



# Handbook for 2026-2027

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## Mission and Vision

The Concordia University Texas Music Department empowers students of all backgrounds to critically think, demonstrate compassion, and lead courageously through music and all that creating music entails. Music students develop their minds, hearts, souls, and bodies to prepare for life and vocation. Working together allows us to create meaningful work in music through musical experiences.

## Faculty and Staff Information

The music department faculty and staff are here to empower our students to be lifelong learners, leaders, and compassionate community members.

Dr. Whitney Crowley, Music Department Chair and School of Fine Arts Director

Mrs. Nicole Furneisen, School of Fine Arts Coordinator

Please see the website for all faculty listings:

<https://www.concordia.edu/academics/school-of-fine-arts/music/concordia-music-faculty/>

## Music Lessons and Ensembles Handbook

Performance opportunities for students include applied lessons and ensembles. These are open to all students regardless of major and experience. CTX applied lessons are a 1:1 weekly meeting with a professor and student on the instrument or voice. We encourage all students to participate in music ensembles. The premier ensembles for CTX are the University Singers and Symphonic Winds/Los Tornos Mariachi. Additional Ensembles include Chapel Music Ensemble, Vocal Ensembles, and the Concordia Jazz Collective. *For operational details on applied lessons, ensembles, juries, and recitals, please consult the [CTX Lessons and Ensembles Handbook](#)*

## Student Code of Conduct and Resources

Music students are expected to abide by the CTX Student Handbook policies. Occasionally, music events may have alcohol present for audience members over the age of 21. Music students, regardless of their age, are expected to refrain from alcohol use during music events and trips.

CTX Student Handbook: <https://www.concordia.edu/student-life/dean-of-students/the-student-handbook.html>

Student Central (Finances, Registration, & Info):  
<https://www.concordia.edu/resources/student-central/>

Academic Calendar and Catalog: <https://www.concordia.edu/resources/office-of-student-registration-and-records/schedules-calendars-and-catalog.html>

## Academic Pathways

The CTX Music Department offers many diverse pathways to participate in the music department. Any CTX student may choose to take music courses to fulfill their Fine Arts requirement for the Concordia Common Core or for their own scholarship exploration beyond this requirement. Four pathways for the music major concentrations also exist (education, ministry, applied studies, and audio production) and an option for a music minor. Instruments for study include voice, flute, oboe, bassoon, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, horn, trombone, euphonium, tuba, percussion, violin, viola, cello, upright bass, classical guitar, piano, and organ.

### Music Education Major

The Music Education concentration is uniquely structured as a double major in Music and Education. Students in this pathway complete requirements from both the Music Department and the College of Education and may qualify for Texas All-Level Music EC-12 Certification through the Texas Education Agency (TEA). Students may also choose to earn the Christian Teaching Diploma (CTD) through the College of Education.

#### *Shared Responsibility Model*

The Music Education pathway is a coordinated effort between two departments. This handbook articulates the Music Department's responsibilities; the College of Education Handbook governs the education major, Education Preparation Program (EPP) and TEA certification side of the program.

Study required for this concentration includes a primary and secondary instrument. For details on course requirements please see the Academic Catalog or Navigate.

### Music Ministry Major

Students pursuing the Music Ministry Major Concentration will complete coursework in music and theology as they prepare for service to the church and world. Students will study a primary instrument and will learn to lead congregational song with that instrument.

The concentration includes an optional **Director of Parish Music–Aligned Track**, designed for students preparing for church music leadership within the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS).

For details on course requirements, please see the Academic Catalog or Navigate.

### Applied Music Major

Students pursuing the Applied Music Major Concentration will complete coursework in their desired area of study and the music core. Students will study a primary instrument or voice. For details on course requirements please see the Academic Catalog or Navigate.

### Audio Production Major

Students pursuing the Audio Production Major Concentration will complete coursework in music and business as they prepare for vocations in the music business industry. Internships with local studios are also available and provide students with real-world

experience prior to graduation. For details on course requirements, please see the Academic Catalog or Navigate.

### Music Minor

Students pursuing the music minor will complete coursework that enriches their primary educational and vocational focus. The music minor allows students to specialize in music ministry, music pedagogy, music history, theory/composition, and other areas of emphasis. For details on course requirements, please see the Academic Catalog or Navigate.

## Auditions & Scholarships

Students who desire to participate in music will interview at the beginning of the first semester enrolled. These interview auditions will determine any scholarship awards granted to the student.

### Interview Audition Procedures

Students will need to prepare and perform two to four minutes of music from two pieces with contrasting styles (preferably two different eras or genres of music - I.e. Baroque and Romantic eras or hard rock and country ballad genres). Interviews will take place on campus as individually scheduled during the academic year or during Embark or En Route Orientations. Interview auditions should be scheduled by contacting [music@concordia.edu](mailto:music@concordia.edu)

### Scholarships

Scholarships are awarded annually and reassessed each academic year. Scholarship awards are not guaranteed from year to year, and most require a particular grade point average (GPA) to be maintained. Students must be enrolled in at least 15 credit hours to be eligible for scholarships. Students may qualify for more than one scholarship. All scholarships are initially based on the interview audition procedures listed above. Students may only qualify for one scholarship category: Ensembles or Music Majors and Minors.

