Music Scholarship and Audition Requirements

Fine Arts Festival 2027 and Department of Music Auditions

We welcome students who love making music—whether you plan to major or minor in music or participate in an ensemble while pursuing another degree. Choose your primary instrument or voice, prepare the selections below, and show us your musicianship and potential.

How to audition

1. Choose an audition area and prepare the technical skills and musical selections listed below.
2. Record your audition, then complete the Fine Arts Festival scholarship application at https://apps.swau.edu/fineartsfestival/

Fine Arts Festival scholarship deadline: January 11, 2027.

Common performance expectations

● Prepare two contrasting musical selections (approximately 8–10 minutes total), unless your area specifies a different format. Choose music that represents your current abilities well.

● Prepare two major and two minor scales in keys of your choice, using the range appropriate to your instrument; include arpeggios where specified. Scales and arpeggios should be memorized.

● Memorization of repertoire is encouraged but not required for auditions. Accompaniment is welcome but not required for the initial video.

● Record with a clear view and sound. Introduce yourself and identify your instrument and selections. A phone recording is acceptable.

Planning to major or minor in Music?

The same performance audition can serve as an entry audition for prospective music majors and minors. Additional music theory placement and piano proficiency assessments help us place students in appropriate classes; see the companion Music Major and Minor Placement Guide. These are placement assessments, not additional scholarship repertoire.

Questions or help choosing repertoire? Contact Dr. Lindsey Johnson | ljohnson@swau.edu

Requirements by audition area

Voice

Two contrasting songs: (1) a classical art song, sacred song, or selection from opera/oratorio, preferably in a language other than English; and (2) a contrasting selection of your choice (for example, musical theater, spiritual, sacred, or contemporary repertoire).

Piano

Two contrasting solo works from different styles or periods. Prepare two major and two minor scales and their arpeggios, four octaves.

Organ

Two contrasting works: (1) a work by J. S. Bach or another Baroque composer; and (2) a work from a later style period. Also prepare one hymn with a short introduction and at least two stanzas, demonstrating clear hymn leadership.

Guitar and Harp

Two contrasting solo selections. Prepare two major and two minor scales; harpists should also prepare the corresponding arpeggios. Choose a comfortable, technically appropriate range.

Strings

Two contrasting selections or movements, such as a Baroque work and a Romantic or contemporary work. A movement of solo Bach is welcome but not required. Prepare two major and two minor scales (with arpeggios if studied).

Woodwinds and Brass

Two contrasting solo works or movements; one may be a substantial etude. Prepare two major and two minor scales and arpeggios, over the practical range of your instrument. Piano accompaniment is optional for the video.

Percussion

Present contrasting demonstrations on at least two percussion instruments or disciplines (for example, snare drum, mallet percussion, timpani). For mallet instruments, prepare two major and two minor scales over two octaves when possible. Include an etude, solo, or excerpt that demonstrates rhythmic control and technique.