Building on faculty and course offerings that began in the latter part of the nineteenth century, the School was formally established in 1924. Today, at all levels of instruction—bachelor’s, master’s, doctoral, and executive education—its programs rank in the top five among American institutions. Each year nearly 1,000 new Business School graduates enter careers as business professionals and teacher-scholars, joining the other Michigan graduates that already serve in leadership positions in business, government, and academic institutions throughout the world.
Enrollment in the Department of Economics increased from 950 in 1914 to 1,440 in 1923. The increased enrollment in commerce following World War I highlighted the growing differences between the objectives of economics and those of business, suggesting the need for a new school whose establishment would benefit both fields. Students in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts who completed requirements of the College and whose scholarship was of sufficiently high standards were admitted to a combined curriculum in letters and business administration. Students could earn a bachelor of arts at the end of the first year in business administration and the master of business administration degree at the end of the second year.

In planning for the new school, the faculty recognized the merits of basing professional study on a liberal education. The constantly increasing influence of business leaders on economic, social, and political institutions served to emphasize the importance of a cultural background for the business leaders of the future. For these reasons, the idea of establishing an undergraduate school of business was never given any serious consideration. The new school was to offer two years of work in business administration following work in liberal arts. The challenge was to decide whether two, three, or four years of background in liberal arts were to be required. In the end, the new school followed the lead of the Amos Tuck School at Dartmouth, which required three years of collegiate preparation.

The first reference to courses in business or “higher commercial” education appeared in the University Calendar for 1900-1901. The aim was to provide a scientific training in the structure and organization of modern industry and commerce to enable the student to master quickly the technique of any business career. A “Certificate of Commerce” was granted in 1904-05. Courses were offered through the College of Literature, Science and the Arts’ Department of Economics. Examples of these early courses were:

- Commercial Geography of the Extractive Industries
- Commercial Geography of the Manufacturing Industries
- Science of Accounting
- Commercial Law
- Administration of Corporate and Public Industries
- Technique of Foreign Trade
- Principles of Industry
- Auditing
- Practical Banking
- Business Organization and Management
- Wholesale and Retail Trade
- Railway Organization and Operation
- Railway Tariffs
- Railway Statistics and Accounts
- Principles of Industrial Technique
- Internal Commerce of the United States
- Principles of Industry
- Railway Finance
- Railway Engineering Problems
- Drawing and Projections
- Industrial History of the United States

Many of these courses continued for only a few years. Courses in accounting and finance began to assume greater importance in the 1920s and beyond. Courses in marketing, statistics, and personnel were also introduced.

Business courses and the faculty were first located in Tappan Hall, a site shared with the School of Education. Despite Tappan Hall’s inadequacies, the program remained there until after World War II, when a new building was constructed on Monroe Street.
The School of Business Administration was formally organized in 1924 and housed in Tappan Hall. Edmund Ezra Day served as the first Dean and, simultaneously, as Chairman of the Department of Economics. This ensured a close relationship between the two programs. It was largely patterned after the Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration, but without the distinctive term “Graduate” in its name. Permission to use the name “Graduate School of Business Administration” on diplomas, official announcements, publications, transcripts, letterheads, news releases, and for other official purposes was not granted by the University until the 1960s.

Edmund Ezra Day came to Michigan with an undergraduate degree from Dartmouth and a Ph.D. from Harvard. He was appointed to organize the new school. Day’s tenure, however, was relatively short. He took a leave of absence during 1927-28 and formally resigned his post soon afterward to join the Rockefeller Foundation. Day later served as President of Cornell from 1937 to 1949.

The school grew rapidly during the 1930s, creating a Bureau for Business Research, forming a Bureau for Industrial Relations, and eventually offering a bachelor’s degree in business administration, primarily designed to meet the needs of the Armed Forces. By the end of World War II, enrollments had increased to over 1,200, and the school had clearly outgrown its cramped space in Tappan Hall. Final plans for the School’s first building were completed in 1944-45, making the building the first construction to be undertaken on the University campus following World War II. The appropriation for the building was approved by the legislature in a special session in 1946, and construction started the following September. Classes were held in the new building in the fall term of 1947, twenty years after the building was first proposed to the Regents.

Under Dean Floyd Bond, the Business School expanded with the Paton Accounting Center and Hale Auditorium. But its most significant expansion and rise to national leadership occurred under the leadership of Dean Gilbert Whitaker, who raised the private support to build a new library, classrooms, and a major conference center for the School’s Executive Management Education program. This latter program, ranked as one of the best in the world, generated the resources to recruit outstanding students and faculty, while expanding the school’s programs at the international level (with programs in Korea, Hong Kong, Brazil, and France).

