



VANDERBILT

Blair Academy at Vanderbilt

Music education for children, youth, and adults

COURSE OFFERINGS | **FALL 2025**



WELCOME TO BLAIR ACADEMY

Blair Academy offers classes and lessons for all ages. Our world-class faculty strives to help each student grow in skill, artistry, and enjoyment in music. Whether you are returning this fall or joining us for the first time, Blair Academy at Vanderbilt has something for you!

REGISTRATION STEPS

STEP ONE: CREATE AN ACCOUNT ON VUPACE

Registration for all lessons, classes, and ensembles can be accomplished on [VUPACE](#), our registration platform. If you have not taken a course at the Blair Academy before, you will need to create a VUPACE account for the student and complete the [New Student Application](#). Once this application is approved, you will receive confirmation via email, and you can then register for courses.

STEP TWO: FIND YOUR COURSE

You can visit the [Blair Academy Programs Page](#) on VUPACE for a complete listing of our offerings. Alternatively, you can search for your chosen course via the search bar in the upper-right corner.

STEP THREE: CHECK OUT

Once you have found your course, you can add the correct section to your cart and click the cart icon to begin the checkout process. Any additional required forms can be completed during checkout.

Contact Elm Stephenson, the Blair Academy registrar, at elm.a.stephenson@vanderbilt.edu or **615-322-7655** if you have any questions or need assistance with registration.

PRIVATE LESSONS

Blair Academy welcomes students of all ages and abilities. Prospective students can contact the area coordinator for their instrument area for placement with an instructor. The Blair Academy semester consists of 16 weeks, which includes 15 lessons and a jury.

ORCHESTRAL INSTRUMENTS, PIANO, GUITAR, VOICE

30-minute lessons—\$1,441

45-minute lessons—\$2,028

60-minute lessons—\$2,553

PARTNER PIANO, FIDDLE, AND SUZUKI

30-minute lessons—\$1,575

45-minute lessons—\$2,100

60-minute lessons—\$2,625

AREA COORDINATORS

BRASS

Fred Sienkiewicz • (615) 343-0307 • fred.sienkiewicz@vanderbilt.edu

FIDDLE

Crystal Wiegman • (615) 343-6360 • crystal.plohman@vanderbilt.edu

GUITAR

Richard Todd • (615) 322-4910 • richard.todd@vanderbilt.edu

HARP

Rachel Miller • (615) 343-4161 • rachel.miller.1@vanderbilt.edu

JAZZ

Marc Widenhofer • (615) 343-0385 • marc.widenhofer@vanderbilt.edu

PERCUSSION

Ji Hye Jung • (615) 322-7669 • ji.h.jung@vanderbilt.edu

BEGINNING PIANO

Derek Hartman • (615) 343-1374 • derek.hartman@vanderbilt.edu

PIANO

Jama Reagan • (615) 322-4938 • jama.reagan@vanderbilt.edu

STRINGS

Connie Heard • (615) 322-7681 • connie.heard@vanderbilt.edu

SUZUKI

Zachary Ebin • (615) 322-7665 • zachary.ebin@vanderbilt.edu

WOODWINDS

Jared Hauser • (615) 322-7663 • jared.hauser@vanderbilt.edu

SCHOLARSHIPS

Blair Academy at Vanderbilt is committed to making the study of music possible for all qualified students. Financial assistance for private lessons is available for precollege students who are under the age of 19 and have not graduated high school. Scholarships are based on either merit or need.

Merit-based scholarships are awarded in the spring for the upcoming academic year and determined mainly on the strength of the student's audition. Scholarship application information for the 2026-2027 academic year will be available in early spring 2026.

Need-based scholarships are available throughout the year. Students must first be placed with an instructor before they can be considered. Please contact Elm Stephenson at elm.a.stephenson@vanderbilt.edu for more information on how to apply.

BEGINNING AND PARTNER PIANO

Ages 4 and up, 16 weeks

Students in Partner Piano receive a combination of private and group piano instruction. In the group lesson, students learn rhythm, pitch, musical terms, and notation, using a variety of activities. Each student has a private lesson and a group lesson weekly.

