

Alcorn State University Department of Fine Arts Student Handbook

Introduction

Welcome to Alcorn State University Department of Fine Arts. As an accredited member of the National Association of Schools of Music, the Department of Fine Arts offers the Bachelor of Music degree. Within this degree the department offers majors in music performance (instrumental, voice, or piano) and music education (instrumental, voice, or piano). In each major the student can select a curriculum with concentrations in either classical or jazz genres.

This handbook is designed to help students understand information concerning policies, procedures, degree options, and guidelines of the Department of Fine Arts. It is important to remember that it is the student's responsibility to be aware of all policies and requirements as they apply to degree programs. Personnel in the Department of Fine Arts office and faculty advisors are available to answer questions and assist students. In addition to the Department of Fine Arts Student Handbook further information can be found in a current ASU General Catalog, the ASU Student Handbook, and the university's web site (www.alcorn.edu).

The ASU General Catalog is available on the university's web site. All music majors are expected to know and become familiar with the information contained in the ASU General Catalog, the ASU Student Handbook, and the Fine Arts Student Handbook. The ASU General Catalog contains general information about the university, as well as information on student life and services, academic regulations and procedures, and individual schools and departments. The ASU Student Handbook explains in detail the regulations of the university. The Department of Fine Arts Handbook contains information concerning expectations of music majors.

General

The curriculum of the Department of Fine Arts includes the areas of Art, Humanities, Music, and Speech and Theater. Its general aim is to contribute to the acquisition by the student of a broad cultural background through humanistic studies. Through offerings at the general education level, through curricula leading to the Bachelor of Music degree, and through a program of elective courses, this aim is served.

The objectives of the music program are:

1. To provide the music major with basic skills, techniques, pedagogical concepts, and perspectives requisite to success in graduate study, as an artist, and a teacher of music on the elementary and secondary levels.
2. To interpret, maintain, and create the highest level in individual and group performance.
3. To enhance the cultural and aesthetic life of Alcorn students through personal experience in a well directed program of education in music.
4. To provide professional service and expertise to the university and the general public.

Degree Programs

The awarding of the Bachelor of Music degree with majors in Performance and Education is contingent on successful completion of required courses in the following areas:

1. General education core
2. Music theory

3. Music history and music literature
4. Applied music and ensembles
5. Music education methods and/or pedagogy
6. Professional education (music education majors)
7. Electives

A minimum grade of “C” is required in all major courses. The Bachelor of Music degree with a major in music education leads to the “A” type education certificate for the state of Mississippi.

Scholarships and Financial Aid

Music scholarships are available to talented students pursuing degrees in music. Scholarships range from partial to full (excluding books) and are based on auditions and specific needs of the Department of Fine Arts. **Students receiving music scholarships must major in music.** Students interested in music scholarships should contact the Department of Fine Arts main office.

Band scholarships are available to talented students based on audition results and specific needs of the band. Band scholarships range from partial to full (excluding books). Students interested in band scholarships should contact the band office.

Scholarship support for each student is reviewed at the end of the spring semester. All forms of financial aid are intended primarily to underwrite the education of students. Criteria followed in awarding music and band scholarships include academic achievement and overall musicianship development. Students requiring additional financial underwriting and assistance due to serious financial need should apply at the Office of Financial Aid and/or the ASU Foundation. Students awarded scholarships should expect half the amount of the total annual award to be applied to the tuition for each academic semester unless specified otherwise.

Renewal of scholarships is contingent on making satisfactory progress towards completing degree requirements. Satisfactory progress is interpreted as maintaining at least a 2.75 cumulative grade average, passing all music courses (“C” or above), passing standardized test requirements on schedule, completing appropriate applications for admission to the teacher education program (music education majors), and making satisfactory progress in the applied area (including attendance at recitals and other events, and performance on recitals, juries). Students must also be in good standing with the university and have no infractions. Students who receive scholarships are required to participate in departmental activities including ensembles, musicals, tours, and scheduled and unscheduled performances. In addition, students are expected to follow the professional advice of their applied instructor.

Failure to comply with departmental or university policies will result in the loss or reduction of scholarship. **Once lost the university is not obligated to renew the scholarship.** Upon notification of loss of the scholarship, the student does have the right to appeal the decision by requesting a hearing with the faculty. The department has limited funding for scholarships and amounts can vary depending on the amount of funding available. Decisions for amounts awarded are based on student performance as well as need. Students are expected to take responsibility for and adhere to academic and performance expectations.

