Music Education
Starts Here

VanderCook College of Music has been the premier institution for music education for over 100 years.

VanderCook has focused exclusively on music teacher education for over a century. Our unique curriculum prepares the whole music educator, emphasizing performance as well as instructional methods. VanderCook will fully prepare you to teach band, orchestra, choir and general music.

VanderCook’s degree programs offer a thorough, comprehensive course of study rooted in collaborative music-making and hands-on, project-based learning in a conservatory-like atmosphere. Skills will be learned and developed starting the very first semester of study through real-world teaching experiences, maximizing your expertise by the time you become a highly sought-after alum in the job market.

Student Spotlight

Tamia Smith, BMEd Class of 2022

“I chose to attend VanderCook because I was excited that I would gain the skills to be able to teach band, choir, general music, and orchestra. I have enjoyed learning how to play all nineteen instruments and how to teach them, as well as understanding the methodology that goes into music education as a whole.”
Bachelor Degree Programs

A Teacher from Day 1

At VanderCook, your journey to becoming a music teacher begins the moment you walk through the door. You will work with grade school and high school students starting your first term through on-campus enrichment clinics and partnerships with local school music programs. No matter what classroom environment you encounter, you will have already learned how to motivate and engage students at every level.

Bachelor of Music Education (BMED)

This immersive four-year program will fully prepare you to teach prek-12 band, orchestra, choir and general music.

- Learn to play and teach 19 instruments
- Complete a 14-week student teaching experience in real-world settings with career music educators
- Earn your degree in four years and be prepared to earn the Illinois Professional Educator License with a prek-12 Endorsement in Music
- Perform two recitals
- 20 performances each year
- Perform at The Midwest Clinic: International Band & Orchestra Conference
- 100% of courses taught by faculty
- 6:1 Student/Teacher ratio

NEW Bachelor of Music in Performance & Pedagogy (BMPed)

Students pursuing the Bachelor of Music in Performance and Pedagogy Degree are interested in becoming uniquely skilled instructors within the music industry, while pursuing a high level of performance. Graduates with this degree will broaden their career choice by studying pedagogy and repertoire specific to their instrument, along with the entrepreneurial, marketing and networking skills needed to build a successful private lesson studio.

- Extended lesson time
- Perform two recitals
- Complete 120 credit hours towards a degree in 4 years
- Internship provides real-life experience in the music industry
- Customized curriculum prepares students who aspire to be music teachers but prefer to teach in a private studio setting

To learn more, visit: vandercook.edu/undergraduate-program/

NEW Performer’s Certificate

The Performer’s Certificate recognizes outstanding achievement in solo and chamber music performance. The certificate is not a degree program, but rather a means to acknowledge the most accomplished performers at the undergraduate level. Candidates may apply for the Performer’s Certificate by completing an application and audition adjudicated by a faculty panel.

Performer’s Certificate requirements:
- A minimum of 12 credit hours taken in the major applied area throughout the entire degree program
- A junior solo recital with 30 to 45 minutes of music in the major applied area
- A senior solo recital with 50 to 65 minutes of music in the major applied area
- At least two semesters in an honors ensemble after acceptance into the Performer’s Certificate program

Schedule an Audition or Campus Visit

Contact Admissions at 312.788.1120 or email: admissions@vandercook.edu
Scholarships and Financial Aid

In keeping with our founders’ philosophy that music education should be available to anyone, VanderCook is committed to maintaining affordable, competitive tuition.

Our Financial Aid staff will work with you to maximize your aid through scholarships, grants and loans. All applicants are automatically considered for:

- Performance Scholarship
- Academic Excellence Award
- Great Teachers Scholarship

100% of full-time undergraduate students receive financial aid.

VanderCook Scholars Program

High school seniors looking to turn their passion for music into a career may be eligible for the VanderCook Scholars Program. A student who is accepted into the VanderCook Scholars Program will receive a four-year FULL tuition scholarship. To be eligible, candidates must be accepted into either the BMEd or BMaped programs and attend VCM as a full-time student for four years.

- Applicants must be high school seniors entering college in the fall with a weighted cumulative high school GPA of 3.5 or higher.
- Candidates must perform at a high level, as demonstrated by their VanderCook audition scores, high school director recommendation and/or All-State participation.

Note: VanderCook Scholars may qualify for the Performer’s Certificate Program and participate concurrently in both.

Contact Financial Aid at 312.788.1146 or financialaid@vandercook.edu

Student Life

As a VanderCook student, you will enjoy full access to Chicago, the Illinois Institute of Technology campus, and the surrounding areas of Bronzeville, Bridgeport, South Loop and Chinatown.

Chicago at Your Fingertips

Attending VanderCook gives you instant access to many of the city’s most famous and important cultural landmarks, including the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Art Institute of Chicago, Navy Pier and the Lyric Opera. All undergraduates receive a CTA transit card and have unlimited access to CTA transit passes during the fall and spring semesters.
Student Organizations
- American Choral Directors Association
- American String Teachers Association
- National Association for Music Education
- National Band Association
- Phi Mu Alpha
- Sigma Alpha Iota
- VanderCook Percussion Club

Unique Features
- State-of-the-Art Music Technology Lab
- State-of-the-Art practice facilities
- Rehearse and conduct a major ensemble in the Student Conductor Concert
- Practicum experiences on campus and in schools throughout the region
- Attend industry conferences
- Access to all amenities available to IIT students

Eating & Dining
- IIT on-campus dining facilities
- Acclaimed restaurants in and around the surrounding areas of Bronzeville, Bridgeport, Chinatown, and the South Loop

The Midwest Clinic
VanderCook co-founded The Midwest Clinic: An International Band and Orchestra Conference held in Chicago with more than 18,000 attendees from all 50 states and more than 40 countries.

