

Bowdoin College Department of Music: New Student Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Do I need to be a music major or minor to participate?

Nope! All students are welcome to enroll in music classes, ensembles, and Individual Performance Studies (aka. lessons).

What ensembles are offered?

- **Orchestra**
- **Concert Band**
- **Chamber Choir**
- **Chamber Ensembles** (strings, winds, brass, etc.)
- **Jazz Combos**
- **Electro-Acoustic Ensemble**
- **South Asian Performing Arts Ensemble**
- **Beyond Borders Percussion Ensemble**

Do I need previous experience to join an ensemble?

Not always, for many ensembles no experience is necessary.

Are there auditions?

Orchestra, Concert Band, Chamber Ensembles, Chamber Choir, and Jazz Combos require auditions for placement. Auditions are held the **first week of the semester**, with rehearsals starting the second week.

How do I register for ensembles?

Register in Workday as you would for other courses. If instructor permission is required, that will be granted after the audition period.

How often do ensembles perform?

Each ensemble gives at least **one on-campus performance per semester**. Additional performance opportunities vary per semester but have included performances on campus, in the local community, other colleges, and even internationally.

What classes are available?

A wide range of classes are offered in *music theory, history, performance, composition, music technology*, and more. Refer to Workday course listings for the most accurate and up-to-date offerings per semester.

Should I take a placement test for music theory?

Yes. The **theory placement test** is available on **Canvas** and should be taken **before course advising and registration**. It helps you and your advisor decide which level of theory is best for you.

How do I register for lessons?

Register in Workday as you would for other courses. You'll be placed on a **waitlist** initially, **Music majors and minors** will be enrolled first, then other students will be in order of their place on the waitlist. Please note that our capacity is limited and not all students will become enrolled.

What kinds of lessons are available?

Bowdoin offers **group lessons** on piano and guitar and **individual lessons** in voice, strings, woodwinds, brass, piano, guitar, harp, organ, drums, and more—across classical, jazz, and contemporary styles.

Are lessons and ensembles for a full year or one semester?

Enrollment in lessons and ensembles is for one semester, a student's VPA requirement may be met by taking two consecutive semesters of an ensemble. Each earns **0.5 credit** and is graded using the **Credit/D/Fail** scale.

Is there a cost associated with taking lessons?

In some cases, yes. The Music Department charges \$840 per semester, via the Bursar's Office for enrollment in lessons. However, Music majors and Music minors, and any student who receives institutional financial aid from Bowdoin will not have to pay this fee.

Can I borrow instruments from the college?

Yes! Instruments and storage lockers are generally available at no charge for students who participate in lessons and ensembles. For more details contact **Delmar Small** (dsmall@bowdoin.edu).

Are practice rooms and pianos available?

Also, yes! All students may access most practice rooms in Gibson and Studzinski Halls. Limited access to drums, amplifiers, electronics, and other instruments is provided to enrolled students.

What if I have other questions?

First, visit the Music Department website: bowdoin.edu/music

From there navigate using the tabs to learn more. Then, if you still have questions, please reach out to **Jason Holmes**, the Academic Department Coordinator for Music (j.holmes@bowdoin.edu).