

HOFF-BARTHELSON

MUSIC SCHOOL

Honors Program Overview

The Honors Program is a selective community of dedicated students committed to achieving a high level of musical performance and musicianship. It provides a structured framework that supports, challenges, and formally recognizes sustained artistic growth over time.

Students progress through the program by earning credits across performance, study, and engagement areas. In addition to completing the Honors Diploma, students may pursue elective pathways—such as composition, musicianship, or collaborative performance—and earn graduation distinctions that recognize exceptional achievement beyond the program's core requirements.

Students currently enrolled in the Honors Program will be grandfathered, as needed, allowing them to complete the program under the requirements in place at the time of their entry.

Students enrolling in the Honors Program with fewer than four years remaining until graduation may receive credit for prior comparable experience.

Credit-Based Structure

The Honors Program operates on a flexible, credit-based model that ensures both consistency and rigor.

- Credits are earned annually through lessons, ensembles, performances, coursework, concert attendance, and community service
- Graduation requires a minimum number of total credits, typically completed over four years
- Students who exceed minimum requirements may earn graduation distinctions and pathway recognition

Areas of Credit

Students earn Honors credits in the following areas:

- **Private Lessons (Required Annually)**
Weekly 60-minute lessons on the primary instrument, three performances on HBMS student recitals per year, and an adjudicated end-of-year Honors recital
- **Ensembles**
Participation in appropriate ensembles as determined by department; minimum credits required for graduation
- **Music Theory & History**
Coursework aligned with the student's level; minimum credits required for graduation
- **Electives**
Student-selected courses from HBMS offerings; minimum credits required for graduation
- **Performance Activities**
Recitals, juries, masterclasses, and approved special events; some required annually, others applied toward credit minimums

- **Professional Concert & Masterclass Attendance (Required Annually)**
Attendance at two professional concerts and one masterclass per year
- **Community Service**
Approved service supporting the HBMS community or broader public; minimum credits required for graduation

Elective Pathways & Distinction

Students may pursue Elective Pathways that support focused, advanced study. By completing additional credits and defined projects, students may earn pathway distinction upon graduation.

Current pathways include:

- Composition
- Musicianship
- Collaborative Piano
- Additional pathways may be introduced over time

Students may also graduate with *cum laude* distinctions: Cum laude, Magna cum laude, Summa cum laude

Additional awards may recognize exceptional performance or sustained excellence.

Advising & Support

All Honors students participate in annual spring advising to plan their course of study and ensure steady progress toward graduation.

Two advising formats are available:

- **Team Meeting:** Student and family meet with the Honors Program Coordinator, Dean, primary teacher, and relevant program directors
- **Coordinator–Dean Meeting:** The Coordinator gathers faculty input in advance and meets with the family alongside the Dean

This process ensures clear expectations, balanced programming, and individualized guidance.

Honors Program Participation Requirements

All students must meet a combination of annual and cumulative requirements. Each activity carries credit value toward both category-specific and overall graduation requirements.

Annual Requirements

Students must participate in the following each year:

Private Lessons and Solo Performance

- Weekly 60-minute lesson with a Hoff-Barthelson Music School Faculty Member
- Minimum of three solo performances on HBMS recitals
- Adjudicated end-of-year Honors recital
(5 credits per year; 20 credits required for graduation)

Professional Attendance

- Two professional concerts and one masterclass
(1 credit per year; 4 credits required for graduation)

Non-Annual Requirements

- **Music Theory & History:** (3 credits per course; 12 credits required)
- **Ensembles:** (2–3 credits per course; 15 credits required)
- **Electives:** (2–3 credits per course; 4 credits required)
- **Elective Performance:** Additional performances beyond annual requirements (1 credit per performance; 8 credits required)
- **Community Service:** (1 credit per activity; 5 credits required)

Instrument-Specific Requirements

- [Piano](#)
- [Voice](#)
- [Strings](#)
- [Classical Guitar](#)
- [Woodwind & Brass](#)
- [Composition](#)

Credit Requirements for Graduation

Area	Credits
Private Lessons	20
Ensembles	15
Music Theory & History	12
Electives	4
Performance	8
Concert & Masterclass Attendance	4
Community Service	5
Total	68

Credit for Prior Experience

Credits are assigned for high-level musical experiences gained at Hoff-Barthelson Music School or other music schools, youth orchestras or recognized performing arts organizations.

