



The Bard Major

Bard School

“Sing us a song, Kelly, sing us a song!’ Same thing every quest. Guys! I play the flute! I’ve only got one larynx!”

--Kelly de la Cittern, freshman half-elf Bard

(Player’s Handbook (2014))

Bard training at Sigil Prep is taught through the illustrious Storm Silverhand College of Bardic Lore and Valor. There is power in music. The more melodic, the more inspired, the more heartfelt the song, the more power it resonates. Also competence. You want your music to be competent. Understanding of meter and time signature. And freakin’ rhyming, man! “Vicious” does not rhyme with “fitness”, Fergie!

At any rate. Music is power. Of course, you need to throw in some somatic and material components, and a basic understanding of arcane magic. But after that, it’s all music.

FRESHMAN YEAR

Your first year as a Bard student will be the busiest year of your life. And you will be so damned jealous of your other friends, who aren’t in class from dawn to dinner.

Scared yet? Beyond some basic weapon courses and skill training, you must take three units of performance classes (music is preferred, but you can argue). Joining marching band or show choir, or being in a play counts.

As you enter your second semester, you must select a “college” to focus your study. This is a philosophical college, not a literal one. You’re already at a university. Do not transfer out of Sigil Prep! We need your tuition money.

You must take the following courses for your major:

Cantrip Lab- Bardic (BRD 100)

Bardic Spellcasting Lab I-II (BRD 101, 201)- All spellcasting labs require a musical instrument (or acceptable performance method) of your choice. Please consult your academic advisor if you play an unusual instrument. Not all our professors play the nose harp.

Ritual Casting (BRD 102)

Bardic Inspiration (BRD 110)

Required Audits of All Trades (BRD 140)- In this course, you will be assigned to a professor, although there are no regular sessions. You will be required to audit an average of at least one academic class session per day (Maths, Sciences, Skill Proficiencies, History, etc.) and have that professor sign off on it. Each week, you must turn in seven signed audit approvals to your BRD 140 professor.

Song of Rest I (BRD 155)

Five academic courses of your choice- three in your first semester, and two in the second.

SOPHOMORE YEAR

In your second year, you must take the following courses:

- Cantrip Lab- Bardic** (BRD 100)
- Bardic Spellcasting Lab III-V** (BRD 301, 401, 501)
- Bardic Inspiration II** (BRD 330)
- Bardic Inspiration Advanced Practicum** (BRD 331)
- Countercharming Theory and Practice** (BRD 360)
- Bardic Inspiration III** (BRD 525)
- Song of Rest II** (BRD 535)
- Two academic courses of your choice**
- Two units of Spellcasting labs from another department**

JUNIOR YEAR

In your third year, you must take the following courses:

- Bardic Spellcasting Lab VI-VII** (BRD 601, 701, 801)
- Song of Rest III** (BRD 717)
- Bardic Inspiration IV** (BRD 820)
- Two units of spellcasting labs from another department**

SENIOR YEAR

To graduate, you must complete the following courses:

- Bardic Spellcasting Lab IX** (BRD 901)
- Song of Rest IV** (BRD 910)
- Two units of spellcasting labs from another department**
- Superior Bardic Inspiration** (BRD 925)

When all requirements are met, the student earns the Bachelor of Arts degree, which recognizes him as a master bard anywhere ballads are sung.

Gimble Cardflapper

(Gnome Bard, junior)

Gimble's sense of humor doesn't really mesh with most people's. He's annoying. He makes terrible puns, then laughs through that giant nose of his. Puns! Not real jokes! And nine hells, sometimes it isn't even puns. He'll just say a thing and think it's hilarious, and it's really just a thing that's happening. *"Look at that guy! He's wearing green socks! Ha! Green! Can you believe that!?"*

He's best friends with Nebin Dicechucker, and they spend far too much time together, but at least most of that is spent playing card games and *Tunnels & Trolls*, and they aren't bothering the rest of us all that much.

(Gimble is based on a portrait character in the Player's Handbook (2003); property of WotC)

Colleges of Thought for Bard Students

All Bardic students must select a College of Thought to focus their studies on during their Freshman year. This will guide their education throughout the remainder of their University career.

College of Glamour

(*Unearthed Arcana- Bards: Bard Colleges* (online download, 2016))

To get this degree, you have to be taught by satyrs and faeries. Our faculty is diverse, but it isn't unlimited, so you may have to take what you can get. If the Performance class you need comes down to Professor Silverhand (not a satyr) and Professor Yankovic (satyr), you may just end up playing the accordion. Tough it out.

