

A Career Guide for Music Majors

Throughout history, music has been an important element in most cultures, serving as a rich and diverse experience used in many ways. Music can be a form of communication, artistic expression, entertainment, therapy or worship. Within the broad field of music, there are many areas of specialization. A concentration in music, with its emphasis on performance, analysis, and critical interpretation provides a foundation for careers in education, business, communications and the arts.

While music is a performing art, few individuals are able to support themselves as full-time musicians. Many music majors elect to combine performing with jobs that allow them to be closely related to music in the workplace. Some music majors continue their education in a graduate or professional school program.

Skills

The study of music develops skills ranging from musical expression to analysis of musical works. Music also develops the ability to concentrate intensely, listen introspectively, observe keenly, work under pressure, meet deadlines and maintain composure when faced with the unexpected. Well-developed communication skills, along with aural

sensitivity, enable graduates to contribute to and succeed in many professions. For example, the ability to put feelings and impressions about music into words is needed by such diverse professionals as a music librarian, a music critic and a music therapist. A sample of representative skills and abilities follows:

Artistic/Technical	Communication	Research/Analysis	Education
Creating and performing music	Writing and speaking effectively	Gathering and analyzing information	Informing and explaining
Interpreting symbols and images	Ability to give and accept constructive criticism	Considering historical perspectives	Group dynamics
Sensitivity to and appreciation of diverse musical styles	Conveying complex information	Hearing and recognizing tonal and harmonic balance, rhythm, and tempo	Organizing information and materials
Doing detailed and accurate work	Describing impressions about music	Working with primary sources	Teaching a skill, concept or principle
Directing a performance	Presenting theories/ideas	Perceiving patterns/structures	Program planning

Career Opportunities

There are many career and job options for music majors. There are all kinds and types of performance settings from symphony orchestras to wedding gigs. What you are paid and how often you work depends on your skills, reputation and the demand for your music. However, most professional musicians work at a combination of jobs and professional activities that are equivalent to or more than, full-time in other fields. Many music majors make a living in non-performance jobs and perform on weekends.

retail, wholesale, manufacturing, importing, exporting, publishing, recording, repair and rebuilding and tuning. People who are successful in the music industry frequently have training and experience in both music and business. Many new businesses have grown out of recent developments in technology and computers.

The music industry is broad in scope and includes

The recording industry is huge, covering thousands of independent labels as well as the handful of major record labels. Technical jobs entail the actual studio work of recording, producing and Conductors

mastering the music. Production jobs entail the duplication and packaging of the recordings and their promotional materials. Administrative jobs cover the promotion, research and budgeting of the industry. Then there are the jobs connected to sales and merchandise, and contracts and legal issues. People in the industry often move from job to job, acquiring diversified skills and climbing the ranks to better jobs.

Performance

Musicians perform music of all types. If you are just getting started it may be worth it to do some volunteer or low pay “gigs” for the experience. Research the performance options in your own community, read the local newspapers’ calendar sections and look for the entertainment listings on the web for your town, city or region. All performance careers start locally!

Church/temple musicians combine music performance and teaching. Most are employed part-time, although large congregations may employ a full-time music director or minister of music. In addition to being competent performers, church or temple musicians must understand composition, transposition and arranging. They must also be familiar with the theology and liturgy of worship.

Music Education

Music teachers work at elementary and secondary schools, colleges and universities, private studios and public or private community music schools (which may be associated with a performing organization).

Composition

Composers often write works on commission. They look for grant and competition money to pay for the commissioning of new works. In the more commercial arena, composers may create music for movies, jingles, multi-media projects, video games or Broadway revues. They may also arrange, adapt or transcribe the work of other composers.

Conducting

Conductors have a wide spectrum of activities and responsibilities. At the level of the smaller community and metropolitan orchestras, the conductor may have to function as a jack-of-all-trades: raising

funds, rehearsing, scheduling and performing. As the orchestra increases in size, length of season and budget, the conductor and music director tend to confine their activities to performing, programming, supervising personnel and working in educational programs. In addition to his or her performance responsibilities, a conductor may also take on the duties of a music director.

Information Science

Music librarians work in libraries with large collections of music books, recordings, musical scores and periodicals associated with music. They can be found in public and academic libraries, radio and television stations, music publishing companies and professional music associations.

Music Therapy

Music therapists use music to accomplish these therapeutic aims: the restoration, maintenance and improvement of mental and physical health. Music therapists work at hospitals, treatment centers, nursing homes, hospices, rehabilitation centers, prisons and mental health clinics.

