

Music Theory, M.A.

Degree Offered

- Master of Arts

Nature of the Program

The Master of Arts in Music Theory is intended for performers and music educators who desire advanced training in the analysis of Western art music and preparation for teaching music theory in either a high school or college setting. This degree can also prepare students for doctoral work in either academic or applied areas, depending upon the electives chosen.

Admissions for 2026-2027

Applicants for the MA in Music Theory must submit a sample of writing, such as a term paper; a music theory paper is strongly recommended. The paper may be uploaded as part of the WVU Graduate Application or may be sent directly to the School of Music. Admission to the program requires demonstrated proficiency on piano (the student should be able to perform a Bach chorale), and demonstrated knowledge of 16th and 18th Century Counterpoint (MUSC 461 and MUSC 462 will be required as deficiency courses in the MA program if not taken at the undergraduate level.)

Applicants to the program must present the necessary credentials to evaluate previous training and experience to the School of Music. These include transcripts from all institutions previously attended showing a grade point average of at least 3.0 in all undergraduate studies submitted through the WVU Office of Admissions.

Major Code: 3733

Degree Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
Overall GPA of 3.0 or higher is required.		
MUSC 771	Music Research and Bibliography	3
MUSC 763	Analytical Techniques	3
MUSC 764	Compositional Techniques in Contemporary Music	3
MUSC 762	Pedagogy of Theory	3
MUSC 690	Teaching Practicum	3
Select one of the following:		3
MUSC 761	Theory Topics	
MUSC 695	Independent Study	
Music History		
Select one of the following:		3
MUSC 470A	Topics in Popular Music	
MUSC 470B	Topics in the Study of Western Art Music	
MUSC 470C	Topics in the History of Jazz	
MUSC 470D	Topics in Music of Sub-Saharan Africa	
MUSC 470E	Topics in Musics of the Americas	
MUSC 470F	Topics in Musics of East Asia	
Electives - With advisor approval, select from all courses in musicology, composition, or performance that are 400-level or higher.		7
MUSC 697	Research	4
Ensemble (one semester)		1
Comprehensive Oral Examination		
MUSC 593	Special Topics	
MUSC 670	Perspectives of Musicology and Ethnomusicology	
MUSC 731	Keyboard Literature	
MUSC 793	Special Topics	
MUSC 795	Independent Study	
Total Hours		33

Major Learning Outcomes

MUSIC THEORY

Students who earn the Master of Arts in Music Theory will be able to:

1. Analyze works from all periods of music using advanced techniques and communicate clearly about them in both written and oral formats.
2. Demonstrate knowledge and skills in one or more fields of music outside the major such as history and literature, composition, musicology and ethnomusicology, and performance
3. Design and implement an undergraduate music theory class and demonstrate instructional delivery and management skills.