In the 1990s the School expanded its executive programs by adding a hotel. With major gifts from donors, the School added Wiley Hall, the Davidson Institute for Emerging Economies, and the Zell Institute for Entrepreneurial Studies. In 2004, the School received a $100 million naming gift from Stephen Ross, a New York real estate developer, and became the Ross School of Business Administration.
Undergraduate Degree Program

Master’s of Landscape Architecture

MS in Natural Resources and Environment

Graduate Non-Degree Program

Ph.D. in Landscape Architecture

Dual & Student-Initiated Programs

Ph.D. in Natural Resources and Environment

Graduate Certificate Program
The School of Natural Resources and Environment has been a pioneer in developing a scientific understanding of ecosystems, including their conservation, management, and restoration. The School trains, assists in policy-making, and teaches the skills necessary to manage and conserve the earth's resources on a sustainable basis. Faculty and student expertise span three major academic concentrations: Resource Ecology and Management, Resource Policy and Behavior, and Landscape Architecture. The first program of its kind in the nation, founded in the late 1880s, the School awards Bachelor of Science, Master of Science, Master of Landscape Architecture, and Doctor of Philosophy degrees.
The School of Natural Resources grew out of the Forestry Department and later School of Forestry, which played a prominent role in the University’s history. The first forestry course was given in 1881 by Professor Morgan Volney Spalding in the Department of Political Science. Michigan was the first university in the United States to offer regular coursework in forestry. This forestry offering lapsed after four years; however, it was introduced once again in 1903.

1903

In 1903 a Forestry Department, headed by Filibert Roth, was created in the Department of Literature, Science and the Arts. Forestry offered a combined undergraduate and graduate program that included four years of the usual coursework for the B.A. with forestry electives along with one year of graduate study. Under Roth’s direction the curriculum and the faculty expanded to keep pace with the evolving forestry profession. The University of Michigan became one of the nation’s best-known forestry schools. Professor Roth retired in 1923.

1927

In 1927 an independent School of Forestry and Conservation was created. Samuel Trask Dana was named the school’s first dean. Dana recruited new faculty and developed a more comprehensive curriculum. Enrollment, which had declined due to the uncertainty following Roth’s retirement and the impact of the Depression, began to grow steadily after 1931. Spurred by the work of the Civilian Conservation Corps and other government conservation activity, enrollment reached 187 full-time students in 1939-40. With the onset of World War II, the number of students dropped precipitously, only to be followed by a postwar boom in enrollment.
In 1949 Dana’s plan called for the creation of an expanded School of Natural Resources, which would offer degrees in regional planning and general conservation in addition to the traditional training programs in forestry, wood technology, wildlife management, and fisheries management. The new School of Natural Resources was organized into five departments: Forestry, Wood Technology, Fisheries Management, Wildlife Management, and Conservation. The first three departments were carried over from the old Department of Forestry. Fisheries Management had been located in the Zoology Department of LS&A. Since its work had become more applied, the fisheries program was moved to the School of Natural Resources. The Conservation Department developed from a $100,000 grant from the Charles Lathrop Pack Foundation and offered a number of interdisciplinary programs, including natural resources economics with the Economics Department and environmental planning and water resources with the School of Public Health.

By the mid-1960s conservation had become the largest SNR department. To better reflect its expanded curriculum, the Conservation Department’s name was changed to Resource Planning and Conservation in 1969. While the Conservation Department was growing, other departments experienced little or no growth, prompting some significant reorganization of the school. The Wood Technology Department was phased out in 1964 and its faculty transferred to Forestry. In 1965 the administrations of the Fisheries and Wildlife Management Departments were combined, but separate curriculums were maintained. Also in 1965, the school acquired a new department with the transfer of Landscape Architecture from the College of Architecture and Design. The School of Natural Resources has also been host to several interdepartmental projects, including the Remote Sensing of the Environment Program, the Environmental Simulation Laboratory, and the Sea Grant Program. Over the years SNR has acquired or managed several forest properties for educational and scientific purposes. These have included the Eberwhite Woods in west Ann Arbor, the Saginaw Forest property farther west of Ann Arbor on Liberty Road, the Stinchfield Woods property near Dexter, the Ringwood tract near Saginaw, and Camp Filibert Roth in Iron County.

Despite the environmental movement, enrollments in the School of Natural Resources declined during the 1970s. In the early 1980s it became a target for a 33% budget cut, which was primarily achieved by focusing its effort more on graduate education and research. In July of 1992 the School added “Environment” to its title and began the task of renovating the Dana Building (the former West Medical Building) into a facility appropriate for 21st-century education and research.
The image above shows a choral rehearsal in the University Hall Auditorium in the late 1800s. The image below is of William Bolcom’s, “Songs of Innocence and of Experience,” performed in the newly renovated Hill Auditorium on Thursday, April 8, 2004. In 2006 Bolcom received four Grammies for this work.
The first professor of music was appointed in 1880. One of the oldest and largest schools of music in the United States, the School ranks among the top conservatories and schools of music in the country. Degrees are offered at the bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral levels in nearly all fields of music, dance, and theater. The School of Music views its mission as keeping an exuberant and undiluted love of the arts alive in all who are associated with it, while striving to prepare specialists who are knowledgeable and well-rounded musicians, dancers, and theater artists.
Before this movement had crystallized, the University Musical Society was organized to bridge the music of the community with that of the University. The University Musical Society was not to be a performing body, but an executive and administrative organization. Its purpose was to stimulate musical taste in the University and the community. Three faculty served as president of the Musical Society in the early years.

