How to Prepare

for a

Senior Honors Recital

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Giving a Senior Honors Recital to fulfill the ID 499 research project is different from other research projects in the fact that preparation for the recital begins at the beginning of one's college career. Lessons, practicing, previous performances and recitals all help prepare a person to give an outstanding Senior Recital because of the knowledge gained during these activities.

The first step in preparing a recital is to choose the music to be played. A person has a few ways to determine what these pieces should be. One's private instructor usually provides many suggestions of enjoyable pieces that are within the student's playing ability. A person may also select pieces that he has heard at previous recitals and concerts. Of course, the Listening Lab at Bracken Library can be a great help when trying to make decisions because many of the pieces would be on recordings that are in that department, and a student is able to hear a finished product of the music.

Once a person has narrowed the choices, he must begin to practice the pieces. One must make sure that he begins his practicing early enough in the year; his private instructor will be able to determine when he should start. It is usually easiest to learn the pieces, put them aside for awhile, and then relearn them again before the concert. This way the student will feel more confident with the music.
As one is learning the music for his recital, he should also research the composers and pieces, so that he has a complete understanding of the music. Sources of information are not difficult to find as long as one takes a little time. The first source of information is one's private instructor. He has probably performed and researched the pieces himself and can suggest some places to find information. Another source is the information found on record jackets of recordings in the Listening Lab or albums personally owned. Many times, especially with modern pieces, the composer's ideas of his piece is provided on the record jacket. The last source that I have used is Bracken Library. On the main floor, Grove's Dictionary of Music is located in the encyclopedia area. At this location there are also many dictionaries of modern composers, jazz and pop music, country music, and the Who's Who in Music. On the third floor, in the music section, one can find many books about composers and their music, instruments, scores, and copies of solo or ensemble music.

Once a person has determined his program and has researched his pieces, he is ready to write program notes and submit them to Music Services. This must be done by a designated time that is established by Music Services. The secretaries in this department will also be willing to provide copies of programs from previous honors recitals, so that a person has an example.