If you manage to get into this program, you will need the following courses:

Mantle of Inspiration (GLA 203)

Enthralling Performance (GLA 234)

Mantle of Majesty (GLA 303)

Unbreakable Majesty (GLA 710)- Majesty is important, after all

College of Lore

(*Player's Handbook* (2014))

Bards who wish to increase their knowledge base can enroll in the College of Lore program, in which you audit every lecture class on campus each semester. By the end, you'll know a little bit about everything. But not necessarily in any meaningful way, since you audited Advanced Faerunian History during the third lecture on the Crown Wars, so you know about this one battle, but not how the war started, or ended, or exactly what it was about. Unless you get your ass to the library after twelve straight hours of auditing classes to look it up.

The College of Lore adds the following to your major requirements (sorry, Freshmen):

Three academic courses of your choice

Sarcasm and the Use of Cutting Words (CLR 220)

Two units of Spellcasting lab from another department

Peerlessness in Bardic Inspiration (CLR 730)

College of Satire

(*Unearthed Arcana: Kits of Old* (online download, 2016))

A lot of people don't get the difference between the College of Satire, the College of Parody, and the College of Spoof. Satire is the exaggeration or ridicule of social convention or attitude to comment on

the world condition. Parody is the comedic deconstruction and imitation of a creative work, to comment on that work, its genre, or its artist. Spoof is just making fun of stuff. Like Mad Magazine. Or, you know, Sigil Prep.

You will be called a fool frequently in your training for this career path. Don't take it badly; it's a compliment, we swear.

When you enroll in this program, you must take and comedically analyze the following courses:

Additional training in Thieves' tools, Sleight of Hand, and one other academic course of your choice

Tumbling for Fools and Idiot Savants (CST 240)

Insight for Fools (CST 310)

Luck for Fools (CST 716)

College of Swords

(*Unearthed Arcana: Kits of Old* (online download, 2016); *Unearthed Arcana: Revised Subclasses* (online download, 2017))

Even more than the College of Valor, Bards of this school are concerned with melee combat. Two-handed fighting, impressive displays of weapons spinning aroundedness, attacking and spellcasting in the same round. Hey, Bladesinger! Just thought I'd call and say, "Checkmate, loser."

This program adds the following to your major requirements:

Extra training in armor and scimitars

Two-Weapon Fighting for Bards (CSW 120) or Dueling for Bards (CSW 121)

Flourishing Blades for Practical and Aesthetic Effect (CSW 220)

Cunning Flourishing (CSW 316)

Flourishing Master Class (CSW 760)

An earlier version of this courses required this courses in lieu of the higher level Flourishing classes:

Extra Attacking (CSW 312)

Battle Magic (CSW 711)

College of Valor

(*Player's Handbook* (2014))

For bards more interested in combat... WHY THE NINE HELLS ARE YOU A BARD!? What are you going to do, hit a dude with your lute? You bes' be bringin' a tuba, buddy.

But you know. If you insist, the College of Valor adds the following to your major requirements:

Additional armor, shield, and weapons training

Combat Applications of Bardic Inspiration (CVL 210)

Advanced Combat Training for Extra Attacks (CVL 310)
Battle Magic Spell and Combat Lab (CVL 701)

College of Whispers

(*Unearthed Arcana- Bards: Bard Colleges* (online download, 2016))

The program for exploitative bard tactics. We'll tell you all the secrets, but first we need you to do something for us. Cool?

With that out of the way, the following courses are required:

Venomous Blades (CWH 204)

Venomous Words (CWH 215)- Remember, if the words have to be injected, they're venomous.

If you have to eat them, they're poisonous.

Mantle of Whispers (CWH 306)

Shadow Lore (CWH 777)

College of Journalism

Listen. Bardic music is a means of influence. But you know what else is highly influential? The frickin' press. The power of the print media. Don't laugh! Most of us are from worlds that don't have your fancy Twitters yet.

And trust me. You want to manipulate some berks? Hint that you agree with their core values, and they'll believe any crap you want to tell them. That's why I'm editor of the campus newspaper.

That's why I'm *going* to be editor of the *Erelhei-Cinlu Courier*. Let Maddie Weber take over the Underdark. I'm just a pen swipe away from turning public opinion against her.



I'VE GOT MY SOURCES

Beginning when you enter this college at 3rd level, you may choose Divination spells from any class whenever you select new spells known. If you choose only Divination spells when you choose spells for the Magical Secrets bard class feature, you may choose a third Divination spell.

MIGHTY PEN

Also at 3rd level, you may cast spells replacing verbal components with written components. The casting time and effect of the spell do not change. Your hands must be free to write, but you can write on any surface with any medium.

MEDIA SAVVY

Beginning at 6th level, you can add both your WIS and CHA bonus to Persuasion and Deception checks.

HOT OFF THE PRESSES

Also at 6th level, you may slam a newspaper on a table, desk, or other surface in front of a person you are attempting to intimidate. The newspaper's headline will be relevant to the situation in some manner, and you must verbally exclaim "Well, how do you explain this!?" You have advantage with this roll, and may add both your WIS and CHA bonus.

