

Music Composition, DMA

FACOMPDMA

Develop advanced skills in traditional and contemporary techniques, and collaborate with music scholars, theorists, performers, educators and composers for a well-rounded foundation for your professional career.

Program description

Degree awarded: DMA Music (Music Composition)

The DMA in music with a concentration in music composition is a comprehensive professional degree program for outstanding students of acoustic, electronic and multimedia composition. Students develop their own compositional voices and focus on their area of interest, regardless of style or aesthetics, while gaining extensive knowledge through coursework and private lessons with faculty.

Composers' performance opportunities include readings by the ASU Symphony Orchestra and visiting ensembles; yearlong residencies with the Wind Ensembles and the Philharmonia; commissions for the PRISMS contemporary music festival; and collaborations with student performers, animators, filmmakers and dancers.

The program provides extensive faculty interaction and opportunities to develop advanced skills in compositional techniques from a wide variety of styles and traditions, with emphasis on fostering students' personal approach to composition. Collaborations with music scholars, theorists, performers, educators and other composers provide students with a broad and well-rounded foundation for advanced careers in music and teaching at the university level.

At a glance

- **College/School:** [Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts](#)
- **Location:** [Tempe](#)

Degree requirements

90 credit hours, a foreign language exam, a written comprehensive exam, an oral comprehensive exam, a prospectus and a dissertation

The credit requirements for the degree are distributed as follows:

major area (composition, music technology, electives) (36 credit hours)

music theory and music history (30 credit hours)

research (12 credit hours)

dissertation (12 credit hours)

The music composition concentration requires the creation of a significant original work of music (considered to be a dissertation) and either two article-length research papers or a substantial paper.

Additional Curriculum Requirements

Completion of diagnostic exams in musicology and music theory is required of all new graduate music students prior to enrollment in the School of Music, Dance and Theatre.

Thirty credit hours from a master's degree may be applied toward the 90 credit hour degree requirement. Once admitted to the program, a student is required to be enrolled continuously, excluding summer sessions, until all requirements for the degree have been fulfilled. In general, the student should expect to spend at least the equivalent of three academic years in the program beyond the master's degree. A minimum of two semesters must be spent in continuous full-time residence at ASU. At least 54 credit hours must be completed in residence at ASU.

Additional information on degree requirements for this degree is available on the curriculum check sheet located at the bottom of [the school's degree page](#).

Admission requirements

Applicants must fulfill the requirements of both the Graduate College and the Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts.

Applicants are eligible to apply to the program if they have earned a U.S. bachelor's degree or higher from a regionally accredited institution or the equivalent of a U.S. bachelor's degree from an institution in another country that is officially recognized by that country.

Applicants must have achieved a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 (scale is 4.00 = "A") in the last 60 semester hours or 90 quarter hours of a bachelor's degree program, or applicants must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 (scale is 4.00 = "A") in an applicable master's degree program.

All applicants must submit:

1. [graduate admission application](#) and application fee
2. [School of Music, Dance and Theatre application](#), including a resume and personal statement

3. official transcripts
4. prescreening portfolio
5. three letters of recommendation
6. proof of English proficiency

Additional Application Information

An applicant whose native language is not English must provide proof of [English proficiency](#) regardless of their current residency. The School of Music, Dance and Theatre does not offer conditional admission under any circumstances. To meet English proficiency requirements, students should have a TOEFL iBT score of at least 80; an IELTS overall band score of at least 6.5; or a Pearson Test of English score of at least 60.

Students should see the program website for application deadlines.

After receipt of complete application materials, including recommendation letters, transcripts and English proficiency, and review of prescreening materials, an applicant may be invited for an interview.

Information about the interview can be found on the [school's admissions website](#).

Tuition information

When it comes to paying for higher education, everyone's situation is different. Students can learn about [ASU tuition and financial aid](#) options to find out which will work best for them.

Application deadlines

Fall

Spring

[expand](#)

[expand](#)

Program learning outcomes

Program learning outcomes identify what a student will learn or be able to do upon completion of their program. This program has the following program outcomes:

- Compose original works, applying theoretical understanding of musical techniques.
- Create a significant original work that integrates and synthesizes various principles of composition.
- Interpret specific musical products within the context of a specific theoretical, historical, or cultural tradition.

Career opportunities

The School of Music, Dance and Theatre graduate programs inspire and empower students to become creative leaders who transform society through music.

Musicians with expertise in performing, composing, teaching, and conducting research, and in arts advocacy, are in high demand across many sectors and industries, including performing arts organizations, educational institutions, entertainment companies, health and wellness industries, and community arts organizations. Skills such as creativity, collaboration, innovation, and entrepreneurship, as well as the focused discipline needed for success as a musician, are all highly valued by a wide range of companies and professions.

Career examples include:

- arts administrator
- community arts advocate
- composer for film, video games or television
- performing musician
- public or community school teacher
- university professor

Contact information

[School of Music, Dance and Theatre](#) | MUSIC E167

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[Admission deadlines](#)