Requirements to Graduate with a Double Major

To graduate with a Double Major in the Honors Program, students must meet the same performance and ensemble requirements of a major concentration. Students are not required to double the other required areas (Music Theory & History, Electives, Concert & Masterclass Attendance, and Community Service).

Requirements to Graduate with a Minor

To graduate with a Minor in the Honors Program, students must have a minimum of 2 years lessons in their minor instrument and 2 year of ensemble appropriate to their minor instrument.

Credit Requirements to Graduate with a *Cum Laude* Distinction

- Cum laude: 80–89 credits
- Magna cum laude: 90–104 credits
- Summa cum laude: 105+ credits

Credit Assignments

Credits are tracked through the ASAP Registration System, creating a comprehensive transcript of each student's activities that can be shared with college admission counselors.

Class / Activity	Credit Value	Category
Private Instruction (Primary instrument, 60-minute lesson; includes jury and 3 recitals)	5	Private Lesson
Private Instruction (Secondary instrument or composition)	1–3	Private Lesson
Jazz Ensemble	2	Ensemble
Advanced Jazz Ensemble	3	Ensemble
Chamber Orchestra	2	Ensemble
Festival Orchestra	3	Ensemble
Junior Voices	2	Ensemble
Chamber Choir	3	Ensemble
Vocal Performance Class	3	Ensemble
Flute Club	3	Ensemble
Junior Flutes / Junior Flute Club	2	Ensemble
Viola Club	2-3	Ensemble
Chamber Music	3	Ensemble
Musicianship Lab Classes	3	Music Theory /History
AP Music Theory	3	Music Theory/History
AP Music Theory Prep (Levels 1 & 2)	3	Music Theory/History
Aural Skills	3	Music Theory/History
Music Through the Ages	3	Music Theory/History
Chopin to Ligeti	3	Music Theory/History
Composition (all levels)	2	Elective
Film Scoring	2	Elective
Digital Music Production	2	Elective
Music Technology	2	Elective

Class / Activity	Credit Value	Category
Class Piano	2	Elective
Diction for Singers	2	Elective
Additional Recital Performance (beyond required performances)	1	Performance
Masterclass or Approved Special Event Performance	1	Performance
Summer Program / Intensive (2+ weeks, pending review)	2–4	Performance
Attendance: 2 Professional Concerts + 1 Masterclass (Annually)	1	Professional Attendance
Community Service Activity	1	Community Service

Audition Requirements

- **Voice:** Two contrasting selections from different periods. Accompaniment required.
- **Piano:** Two scales (major and relative minor, four octaves) and two selections representing contrasting style periods.
- **Strings (including classical guitar):** Two scales (major and relative minor, two octaves) and two selections representing contrasting style periods. Accompaniment preferred.
- **Woodwinds & Brass:** Two scales (major and relative minor, two octaves) and two selections representing contrasting style periods. Accompaniment preferred.
- **Composition:** Pre-screening portfolio - Submit a portfolio that includes 3 scores in PDF format that best represents your compositional ability. Recordings and/or MIDI representations of other scores are not required but are welcome.
 - At least one piece should be for an ensemble of 4 or more instruments.
 - At least one piece should also include a recording (Professional recordings are not required)

Upon successful completion of the prescreening, you will be invited for a short interview and meeting with Dr. Derek Cooper, Chair of Composition and Musicianship

Instrument Specific Requirements

Piano

- **Required every year**

Students must earn a minimum number of credits to graduate. Even with the minimum credit threshold met, students must continue to participate in these until they graduate from the program.

- **Private Lessons & Solo performance**

20 credits required to graduate / 5 credits applied per year when requirements below are met.

- **Weekly lesson with Hoff-Barthelson Music School Faculty**, minimum 60-minutes in duration.
- **Minimum of 3 Performances in Student Recitals (not adjudicated, but with comments from faculty):** Over the course of the three student recital performances, students must perform a total of three selections representing contrasting musical eras (Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Impressionist, and Contemporary). Depending on recital scheduling and timing, students may perform one or more

selections at each recital. Memorization requirement at the discretion of the student's private lesson instructor. *Students are encouraged to play *more* than 3 times on student recitals and will earn 1 credit per additional performance.*

- **End-of-year Honors Program Recital (adjudicated):** Two or three selections from contrasting periods (Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Impressionist, Contemporary); music must be memorized.

