2017 TOUR

WIND ENSEMBLE

Dr. Craig A. Hancock, Conductor

WWW.WARTBURG.EDU/TOURS
Two ensembles comprise the Wartburg College Concert Bands program—the Wind Ensemble and the Symphonic Band. Placement in the groups is determined by a yearly audition. Both groups represent students of all class standings and nearly all academic majors. The bands present joint and individual concerts throughout the year. Many of their 155 members also are involved in other groups on campus, varying from choirs to jazz bands and from campus ministry to student government. The Wind Ensemble tours each spring and schedules an international tour every third year during Wartburg’s one-month May Term. In spring 2003, the Wind Ensemble performed at New York City’s Carnegie Hall. The group toured Europe in 1997, 2001, 2004, 2010, and 2016 and Japan in May 2007. In 2013, the ensemble toured China and Japan, and in 2019 the group will return to Japan.
Dr. Craig A. Hancock is in his 22nd year as Director of Bands at Wartburg College. Prior positions include Wayne State College (Wayne, Neb.), Graceland College (Lamoni), and Simpson College (Indianola). Hancock earned Bachelor of Music degrees in music education and trombone performance at Simpson, graduating magna cum laude. He earned a Master of Arts degree in trombone performance (studying with John Hill) and Doctor of Musical Arts degree in band conducting (studying with Myron Welch) at the University of Iowa.

At Wartburg, besides administering and conducting the college’s top concert band (the Wind Ensemble), Hancock oversees the pep band and the second jazz band; teaches trombone, euphonium, and tuba lessons, advanced conducting class, marching band, and instrument repair techniques; and serves as the college instrument repair technician. With Hancock’s leadership, the Wartburg College Concert Bands program sponsors the annual Meistersinger Honor Band Festival in early February and Band Camp at Wartburg each summer.

Under Hancock’s direction, the Wartburg College Wind Ensemble has traveled the globe, from Carnegie Hall to London, Munich, Prague, Tokyo, Beijing, and many points in between. As a trombonist, he has performed with the Des Moines Symphony, the Des Moines Metro Opera Company, the Graceland College Community Orchestra, the Northeast Nebraska Sinfonia, the Wartburg Community Symphony, and until recently, when he accepted the position as conductor of the Greater Waverly Area Municipal Band, was principal trombone each summer for 21 years in the Waterloo Municipal Band. In addition to his conducting and teaching, he is active as a clinician, adjudicator, festival conductor, and low brass performer. A past board member of the Iowa Bandmasters Association, Hancock in 2000 received the Wartburg Student Senate Award for Teaching Excellence. He is listed in the 2005 edition of Who’s Who Among American Teachers. He holds membership in Iowa Bandmasters Association, College Band Directors National Association, Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia Music Fraternity, and the American Association of University Professors.

Dr. Hancock also has served as president of the Waterloo Municipal Band Board and in leadership with the Waverly Lions Club. Hancock has served as a Boy Scout leader in each of the communities in which he has resided, and as a licensed minister, serves his local church as associate pastor. Hancock and his wife of 29 years, Elizabeth, have a blended family of boys, ages 38, 36, 32, 22, and 20.
Program
to be selected from the following

Bayou Breakdown (2004) ........................................... Brant Karrick

Einzugsmarsch der Bojaren (1893/1911) .......... Johan Halvorsen, arr. Laurendeau

Scootin’ on Hardrock (1999) .............................. David R. Holsinger
Three Short Scat-Jazzy Dances

October (2000) .................................................. Eric Whitacre

One Life Beautiful (2010) ................................. Julie Giroux

Southern Hymn (2009) .......................................... Samuel L. Hazo

Let the Amen Sound (1912) ............................. Travis J. Cross

Rough Riders (1943/1996) ................................. Karl L. King, arr. Swearingen


Flight of the Bumblebee (1933) .................... N. Rimsky-Korsakov, arr. Iasilli
From the opera The Tale of Tsar Saltan

Galop (1971) ...................................................... Dmitri Shostakovich, trans. Hunsberger
From the musical comedy Moscow, Cheryomushki

Vesuvius (1999) .................................................. Frank Ticheli

One Wartburg College Concert Bands’ tradition near and dear to members and alumni is the concert ending—always with Clarke’s rendition of Nearer My God to Thee, followed by the band singing The Lord Bless You and Keep You. Today’s performance can end no other way.
Program Notes

“Bayou Breakdown” weaves a bluegrass reel into a fugal texture with plenty of Cajun two-step backbeat and ‘blue’ notes all into a palate-pleasing musical gumbo!

