

Undergraduate Percussion Audition Requirements

All Music Degrees Except Jazz Studies: Mallets, Snare Drum and Timpani:

Percussion Concentrations include degrees such as Music Education, Theory, Composition, and BA. If you are applying for a Percussion Performance degree (orchestral player, solo performer, etc.) the expectations are higher and you should be able to perform more advanced literature.

Final acceptance as a music major with a percussion emphasis will be determined by an audition consisting of prepared solos or etudes on mallets (2 and 4 mallets etudes or solos) , timpani, and snare drum. Students will sight read on snare drum and marimba at the audition and play scales. You should select pieces that best showcase your ability level.

Jazz Studies Degree: Drum Set, Mallets and Snare Drum:

All applicants for Jazz drum set applicants must perform the following as 3 separate auditions: A snare drum solo or etude and sight reading; a marimba or vibraphone solo (can be a jazz or classical selection), sight reading and scales.

On drumset, the applicant should demonstrate styles skills in rhythmic improvisation in swing/be-bop, Afro-Cuban and Brazilian, and funk styles over Blues and standard American song forms. In addition, jazz big band skills should be displayed during the sight-reading of 2 to 3 big band charts.

Tips for a successful audition:

1. Make musical selections that are based on your technical and musical abilities. It is better to play a piece musically well, then to struggle with techniques above your skill level.
2. Be prepared – practice – put in the time. Work with your private lesson teacher. The more comfortable you are playing your audition selections the less nervous you will be.
3. Perform your pieces for others prior to your audition day. Record these performances. This is an opportunity to learn and improve, even if you are playing for friends in the band hall.
5. Sight read on snare drum and mallets every day with a metronome.
6. Dress Professionally. Bring your mallets, sticks, and music.

Our auditions are structured so that you perform each instrument in a different room with one of our faculty. Your total audition can take 30 to 45 minutes.

Our percussion faculty is looking forward to hearing you perform. We understand the stress of an audition process. So be prepared, do your best and enjoy the moment!
Good luck!