



CONNECTICUT COLLEGE

Connecticut College Music Department Audition Guidelines 2011-2012

The Music Department welcomes the participation of both majors and non-majors in its ensembles and individual lessons. Auditions are offered each semester, and are designed simply to determine a student's level of preparation. We assume that student musicians come to the college with some background in music; if, instead, you are a beginner, we encourage you to study outside of the college structure (for a fee, and not for credit) in order to gain the skills necessary to participate at the college level. The Thames Valley Music School shares our facilities, and has excellent instructors; their office is in Cummings 216, and extension is 2749. If you are not sure of your level please come and audition, and we will help you figure out the best course of action.

As a general rule, instrumentalists (with the exception of keyboard and percussion students) should have their own instruments. The Music Department does own a small collection of instruments that are available for loan to students, however. See the Music Department assistant for details (Cummings Arts Center room 216; ext. 2720).

Ensembles

Ensembles count as one credit. Each ensemble follows a slightly different procedure for auditions:

Chamber Choir

- Auditions are held in the fall during freshman orientation, on the afternoon of placement tests. A second round of auditions takes place on the first Friday of classes, during both fall and spring semesters.
- The expectation is that a singer can carry a musical line securely and learn music fairly quickly, and has at least a rudimentary ability to read music (knowledge of note names and a basic understanding of rhythm)
- The audition is in three parts:
 - 1) sing 5 notes up and down to get a sense of voice quality, strength and range
 - 2) sing a familiar tune (usually *My Country, 'Tis of Thee*) partly without piano
 - 3) sing back a 6-note passage, in order to test ear and pitch retention

Concert Band

- Auditions are held in the fall during freshman orientation, on the afternoon of placement tests. A second round of auditions takes place the following week.
- Audition music will be available in the Music Department office (Cummings Arts Center, room 216) beginning approximately one week before auditions. Students should practice this in preparation for the audition.
- For new students the audition will consist of:
 - Playing the audition music, and
 - Playing an etude or solo work of your choice that demonstrates performing ability.
- Returning students will:
 - Play the audition music (for section seating assignment)

Jazz Ensemble

- Auditions are held in the fall during freshman orientation, on the afternoon of placement tests. A second round of auditions takes place the following week.
- Audition music will be available in the Music Department office (Cummings Arts Center, room 216) beginning approximately one week before auditions. Students should practice this in preparation for the audition. In addition to instrumentalists representing standard big band instrumentation, vocalists may audition, but only two vocalists will be selected for the ensemble.
- For new students the audition will consist of:

- Playing the audition music, and
- Playing a standard song or solo work of your choice to demonstrate jazz interpretation, with an improvisatory example if you are capable.
- Returning students will:
 - Play the audition music (for section seating assignment)

Traditional Jazz Band

- Auditions are held at 4:00 p.m. on the second Friday of classes.
- Those eligible to audition include: trumpet, clarinet, alto saxophone, tenor saxophone, trombone, bass (tuba or double bass), drums, mallets, vocalist, banjo, violin, guitar, and piano. Only one vocalist will be selected. Students must have the ability to transpose parts as needed and to improvise.
- For all students the audition will consist of:
 - Playing a prepared standard song or solo work of your choice to demonstrate jazz interpretation. Instrumentalists must include an improvisatory section/chorus, and vocalists must demonstrate improvisatory “scat” ability.
 - Sight reading will include one lead sheet standard tune.

Orchestra

- Auditions are held in the fall during freshman orientation, on the afternoon of placement tests. Additional auditions take place during the first rehearsal of the semester, during both fall and spring semesters; these include auditions for new members, and seating auditions for returning members.
- The audition for new members will consist of:
 - Playing a chromatic scale, 2 octaves, except harp, which will play a diatonic scale
 - Playing a prepared classical piece of your choice
 - Sight reading drawn from the standard classical orchestral repertoire
- For returning students the audition will include:
 - Playing a chromatic scale, 2 octaves, except harp, which will play a diatonic scale
 - Sight reading drawn from the standard classical orchestral repertoire

Percussion and New Music Ensemble

- Auditions are held in the fall during freshman orientation, on the afternoon of placement tests. Additional auditions will take place by arrangement. Both percussionists and other instrumentalists interested in new music are welcome to audition.
- For the audition students will:
 - Play a piece of their choosing that demonstrates chamber music playing
 - Sight read an excerpt chosen by the director

Private instruction

Private instruction is available for voice, violin, viola, cello, acoustic bass, classical guitar, harp, flute, clarinet, saxophone, bassoon, oboe, trumpet, trombone, French horn, euphonium, tuba, percussion, piano, organ, and harpsichord. Lessons count as two credits, and are graded. The expectation is that you practice approximately an hour per day.