Media

This encompasses a wide range of music careers including composition, scoring, production, editing, clearing copyrights and licensing. There are many types of media including video games, radio, television, internet and print. When you use any of these media and you notice music played, printed or referred to, chances are there was a person paid to make that happen!

Music Criticism

Music critics are a unique combination of journalist and musician. Their views are published daily, often providing quotations to be used as publicity for performing artists. They affect their audience both indirectly and directly. Indirectly, by determining which artists will survive in the performance media and will therefore be available for the public to choose from, and directly, by influencing the choices the public makes, its understanding of performances and its reactions to them.

The preparation of music critics is largely as one might expect. More than two-thirds of the music critics in large US cities majored in music, with

performance and then music history identified as the leading areas of specialization. Nearly half of the music critics have earned at least a master's degree. Music criticism is a highly specialized field, one that blends music and expressive writing skills. The glamour of attending concerts and meeting performers is an undeniable benefit, but the quick pace, objectivity and late and sometimes long hours may be less appealing. Music critics must have a sincere desire and dedication to the profession.

Arts Administration

Arts organizations, like most for profit companies, have a number of administrative, business or management functions. These roles require people with creativity and an understanding and passion for the arts, as well as skills in a range of areas from finance and marketing to education.

The specific positions available at an arts organization will depend on what the organization does and how large its budget and staff are. Since arts managers are needed in virtually every arts organization, from theatre companies to museums, many opportunities exist in this field. For example,

a museum is likely to have staff members in education that work with school groups to introduce children to the exhibits. An opera company, concert hall, or theatre needs box-office and front of the house workers to manage ticket sales, write press releases, market the productions in the community, and create visibility. Some theatre companies need general managers to schedule tours, monitor union agreements, and run the business side of performances.

Over the last decade, arts management has become a growing field with increasing specialization and training. A number of new graduate training and certification programs have emerged. These programs may be useful, depending on your interests and goals. Some arts managers, for example, suggest eventually pursuing a business degree with a specialization in nonprofit management. Almost without exception, however, arts managers advise getting work-related experience first and considering graduate study later on. If you decide to investigate graduate study, begin by asking professionals what programs they think are valuable and respected in the field.

Job Titles

These job titles are examples of some of the ways that music majors have applied their skills and abilities. An internship is a good way to explore many of the occupations listed below and receive on-the-job training at the same time. In general, additional education or specialized training is required for those occupations marked with a (*) on the following list.

Arts Council Director
Recording Engineer
Business Manager
Fundraising Director
Bow Specialist
Sound Technician
Accompanist
Attorney
Educational Coordinator
Events Planner
Clinician
Film Scorer/Music Editor
Private Lesson Teacher
Music Publishing
Band Director
*College Professor

Lyricist
Music Librarian
Music Therapist
Music Teacher
Recording Engineer
Music Critic
Piano Technician/Tuner
Acoustical Engineer
Music Software Programmer
Electronic Music Technician
Studio Musician
Club Performer
Music Software Programmer
Chamber Musician
Conductor
Composer

Music Director
Instrument/Equipment
Salesperson
Church Music Director
Restoration Specialist
Sound Technician
Accompanist
Business Manager
Musicologist
Ethnomusicologist
Promoter, Booking Agent
Restoration Specialist
Music Retailer
Public Relations

Employers of Music Majors

Television/Radio/Film
State and Federal Government Agencies
Churches
Colleges/Universities/Schools
Production Companies
Theaters
Libraries
Record Companies
Cruise Lines

Magazines and Newspapers
Music Publishers
Hospitals
Music Stores
Entertainment Law Firms
Software Development Firms
Instrument Manufacturers
Performing Arts Organizations
Film Companies

First Jobs Held by Recent UT Graduates

Marketing Segment Specialist
Choir Director
Investor Services Representative
Band Director
Acoustical Design Consultant

Production Assistant
Assistant Band Director
Medical Researcher
Music Festival Administrator
Museum Intern

Earnings

Musicians and singers held about 176,200 jobs in 2010. They often perform in settings such as concert halls, arenas, and clubs. They often work in religious organizations and performing arts companies. In 2010, 43 percent of musicians and singers were self-employed.

Many musicians and singers find only part-time or intermittent work and have long periods of unemployment between jobs. The stress of constantly looking for work leads many to accept permanent full-time jobs in other occupations while working part time as a musician or singer. Rehearsals and recording sessions are commonly held during business hours, but performances take place most often on nights and weekends.

The median hourly wage of musicians and singers was \$22.39 in May 2010. The median wage is the wage at which half the workers in an occupation earned more than that amount and half earned less. The lowest 10 percent earned less than \$8.50, and the top 10 percent earned more than \$60.02.

