



US-CHINA MUSIC INSTITUTE

Bard College Conservatory of Music

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

Academic Year 2023-24

The US-China Music Institute was founded in late 2017 and began admitting undergraduate students to major in Chinese Instruments in the Fall of 2018. You, our new and current students, are the pioneers of this innovative program, currently the only one of its kind in the United States or the Western Hemisphere.

This document is an important roadmap as you plan your academic careers at Bard. Please read through it carefully and make good use of the guidelines and information here so that you can be an active, well-informed participant in your own education.

For complete information about being a student at the Conservatory, please see blogs.bard.edu/conservatory-wiki/. The Conservatory Handbook wiki pages include lots of helpful information including instructions for scheduling lessons and performances, rules and policies, and more.

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CONSERVATORY CURRICULUM FOR CHINESE INSTRUMENT MAJORS

Studying at Bard

All Conservatory undergraduates including Chinese instrument majors pursue a five-year program leading to two degrees: the bachelor of music and the bachelor of arts in a field other than music. Conservatory students live, eat, and attend most classes with non-Conservatory students, and are fully part of the academic and social life of the College. Each Conservatory student has two academic advisers, one from the Conservatory and one from a field that the student is considering as a major for the BA degree.

The Chinese instrument major closely follows the curriculum of the rest of the Conservatory, while offering courses specially designed to provide a comprehensive background in Chinese musical forms and traditions. The Chinese instrument curriculum was designed and is overseen by the Conservatory's US-China Music Institute, in collaboration with the Traditional Instruments Department of the Central Conservatory of Music (CCOM), China.

Philosophy

The bachelor of music program contains many innovative components: all performance majors study composition, and the Conservatory Seminar integrates music theory and music history with special emphasis on their relation to performance. The curricula of the Conservatory and the College are flexible, allowing participants to create the sequence of music and other courses that best suits each student. The aim of the Conservatory and the College is to foster a unified learning environment where the serious study of music goes hand in hand with the education of the whole person.

For students of Chinese instruments, the Conservatory offers a holistic approach to musicianship and scholarship while also providing coursework and musical training specially designed for the unique requirements of their individual practice.

Double-Degree Requirements

Requirements for the simultaneously awarded degrees of B. Music and B.A. can be summarized as follows:

Bachelor of Arts Requirements

- A minimum of 160 credits, at least 64 of which must be taken at Bard.
- A minimum of 40 credits outside the division of the B.A. major.
- The common curriculum for first-year students:
 - Two semesters of First-Year Seminar.
 - Language and Thinking (L&T): a 3-week intensive program before the start of the first semester.

- Citizen Science: a 2-week intensive course before the start of the second semester.
- Promotion to the Upper College by passing moderation.
- Completion of an acceptable B.A. Senior Project in a field other than music.
- Distribution requirements: one course from each of the appropriate distribution areas.

Bachelor of Music Requirements

- Studio instruction in every semester of enrollment.
- Chinese Ensemble in every semester of enrollment.
- Study Abroad at CCOM – 4 weeks of study on site at the Central Conservatory in Beijing; required after the end of first year, and twice more before the start of the fifth year.
- Conservatory Core Sequence for Chinese Music – four semesters.
 - Music Theory, Tonal Harmony and Counterpoint (2 semesters)
 - Composition for Performers
 - Conservatory Seminar on Chinese Music
- Aural Skills – two semesters.
- One Western Music History class
- Literature and Language of Chinese Music – four semesters:
 - I. Introduction – required in the first semester of the first year.
 - II. Instrumental Music
 - III. Folk Music
 - IV. Operatic Music
- Conservatory Senior Project – includes the degree recital.

Music Electives

Additional music electives are available in a broad range of topics, including classes in music history, advanced analysis, and courses studying music of Western and various non-Western traditions. All courses in the Bard College B.A. Music Program—including those in electronic music, jazz, and world music—are open to students in the Conservatory.

Study Abroad

Chinese instrument majors will have the opportunity to study for one month at the Central Conservatory of Music (CCOM) in Beijing at the end of every Spring semester. During this time students will take lessons with their CCOM master teacher as well as attending classes, and they will participate in the CCOM end-of-year Jury. All first-year students are required to travel to CCOM at the end of the year. A total of three study abroad trips to CCOM are required before the start of the 5th year at Bard. Please see the section titled **The Study Abroad Program** below for more detailed information.