**Ensembles:** Students, regardless of their major, may receive a scholarship for participating in the University Singers or Symphonic Winds. Scholarships will be awarded based on an audition and may be re-awarded based on student's contribution to the ensemble. Students who fail the music ensemble course will not be awarded a scholarship for the following year. Students who fail may re-audition for ensemble scholarship after one year.

**Music Majors and Minors:** Students who have declared music major or minor concentrations may audition for additional music scholarships. These music scholarships are based on interview auditions and academic qualifications. Students may qualify for more than one music scholarship.

- The Marilyn Bauer Erickson Memorial Scholarship may be awarded to music students who show musical talent and plan to do LCMS church work or major in music (any music concentration). Students must maintain good standing and at least an overall 2.0 grade point average (GPA).

- The Ernest & Katherine Bollard Church Music Scholarship may be awarded to music students who plan to do LCMS church music. Students must maintain good standing and at least an overall 2.0 GPA.
- The Leo & Thelma Gastler Scholarship may be awarded to music students who plan to do LCMS church work or major in music ministry or education. Students must be enrolled full-time, be in good standing, and maintain an overall 3.0 GPA.
- The Julia Krumm Aspiring Organist Scholarship may be awarded to music students who plan to study the organ or keyboard instrument (any CTX major applies). Students must be enrolled full-time, be in good standing, and maintain at least an overall 2.0 GPA.
- The Dr. Bernard and Ruth Gastler 50% ACC Music Scholarship may be awarded to music students who plan to do LCMS church work or major in music (education or ministry concentrations only). Students must be enrolled full-time, maintain good standing, and maintain an overall 3.0 GPA.

## Music Program Assessment

The music program outcomes are assessed annually as part of the university's institutional effectiveness and continuous improvement processes, supporting compliance with Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) accreditation requirements. This process is documented in CTX [PR18 – Assessment Planning and Reporting – Academic and Educational Support Programs, available on Tornado Times](#) (Employee Portal).

The music department aligns with the standards of the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) to promote quality music education, curriculum, and professional practice.

## Health & Safety

The Music Department at Concordia University Texas is committed to the health, safety, and wellness of every student, faculty member, and staff member in our care. We view this commitment as inseparable from our Christian vocation: musicians are stewards of the body voice, mind, and hearing they have been given, and the department has a corresponding responsibility to inform, protect, and support.

Caring for one's body, mind, hearing, and voice is part of faithful stewardship. The pursuit of musical excellence must never come at the cost of long-term harm to the musician. We prioritize sustainable practice over reckless intensity.

## Hearing Health

Musicians face elevated risk of noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL) due to prolonged exposure to high sound levels in rehearsals, performances, and practice.

### Known Risk Factors at CTX:

- Ensemble rehearsals
- Amplified performance environments
- Prolonged individual practice in small spaces

- Audio Production coursework involving studio monitoring and live sound

#### **Departmental Practices:**

- Faculty are trained to monitor rehearsal volume and incorporate breaks
- Students in Audio Production and amplified ensembles are encouraged to use **musician-grade hearing protection** (high-fidelity earplugs)
- Practice room signage reminds students of safe listening levels
- Annual awareness communication distributed at the start of each academic year

#### **Student Responsibilities:**

- Take regular breaks during long practice sessions
- Use hearing protection when appropriate (available for purchase; recommendations provided by faculty)
- Report any ringing, muffled hearing, or discomfort promptly
- Seek professional audiological evaluation if concerns arise

### **Vocal Health**

Vocalists face specific risks including vocal strain, nodules, and long-term vocal fatigue.

#### **Departmental Practices:**

- Vocal faculty provide instruction in healthy vocal technique as a foundational element of applied study
- Ensemble directors incorporate vocal warm-ups and monitor vocal load across rehearsals and performances
- Students preparing for extended performances (recitals, tours, multiple back-to-back events) receive individualized guidance on vocal pacing

#### **Student Responsibilities:**

- Hydrate consistently
- Avoid overuse, especially during illness
- Warm up before singing
- Report hoarseness, pain, or vocal changes to your applied instructor promptly
- Seek professional otolaryngology evaluation for persistent vocal concerns

### **Neuromusculoskeletal Health**

Instrumentalists, pianists, guitarists, and percussionists face repetitive strain, postural, and overuse injuries.

#### **Departmental Practices:**

- Applied instructors incorporate posture, technique, and injury-prevention guidance as part of foundational instruction
- Students preparing for juries, recitals, or intensive performance seasons receive individualized guidance on practice pacing

- Faculty are attentive to signs of overuse and refer students to appropriate care when needed

### **Student Responsibilities:**

- Warm up before playing
- Take breaks during long practice sessions (recommended: 5-minute break every 25–30 minutes)
- Maintain appropriate posture and instrument setup
- Report pain, tingling, numbness, or reduced range of motion promptly
- Seek professional medical evaluation for persistent physical concerns

### **Mental Health & Performance Wellness**

Musicians face specific mental health considerations including performance anxiety, perfectionism, and the emotional weight of public assessment.