Music directors and composers held about 93,200 jobs in 2010. About 38 percent were self-employed. Jobs for music directors and composers are found all over the country. However, many jobs are located in cities in which entertainment and recording activities are concentrated, such as New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago.

The median annual wage of music directors and composers was \$45,970 in May 2010. The median wage is the wage at which half the workers in an occupation earned more than that amount and half earned less. The lowest 10 percent earned less than \$21,720, and the top 10 percent earned more than \$85,020.

From: **Occupational Outlook Handbook** at <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/entertainment-and-sports/musicians-and-singers.htm> and <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/entertainment-and-sports/music-directors-and-composers.htm>

Graduate School Options

The three most common graduate degrees offered in music are the Master of Music, Doctor of Musical Arts and Doctor of Philosophy. For general information about music graduate programs and a list of accredited graduate programs, see the College Music Society's Directory of Music Faculties in College and Universities, United States and Canada (available in the Fine Arts Library or online with limited search capabilities at <http://www.music.org/>).

Artist Diploma or certificate programs: These graduate or postgraduate programs are geared towards performance with few or no academic requirements, and are typically considered to be non-degree programs.

Master of Music (M.M.): Usually a two-year program that is offered with concentrations in performance, composition, theory, music education and musicology. Applicants must hold a bachelor's degree in music or its equivalent. Typical master's programs require about 36 credit hours, which for performers usually include large ensemble,

chamber music, lessons, master class or repertoire class, language competencies for singers and at least one academic course per year in theory or history.

Doctor of Musical Arts (D.M.A.): This is the doctoral degree in performance, composition and conducting. The M.M. is usually a prerequisite to enter a D.M.A. program. Programs vary greatly, but it usually takes a minimum of two years to complete the course and residency requirements. For performers, this usually involves 3-6 full solo recitals. For composers, a number of compositions are expected. A thesis or doctoral research paper is also required. Language requirements, coursework/seminars in theory and history and ensembles may be part of the degree requirements.

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.): These doctorates are usually offered in musicology, music theory or music education. After two to three years of coursework, general exams precede work on the dissertation.

FACS Resources for Music Majors

Fine Arts Career Services keeps a small library of arts career and job search related books, many of which are not available at other University of Texas libraries. Students may come by the office (DFA 1.103) to browse books during our regular hours.

100 Careers in the Music Business
 Guide to Competitions 2004
 Booking and Tour Management for the Performing Arts
 Chamber Music Association: Membership Directory 2005
 Complete Guide to Film Scoring
 Exploring Careers in Music
 Great Jobs for Music Majors
 Making Your Living as a String Player

Music, Money, Success & the Movies
 Music & Money
 Music, Money and Success
 New England Conservatory Music Career Informational Handouts
 OPERA America: Membership Directory
 The Savvy Musician
 Texas Music Industry Directory 2006
 The Musician's Way

* For a complete list of FACS Resources visit <http://www.utexas.edu/finearts/careers/career-information>

* Visit http://www.lib.utexas.edu/fal/collections/current_periodicals/index.php for a complete listing of music journals available in the Fine Arts Library

Online Resources for Music Majors

Fine Arts Career Services

HireUTexas

<http://recruit.utexas.edu/hireutexas/>
UT's online job and internship database which posts professional opportunities for all majors.

Fine Arts Works

<https://finearts-utexas-csm.symplicity.com/>
Fine Arts Career Services' database of art-related opportunities. Fine Arts students can post a resume and view job postings and upcoming career events.

Job Listings

Alliance of Artist Communities

<http://www.artistcommunities.org/>
The Alliance of Artists Communities is the service organization for the field of artists' communities and residencies. They maintain artist residency listings, advocate for artist residency programs and communities, and offer professional development for artists. Their website includes job postings.

Americans for the Arts

<http://jobbank.artsusa.org>
This advocacy organization supports the arts in many ways. Their job bank is the premier electronic recruitment resource for the industry and includes national job listings for all of the fine arts. It includes postings in academia, arts administration and management. Check out the rest of their site for other helpful arts resources.

Art Job

<https://www.artjob.org/>
Comprehensive, up-to-date national listings of jobs, internships, fellowships and other employment opportunities in the arts. Contact Fine Arts Career Services for the username and password.

ArtSearch

<http://www.tcg.org/artsearch/>
The publication from the Theatre Communication Group for full-time, part-time, seasonal, year-round and internship opportunities in the performing arts. Contact FACS for the username and password.