Composed in spring 2003, it was written for the University of Toledo Wind Ensemble and dedicated to Frank Wickes, director of bands at Louisiana State University. The initial idea was to compose a fugue for concert band, blending elements of American bluegrass with a sort of Bach meets Grainger sound. As is the case with many compositions, the piece was at least halfway sketched before it received its title. Breakdown, in this case, refers to a lively, sometimes noisy, and highly energetic American country dance. Adding Bayou to the title allowed the composer to reflect upon his many cherished memories of the charismatic state of Louisiana and Louisiana State University and encouraged him to include rhythms and harmonies heard in certain Cajun music.” – Brant Karrick

Einzugsmarsch der Bojaren (Entry March of the Boyars) is an orchestral composition, written in 1893 from the pen of the Norwegian Johan Halvorsen (1864–1935). It is one of the most popular works of the composer and quickly became an international success. The piece has an occupational inspiration behind it. Halvorsen was offered a post at Bucharest Conservatory, but he declined. However, he became interested in the city and read about it and the entry of the Romania boyars into Bucharest in the 18th century. The scene almost “forced” him to compose music out of it. The music was first used as stage music at the Bergen Theatre, where he worked as the director of music. Two years later Halvorsen published an arrangement of the piece for symphony orchestra. Eighteen years later the band version followed.

Scootin’ on Hardrock “About half a mile east of my office on Shady Grove Road, you will cross Hardrock Road, the former main street of Shady Grove Township, Texas. Sitting close to the railroad line between Dallas and Fort Worth, this little community thrived for its initial 20 years. But when the township was absorbed by Irving and Grand Prairie 30 years ago, Hardrock Road was destined to suffer dearly the abandonment of both a future and ‘county maintenance.’ The road runs only about a mile in length, from the entrance to the bankrupted wildlife park on the south, to Rock Island Road, parallel to the old Rock Island Railroad tracks, to the north. There are a number of houses left in dilapidated neighborhoods. Most are suffering the ravages of too many uncaring renters; however, some still appear neat and cared for, despite their age. Several defunct horse stables and exercise corrals line the road, in addition to a couple of ‘joints,’ a small grocery store, a welder's shop, and a number of scrap yards. Located midpoint on Hardrock Road is a cemetery and close by, a vacant lot, where the original Shady Grove Baptist Church stood from 1937 until December 1974, when disgruntled church members allegedly put a torch to the building and burned it down. (And you thought YOUR church board had heated meetings!) One doesn’t mosey down Hardrock Road anymore. You scoot along because now the only reason to drive through there is to go from somewhere you've been to someplace you haven’t … And anyway, only the locals consider the route a shortcut to wherever … But once upon a time, Hardrock Road was the center of town.” – David Holsinger

“October is my favorite month. Something about the crisp autumn air and the subtle change in light always make me a little sentimental, and as I started to sketch, I felt that same quiet beauty in the writing. The simple, pastoral melodies and subsequent harmonies are inspired by the great English Romantics (Vaughan Williams, Elgar) as I felt that this style was also perfectly suited to capture the natural and pastoral soul of the season. I’m quite happy with the end result, especially because I feel there just isn’t enough lush, beautiful music written for winds.” – Eric Whitacre

“One Life Beautiful”—the title itself is a double-entendre, which in one sense is referring to the person this work is dedicated to as in ‘one life’ that was beautifully lived. The other sense is a direct observation, concluding that having only one life is what makes life so sacred, tragic, and so very precious. This is an impressionistic work musically describing that condition. Shakespeare’s ‘sweet sorrow,’ the frailty and strength of life, the meaning of what is it to truly live One Life Beautiful.” – Julie Giroux
Southern Hymn was commissioned in memory of a band dad and active booster member. Here’s what Samuel Hazo had to say about him: “Neil Rasmussen was first and foremost a devoted husband and terrific father to Kristin and Jeffrey. Although he never had the opportunity to actually read or play music, one of his favorite pastimes was watching the bands perform at football games, parades, and concerts. He would always comment on how wonderful all the musicians played. As a band parent, he was so proud of not only his own children but each and every one of the children who performed.”

