

Example of Classical Music Curriculum Redesign: Panel Presentation

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Presenters: Peter Webster, Robert Cutietta, Brian Head, Lucinda Carver

Thornton School of Music, University of Southern California, Los Angeles

The ReDesign: Rethinking Virtuosity

We've created a new model of classical music education for undergraduates by rethinking what it means to be a virtuoso in the 21st century. The classical music profession has changed. We're changing with it. In our continuing commitment to a virtuosic education for musicians, USC Thornton will unveil a new educational model, launching in Fall 2019 for undergraduates in the Classical Performance & Composition Division.

A New Model: Our new degree structure will offer more flexibility, allowing students to chart their own musical path and take electives in any area they wish. They'll maintain a robust core of performance, history, and theory classes, including a senior recital and an individualized project. And of course, students will invest plenty of time honing their musical craft in the practice room. Because career development is integrated into the four-year curriculum and not relegated to a separate course, students will work toward their professional goals from day one. Whether competing for coveted orchestral positions or launching their own ensembles, they will not only have a wider range of opportunities, but will be able to create their own. Just as boundaries are quickly disappearing across the entire music profession, the new curriculum will encourage a cross-genre approach to music training.

Example: In the first year, classical, jazz, and popular music students take theory and aural skills classes together. In the second year, they begin their music history sequence together in a class called Music & Ideas that challenges them to rethink music history, from Mozart to Miles Davis, in themes rather than chronology. As Brian Head says: "It's the first history class students will encounter here, and it's subversive because it's non-chronological. Rather than being organized by time period of musical style, it's built around ideas. For example, how has money influenced the creation and performance of music? What about political and cultural institutions? What is beauty? Students will engage with the most enduring animating forces that musicians have grappled with across styles and across time periods."

Eight Components of the New Curriculum. Our new model restructures lessons, rehearsals, and classes, themselves. Our faculty has identified eight components that define professional virtuosity and consider what it means to have a fulfilling musical career. The eight components, will be addressed in every class, lesson, and rehearsal across a student's four years of study.

Each aspect of our new curriculum will help students create a distinctive musical voice by...

- Developing musical excellence
- Connecting scholarship to music making
- Interrogating the relevance of music to a diverse and inclusive society
- Erasing performance boundaries between different genres of music

And create a fulfilling musical career by...

- Navigating their way into the music profession to monetize their skills
- Mastering skills to share music through digital platforms and non-traditional venues
- Building a lifelong, global professional network
- Leading a healthy life as a musician

The Young Artist Project. At the heart of the new program is the Young Artist Project, which students begin working on in their junior year, providing an opportunity to specialize, collaborate, and shape work that reflects a distinct musical voice. Students might visualize a composition, develop a hybrid performance, conduct research, or even explore new creative technologies – the Young Artist Project is about developing a unique voice to make their art powerful and relevant today.

Find more at: <https://music.usc.edu/redesign> Presentation Slides and this Handout at: <http://www.peterrwebster.com/>

Youtube: <https://youtu.be/VB12y3e9rjk>

Contact: Peter Webster (peterweb@usc.edu); Robert Cutietta (cutietta@usc.edu), Brian Head (head@usc.edu),
Lucinda Carver (carver@usc.edu)