



NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

School of Music

College of Visual and Performing Arts

NIU Bachelor of Arts in Music Requirements

Please review and prepare all requirements thoroughly. Auditions and interviews are held in person at NIU in February, unless otherwise determined. Please register for an audition date on our website or go.niu.edu/musicaudition.

If you are unable to attend NIU's official audition or interview days, contact the Music Admissions Coordinator (avmenk@niu.edu) for permission to schedule an independent audition/interview or obtain approval to submit an unedited video audition or online interview.

The Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in Music provides students a unique opportunity to customize their educational path within the School of Music. The B.A. in Music is for students that seek to study music in the context of the world today combining practice and theory with a broad elective component that allows for study in a variety of musical styles, genres and applications including world music, recording arts, electroacoustic music and songwriting. Flexibility within the B.A. allows for students to elect their own focus as well as the potential to add a related second major or minor to augment their interests as well as broaden their post-graduate career paths. Students also have the option to study performance through the classical, jazz or world music ensembles. Coursework for the B.A. includes fundamental and contemporary music theory and aural skills, music history, songwriting, computer music, ensembles, and various music electives – chosen based upon a student's interests and goals. A minimum of 40 semester hours of the total number must be in courses numbered at the 300 and/or 400 level. These must include at least 12 semester hours of major departmental courses taken at NIU.

Based upon a student's musical background and experiences, there are two ways to apply for the B.A. in Music, following the completion of the School of Music supplemental application. Students that have experienced music training outside of the classroom or in a nontraditional fashion may prefer to apply through Option 2 listed below. All undergraduate applicants will complete aural skills exercises at the time of audition/interview.

Option 1: Students complete an instrumental or vocal audition process. Pending acceptance to the School of Music, students will partake in at least 4 semesters of large ensemble participation and primary lessons within the studio for which they have been admitted.

Please review the specific studio audition requirements listed on area requirement PDFs listed on the Auditions page or go.niu.edu/musicaudition. Note that an instrumental or vocal audition is the only application option available for students interested in the Bachelor of Music with an emphasis in Education, Performance, or Composition.

Option 2: Students submit a portfolio and complete an admissions interview. Portfolios must be well organized and show a student's interest and aptitude for the study of music. A portfolio may be comprised of compositions, recordings, papers, media, software or other materials and are only limited by the creativity of the applicant. Please also include a list of music notation and/or music production software that you have experience with, if applicable. Pending acceptance to the School of Music, students will partake in 8 semesters of world music ensembles to complete specific music curriculum requirements.

*The B.A. in Music provides students opportunities to study recording arts and media technologies within elective coursework. This is not a specific degree in audio engineering or in recording arts. However, graduates will have sufficient preparation through coursework, student employment, and internship opportunities to go onto a career that focuses on these skills.