Withdrawals

A Conservatory student may withdraw from the Conservatory and continue as a BA candidate at Bard College. (Such a decision may have an impact on the student's financial aid.) However, a student may not withdraw from Bard's BA program and continue in the Conservatory.

ADVISORS AND STUDIO INSTRUCTORS

Conservatory students are assigned two advisors, a Conservatory advisor and an academic advisor. Together, they work each student to stay on track to fulfill degree requirements for both the Conservatory and the College. The Conservatory advisor will not necessarily be related to the US-China Music Institute, but they should be aware of the specific requirements for this program.

The directors of the US-China Music Institute will also supervise the progress of each Chinese instrument major with regular meetings each semester.

Studio instructors for Chinese instrument majors are divided into master teachers, who may be current faculty members of the Traditional Instruments Department of the Central Conservatory of Music, and graduate assistants hand-picked each year by the master teachers. Lessons with the master teachers at CCOM will be held primarily via video-conference via the Conservatory's teleconferencing system and will be scheduled in coordination with US-China Music Institute staff. Graduate assistant teachers will be on campus at Bard to provide weekly lessons as a supplement to master teacher instruction*. Graduate assistants will also participate in Chinese Ensemble and chamber music with undergraduates.

* If/when travel from China is not possible or allowed for the GA's, they will provide lessons via video-conferencing.

BACHELOR OF MUSIC DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The requirements (by semester) of the bachelor of music degree in the Conservatory are:

- Studio Instruction (all)
- Chinese Ensemble (all)
- Aural Skills (two)
- Conservatory Core Sequence (four)
- Chinese Music History (four)
- Western Music History (one)

- Degree Recital

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Studio Instruction

Working with outstanding master teachers and their hand-picked graduate assistants from the Central Conservatory of Music (CCOM), students benefit from weekly in person instruction with on-site studio teachers, along with regular video-conference sessions with master teachers in Beijing utilizing state-of-the-art technology. See the **Performance Requirements** table below for the schedule of required juries and recitals.

The Studio Instruction program includes study abroad in Beijing to work with the master teacher in person while residing on campus at CCOM. A total of three month-long study abroad trips to CCOM are needed to complete Studio Instruction degree requirements (more information in **The Study Abroad Program** below).

Chinese Ensemble

Chinese Ensemble provides Chinese instrument majors both large-ensemble and chamber music experience with regular rehearsals and performance opportunities. Students work closely with the ensemble coach and their studio teachers to further develop their skills in ensemble playing, intonation, and musical expression through practical playing experience. At least two major Chinese Ensemble concerts with the participation of all Chinese instrument majors will be performed each semester on campus, supplemented by other types of performance opportunities on and off campus throughout the year. Studio teachers assist the ensemble coach as well as performing in ensembles, allowing students to learn firsthand from the playing of more experienced musicians. Mixed ensembles including Western instruments are encouraged. The Chinese Ensemble program is further enriched by master classes and concerts by guest artists. In their first semester, first-year students will also attend 8 special sessions of the Conservatory's Introduction to Chamber Music to acquire skills in musicianship, rehearsing, ensemble playing, and managing the requirements of the double-degree.

Note: For Chinese instrument majors, Chinese Ensemble is the equivalent to both the Conservatory Chamber Music and Orchestra requirements. Separate enrollment in Chamber Music or Orchestra is not required. However, first year students will still need to take *First-Year Conservatory Forum: Wellness, Life Skills and Chamber Music*.

Conservatory Core Sequence for Chinese Music

The Conservatory Core Sequence is a unique four-semester sequence of classes that integrates the study of music theory, music history, and composition in order to give students a richer understanding of these topics as vital and relevant to their work as interpreters:

- **Music Theory, Tonal Harmony and Counterpoint** – a 2-semester accelerated overview to species counterpoint and traditional harmony. Note: placement test required. If you

didn't pass the placement test, you will take music theory 1 and 2 from music department instead of Core seminar 1 and 2 from the conservatory.

