

Career paths in music

Performance: Singing, playing, or conducting for a living. In the classical world, most performers have advanced academic degrees; in the commercial world, this varies a great deal. Successful professional performers have to be at the very top of their craft. They practice a lot, they often perform for non-glamorous gigs as well as exciting ones, and the competition is fierce.

Music education: Teaching music to others. This encompasses a wide variety of possibilities, from young children through college students and individual students through large classes/ensembles, and can include subject areas ranging from general music to highly specialized instruction. Most music educators pursue a teaching credential program (or more) following their undergraduate degree.

Composition: Writing original music for concert performance, studio performance, film/TV, advertising, video games, and more. Composers may or may not also be performers, but they need an understanding of a wide range of instruments and of the voice, and a strong grasp of music theory and harmony. Facility with music technology is also helpful!

Music production: Producing, engineering, and/or recording music. Producers may work in live venues, in studios, for film or TV productions, and more. This field requires a deep knowledge and understanding of both current technology and music/musicians.

Music therapy: Using music to work with clients to achieve their therapeutic goals. Music therapists don't just play music to "cheer people up"; their field is science-based is rigorous, and this is an excellent and emerging profession for people with a love of music and a desire to help others.

Those aren't the only options! But they're some of the most popular ones our alums have chosen. We also have music students who ultimately decide to pursue music as a part-time profession or a hobby alongside a career in another field. Our faculty members have a wide range of academic and professional experience, and we'll be glad to talk with you about how best to achieve your goals and plan for your future.

