

Music Composition, B.M.

Degree Offered

- Bachelor of Music

Nature of the Program

The composition curriculum is especially designed for students wishing to prepare themselves as composers in both acoustic and electronic styles. The increased interest of society today in the arts is creating many new opportunities for the professional composer and teacher.

Admissions for 2026-2027

Acceptance into an undergraduate music degree program is contingent upon both admission to WVU as an undergraduate student and a successful performance audition. Auditions are held from late fall through the early spring semester. For maximum scholarship consideration, students are encouraged to complete the application (including audition) before March 1. Audition information can be found on the College's website or by contacting the CCAM Office of Recruitment at (304) 293-4339. Special accommodations may be made by contacting the School of Music at (304) 293-4532 or Music@mail.wvu.edu.

For admission consideration, all students must submit separate applications to the University and to the School of Music. The audition is a preliminary assessment of a student's potential for success. For the Bachelor of Science in Music and Health, students must audition at a minimum performance level four. If a student is admitted, their standing is confirmed or revised after the first semester of study.

Students should own their own instrument under normal circumstances (except for piano).

1. Apply to West Virginia University (How to Apply (<https://admissions.wvu.edu/how-to-apply/>))
2. Audition for the School of Music (Apply Now (<https://wvucca.wufoo.com/forms/w1qiwnk21fcr23v/>))

Acceptance into an undergraduate music degree program requires admission to WVU as an undergraduate student and a successful audition and/or interview. The audition and/or interview is a preliminary assessment of a student's potential for success in their intended major.

- BA Music - audition required
- BA Music Business and Industry: Applied Music Emphasis - audition required
- BA Music Business and Industry: Multi-instrumental Emphasis - interview required (no audition)
- BM Composition - audition and portfolio review required
- BM Music Education - audition and interview required
- BM Music Therapy - audition and interview required
- BM Performance - audition required
- BS Music and Health - audition required

Students who cannot attend one of our regularly scheduled audition days should contact the School of Music at: (304) 293-4532 or Music@mail.wvu.edu.

Music majors can change from one music curriculum to another with faculty approval, particularly during the freshman or sophomore year, without significant loss of course credit. Students are encouraged to explore and follow the curriculum for which they are best qualified and in which they can achieve the greatest success. Evaluation of students' work by the School of Music faculty informs these decisions. If students wish a broader, liberal arts-oriented program, they may pursue a Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Music.

Major Code: 3712

General Education Foundations

Please use this link to view a list of courses that meet each GEF requirement. (<http://registrar.wvu.edu/gef/>)

NOTE: Some major requirements will fulfill specific GEF requirements. Please see the curriculum requirements listed below for details on which GEFs you will need to select.

Code	Title	Hours
General Education Foundations		
F1 - Composition & Rhetoric		3-6
ENGL 101 & ENGL 102	Introduction to Composition and Rhetoric and Composition, Rhetoric, and Research	

or ENGL 103	Accelerated Academic Writing	
F2A/F2B - Science & Technology		4-6
F3 - Math & Quantitative Reasoning		3-4
F4 - Society & Connections		3
F5 - Human Inquiry & the Past		3
F6 - The Arts & Creativity		3
F7 - Global Studies & Diversity		3
F8 - Focus (may be satisfied by completion of a minor, double major, or dual degree)		9
Total Hours		31-37

Please note that not all of the GEF courses are offered at all campuses. Students should consult with their advisor or academic department regarding the GEF course offerings available at their campus.

Curriculum Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
University Requirements		29
Music Composition Program Requirements		24
Music Composition Major Requirements		67-68
Total Hours		120

University Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
General Education Foundations (GEF) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 (31-37 Credits)		
Outstanding GEF Requirements 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, and 8		27
MUSC 191	First-Year Seminar	2
Total Hours		29

Music Composition Program Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
A minimum GPA of 2.0 is required in all major courses		
MUSC 161	Aural Theory 1 (Minimum grade of B-)	2
MUSC 162	Written Theory 1 (Minimum grade of B-)	3
MUSC 163	Aural Theory 2 (Minimum grade of B-)	2
MUSC 164	Written Theory 2 (Minimum grade of B-)	3
MUSC 189	Music Convocation (Five Semesters)	0
Select one of the following (GEF 8):		3
MUSC 111	Introduction to Music	
MUSC 113	American Popular Music	
MUSC 114	Music and the Immigrant Experience	
MUSC 115	Introduction to History of Jazz	
MUSC 116	Music in World Cultures	
MUSC 117	Hip Hop Nation: Musical and Conceptual Foundations of a Cultural Revolution	
MUSC 118	Music in Appalachia	
MUSC 262	Written Theory 3 (Minimum grade of B-)	3
MUSC 263	Aural Theory 4 (Minimum grade of B-; must be taken as the accelerated section. If this is not possible, the student must take MUSC 261 as well.)	2
MUSC 270	History of Western Musical Traditions 1 (May fulfill GEF 8)	3
MUSC 271	History of Western Musical Traditions 2 (May fulfill GEF 6)	3
Total Hours		24