Presidents of the Musical Society

Henry Frieze 1879-81, 1883-89
Alexander Winchell 1881-83, 1889-91
Francis Kelsey 1891-1927

In the fall of 1880 the Literary Department offered a course in music. Calvin B. Cady, a distinguished young musician from Oberlin, Ohio who had studied at the Leipzig Konservatorium and had been elected conductor of the Choral Union was appointed to the newly established instructorship in music.

1881

The Ann Arbor School of Music was opened in September, 1881, and classes were conducted in a building at the corner of State and Huron Streets. Later the same year, the school became a division of the incorporated University Musical Society. The school did not survive due to lack of funds.

1892

In January, 1892 a special committee that was reorganizing the school collected one hundred subscriptions of sixty-five dollars each ($6,500), whereupon the Board of Directors of the University Musical Society passed a resolution establishing the “University School of Music.” It opened for instruction in October, 1892, in rooms rented in Newberry Hall. The school was not part of the University.

1891

In December of 1891, William Pettee, Professor of Mining Engineering, announced: “The University Musical Society has all the power it needs to proceed to the establishment of a School of Music,” and it was resolved that a school of music be established “as soon as the necessary financial support could be secured.”

1893

The rooms in Newberry Hall proved inadequate, however, and in 1893 a group of Ann Arbor citizens formed the School of Music Building Association. About two hundred individuals and firms subscribed for approximately six hundred shares of stock at $25 each, a total of $25,000. A site at 325 Maynard Street was purchased, and a building was constructed.
In 1905, students in the Literary Department were permitted to elect courses in practical music in the University School of Music for which they received credit toward the bachelor of arts degree. In 1916 alterations were made to the School of Music building on Maynard.

In 1925 the University School of Music Building Association gave the title of the building on Maynard Street to the University Musical Society, and the School of Music Building Association was dissolved. In 1929 the University Musical Society transferred the title of the building to the University when the School of Music was made a formal academic unit of the University. However, the School had long since outgrown the Maynard facility. Recitals, which were required from all degree-candidates in applied music, had to be scheduled a year in advance because borrowed facilities in other campus buildings were overtaxed and in heavy demand. In the 1930s the Varsity Band moved from Morris Hall into new quarters in Newberry Hall, which had a larger auditorium and acoustics more closely resembling those of the halls in which the Band played at concerts. However, the acoustics were not at all appreciated by the women living next door in Helen Newberry Hall, who voiced their objection to President Ruthven. After the first rehearsal, the band moved back to Morris Hall.
The proposed School of Music building was to be built next to the carillon tower since the tower would house classrooms. It was also to be sited next to Hill Auditorium, making the location ideal for rehearsals and performances.

William Revelli, the band director, observed that the band was making strides—moving from a building that was built in 1854 (Morris Hall) to one that was built in 1886 (Harris Hall).

In 1945, the University Band and the wind instrument department were located in their new quarters in Harris Hall on the northeast corner of State and Huron Streets.

In 1946 the School of Music enrollment was frozen at 600 because of the severe space restrictions. To accommodate the students, the School had to operate their meager facilities from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. seven days a week. There was a critical shortage of space for classrooms, practice facilities, and concert halls. The school was forced to overflow into makeshift quarters in 13 other campus-area buildings, including several churches. Faculty members had no conference room for staff meetings, and their offices were scattered over several campus buildings. Many faculty shared their offices with pianos and other musical instruments. One professor’s office also doubled as an emergency fire exit.
In the early 1950s a new building for the School of Music was number one on the University's priority list of capital outlay construction needs. On May 17, 1957 a $3,900,000 contract was let for the building. But again the project was stalled for lack of appropriations, and the plans were filed away.

Finally in the early 1960s, state funding was obtained for a new building located on the University's North Campus. The noted Finnish architect Eero Saarinen (who had also developed the early master plans for the North Campus) was given the commission, and construction began.

In 1963 the new North Campus Music School Building was completed, solving the space problem and consolidating all musical activities under one roof. The tri-level building included space for 171 practice rooms, 21 classrooms, 46 teaching studios, 25 faculty offices, two rehearsal halls, a library with a 27,000-volume capacity, and several audition studios and recording rooms.

Dean Wallace said one of the most important aspects of the building was the faith the University had reaffirmed in music and the arts. “This building has become a symbol for the humanities taking their rightful place next to the sciences in the atomic age.” (Michigan Alumnus, October 1, 1962, p. 14)

Music benefited from the spectacular Saarinen-designed complex on North Campus and the extraordinary performance venues on the Central Campus (Hill Auditorium, Power Center, Lydia Mendelsson). Yet several of its programs in the performing arts were scattered about the Central Campus, with dance (which was transferred from Physical Education in 1974) in the Central Campus Recreation Building complex, while the theatrical arts (Musical Theater was established in 1981, and the Theater Department was transferred from the LS&A Speech and Drama Department in 1984) were in dilapidated quarters in the Frieze Building. In 2005 construction was begun on a major new facility on the North Campus, the Walgreen Center for Theatrical Arts, containing the Arthur Miller Theatre. In July of 2006 the name of the School was changed to the School of Music, Theater and Drama.