

Music

“The One Course curriculum is ideal for studying music because it allows you to immerse yourself in your class each block—whether it is in music or another department—and with all classes out by 3 p.m., your class time never competes with practice or rehearsal.”

Lisa Hearne, Professor of Music

Cornell College’s Department of Music provides rich opportunities to explore performance, theory, composition, and history within the framework of a broad liberal arts education. It also supports an active community of music majors, nonmajors who value music as an avocation, and professional teaching musicians. All are dedicated to the intellectual examination and informed performance of music of all styles.

Although steeped in tradition, the department champions the highest caliber of new music in performance. In 2014 our orchestra and choir performed Michael Gandolfi’s epic “QED: Engaging Richard Feynman.” This was only the second live performance of this ambitious piece.

Studying music at Cornell prepares our alumni for a full-time career in the arts or for contributing to their communities through their talents—either way involving them in building the ongoing richness of culture. Many of our majors go into teaching or on to graduate and professional schools in performance, musicology, or education. Others combine music with other majors as they prepare for law school, business careers, and other endeavors. Our alumni have distinguished themselves in many fields, including as a senior business analyst at Pandora, a managing consultant in a national philanthropic firm, and a manager of entertainment operations at Disney California.

BENEFITS OF ONE COURSE AT A TIME

Music courses that include music theory, history, literature, and topics courses

are offered on the One Course At A Time curriculum. Studio lessons and performing ensembles are on a semester system that runs contemporaneously with Cornell’s One Course curriculum. The meshing of these schedules means that students have opportunities for focused immersion experiences as well as extended periods of practice and ensemble work.

Special opportunities include a course in Chicago at the Newberry Library. Students are able to study primary documents and attend operas, concerts, and plays. During a block break in 2016, our Pandemonium steel drum ensemble, Calypso Singers, and Calypso Horns traveled to New Orleans to perform in four Mardi Gras parades seen by 1 million people.

CURRICULUM HIGHLIGHTS

Live performance is at the center of a Cornell College music education. Cornell music majors’ performances are enriched by our broad liberal arts education and the close study of music theory, history, and literature. Cornell is unusual among most small liberal arts colleges by offering a choice of four types of music degrees:

- Bachelor of Music, major in performance
- Bachelor of Music, major in music education
- Bachelor of Arts, major (or minor) in music
- Bachelor of Special Studies, designed by students, in collaboration with faculty members, to emphasize areas of interest such as fine arts management, music therapy, or music theater

Our full-time faculty is augmented with approximately 20 visiting artists who teach applied music lessons.

All music majors complete a senior capstone experience through a recital, a paper or project, or student teaching.

Faculty Bios & Courses

In addition to five full-time faculty, there are approximately 20 visiting artists who teach applied music lessons.

LISA HEARNE

Professor of Music and Director of Choral Music
Teaches Studio Voice and related courses: Vocal Diction, Vocal Pedagogy, and Song Literature. She directs Concert Choir and Chamber Singers and has led Cornell’s choral ensembles on tours in Europe and the United States. She is also an active soprano soloist, adjudicator, and guest choral conductor. D.M.A., University of Iowa; M.M., Arizona State University; B.M., Eastern Illinois University.

MARTIN HEARNE

Professor of Music
Teaches Music Education and Conducting. He serves as conductor of the Orchestra, Wind Ensemble, and Steel Drum Ensembles at Cornell, and he has led groups on tours in Europe and the United States. He also serves as conductor for the Palisades Ensemble, which he founded, comprising some of the best instrumentalists in the region. Ph.D., Louisiana State University; B.M.Ed., Northeast Louisiana State University; M.M.Ed., Louisiana State University.

JAMES MARTIN

Professor of Music
Teaches Opera, Piano Pedagogy, History of Western Music, and The Ring Cycle of Wagner. Research interests include piano, music history, opera, Beethoven, Wagner, John Cage, and the history of avant-garde. During Wagner and Wagnerism, he introduces students to historical research at Chicago’s Newberry Library, as well as to live performances, lectures, museums, and other music-oriented venues. He has been a faculty fellow at Columbia, Princeton, and Stanford, and he is a former director of Chicago’s Newberry Library ACM Program in the Humanities. D.M., Northwestern University; M.M., University of Illinois; B.M., Butler University.