Music Composition Major Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
A minimum GPA of 2.0 is required in all major courses		
Composition Courses		
Music Composition		6
MUSC 160S	Introduction to Music Composition (Repeated)	
Upper Division Composition		16
MUSC 460S	Upper Division Composition (Repeated)	
MUSC 362	Instrumentation and Orchestration	3
MUSC 464	Compositional Techniques in Contemporary Music	3
Select one of the following:		2-3
MUSC 364	Popular Music Analysis Seminar	
MUSC 365	Songwriting: Composition and Analysis	
MUSC 463	Analysis of Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Music	
MUSC 461	Counterpoint, 16th Century	
MUSC 462	Counterpoint, 18th Century	
MUSC 468	Jazz and Commercial Music Harmony	
MUSC 469	Counterpoint, 20th Century	
Choose eight hours from the following:		8
MUSC 460A	Electronic Music Composition	
MUSC 465S	Electronic Music Production	
MUSC 466	Techniques for Electronic Music Performance	
MUSC 236	Introduction to Recording Technology	
MUSC 338	Sound-Games/Visual Media	
MUSC 439	Songwriting with Technology	
MUSC 459	Film and Video Game Composition	
Music Business Courses		
MUSC 410	Introduction to Music Industry	3
Music Supportive Courses		
MUSC 200S	Fundamentals of Conducting	2
Class Piano *minimum proficiency level 2 required; waived if piano is principal instrument		
Class Piano		4
MUSC 130S	Piano Class 1	
MUSC 131S	Piano Class 2	
MUSC 132S	Piano Class 3	
MUSC 133S	Piano Class 4	
2 semesters of music ensemble to be selected from the following: *		2
MUSC 300	Band: Wind Symphony	
MUSC 300A	Band: Symphonic	
MUSC 300B	Band: Marching	
MUSC 302	University Community Choir	
MUSC 303	Symphony Orchestra	
MUSC 305	Chamber Singers	
MUSC 306	University Mountaineer Chorus	
MUSC 353	Jazz Ensemble 1	
MUSC 350	Jazz Ensemble 2	
1 semesters of:		1
MUSC 348	Chamber Music: New Music	
2 semesters of music ensemble to be selected from the following: *		2
MUSC 300	Band: Wind Symphony	
MUSC 300A	Band: Symphonic	
MUSC 300B	Band: Marching	
MUSC 302	University Community Choir	

MUSC 303	Symphony Orchestra
MUSC 305	Chamber Singers
MUSC 306	University Mountaineer Chorus
MUSC 340	Chamber Music: Brass
MUSC 341	Chamber Music: Guitar
MUSC 342	Chamber Music: Piano-4 Hand
MUSC 343	Chamber Music: Strings
MUSC 344	Chamber Music: Woodwind
MUSC 345	Chamber Music: Vocal
MUSC 346	Chamber Music: Mixed Ensemble
MUSC 347	Chamber Music: Mountaineer Singers
MUSC 348	Chamber Music: New Music
MUSC 349	Chamber Music: Other
MUSC 353	Jazz Ensemble 1
MUSC 350	Jazz Ensemble 2
MUSC 353B	Chamber Music: Jazz Small Group
MUSC 353C	Chamber Music: Jazz Small Group 2
MUSC 353E	Chamber Music: Jazz and Ethnic
MUSC 353G	Chamber Music: Jazz Vocal Ensemble
MUSC 353H	Chamber Music: Jazz Other
MUSC 353I	Chamber Music: Jazz Vocal Ensemble
MUSC 354	Gamelan
MUSC 355	Steel Band
MUSC 356	African Music Ensemble
MUSC 357	Brazilian Music Ensemble
MUSC 358	Experiential Music Ensemble
MUSC 359	Taiko Ensemble
MUSC 361	Fife and Drum Ensemble
MUSC 363	Appalachian Music Ensemble
2 semesters of music ensembles to be selected from the following:	
MUSC 340	Chamber Music: Brass
MUSC 341	Chamber Music: Guitar
MUSC 342	Chamber Music: Piano-4 Hand
MUSC 343	Chamber Music: Strings
MUSC 344	Chamber Music: Woodwind
MUSC 346	Chamber Music: Mixed Ensemble
MUSC 347	Chamber Music: Mountaineer Singers
MUSC 348	Chamber Music: New Music
MUSC 349	Chamber Music: Other
MUSC 353B	Chamber Music: Jazz Small Group
MUSC 353C	Chamber Music: Jazz Small Group 2
MUSC 353E	Chamber Music: Jazz and Ethnic
MUSC 353G	Chamber Music: Jazz Vocal Ensemble
MUSC 353H	Chamber Music: Jazz Other
MUSC 353I	Chamber Music: Jazz Vocal Ensemble
MUSC 354	Gamelan
MUSC 355	Steel Band
MUSC 356	African Music Ensemble
MUSC 357	Brazilian Music Ensemble
MUSC 358	Experiential Music Ensemble
MUSC 359	Taiko Ensemble
MUSC 361	Fife and Drum Ensemble

