

Master of Music (Jazz Composition)

About This Program

In the Masters in Music Jazz Composition program, students develop mastery in writing for various ensembles, both large and small. Flexibility within the degree allows students to focus on traditional big band, small group writing, studio orchestra, or more modern genre-blending compositional techniques. UTA's jazz and classical ensembles provide opportunities for students to hear their work. As with the MM in Jazz Performance, students earning the MM in Jazz Composition are credentialed to teach at community colleges and some universities.

Competencies

1. Upon graduation, students will be able to perform and/or teach at the community college level or above in their primary field of specialty.
2. Upon completion, students will be prepared for further academic study in their primary field at the doctoral level
3. Upon graduation, students will have advanced skills in jazz composition and comprehensive knowledge of various styles and improvisation

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA *UPDATED SPRING 2026

UNCONDITIONAL ADMISSION

1. Bachelor's degree in music or its demonstrated equivalent (such as a music conservatory degree).
2. Three letters of recommendation are required, speaking to the student's potential for success from references familiar with the student's academic background.
3. A minimum 3.0 GPA in the last 60 hours of undergraduate work as calculated by the Graduate Admissions.
4. Submitted application to the Department of Music (see the departmental website for more information).
5. A portfolio of works, to include at least two (2) but not more than four (4) scores and recordings representing the applicant's best work. At least two of these should be in the jazz genre. Live recordings are preferred; MIDI recordings are discouraged but will be accepted as a last resort. At least one of the works should be scored for a large jazz ensemble (ten or more performers). Links to both scores and audio files housed online for the included pieces (via SoundCloud, DropBox, etc.) should be sent in an email to the graduate advisor. Please do not attach the files in the email.
6. A performance audition is also required on your primary jazz instrument. Applicants should prepare two jazz pieces in contrasting styles and tempos, with at least one jazz standard included. A pianist will be available to accompany you, or you may arrange for your own accompaniment (such as a play-along recording). Stereo equipment may be provided but only upon advance notice by the applicant.

All admission criteria will be considered equally. Students meeting all the criteria, plus any track-specific requirements, will be granted unconditional admission.

PROBATIONARY STATUS

A student showing a deficiency in any of the above criteria and showing promise for successful graduate study may still be admitted on a probationary basis upon the recommendation of the Graduate Studies Committee. The conditions of the probation will be outlined in the letter of admission. (The Music Department does not have the authority to lower University TOEFL score requirements for any student.)

PROVISIONAL ADMISSION

An applicant unable to supply all required documentation prior to the admission deadline but who otherwise appears to meet admission requirements may be granted provisional admission.

DENIED ADMISSION

An applicant can be denied admission based on the recommendation of the Graduate Studies Committee. Applicants may reapply for admission if the deficiencies in credentials that led to denial are remedied.

DEFERRED ADMISSION

A deferred decision may be granted when a file is incomplete or when a denied decision is not appropriate.

Tracks are offered in Music Performance, Jazz Studies, Jazz Composition, Music Theory, and Conducting. The program is designed for the student who has a Bachelor's degree in music.

TOEFL REQUIREMENT

Applicants whose native language is not English must demonstrate proficiency in English by earning a total score of at least 79 on the Test of English as a Foreign Language internet-based examination (TOEFL iBT).

Those who do not meet the English proficiency requirement must satisfactorily complete courses in the ESOL area, as approved by the program and Graduate Admissions.

Advisory examinations in music history and written theory may be administered to all students prior to enrollment or during their first semester as a degree-seeking student.

Curriculum

Jazz Composition Foundations

MUSI 5308	MUSIC HISTORY SELECTED TOPICS	3
MUSI 5366	JAZZ STYLE AND ANALYSIS	3
MUSI 5362	INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH IN MUSIC	3
MUSI 5355	REHEARSAL TECHNIQUES	3
4 semesters of Applied Study (MUSI 5348) with the last semester including a full length public performance/recital, which may serve as a thesis.		12

Jazz Composition Specialization

MUSI 5191	CONFERENCE COURSE IN MUSIC	1
Select 6 hours from the following:		6
MUSI 3394	DIGITAL MUSIC TECHNOLOGY	
MUSI 4327	TECHNIQUES AND TECHNOLOGY IN FILM COMPOSITION	
MUSI 5112	CHAMBER MUSIC (maximum of 3 repeats)	
MUSI 5308	MUSIC HISTORY SELECTED TOPICS (may be counted once as an elective if core requirement is met and the course is taken with a different emphasis)	
MUSI 5350	SELECTED TOPICS IN MUSIC PEDAGOGY	
MUSI 5360	ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY FOR MUSICIANS (MUSI 53XX (Applied lessons on a Jazz Instrument))	
MUSI 5365	MEANING & REPRESENTATION IN MUSIC	
MUSI 5388	20TH CENTURY FORM & TECHNIQUE	
MUSI 53XX	(Applied lessons on a Jazz Instrument)	
Select 3 hours from the following (may be repeated):		3
MUSI 5107	JAZZ ORCHESTRA	
MUSI 5108	JAZZ ENSEMBLE	
MUSI 5110	JAZZ COMBO	

Total Hours **34**

Program Completion

All students completing the Master of Music (Jazz Composition Track) take a written examination measuring selected content from the following three courses:

- MUSI 5348 Jazz Composition
- MUSI 5366 Jazz Styles and Analysis
- MUSI 5308 Selected Topics in Music History

After successfully completing the written exam, students proceed to an oral examination, providing them with an opportunity to expand upon or rectify their responses from the written assessment.

A final Master's examination may result in:

1. An unconditional pass with a recommendation to the Graduate Dean that the candidate be certified to receive the degree.
2. A conditional pass with the requirement that additional conditions be met, which may include further work on the thesis or thesis substitute, additional coursework with a minimum specified grade point average or both (in all cases the final master's examination must be repeated within a specified period).
3. Failure, with permission to be re-examined within a specified period; or
4. Failure, with recommendation to the Dean of Graduate Studies that the candidate be dismissed from the program. The Music Department limits to 2 the number of times the examination can be taken.

Master of Music in Jazz Composition students present a recital of original pieces and arrangements at the end of their course of study.

Advising Resources

All UTA Music Degrees require an audition for Music Department acceptance. First time in college students may contact the Music Department advisor for general degree information and will be advised in the department starting their second semester. Transfer students should contact the Music Department Advisor prior to acceptance for general degree information and again following a successful audition for acceptance into the UTA Music

Department for academic advising and clearance to enroll. Students interested in the Music Minor should contact the Music Department advisor for the Minor course sheet, and Minor approval form, and may do so at any time in the semester.

Location:

Fine Arts 101C

Email:

Undergraduate: music@uta.edu

Graduate: musicgradadvisor@uta.edu

Phone:

817-272-3471

Web:

Degree information, Forms, and Advising (<https://www.uta.edu/academics/schools-colleges/liberal-arts/departments/music/current-students/undergraduate/>)