PERFORMANCE ENSEMBLES

Our vibrant and challenging ensembles are open to both majors and nonmajors. Ensembles meet three or four times per week on a semester schedule. Our ensembles are:

- Concert Choir
- Chamber Singers
- Chamber Orchestra
- Wind Ensemble
- Jazz Ensemble
- Steel Drum Ensembles

Additional chamber ensembles may include string quartets, brass quintets, woodwind quintets, new music and percussion ensembles, or vocal collegium.

The steel drum program will be featured artists on the Hart Performing Arts Series in Hart, Michigan, in 2018.

STUDIO LESSONS

Studio lessons are taught by professional faculty members who specialize in the instrument or performance style specific to each student. Lessons are required for music majors and scholarship recipients and are open to all qualified student musicians. Jury performances may be required for students enrolled in studio lessons.

INTERNSHIPS/FELLOWSHIPS

Internships have created exciting experiences for our music students, and the block plan makes scheduling easy. Recent internships include public school instrumental music education in Marion, Iowa; Harmony University in Nashville, Tennessee; teaching music in the public schools of England; working as an arts administrator at Orchestra Iowa; and practicing music therapy.

MUSIC SCHOLARSHIPS & AWARDS

Music scholarships range from \$1,000 to \$5,000 annually and are awarded in addition to other scholarships, increasing the total assistance package. Music scholarships are available to all qualified students, whether or not they major or minor in music. All music scholarships and awards require students to participate in at least one major ensemble on the student's primary instrument. With some scholarship levels music lesson fees are waived; those scholarship recipients must enroll in music lessons on their principal instrument and enroll in the MUS 701 Music Performance Seminar.

AFTER CORNELL

ALUMNI CAREERS

High school vocal music teacher, Anna, Texas (Class of 2016)

Choir director and elementary music teacher, Clinton-Graceville-Beardsley Public Schools, Graceville, Minnesota (Class of 2016)

Teach For America, lead teacher at CAP Tulsa, Tulsa, Oklahoma (Class of 2015)

AmeriCorps VISTA, Hopa Mountain's Indigenous Scholars of Promise Program, Bozeman, Montana (Class of 2014)

Fine arts teacher, Sabin Elementary Magnet School, Chicago, Illinois (Class of 2012)

Lead Teacher, Hope Academy, Greenville, South Carolina (Class of 2011)

Musician, live sound and recording engineer, producer, music instructor, Chicago, Illinois (Class of 2011)

Director of information technology, Joint and Pain Treatment Centers, Lompoc, California (Class of 2011)

Software engineer at SportsLabs, Denver, Colorado (Class of 2011)

Student naval aviator, U.S. Navy, Colorado Springs, Colorado (Class of 2011)

Technical support engineer, Electronic Theatre Controls, Middleton, Wisconsin (Class of 2010)

Secondary choir teacher, H-L-V Community School, Victor, Iowa (Class of 2010)

Music teacher, Dominion Academy, Leesburg, Virginia (Class of 2007)

Senior business analyst, Pandora, Oakland, California (Class of 2006)

GRADUATE SCHOOLS ATTENDED

Students interested in pursuing performance or a professional field requiring a graduate degree are well-prepared by the department's coursework and fast-paced One Course schedule.

Ph.D. candidate, musicology, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina (Class of 2014)

Master's degree, VanderCook College of Music (Class of 2014, 2012)

Ph.D., psychology, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona (Class of 2012)

Master's degree, Arizona State University, Tucson, Arizona (Class of 2012)

M.A., higher education and student affairs, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa (Class of 2012)

M.A., musicology, University of Denver, Denver, Colorado (Class of 2011)

M.B.A./M.F.A., theatre management, University of California at Long Beach, California (Class of 2010)

M.M., horn performance, University of Denver, Denver, Colorado (Class of 2008)

JAMA STILWELL

Associate Professor of Music

Teaches applied flute lessons, core courses in music theory and history, and topics courses such as Women and Music and Musical Borrowing. Stilwell's research was honored with the 2011 Einstein Award of the American Musicological Society. Ph.D., University of Iowa; M.M., Northwestern University; B.M., University of Iowa.

AARON PERRINE

Composer in Residence and Lecturer in Music

Teaches Music Theory, Music Education Methods and Materials, and Composition. Perrine is an award-winning composer of works commissioned for colleges, high school, and middle school ensembles and is well regarded as a clinician and educator. Ph.D., University of Iowa; M.Ed., University of Minnesota; B.A., University of Minnesota, Morris.