



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™
DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC
Piano Area

Piano Area Handbook

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Piano Area Handbook

For Undergraduate Piano Majors and Minors

The content of this publication is to supplement the [Undergraduate Handbook](#) and [Piano Area Website](#)

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AUDITIONS

All potential music majors and minors are required to audition before appropriate faculty to determine their suitability to enter the program, participate in any ensemble, and determine eligibility for a scholarship or service award.

Although other dates are available, the department offers several audition dates, including scholarship auditions for music majors. For more information, go to [//www.music.msstate.edu/students/scholarships/](http://www.music.msstate.edu/students/scholarships/)

Piano auditions can be scheduled with the area coordinator; however, music majors and minors will also need to audition for a major ensemble (choir, band, or orchestra). It is possible to schedule your piano audition on the same day as your major ensemble audition (choir, band, or orchestra) – go to [auditions and scholarships](#).

AUDITION PROCEDURES/REQUIREMENTS

Please fill out the [audition request form](#) and send to [Dr. Rosângela Sebba](#). The MSU piano faculty offers a complimentary 30-minute lesson free of charge, for incoming piano majors. First-year students and transfers are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity to get to know the professors and their distinctive styles of teaching.

- Demonstrate major/minor scales and arpeggios (minimum of two octaves)
- Two prepared pieces of contrasting styles (memorization preferred)
- Sight-reading at an appropriate level

COURSE NUMBERS

Applied Piano Courses for Piano Majors and Minors

(Piano Minors are required to take 4 hrs. of lessons – MUA 1010, 2 semesters of 2 credit hrs. Piano Majors are required to take lessons every semester, at least two semesters in each level, 2 credit hrs. for a 1 hr. weekly lesson.)

MUA 1010	(Pre-requisite: placement audition; intermediate to advanced level). Variable credit 1 or 2 hours. Three hours practice per hour of credit. May be repeated for credit. Individual piano instruction for music and music education majors with keyboard concentration.
MUA 2010	(Prerequisite: placement audition for transfer students or students who have taken MUA 1010; intermediate to advanced level). Variable credit, 1 or 2 credit hours, Three hours practice per week per hour of credit. May be repeated for credit. Individual piano instruction for music and music education majors with keyboard concentration.
MUA 3012	(Prerequisites: Passed UDPE, BMP, BME, or BA Music Major, or permission of instructor). Four hours studio. Individual piano instruction for music and music education majors with keyboard concentration.
MUA 4012	(Prerequisites: Passed Junior Recital, BMP, BME, or BA Music Major, or permission of instructor). Four hours studio. Individual piano instruction for music and music education majors with keyboard concentration.
MUA 8440	(Prerequisite: Admission to MME Degree Program). Directed individual study of one to two credit hours. Designed to provide students with advanced, professional-level instruction on a primary or secondary instrument/voice area. Pedagogical

techniques and practices frequently used in instructing younger musicians may also be covered. Repeatable five times.

Applied Piano Course for Music Majors (Non-Piano Majors)

MUA 1020 (Pre-requisite: MU 3121 or consent of instructor). Variable credit 1 or 2 credit hours. One hour of practice per hour of credit. May be repeated for credit. Individual piano instruction for music and music education majors, instrumental, vocal and guitar concentrations.

Applied Piano Course for Non-Music Majors

MUA 1031 One credit hour for half-hour weekly individual lessons. One hour of practice per hour of credit. May be repeated for credit. Individual instruction for beginning advanced students to develop skills for personal enrichment.

Collaborative Course

MU 3201 (Prerequisite: late intermediate to early advanced piano skills. Audition required). One to five rehearsals per week. The study and performance of vocal/piano and instrumental piano repertoire. May be repeated for credit more than once.

Piano Pedagogy Course

MUE 3333 Two hours lecture. Two hours laboratory. Methods, materials, curriculum building, and philosophical bases for teaching beginning piano. Required of all students in the keyboard concentration.

Piano Literature Course

MU 4733/6733 (Prerequisite: have taken and passed MU 3333, MU 3433, and MUA 3012). Three credit hours. A historical study of how music was performed in the composer's time from earlier to later periods.

Piano Performance Practice

MU 3433 Three hours lecture. Repertoire, curriculum building, in a chronological and historical organization for teachers. Includes learning repertoire for teaching beginning, intermediate, and advanced piano. Recommended for all students in the keyboard concentration. Requires music reading and some knowledge of history.

Piano Class Courses

(Piano majors and minors should take MU 3112 and MU 3122. Though, if needed they can take MU 2111, MU 2121, MU are required to take 4 hrs. of lessons – MUA 1010, 2 semesters of 2 credit hrs. Piano Majors are required to take lessons every semester, at least two semesters in each level, 2 credit hrs. for a 1 hr. weekly lesson.)

