. The fifth semester is focused on Choral music, the sixth semester is focused on Elementary General music, and the seventh semester is focused on Instrumental music.

The eighth semester (the spring semester of the student's senior year) consists of full-time student teaching. No other courses, lessons, ensembles, etc. may be taken during that semester without special permission.

After eight semesters, students graduate with a BA in Music from the School of Fine Arts, and a BS in Music Education from the Neag School of Education.



## The Fifth Year

Fifth year students pursue a Master of Arts in Curriculum and Instruction degree from the Neag School of Education. These students take graduate courses in music education, research methods, and educational leadership. They participate in a year-long internship for 18 hours per week. In addition, they complete a portfolio and conduct an “Inquiry Project” involving educational research.

A full semester sequence and list of degree requirements can be found at  
<https://music.uconn.edu/programs/undergrad/ibm-music-education/>

## Applying to the Neag School of Education

Teacher certification programs in Connecticut are required to screen applicants for upper-division study. The Neag School of Education accomplishes this by requiring students to apply to the program during their sophomore year, and begin classes in their junior year.

The applicant is required to submit the following:

- A Resume
- An official transcript showing grades and GPA for the first three semesters
- An essay detailing four influential teaching-related experiences
- An essay reflecting upon your desire to become an educator

Typically, the online application is submitted between the third and fourth semesters.

The next step is a brief interview with the music education faculty, who will discuss and determine the student’s potential for success in the teacher education program. Admission is competitive, and is based on the applicant’s interview and application documents.

More information about the application process can be found at  
<https://teachered.education.uconn.edu/ibm-future-students-how-to-apply/>



## Frequently Asked Questions

- What can I teach when I graduate?
  - Graduates of the IB/M program will obtain an Initial Educator Certificate to teach PreK-12 music classes in Connecticut. This includes all levels of general, instrumental, and choral music.
- How do I get certified?
  - Teacher certification requires completion of all coursework in the IB/M program (all five years), successful completion of student teaching, an acceptable score (or waiver) on the Praxis I, and an acceptable score on the Praxis II. In addition, they must obtain a passing score on the edTPA teaching portfolio. Once completion of these requirements is verified, UConn will fill out your certification paperwork and send it to you.
- Can I get certified in another state?
  - At the time of publication, 38 other states will accept a Connecticut teacher, and edTPA passing scores allow for more fluidity amongst state certification.

This information is always subject to change based on the most updated education policies for certification, so you must contact the Department of Education in the state you wish to teach in.
- How competitive is admission to the Neag School of Education?
  - According to the Connecticut State Department of Education, students must have a 2.75 GPA to be considered for admission. The size of each cohort varies depending on the number of applicants from the Music Department as well as the number of applicants to the Neag school as a whole.
  - Students are expected to have earned a “B” or higher in all music classes. Keep in mind that the Neag School of Education does not conduct auditions or musical skills tests. Therefore, musical ability is solely determined by the applicant’s music class grades.



## Will UConn let me [...]?

- Can I double major?
  - o The music education program already leads to three degrees. Due to the demands of the music education program, an additional degree or major may require six or seven years of undergraduate study. Contact Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs/Director of Advising Eva Gorbants at (860) 486-3016 or [eva.gorbants@uconn.edu](mailto:eva.gorbants@uconn.edu) for more information.
- Can I get certified in another subject area in addition to music?
  - o Yes, but not through UConn. You must possess an initial certification in one area before you can be cross-certified in another. Information on cross-certification is available on the Connecticut Department of Education website.
  - o The Neag School advises students not to pursue certification in two areas unless they truly do not prefer one to the other. This is because if you are certified in two areas, a school may hire you as a music teacher but make you teach another subject.
- Can I begin music education coursework after my freshman year?
  - o The music education program consists of ten full semesters of music coursework, which must be taken in a specific order. This means that a student will graduate five years from the time he or she joins the music program. From time to time, a student joins as a sophomore, but it invariably takes him or her six years to graduate, unless he or she transfers from a music program at another college. Contact Eva Gorbants for more information.
- I want to get a BM in performance instead of just a BA in music. Is this possible?
  - o The music education program is quite dense, and the extra courses required for a Bachelor of Music degree (form and analysis, music electives, pedagogy, etc.) tend to interfere with classroom observations and student teaching.
  - o Music education students are not disadvantaged relative to performance majors. They participate in the same ensembles, get the same number of lessons, and can still perform recitals if they so choose. The name of your degree is not as important as your skills as a performer, a teacher, and a scholar!