Auditions

Every student enrolled as a full-time degree candidate must study a major instrument, e.g. piano, voice, trumpet, and saxophone. Students desiring to be considered for a scholarship must perform an audition before an award is granted. Students desiring the music performance major must audition on the chosen instrument before being accepted into the program. Students enrolled as music education majors who wish to change to music performance must audition prior to being admitted to the performance program and prior to the beginning of the junior year. It should be noted that there are differences in the applied music sequences between the music performance and music education curriculums. Contact the Department of Fine Arts

office to schedule auditions and for more information about audition guidelines.

Piano

All students who wish to concentrate in piano are required to have had prior study. Two selections from different style periods are to be played from memory and selected pieces will be given for sight-reading. Also, selections chosen must be originally composed for the piano, (No arrangements, pop music, etc). Memorized pieces may include such selections as: Bach, two and three part inventions, preludes and fugues; Sonatas by Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven; Chopin, preludes, etudes, and waltzes; mature pieces by Bartok, or comparable selections.

Voice

Candidates should possess a voice of good quality and show evidence of musicianship. Candidates for a major in voice should be prepared to sing at least two songs of contrasting styles and languages e.g. Arias, oratorio, musical theatre compositions, art songs, spirituals, etc., and be able to sight-read selected pieces.

Instrumental

All prospective instrumental majors are expected to be proficient on a performing instrument. The following are expected for the entrance audition: solo piece, all major scales, general technical studies as applied to the instrument being performed, and sight-reading.

Entrance Examinations

Entrance examinations are required for the purpose of placement in music theory and piano class. Entrance examinations are administered during freshman orientation in the fall and at the beginning of the spring semester. Preparation materials for the music theory test are available on the department web pages at: <http://musictheory.alcorn.edu>. Students should contact the department office for information concerning entrance examinations and scheduling.

Academic Advising

Freshman and sophomore students in music are assigned academic advisors through the College for Excellence. Typically these advisors will be music faculty. Students who have exited from the College for Excellence, (juniors and seniors who have completed freshman and sophomore requirements), are typically assigned to their applied instructor for advising. Students are required to see their advisors regarding registration and other activities related to academic matters. They must have appropriate approval including an advisor signature before registering for courses. Students should consult with their advisor regularly, especially during pre-registration and during the general registration period each semester. Students must always consult with their advisors when making any kind of a course or registration change. Students are highly encouraged to take advantage of pre-registration. Music majors must consult with their applied teachers to ensure that they are registering for the proper sequence of applied music courses.

Transfer Credit Policy

Students with college credit from other institutions should meet with their advisor for proper placement within their desired degree program as per the following requirements:

Applied/Ensemble

1. The number of applied credits accepted for transfer will be determined by audition.
2. The number of ensemble credits accepted for transfer will be directly related to the level of applied study as determined by the audition.

Music Theory

1. The Department of Fine Arts will accept transfer credits for music theory and sight singing/aural skills courses through the sophomore year with grades of C or above from four-year NASM institutions and from those community colleges with which Alcorn has community college course acceptance agreements.
2. All other transfer students must take an examination for placement. Results of the placement examination will determine the number of theory/aural skills/sight singing credits that will transfer.

Keyboard

1. If a transfer student has successfully completed (grade of "C" or above) in four credit hours of keyboard study from a four-year NASM institution, the Department of Fine Arts will accept the transfer credits. However, all transfer students must take and pass a keyboard proficiency examination.
2. All other transfer students must take a keyboard examination for placement.

Ensembles

Every full time music major, (12 credit hours or more), must perform in a major ensemble each semester. Students in the music education degree programs are exempt from ensemble participation during the semester in which they are enrolled in student teaching. Only one ensemble credit per semester counts toward the ensemble requirement.

Vocal Ensembles

The **Concert Choir** is open to all students by audition. This ensemble provides challenging repertoire with representation of numerous genres. Good technique is reinforced in a positive musical environment. Voice majors are required to sing in the Concert Choir.

The **Men's Chorale** is open to all male students by audition.

The **Women's Choir** is open to all female students by audition.

Instrumental Ensembles

The **Concert Band** is open to all students by audition. It is required of instrumental music majors who are not selected for the Wind Ensemble. Students on band scholarships are required to register for either the concert band or the wind ensemble in order to keep the scholarship.

The **Jazz Ensemble** is open to all students subject to the approval of the director. This ensemble provides performance experience in all styles and forms. Instrumental majors concentrating in jazz may enroll in this ensemble in place of concert band or wind ensemble.

