

Music Composition

For more than 140 years, the School of Music at Illinois Wesleyan University has enjoyed a tradition of excellence. IWU is one of the few schools in the country where young composers can combine the breadth of an outstanding liberal arts education with the rigorous professional training of a fully accredited School of Music. A prestigious faculty, admirable facilities and a substantial scholarship program make Illinois Wesleyan an ideal place for the study, performance and creation of music.

Why Music Composition at Illinois Wesleyan?

- The program emphasizes private composition study as well as applied instrumental and vocal instruction, music history, theory, conducting and music technology. Students are welcome to compose in all styles.
- Students benefit from weekly seminar classes featuring guest speakers, discussion of contemporary music and topics of interest to composers.
- The Electroacoustic Music Laboratory offers sophisticated synthesis, sampling and signal processing hardware and software as well as an up-to-date recording facility.
- The Music Theory Computer Laboratory contains 17 workstations with MIDI keyboards and notation, sequencing and ear-training software.
- The annual Symposium of Contemporary Music, established in 1952, has recently brought to campus such important composers as William Bolcom, Libby Larsen, Louis Andriessen and Arvo Pärt. Numerous other concerts of new music, many with guest composers and performers, are presented each year as part of IWU's New Music Series.
- The Ames Library contemporary music collection is among the most extensive of any college or university in Illinois.



A Sampling of Courses offered in Music Composition:

Introduction to Music Composition
Tonal Counterpoint
Advanced Analysis
Orchestration
History of Musical Style VI:
Post World War II to the Present
Electroacoustic Music
Improvisation Workshop

A Sampling of Electroacoustic Music Laboratory Technology:

Pro Tools
Digital Performer
Max/MSP
Absynth
Audio Sculpt
Kurzweil 2500XS Synthesizer
Tascam SS-RI Recorder
TC Electronic M350 Sound Processor
Alesis QuadraVerb
Yamaha MG 24/14 FX
Event Electronics 20/20BAS Studio Monitors

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“Our program is highly oriented toward the individual student. Composition majors work one-on-one with faculty composers each semester, and we

- The Collegiate Choir sponsors the oldest continuous commissioning program of its kind in the United States.

Learning from a Quality Faculty

- **Dr. Mario J. Pelusi** (*Director, School of Music*), *Professor of Composition and Theory*
Ph.D. — Princeton University

A composer, theorist, conductor and pianist, he has composed numerous chamber and orchestral works, many of which were commissioned and performed by some of America’s most accomplished ensembles.

- **Dr. David Vayo**, *Professor of Composition and Theory*
A.Mus.D. — University of Michigan

Over 400 performances and broadcasts of his compositions have taken place, including recent performances in Mexico, Hong Kong, Amsterdam, Rio de Janeiro, Bangkok, and at the Universities of Wisconsin, Iowa and Utah.

- **Dr. Joseph Plazak**, *Assistant Professor of Theory*
Ph.D. — Ohio State University

Researches in the field of music psychology, specifically regarding topics of musical preference and theories of popular music; his work has been published in ESCOM’s *Musicae Scientiae*, *Empirical Musicology Review*, and the Ohio State OSOM journal.

Putting Your Learning into Practice

- Composition alumni have gone on to graduate programs at schools such as Harvard, Northwestern, the University of Chicago, CalArts, and the Universities of Minnesota, Iowa and Texas.
- Four young alumni are university music professors, and others have found full-time employment in such fields as new-music advocacy, music publishing, commercial music, church music and symphony orchestra management.
- Accomplishments by young alumni include writing the music for a commercial broadcast during the 2008 Super Bowl; receiving commissions from the Barlow Endowment for Music Composition and the Champaign-Urbana Symphony; having music selected for performance at the national conference of the Society of Composers, Inc.; and being chosen as a Composition Fellow at the prestigious Other Minds Festival in San Francisco.

encourage compositional projects reflecting the student’s interests: classical, pop, jazz, musical theatre, electronic music and any other styles that appeal to the student are all welcome. The New Music Series presents regular student composition concerts as well as numerous programs by guest composers and performers from around the world, who meet with student composers while on campus. The annual Symposium of Contemporary Music, the highlight of each year’s events, recently celebrated its 55th anniversary.”

Dr. David Vayo

Head of Music Composition Department,
Coordinator of New Music Activities



ILLINOIS WESLEYAN
UNIVERSITY

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