- o Music education students are not committed to any one program for the first four semesters. They can switch to a major in performance, composition, BA, etc. later on if they do not think the IB/M program is right for them.
- Can I participate in [...] even though I'm not a performance major?
  - o During the first seven semesters, the answer is almost certainly "yes." Many of the best musicians in the department are music education majors. Chamber music, opera, wind ensemble, and other prestigious opportunities in the department are all open to music education majors.
  - o During student teaching and the fifth year internship, students may be too busy to participate in other music major activities. They are responsible for their school placements first. Because students are no longer enrolled in the School of Fine Arts in their fifth year, this may impact eligibility to take lessons and participate in certain performing groups.
- Can I study abroad?
  - o Study abroad is a robust opportunity for music and music education students. The Neag School of Education offers a masters year study abroad. Information on Neag's abroad programs can be found at <https://education.uconn.edu/global-experiences-at-the-neag-school/>
  - o Other study abroad programs are available during summer and winter breaks. At the time of publication, the Music Department offers a summer program in Strasbourg, France every other year for all majors. Choir members also have the opportunity to tour internationally every other year. Additionally, Music Education travels to Puerto Rico for a short term study away program. More opportunities will be coming in the future.
- Can I participate in the Honors Program?
  - o Yes! Honors students can choose to participate in the Honors Program for music, education, or both. There are specific Honors courses and seminars for the education program, while music courses have to be converted to Honors by arrangement with the professor. Graduation as an Honors Scholar in both degrees requires 12 Honors credits in each degree, along with either two thesis projects, or one thesis that pertains to both music and education. Contact the Honors advisors for more information. Dr. Eric Rice is the Honors advisor for music. Dr. Del Siegle and Dr. Catherine Little are the Honors advisors for Education.



## **“What advice would you give to prospective music education majors?”**

“One of the great things about the music education program at UConn is the abundance of opportunities to interact with and teach real students. This is something that is virtually unparalleled at other institutions and that sets our students, grads, and teachers apart. My advice to future music educators is to JUMP at these opportunities. **Get involved in organizations and communities;** request to observe and network with practicing teachers; volunteer to lead a lesson when local schools come to UConn to work with you; assert yourself in your clinic, student teaching, and internship placements and ask for as much hands-on time with the kids as possible. **These experiences are truly unique and 100% worth every second.**” – Samantha Card ‘19, Music Education/Voice

“Joining NAfME was one of the best decisions I made on my path towards becoming an educator. I would recommend to anyone on their journey, no matter if they are a freshman or a grad student, that they get involved in NAfME somehow. They have fantastic resources, bring in a wide variety of guest speakers to talk about a vast range of topics, take the initiative in providing the best learning experiences to their members, and extend their talents to the community through Christmas caroling and other outreach activities. Another thing I would suggest doing in order to broaden your horizons is to listen to as much music as you can that is outside of the Western world. Extend your pallet to include things that aren't by white male composers, because it will help you understand different kinds of music and culture in order to better help you and your future students. **The music world is vast; there is no reason to contain yourself to things that you're comfortable with, because how will you ever grow that way? Always be thinking about what you could do to become a better educator and never settle since there is always more to learn.**” – Meghan Canastar ‘20, Music Education/Trombone

“Getting involved in the UConn Music Education program was one of the best decisions I have ever made. I didn't know I would be majoring in Music Education (or even Music) when I decided to choose UConn, but I've found my home in an amazing program that supports its students unlike anywhere else I've seen. I've worked with some amazing professors and advisors (and friends), and there is nowhere else I would rather be learning to become an educator. One of my favorite parts about the program is that it lets me thrive as not only an educator, but a performer as well. **I was able to take things I learned in my Music Ed classes and apply those lessons to my ensembles, learning a lot about teaching the whole way through. I would also definitely advise aspiring educators to get involved in extracurriculars at UConn that will give you some experience teaching before you apply to Neag - it definitely helped me when I applied!**” – Will Mandelbaum ‘21, Music Education/Voice