Please email **Derek Hartman, beginning piano area coordinator**, at derek.hartman@vanderbilt.edu for availability and placement.

PARTNER PIANO I — \$1,276

(Limited to children age 4)
20-minute private lesson and
30-minute group lesson weekly

PARTNER PIANO III — \$2,100

45-minute private lesson and
30-minute group lesson weekly

PARTNER PIANO II — \$1,575

30-minute private lesson and
30-minute group lesson weekly

PARTNER PIANO IV — \$2,625

60-minute private lesson and
30-minute group lesson weekly



VANDERBILT SUZUKI PROGRAM



VANDERBILT SUZUKI PROGRAM

Ages 4 and up, 16 weeks

Suzuki instruction develops musical skill and sensitivity, using listening and imitation, the same process used in learning language. Students gain poise and read music notation as they progress. New students as young as age 4 are welcome.

The Vanderbilt Suzuki Program offers instruction in violin, cello, and trumpet.

Contact the **Suzuki Program director, Zachary Ebin**, for information about joining this renowned program. zachary.ebin@vanderbilt.edu • (615) 322-7665

TUITION

SUZUKI I

\$1,575

30-minute private lesson
and weekly group lesson

SUZUKI II

\$2,100

45-minute private lesson
and weekly group lesson

SUZUKI III

\$2,625

60-minute private lesson
and weekly group lesson



VANDERBILT FIDDLE PROGRAM

Crystal Wiegman, director

Ages 5 and up, 16 weeks

The Vanderbilt Fiddle Program offers a holistic approach in teaching, using the Suzuki philosophy to build solid technique and tone, along with the "Fiddle and Song" curriculum to teach traditional fiddle music. Introductory classical and historical folk styles, including old-time, bluegrass, Irish, Scottish, Texas swing, and other world styles are taught.

Beginning students have 30-minute weekly private lessons and small group experience. Second-year and above students participate in the Vanderbilt Fiddle Program performance group, which gives students the opportunity to have fun playing and learning with peers.

Please contact Crystal Wiegman to be placed with an instructor and join in the fun!

crystal.plohman@vanderbilt.edu •
(615) 343-6360

VANDERBILT FIDDLE Program



TUITION

- 30-minute weekly/group experience: \$1,575
- 45-minute weekly private/weekly group class: \$2,100
- 60-minute weekly private/weekly group class: \$2,625

CHAMBER MUSIC

All ages

Christina McGann, coordinator

christina.mcgann@vanderbilt.edu • (615) 322-4911

Visit blair.vanderbilt.edu/blair-academy/chamber-music for requirements and information.

This course offers weekly coaching sessions of small instrumental groups culminating in a final performance. Students will be active participants in the collaborative process, gaining a greater knowledge of ensemble techniques and widening their musical perspective.

Please contact Christina McGann for placement.

15 sessions

Tuition: \$442



COLLABORATIVE PIANO

Grade 7 and up

Amy Dorfman, instructor

amy.dorfman@vanderbilt.edu

(615) 322-7688

This class will help you develop skills to work with different instrumental partners. Learn how to develop teamwork and confidence in making music with others. Pianists in grade 7 and up are welcome.

15 sessions, Room 2180

Tuition: \$462



JAZZ INSTRUCTION

ACADEMY JAZZ LISTENING

Marc Widenhofer, instructor

Have you ever wanted to learn more about jazz without the pressures of performance? This course will focus on some of jazz's major contributors through selected listening, all while studying what makes them unique.

Wednesdays, 4:45–5:45 p.m., Room 2192

Begins August 14

Tuition: \$452

ACADEMY JAZZ COMBO

Marc Widenhofer, instructor

Provides focused laboratory training for performance of composed and improvised small combo jazz traditions. Discussion and application of techniques associated with solo, sectional, and ensemble performance in jazz.

