

BACHELOR OF MUSIC (BMUS) DEGREE WITH A MAJOR IN COMPOSITION

Program Learning Outcomes for the BMus Degree

Upon completing the BMus degree, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate technical and musical competence in solo performance, composition, or music-historical research appropriate to the standards of a four-year undergraduate program.
2. Possess intermediate analytical skills in music theory and an understanding of how those skills inform music performance.
3. Acquire a fundamental understanding of the relationship between music history and music performance.
4. Develop superior technical collaborative skills in the student's major area through a combination of practice, coaching, and rehearsal in large and small ensembles.

Requirements for the BMus Degree with a Major in Composition

For general university requirements, see [Graduation Requirements \(https://ga.rice.edu/undergraduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/graduation-requirements/\)](https://ga.rice.edu/undergraduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/graduation-requirements/). Students pursuing the BMus degree with a major in Composition must complete:

- A minimum of 20 courses (94-99 credit hours, depending on course selection) to satisfy major requirements.
- A minimum of 120 credit hours to satisfy degree requirements.
- A minimum of 14 courses (65 credit hours) taken at the 300-level or above.

All students pursuing the BMus degree in any major must participate in core music, applied music, and other required music courses as well as in chamber music and large ensembles, plus electives. These students are entitled to one hour of private lessons each week of each semester they are enrolled as a music major; private or group lessons beyond this may result in additional fees.

The courses listed below satisfy the requirements for this major. In certain instances, courses not on this official list may be substituted upon approval of the major's academic advisor, or where applicable, the department's Director of Undergraduate Studies. (Course substitutions must be formally applied and entered into Degree Works by the major's [Official Certifier \(https://registrar.rice.edu/facstaff/degreeworks/officialcertifier/\)](https://registrar.rice.edu/facstaff/degreeworks/officialcertifier/).) Students and their academic advisors should identify and clearly document the courses to be taken.

Summary

Code	Title	Credit Hours
Total Credit Hours Required for the Major in Composition		94-99
Total Credit Hours Required for the BMus Degree with a Major in Composition		120

Degree Requirements

Code	Title	Credit Hours
Music Theory		
MUSI 211	THEORY I	3
MUSI 212	THEORY II	3
MUSI 311	THEORETICAL STUDIES III	3
MUSI 312	THEORETICAL STUDIES IV	3
MUSI 403	BASIC ELECTRONIC MUSIC	3
or MUSI 404	ELECTRONIC MUSIC COMPOSITION	
MUSI 416	ORCHESTRATION	3
<i>Select 1 course from the following:</i>		3
MUSI 512	ANALYTICAL SYSTEMS	
MUSI 513	MODAL COUNTERPOINT	
MUSI 613	TONAL COUNTERPOINT	
Aural Skills and Performance Techniques		
MUSI 231	AURAL SKILLS AND PERFORMANCE TECHNIQUE I	2
MUSI 232	AURAL SKILLS AND PERFORMANCE TECHNIQUE II	2
MUSI 331	AURAL SKILLS AND PERFORMANCE TECHNIQUES III	2
MUSI 332	AURAL SKILLS AND PERFORMANCE TECHNIQUES IV	2
Music History		
MUSI 222 / MDEM 222	MEDIEVAL AND RENAISSANCE ERAS	3
MUSI 321	BAROQUE AND EARLY CLASSICAL ERAS	3
MUSI 322	CLASSICAL AND ROMANTIC ERAS	3
MUSI 421	THE MODERN ERA	3
Composition Study		
MUSI 401	COMPOSITION FOR MAJORS (minimum of 8 semesters)	3
MUSI 303	UNDERGRAD COMPOSITION SEMINAR (minimum of 8 semesters)	1
Piano Study (minimum of 8 semesters) ¹		16
MUSI 281	SECONDARY PIANO	
MUSI 381	CONCENTRATION PIANO	
Ensemble (minimum of 5 semesters)		
<i>Select a minimum of 5 semesters from the following:</i>		5-10
MUSI 335	UNDERGRADUATE CHORUS	
MUSI 337	UNDERGRADUATE ORCHESTRA	
Senior Recital		
MUSI 441	SENIOR RECITAL	0
Piano Proficiency Exam		
Students must complete and pass the Piano Proficiency Exam ¹		
Total Credit Hours Required for the Major in Composition		94-99
Additional Credit Hours to Complete Degree Requirements *		
University Graduation Requirements (https://ga.rice.edu/undergraduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/graduation-requirements/) *		31
Total Credit Hours		120

Footnotes and Additional Information

* **Note:** University Graduation Requirements include 31 credit hours, comprised of Distribution Requirements (Groups I, II, and III), FWIS, and LPAP coursework. In some instances, courses satisfying FWIS or distribution requirements may additionally meet other requirements, such as the Analyzing Diversity (AD) requirement, or some of the student's declared major, minor, or certificate requirements. Additional Credit Hours to Complete Degree Requirements include general electives, coursework completed as upper-level, residency (hours taken at Rice), and/or any other additional academic program requirements.

¹ BMus students majoring in Composition must enroll in MUSI 281 until the piano proficiency exam is passed, and then enroll in MUSI 381 to complete a minimum of 8 semesters of piano study.