“The music education program at UConn has provided me numerous opportunities and resources from the start of my freshman year. The faculty are extremely knowledgeable and accomplished in a variety of fields, helping me feel prepared as both a musician and an educator. The NAfME chapter at UConn has additionally provided me resources that extend beyond the college classroom. Through this program I've received guidance and advice on the Neag application process, attended CMEA led conferences, and learned worthwhile skills such as how to implement a marching band or musical theater program into a school. **Music education thrives off of collaboration, creativity, and experience, all factors that are incorporated into my classes every day.**” – Erin Naclerio ‘22, Music Education/Oboe



## About UConn NAfME

**National Association for Music Education (NAfME)**, among the world's largest arts education organizations, is the only association that addresses all aspects of music education. NAfME advocates at the local, state, and national levels by providing resources for teachers, parents, and administrators, hosting professional development events, and offering a variety of opportunities for students and teachers. NAfME orchestrates success for students nationwide and has supported music educators at all levels of teaching for more than a century.

Since 1907, NAfME has worked to ensure that every student has access to a well-balanced, comprehensive, and high-quality music program taught by qualified teachers. NAfME's activities and resources have been largely responsible for the establishment of music education as a profession, for the promotion of music study as an integral part of the school curriculum, and for the development of the National Standards for Arts Education.

The **UConn Collegiate Chapter of NAfME** invites Music Education students to take advantage of all that NAfME membership has to offer. Our mission is to:

- Make available to members opportunities for professional development;
- Acquaint students with the privileges and responsibilities of the Music Education profession;
- Provide all members with the opportunity to become acquainted with leaders in Music Education through participation in programs, demonstrations, discussions, workshops and performances planned by this chapter, the state music educators' association, and NAfME: The National Association for Music Education;
- Assist the school in various projects throughout the year; and
- Provide the opportunity to have contact with collegiate members from other schools.

If you would like more information about UConn NAfME or would like to be added to our mailing list, you can contact us at [uconn.nafme@gmail.com](mailto:uconn.nafme@gmail.com) or through our social media.

-  <https://www.facebook.com/UConnNafme/>
-  @uconn.nafme ■ <https://www.instagram.com/uconn.nafme/>
-  @UConnNAfME ■ <https://twitter.com/uconnnafme>
-  <https://uconnnafme.wixsite.com/music>



## Helpful Resources

### UConn NAfME

[uconn.nafme@gmail.com](mailto:uconn.nafme@gmail.com)

### UConn Music Office

[music@uconn.edu](mailto:music@uconn.edu) / (860) 486-3728

### Dr. Eric Rice

UConn Music Department Head  
[eric.rice@uconn.edu](mailto:eric.rice@uconn.edu) / (860) 486-3728

### Dr. Cara Bernard

Assistant Clinical Professor of Music Education  
[cara.bernard@uconn.edu](mailto:cara.bernard@uconn.edu) / (860) 486-2561

### Dr. Joseph Abramo

Assistant Professor of Music Education  
[joseph.abramo@uconn.edu](mailto:joseph.abramo@uconn.edu) / (860) 486-2561

### Eva Gorbants

Assistant Dean of Fine Arts, Director of Advising  
[eva.gorbants@uconn.edu](mailto:eva.gorbants@uconn.edu) / (860) 486-3016

### Elizabeth Foody

SFA Admissions Coordinator  
[elizabeth.foody@uconn.edu](mailto:elizabeth.foody@uconn.edu) / (860) 486-2678

### UConn Music

[music.uconn.edu](http://music.uconn.edu)

### School of Fine Arts

[sfa.uconn.edu](http://sfa.uconn.edu)

### SFA Advising

[sfa.uconn.edu/office/student-resources/student-advising/](http://sfa.uconn.edu/office/student-resources/student-advising/)

### Neag School of Education

[teachered.education.uconn.edu](http://teachered.education.uconn.edu)

### Neag Advising

[advising.education.uconn.edu/](http://advising.education.uconn.edu/)

### Undergraduate Admissions

[admissions.uconn.edu/](http://admissions.uconn.edu/)