

May 3, 2023

Associate Professor Brad Steinmetz
Chair, Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee

RE: Bachelor of Music in Composition changes

Dear Brad and Members of the Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee,

At its meeting on April 28, 2023, the Arts and Humanities 2 Panel of the ASC Curriculum Committee reviewed and unanimously approved with contingencies the proposal for changes to the Bachelor of Music in Composition.

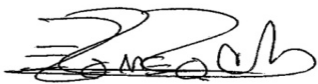
Currently, students pursuing the Composition specialization of the Bachelor of Music, begin composition lessons at the Junior year. This has several drawbacks for students as they do not receive guidance and instruction sooner in their program. Furthermore, students aren't able to produce more artifacts such as completed scores and performance recording of their music, which puts them at a disadvantage for entrance into graduate programs. One of the proposed changes is to expand composition lessons to all 8 semesters of the program. To facilitate this, applied composition lessons (otherwise known as MUS 2293 – Individual Studies: MUS Composition, 5635 – Composition 2, and MUS 4679.02 – Senior Composition Project) will be updated to 16 units total (2 units per semester each) allowing for students to start applied composition instruction earlier in their studies.

To make space in the curriculum for the 16CH of applied composition lessons, students will not be required to take MUS 5620, MUS 5621, MUS 5631, MUS 5622, and MUS 5677. Students will still cover much of the material from these courses between MUS 5630 (Composers Seminar) and the applied composition lessons (MUS 2293, MUS 5635, & MUS 4679.02). Another change in the curriculum will be to remove MUS 5621(Theory & Analysis, 17th–18th C.), MUS 5622 (Theory & Analysis, 18th–19th C.), MUS 5631 (Counterpoint, Intermediate), and MUS 5677 (Multimedia for Musicians) in the “Music Theory & Composition” category of the major as options for students to choose from, and to offer the option only between MUS 5636.01 (Intro. to Electronic Music) and MUS 5637.01 (Introduction to Electronic Music Synthesis). Finally, the number of credit hours from electives will also be lowered from 5 to 2 CH to make space for applied lessons in composition. Students can use this space in their curriculum to add supplemental courses, such as some of the courses that have been eliminated as requirements.

While these changes do not affect the current credit hours (77CH) within the major, it would immediately impact the audition process. Currently, students interested in the composition degree are required to take a voice/instrumental audition for entrance into the School of Music and then declare composition as their major. The proposed revision is that students will still be required to have applied instrumental/voice instruction; however, their skill on an instrument/voice should not be judged at the audition with the equivalent weight as their potential as composers. For students to be admitted into the composition specialization, they must also go through an interview with the composition faculty at the time of their instrument/voice audition. Overall, the audition criteria to be admitted as a composition major must be that the students' skill on an instrument or voice be at a level sufficient for admission as a minor, and their assessment on composition may rely more heavily upon potential rather than artifacts, so a portfolio should be optional but encouraged.

We believe that the proposed changes, not only in the curriculum but also in its comprehensive revision to procedures for admission and overall preparation for students pursuing the Bachelor of Music in Composition, will make the program more in line with national trends and competitive in comparison to other peer institutions. All contingencies have been met; therefore, we advance the proposed revision to the Music major with a motion to approve.

Regards,



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