Policies for the BMus Degree

Admission

An audition, in person, is required for Instrumental Performance and Vocal Performance undergraduate applicants. A recorded audition may be considered in lieu of a live audition in extreme circumstances. Composition applicants must submit portfolios, and Music History applicants must provide samples of their written work. The Shepherd School faculty and the university's Committee on Admission jointly determine admission, the latter basing its evaluation on successful academic achievement and other standards of college admission. Transfer applicants from other colleges, conservatories, and universities must audition, and take placement exams in both music history and music theory. Once admitted, their prior preparation in music is assessed, which may reduce the required period of study at Rice.

Academic Standards

Curriculum and Degree Requirements

Further information on curricular requirements for all majors and degree programs is available from the Shepherd School of Music.

Grading Policy

A minimum grade of B- (2.67 grade points) per course is expected of all music students in their major applied area. A grade of C+ (2.33 grade points) or lower in a course in the student's major applied area is considered unsatisfactory and will be evaluated in the following manner:

- A music major who receives a grade of C+ (2.33 grade points) or lower in a course in their major applied area will be placed on music probation. Music probation signifies that the student's work has been sufficiently unsatisfactory to preclude graduation unless marked improvement is achieved promptly. A student on music probation may be absent from class only for extraordinary reasons and may not represent the school in any public function not directly a part of a degree program.
- If a student receives a second semester of C+ (2.33 grade points) or lower in a course in their major applied area, whether for consecutive semesters or not, the student will be discontinued as a BMus degree seeking student and merit scholarship from the Shepherd School will be discontinued.

Please Note: For music history and musicology majors, a grade of C+ (2.33 grade points) or lower in any music history course is considered unsatisfactory and will be evaluated as noted above. For music theory majors, a grade of C+ (2.33 grade points) or lower in any advanced music

theory course is considered unsatisfactory and will be evaluated as noted above.

Leaves of Absence and Voluntary Withdrawal

Music majors must obtain permission in writing from the dean of the Shepherd School before requesting a leave of absence from the university. Requests must be in the dean's office before the first day of classes in the semester for which leave is requested.

Music majors taking voluntary withdrawal from the university are not guaranteed readmission into the Shepherd School and may be asked to reapply/reaudition. Students should explain the reasons for their withdrawal to the dean before leaving campus.

Examinations

At the end of each semester, a jury examination in applied music may be given over the material studied during the semester. All BMus degree candidates (all students except those pursuing the BA degree with a major in music) must demonstrate keyboard proficiency by examination. If students have little or no knowledge of the keyboard, they should enroll in secondary piano at the beginning of their first semester and continue study until they can meet the examination requirements.

Performance

Students are expected to perform frequently during their residence at Rice. Performance majors must present at least two full recitals; composition majors must present at least one full recital. Students are expected to attend both faculty and student recitals. In addition, all music majors must participate in the school's conducted ensembles as assigned.

Transfer Credit

For Rice University's policy regarding transfer credit, see Transfer Credit (<https://ga.rice.edu/undergraduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/transfer-credit/>). Some departments and programs have additional restrictions on transfer credit. The Office of Academic Advising maintains the university's official list of transfer credit advisors (<https://oaa.rice.edu/advising-network/transfer-credit-advisors/>) on their website: <https://oaa.rice.edu>. Students are encouraged to meet with their academic program's transfer credit advisor when considering transfer credit possibilities.

Departmental Transfer Credit Guidelines

Students pursuing the BMus degree should be aware of the following departmental transfer credit guidelines:

- Requests for transfer credit will be considered by the program director (and/or the program's official transfer credit advisor) on an individual case-by-case basis.

Additional Information

For additional information, please see the Shepherd School of Music website: <https://music.rice.edu/>.

Opportunities for the BMus Degree

Academic Honors

The university recognizes academic excellence achieved over an undergraduate's academic history at Rice. For information on university honors, please see Latin Honors (<https://ga.rice.edu/undergraduate-students/honors-distinctions/university/>) (*summa cum laude*, *magna cum laude*, and *cum laude*) and Distinction in Research and Creative Work (<https://ga.rice.edu/undergraduate-students/honors-distinctions/>).

[university/](#)). Some departments have department-specific Honors awards or designations.

BMus/MMus Honors Program

Shepherd School students who demonstrate truly exceptional musical and academic accomplishment may apply for the BMus/MMus five-year coordinated program. This program, often referred to in the school as the *BMus/MMus Honors Program*, allows for the completion and awarding of both the BMus and MMus degrees concurrently. Application to this program is made in the student's fifth or sixth semester of undergraduate studies.

The same general university requirements apply, but students seeking the program's coordinated BMus/MMus degrees must complete a total of at least 150 semester hours by graduation. The number of required hours varies according to major area. In order to earn the MMus degree, a minimum of 30 credit hours of graduate-level study (coursework at the 500-level or above) must be completed.

The first five semesters of course work in this program parallel the core curriculum of the bachelor's degrees. The sixth semester is a transitional semester during which students qualify for admission to the combined program. For further information, including application procedures, see the *Shepherd School Student Handbook*.

Other Musical Opportunities

Lectures and Performances

A visiting lecturer series, a professional concert series, and numerous distinguished visiting musicians contribute to the Shepherd School environment. The Houston Symphony Orchestra, Symphony Chorus, Houston Grand Opera, Houston Ballet, Houston Masterworks Chorus, Da Camera, Context, and Chamber Music Houston, as well as the activities of other institutions of higher learning in the area, also provide exceptional opportunities for students to enjoy a wide spectrum of music.

Additional Information

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