

# MUSIC THEORY AND COGNITION

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[music.northwestern.edu/academics/areas-of-study/music-theory-and-cognition](https://music.northwestern.edu/academics/areas-of-study/music-theory-and-cognition)

Undergraduates majoring in theory or cognition receive a broad education in music analysis and the cognitive sciences. The emphasis is on cognitive musicology, whereby music is studied using the tools and insights of cognitive science and musicological research.

## Programs of Study

- Music Cognition Major (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/music/music-theory-cognition/music-cognition-major>)
- Music Cognition Minor (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/music/music-theory-cognition/music-cognition-minor>)
- Music Theory Major (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/music/music-theory-cognition/music-theory-major>)
- Music Theory Minor (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/music/music-theory-cognition/music-theory-minor>)

## Music Theory Courses

**MUS\_THRY 251-0 Music and Mind (1 Unit)** An introduction to music cognition for music undergraduates as well as students with limited music backgrounds. Readings primarily from secondary sources, with some primary sources as well.

**MUS\_THRY 316-0 16th Century Counterpoint (1 Unit)** Contrapuntal textures from two to four voices. Cadence and form, melodic line and motive, rhythm, simple and complex imitation, and treatment of dissonance in the sacred music of Lassus, Josquin, and Palestrina.

**MUS\_THRY 317-0 Figured Bass (1 Unit)** The study of harmony at the keyboard as learned by musicians since the early 17th century. Figured bass is an essential subject for performers of early music (including Bach and Mozart) and a key to the analysis of most pre-20th century European music.

**MUS\_THRY 318-0 18th Century Counterpoint (1 Unit)** Baroque dance suite, chorale prelude, invention, fugue, chiefly involving the music of J. S. Bach. Melodic, harmonic, structural characteristics; contrapuntal techniques.

**MUS\_THRY 321-0 Analytical Techniques (1 Unit)** Detailed analysis of all parameters of selected musical examples; compositional procedures as a means of developing an intelligent rationale for interpretation. Prerequisite: MUSIC 211-3 or consent of instructor.

**MUS\_THRY 322-0 Rhythm and Meter (1 Unit)** Close reading and discussion of key canonical texts from the last three decades' rich scholarship in rhythm and meter as well as innovative new work. Each student completes a substantial analytical and/or theoretical paper.

**MUS\_THRY 331-0 Analytical Studies (1 Unit)** Extension and refinement of concepts and techniques acquired in first and second year music theory.

**MUS\_THRY 335-0 Selected Topics in Music Theory (1 Unit)** Topics vary; announced before registration. May be repeated.

**MUS\_THRY 336-0 Selected Topics in Music Cognition (1 Unit)** Topics vary; announced before registration. May be repeated.

**MUS\_THRY 355-0 Atonal Analysis (1 Unit)** Techniques for analysis of atonal and nonfunctional tonal music, including serial, set-theoretic, and parametric approaches. Emphasis on music of Schoenberg, Webern, Berg, Stravinsky, and Debussy. Selected readings in analytic literature. Prerequisite: MUSIC 211-3 or equivalent.

**MUS\_THRY 385-0 Senior Project (1 Unit)**

**MUS\_THRY 390-0 Music Theory Colloquium (0 Unit)** (0) Discussion of current research in music theory and cognition.

**MUS\_THRY 399-0 Independent Study (0.5-1 Unit)**