“Let the Amen Sound was commissioned by the Northshore Concert Band in memory of Benjamin and Elizabeth Zyer. Their son, Dave, who plays in the clarinet section and served for many years as board chair, believed the piece should reflect the deep faith his parents shared, and after considering different hymns, we decided to base the work on Joachim Neander’s 17th-century chorale Lobe den Herren, know in English as ‘Praise to the Lord.’ The title comes from the final stanza of the hymn. My setting opens with a simple expression of innocence from which the hymn tune emerges first in solo flute, accompanied by percussion and muted trumpets to evoke the sound of liturgical bells. Solo clarinet and bassoon join, leading to a reverent statement of the hymn by the full ensemble. The three variations that follow seek to portray archetypal moments in our shared human experience: the playful exuberance of childhood, the sentimental dance of youth, and the triumphant celebration of lives well lived.”

– Travis J. Cross

Flight of the Bumblebee is an orchestral interlude written by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov for his opera, The Tale of Tsar Saltan, composed in 1899-1900. Although the original opera features a vocal line, it is easily omitted and this, plus the fact that the number decisively closes the scene, made for easy extraction as a concerto piece. Although the Flight does not have a title in the score of the opera, its common English title translates like the Russian one (Полёт шмеля = Polyot shmelya). Incidentally, this piece does not constitute one of the movements of the orchestral suite that Rimsky-Korsakov derived from the opera for concerts. Flight of the Bumblebee is recognizable for its frantic pace when played up to tempo, with nearly uninterrupted runs of chromatic sixteenth notes. It is not so much the pitch or range of the notes that are played that challenges the musician, but simply the musician’s ability to move to them quickly enough. Because of this and its complexity, it requires a great deal of skill to perform.

Rough Riders was written in 1943, and composer Karl King penned this circus march as part of a set of marches written for school bands in the 1940s. King composed more than 300 works, including marches, gallops, waltzes, and overtures.

Full Tilt! was commissioned by the Northwest Oklahoma Band Director’s Association for its 2007 festival. Filled with rhythmic energy, it is the composer’s hope that the piece will provide a thrill ride of sorts for performers and audience members alike.

Galop is a short, frenetic piece from the satirical operetta Moscow, Cheryomushki. The plot of the work deals with housing issues in Moscow (specifically the Cheryomushki neighborhood) and follows a group of characters new to the housing development. In the operetta, this piece provides dancing music for a housewarming party.

“Mount Vesuvius, the volcano that destroyed Pompeii in A.D. 79, is an icon of power and energy in this work. Originally, I had in mind a wild and passionate dance such as might have been performed at an ancient Roman Bacchanalia. During the composition process, I began to envision something more explosive and fiery. With its driving rhythms, exotic modes, and quotations from the Dies Irae from the medieval Requiem Mass, it became evident that the Bacchanalia I was writing could represent a dance from the final days of the doomed city of Pompeii.” – Frank Ticheli
Wartburg College Wind Ensemble

**Flute/Piccolo**
* Maria Silva  Albert Lea, Minn.
 Emily Brekunitch  Geneva
 Payton Brinkman  Cassville, Wis.
 † Sarah Yotter  Mendota Heights, Minn.
 Madeline Cable  Dyersville
 Bryn Davies  Solon

**Oboe**
 Anna Baldwin  Solvang, Calif.

**Bassoon**
 Juan Astiazar  Phoenix, Ariz.

**Clarinet**
 †Anna Henrich  Mason City
 Nina Vitari  Aspen, Colo.
 #Mary Kate Hines  Davenport
 Elizabeth Lyke  Geneva, Ill.
 Britni Cohen-Wichner  Stoughton, Wis.
 Hanna Williams  Swisher
 Sofia Bouffard  Cedar Rapids
 † Robbie Newell  Waverly
 Alyssa Edwards  Kingston, Ill.
 Mallory Weaver  Bettendorf
 *Kim Conner  Jesup

**E-flat Clarinet**
 Nina Vitari  Aspen, Colo.
 #Mary Kate Hines  Davenport
 Elizabeth Lyke  Geneva, Ill.

**Alto Clarinet**
 *Robbie Newell  Waverly

**Bass Clarinet**
 Brianna Schares  Gilbertville
 #Allison Coe  Dixon

**Alto Saxophone**
 Mason Wirtz  Maynard
 † Kathryn Chabal  Mount Pleasant
 Tessa Hartman  Jesup

**Tenor Saxophone**
 Rebecca Buchanan  Hampton
 Michelle Hahn  Mason City

**Baritone Saxophone**
 Trevor Krug  Dysart

**French Horn**
 † Logan Merley  Sheldon
 Weston Krug  Dysart
 Johanna Kluck  Bruning, Neb.

**Trumpet**
 Eric Rix  Sioux Rapids
 Hannah Blackwell  Schaumburg, Ill.
 Chad Keitel  Oxford
 *† Julia Ratekin  Johnston
 Samantha Riese  Zearing
 Jared Torgeson  Ogilive, Minn.

