MUSIC PHD

Degree Requirements

The following requirements are in addition to, or further elaborate upon, those requirements outlined in The Graduate School Policy Guide (https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/tgs/academic-policies-procedures).

Master’s

The MA in Music is a non-admitting degree from The Graduate School (https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu) offered in the four specializations of the PhD program in Music (Composition & Music Technology, Music Education, Musicology, and Music Theory & Cognition). A student may request this degree only if they do not already hold a master’s level degree in the field of specialization at the time of the request. Students may apply for the MA in Music after completing fifteen units toward the PhD coursework and:

- in Musicology, one foreign language exam and either two components of the qualifying exam or the dissertation prospectus
- in Music Education, the teaching demonstration and the qualifying exam
- in Music Theory & Cognition, one component of the qualifying exam or the dissertation prospectus

The MA in Music is not to be confused with the various stand-alone MM (Master of Music) degrees offered by the Bienen School of Music (https://www.music.northwestern.edu/academics.degrees). The MA in Music is only available to students already admitted to and pursuing the PhD in Music.

PhD

Specializations of study are offered in four areas: Composition & Music Technology, Music Education, Musicology, and Music Theory & Cognition. Requirements vary by area of specialization. All PhD students in Music must complete a minimum of 18 graduate units; those entering without a master’s degree complete 27. Normally this requires two years of coursework in the former case and three years in the latter.

Students should consult the Bienen School of Music Graduate Handbook (https://www.music.northwestern.edu/resources/students/graduate) regarding specific curricular and qualifying exam requirements for their area of specialization.

Cognate Area of Study: In addition to completing the core, all students will be required to take three 300- or 400-level graduate courses outside the Bienen School of Music in an approved cognate area.

Colloquium: All students in residency are expected to attend and participate in the program colloquium or center in their field of specialization.

Total Course Units Required: 18-27

Other PhD Degree Requirements

- Examinations: Requirements for the Qualifying Examination include written and oral components. Specific requirements vary by specialization and are enumerated in the Bienen School of Music Graduate Handbook (https://www.music.northwestern.edu/resources/students/graduate).
- Language Requirement: Examinations in two languages (musicology specialization only)
- PhD Dissertation: Based on original, independent research. The dissertation requirement for Composition and Music Technology also includes a Doctoral Composition.
- Final Evaluations: Defense of dissertation