MU 1111 Two hours laboratory. Beginning piano for non-music majors.

MU 2111 (Prerequisite: BMP, BME, or BA Music Major, or permission of instructor). Two hours studio. Beginner piano. Course material develops functional piano skills (e.g., sight reading, technical exercises, chord progressions, improvisation, repertoire pieces, ensemble playing).

MU 2121	(Prerequisite: BMP, BME, or BA Music Major, or permission of instructor, Grade of C or better in MU 2111). Two hours studio. Course material develops functional piano skills (e.g., sight reading, technical exercises, chord progressions, improvisation, repertoire pieces, ensemble playing).
MU 3111	(Prerequisite: BMP, BME, or BA Music Major, or permission of instructor, Grade of C or better in MU 2121). Two hours studio. Intermediate piano. Course material develops functional piano skills and prepares students for the piano proficiency exam (PPE) during the final examination period.
MU 3121	(Prerequisite: BMP, BME, or BA Music Major, or permission of instructor, Grade of C or better in MU 3131). Two hours studio. Course material develops functional piano skills (e.g., sight reading, technical exercises, score reading, instrumental transposition, chord progressions, improvisation, repertoire pieces, ensemble playing).
MU 3112	(Prerequisite: Prior credit or concurrent enrollment in MU 1213-1413). Two hours laboratory. Functional keyboard skills for music majors who read and play intermediate to advanced-level piano repertoire.
MU 3122	(Prerequisite: Grade of C or above in MU 3112 or equivalent, or by permission of instructor.) Four hours studio. Functional Keyboard skills for music majors who read and play intermediate to advanced-level repertoire. Develops functional piano skills (e.g., sight-reading, technique, score reading, transposition, chord progressions, improvisation, repertoire).
MU 3411	(Prerequisite: BMP, BME, or BA Music Major in Vocal Concentration and passed UDPE, or permission of instructor). Two hours studio. Intermediate piano. Course material develops functional piano skills for pre-service vocal music education teachers (e.g., technical exercises, sight reading, vocalise, vocal accompaniments, and vocal score reading).

JURY REQUIREMENTS and FORMS

All students taking applied lessons, except for non-music majors, are required to perform a jury at the conclusion of each semester, exceptions are determined by individual studios and outlined in the applied syllabus. In all cases the final jury shall constitute 25% of the semester grade. The remaining 75% of the grade will be determined by the applied teacher and may include: midterm jury, weekly grade, studio class, recital hour and/or studio recital performance, and concert attendance. The following distribution was voted on and approved by the Performance Studies Committee:

- Midterm Jury 15% (studios without a midterm jury, should apply this percentage as progress midterm grade)
- Weekly Lessons 15%
- Studio Class 10%
- Recital Hour Performance 15%
- Studio Recital 15% (studios without a semester recital, should apply this percentage as weekly lessons increasing the percentage from 15% to 30%)
- Recital/Concert Attendance 5%

Midterm Jury Procedure

The midterm jury will consist of the instructor of record only, who will provide a written evaluation of the student progress and assign a grade. The written evaluation will be shared with the applied student during the next lesson. The applied [midterm jury form](#) with evaluation and grade, will be placed in the students' files. This jury is referred to as the "reading" jury, when students are evaluated according to their reading and learning ability: correct notes, rhythms, steady tempo, continuity, evenness, dynamics and pedaling.

Final Jury Procedure

The final jury will consist of a minimum of three faculty members, who will provide a written evaluation of the student performance and assign a grade. The written evaluation will be shared with the applied student prior to the end of the semester. The applied [final jury form](#) with evaluation and grade, will be placed in the students' files. The jury is always scheduled on "reading day" — the day after classes end. The final jury is comprised of four categories:

- Technique (all major and minor scales and arpeggios, Etudes)
- Sight-reading (provided by the piano area coordinator)
- Independent Study (assigned at the beginning of the semester)
- Repertoire (2-4 pieces by different composers and musical periods. At least two pieces must be memorized for the final jury)

Freshman 1st and 2nd Semesters Jury Requirements

1. 1st Semester: At least all major scales and arpeggios, two octaves playing 16th notes; ♩ = 92. 2nd semester: Final goal is to play all parallel major and harmonic minor scales and arpeggios, four octaves playing 16th notes; ♩ = 110
2. Gurlitt, Beringer or Hanon Etudes (teacher prerogative)
3. 2-4 pieces from different composers and periods. Two pieces must be memorized for the final jury (teacher prerogative). Bach Inventions or Prelude & Fugue; Classical sonata movement; 20th century short piece
4. An independent study piece determined by the area faculty, to be given to student at the beginning of the semester
5. The second semester jury serves as a level change, after instructor's permission