- **Ensemble participation**

15 credits required to graduate.

- **Chamber Ensemble:** Piano Ensemble, Chamber Music, Jazz Ensemble, or Large Ensemble. *12 credits required.*
- **Large Ensemble:** Junior Voices, Chamber Choir, Chamber Orchestra, or Festival Orchestra. *3 credits required.*

- **Concert and masterclass attendance**

4 credits required to graduate

- Attend 2 Professional concerts and 1 masterclass. Scan and submit programs to honors@hbms.org. *1 credit when attendance at all 3 events is confirmed.*

- **Not required every year.**

Students must earn a minimum number of credits to fulfill graduation requirements.

- **Music Theory & History**

12 Credits required to graduate

- Musicianship Lab Classes, AP or AP Prep classes; Aural Skills; Music Through the Ages; Chopin to Ligeti. *3 credits per class.*

- **Electives**

4 credits to graduate

- Free class or ensemble selection selected in consultation with Honors Program leadership and students' primary instructor. *1-3 credits per class or ensemble.*

- **Solo Performances**

8 credits required to graduate

- Recital performances (beyond requirement listed above). *1 credit per performance.*
- Masterclass or approved special event performance. *1 credit per performance.*

- **Community service**

5 credits to graduate

- **Performances:** Concerts for the Community or other community-focused performances students arrange themselves (subject to approval). *1 credit per performance.*
- **Programs offering assistant and/or volunteer roles:** Suzuki Group Class Accompaniment; Summer Arts Program; Music Theory Olympics; Musicianship and Early Childhood Program classes; HBMS Festivals and Special Events; others subject to approval. *Credit value TBD by Honors Program Leadership Team; compensation available depending on role, responsibility, and term of engagement.*

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Voice

- **Required every year**

Students must earn a minimum number of credits to graduate. Even with the minimum credit threshold met, students must continue to participate in these until they graduate from the program.

- **Private Lessons & Solo performance**

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- **Weekly lesson with Hoff-Barthelson Music School Faculty**, minimum 60-minutes in duration.

- **Minimum of 3 Performances in Student Recitals (not adjudicated, but with comments from faculty):** Over the course of the three student recital performances, students must perform a total of three selections representing contrasting musical eras (Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Impressionist, and Contemporary). Depending on recital scheduling and timing, students may perform one or more selections at each recital. Memorization requirement at the discretion of the student's private lesson instructor. *Students are encouraged to sing *more* than 3 times on student recitals and will earn 1 credit per additional performance.*
 - **End-of-year Honors Program Recital (adjudicated):** Two or three selections from contrasting periods (Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Impressionist, Contemporary); music must be memorized.
- **Ensemble participation**
15 credits required to graduate.
 - **Large Ensemble:** Junior Voices, Chamber Choir, Chamber Orchestra, or Festival Orchestra. *9 credits required.*
 - **Elective Ensemble:** Jazz Ensemble, Vocal Performance Class, Chamber Music. *6 credits required.*
- **Concert and masterclass attendance**
4 credits required to graduate
 - Attend 2 Professional concerts and 1 masterclass. Scan and submit programs to honors@hbms.org. *1 credit when attendance at all 3 events is confirmed.*
- **Not required every year.**
Students must earn a minimum number of credits to fulfill graduation requirements.
 - **Music Theory & History**
12 Credits required to graduate
 - Musicianship Lab Classes, AP or AP Prep classes; Aural Skills; Music Through the Ages; Chopin to Ligeti. *3 credits per class.*
 - **Electives**
4 credits to graduate
 - Free class or ensemble selection selected in consultation with Honors Program leadership and students' primary instructor. *1-3 credits per class or ensemble.*
 - **Solo Performances**
8 credits required to graduate
 - Recital performances (beyond requirement listed above). *1 credit per performance.*
 - Masterclass or approved special event performance. *1 credit per performance.*
 - **Community service**
5 credits to graduate
 - **Performances:** Concerts for the Community or other community-focused performances students arrange themselves (subject to approval). *1 credit per performance.*
 - **Programs offering assistant and/or volunteer roles:** Assistant to Choral Conductors; Summer Arts Program; Music Theory Olympics; Musicianship and Early Childhood Program classes; HBMS Festivals and Special Events; others subject to approval. *Credit value TBD by Honors Program Leadership Team; compensation available depending on role, responsibility, and term of engagement.*

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- **Required every year**

Students must earn a minimum number of credits to graduate. Even with the minimum credit threshold met, students must continue to participate in these until they graduate from the program.

