



JACOBS SCHOOL OF MUSIC

INDIANA UNIVERSITY

Bloomington

Dear colleagues,

Welcome to the music theory department at Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music! With this letter, we hope to provide some useful information about our department and school.

If you'd like, you may jump to [Frequently Asked Questions](#) for answers to some of our most common questions. Also feel free to join us at an of our IU Music Theory events. The schedule is being updated as information comes through and you can find that information [here](#).

The music theory department combines world-class research and scholarship with unique and innovative pedagogy. Eclectic in our interests and internationally renowned for the quality and scope of our work, the music theory faculty and students maintain a strong record of publications, conference presentations, performances, and other accomplishments. As faculty scholars, we are dedicated to exploring music's intellectual, critical, structural, and social domains. We are experienced in a broad array of approaches and methodologies, including Schenkerian analysis, serialism, transformation theory, informatics, and cultural studies; and we are passionate about musical repertoires ranging from the classical music of the long eighteenth century through a variety of twentieth-century genres to post-millennial pop. Our students and faculty work together to maintain a high standard of rigorous, conservatory-style pedagogy in music theory while leading the way towards a more diverse and inclusive future for our field.

Our program offers both MM and PhD degrees in music theory, as well as a joint MM/MLS degree in music theory and library science. The MM degree is designed to give students exposure to a broad range of topics within our field, and the PhD degree, with its focus on special-topics seminars and independent-study projects, affords students the opportunity to explore specialized areas in depth. In both degree programs, rigorous scholarly work is complemented by extensive teaching experience: all of our graduate students receive an Associate Instructor appointment, enabling them both to grow under the mentorship of our expert faculty and to teach some of the brightest and most talented young musicians in the world.

We also offer invaluable professional-development opportunities. Students, faculty, and guests regularly present at our weekly colloquium series, which provides a means to workshop new ideas and share research in progress. Additionally, all students are members of our Graduate Theory Association, which hosts an annual symposium of research in music theory, and publishes the *Indiana Theory Review*, a peer-reviewed scholarly journal produced entirely by our students.

The extensive training our students receive as pedagogues and scholars contributes to the excellent success rates that our alumni enjoy on the job market. Our graduates hold teaching positions in major universities, liberal-arts colleges, and schools of music around the world.

We invite you to explore our [website](#) to learn more about our program, and please feel free to [contact me](#) or any of our faculty if you have further questions. See the following pages for frequently asked questions and for events related to the SMT annual meeting. Again, welcome to IU!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kyle Adams', with a horizontal line underneath.

Kyle Adams
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Frequently Asked Questions

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What is the admissions process like?

The application and admissions processes for MM and PhD candidates are quite similar. By December 1, you must submit your application to Indiana University and to the Jacobs School of Music (more information can be found on the [website](#) for the Office of Admissions and Financial Aid). In addition to the graduate applications, the music theory department requests two writing samples, one of which should ideally show some skill in the analysis of tonal music. For MM applicants, it is also acceptable to submit analytical work, such as a Roman-numeral analysis or a voice-leading sketch.

From the initial applicants, we select a group who are invited to campus (note that in 2021–22, candidates can choose an in-person or virtual visit to campus). These candidates will meet individually with three faculty members of their choosing, and will also meet with the chair. Each candidate also receives a musicianship evaluation, in which we assess the applicant's teaching ability through tests of aural and keyboard skills, as well as analysis of score excerpts and audio excerpts.

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What will my teaching experience look like? How much mentorship will I have, and how much independence will I have?

All of our graduate students receive an Associate Instructor (AI) appointment. Our undergraduate core courses consist of large lectures taught by a faculty member (two or three times per week) and small-group drill sections taught by the AIs (twice per week). Each AI therefore works closely under the mentorship of a faculty member who provides lesson plans and holds weekly staff meetings, but also has a high degree of independence in crafting their own drills. Our more advanced AIs can also be appointed as AI coordinators, who are responsible either for teaching the honors sections of undergraduate theory or for supervising the large-lecture undergraduate aural skills courses, and who essentially serve as instructors of record for their courses.

