

# Music Theory

Music theory encompasses a variety of activities which all focus on understanding music. It includes such diverse fields as music analysis, the development of new theories of music and musical structure, history of theory, music perception and cognition, aesthetics of music, music theory pedagogy, and computer-assisted music instruction.

## Pursuing Music Theory at Ohio State

Students interested in music theory should develop performance skills in preparation for the School of Music entrance audition. Piano lessons and music theory classes are also recommended, if available.

All students planning to pursue a music major complete an entrance audition and the Music Achievement Test (MAT). Normally students do this during the senior year in high school on a scheduled Audition Day. Transfer students and students already at Ohio State should also plan to complete an audition and the MAT.

Acceptance into the Bachelor of Music degree program in music theory requires a minimum of a 3.0 cumulative point-hour ratio (CPHR) in first- and second-year music theory courses and in first- and second-year aural training courses, admission to the second-year level of performance (private lessons) on the student's principal instrument, and approval by the music theory and composition area faculty.

School of Music students should apply for acceptance into the Bachelor of Music degree program in music theory at the end of the second year or the beginning of the third year of study.

## Music Theory Requirements

Music courses required for the degree:

- First- and second-year music theory, music technology, and aural training (31 credit hours)
- Form and analysis (3 credit hours)
- Introductory music history, survey of music history, and ethnomusicology (16 credit hours)
- Ensemble and composers' seminar (12 credit hours)
- Principal instrument—2 years (12 credit hours)
- Minor instrument (must be piano if piano is not the principal instrument) (6 credit hours)
- Keyboard harmony (6 credit hours)
- Beginning conducting (2 credit hours)
- Orchestration, counterpoint, composition (9 credit hours)

- Analysis and more counterpoint (9 credit hours)
- Senior project (4 credit hours): senior paper and presentation of paper

## Educational Objectives

Students majoring in music theory will achieve the following learning outcomes:

- Students must demonstrate achievement of professional, entry-level competence in the area of specialization, including significant technical mastery, capability to produce work and solve professional problems independently, and a coherent set of artistic/intellectual goals that are evident in their work.
  - Students will engage in applied studies each quarter that will provide appropriate skills, knowledge, and experience to prepare students for graduate programs and professional careers in the field. They will represent an understanding of a wide range of historical styles and periods.
  - Students will complete courses in music theory, music history, and area-specific literature and pedagogy that will provide appropriate skills, knowledge, and experience to prepare them for professional careers in the field. These courses will represent an understanding of a wide range of historical styles and periods.
- Students must have the ability to communicate musical ideas, concepts, and requirements to professionals and lay persons related to the practice of the major field. Such communication may involve musical, oral, written, and visual media.
  - Students will complete curricular requirements that include courses designed to develop oral and written communication skills.
  - Students will gain knowledge and experience in pedagogical methodologies in their area of specialization.
- Students will gain an understanding of the nature of the music field in the professional world, particularly related to organizational structures, work ethics, technological resources, and entrepreneurial skills required for advancing their careers.
  - Students will complete a required course in music technology and will prepare numerous assignments in music theory and music history courses employing a wide range of software and web-based sources and skills covered in this course.

For more information, check these web sites:

School of Music: [music.osu.edu](http://music.osu.edu)

Arts and Humanities: [artsandhumanities.osu.edu](http://artsandhumanities.osu.edu)

Ohio State: [osu.edu](http://osu.edu)

Admissions: [undergrad.osu.edu](http://undergrad.osu.edu)

Multicultural Center: [multiculturalcenter.osu.edu](http://multiculturalcenter.osu.edu)

First Year Experience Program: [fye.osu.edu](http://fye.osu.edu)

## Curriculum Sample

This is a sample list of classes a student will take to pursue a degree in Music Theory. Since university students need more than a specific education in a narrow field, they also will take classes to complete the General Education Curriculum (GEC). The GEC will allow students to develop the fundamental skills essential to collegiate success across major programs. Course work options satisfying the GEC often come from a variety of academic areas of study allowing students to tailor their GEC toward their interests.

Note: This sample represents one of several possible paths to a degree in Music Theory. Consult the school web site, [music.osu.edu](http://music.osu.edu), for details on each specific track.

### Freshman Year:

Ensembles	3
Introductory Music History	1
Lessons on principal instrument	6
Music Technology	3
Music Aural Training I - III	6
Music Theory I - III	9
GEC (arts and humanities)	5
GEC (quantitative and logical)	5
GEC (writing and related)	10
Arts Survey	1
Freshman Seminar	1
<b>Total hours</b>	<b>50</b>

### Sophomore Year:

Ensembles	3
Lessons on principal instrument	6
Music Aural Training IV-VI	6
Music History I - III	9
Music Theory IV - VI	9
GEC (arts and humanities)	10
GEC (quantitative and logical)	5
Ethnomusicology	3
<b>Total hours</b>	<b>51</b>

### Junior Year:

Ensembles	3
Instrumentation, counterpoint, composition	9
Conducting	2
Lessons on minor instrument	6
GEC (arts and humanities)	10
GEC (natural sciences)	5
GEC (social sciences)	10
<b>Total hours</b>	<b>45</b>

### Senior Year:

Ensembles	3
Advanced counterpoint and analysis	9
Keyboard Harmony I - III	6
Senior Project	4
GEC (natural sciences)	10
GEC (social sciences)	5
Elective	12
<b>Total hours</b>	<b>49</b>

- Students will build workplace skills through independent studies with applied faculty and ensemble directions.
- Students must gain experiences in general studies sufficient to prepare them for a range of career options.
  - Students will gain skills sufficient for clear and effective verbal and written communication.
  - Students will include a broad range of general studies courses in their curricula appropriate for complementing degree requirements that address their specific music concentrations.

## Co-Curricular Opportunities

Ohio State offers many opportunities for students to learn and grow outside of the classroom. These range from cooperative education (co-op) and internships to study abroad programs to student organizations. Co-ops and internships place students in professional environments while they are Ohio State students. Ohio State offers more than 100 study abroad programs in 40 countries around the world. In addition, there are hundreds of student organizations on campus to meet the interests of a diverse student population.

These opportunities enable students to gain valuable work experience, learn about other cultures, and take on leadership roles before they enter the workforce. All of these experiences enhance learning and may provide an advantage in the job market.

## Honors & Scholars Opportunities

Ohio State offers the Honors and Scholars programs to create an environment of intellectual support and stimulation within a close-knit community of high-ability undergraduate students. Through these programs, students have access to smaller classes, undergraduate research opportunities, close working relationships with faculty, priority scheduling, and unique housing options.

Honors and Scholars programs represent great opportunities to be part of a smaller community within a large university. Good candidates for these programs will receive additional information after admission to the university. Learn more about the Honors and Scholars program at [honors-scholars.osu.edu](http://honors-scholars.osu.edu).

## Career Prospects in Music Theory

Most music theorists continue their studies in graduate school and earn a doctoral degree before becoming a college teacher or university professor. Recent Ohio State music theory majors have gone on to graduate school at Indiana University, the University of Ottawa, The University of Rochester's Eastman School of Music, and SUNY at Stony Brook, as well as at Ohio State.

**Revised August 2009.** For the most up-to-date information on the music theory program, please visit [music.osu.edu](http://music.osu.edu).

## Contact information:

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