- **Private Lessons & Solo performance**

20 credits required to graduate / 5 credits applied per year when requirements below are met.

- **Weekly lesson with Hoff-Barthelson Music School Faculty**, minimum 60-minutes in duration.
 - **Minimum of 3 Performances in Student Recitals (not adjudicated, but with comments from faculty):** Over the course of the three student recital performances, students must perform a total of three selections representing contrasting musical eras (Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Impressionist, and Contemporary). Depending on recital scheduling and timing, students may perform one or more selections at each recital. Memorization requirement at the discretion of the student's private lesson instructor. *Students are encouraged to play *more* than 3 times on student recitals and will earn 1 credit per additional performance.*
 - **End-of-year Honors Program Recital (adjudicated):** Two or three selections from contrasting periods (Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Impressionist, Contemporary). Memorization requirement at the discretion of the student's private lesson instructor.

- **Ensemble participation**

15 credits required to graduate

- **Large Ensemble** – Orchestra (Chamber Orchestra, Festival Orchestra). *9 credits required.*
 - **Chamber Ensemble:** Chamber Music. *6 credits required.*

- **Concert and masterclass attendance**

4 credits required to graduate

- Attend 2 Professional concerts and 1 masterclass. Scan and submit programs to honors@hbms.org. *1 credit when attendance at all 3 events is confirmed.*

- **Not required every year.**

Students must earn a minimum number of credits to fulfill graduation requirements.

- **Music Theory & History**

12 Credits required to graduate

- Musicianship Lab Classes, AP or AP Prep classes; Aural Skills; Music Through the Ages; Chopin to Ligeti. *3 credits per class.*

- **Electives**

4 credits to graduate

- Free class or ensemble selection selected in consultation with Honors Program leadership and students' primary instructor. *1-3 credits per class or ensemble.*

- **Solo Performances**

8 credits required to graduate

- Recital performances (beyond requirement listed above). *1 credit per performance.*
 - Masterclass or approved special event performance. *1 credit per performance.*

- **Community service**

5 credits to graduate

- **Performances:** Concerts for the Community or other community-focused performances students arrange themselves (subject to approval). *1 credit per performance.*
 - **Programs offering assistant and/or volunteer roles:** Port Chester Saturday Orchestra Program; Assistant to Orchestra Conductors; Assistant to Suzuki Group Class Instructor; Summer Arts Program; Music Theory Olympics; Musicianship and Early Childhood Program classes; HBMS Festivals and Special Events; others subject to approval. *Credit*

Classical Guitar

❖ Required every year

Students must earn a minimum number of credits to graduate. Even with the minimum credit threshold met, students must continue to participate in these until they graduate from the program.

- **Private Lessons & Solo performance**

20 credits required to graduate / 5 credits applied per year when requirements below are met.

- **Weekly lesson with Hoff-Barthelson Music School Faculty**, minimum 60-minutes in duration.
- **Minimum of 3 Performances in Student Recitals (not adjudicated, but with comments from faculty):** Over the course of the three student recital performances, students must perform a total of three selections representing contrasting musical eras (Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Impressionist, and Contemporary). Depending on recital scheduling and timing, students may perform one or more selections at each recital. Memorization requirement at the discretion of the student's private lesson instructor. *Students are encouraged to play *more* than 3 times on student recitals and will earn 1 credit per additional performance.*
- **End-of-year Honors Program Recital (adjudicated):** Two or three selections from contrasting periods (Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Impressionist, Contemporary); music must be memorized.