- **Composition for Performers** - By learning to compose, students develop a deep understanding of the compositional process, which is an integral skill for all performing musicians. Students produce several original compositions to be performed by themselves and others at a final concert. The class is taught by the Conservatory composition faculty Joan Tower and George Tsontakis, two of our most celebrated composers and teachers of composition.
- **Conservatory Seminar on Chinese Music** – This is the capstone class for the Conservatory Core Sequence in Chinese Music, and is designed to give students the ability to place their music making in a larger social, historical, and expressive context. The seminar explores Chinese music and the arts in society. Topics include the political role that music and the arts have played, and continue to play, in modern China's history, as well as the history of Western music in China and its close association with domestic politics and international diplomacy. This course is taught by the director of the US-China Music Institute, Jindong Cai.

Aural Skills

This sequence of courses provides Conservatory students with skills in sight-singing, harmonics, melodic and rhythmic dictation, clef reading, keyboard harmony, harmonic analysis and other requirements of functional musical literacy.

Chinese Music History

In addition to the four-semester Conservatory Core Sequence, students are required to take a four-semester music history sequence titled Literature and Language of Chinese Music. In their first semester, students are required to take Literature and Language of Chinese Music I: Introduction. The three remaining semesters provide an in-depth exploration of the development of Chinese instrumental music, folk traditions, and opera. One of these three courses will be offered each semester in rotation and can be taken in any order at any time after the first semester.

Degree Recital

Students present a full-length recital in the fourth or fifth year of the program. The repertoire is chosen in conjunction with the master teacher and should demonstrate the unique musical strengths and artistic goals of the student. All recitals/concerts need to be approved by USCFI committee first. Please send your recital application with the program and stage plot to Hsiao-Fang Lin at least 8 weeks before your recital date.

THE STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM

Overview

The US-China Music Institute and the Central Conservatory of Music (CCOM) in Beijing offer a four-week study abroad opportunity for Chinese instrument majors at the Bard Conservatory. This program will take place every year at the end of Bard's Spring semester, during the last weeks of the semester at CCOM. *

Requirements

Studying at CCOM is an important part of the Studio Instruction degree requirement. All first-year students will be required to attend CCOM for one month after the end of the Spring semester. Two additional visits are required before the beginning of the 5th year at Bard. This means students can choose to take one year off from this requirement in their 2nd, 3rd, or 4th year.

During the four-week program, students will take in-person lessons with their master teachers, they will have the opportunity to sit in on classes, and they will be required to participate in the CCOM end-of-year Jury. Final studio instruction grades will be based in part on these activities.

Registration

During each Spring semester students will be asked to fill out an online registration form through the Bard Abroad department so we can inform CCOM who will be coming that year.

Finances

On-campus housing will be covered by USCMi during the four-week period of study. Students will be responsible to pay for travel from Bard to CCOM and food when in China. If travel costs present a hardship, it will be possible to apply for a travel grant during the study abroad registration process.

*NOTE: Due to disruptions during the pandemic, not all USCMi students registered will be able to fulfill the study abroad requirement as stated above, and will be given alternative credits as needed on a case-by-case basis.

US-CHINA MUSIC INSTITUTE PERFORMANCES

Chinese Ensemble

The Chinese Ensemble is composed of every undergraduate Chinese instrument major, their graduate assistants, Chinese Music and Culture graduate students, and other students of the

Conservatory who are interested in participating. The Chinese Ensemble will perform at least one US-China Music Institute sponsored concert each semester on campus at Bard. Attendance at weekly or semi-weekly rehearsals with the ensemble coach are mandatory to prepare for these concerts. The US-China Music Institute director and the ensemble coach will choose and prepare pieces for these concerts, and the US-China Music Institute staff will prepare printed programs and posters and will promote the concerts.

Smaller chamber ensembles are also part of this program, and will be organized and supervised by the ensemble coach with the help of Conservatory and US-China Music Institute staff.

Other performance opportunities on or off-campus may come up throughout the year. This includes potential events in New York City at China Institute or elsewhere, or at local venues in the Hudson Valley. Transportation will be provided for any officially sponsored US-China Music Institute performance.

Chinese Music in the Chapel

This is a concert series designed to showcase the graduate assistants of the US-China Music Institute. Chapel concerts will also take place once per semester. Graduate assistants may request the participation of their students in chamber pieces as part of their programs, if they so choose. Chinese instrument majors should also expect to assist the GA's during these concerts.