After their initial semester of appointment, AIs submit preference forms indicating what they would like to teach. We do our best to honor these preferences, giving each AI a teaching experience customized to their pedagogical interest and drawing on their specific strengths. Students who complete both MM and PhD degrees have the opportunity to serve as AIs for our complete undergraduate curriculum in both written theory and aural skills.

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How long does the MM program take?

Our MM program typically takes two years to complete.

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What are the course requirements for the MM program?

For the MM degree, each student takes 21 credits (seven courses) in the major field. These are:

- Analytical Techniques for Tonal Music
- Analysis of Music Since 1900
- Schenkerian Analysis
- Stylistic Counterpoint (either 16th-century or 18th-century)
- Readings in Music Theory
- Music Theory Pedagogy
- One doctoral seminar

Additionally, students are required to complete six credits (two courses) in music history and literature, six elective credits (which can also be taken from music theory or history course offerings), and our Music Bibliography course.

At the end of the MM program, students submit a portfolio of written work, demonstrating proficiency in research, analytical, and practical areas.

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How long does the PhD program take?

Most students complete our PhD program in five years: two to three years of coursework, and another two to three years of exams and dissertation.

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What are the course requirements for the PhD program?

The core of our PhD program comprises 25 credits (nine courses). These are:

- History of Music Theory I and II
- Four special-topic seminars
- Readings in Music Theory
- Choice of one more doctoral seminar, a Master's-level seminar, or an independent-study project
- Dissertation Topic Workshop (one credit; completed during the last semester of coursework)

Students who come to IU from other institutions are required either to take or validate (by exam or portfolio) our MM courses listed above.

PhD students must minor in either music history, musicology, or ethnomusicology. Students may pursue a second minor by selecting twelve additional credits in another field; otherwise, these credits may be used for general electives or put towards the dissertation. In addition, students must pass a reading-knowledge exam in one non-English language or demonstrate proficiency in a related research skill, subject to approval of the department. Students usually finish coursework in five or six semesters.

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What does the PhD program look like after coursework is completed?

After students complete coursework, they must complete a dissertation topic proposal, pass minor- and major-field qualifying exams, and complete their dissertation. A typical order of events is as follows:

- In the last semester of coursework, students take the Dissertation Topic Workshop, which culminates in a dissertation prospectus—a short version of what will become their full topic proposal
- Students take their minor-field exam. Once students begin the exam process, they have one calendar year to complete all exams
- Students take their major-field written qualifying exam. This normally comprises four topic areas: history of theory, tonal analysis, post-tonal analysis, and a special topic usually related to the student's dissertation. Students may forgo the special topic by doubling up on one of the other topic areas.
- Once a student has passed the major-field written exam, they sit for the oral exam, in which the faculty may follow up on the written exam or ask more general questions about the field.
- At any point during the exam process, or after it is complete, the dissertation prospectus is expanded into the full topic proposal, which is approved by the entire department.
- Once a student has passed all exams, and their dissertation topic proposal is approved, they are a candidate for the degree, and need to complete the dissertation itself.

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Will I have opportunities to continue performing?

Yes! Our students are encouraged to continue their performance activities. Each MM student enrolls in large ensembles for their four semesters in the program, giving them an opportunity to perform with our world-class orchestra, choir, new-music, or historical-performance ensembles. Private lessons and are also available to all of our graduate students via audition with the relevant faculty. Our GTA (Graduate Theory Association) also hosts a recital each fall, in which the theorists can showcase their talents in performance and composition.

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What will my financial aid package be?

Each of our students receives a package worth approximately \$48,000. Students receive a 96.5% tuition reimbursement, health insurance, and a stipend of roughly \$13,500 per year. Some mandatory fees apply, but we are often able to provide additional scholarship assistance for exceptional applicants.

Additionally, we have three Jacobs Fellowships available for PhD students, which provide an \$21,000 stipend per year for four years, and one Mary Wennerstrom scholarship covering \$22,500 for four years.

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