INTRODUCTION

Oberlin College, established in 1833, has a long and distinguished history of education, support, and promotion of the arts in general, and music in particular. The music division, now known as the Conservatory, became part of the College in 1867 and continues to educate and train musicians for professional careers. Bachelor of Music and a limited Master of Music programs are offered in the Conservatory, and a substantial number of students complete two degrees, the Bachelor of Arts and the Bachelor of Music, within five years. In addition, the Conservatory has long provided musical opportunities for students in the Arts & Sciences division of the College through private lessons, ensemble participation, academic classes, and a liberal arts major, the Musical Studies Major (see below).

Oberlin is rich with opportunities for musicians at all levels. The Conservatory presents over 500 concerts annually, most of them free and open to the public. Nationally known artists in the classical, folk, pop, rock, and jazz genres are also featured each year. The Oberlin Artist Recital Series showcases internationally known artists and offers tickets to students at a discounted rate.

DEGREE OPPORTUNITIES

Each year, between 30 and 40 Arts & Sciences (A&S) students pursue a major in Musical Studies. This Bachelor of Arts major offers students the opportunity to study music within the liberal arts context. Common focuses are music theory, music history, and ethnomusicology. Students can also propose their own liberal-arts influenced focus. The requirements for the Musical Studies major are listed in the Course Catalog.

An A&S student wishing to declare the Musical Studies Major proposes a course of study, including preliminary thoughts on a capstone project, which is then reviewed by the Musical Studies committee. The committee works with the student to craft an approved course of study.

All prospective Musical Studies majors may, as early as the beginning of their first semester, audition for private lessons (called secondary applied study, see below).

CHANGE OF STATUS

Some A&S students come to Oberlin wishing to audition (or re-audition) for the Conservatory once they are enrolled. Students wishing to schedule an audition for the B.Mus. degree must contact the Conservatory Admissions Office (Conservatory Annex 206, x58413). Those who are admitted to the Conservatory may choose to become Double Degree students or to transfer from the College to the Conservatory. Further information can be found here: http://new.oberlin.edu/conservatory/admissions/apply/cc-dd.dot Auditions for the B.Mus. will not be given at the beginning of the semester, but will take place during regularly scheduled audition dates. For a listing of those dates, please contact the Conservatory Admissions Office. A Change of Status application (available in the Conservatory Admissions office) must also be completed.

PRIVATE LESSONS (a.k.a. Applied Study)

Many A&S students come to Oberlin with a strong musical background and wish to continue private study on an instrument, which we call Applied Study (also referred to as Private Study or Applied Lessons). Applied Study is offered on any instrument and style for
which we have a faculty member. Instruments include piano, organ, historical keyboard instruments, orchestral instruments, and big band instruments; styles include Jazz and Classical.

Applied Study takes several forms and may be taken for credit or no credit. Many A&S students choose to audition for Secondary Applied Study. Auditions occur during the first week of classes each semester. Following the audition, faculty members recommend students for placement with a faculty teacher (if space permits), in the supervised student teacher program, or in the approved student teacher program. Students placed for secondary applied study with a faculty member or a supervised student teacher receive two credits for the secondary lessons. Students recommended for placement in the approved student teacher program do not receive credit for the lessons and "contract" with the student teacher for $7.50 per half-hour lesson.

PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITIES

There are many other ways to take part in the musical life of the campus. Ensemble participation is one of the most common options. Most commonly A&S students participate in the Musical Union (a large choral ensemble), Oberlin College Choir, Collegium Musicum, Oberlin College Women’s Chorale, or the Arts & Sciences Orchestra. A&S students are welcome to audition for any Conservatory ensemble. Other ensembles include the Oberlin Orchestra/Contemporary Music Ensemble, Oberlin Sinfonietta/Chamber Orchestra, and Contemporary Music Ensemble. Although these ensembles are generally populated by Conservatory students, they are open to all students by audition. In addition, the ethnomusicology program offers ensembles such as the Javanese Gamelan or Sumatran Talempong.

Outside the Conservatory, student-run ensembles thrive as well. Oberlin Steel, a steel drum ensemble, is a popular campus group. Several a cappella choral ensembles exist such as the Obertones, Nothing But Treble, and The Offbeats. Many rock, folk, and alternative music bands are active throughout the academic year.

COURSES

Oberlin offers several music courses specifically for students in the A&S division. Two introductory courses are typically offered each year specifically for A&S students: Introduction to the Anthropology of Music (CMUS 103) and Introduction to Western Art Music (CMUS 100). Both of these courses accept students with little formal training. On occasion, a General Music Theory course and academic courses are offered by Conservatory faculty and are open primarily to students in the A&S division. Although most courses in the Conservatory are open to qualified A&S students, in reality some Conservatory courses become filled with Conservatory students and declared Musical Studies majors. In addition, Introduction to the History and Literature of Music (MHST 101) and most Ethnomusicology courses are courses that accept college students with advanced musical preparation. Students interested in advanced course work in Musicology must begin with the MHST 101 or the Ethnomusicology 100 course and may then proceed to 200-level Music History and Ethnomusicology courses.

A&S students at an advanced level of musicianship may wish to enroll in Music Theory courses. Any student who wishes to enroll in courses in the Music Theory Division must take two placement examinations before being allowed to register. The theory placement exam is given over the summer and the first aural skills exam
occurs during Orientation. College students should note that spaces in Music Theory courses are limited, and Conservatory students and declared Musical Studies majors are given first priority. A&S students interested in taking the theory placement exam should take the online placement test [http://www.oberlin.edu/octet/PlacementExam/Music Theory/] prior to Freshman Orientation if possible.

FACILITIES

The facilities of the Conservatory include practice rooms, classrooms, electronic and computer music studios, three concert halls, and many teaching studios or offices. The Conservatory Library has a wealth of audio recordings, musical scores and books. The library also includes listening facilities with compact disc players, turntables, tape decks, video playback units, and CD-ROM equipment. A&S students may use the library and practice facilities as well as other rooms in the Conservatory. Please see the current Oberlin College Student Handbook for policies relating to the use of Conservatory facilities.

INSTRUMENTS

It has been the practice for many years at the Conservatory to provide instruments for various functions, including secondary instrument study on historical instruments, class lessons for music educators, and special performance needs to name a few. Although the instrument inventory exists primarily for use by Conservatory students, A&S students may have access to certain portions of the collection under the circumstances outlined below.

Conservatory instruments will be loaned to college students enrolled in classes and/or ensembles, such as the Baroque Orchestra, that require their use. Specialized instrument collections are under the direct supervision of the major faculty member in that area. In general, these collections are only available to Conservatory students enrolled in a class, ensemble, or lesson that requires access to those specialized instruments. The faculty member in consultation with the Associate Dean can make exceptions for A&S students enrolled in certain classes.

Unfortunately, the Conservatory cannot loan or rent instruments to A&S students for activities other than those described above. In cases where an instrument cannot be provided, instruments are often available from local music shops at reasonable rates.

Unless other arrangements are made with the faculty member and the Associate Dean, students are expected to store instruments in the room and locker provided for that instrument. The Conservatory has very limited general locker space for use by A&S students. Inquiries about locker availability should be made in the Concert Production Office (Bibbins 234).