The VanderCook Symphonic Band is the only college ensemble invited to perform at The Midwest Clinic every year since its inception in 1946.

Performance Opportunities
VanderCook’s undergraduate degrees are uniquely designed to provide performance experiences in band, orchestra and choir simultaneously as part of the curriculum.

As a member of the Philharmonic Orchestra, Symphonic Band, Concert Choir, String Orchestra, Collegiate Chorale, Percussion Ensemble and Jazz Band, you will perform over 20 times a year on campus and throughout the city of Chicago.
Faculty Affiliations

Our faculty bring decades of collective professional experience from institutions around the world...

Agape Chorus
Atlanta Symphony
Boston Lyric Opera
Boston Ballet
Boston Philharmonic Orchestra
Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra
Boston Symphony Orchestra
Broadway in Chicago
Chicago Brass Choir
Chicago Symphony Brass Quintet
Chicago Children’s Choir
Chicago Symphony Orchestra
Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra
Civic Orchestra of Chicago

Grant Park Symphony Orchestra
Great Miami Youth Symphony
Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra
Indiana Symphony Orchestra
Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra
Kansas City Symphony
Lyric Opera of Chicago
Madison Scouts Drum and Bugle Corps
Merit School of Music
Milwaukee Brass Ensemble
Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra
Music For All

National Music Camp at Interlochen
NHK Orchestra (Japan)
Northwest Indiana Symphony
Philadelphia Orchestra
Southwest Symphony Orchestra
St. Louis Symphony
St. Petersburg State Chamber Orchestra (Russia)
Tallahassee Symphony Youth Orchestra
Viennese Symphony Orchestra
Yamaha Performing Artist

Mentors Who Care

Ensemble Directors
Alexander Karnisky .............................................. Director of Bands
Robert Sinclair .................................................. Director of Choral Activities
Yvonne Davila-Cortez ......................................... Director of String Education

Instructors
Mariana Garlizzo .................................................. Flute
Deborah Stevenson .............................................. Oboe
Matthew Hogan .................................................. Bassoon
Bonnie Campbell ................................................. Clarinet
Anthony Klonicki ............................................. Saxophone, Jazz Studies
Leah Schuman ................................................... Trumpet
Peter Jirosek ..................................................... Horn
Timothy Riordan .................................................. Trombone
Maxwell Briggs ................................................... Euphonium/Tuba
James Yakas ...................................................... Percussion

Yan Liu .............................................................. Violin/Viola
Eran Meir ............................................................. Cello
Doug Bistrow ..................................................... Bass
Angela Presuti-Korbitz ...................................... Voice
Katelyn Lee ........................................................... Voice
Michele Thomas ................................................. Jazz/Contemporary Voice
Julie Goldberg ................................................... Guitar
Yu-Sui Hung ..................................................... Piano, Music Theory
I-Huan Tsai ....................................................... Piano, Music Theory
Dana Schmucki .................................................. Piano, Music Theory
Manju Durairaj ................................................ K-5 Methods
Stacey Larson Dolan ........................................... Instrumental Music Education
Ruth A. Rhodes ................................................ Woodwind Methods, Student Teaching
Michael Becker .................................................. World Music, Music History
Roseanne Rosenthal .......................................... Research Methods
Master of Music Education and Licensure (MCert)
This program is designed for students who have earned an undergraduate degree in music (music theory, music history, music performance, music therapy, etc) and wish to earn an MMEd while securing certification to teach in the public schools.

Teacher Certification Entitlement Program (TCEP)
The Teacher Certification Entitlement Program (TCEP) is designed for students who have earned an undergraduate degree in music (music theory, music history, music performance, music therapy, etc) and want to secure teacher certification through the teacher licensure program.

The MCert and TCEP programs offer:
- Two-year curriculum
- Instruction on multiple instruments to become a complete musician and teacher
- Financial aid packages for qualified candidates
- Holistic approach to teaching and learning

To learn more, visit: vandercook.edu/graduate-program/
Music Education Center of America (MECA) Continuing Education

At VanderCook, continuing education is about more than just earning graduate credit. Our graduate-level courses are designed to present practical knowledge and skills that teachers can immediately use in their classrooms.

The MECA program provides:

- A diverse faculty bringing experience and expertise from around the world
- A full spectrum of courses for K-12 band, orchestra, choral and general music teachers (all disciplines, all grade levels)
- New skills, resources and strategies can be implemented immediately
- Courses offered Online, On-Campus, and Off-Campus
- Three terms per year (fall, spring, and summer)

INSPIRING

MOTIVATING

PRAGMATIC

COMPREHENSIVE

To learn more, visit: vandercook.edu/continuing-education-meca/
Schedule your visit today.