Degree Recitals

Recitals that are part of the Conservatory degree requirement should be scheduled through the Conservatory concert office, following the same guidelines as all other Conservatory students. Required performances include the midpoint recital, off-campus recital, and final degree recital. More information in the **Performance Requirements** table below.

Please see the concert office website: <https://blogs.bard.edu/conservatory-wiki/home/the-concert-office/>

Non-degree Recitals

Students are encouraged to organize their own concerts at any time, as long as it does not interfere with the official performance schedule. These concerts will be the responsibility of the students to schedule, prepare, and promote, according to the guidelines set out by the Conservatory Concert office.

NOTE: Information about Degree and Non-degree recitals is available on the Concert Office wikis page: <https://wikis.bard.edu/display/conservatory/The+Concert+Office>

US-CHINA MUSIC INSTITUTE FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATION

Administration

Jindong Cai, Director

Kathryn Wright, Managing Director

Hsiao-Fang Lin, Director of Music Programming

Shutong Li, music assistant and assistant conductor

The US-China Music Institute office is currently located in Blum N201. Staff are available to assist students most weekdays after 12pm.

Faculty (Academic Years 2020-2021 and 2021-2022)

Yu Hongmei, *erhu*

Zhang Hongyan, *pipa*

Zhou Wang, *guzheng*

Zhang Qiang, *pipa*

Ziao Jiazhen, *guqin*

Qiao Jia, *Chinese percussion*

Xu Yang, *ruan*

Chen Yan, *erhu*

Guo Yazhi, *suona*

Wu Man, Master Classes

Chen Tao, *dizi*, Chinese Ensemble and chamber music coach

Mingmei Yip, Visiting Professor, Chinese Music History and Culture

Xinyan Li, Visiting Professor, Chinese Music History and Composition

Faculty bios can be found on the Conservatory website at:

bard.edu/conservatory/uschinamusic

SPECIAL PROGRAMS OF THE US-CHINA MUSIC INSTITUTE

Master of Arts in Chinese Music and Culture

The Conservatory's [Master of Arts in Chinese Music and Culture](#) is a two-year full-time degree program offering music students who are proficient in both English and Chinese a rich interdisciplinary curriculum exploring the intersections between the music and the culture of China. Degree candidates can choose from different concentrations depending on their specialization: Chinese or Western instruments, voice, musicology/ethnomusicology, or composition.

CONSERVATORY 5+1 PROGRAM

Highly qualified students enrolled in the Bard Conservatory 5-year undergraduate double-degree program will have the opportunity to complete their BA, BM, and MA degrees in a 5+1 sequence. With proper advance planning, students can begin coursework for the MA in Chinese Music and Culture during the fifth year and complete the MA after one additional year. This opportunity is only open to students with appropriate academic and performance skills sufficient to meet all the requirements for the MA. Students will need to apply to MA in Chinese Music and Culture program in their fourth year in the conservatory.

Guqin and Chinese Studies Five-Year Double Degree

In ancient China, the *guqin* was once considered essential to the development of a cultured individual. Over thousands of years, the *guqin* has been closely associated with Chinese philosophy and the arts, and is currently enjoying a resurgence in popularity. In the spirit of the ancient tradition, the Department of Asian Studies and the US-China Music Institute in the Conservatory of Music now offer a joint five-year double-degree major in *guqin* performance and Chinese studies, starting in the 2020-21 academic year. This program is appropriate for students with strong musical backgrounds and an interest in Chinese history, arts and culture. Prior knowledge of the *guqin* is recommended but not required.

Two Majors, Two Degrees

All Conservatory undergraduates pursue a five-year program leading to two degrees: the bachelor of music and the bachelor of arts in a field other than music. The Guqin and Chinese Studies double degree will follow this same model. Each student will have two academic advisers, one from the Conservatory and one from the Asian Studies Program.

Curriculum

The *guqin* major is offered through the undergraduate program of the US-China Music Institute, which closely follows the curriculum of the rest of the Conservatory while offering courses specially designed to provide a comprehensive background in Chinese musical forms and traditions. The Chinese instrument curriculum was designed and is overseen by the Institute in collaboration with the Traditional Instruments department of the Central Conservatory of Music (CCOM), China.

The Chinese Studies major is overseen by Bard's Asian Studies department. There are two tracks offered, one for students originally from China and one for non-Chinese speaking students. Students take courses in Chinese literature, language, history, culture and the arts.

