Music

Undergraduate Major  Undergraduate Minor

Find your tempo. Tap into your talents.

Whether you want to teach, perform or prepare yourself for graduate study, an undergraduate degree in music is a good first step toward a fulfilling life in music. The Music Department at UW-La Crosse is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music. In UWL’s program, students form a close community, and faculty are eager to share their passion for music. Students explore the field in a broad and balanced way incorporating theory, composition, history, performances, community musical activities and other specialized topics. Many instrumental ensembles and choirs are open to all UWL students regardless of major. Visit the Music Department website for specific audition requirements.

What is it like to major in music?

Studying music includes both artistic and academic experiences. Student musicians work on their artistry in departmental recitals, master classes and participating in ensembles of various sizes and styles. Academic experiences enhance the artistry through private lessons, music theory, ear training, sight-reading and music history. At UWL, all majors and minors include several semesters of lessons on one voice or instrument. Music education courses provide opportunities to gain skills in teaching expertise as well.

Careers in music

Music majors are prepared for a variety of careers and continuing education opportunities.

- Music performance careers
- Music-related professions: Examples include music therapy, music sales and songwriting.
- Teaching in public schools or private settings: UWL music graduates continue to be in high demand for positions such as instrumental, choral and general music teachers. The most important consideration in job placement is a willingness to move and not be limited to a single geographical area. Salaries are comparable to teaching in fields other than music. Advanced degrees mean salary benefits in almost all school systems.
- Graduate studies in music: Continuing your education might lead to preparation for college teaching in a specific area such as music theory, music history, composition, music education, and applied music. Many college positions require a master’s degree; an increasing number also require a doctoral degree. Others continue their graduate education in music performance, conducting, conservatory study, business school or theological school.

Entry level music jobs

- K-12 music educator
- Band, orchestra or choral director
- Church musician
- Jazz instrumentalist
- Performer
- Private studio instructor
- Music store teacher/specialist
- Music journalist
- Composer/songwriter
- Military musician/performer
- Instrument repair technician
- Piano tuning
- Music agent

Being a part of the Music Department at UWL was amazing. All the ensembles encourage students to get involved and enrolled, even non-music majors. Part of the reason why I love it so much is because we get a great variety of students from multiple departments across campus.

Anton Lenertz
Music

What distinguishes UWL's music program?

- Scholarships available for music students
  The Music Department awards more than 50 talent-based scholarships per year to music majors and minors. Ensemble scholarships are available for talented non-majors performing in ensembles and chamber groups. Learn more about scholarship opportunities on the Music Department website or contact music@uwlax.edu.

- Multiple, music-related employment opportunities while studying
  Part-time student employment opportunities in the Music Office and Listening Lab are available to students eligible for the Federal Work Study program. Other job opportunities, such as recital hall tech crew and ensemble assistantships, are available to all students regardless of financial need. Learn more about student employment opportunities on the Music Department website or contact music@uwlax.edu.

- Applied music lessons
  All music majors and minors receive applied music lessons without additional fees. Any student without a music major or music minor may audition to take applied lessons when studio space is available; an additional fee is required for students enrolled in lessons only.

- Excellent facilities for rehearsing, performing, recording and learning
  Located in the UWL Center for the Arts, the Music Department features the acoustically-superb and renovated 235-seat Annett Recital Hall, which houses two grand pianos, a two-manual harpsichord and state-of-the-art digital recording equipment. Center for the Arts also houses well-equipped rehearsal facilities, classrooms, and labs, as well as ample practice rooms.

- Devoted faculty and staff
  Music faculty and staff members are dedicated to excellence in teaching and performing. They are passionate about providing artistic performance opportunities for students and helping all students attain their musical goals.

- Strong reputation for Jazz
  Long a marquee program in Wisconsin, the Jazz Studies area features two big bands and two jazz combos. Both music- and non-music majors perform historical and contemporary big band styles in the Jazz Orchestra and the Jazz Ensemble through frequent on- and off-campus concerts. Improvisers learn their craft in jazz improvisation courses and gain small group experience in combo performances at area jazz clubs. Jazz vocalists sing with all instrumental jazz ensembles and have their own dedicated group with the Contemporary/Jazz Vocal Ensemble.

- Variety of instrumental ensembles
  These groups work with composers, perform new music, and use music talents to support collaborative efforts in the La Crosse community. While some groups require an audition, others are open to any student musician on campus. All ensembles in the Instrumental Studies area are committed to supporting diversity and inclusion both in music choice and membership.

- Variety of choral groups
  The Choral Studies program is one of the most diverse on campus in both student population and opportunity. All choirs perform several times throughout the year both on and off campus.