The **Marching Band** is open to all university students. Placement is determined by audition results and needs of the ensemble. Instrumental majors are required to perform in this organization. Students on band scholarships are required to register for the marching band during the fall semester.

The **Wind Ensemble** is open to all university students by audition. Placement is determined by audition results and needs of the ensemble. The ensemble performs standard literature. Instrumental majors not in Concert Band are required to participate in Wind Ensemble.

*In addition to the major ensembles listed above **Chamber ensembles** are open to students on a selective basis. Participation in a chamber ensemble does not exempt a student from participation in a major ensemble.

Attendance

Classes

Students are expected to regularly attend all classes, recitals, and to complete laboratory sessions. In addition, students are expected to be prompt and on time for all classes and studio appointments. It is the responsibility of students to abide by attendance rules that instructors prescribe and should clear excused absences with individual instructors.

Notice of illness, injury, or hospitalization may be provided by the Student Health Service, Office of Counseling and Testing, a family physician, or the Vice President for Academic Affairs. For unusual circumstances, a temporary leave of absence may be obtained from the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Every student must adhere to the university's policy on attendance.

Whenever students miss classes, they are not relieved of responsibilities to meet all course requirements and complete all class assignments. Class attendance regulations are found in the ASU General Catalog. A student who has an excessive number of absences should notify his academic advisor as well as all instructors. A student may not miss more than one-fourth of classes for any reason (excused or not excused).

Applied Lessons

The ASU policy on class attendance applies to individual applied lessons as well. The instructor must be notified in advance of any absence. Make-up lessons are given at the discretion of the instructor and only for valid reasons, such as certifiable illness. Please check with the individual instructor regarding any additional stipulations.

Ensembles

As with lessons, the ASU policy on attendance applies to ensembles. Since participation in a rehearsal cannot be "made-up," members of the ensemble are expected to attend all rehearsals and to be on time. The instructor/director must be notified in advance of any absence.

Recitals

MU 052 (Student Recital)

All music majors are required to register for and pass eight semesters of MU 052 (Recital). The recital hour is a forum for student performances and also an opportunity for faculty and students to consider issues of academic and musical importance. Music students are not only interested in their own performance, but also recognize the value of listening to the performances of others and learning about the various performing media. Attendance at student recitals is required and attendance at additional concerts, recitals, and special events sponsored by the Department of Fine Arts is expected. Music Education majors are exempt from the recital attendance requirement during the semester in which they are enrolled in student teaching. Attendance records are kept and a grade is awarded on a pass or fail basis.

First semester freshman music majors are not required to perform on recital. Freshman music education and music performance students are required to perform on one student recital during the second semester. Subsequently, all music education majors are required to appear once during the fall semester and twice

during the spring semester. However, all music performance majors are required to appear twice during each semester following their freshman year. These are minimum requirements and individual instructors may require additional appearances. Number of appearances, level of performances, and quality of performances will affect the grade for applied lessons as recorded by the student's applied teacher.

All students must make rehearsal arrangements with their accompanist at least two weeks prior to performing on recital. Students are required to dress appropriately when performing on a recital (semi-formal or formal). Blue jeans, shorts, and T-shirts are not considered appropriate performance attire.

Applied instructors will submit performance information on each student planning to appear on a recital to the recital coordinator no later than noon on the Tuesday preceding each Thursday recital. Students must have the approval of their applied teachers before appearing on recital.

Major Recitals (Junior/Senior recitals)

In addition to routine appearances on student recital programs, all music majors will present a recital during their senior year. Performance majors will present a full-length one hour recital (2nd semester senior) and education majors will present a 45 minute recital (1st semester senior). Performance majors must also present a half-hour recital during their junior year. These recitals are considered a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Music degree. Music majors are expected to attend recitals given by their fellow students.

Students preparing for a major recital must make rehearsal and performance arrangements with their accompanist and/or supporting performers at least one semester before the performance date. Last minute rehearsing is not tolerated and unacceptable. Publicity material for the recital must be submitted to the Department of Fine Arts office and Public Relations office at least four weeks before the performance date. Program material must be submitted to the departmental secretary at least two weeks in advance. All program notes must be grammatically correct and accurate. At a minimum of two weeks before the recital a hearing of the recital must be conducted in front of a faculty committee. A student will not be allowed to perform a recital until the hearing is passed. The dates for the recital hearing and the recital itself must be approved by the student's applied teacher and the departmental office.