**Trombone**
 † Jason Brescia  Hoffman Estates, Ill.
 Emily Bingham  Waverly
 Emily DeBoer  Waukee
 Hannah Mauritz  Bondurant

**Bass Trombone**
 Kassie Hennings  Dysart

**Euphonium**
 Abby Lucas  Mason City
 Mary O’Connell  Tiffin

**Tuba**
 † Noah Hickman  Sheldon
 Garrett Arensdorf  Asburg
 Danica Duellman  Dodge, Wis.

**Percussion (listed alphabetically)**
 * Alex Astiazaran  Phoenix, Ariz.
 Cody Birely  Davenport
 Brittney Carpenter  Jamestown, N.D.
 Jason Costabile  Arlington Heights, Ill.
 † Scott Eiklenborg  Aplington
 Grant Gage  Highlands Ranch, Colo.
 * Stephen Klaassen  Broken Arrow, Okla.
 Ally Ziegenfuss  Delhi

* - band council
# - band librarians
† - section leader
Music as a Major

• The Bachelor of Arts degree with a music major enables students to combine music with a minor or a second major in another field. The church music major combines courses in music and religion to prepare students for leading music programs in churches and in many types of Christian outreach.

• The Bachelor of Music degree prepares students for further study leading to professional performance, studio teaching, or careers in church music.

• The Bachelor of Music Education degree qualifies students to teach music in grades K-12. The Bachelor of Music Education degree with a music therapy major prepares students to use music in helping children and adults with emotional, mental, or physical problems and people with special needs. Wartburg is the only private college in Iowa to offer a major in music therapy.

• The Bachelor of Music in Music Therapy degree does not include the K-12 music certification, but it meets the requirements for certification as a registered music therapist (RMT) through the National Association for Music Therapy.

Music Enriches Campus Life

Wartburg provides a variety of musical activities geared to individual interests, talents, and time schedules. Instrumental organizations include the Wind Ensemble, Symphonic Band, the Wartburg Community Symphony, Kammerstreicher chamber orchestra, Knightlifers Jazz Band, Pep Band, and several smaller ensembles. Vocal groups include the Wartburg Choir, which places special emphasis on sacred choral music; the Castle Singers, a chamber choir; St. Elizabeth Chorale, a women’s choir; Ritterchor, a men’s choir; and Kantorei, which provides music for campus worship.

The Wartburg Wind Ensemble, Wartburg Choir, and Castle Singers schedule annual concert tours within the United States and travel abroad every three years during the college’s one-month May Term.

Meistersinger Music Scholarships

Up to $5,000 per year

Awarded on the basis of audition, these scholarships recognize and encourage talented student musicians who also thrive on Wartburg’s academic challenges. Competition is open to music and nonmusic majors in vocal, instrumental, string, and keyboard areas. Students must respond to an audition invitation and be accepted for admission at least two weeks prior to the auditions.

An Outstanding Facility

Music groups rehearse in the Bachman Fine Arts Center, which provides spacious rehearsal/recital halls for band, choir, and orchestra. A 20-station electronic music laboratory is equipped with synthesizers, sequencers, computers, and software for music theory, composition, and ear training. The Bachman Fine Arts Center is furnished with grand and upright pianos, and students have access to five organs on campus.
Camps and Honor Festivals

Band Camp XXI at Wartburg College - July 16-22, 2017
Directed by Dr. Craig A. Hancock, director of bands and professor of music. Open to high school students. Daily sessions include music theory, beginning conducting, jazz improvisation, composition, instrument repair, world drumming, and many others.