- **Ensemble participation**

15 credits required to graduate

- **Chamber Ensemble:** Guitar Ensemble, Chamber Ensemble, or Jazz Ensemble. *9 credits required.*
- **Large Ensemble:** Choir (Junior Voices or Chamber Choir), or Orchestra (Chamber Orchestra, Festival Orchestra). *6 credits required.*

- **Concert and masterclass attendance**

4 credits required to graduate

- Attend 2 Professional concerts and 1 masterclass. Scan and submit programs to honors@hbms.org. *1 credit when attendance at all 3 events is confirmed.*

❖ Not required every year.

Students must earn a minimum number of credits to fulfill the graduation requirement.

- **Music Theory & History**

12 Credits required to graduate

- Musicianship Lab Classes, AP or AP Prep classes; Aural Skills; Music Through the Ages; Chopin to Ligeti. *3 credits per class.*

- **Electives**

4 credits to graduate

- Free class or ensemble selection selected in consultation with Honors Program leadership and students' primary instructor. *1-3 credits per class or ensemble.*

- **Solo Performances**

8 credits required to graduate

- Recital performances (beyond requirement listed above). *1 credit per performance.*
- Masterclass or approved special event performance. *1 credit per performance.*

- **Community service**

5 credits to graduate

- **Performances:** Concerts for the Community or other community-focused performances students arrange themselves (subject to approval). *1 credit per performance.*
- **Programs offering assistant and/or volunteer roles:** Suzuki Guitar Group Class Accompaniment; Summer Arts Program; Music Theory Olympics; Musicianship and Early Childhood Program classes; HBMS Festivals and Special Events; others subject to approval. *Credit value TBD by Honors Program Leadership Team; compensation available depending on role, responsibility, and term of engagement.*

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Woodwinds & Brass

❖ Required every year

Students must earn a minimum number of credits to graduate. Even with the minimum credit threshold met, students must continue to participate in these until they graduate from the program.

○ Private Lessons & Solo performance

20 credits required to graduate / 5 credits applied per year when requirements below are met.

- **Weekly lesson with Hoff-Barthelson Music School Faculty,** minimum 60-minutes in duration.
- **Minimum of 3 Performances in Student Recitals (not adjudicated, but with comments from faculty):** Over the course of the three student recital performances, students must perform a total of three selections representing contrasting musical eras (Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Impressionist, and Contemporary). Depending on recital scheduling and timing, students may perform one or more selections at each recital. Memorization requirement at the discretion of the student's private lesson instructor. *Students are encouraged to play *more* than 3 times on student recitals and will earn 1 credit per additional performance.*
- **End-of-year Honors Program Recital (adjudicated):** Two or three selections from contrasting periods (Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Impressionist, Contemporary); Memorization requirement at the discretion of the student's private lesson instructor.

○ Ensemble participation

15 credits required to graduate

- **Large Ensemble** – Orchestra (Chamber Orchestra, Festival Orchestra, Flute Club, Jazz Band). *9 credits required.*
- **Chamber Ensemble:** Chamber Music, Flute Club. *6 credits required.*

○ Concert and masterclass attendance

4 credits required to graduate

- Attend 2 Professional concerts and 1 masterclass. Scan and submit programs to honors@hbms.org. *1 credit when attendance at all 3 events is confirmed.*

❖ Not required every year.

Students must earn a minimum number of credits to fulfill the graduation requirement.

○ Music Theory & History

12 Credits required to graduate

- Musicianship Lab Classes, AP or AP Prep classes; Aural Skills; Music Through the Ages; Chopin to Ligeti. *3 credits per class.*

○ Electives

4 credits to graduate

- Free class or ensemble selection selected in consultation with Honors Program leadership and students' primary instructor. *1-3 credits per class or ensemble.*

○ Solo Performances

8 credits required to graduate

- Recital performances (beyond requirement listed above). *1 credit per performance.*
- Masterclass or approved special event performance. *1 credit per performance.*
- **Community service**
5 credits to graduate
 - **Performances:** Concerts for the Community or other community-focused performances students arrange themselves (subject to approval). *1 credit per performance.*
 - **Programs offering assistant and/or volunteer roles:** Flute Ensemble/Cub Assistant; Summer Arts Program; Music Theory Olympics; Musicianship and Early Childhood Program classes; HBMS Festivals and Special Events; others subject to approval. *Credit value TBD by Honors Program Leadership Team; compensation available depending on role, responsibility, and term of engagement.*

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Composition – update coming soon!

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