Special Events

Jazz Festival

The Department of Fine Arts with funding from the Mississippi Arts Commission, a state agency, the Southern Arts Federation, a regional agency, and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency, sponsors a Jazz Festival each spring. High school and college jazz ensembles compete for trophies, certificates, and plaques. Along with these performances, the festival includes workshops and performances by featured professional artists. Music majors are encouraged to attend the jazz festival event. Attendance is required of those students enrolled in jazz related courses.

Other Performances

The Department sponsors recitals and performances by its faculty and others. Many of these performances include workshops and/or master classes. Music majors are expected to attend these performances and sessions.

Performance Juries

All applied music students (except MU121 and MU 123) must take a jury examination at the end of each semester. The jury consists of a performance session before a faculty committee with a brief period of faculty

inquiry. Students will be exempted from the jury examinations only when they have performed a junior or senior recital meeting partial degree requirements during that semester. The performance jury is the equivalent of a final exam for the applied area of semester study. Juries are normally held during the week preceding final exams.

Approximately one week prior to juries, a sign-up sheet will be posted in the department. (Inquire at the department office.) All music majors (except those exempted) must sign-up for a jury time. Specific content of each student's jury is determined by the applied area instructor. In general, students should have prepared two contrasting pieces at the appropriate level. A composition that has been performed on recital cannot be repeated in the jury. Students must consult with their applied teachers for appropriate pieces and must have the approval of their applied teacher for performance on the jury.

Students must prepare a jury sheet prior to appearing on jury. Jury sheets can be obtained from applied teachers, from the Department of Fine Arts office, the Music Dept website, and in the back of this handbook. Students must list pieces, technical studies, and other pertinent information on the sheets. Copies of the sheets must be made such that each faculty member on the performance jury committee can be given one (Approximately ten copies).

Results of the jury session are used by applied instructors for grading purposes. Failure to appear on jury will result in a non-passing grade for the applied course. Dismissal from the applied area and, reduction and or loss of scholarship support will be considered by the chairperson if standards are not being met.

Final Examinations

Final examinations for all courses in the Department of Fine Arts follow the scheduling of examinations listed in the current semesters Schedule of Classes. Check the examination schedule early in the semester to allow for proper preparation and attendance. Early examinations are not sanctioned by the Department of Fine Arts nor the University.

Piano Proficiency Examination

All music majors are required to take and pass a piano proficiency examination at the end of four credit hours of piano study. Music education majors must pass the piano proficiency examination prior to student teaching.

Practice Rooms

Practice rooms are located on the first floor of the Fine Arts Building. Food, beverages, and smoking are not permitted in practice rooms. Special care should be taken to avoid destruction or damage of school property in the practice rooms. Practice rooms are open on a first come first serve basis. Personal items should not be left unattended in practice rooms.

Proper progress as a music major is impossible without practice. All music students should consult with their applied teacher about making effective use of their practice time and expectations for improvement. It is expected that all music majors will make use of the practice rooms on a regular basis.

Computer Laboratory

The Department of Fine Arts maintains a computer laboratory on the second floor of the Fine Arts Building. It is open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Friday. It is often open extended hours when faculty members are in the building. Students need to check with faculty members for extended hours of operation. Use of the computer laboratory is a requirement for a number of music courses. Students must schedule their course load and times in a manner such that there is time to use

the computer laboratory during normal hours of operation. Sites such as Facebook, Twitter, etc. shall not be in use during laboratory hours. In addition, all listening shall be done using student provided headphones. The laboratory is a designated study area and will be treated as such.

It is impossible for the Department of Fine Arts to supply all the paper needs of its students in the computer laboratory. Students are expected to purchase and supply their own paper. Paper for the printer can be purchased at office supply and discount stores at reasonable prices. Five hundred sheet reams of 8.5" x 11", 20 lb paper are the best to purchase. Normal typing paper will not work.

Music Library

The music library, located on the second floor of the Department of Fine Arts building, is available for use Monday through Thursday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and on Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The Music Library's collection consists of print and non-print materials (musical scores, choral music, LP recordings, CDs, videos, encyclopedias, dictionaries, anthologies, and textbooks). Materials are available for use in the music library. Students may listen to and/or record selections from LP recordings or CDs for study purposes. Students are encouraged to make good use of these materials.

Music Organizations

All music education majors are strongly recommended to participate in the Alcorn student chapter of the Music Educators National Conference (MENC) each semester. There is an Alcorn chapter of KAPPA KAPPA PSI National Honorary Band Fraternity and TAU BETA SIGMA National Honorary Band Sorority for those students involved in the band program. There is also Alcorn chapter of Choir Psi Phi National Society for current or past choir members.

