

Abby Kim
zsz3pn@virginia.edu
Class of 2025

Learning the Viola

Project Summary

My proposal is to learn the viola through both personal study and guidance from Professor Daniel Sender while continuing my studies in violin. I have been playing the violin since I was 5 years old and would like to expand my musical skill set by learning the viola. In order to accomplish this, I am applying for a grant that will allow me to purchase a viola, viola bow, and viola case. My budget for this proposal is \$3000 and is further explained below.

Project Description

My main goal is to learn how to play the viola and reach a level of proficiency that will allow me to participate/perform in different ensembles at UVA (such as a chamber group or the Charlottesville Symphony). As a violinist, I believe that the process of learning the viola should come fairly naturally, although I will still need to work hard to reach an advanced level of playing. I also have prior experience with learning an instrument through personal study, as I learned how to play the piano on my own in middle school.

I believe that learning the viola will be extremely valuable for my personal growth, as it will expand my musical abilities and allow me to learn more about creating music from a different perspective. It will also help me become a more well-rounded musician, as I will have the ability to play violin, viola, and piano. This will open up new opportunities for me, enriching my musical experience at UVA. This will also subsequently impact the musical scene at UVA in a positive way, as there is often a higher demand for violists in comparison to violinists.

In order to accomplish these goals, I will need to purchase a viola, viola bow, case, and a couple more essential items (such as a shoulder rest, rosin, strings, etc). I will also need to learn how to read alto clef and reach a level of fluency that will allow me to read viola music comfortably. I will begin my learning process by taking just a couple minutes a day to learn how to read alto clef, utilizing online resources in order to do so. Once I receive the physical viola, I will start to dedicate more time every day to practicing and learning the viola. I will engage in diligent personal study through resources such as Youtube videos while receiving helpful guidance from Professor Sender. Eventually, I hope that I will be able to participate in different ensembles with the viola and work on collaborative performances with my fellow musician peers.

Although learning the basics of the viola shouldn't be too difficult (due to my extensive background in violin) there are a couple of anticipated limitations. Learning alto clef may be a bit difficult at first, as I am most comfortable with treble clef (being a violinist) and also know how to read bass clef (from my piano background). Learning and using an entirely new clef can

end up being confusing, so I will need to diligently study the alto clef. The viola is also a bigger instrument, so I anticipate that it will be more physically straining, especially if I am practicing both the violin and viola daily. I will need to get used to the differences between viola and violin (timbre, weight, size, technique), etc which will require intentional, attentive practice.

As referenced above, my faculty mentor is Professor Daniel Sender, an Associate Professor of Violin in the Department of Music as well as the current Concertmaster of the Charlottesville Symphony. I have been studying with Professor Sender since before I came to UVA (starting around 5th grade), as I am a Charlottesville resident. During the time that I have studied with him, he has helped me improve both my technical and musical skills for the violin by leaps and bounds, so I am confident that he will be an excellent source of guidance for the viola.

Overall, I believe that learning how to play the viola will be a valuable skill that will enhance my experience at UVA while also positively affecting others. While it will require a lot of hard work at first, it is a skill that I can utilize for the rest of my life. For my outcome report/presentation, I will provide video examples of my playing as well as a detailed explanation of how my learning process went as a violinist learning the viola (what went well, what challenges I had, etc). If I am able to join and perform in a chamber group with the viola then I will provide video examples of our group.

Timeline:

Spring 2023

- Begin process of researching good quality violas, bows, and cases
- Begin to learn how to read alto clef daily

Summer 2023

- Go to Vacanti Violins (as well as any other shops if needed) to try out different violas and viola bows, make purchase by August at the latest
- Continue to learn how to read alto clef on my own time

Fall 2023

- Start playing viola, figure out the differences between violin and viola and try to learn in an intentional manner
- Continue violin studies under Professor Sender while also receiving guidance on how to play the viola

Spring 2024

- Continue to practice and learn more viola from Professor Sender alongside violin studies
- Reach a level in which I can participate in chamber ensemble or orchestra with both viola and violin, work on collaborative projects with fellow musicians

Budget:

Item	Cost	Details
Callegari Viola	\$2800	Pricing provided by Vacanti Violins. If I am awarded the funding, then I will go back and test out all the violas that go for this price, and then pick the one that I like the most.
Howard Core Viola Bow	\$100	Pricing provided by Vacanti Violins
Howard Core Viola Case	\$100	Pricing provided by Vacanti Violins
Total:	\$3000	n/a

Note: I am planning on covering the costs for any other necessities (such as rosin, a shoulder rest, and strings) on my own.

Participation in the Arts

I have been very active in the arts during my time at UVA. I have been a member of the Charlottesville Symphony since my first year, and also participate in Chamber Ensemble. I also take private lessons with Professor Sender, which requires daily practice and participation in studio classes and recitals. I recently declared the music major, and have taken numerous music classes such as Music Theory, Intro to Composition, Music and Discourse, 19th Century Music History, a 4000-level seminar on Leonard Bernstein, and more. I have also branched into other sections of the arts, taking thought-provoking classes such as Art and Global Cultures and Writing about the Arts. I have also performed with the Trans-Siberian Orchestra twice at JPJ and have played at numerous local weddings with my chamber group (Albemarle Chamber Players). I was accepted into the Miller Arts program recently (Spring 2023) so I haven't been able to experience much of the program, but I look forward to connecting with more artists of different disciplines through CASS 1010 next semester.

Portfolio Examples

Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 35 - Mvmt I (the first few minutes)

Link : <https://youtu.be/oG3PWY0WHSI>

Bach Gigue from Partita No. 3

Link : <https://youtu.be/nbAYLpj8trE>