There is no additional fee for the college individual lessons, thanks to the generosity of the Jack Niblack '98 Music Lessons Fund.

Fall auditions are held during freshman orientation, on the afternoon of placement tests. A second round of auditions takes place on the first Friday of classes. Spring auditions are held on the first Friday of classes. The guidelines below offer suggestions of what to prepare for auditions. We know that individual backgrounds vary considerably, though, so please just come to your audition warmed up (practice rooms are available; see the department assistant in Cummings 216) and prepared to do the best that you can, playing music that is appropriate to your level.

Voice:

- The audition will begin with a brief warm-up, though you should also warm up in advance.
- Please prepare one classical piece (from *24 Italian Art Songs* or from the standard vocal repertoire) or a familiar tune such as *My Country*, *'Tis of Thee*.
- Please bring two copies of the music you will perform; an accompanist will be provided. Greer Music Library (on the first floor of Cummings Arts Center) has a large collection of music.

For most instruments:

- Scales that are appropriate to your level
- Two contrasting classical movements or pieces
- In addition, you may be asked to sight read a piece

Some studios offer specific suggestions below:

Flute:

- Major scales up to four sharps and flats
- Chromatic scale
- An etude at the level of Andersen, Opus 33
- Two contrasting pieces or movements

Clarinet:

- Major scales up to three sharps and flats
- Chromatic scale from low E to E or G above the staff
- An etude from C. Rose, *Thirty-two Etudes* for Clarinet (the preferred edition can be found in David Hite, ed. *Artistic Studies from the French School* (Southern Music Co.))

Saxophone

- Major scales up to four sharps and four flats
- Chromatic scale from low Bb to high F
- Two contrasting etudes from *Melodious and Progressive Studies Book 1*, or *Book 2*, by David Hite (Southern Music Co.)
- A solo from *Solos for the Alto Saxophone Player* or *Solos for the Tenor Saxophone Player* by Larry Teal (G. Schirmer)

Bassoon:

- Major scales up to three sharps and flats
- Chromatic scale 3 octaves low Bb to high Bb
- An etude at the level of *Milde Studies in all Keys*, op. 24 or *Weissenborn 50 Bassoon Studies*, Op. 8, Vol.II, or harder
- Part or all of a solo demonstrating performing capability (such as a movement from the Mozart or Weber Concerto)

Euphonium:

- All 12 major scales, preferably 2 octaves
- One technical etude (from Arban's *Trombone/Euphonium Method* or similar)
- One legato etude (from Rochut's *Melodious Etudes for Trombone* or similar)
- Part or all of a solo demonstrating performing capability

Tuba:

- All 12 major scales, preferably 2 octaves
- One technical etude (from Tyrell, Kopprasch, Blazhevich, Knaub, Arban, or similar)
- One legato etude (from Bordogni/Shoemaker, Kuehn, Rochut's *Melodious Etudes for Trombone 8ba*, or similar)
- Part or all of a solo demonstrating performing capability

Percussion

- Prepare something on snare drum and mallets or timpani (if you play these instruments)
- The audition will also include sight reading

Piano

- Any major scale, ascending and descending, hands together, two octaves
- A composition of moderate difficulty from the classical repertory by composers such as Bach, Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, or Chopin

Organ

- Students may play the audition on the piano or the organ
- If auditioning on the organ, students should play a 4-part hymn with or without pedals and a composition for organ such as one of the "Eight Little Preludes and Fugues" attributed to Bach
- If auditioning on the piano, students should follow the guidelines for piano auditions

Harpsichord

- Students may play the audition on the piano or the harpsichord
- If auditioning on the harpsichord, students should play a composition from the baroque or early classical period
- If auditioning on the piano, students should follow the guidelines for piano auditions

Classical Guitar

- 1 and 2 octave major scales up to 4 sharps and down to 1 flat
- One etude from the Classical period (Carcassi, Carulli, Sor, Giuliani etc.) and/or one short composition that displays right hand finger picking techniques