Policies and Procedures for Admission to Teacher Education

All students desiring to enter a professional teacher education program at Alcorn State University must take and pass the Academic Skills Assessments (Praxis I) of the Educational Testing Service Praxis series assessments and make formal application to be accepted in the teacher education program. Students must have completed 44 core semester hours with the cumulative GPA of 2.75. In addition music majors must achieve a minimum grade of "C" in all music courses.

Music majors in the teacher education degree program must complete the PRAXIS I by the end of the sophomore year and before the junior year registration. Failure to complete the PRAXIS requirement will result in loss of scholarship for those students on a music scholarship.

The registration form for the PRAXIS I can be obtained from the Counseling and Testing Center and the application for admission into teacher education can be obtained from the department of Education and Psychology. The application must be accompanied by letters of recommendation from the student's advisor and departmental chairperson and a copy of the student's transcript. The PRAXIS I may be taken at designated times at Alcorn. The times and dates are found in the registration booklet. Students may also elect to take the computerized version at other sites. Information regarding test dates, sites, and procedures can be obtained from the Counseling and Testing Center.

An Application for admission must be filed no later than the fourth week of the semester in which the student will have earned at least 44 hours at Alcorn State University. Full Admission will be granted to those applicants meeting the following standards:

1. The applicant must successfully pass PRAXIS I (Reading, Writing, and Math).
2. The applicant has earned a cumulative grade point average of 2.75 on 44 semester hours of core

- courses.
3. The applicant has earned no grade of less than “C” in EN 111, EN 112, SA 223, PH 132 and all music courses.
 4. The applicant has passed the English Proficiency Examination
 5. The applicant has been recommended by two faculty members.

Students who do not make the required score(s) may retake the appropriate test(s). Students may not enroll in any of the following courses until full admission has been granted:

ED 498, PH 336, ED 468 Student Teaching, MU 337, and MU 339

Students enrolled in Teacher Education who have failed to maintain a cumulative average of 2.75 will be placed on probation for one semester. If at the end of the probationary semester the student’s cumulative average is still below 2.75 the student will be dropped from the Teacher Education Program. During the probationary semester the student may not enroll in ED 458, ED 468, Directed Teaching or in any other professional education courses except those previously completed with a grade of less than “C”.

Transfer Students

Transfer students must meet the standards set for regular students. Transfer students who have earned 44 or more core hours at another institution and who make application to Teacher Education upon admission to Alcorn State University may be admitted provided that they have passed the PRAXIS I (Reading, Writing, and Math). Students who present evidence of admission to and in good standing in an NCATE approved Teacher Education Program at another institution may be granted admission to Teacher Education at Alcorn State University.

Admission to Student Teaching

Student teaching is an integral part of the teacher education program at Alcorn State University and is the culmination of the teacher preparation experiences at the University. All students pursuing a degree leading to teacher certification must enroll for student teaching experiences during their final semester at Alcorn State University.

Participation in these experiences is limited to those students who apply and are admitted to student teaching. The student must submit an application to the Office of Admissions and Student Advisement no later than July 15, for fall semesters, and October 15, for spring semesters. Applicants for admission to student teaching are screened for eligibility on the basis of the following criteria”

1. Full admission to teacher education (students on probation within teacher education may not enroll in student teaching);
2. Recommendation of department chairperson;
3. Completion of all general education requirements;
4. Completion of at least one semester residence at Alcorn State University;
5. An earned grade point average of 2.75 on all work (transfer students must have a 2.75 average on all work and on all work earned at Alcorn State University);
6. Completion of at least 95% of the major field requirements with a GPA of 2.75 or above;
7. Completion of all applicable professional education requirements with no grade of less than “C”.
8. Successful passing of PRAXIS II (Principles of Learning and Teaching, and the Specialty Area and,
9. Completion of the senior recital

Teaching Certification

The Educational Testing Service (ETS) PRAXIS Series assessment is a requirement for graduation from the

undergraduate teaching programs at Alcorn State University. The PRAXIS I and PRAXIS II are requirements for those who desire to teach in the State of Mississippi. Students are responsible for filling out the application and paying required fees to take the examination. Music students must take PRAXIS I (Academic Skills Assessments) in the second semester of their sophomore year. The PRAXISII (Principles of Learning and Teaching Tests and Specialty Area Test) must be taken before student teaching. All teacher education majors should have a copy of their PRAXIS scores sent directly to the Office of Certification in the State Department of Education.