

COMPOSITION MAJOR (B.MUS.) (124 CREDITS)

Offered by: Music Research (Schulich School of Music)
Degree: Bachelor of Music
Program credit weight: 124

Program Description

The Bachelor of Music (B.Mus.); Major in Composition program offers students a solid grounding in the basics of classical music composition for instruments and voices, with or without electronics. This is achieved through lecture courses and tutorials (private composition lessons in the third and fourth years of the program). The study of topics related to music theory helps to hone students' compositional technique, while the study of topics related to music history helps to develops students' critical thinking skills. Free elective courses allow students either to focus on an area of secondary interest as a minor degree, or to pursue a broader range of course offerings, either within or outside the Schulich School of Music. To ensure consistent performance throughout their program, students are required to achieve a minimum grade of B- in courses given by the Composition Area.

Note: For information about Fall 2025 and Winter 2026 course offerings, please check back on May 8, 2025. Until then, the "Terms offered" field will appear blank for most courses while the class schedule is being finalized.

Program Prerequisites - Freshman Program (32 credits)

32 credits selected as described below, in consultation with the Program Adviser:

22 credits of Prerequisite Courses

4 credits of Large Ensemble

6 credits of Non-Music Electives

Prerequisite Courses

22 credits, all of the courses below:

Note: Students who can demonstrate through auditions, placement tests or equivalencies that they have mastered the material in any of the courses below will be exempt from them and may proceed to more advanced courses.

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Course	Title	Credits
MUHL 186	Western Musical Traditions.	3
MUIN 180	BMus Practical Lessons 1.	3
MUIN 181	BMus Practical Lessons 2.	3
MUPD 135	Music as a Profession 1.	1
MUSP 140	Musicianship Training 1.	2
MUSP 141	Musicianship Training 2.	2
MUSP 170	Musicianship (Keyboard) 1.	1

MUSP 171	Musicianship (Keyboard) 2.	1
MUTH 150	Theory and Analysis 1.	3
MUTH 151	Theory and Analysis 2.	3

Required Courses (61 credits) Composition

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Course	Title	Credits
MUCO 241	Tonal Composition 1A.	3
MUCO 242	Tonal Composition 1B.	3
MUCO 245	Composition 1A.	2
MUCO 246	Composition 1B.	3
MUCO 261	Orchestration 1.	3
MUCO 340D1	Composition 2.	2
MUCO 340D2	Composition 2.	2
MUCO 341	Digital Studio Composition 1.	3
MUCO 342	Digital Studio Composition 2.	3
MUCO 360	Orchestration 2.	3
MUCO 440D1	Composition 3.	2
MUCO 440D2	Composition 3.	2
MUCO 460	Orchestration 3.	2
MUCO 541	Advanced Digital Studio Composition 1.	3
MUCO 575	Topics in Composition.	3

Theory

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Course	Title	Credits
MUTH 251	Theory and Analysis 4.	3
MUTH 350	Theory and Analysis 5.	3

Musicianship

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Course	Title	Credits
MUSP 240	Musicianship Training 3.	2
MUSP 241	Musicianship Training 4.	2
MUSP 346	Post-Tonal Musicianship.	2

Music History

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Course	Title	Credits
MUHL 286	Critical Thinking About Music.	3

Performance/practical lessons

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Course	Title	Credits
MUIN 280	BMus Practical Lessons 3.	2.5
MUIN 281	BMus Practical Lessons 4.	2.5
MUIN 283	BMus Concentration Final Examination.	1

Professional Development

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Course	Title	Credits
MUPD 235	Music as a Profession 2.	1

MUTH 322	Topics in Post-Tonal Analysis.	3
MUTH 528	Schenkerian Theory and Analysis.	3
MUTH 538	Mathematical Models for Musical Analysis.	3
MUTH 539	Topics in Advanced Writing Techniques.	3

Complementary Courses (13 credits)

Music Theory

3 credits from the following:

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Course	Title	Credits
MUTH 202	Modal Counterpoint 1.	3
MUTH 204	Tonal Counterpoint 1.	3

Music History

6 credits from the following:

Expand allContract all

Course	Title	Credits
MUHL 385	Early Twentieth-Century Music.	3
MUHL 391	Canadian Music.	3
MUHL 392	Music since 1945.	3

Performance/ensemble

4 credits from the following:

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Course	Title	Credits
MUEN 563	Jazz Vocal Workshop.	2
MUEN 572	Cappella Antica.	2
MUEN 573	Baroque Orchestra.	2
MUEN 587	Cappella McGill.	2
MUEN 590	McGill Wind Orchestra.	2
MUEN 592	Chamber Jazz Ensemble.	2
MUEN 593	Choral Ensembles.	2
MUEN 594	Contemporary Music Ensemble.	2
MUEN 595	Jazz Ensembles.	2
MUEN 597	McGill Symphony Orchestra.	2

Elective Courses (18 credits)

3 credits of non-Music Electives.

15 credits of Free Electives.

Recommended But Not Required Courses

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Course	Title	Credits
MUCO 542	Advanced Digital Studio Composition 2.	3
MUHL 388	Opera After 1900.	3
MUTH 302	Modal Counterpoint 2.	3
MUTH 304	Tonal Counterpoint 2.	3