Strings at Crane

Inspired by our tradition of innovation, the members of Crane's string department provide exceptional instruction and inspiration for students. Whether their majors are performance, education or other musical studies, students are expected to reach high levels of performance excellence and scholarship. This excellence is illustrated, in part, in the quality of our large and small ensembles and in the hundreds of works performed in recital by string players each year.

String students learn from our talented faculty, benefitting from their range of experiences as orchestral players, recitalists, chamber musicians and master educators. Following an intensive program of studies, our graduates are well-equipped to find jobs as music professionals and are recognized as fine teachers and performers.

String faculty members seek to create a supportive environment in which players learn to teach each other and themselves, analyzing technical and musical issues so that they can improve their own playing. We believe this is the best way to create the strongest musicians – musicians who will lead the profession as players and teachers. At the heart of our collective experience is the idea that teachers and pre-professional performers and educators are equal partners in a vibrant string community.

Performance Opportunities

The Crane Symphony Orchestra is the second oldest college orchestra in the United States, and in its long legacy, students at Crane have worked with legendary conductors and musicians, such as Nadia Boulanger, Sarah Caldwell, Aaron Copland, Howard Hanson, Gunther Schuller, and Robert Shaw, to name a few. Each year, the Crane Symphony Orchestra performs with the Crane Chorus in the Spring Festival, working for a week-long residency with internationally renowned conductors. The Crane Symphony Orchestra performs a wide range orchestral repertoire, from baroque to contemporary music. The mission for Crane Symphony Orchestra is not only pursuing a high-standard of performance. We are also committed to providing students with an excellent ensemble experience as part of the education for future music teachers, performers, scholars, composers, and music industry leaders. The CSO is under the direction of Dr. Ching-chun Lai. (Note: Dr. Lai is on leave for the 2018-2019 school year, and the CSO will be led by Dr. Joel Schut in her absence.)

The Crane String Orchestra performs literature written for all sizes of string ensembles, which is exactly that repertoire most useful to school string teachers.
The Crane Opera Orchestra performs fully-staged operatic works with the Crane Opera Ensemble each semester. The size of the ensemble depends on specific work being performed, which is drawn from Baroque through contemporary operatic which is drawn from Baroque through contemporary operatic and musical theatre repertoire. The Opera Ensemble’s 2011 production of Amahl & the Night Visitors was the 1st place winner of The American Prize in Operatic Performance and 2nd place in the National Opera Association’s annual Collegiate Production Competition (Division 3). The Crane Opera Orchestra is under the direction of Dr. Kirk Severtson.

Chamber Music opportunities for string students include string quintets, quartets, and trios, as well as piano quintets and trios, as well as the Crane Viola Ensemble. Student chamber music groups are coached by members of the string faculty.

National String Project

Now in its 14th year, the National String Project at Crane’s mission is to expand string education opportunities in the North Country while providing teaching experiences for university students at the Crane School of Music. Lessons and ensembles are taught by Crane music education majors with the guidance of Crane music faculty. Our site is part of a National Consortium of String Projects founded in collaboration with the American String Teachers Association, now serving 36 communities around the nation.

Our String Faculty

Liesl Schoenberger Doty, violin
dotyls@potsdam.edu

Dr. Sarah Hersh, violin
hershss@potsdam.edu

Dr. Shelly Tramposh, viola
tramposh@potsdam.edu

Dr. Marie-Élaine Gagnon, cello
gagnonmc@potsdam.edu

John Geggie, double bass
geggiejd@potsdam.edu

Apply to Crane

You will find complete information about Crane, SUNY Potsdam, and the audition process on our website.

The Crane School of Music offers these degrees:
- BM and MM in Music Education
- BM and MM in Performance
- BM in Musical Studies - Composition
- BM in Musical Studies - Music Theory
- BM in Musical Studies - Music History
- BM, emphasis in Music Business
- BA in Music