

Musical Arts (DMA)

Areas of Study

The Doctor of Musical Arts (DMA) degree allows for three majors: music, conducting, and music and human learning. The DMA degree in music offers concentrations in composition (including a jazz emphasis) and in performance (including opera, collaborative piano, jazz, and voice pedagogy emphases). The DMA degree in music and human learning includes jazz pedagogy and piano pedagogy emphases. A jazz emphasis is also available in the performance and the composition majors.

- **Conducting.** Students in this major study the artistic, technical, physical, and leadership principles and skills required of successful conductors at the professional and postsecondary levels. Intensive coursework in conducting, score study, analysis, musicology, and theory is combined with opportunities to conduct University ensembles. Individual courses of study are tailored to prepare students for advanced careers as artists and teachers.
- **Music and Human Learning.** Students in this major study the fundamental principles of human learning and behavior as applied in all aspects of music activity, including performance, perception, composition, analysis, pedagogy, and the role of music in elementary and secondary schools and in higher education. Individual courses of study are uniquely designed to broaden and refine the knowledge and skills of experienced educators, preparing them for advanced careers as teachers and scholars in the various dimensions of research and professional education.
- **Composition.** Students pursuing degrees in this area of concentration have the opportunity to acquire the tools to create music and convey their musical ideas through a variety of performance media. Students are expected to exhibit a thorough knowledge of the theoretical and historical basis of music and to develop strong pedagogical skills. A comprehensive general curriculum and optional concentrations in various areas of specialization help to prepare students for advanced careers as composers and teachers.
- **Performance.** Degrees in this area of concentration are awarded for performance on brass, woodwind, percussion, keyboard, and stringed instruments, and in voice, opera, collaborative piano, and chamber music. In addition to demonstrating the technical achievements of the artist-performer, the student is expected to exhibit a thorough knowledge of the theoretical, pedagogical, and historical aspects of the major, as well as a knowledge of the literature of the performance area.

Graduate Handbook

Graduate handbook information is updated and maintained by each program. Graduate handbooks are available within each program's office and [online](#). Please contact the program with concerns or questions.

Admission Requirements

Candidates for the DMA degree must pass a comprehensive examination. They must demonstrate outstanding professional competence, artistic maturity, and exceptional knowledge of the historical and practical aspects of their major field.

All applicants are required to furnish a statement of intent in graduate study and three letters of reference pertaining to their potential for graduate work in music, music and human learning, or conducting. Graduate Record Examinations scores are not required for students pursuing degrees in conducting or in music with concentrations in composition or performance. Applicants seeking admission to degree

programs with a concentration in performance typically must perform a live audition. Exceptions and detailed instructions can be found on the [Butler School of Music graduate admissions website](#). Those seeking admission to the degree program in conducting and certain areas of concentration within music must submit prescreening videos before arranging for a live audition on campus; those planning to major in music with a concentration in composition must send scores and recordings of their music; and those planning to major in music with a concentration in musicology, ethnomusicology, or music theory must submit samples of their written work. Those applying for admission to doctoral degree programs in music and human learning must submit samples of written work and video recordings of their teaching.

Diagnostic examinations in music theory and in music history and literature are required of all students before registration for the first semester of graduate work. Passing these examinations or remediation of the deficiencies by completing assigned courses is necessary for completion of every degree, and, in the case of doctoral students, is a prerequisite to doctoral comprehensive examinations.

Entering graduate students in music pursuing a concentration in voice are expected to have taken the equivalent of one semester each of Italian, French, and German, and two semesters of diction. All entering graduate students pursuing a degree with a concentration in voice are given a diagnostic examination consisting of reading in these three languages. The examination stresses proficiency in pronunciation and is used to help the student plan a program of study.

Requirements

Each candidate must prepare a scholarly treatise in a field appropriate to the major or complete the alternative requirements of the non-treatise degree option. For music majors pursuing a concentration in composition, an original musical work replaces the treatise.

Further information about requirements in various areas of concentration is available from the graduate admissions coordinator.