



MECA: Music Education Center of America
Continuing Education Program

Manual of Policies and Services

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VanderCook College of Music

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College Mission

The mission of VanderCook College of Music is to enrich the lives of present and future generations through the preparation of teachers in the instrumental, choral, and general music disciplines. Our broad-based curriculum is designed to prepare teachers with strong character, skill in the process of teaching, and respect for the essential role of music in our culture (Conceptual Framework, 2002).

Program Overview

The Music Education Center of America (MECA) is a highly successful continuing education program operated by VanderCook College of Music. A component of the graduate division, the MECA program offers graduate-level non-traditional, accelerated courses designed to fill the practical needs of band, choral, string and general music educators. Courses are structured in concentrated one-week blocks during the summer, and in a variety of formats in the fall and spring, including five-Saturday courses and one-credit single-weekend courses. On-campus courses offered in the MECA program qualify as electives toward the Master of Music Education degree at VanderCook College.

The majority of continuing education classes are held on the VanderCook College campus, and several courses are offered off-campus for the convenience of our students. The MECA faculty includes VanderCook College faculty members, visiting professors from major colleges and universities, well-known clinicians and leading professionals in music education, composition and performance.

VanderCook College of Music has been offering on-line distance learning courses since the spring of 2001, which are managed through a web portal such as Blackboard.com. For information on upcoming fall and spring on-line classes, consult the VanderCook web site; on-line classes are not offered during the summer.

Program Organization

Continuing education courses are structured to comply with VanderCook's academic policies and standards for graduate study. Up to 12 hours of graduate credit earned through the MECA Continuing Education Program may be applied as elective credits to the Master of Music Education degree at VanderCook College. Master of Music Education and Certification students may take MECA courses as advised. All MECA courses are published under separate cover each fall, spring and summer.

Pre-registration is recommended. Completed course registration forms must be accompanied by payment of a non-refundable deposit in the amount indicated for each course in the MECA brochure. The balance of tuition and fees is due on or before the first day of class. Registrations by fax or phone will be accepted if the course deposit is charged to Visa, Discover or MasterCard. Tuition for some courses, including all on-line and off-campus courses, must be paid in full at the time of registration.

Any course may be audited for no credit. There is no discount in the cost of the class for auditing.

Cancellations

Refunds of tuition, less the non-refundable deposit, may be requested up to noon on the Friday prior to the start of each course. VanderCook College reserves the right to cancel any course due to insufficient enrollment, in which case all deposits will be returned.

Instructional Resource Fee

An instructional resource fee is included in the cost of each course, to cover the costs of educational materials, music, accompanists, equipment rental, etc. For instrument repair courses, conducting courses and computer courses, the fee is \$75; for all other courses, the fee is \$65.

PLEASE NOTE: Students in the Percussion Repair class will be charged as needed for expenses exceeding the \$75 resource fee; such expenses may be incurred by some students depending on the projects undertaken and materials used.

Computer Equipment

For on-campus computer classes, each workstation includes a Macintosh computer, and MIDI keyboard. Students must use VanderCook's computer equipment to ensure technological consistency.

Class Schedule

Please check the MECA brochure or the VanderCook web site for course times – not all classes are on the same schedule. All class days will have scheduled breaks, as appropriate.

Academic Policies

To be eligible for the MECA program students must have previously earned a music degree from an accredited college or university, or have a bachelor's degree in another discipline and a minimum of 60 hours of music or music education credits at the undergraduate level.

Classes are structured to meet for 15 academic hours, or 12.5 clock hours, per graduate credit. Strict attendance policies are in place, and instructors assign assessment activities to evaluate the skill, proficiency, and competency of each participant. Class participation, quality of work on assessment activities, and class attendance are the criteria used to evaluate for grading purposes.

Assessment Activities

Assessment activities for purposes of evaluating the students by the instructor(s) are required. Some type of project (written or otherwise) from the instructor(s) will be assigned as a means of evaluating each student's performance in each MECA class. All students are encouraged to keep a journal documenting their work in each class.

Assessment activities may take one of several forms:

- individual project or presentation
- team project or presentation
- research paper
- notebook or journal
- written examination
- homework assignments

Grade Reports

Grading is at the discretion of the course instructors and is based on class participation, performance on assessment activities and attendance. The standard A, B, C, D, F format will be used. Each student will receive a grade report sent directly to her/his home address upon successful completion of the course. Grade reports are usually not considered official documents by school districts for purposes of pay increases. However, they often may be used as documentation for teacher re-certification purposes. Be sure to check with your school district, if in doubt.

Visiting professors may submit grades up to two weeks after the completion of a course to allow them time to grade exit evaluation projects. Please discuss any time frame issues with your instructor, with the Graduate Dean and with the Registrar.

Only one grade sheet will be generated for each student in each course. Please keep grade reports in your personal files for future use.

Transcripts

VanderCook College issues only official transcripts. To receive an official transcript of your coursework, you must make the request in writing. You may either 1) complete a transcript request form that is available at the college or on our web site at **www.vandercook.edu** or, 2) put in writing your name, social security number, address of where the transcript should be sent, then sign and date the letter. There is a \$5 fee for each transcript requested, which must accompany the request. Please send transcript requests to the attention of the Registrar, VanderCook College of Music, 3140 S. Federal St., Chicago, IL 60616.

Transcripts will be processed and mailed 7 to 10 days after grades have become available and a transcript request has been received.

Anyone who has an urgent deadline and must receive a transcript in fewer than 7 days may make special arrangements with the Registrar. Please direct any questions about transcripts to the office of the Registrar, (312) 225-6288 x236.