Tuesdays, 5:00-6:00 p.m., Room 1192

Begins August 19

Tuition: \$452



MUSICIANSHIP STUDIO (AURAL SKILLS)

Grades 8–12, younger students with permission of instructor

Fred Sienkiewicz, instructor • fred.sienkiewicz@vanderbilt.edu

Join us to discover the secrets of sight-reading, rhythm, phrasing, and expression through an interactive and fun performance class open to all musicians. Develop deep knowledge of intervals, rhythms, scales, arpeggios, and harmonies through listening, playing, and singing and conducting while using solfège, scale degrees, or the takadimi rhythmic solfège system.

Musicianship Studio is a mixed level group class offered in both fall and spring semesters and designed to be repeated and to continually challenge students to grow their musicianship skills.

MUSICIANSHIP STUDIO

Mondays, 4:30-5:20 p.m., Room 2190

15 sessions: Begins August 18

Tuition: \$308



INTERACTIVE MUSIC THEORY

Grade 8-12

Kevin Rilling, instructor • kevin.a.rilling@vanderbilt.edu

Understanding how music is put together can inform our performing ability, as well as our personal satisfaction we get from the music we listen to. Each student's learning and understanding is personally guided through weekly class meetings and regular worksheets and tests. Classes on Zoom allow for more personalized instruction. Students are able to develop collegiality and community.

A placement test is required for all new students. Be sure to register early, as space is limited. Contact Kevin Rilling at kevin.a.rilling@vanderbilt.edu.



Thursday classes begin August 14; Monday classes begin August 18

15 sessions, Tuition: \$329

Mondays, 4:00–4:50 p.m.

(Zoom, intermediate/
advanced)

Thursdays, 4:00–4:50 p.m.

(Zoom, intermediate/
advanced)

Thursdays, 6:00–6:50 p.m.

(in-person, intermediate/
advanced)

Mondays, 5:00–5:50 p.m.

(in-person, beginner students
only)

Thursdays, 5:00–5:50 p.m.

(in-person, intermediate/
advanced)

MUSICOLOGY AND ETHNOMUSICOLOGY

Grades 9-12

Melanie Lowe, instructor

m.lowe@vanderbilt.edu

MUSIC HISTORY I (YEAR 1)

History and culture come alive in this year-long overview of music from the Middle Ages to the present.

Tuesdays, 4:35–5:25 p.m., Room 1167

15 sessions: Begins August 19

Tuition: \$329

MUSIC HISTORY II (YEAR 2)

Special topics will be explored in depth in this year-long course, including specific composers, genres, styles, and historical concepts.

Tuesdays, 5:35–6:25 p.m., Room 1167

15 sessions: Begins August 19

Tuition: \$329



VANDERBILT YOUTH CHOIRS (VYC)

The tiered program of seven choirs for children in grades 1–12 is classically based, with strong emphases on healthy vocal production, music reading skills, and performance.

Artistic Director: Mary Biddlecombe

(615) 343-3167 or mary.biddlecombe@vanderbilt.edu

Administrator: Julie Claverie

(615) 343-3167 or julie.claverie@vanderbilt.edu

Tucker Biddlecombe, Decani (formerly the Nashville Boychoir) and **Cantori** (formerly the Young Men's Chorus) **director**

Sarah Bronchetti, Training Choir and Young Singers of Blair director

Fall auditions for all groups are on Saturday, August 9 from 10:00–12:30 p.m., and on Monday, August 11 from 5:00–7:30 p.m. in Room 1109A at the Blair School of Music.

Please sign up for an appointment time on our website at <https://blair.vanderbilt.edu/blairacademy/youth-choirs/>

Tuition: Concert Choir and Cantori, \$483; Blair Choristers and Decani, \$390; Young Singers of Blair and Training Choir, \$308

NOTE: Families with more than one child in this ensemble program receive a 25 percent discount for the second child.

The VYC semester begins with Chorale on **Wednesday, August 13.**

TRAINING CHOIR

Boys and girls in grades 1–3

Singing, music fundamentals, and music activities form the core of this program.

