

November 2, 2007

Music majors find balance in classes, concerts, practice

By Liz Glazier

Rocket Focus Assistant Editor

While many students whine about all the credits and liberal arts classes they must take in order to graduate, some students don't realize music majors must earn the same amount of credits as other students, but must take many more classes to earn those credits.

Many of the music department classes are one-credit courses. There are four different kinds of degrees that music majors can earn.

They can receive a Bachelor of Music degree in music therapy, music education or music performance, or a Bachelor of Arts degree, which is a liberal arts program.

After getting a degree in music therapy, graduates can use their knowledge by using music in a therapeutic way.

Senior music therapy major Janelle Chambers said music therapy is a way to use music to reach nonmusical goals.

"Music therapy is using

oriented towards one specific area. However, they can go on to teach lessons in a store or start a music store of their own.

The final program that is offered to music students is the music liberal arts program.

Maribeth Knaub, the chairperson of SRU's music department, said the music liberal arts program is more of a series of courses for students that don't know exactly what they want to do with music.

"This is a program so students can have that background in music to start off with and just go from there," Knaub said.

Along with the many one-credit classes music majors need to take, each student is also required to be involved with at least one music performance group on campus. The students do receive credits for these performance groups.

Chambers is a member of two musical groups, the concert choir and the chamber singers, and said the fact that she only receives one credit for these groups and also many of her classes is stressful.

"We do just as much work for that one-credit class as we would for a three-credit class," Chambers said.

Maegan Hunt, a senior music education and performance major, agreed that taking a lot of one-credit classes is stressful. She also said the number of classes required in the music department is a lot, but is understandable.

"I have taken 21 credits a semester in order to graduate in four years," Hunt, 22, said.

Hunt is involved with the Wind Ensemble, Orchestra and Jazz Band II. The Wind Ensemble meets twice a week, orchestra meets once a week and Jazz Band II meets three

SEE ONE-CREDIT, PAGE B-3



AARON GOOD/THE ROCKET

Mark Dressler plays the trombone during the Jazz Combo I concert held in Swope Music Hall. The concert included an ensemble of six SRU student musicians.

elements of music to address various needs of human beings," said Chambers, 22. "These can be mental, physical or even spiritual needs."

Another option is a music education degree, where students can go on and teach music classes or even become directors.

The music performance degree offered by SRU is not really



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Dance department making name despite other popular majors

By Corey Carrington

Rocket Contributor

and Jessica Rupell

Rocket Focus Editor

Being at a school where a lot of students are either education or exercise science majors, it can be easy for undergrads in other majors to get lost in the shuffle.

But when a department makes sure that it remains highly visible on campus, that department is usually made up of individuals not willing to fade into the background.

That is the case with SRU's dance department.

"A lot of what happens in other departments is behind closed doors," said Nora Ambrosio, a professor in and

chairperson of the dance department. "But what we do is so public."

Ambrosio, who is in her 20th year at SRU, said she believes that while in the past some professors from other departments didn't really understand what the dance department did, it really does not happen much anymore.

"I think the community and administration really values us as a department," Ambrosio said.

"We just had close to 700 people at our Faculty Dance Concert. There's not a whole lot of events on campus that can say that."

With 114 dance majors and about 30 dance minors, the program is small, but Ambrosio

said this doesn't mean that it's an easy major.

"There is a big misconception that dance is an easy major," Ambrosio said. "But we have one of the highest QPA requirements in all majors, being 3.0 overall and a 2.7 in the major."

LaMar Williams Jr., a freshman dance major from Erie, Pa., is one of the three male dance majors on campus.

Williams, 18, said he thinks some people under appreciate the dance department for many reasons.

"When people see something they're not used to, they don't see it as unique," Williams said. "People need to broaden their

SEE PHYSICAL, PAGE B-3

Student-directed play to hit Miller Auditorium mainstage Nov. 14

By Jessica Rupell

Rocket Focus Editor

She's done acting, took technical classes, helped to paint sets and worked public relations for the theatre department.

But in less than two weeks, Deanna Brookens, a senior theatre major, is about to find out what it's like to add directing to her list of credentials.

Brookens, 23, wrote a proposal to the theatre department faculty and staff last October telling them why she wanted to direct a play.

She said she had two plays in mind when she first did her proposal, and with the help of the theatre department faculty, collectively chose "This Is Our Youth."

Brookens said "This Is Our Youth," a play written by Kenneth Longergan, is set in the upper west side of Manhattan in 1982.

"I was drawn to it because it's all about growing up, which is something all theatre majors can relate to," Brookens said. "It's also something the student body can relate to."

The proposal was accepted by the end of the semester.

Though it all seemed so simple for

Brookens, Laura Smiley, an assistant professor in the theatre department, said that isn't the case at all.

"This privilege only happens once every couple of years when a student has work to be shown," Smiley said.

"And it makes sense that it's Deanna because she has been a major player in the department."

Besides reading the play a lot last year, the production did not move forward until Brookens worked on the script this summer.

"I read the script a bunch of times for meaning and what I wanted to convey about the show," Brookens said.

"I also broke down the scenes for the rehearsal process and did research on the Ronald Reagan era, which is when the story takes place."

Auditions for the play were held during the first week of classes, with about 50 people showing up for both fall shows.

But unlike past years, the competition was extremely stiff this year, with the first show only casting six people and "This Is Our Youth" casting three.

Nick Gligor, a senior communication major, was cast as the main character, Dennis, in "This is Our Youth."

In his third role in a theatre-department production, Gligor said he was more confident during these auditions than he had been in the past.

"I never really try to think about it," Gligor said. "If they like it, they do, if not,

SEE FINAL, PAGE B-3



JESSICA RUPELL/THE ROCKET

During Tuesday's rehearsal for "This is Our Youth," Dennis (Nick Gligor) yells at Warren (Zach Nading) for stealing \$15,000 from his father and bringing it to his apartment. The play, set in the upper west side of Manhattan, is set to open in Miller Auditorium on Nov. 14 at 8 p.m.