

KSC Department of Music

FAQ

Technology:

Should I get a Mac or a PC? What software should I get? – The Music Technology Instruction Lab uses Macintosh computers, so if compatibility is a concern then Macintosh would be the best choice. However, Windows-based computers should be able to transfer data to and from the Lab computers without too much difficulty. At a minimum, you will need software to do word processing. The standard software for Keene State is Microsoft Word. However, there are less expensive alternatives. For Macintosh computers there is Pages from Apple. Both Mac and Windows users can also download free word processing software from OpenOffice.org. It would also be advisable to have music notation software. Both Sibelius <www.sibelius.com> and Finale <www.finalemusic.com> have versions for under \$100. In addition, the full package of Sibelius is available at a student rate of about half price.

Will I need a computer at college? – It's a good idea, though not required, to have a laptop or desktop of your own. The Mason Library is equipped with public computers, as is the Music Technology Instruction Lab. In addition, the KSC campus is outfitted with several computer labs, which have extended hours. However, the life of a music major is a busy one, and you'll soon find that owning your own computer will help you to complete assignments and other tasks on time.

Is there a recording studio? – At the present time the Department of Music does not house a recording studio. However, the College does maintain a recording studio in Elliot Hall that can be reserved for class use. There are plans to incorporate a multitrack recording studio in the proposed Visual and Media Arts Center

Bachelor of Music in Music Education:

If I get certified to teach music in NH, can I still teach in another state? – Yes, we recommend that candidates get certified in NH. Then they can do paperwork with other states to gain a reciprocal license. Sometimes, it's just a fee; in other states, there may be an additional exam or other requirements to complete.

Will I be certified to teach both choral and instrumental? – The NH music educator certification is Music K-12, which includes choral, instrumental, and general music. Our curriculum plan trains pre-service music teachers to be cross-trained and marketable. KSC has a great placement rate for music teachers!

How soon do I get into the classroom? – Music education students begin the practicum series with class visits during the freshman year, in general music classrooms in the greater Keene area. They can also opt to enroll in music teaching apprenticeships during winter and summer breaks. During the junior year, students spend individual time with choral and instrumental ensemble directors. In the senior year, students have 10 weeks in various K-12 general music settings. The culmination is a thoughtful placement in K-12 classrooms for student teaching to best fit the student's interest and skill set.

Do Music Education majors take private instrumental lessons? – Yes, all students earning the BM in Music Education degree must take applied lessons for 2 credits each semester. BM Mus Ed Instrumental students may take applied lessons on a secondary instrument, but this is not required. BM Mus Ed Choral students are required to study a secondary instrument (often piano).

How often are Music Education majors required to perform? – Music Education majors must perform once per semester, beginning their second semester of study. Students perform during the weekly Music Workshop, a formal but welcoming setting in front of peers and colleagues.

Are Music Education majors required to do a solo recital? – Students earning the BM degree in Music Education must partake in a solo recital during their senior year. The recital must include 30-40 minutes of music and may be presented as a shared recital with one other student.

Bachelor of Music in Performance:

Why do Performance majors take applied lessons for 3 credits when other students take 2 credit lessons? – The main focus of the BM in Performance degree is the development of instrumental or vocal skills. Students take classes in many areas including piano, music theory, music history, conducting, and large and small ensembles, which contribute to the student's overall musical knowledge base. These academic music classes, combined with concerted focus on the repertoire of the chosen instrument or voice, will help the student to reach advanced performance ability.

What can I do with a BM in Performance degree after graduation? – Performance majors have several options after graduation, depending on their long-term goals. Many students decide to further their education by going on to graduate programs in performance: degrees include M.M., D.M.A., and Artist Diploma. The M.M. and D.M.A. degrees allow students to apply for college-level teaching positions, which can perpetuate a lifestyle that encompasses high-level teaching and performing in an academic setting. Graduates who prefer to focus solely on playing might opt to earn the Artist Diploma degree. This rigorous advanced degree focuses on playing and performing and is geared toward developing a high-level performance career. Graduates might also decide to continue with private lessons, freelance, establish a chamber ensemble, or apply for jobs in already-established orchestras and chamber groups. In addition, private teaching studios are a common choice among graduates of the BM in Performance degree.

As a Music Performance major, how many recitals will I do? – Music Performance majors do two recitals: one in the junior year and one in the senior year. The junior recital is 30-40 minutes in length and the senior program is 60-70 minutes. Students work closely with their applied teachers to determine appropriate repertoire for these recital programs.

Bachelor of Music in Music Technology:

What programs do you use/learn in the Music Technology program? – The music education curriculum includes hands-on experience with Sibelius, Finale, Digital Performer, GarageBand, Band-in-a-Box, and Microsoft Office. Students in the Music Technology specialization also work with Max/MSP and software synthesis applications. In addition, the entire Microsoft Office suite and other music applications are available in the MTIL during open lab

hours.

Bachelor of Music in Composition:

How often do BM Composition students have their works performed? – Beginning in the sophomore year, composition students are required to have at least one new piece performed each semester. These performances generally take place during the Composers Concert at the end of each semester. However, opportunities can arise for additional performances; student composers are encouraged to submit works to faculty performers, ensemble directors, and fellow students, and to take part in conferences and competitions.