Greenlights

www.greenlights.org
Greenlights is a provider of nonprofit strengthening and support services including professional development events, workshops, and a job board containing hundreds of postings by member organizations.

Idealist

<http://www.idealists.org/>
Idealist.org connects people with job, volunteer and action opportunities posted by 90,000 organizations around the world.

Musical Chairs

<http://www.musicalchairs.info/jobs>
The world's leading online resource for performance, teaching and administration jobs in classical music.

New England Conservatory Bridge

<https://www.myinterfase.com/nec/student/>
Includes over 2700 opportunities in music including performance, arts administration and music industry jobs as well as competition, festival, scholarship and grant listings. Current students can contact Fine Arts Career Services for login information.

New York Foundation for the Arts

<http://www.nyfa.org/>
This website provides a number of services for artists including job and internship postings, funding opportunities, arts advocacy and services for artists. They also maintain an online newsletter covering current issues affecting artists.

USA Jobs

<https://www.usajobs.gov/>
USAJOBS is the U.S. Government's official system/program for Federal jobs and employment information. They offer an excellent page dedicated to students and recent graduates seeking Federal jobs.

Overseas Job Opportunities

Going Global

<http://www.goinglobal.com/>

Search for job openings and internship opportunities in countries around the world. Listings are updated daily! Additionally, Going Global career and employment resources include more than 10,000 pages of constantly-updated content on topics such as: job search sources, work permit/visa regulations, resume writing guidelines and examples, employment trends, salary ranges, networking groups and cultural/interviewing advice.

Regional Organizations

Austin Creative Alliance

<http://www.austincreativealliance.org/>

As a nonprofit arts service organization, ACA focuses on sponsoring projects and programs that both strengthen Austin's performing arts community and bring new audiences to the arts. Find links to some of the Austin-area arts organizations.

Texas Commission on the Arts

<http://www.arts.texas.gov>

Includes links to numerous sites, opportunities and assistance for visual and performing artists. View their employment links by going to New Opportunities.

Texas Music Office

<http://www.gov.texas.gov/music>

The TMO is a clearinghouse of music and music-related industry information.

Texas State Agencies List

<https://www.tsl.texas.gov/app/lrs/agencies/index.html>

The list contains an entry for each current Texas state agency with links to contact and other information about the agency.

Professional Organizations

American Federation of Musicians

<http://www.afm.org/>

The AFM is the largest union in the world representing the interests of the professional musician.

American Music Therapy Association

<http://www.musictherapy.org/>

This site answers many questions students may have about music therapy as a career.

American Musicological Society

<http://www.ams-net.org/>

The AMS was founded to advance research in the various fields of music as a branch of learning and scholarship.

American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP)

<http://www.ascap.com/>

ASCAP is a membership association of U.S. composers, songwriters and publishers of every kind of music and hundreds of thousands worldwide.

Association of Performing Arts Presenters

<http://www.apap365.org/>

Excellent site for those interested in arts administration positions. Includes a job bank.

Chamber Music America

<http://www.chamber-music.org/>

ChamberMusicAmericapromotesartisticexcellence and economic stability within the profession and strives to ensure that chamber music is a vital part of American life.

The College Music Society

<http://www.music.org/>

Publications include the Music Vacancy List, The Directory of Music Faculties, and The International Directory of Music Organizations.

Eastman Office of Careers and Professional Development Materials

<http://esm.rochester.edu/iml/careers/library.php>

Includes excellent information on music resumes and cover letters.

League of American Orchestras

<http://www.americanorchestras.org>

The League of American Orchestras leads, supports and champions America's orchestras and the vitality of the music they perform. This site has an excellent Career Center section.

Musical America

<http://www.musicalamerica.com/>

The site is divided into three sections: Industry News, Directory Articles and Listings, and includes a Career Center.

National Association for Music Education

nafme.org

Contains information for teachers, job postings and a great guide to careers in music.

Opera America

<http://www.operaamerica.org/>

Their professional development page includes links to employment, internships and fellowships.

Texas Music Educators Network

<http://www.tmea.org>

Site includes a job database and other helpful information for music educators

Other**Artist House Music**

<http://www.artistshousemusic.org/>

Nonprofit website which exists to educate musicians and music entrepreneurs on how to build a sustainable career.

Orchestralist

<http://www.orchestralist.net>

Orchestralist is an international forum for conductors, composers, players and their colleagues in the orchestra business.

Worldwide Internet Music Resources

http://library.music.indiana.edu/music_resources

A useful list of online resources that includes a comprehensive list of professional associations for specific instruments and other areas of music.

*The information in this guide was compiled from resources available online and in DFA 1.103.
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