MUSC 363	Appalachian Music Ensemble	
Principal Performance Studies *minimum proficiency level 6 required		
Select eight hours from the following:		
Applied Music 100 level (MUSC 121-127) - 2 semesters		4
Applied Music 200 level (MUSC 221-227) - 2 semesters		4
Music History Elective - selected from 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	
MUSC 470G	Topics in Musics of South Asia	
MUSC 470H	Topics in Gender and Sexuality in Music	
MUSC 470I	Topics in Race and Ethnicity in Music	
MUSC 470J	Topics in Musics of the Arab World	
MUSC 477	Music of Africa	
Capstone		
MUSC 467	Major Project in Theory, Composition, or Music History	2
Proficiency Level Piano		
Proficiency Level		
Total Hours		67-68

* Credits may vary. Refer to the School of Music Requirements (<http://catalog.wvu.edu/undergraduate/collegeofcreativeartsandmedia/music/>) for policies related to fulfilling ensemble requirements.

Performance Proficiency

A music major with an emphasis in composition should enter as a freshman having achieved proficiency level three on the major instrument, and must complete proficiency level six on that instrument before graduation. If piano is not the major instrument, the student must achieve a level two on piano. Piano majors reduce total curricular credits by four.

Solo Performance Requirement

Majors in this curriculum must present two solo performances on the major instrument in upper-level recitals before graduation.

Suggested Plan of Study

First Year

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours
MUSC Ensemble		1 MUSC Ensemble	1
MUSC Ensemble		1 MUSC 121-127D Applied Music	2
MUSC 122-127D Applied Music		2 MUSC 160S	3
MUSC 160S		3 Select one of the following:	1
Select one of the following:		1 MUSC 130S	
MUSC 130S		MUSC 131S	
MUSC 131S		MUSC 132S	
MUSC 132S		MUSC 133S	
MUSC 133S		MUSC 134S	
MUSC 134S		MUSC 163	2
MUSC 161		2 MUSC 164	3
MUSC 162		3 MUSC 189	0
MUSC 191		2 Select one of the following (GEF 8):	3
		MUSC 111	
		MUSC 113	

MUSC 114
MUSC 115
MUSC 116
MUSC 117
MUSC 118

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Second Year

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours
MUSC Ensemble		1 MUSC Ensemble	1
MUSC 221-227D Applied Music		2 MUSC 221-227D Applied Music	2
MUSC 460S		4 MUSC 460S	4
Select one of the following:		1 Select one of the following:	1
MUSC 130S		MUSC 130S	
MUSC 131S		MUSC 131S	
MUSC 132S		MUSC 132S	
MUSC 133S		MUSC 133S	
MUSC 134S		MUSC 134S	
MUSC 262		3 Select one of the following:	3
MUSC 263 (Must be taken as accelerated section.)		2 MUSC 463	
MUSC 189		0 MUSC 365	
GEF 3		3 MUSC 468	
		MUSC 469	
		MUSC 461	
		MUSC 462	
		MUSC 189	0
		ENGL 101	3

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Third Year

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours
MUSC 460S		4 MUSC 460S	4
Choose one of the following:		3 MUSC 348	1
MUSC 459		MUSC 189	0
MUSC 338		GEF 7	3
MUSC 189		0 MUSC 270	3
GEF 4		3 MUSC 464	3
MUSC 410		3	
ENGL 102		3	

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Fourth Year

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours
MUSC 200S		2 Capstone:	
Choose One of the Following:		2 MUSC 467	2
MUSC 460A		MUSC Ensemble	1
MUSC 465S		GEF 8	3
MUSC 362		3 Choose One of the Following:	2-3
GEF 2		2 MUSC 460A	
GEF 5		3 MUSC 466	
MUSC 271		3 MUSC 236	
MUSC Ensemble		1 MUSC 439	
		Choose one of the following:	3
		MUSC 470A	
		MUSC 470B	

MUSC 470C
 MUSC 470D
 MUSC 470E
 MUSC 470F
 MUSC 470G
 MUSC 470H
 MUSC 470I
 MUSC 470J
 MUSC 477

GEF 2

3

16

14

Total credit hours: 120

Major Learning Outcomes

MUSIC COMPOSITION

Students who earn the Bachelor of Music in Composition will be able to:

- Compose at a high level in a variety of styles, for a wide range of instrumental/choral groups, and in varying media, including both electronic and acoustic settings.
- Demonstrate fluency in the use of tools needed by composers including varied and diverse approaches to composing music in any style, a workable knowledge of multiple instruments and digital technologies, analytical techniques, and applicable technologies.
- Collaborate effectively with musicians and artists, including but not limited to instrumentalists, digital artists, and media specialists, whose work crosses artistic lines to produce public performances of their work.
- Display entrepreneurship in a wide range of artistic, professional, and business-minded experiences.