How many semesters of composition lessons are required for BM Composition majors? – Students earning a BM in Composition will begin their composition studies in the sophomore year. During spring and fall semesters, sophomore composition majors take Composition I and II, respectively. After completion of the composition class, students must take 4 semesters of applied composition, culminating in a senior composition recital during the 4th semester.

Bachelor of Arts in Music:

What is the difference between a BA and a BM degree? Why would I choose one over the other? - The Bachelor of Arts degree has many of the same academic requirements as the Bachelor of Music degree, but it allows students to focus on a broader set of interests throughout the degree. With more electives in the BA degree, students have the option of focusing on more interdisciplinary subjects outside of the music department. This falls in line with a true liberal arts education, as students have the opportunity to delve into any number of subjects while pursuing their music degree. In addition, the BA degree offers areas of concentration, such as technology, composition, theory, history, and elementary education that are not available to students earning a BM degree.

Do BA candidates have to give a senior recital or perform on Music Workshop? – BA candidates are required to perform once per year during the weekly Music Workshops. The BA student will work closely with his or her applied teacher to determine the appropriate repertoire for these performances. A senior recital is not a requirement of the BA music degree.

General Music Questions:

Can I double major? – Yes, students are welcome to double major. However, doing so requires careful collaboration with an academic advisor, to assure that no requirements are missed along the way. Students who double major, depending on their degrees, may need to add one or two extra semesters to their time at Keene State. With careful planning, this can be determined up front, so that students know before declaring a second major whether they will be required to stay for extra time.

Are students assigned an advisor in the music department? – Yes, freshman music majors are assigned a full-time music department faculty member as an academic advisor. This person will be available to help you during registration time, to help keep you on track with your degree, to assure that you are taking the appropriate non-music classes toward your degree, and to help you to decide which classes to take in the following semester. Faculty advisors can also be contacted any time, to deal with academic questions and issues that arise throughout the year.

What is the Mid-Level Review? – The Mid-Level Review is essentially a group advising session. Second-semester sophomores are asked to reflect on their time at KSC, think about where their career is headed, and decide whether they feel they are on track to meet their academic and career goals. Students then meet individually with a small panel of music faculty to discuss their goals and to identify any areas, which might prevent the student from achieving these goals. The Mid-Level Review is our way of catching any problem areas early, so that they may be resolved before the student reaches his or her junior and senior year.

I read about the Proficiency Exams in the Catalogue and Handbook. Which exams are required and when do I need to pass them? – By the end of the sophomore year, students must pass the Mid-Level Review, the Piano Proficiency Exam, and the Aural Skills Proficiency Exam. The proficiency exams assure that students have acquired the skills necessary to go on to the practical, more advanced, junior- and senior- level requirements such as Conducting, Practicum, and the Junior and Senior recitals. The exams are given a few times throughout the school year, so that students have more than one opportunity to take or retake them.

What can I do to prepare ahead of time for the Proficiency Exams? – The best thing you can do to prepare for the sophomore Proficiency Exams is to keep up with your material in your Aural Skills and Piano classes. However, if you find yourself struggling with either of these subjects, talk to your advisor during your freshman year. The music department has a tutoring program in place, which is designed to identify areas of difficulty and address them early. If you have preliminary questions about either exam, contact Professors Heather Gilligan – Aural Skills Proficiency Exam (hgilligan@keene.edu) or Maura Glennon – Piano Proficiency Exam (mglennon@keene.edu).

I took AP Theory in high school. Do I have to sign up for Music Theory? – Students may test out of Theory I or II by taking an exam before the start of classes. Contact Professor Heather Gilligan (hgilligan@keene.edu) to discuss your situation and request an exam time.

What music ensembles will I be able to join? – The music department hosts many ensembles, both large and small. Large ensembles include Concert Band, Orchestra, Jazz Ensemble, Percussion Ensemble, Guitar Orchestra, Chamber Singers, and Concert Choir. These large ensembles perform one or two times per semester and may be taken for 0 or 1 credit. Those students with a heavy course load have the option of taking extra ensembles for 0 credit so that they stay within the credit limitations of the College. Most music degrees at KSC require several semesters of Large Ensemble; talk to your advisor to be sure you have taken the correct number of Large Ensemble credits. Small ensembles include string ensemble, saxophone ensemble, clarinet ensemble, flute ensemble, piano ensemble, fiddle ensemble, jazz combos, and Keene Vocal Consort. These groups perform in the Chamber Ensemble Concerts, which take place at the end of each semester. Students are also encouraged to join world music ensembles such as the Latin American Music Ensemble and African Drumming Ensembles as electives, as these will broaden your musical experience and develop an ear for diverse musical cultures.

What extra-curricular music organizations will I be able to join? – The Keene State College Department of Music has strong chapters of NAFME (Music Educators National Conference), ACDA (American Choral Directors Association), and MTNA (Music Teachers National Association). Both groups are student run, with a faculty advisor. They require a minimal fee to join, and they sponsor various academic and social activities throughout the year.