Morning Check-in

Tuition for each course is due in full on the first day of the course, except in the case of on-line, weekend, or off-campus classes, for which full pre-payment is required. If you have not paid the balance for your class beforehand, you must pay your balance at VanderCook between 7:00 a.m. and 7:45 a.m. on the first day of your class, at which time you will be given your name tag. A copy of your course registration, which also serves as your receipt and indicates all monies paid, will be brought to you later during the day. Please keep all receipts in your personal files for future use.

NOTE: If you have paid in full, you do not need to check in with VanderCook staff before class begins. Proceed directly to your room, where your name tag will be given to you. Classroom assignments are posted on the VanderCook web site at:

www.vandercook.edu/meca.

Attendance Policies

Attendance at all classes for the full day is required. A student's grade will be reduced by one letter grade for each half-day that the student misses. If a student is absent for any portion of either the morning or afternoon session, it is viewed as a half-day absence.

Attendance Sign-in

All students must sign all attendance sheets for each course. An attendance sheet will be distributed each morning shortly after class begins and each afternoon shortly before dismissal. If a student does not sign an attendance sheet, the assumption will be made that a half-day absence has occurred for the sheet not signed.

Absences

Attendance at all sessions is mandatory. However, a student who is aware that he/she may be absent for any portion of a class, or who is absent due to unforeseen circumstances must complete a "Request for Approval of Absence" form and submit it to Ruth Rhodes, Dean of Graduate Studies. Submitting a "Request for Ap-

proval of Absence” does not guarantee that approval will be granted. Forms may be requested from the Graduate Dean's office.

Library and Practice Rooms

The Ruppel Memorial Library's collections and services are available to students enrolled in MECA classes, though MECA students may not remove materials from the library. The library's collection encompasses music education and general music, as well as general education and psychology. Library materials include printed, audiovisual and electronic resources.

MECA students are invited to take advantage of the VanderCook practice rooms while on campus. An electronic piano lab and several acoustic pianos are also available.

Housing, Food, Parking and Transportation

Campus Housing

If you need inexpensive and comfortable housing, VanderCook's first choice is the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT) residence halls. Register early for reduced rates. Arrangements must be made directly with the IIT Housing Office, at:

<http://www.vandercook.iit.edu>

Please do not include housing payments with your tuition check to VanderCook College. VanderCook College cannot make housing arrangements for students.

Campus Dining

Students staying in campus housing get a meal plan, but campus dining facilities are open to all of our students. Hours of operation and other information may be found on-line at:

<http://www.vandercook.iit.edu>

Campus Parking

Summer MECA students parking on campus must purchase parking permits. Permits must be purchased in advance from the IIT Parking Services Office, at **<http://www.vandercook.iit.edu>**.

Summer MECA students unable to purchase a parking permit in advance may park in the visitors' prepay lot at 32nd and State Streets. If necessary, you may use the class lunch break to pur-

chase a permit. The IIT Parking Services Office is on the mezzanine of Hermann Hall at 3241 S. Federal St., and is open from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Summer MECA students may not park in the parking lot directly in front of the VanderCook building.

Please do not include parking payments with your tuition check to VanderCook College.

Driving Directions to VanderCook – Avoid Dan Ryan Construction

From the north: enter Chicago on I-90/94 east (Kennedy Expressway) and exit at Congress Parkway/Chicago Loop. Go to State St. and turn right (south). Take State St. all the way to 31st St. and turn right. Just before the train viaduct on your left is a driveway onto campus, which is Federal St. VanderCook College is the second building on your right.

From the west/southwest: take I-55 (Stevenson Expressway) into Chicago and exit at Damen Ave. Turn right at the top of the ramp. Go to Archer Ave. and turn left. Take Archer to Cermak Rd. (22nd St.) and bear right. Continue on Cermak Rd. to State St. and turn right. Take State St. all the way south to 31st St. and turn right. Just before the train viaduct on your left is a driveway onto campus, which is Federal St. VanderCook College is the second building on your right.

From the south: the Illinois Department of Transportation suggests that motorists avoid the Dan Ryan Expressway during reconstruction. Alternate routes are Ashland Ave., Stony Island Ave./Lake Shore Drive, or the Chicago Skyway (I-90). If taking the Skyway, exit at State St. and turn right at the bottom of the ramp. Take State St. to 33rd St. and turn left. Go to Federal St. (driveway just before the train viaduct), turn right and drive north through the parking lot to VanderCook College, which will be on your left.

No matter where you are driving from, expect greater than normal travel times, and consider using the campus shuttle or public transportation for traveling to VanderCook (see below). For further information on construction and alternate routes for motorists, visit **www.danryanexpressway.com** or call 877-411-IDOT.

Public Transportation

Access from the campus to the city of Chicago and all the cultural wonders it provides is convenient. The Chicago Transit Authority operates two train lines from the Illinois Institute of Technology campus to the downtown area. The "Red Line" may be accessed at 35th Street and the Dan Ryan. The entrance to the "Green Line" is located at 35th and State Streets (riders with transit cards may enter at 3400 south, at the south end of State Street Village). There are also several bus stops along State St. for your convenience. Visit **www.transitchicago.com** for information on fares, schedules, and routes.

IIT Shuttle Service

The Illinois Institute of Technology provides round-trip shuttle bus service between the campus and train stations downtown. MECA students are entitled to ride the shuttle, but must present a MECA receipt or MECA name tag to the driver upon request. Schedules are available from the IIT web site at:

www.iit.edu/directory/shuttlebus.html.

Questions or comments about the shuttle may be sent by email to shuttlebus@iit.edu.

Questions? Write or call:

meca@vandercook.edu
(312) 225-6288

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