Thursdays, 5:00–6:00 p.m., Room 2192

DECANI

Boys in grade 3 and older

Students explore vocal technique and music reading skills. Participants attend fall choral camp.

Tuesdays, 5:45–6:45 p.m., Choral Hall

YOUNG SINGERS OF BLAIR

Boys and girls in grades 3–5

Healthy vocal techniques, music reading skills, and music activities make this choir rewarding and fun.

Thursdays, 5:00–6:00 p.m., Room 2192

CHORISTERS

Girls in grade 5 and older

Intermediate choir that sings in parts, performs regularly, and attends fall choral camp.

Mondays, 6:30–7:30 p.m., Choral Hall

VANDERBILT YOUTH Choirs



Photo by Kurt Heinecke

VYC CHOIRS, CONTINUED

CHORALE

Chorale is open to all boys and girls already in one of the VYC choirs. They will sing SATB music. For advanced students with excellent musicianship.

Wednesday,
4:45–6:15 p.m., Choral Hall

Tuition: \$71/semester

CONCERT CHOIR

Girls in grades 8–12

This select choir performs regularly and takes a mandatory tour each summer.

Monday,
4:45–6:15 p.m., Choral Hall

CANTORI

Formerly the Young Men's Chorus, boys with changed/ changing voices learn how to use their emerging voices in harmony with other young men.

Thursday,
6:10–7:20 p.m., Choral Hall



VANDERBILT YOUTH ORCHESTRAS

VANDERBILT YOUTH ORCHESTRAS (VYO)

Craig Madole, director • craig.a.madole@vanderbilt.edu

Visit blair.vanderbilt.edu/blair-academy/youth-orchestras for audition requirements, information, and scheduling. Email craig.madole@vanderbilt.edu for questions about VYO auditions. Auditions will be held August 9-19.

Tuition: Curb Youth Symphony, \$349; Philharmonia, \$329; Repertory Orchestra, \$318; Youth Strings Orchestra, Reading Orchestra, and Beginning Reading Orchestra-\$267

NOTE: Families with more than one child in VYO ensembles receive a 25 percent discount for the second child. Additionally, students enrolled in private lessons through the Blair Academy receive a 50 percent discount on VYO ensembles.

STRING ORCHESTRAS

Robin Winkowski, ensemble coordinator • robin.l.winkowski.1@vanderbilt.edu

Orchestras begin Tuesday, September 2

BEGINNING

READING ORCHESTRA

Tuesdays, 5:30–6:15 p.m.,
Room 2190

This course allows students to build reading skill in a fun environment and is best for students that have studied with his/her private teacher through most of Suzuki Volume 1.

READING

ORCHESTRA

Tuesdays, 6:15–7:00 p.m.,
Room 2190

Students expand reading skills and build upon their musical foundation in a string orchestra environment. Students should be working in Suzuki Volume 2 or above.

YOUTH STRINGS

ORCHESTRA

Tuesdays, 7:15–8:15 p.m.,
Room 2190

This string orchestra builds ensemble communication skills while expanding bow technique and advancing musicianship. Students are typically working in Suzuki Volume 3 or above.



FULL ORCHESTRAS

REPERTORY ORCHESTRA

Tiffany Turner, director

tiffany.turner@vanderbilt.edu

A full orchestra experience for advancing student musicians exploring arrangements of masterworks and exciting educational orchestra literature.

Tuesdays, 6:30–8:45 p.m.

Instrumental Rehearsal Hall

Begins Tuesday, September 2



PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA

Craig Madole, director

craig.a.madole@vanderbilt.edu

This full orchestra performs great masterworks of symphonic literature.

Sundays, 2:00–4:30 p.m.

Music Rehearsal Hall
(124 28th Avenue South)

Begins Sunday, August 24



CURB YOUTH SYMPHONY

Ernesto Estigarribia, artistic director and conductor

ernesto.estigarribia@vanderbilt.edu

The most prestigious youth orchestra in Middle Tennessee. Performing professional level repertoire and whole symphonic works, this orchestra rehearses weekly and will have at least 3 required sectional rehearsals each semester on Sunday afternoons. A side by side experience with the Nashville Symphony occurs during the spring semester.