Meistersinger Keyboard Camp - July 29-Aug. 1, 2017
The Meistersinger Keyboard Camp for piano and organ students grades 7-12 allows students to receive instruction in piano, organ, music theory, and history, as well as explore topics and careers in music. Each day will culminate with an informal recital, and the camp ends with a recital open to the public. Instructors are Dr. Karen Black, Rudi Inselmann Endowed Professor of Organ at Wartburg College, and Dr. Suzanne Torkelson, professor of piano at Wartburg and West Central Division Director for Music Teachers National Association.

Summer All-State Choir Camps - Aug. 1-3 and 5-7, 2017
Directed by Dr. Lee Nelson, director of choral activities and associate professor of music. Introduces high school vocalists and music teachers to music for the Iowa All-State vocal auditions. Individual vocal lessons and group vocal classes are available for an additional fee.

More details about summer camps available at www.wartburg.edu/camps.

Real Men Sing Choir Festival - October 2017
Hosted by the Wartburg Ritterchor and directed by Dr. Lee Nelson, this festival is unlike any other in Iowa. More than 600 male singers from around the Midwest will join in a day of singing and voice master classes. Recent clinicians include Cantus, Tonic Sol-fa, Great Northern Union, Rockapella, and Vocal Point.

Meistersinger Honor Choir Festival - January 2018
The Wartburg Music Department hosts an annual choral festival of the Midwest’s most talented vocal musicians. The day culminates with a finale concert featuring the honor choir, as well as select Wartburg vocal ensembles. Recent clinicians include Morten Lauridsen, Stacey V. Gibbs, Rene Clausen, Eriks Ešenvalds, and Jake Runestad.

Meistersinger Honor Band Festival - February 2018
The Wartburg Music Department hosts an annual weekend band festival of the area’s most talented instrumental musicians. The weekend culminates with a concert featuring the honor bands, as well the Wartburg College Symphonic Band and Wind Ensemble.

Wartburg Trumpet Festival - March 2018
The Wartburg Trumpet Festival brings internationally renowned trumpet performers and educators to campus for a one-day festival for high school trumpet players. Recent clinicians include Vince DiMartino, Rolf Olson, Amy Gilreath, Susan Rider, and Tom Hooten.

More details about honor festivals available at www.wartburg.edu/fest.
Wartburg Music Faculty

Dr. Karen Black ................................................................. organ, music theory, college organist,
St. Elizabeth Chorale director
Kara Groen ........................................................................... music therapy
Dr. Craig A. Hancock ....................................................... director of bands, Wind Ensemble director, conducting,
trombone, euphonium, tuba
Dr. Melanie Harms ................................................................ music therapy
Dr. Jennifer Larson ................................................................ voice
Dr. Scott Muntefering ....................................................... Symphonic Band director, music education, trumpet
Dr. Lee Nelson .............................................................. Wartburg Choir director, Ritterchor director, conducting,
Artistic Director of Christmas with Wartburg
Dr. Brian Pfaltzgraff, chair ................................................ voice, Opera Workshop director
Dr. Ted Reuter .................................................................. piano, music history
Dr. Paula Survilla .......................................................... music history, music theory, ethnomusicology
Dr. Jacob Tews ................................................................. Wartburg Community Symphony conductor,
Kammerstreicher conductor, violin, viola, conducting, music theory
Dr. Nicki Toliver ................................................................. Castle Singers director, Kantorei director, music education
Dr. Suzanne Torkelson ..................................................... piano, music theory, pedagogy,
Tower School of Music director
Dr. Eric Wachmann ........................................................ clarinet, music theory

Adjunct Instructors

Katherine Beane ................................................................. voice
Diane Beane ..................................................................... piano
Laurie Braaten-Reuter ..................................................... piano
Gretchen Brumwell ............................................................... harp
Dominique Cawley ............................................................. flute
Jonathan Chenoweth .......................................................... cello
Daniel Gast .......................................................................... voice
Rosemary Gast ..................................................................... voice
James Gosnell ................................................................. Knightlites Jazz Band director
Dr. Andrew Harris ............................................................... horn
Al Jacobson ........................................................................... percussion
Lauren Jensen ......................................................................... bass
Katie Lahue ........................................................................ music therapy
Mark Lehmann ................................................................. voice
Bard Mackey ................................................................. low brass
Cindi Mason ................................................................. clarinet
Dr. Gregory Morton ........................................................ oboe, bassoon
Rebecca Nickles ............................................................... piano
Jessica Nilles ................................................................. piano
Carita Pfaltzgraff ................................................................. voice
Kara Rewerts ................................................................. music therapy
Pat Reuter Riddle ............................................................... piano
Rich Scheffel ................................................................. low brass
Tim Schumacher ........................................................... songwriting
Timothy W. Schumacher ................................................ HANDbell Choir director, guitar
Meghan Schumacker ........................................................ saxophone
Jim Vaux ................................................................. trumpet
Tour Schedule

