

2026 UNC SOUTHARD MUSIC COMPETITION

Three scholarship awards will be awarded to outstanding soloists and/or ensembles through a competition open to all enrolled UNC students (graduate and undergraduate) who are recommended by their applied teachers, and who fulfill the application requirements:

First Place \$2000

Second Place \$1450

Third Place \$1000

The award is to be split by a chamber group and if the accompanist of a solo work is a student.

All three winners will perform on The Schoolwide Common Hour March 23, 2026, at 12:20pm in the Performance Hall.

[Please note that first-place winners in any category from prior year competitions are ineligible to compete again.]

Winners will also perform at the PVA Spotlight Signature Event on April 2, 2026 at 7:30pm in the Performance Hall.

Entrants are required to submit a video of their performance for the preliminary round. Judges from outside the area will then determine finalists for the live round.

(The on-line application form is on the School of Music Homepage > Forms and Info > For Students > Quick Links – Competitions > Southard Music Competition):

<https://arts.unco.edu/music/festivals-workshops/southard-music-competition/>

REQUIREMENTS

I. Literature

Maximum length: each entrant may put together a program of no more than 16 minutes in length. The program can include multiple works in a variety of styles.

Vocal Literature: song cycles or groups of art songs, arias, opera excerpts.

Instrumental Literature: concertos, sonatas, suites, movements from sonatas, suites or concertos, single movement works, transcriptions.

Chamber Literature: like instrument duos and vocal and/or instrumental trios through octets.

II. Oral Component

Each entrant shall introduce themselves and give no more than a 1 minute and 30 second introduction to the piece prior to the performance. Careful thought and consideration should be given to this.

III. Materials

Each entrant shall provide a one sheet in digital format consisting of promotional photographs, a group bio, and programs no later than **Monday, December 1st, 2025 by 5:00pm** via the online application.

Here is information on what a one sheet is: <https://bandzoogie.com/blog/creating-a-onesheet-for-your-music-8-tips-for-success>

One Sheet Suggestions

- Two photos- one for a formal recital on a concert series and one casual photo (often used for educational and outreach).
- Individual or Group bio
- These should be separate attachments with the one sheet:

Sample programs: (these are fictional programs of what you would like to do)

Formal recital A

Outreach programs: (These are fictional outreach programs)

Outreach program A

Each program should utilize music from your recital programs and have a specific outreach goal.

IV. Video Recording

Each entrant shall provide a video recording of the piece/s they will perform for the competition. Students are encouraged to create the video with as high quality as possible as the video submission determines selection for the live final round. In addition to the audio provided by the video camera, it is highly recommended to record higher quality audio using external microphones and digital audio software, and then link the higher quality audio with the video in a program such as Adobe Premiere Pro or Davinci Resolve.

Students may process the image and audio with digital effects and tools if necessary, such as EQ, REVERB, COMPRESSION etc. but may not edit to fix live performance elements such as intonation, wrong notes, ensemble issues, etc). Recommended free version software platforms for video and audio editing are Davinci Resolve: <https://www.blackmagicdesign.com/products/davinciresolve/> and Pro Tools First: <https://www.avid.com/pro-tools>.

The artistic quality of the performance is of paramount importance and the judges will be instructed as such in their evaluation and ranking of participants. Students performing multiple works on different video clips should edit them into one video file.

The repertoire presented shall be the same for the preliminary, and final rounds. The recording may only include the repertoire to be performed throughout the competition.

Video

Videos should be uploaded as unlisted YouTube.com videos and titled as follows: Southard2026_First Name_Last Name. YouTube accepts the following video formats: (.MOV/.MPEG4/.AVI/.WMV/.MPEGPS/.FLV/3GPP/WebM). Links to uploaded video should be included with the online application.

How to Create Your Video

Sign up for a YouTube account if you don't have one and upload the video. To learn how to post unlisted videos, go here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XnGeqjblusw>.

Audio for the Video

Standard audio files are acceptable (WAV, AIFF, etc.). Remember that MP3's are compressed files of lower sound quality.

V. Deadlines

Application and Recording Deadline is Monday, Monday, December 1st, 2025 by 5:00pm.

To compete, each entrant is required to complete and submit the application form on the School of Music website and upload the materials, video submission link, and scores by Monday, December 1st, 2025. Do not wait until the last day as the application may take time.

VI. Score Requirements

Each contestant is required to provide at least one published edition of the **!!FULL SCORE!!** for the judges as well as two additional copies at both the preliminary and final competition rounds. At least one score must be a **PUBLISHED ORIGINAL**. (If the work is unpublished please just include three scores). Scores should be uploaded as PDFs as part of the application.

PRELIMINARY ROUND OF AUDITIONS

Judges from outside the area who are applied faculty will be invited to adjudicate the departmental preliminary videos. The number of winners allowed each department is based on 4% of the majors in that department (based on Fall Semester 2023 enrollment).

Category	No. of Finalists
Brass/Percussion Solo	3
Keyboard Solo	3
String Solo	3
Vocal Solo	4
Woodwind Solo	3
Chamber Music	5

Notes:

1. In the Chamber Music category, all participants (including pianists) must be UNC students.
2. A particular entry may participate in one category only. For example, a cello/piano sonata may not enter preliminaries for both Keyboard Solo and String Solo.
3. Works for instrumental solo and continuo, while involving three performers will compete in the appropriate solo area.
4. Solo instrument with piano will compete in the appropriate solo area.

LIVE FINAL ROUND OF AUDITIONS

The finals will take place Saturday, January 17th, 2026, beginning at 8:30am. The finals are open to the public.

YOU MUST BE AVAILABLE DURING THE DAY FOR THE FINALS.

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE COMPETITION

Please contact Dr. Dahlke, Frasier 54, or call 1-2000, or email at andrew.dahlke@unco.edu.