### **Departmental Commitment:**

- We treat mental health as an essential dimension of the whole musician
- Faculty are trained to recognize signs of distress and refer to appropriate campus resources
- Performance anxiety is discussed openly and treated as a normal, manageable aspect of musical life rather than a personal failing
- We foster a culture where seeking help is understood as strength, not weakness

### **Available Resources:**

- **Campus Counseling Services:** <https://www.concordia.edu/resources/counseling-services/>
- **Nearby Health Services:** <https://www.concordia.edu/student-life/dean-of-students/nearby-medical-facilities.html>
- **Campus Pastor / Spiritual Care:** <https://www.concordia.edu/campus-ministry/campus-ministry-team.html>
- **Music Department Chair:** for music or academic concerns

### **Environmental Considerations Specific to Concordia Texas**

- **Outdoor performances** in Texas heat present hydration, sun exposure, and instrument care considerations. Faculty and ensemble directors adjust practices accordingly.
- **Indoor acoustics** vary; ensemble directors and applied instructors adjust volume and technique as appropriate.
- **Instrument transportation** across campus (especially to and from the Chapel and outdoor venues) is planned with attention to student physical load.

### **Reporting & Accommodations**

Students requiring accommodations for health, disability, or wellness reasons should contact:

- Office of Accessibility Services: <https://www.concordia.edu/resources/academic-support-center/services-for-students-with-disabilities/>
- **Music Department Chair** to coordinate reasonable adjustments to lessons, ensembles, juries, and recitals in collaboration with the Office of Accessibility Services

All reasonable accommodations will be honored, and requests will be treated with confidentiality and respect.

## Faculty Commitment

Music faculty commit to:

- Modeling healthy practice, rehearsal, and performance habits
- Educating students on health & safety as a normal part of applied instruction and ensemble participation
- Adjusting expectations in response to student health concerns
- Referring students to appropriate professional care when needs exceed faculty expertise

## Career Preparation & Alumni

Graduates of the Concordia Texas Music Department pursue vocations across the full breadth of music professions. Recent alumni serve as:

- **Educators** in K–12 public, private, and parochial schools
- **Church Musicians** in Lutheran (LCMS), non-denominational, and other Christian congregations
- **Directors of Parish Music** in LCMS congregations, with theological and musical leadership responsibilities
- **Composers and Songwriters** in independent and industry contexts
- **Performers** in regional ensembles, freelance settings, and touring contexts
- **Audio Producers and Engineers** in live sound, recording studios, houses of worship, and independent production
- **Music Industry Professionals** in publishing, event production, artist management, and related fields
- **Graduate Students** at master's and doctoral programs in music, music education, and related disciplines

## Career Preparation Resources

Throughout the degree, students engage in:

- **Vocational conversations** with their applied instructor and the Music Department Chair
- **Professional development experiences** including performance opportunities, community engagement, and (for Music Education) field experiences
- **Mentorship** through relationships with faculty who are themselves active in the field
- **Peer networking** through ensemble participation, tours, and departmental events
- **Capstone experiences** (Student Recital, concentration-specific projects) that serve as portfolio work

## Alumni Network

Alumni remain a vital part of the CTX Music community. Current students are encouraged to connect with alumni through:

- Faculty-facilitated introductions
- Alumni visits and guest performances

## Equipment and Instruments

CTX instruments and equipment are available for students. The use of university-owned instruments is included with CTX tuition. Students will be expected to properly care for the instrument(s) issued to them. *For details on instrument and equipment use, storage, rental, and checkout procedures, please consult the [CTX Lessons and Ensembles Handbook](#)*

### Music Major Equipment and Instrument Suggestions

Music majors are highly encouraged to own their own semi-professional or professional model main instrument for strings, woodwinds, brass, or percussion (i.e. - violinist owns their own violin). Lesson professors and the music department chair can provide students with recommendations for professional makes and models. Secondary instruments are available for rent from the university (see above).

Audio production majors are highly encouraged to have their own set of studio quality headphones with an eighth inch headphone jack and a laptop with at least one USB C port. The music department chair or audio production adjunct can help students provide recommendations on the equipment specifications. All music majors have access to the music lab (B208) with computers, midi keyboards, and recording equipment. To access the music lab, email the School of Fine Arts Coordinator.

## Music Department Forms

[CTX Lessons and Ensembles Handbook](#)

[Music Performance Rubric Friday Serenades.pdf](#)

[CTX Music Jury Performance Rubric.pdf](#)

[Music Student Audition Form.docx](#)

[CTX Music Travel Request Form.docx](#)

Music Ensembles: [CTX Music Library Database USE - 2026.xlsx](#)

[AC21 - Music Department Travel Policy 2024-10-15](#)