Mondays, 6:35–9:05 p.m.

Instrumental Rehearsal Hall

Begins Monday, August 25



ADULT COURSES

HIT SONGWRITERS SERIES

Deanna Walker, instructor •
deanna.walker@vanderbilt.edu

Special guest artists each week make this class sparkle. From Nashville, Los Angeles, Atlanta and beyond, guests include the music industry's finest songwriters, publishers, producers, performers, and experts. Connect, ask questions, hear the stories behind the songs, and get your songs critiqued by Professor Walker and industry guests. The class is open to audiences worldwide, is presented on Zoom, and is limited to 18 full participants (those who can get their songs critiqued) with an unlimited number of observers (observers can participate in every way other than submitting material for critique).



Tuesdays, 7:00–9:00 p.m., Zoom

15 sessions: Begins August 26

Full Participant Tuition: \$349 | Observer Section Tuition: \$153



CREATIVETS

CreatiVets has partnered with Vanderbilt's Blair School of Music to create a songwriting course exclusively for veterans. CreatiVets mission is to empower wounded veterans to heal through the arts and music. The class, hosted by veteran Rick Beresford and Deanna Walker, and is free to veterans around the country on a first-come, first-served basis. It's presented entirely on Zoom and is limited to 12 participants. The class will cover a range of topics, including songwriting craft, creativity, an introduction to production and recording, and will include song critiques with the hosts and major music industry publishers.

For more information, contact
info@creativets.org.

Mondays, 6:30–8:30 p.m.
CST, Zoom

Begins September 8

Tuition: \$103



BUSINESS OF MUSIC

Dustin Kovacic, instructor •

dustin.kovacic@vanderbilt.edu

This course will explore the music business in-depth, with a focus on understanding how music is protected and monetized. We will break down the rights associated with music and music creators and will explore key music industry agreements, from recording and publishing deals to management and live performance contracts and the rights implicated in each. We will also discuss how royalties are generated and ways in which music creatives can properly collect and utilize these resources.

Thursdays, 7:00-9:00 p.m. CST, Zoom

6 Sessions: Begins August 14



VANDERBILT COMMUNITY CHORUS

David B. Williams, director •

david.b.williams@vanderbilt.edu

The VCC is an auditioned chorus composed of singers from throughout the middle Tennessee community, and performs some of the most challenging music in the repertoire. Programs are diverse and are just as likely to include music of JS Bach as they are Stephen Sondheim, Jake Runestad or Moses Hogan. The group performs 2-3 concerts per year and tours internationally every 3-4 years.

Auditions are held by appointment with director David Williams: (615) 322-7164 • <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/community-chorus/>

Tuesdays, 7:00–9:00 p.m., Choral Hall

Begins September 2

Tuition: \$110



REGISTRATION

Blair uses an online registration and payment system, VUPACE. New students should visit vupace.vanderbilt.edu to create a profile and submit a new student application. After application approval, registration may be completed online.

Credit card payments are accepted. Refunds are not made after the first week of classes. Payment may be made in full at registration or in installments. See Elm Stephenson, Academy registrar, for assistance.

Registration begins July 21, 2025

Registrar Office hours: 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. On Wednesdays, the registrar is available only by phone.

BLAIR ACADEMY CONTACT INFORMATION

REGISTRATION AND ENROLLMENT QUESTIONS

Elm Stephenson
Blair Academy Registrar
(615) 322-7655
elm.a.stephenson@vanderbilt.edu

GENERAL QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS

Mary Biddlecombe
Director, Blair Academy
at Vanderbilt
(615) 343-3167
mary.biddlecombe@vanderbilt.edu

BLAIR ACADEMY PROGRAM WEBSITE blair.vanderbilt.edu/blair-academy