For more information, see the **Guqin and Chinese Studies Handbook** on the Conservatory Wiki.

US-China Music Institute Course Requirements Worksheet

Course Name	Course	Completed
Core sequence I: Diatonic Harmony and Species Counterpoint	CNSV 140	
Core Sequence II: Chromatic Harmony and Combined Species Counterpoint	CNSV 240	
Core Sequence III: Composition for Performers	CNSV 330	
Core Sequence IV: Conservatory Seminar in Chinese Music (Fall semester)	CNSV 333	
Aural Skills III	CNSV 308	
Aural Skills IV	CNSV 309	
Literature and Language of Chinese Music I: Introduction (2 credits) *required in the 1 st semester of the first-year	CNSV 125	
Literature and Language of Chinese Music II: Instrumental Music (2 credits)	CNSV 126	
Literature and Language of Chinese Music III: Folk Music (2 credits)	CNSV 218	
Literature and Language of Chinese Music IV: Operatic Music (2 credits)	CNSV 226	
One Western Music History Class		
Senior Recital Seminar	CNSV 403	
Studio Lessons *Every semester (4 credits)	CNSV 100	
Chinese Ensemble *Every semester (0 credits, can be 2 credits with permission)	CNSV 118	
The Guqin in Chinese Culture (2 credits) *required in the 1 st semester of the first year (<i>guqin students only</i>)	CNSV 119	
Study Abroad at Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, China 4 weeks of study on site at the Central Conservatory in Beijing; required after the end of first year, and twice more before the start of the fifth year (exceptions for students registered during 2020-21 and 2021-22)		

College Distribution Requirements

Foreign Languages and Lit (FL)	Analysis of Art (AA)	Practicing Arts (PA)	Laboratory Science (LS)	Mathematics and Computing (MC)
Literary Analysis in English (LA)	Historical Analysis (HA)	Social Analysis (SA)	Meaning, Being, and Value (MBV)	Difference and Justice (D+J)

Course Planning Form

	Fall Semester	Spring Semester
Freshman (1st year)		
Sophomore (2nd year)		
Junior (3rd year)		
Senior (4th year)		
Super Senior (5th year)		

US-China Music Institute Performance Requirements

(each semester needs to have all new pieces for midterm and jury)

	Midterm	Jury
First year 1st semester	2 etudes + 5 mins solo	2 etudes + total 10 mins solo
First year 2nd semester	2 etudes + 5 mins solo	2 etudes + total 10 mins solo
Second year 3rd semester	2 etudes + 5 mins solo + 300-500 word program note (introduction of each piece and composer)	2 etudes + total 15 mins solo + 300-500 word program note (introduction of each piece and composer)
Second year 4th semester	2 etudes + 5 mins solo + 300-500 word program note (introduction of each piece and composer)	2 etudes + total 15 mins solo + 300-500 word program note (introduction of each piece and composer)
Third year 5th semester	Complete first draft of Midpoint recital program	Midpoint recital precheck (program notes + 15-20 mins performance-ready music from the recital program)
Third year 6th semester	Midpoint recital: one hour long, including at least 30 mins solo music and 15 mins chamber music. <i>This recital must occur before Spring Break in the 3rd year.</i>	
Fourth year 7th semester	Complete first draft of off-campus recital program proposal: including repertoire, location, and other details	Off-campus recital precheck (program notes + 15-20 mins performance-ready music from the recital program)
Fourth year 8th semester	Off-campus recital, 2 options: 1. solo or chamber, duration at least 45 mins music. 2. joint recital (max two players/producers), duration at least 20 mins solo per player and 20 mins chamber with both players, total at least 60 mins music.	
Fifth year 9th and 10th semester	Degree recital and Promotional: Each student will enroll in the Senior Recital Seminar where they will get additional support for the logistics of concert production, program notes, and a forum for performing, and promotion for their own recital. Additionally, this process will require a final "promotional" before their degree recital: this will be a short 20-minute session at which a committee will hear the student play the recital repertoire. This opportunity is meant to solidify the students' performance goals, and to support their efforts towards the final degree recital.	

For more information about performance requirements and other aspects of the Dual Degree program of the Conservatory, please refer to the Conservatory Handbook.