



# Music Focus

## Description

The music focus is highly recommended for students who are seeking to understand music at a deeper level and how it applies to the other arts. Excellent candidates for this program demonstrate a strong work ethic, advanced performance skills, dedication and leadership in their current school ensembles, and desire a variety of solo and ensemble experiences. Students who wish to pursue this focus are actively seeking out new challenges, a rigorous program of study, and an intimate and collegial learning environment. It is not necessary to desire to major in music to be a part of this program. Many former music students go on to major in a variety of fields. Students who select the music focus at the AFA will receive in-depth training with other highly motivated students as well as authentic field experiences. The rigorous course load and frequent performance experiences prepare students to successfully enter college regardless of their major. Throughout their time at the Academy, students will study music theory, music technology, music history, and piano, as well as prepare several solo and ensemble pieces. Students will also experience masterclasses by talented professionals, participate in college visits, and travel to cultural hubs like New York City to enjoy professional performances and get a taste of what it takes to become a professional in the arts. The goal of the music focus is to develop independent musicians who actively and effectively perform, create, and respond to all facets music by examining music's connection to their personal lives as well as society.

## Course Sequence

### Year 1

#### Music History I

Students study a variety of music styles, broad outlines of musical history and cultural context, interrelationships of musical elements, and vocabulary for describing musical events and interactions. Emphasis is given to the development of perceptive, detailed listening skills and the ability to intelligently discuss musical observations and patterns.

#### Piano I

Students learn and practice basic piano techniques and music reading skills in group lab settings as well as individualized study. They practice, rehearse, and perform a variety of piano literature, written at appropriate performance-grade level. In addition, students develop the ability to understand, appreciate, perceive, create, and respond to music through balanced instruction that includes studying works from historical, aesthetic, and critical perspectives. Prior piano experience, while helpful, is not required.

#### FCC MUSC 111 and 106 (*Music Theory I and Aural Skills I*)

Students learn the foundations of music theory including scales, keys, intervals, and chords. Students then apply this knowledge as they learn basic voice leading practices while analyzing typical forms and structures. Students also learn sight singing and ear training along with rhythmic dictation as they train their ears to recognize common musical patterns. A passing grade in these courses results in four college credits from FCC.

#### Music Technology I

Students become more familiar with a variety of software programs and hardware options available in the field of music. They also continue to learn and practice techniques for manipulating music within the software programs (e.g., editing and arranging) and are mentored in the skills necessary to continue their studies in music theory and composition. Students design and develop independent projects/products in which they apply skills and techniques to new situations and problems at an increasingly independent level. They also continue to practice effective oral and written argumentation skills in the areas of presentation and critical analysis.

#### Advanced Music Studies

This course integrates material studied in theory and history and improves individual musicianship through solo and ensemble performance, group discussion, study of effective practice and rehearsal techniques, and reflective analysis of performance literature. Assessments for this class involve performances outside of the normal school day. Demonstration of essential performance technique on scales, etudes, and sight reading will be regularly assessed. Professionals will periodically be brought in to conduct masterclasses and clinics.

### Year 2

#### FCC MUSC 107 and 112 (*Music Theory II and Aural Skills II*)

This course is high school based dual enrollment through Frederick Community College. Students continue their study of music theory by analyzing 7th chords and extending their knowledge of harmonic analysis and voice leading through more complicated progressions. Students continue to develop their ears through melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic singing and dictations exercises.

#### Music History II

#### Piano II

#### Music Technology II

#### Advanced Music Studies II

### Year 3

#### Theories and Practices in Content

In this course, students complete final studies in selected disciplines of their focus area and complete projects and tasks that prepare the student for the post-secondary experience. Project based learning takes place with the guidance of the instructor and should demonstrate an understanding of current trends, opposing viewpoints, career pathways, and best practices of the selected topics through research, collaboration, interaction with professionals, field study, and presentations. Artifacts from projects and current issues in the arts will be addressed through regular discussion groups with other third year AFA students.

#### AFA Internship

Students explore career opportunities that they may consider studying in a post-secondary setting. Students are placed for one semester with adult mentors to explore the responsibilities, benefits, advantages, and disadvantages of a career choice. Each school's Transition Education Teacher-Coordinator serves as a conduit between the school and internship site. Each student will be paired with a faculty advisor. An approved project is completed during the internship and requires the demonstration of both oral and written communication skills.

#### AFA Capstone Project

The capstone experience may be connected to the mentor/internship; a research project; a career-related project; an arts, media or information resource design portfolio; the preparation and performance at a competition/festival/exhibition; or leadership of a school/community initiative. The capstone experience must be planned and approved in accordance with a teacher mentor and/or business partner upon completion of the application. Students must complete and submit an Application a Capstone Experience Description and a Capstone Experience Agreement. Capstone experiences will be assessed by the mentor teacher, and/or a small group consisting of academy leaders, teachers and/or professionals from the community.

## Typical Activities

- Masterclasses with professionals
- Trips to view professional performances
- Performances at community events and festivals
- Visits to colleges and universities
- Coaching for college audition preparation
- AFA Showcases and Recitals
- Release of and original album

## Audition Requirements

- Online Application at [www.fcpsartsacademy.org](http://www.fcpsartsacademy.org)
- Performance of Prepared Literature
- Sight Reading or Singing
- Interview

Jonathan Kurtz: Instrumental Instructor

[Jonathan.kurtz@fcps.org](mailto:Jonathan.kurtz@fcps.org)

240-236-8352

Dr. Kathleen Taylor: Vocal Instructor

[Kathleen.Taylor@fcps.org](mailto:Kathleen.Taylor@fcps.org)

240-236-8351



Frederick County Public Schools