If your opponent is successfully intimidated, he is Incapacitated, only able to stammer dumbly for one minute, or until physically attacked.

Once you have used this ability, you must take a long rest (and buy another newspaper) before you can use it again.

A LITTLE PAYOLA

At 14th level, you may cast Divination spells you know even if you have used your spell slots of the appropriate level by giving (100 x spell level) gold pieces to a nearby non-ally and saying “What do you know?” The spell will be cast without expending a spell slot, and any information gleaned will be spoken by the recipient of the gold, even if he couldn’t possibly know the information.

You have a daily “budget” of your level x 100 gp to cast Divinations in this way.

Bard Faculty

(Note that Storm Silverhand is a member of the Circle of Deans, and is presently above Department level)

Cylyria Dragonbreast [department head]

(Half-Elf Bard, Professor of Music Theory, Harp Playing) A talented harpist, and a senior member of Faerun's fabled Harpers, Professor Dragonbreast is often melancholy, although she has fits of merriment that surprise and delight friends and students alike. She is known to be a gifted singer, but she seldom sings outside the privacy of her office. Then, that one time a year she decides to raise her voice in song, and her students cry in amazement and delight.

Regardless of her moodiness, Cylyria is sympathetic and will listen to the concerns of any student, even if they aren't in her class.

(Cylyria Dragonbreast is a figure from the Forgotten Realms campaign setting; property of WotC)

Guinevere, Queen [tenured]

(Human Bard, Professor of Classical Romanticism)

As Queen of the realm of Camelot, Professor Guinevere has a lot of firsthand knowledge of the courtly doings of the royal class, which she shares with charm and enthusiasm. A highly likeable woman, so much so that she's probably having an affair with somebody else in the faculty right now. Someone that her husband is aware of, but grudgingly ignores because it's not noble to draw attention to such things, and anyway he'll gladly forgive said person on his deathbed. She's a pretty frequent topic on the gossip circuit, to be sure.

(Queen Guinevere is a figure from Arthurian legend; introduced to D&D via Legends & Lore (1990))

Olive Rustkettle [tenured]

(Halfling Rogue, Professor of Bardic Bluffing)

Professor Rustkettle is a fairly open imposter at Sigil Prep. She won her name (and reputation) in a dice game, and since that time has been pretending to be a Bard. Since she was hired on at Sigil Prep, she's also been pretending to be a Bard Professor, although she's mostly teaching how to keep up a bluff indefinitely.

Regardless, she's a good performer, and teaches several Performance classes in a number of instruments. She just doesn't produce any magic with it.

(Olive Rustkettle is a character from the Finder's Stone series of novels; property of WotC)

Jessareen

(Athasian Elf Bard, Professor of Journalism)

It may seem odd that one of Sigil Prep's most popular journalism professors is from the paper-scarce plane of Athas, but Professor Jessareen takes her craft to an extreme level, able to memorize volumes of current events and bringing the news from town to town. She expects no less of her students, and part of the final in her senior level class is to memorize an entire edition of the Sigil newspaper, SIGIS, and recite portions on command. She is also very socially conscious, and hippie do-gooder student Rhionna Hazelhawk is often quoted as saying she'd totally have a crush on Professor

Jessareen if Rhionna was into girls. Which she's not. But she supports your right to be. (Maybe after a couple of drinks).

(Jessareen is a character from the Dark Sun supplement, City by the Silt Sea (1994); property of WotC)

Giff Rapelje

(Gnome Bard, Professor of Creative Non-Fiction)

Professor Rapelje is the editor and head journalist of *Rope and Piton*, the newsletter of Eberron's Wayfarer Foundation. He is one of the most read travel writers on Eberron, and possibly in the planes. He seems very verbose when lecturing, especially on topics he's interested in, and he reads each students' papers as if they were engaging novels. But in one-on-one conversation, he's rather reserved. "Professor, if I'm writing a first-person narrative, and I need to get across a point that's important to the story, but to which I wasn't personally witness, should I comment on how I learned this information, or just leave it implicit that I came across the knowledge at some later point?" To which he'll reply, "Mm. Depends."

(Giff Rapelje is a character from the Eberron supplement, Explorer's Handbook (2005))

Suni

(Half-Elf Bard, Professor of Theater Arts)

Although she was hoping for a more prestigious job with the Bard department, to escape the rigors of Athas, Professor Suni accepted a job teaching theatrical arts (and putting on two plays a year). Frustratingly, she's most often assigned to direct shows for the Monster School and has to teach manticores and mind flayers how human interaction works long enough to get through *Romeo and Juliet*. Somehow, they never seem to have a problem with *Hamlet*...

(Suni is a character from a short story in the Dark Sun supplement, The Ivory Triangle (1993); property of WotC)

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