SATURDAY, MARCH 25, 7:30 P.M.
Arcadia Historical Society
401 S. Washington St.
Arcadia, Wisconsin

SUNDAY, APRIL 9, 2 P.M.
Neumann Auditorium
Waverly, Iowa

FRIDAY, APRIL 21, 7:30 P.M.
Trinity United Methodist Church
*Featuring the Charles City High School Band*
601 Milwaukee St.
Charles City, Iowa

SATURDAY, APRIL 22, 7:30 P.M.
Robert Blue Middle School Auditorium
Featuring the Eagle Grove High School Band
1015 NW Second St.
Eagle Grove, Iowa

SUNDAY, APRIL 23, 3 P.M.
Colo-NESCO High School
*Featuring the Colo-NESCO High School Band*
919 West St.
Colo, Iowa

MONDAY, APRIL 24, 7:30 P.M.
Assumption High School
1020 W. Central Park Ave.
Davenport, Iowa

TUESDAY, APRIL 25, 7:30 P.M.
Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church
204 N. 10th St.
Watertown, Wisconsin
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26, 7:30 P.M.
Zion Lutheran Church
204 S. Grant St.
Hinsdale, Illinois

FRIDAY, APRIL 28, 7:30 P.M.
Lutheran Church of Atonement
909 E. Main St.
Barrington, Illinois

SATURDAY, APRIL 29, 7:30 P.M.
Clear Creek Amana High School
Featuring the Clear Creek Amana High School Band
551 W. Marengo Rd.
Tiffin, Iowa

SUNDAY, APRIL 30, 3 P.M.
Jespup High School
Featuring the Jesup High School Band
531 Prospect St.
Jespup, Iowa
Coming to Wartburg College

SUNDAY, MARCH 26
Kantorei and Handbell Choir Concert, Wartburg Chapel, 3 p.m.

SATURDAY, APRIL 1
Symphonic Band Concert, Neumann Auditorium, 7:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, APRIL 2
St. Elizabeth Chorale Concert, Wartburg Chapel, 2 p.m.
Ritterchor Concert, Wartburg Chapel, 4 p.m.

FRIDAY, APRIL 7
Bach’s Lunch Organ Concert Series, Wartburg Chapel, noon
Knightliters Jazz Band Spring Concert, McCaskey Lyceum, Saemann Student Center, 7:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, APRIL 8
Castle Singers and Kammerstreicher Concert, Wartburg Chapel, 4 p.m.
Wartburg Community Symphony Concert, Neumann Auditorium, 7:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, APRIL 9
Wind Ensemble Home Concert, Neumann Auditorium, 2 p.m.
Wartburg Choir Home Concert, Wartburg Chapel, 4 p.m.

TUESDAY, APRIL 11
RICE Day, campuswide, all day

SATURDAY, MAY 27
May Term Band Concert, campus mall, 6:30 p.m.

Many of Wartburg’s music events are live-streamed through Knight Vision at www.wartburg.edu/KnightVision
ABOUT WARTBURG COLLEGE

Wartburg is a selective liberal arts college of the Lutheran Church (ELCA), internationally recognized for community engagement. The college’s 1,482 students come from 58 countries and 28 U.S. states. Wartburg is dedicated to challenging and nurturing students for lives of leadership and service as a spirited expression of their faith and learning.

Wartburg offers more than 50 academic majors, including music education, performance, music therapy, and church music. The college’s 15 vocal and instrumental music ensembles are open to music and nonmusic majors. The Wartburg Choir, Wind Ensemble, and Castle Singers tour annually and travel abroad every third year during the college’s one-month May Term.

All-State musicians and Lutheran Summer Music participants who enroll at Wartburg qualify for minimum $2,500 scholarships. Meistersinger Music Scholarships offer up to $5,000 per year to music and nonmusic majors, based on audition.

Wartburg takes its name from the Wartburg Castle in Eisenach, Germany, where Martin Luther took refuge for 10 months during the stormy days of the Protestant Reformation. Music groups frequently visit the castle during their May Term trips abroad.