Sophomore 1st and 2nd Semesters Jury Requirements

1. All parallel major and harmonic minor scales and arpeggios, four octaves playing 16th notes; ♩ = 120
2. An etude of choice in consultation with your instructor (see handout provided with Czerny and Clementi. Chopin and Liszt are suggested for advanced students or Junior/Senior years)
3. 2-4 pieces from different composers and periods. Two pieces must be memorized for the final jury (teacher prerogative). Bach Prelude & Fugue or Baroque Sonata; Classical sonata movement continuing from previous year; Romantic work
4. An independent study piece determined by the area faculty, to be given to students at the beginning of the semester. Duets are encouraged.
5. The second semester jury serves as a level change, after instructor's permission, and presentation of the [Upper Division Proficiency Exam](#)

Junior 1st and 2nd Semesters Jury Requirements

1. All contrary major and harmonic minor scales and arpeggios, four octaves playing 16th notes; ♩ = 120
2. An etude of choice in consultation with your instructor (finish handout provided with Czerny and Clementi. Chopin and Liszt are suggested for advanced students or Junior/Senior years)
3. 2-4 pieces from different composers and periods. Two pieces must be memorized for the final jury (teacher prerogative). Bach Prelude & Fugue or Baroque Sonata; a complete Classical sonata finish from previous year; Romantic work; 20th century work
4. An independent study piece determined by the area faculty, to be given to students at the beginning of the semester. Accompaniments/chamber music are encouraged
5. By the 2nd semester and after instructor's permission, students should be done with presentation of the [Upper Division Proficiency Exam](#)

Senior 1st and 2nd Semesters Jury Requirements

1. All contrary major and harmonic minor scales and arpeggios, four octaves playing 16th notes; ♩ = 120. Or, thirds and sixths scales, four octaves playing 16th notes; ♩ = 120
2. An etude of choice in consultation with your instructor (Chopin, Liszt, or other composers)
3. 8. 2-4 pieces from different composers and periods. Two pieces must be memorized for the final jury (teacher prerogative). Bach Prelude & Fugue or Baroque Sonata; a complete Classical sonata finish from previous year; Romantic work; 20th century work; chamber music
4. An independent study piece determined by the area faculty, to be given to student at the beginning of the semester. Accompaniments/chamber music are encouraged
5. [Recital](#) should be given on the last semester prior to student teach or graduation

PIANO PROFICIENCY EXAM

The purpose of the exam is to ensure competence in writing, public speaking, and performance, all of which are necessary skills for success as professional musicians and educators. Yes, all music majors are required to take this exam before enrolling in a 3000 lesson and some upper academic classes.

Policy:

This exam will be given as the final exam for MU 3111 and MU 3122, or on a needed basis at the end of each semester. It is recommended that transfer students take the exam prior to or during the first week of class of their first semester at MSU. Three piano faculty will grade each area of the exam "Pass" or "Fail." At least 2 "Pass" grades per question must be given for a student to pass. *Students must pass each area of the exam with a score of 70% or above. Students who fail any area will be required to retake the exam in entirety and enroll in an appropriate piano course recommended by the faculty members evaluating the exam.*

The Piano Proficiency Exam requirements are based on the third semester of piano class, MU 3111 and MU 3122. Details of the exam can be found on the [Undergraduate Handbook](#)

RECITAL AND PROJECT SCHEDULING, GUIDELINES and REQUIREMENTS

BME students are required to prepare a degree recital as fulfillment of the degree requirements, and the recital must be completed prior to student internship. BA students are required to prepare a degree recital

or project presentation as fulfillment of the degree requirement prior to graduation. Information about the project presentation is listed following degree recital information. Recitals have a minimum of 30 minutes of music. BM students are required to prepare a Junior recital (30 minutes of memorized works) and a Senior recital (60 minutes of memorized works) as fulfillment of the degree requirement prior to graduation.

DEGREE RECITAL AND/OR BA PROJECT

There are three important steps, and it is imperative to follow them to succeed:

- [Recital form](#)
- [Recital hearing form](#)
- [Recital request form](#)
- [Recital template](#) (Word doc.)

The purpose of the recital forms is to ensure that all the items listed below are available:

- The hearing and recital location(s)
- Date and time are not conflicting with other music events (check the Department Calendar)
- All committee members are available for the hearing and recital
- The CP is available for the hearing and recital (when and if applicable)
- All other performers are available for the hearing and recital

After the requested information is collected with all of the required signatures, the forms will be placed in the students' files.

DEGREE RECITAL AND PROJECT HEARING

The purpose of the hearing is to ensure that students are appropriately and sufficiently prepared for public performance and to provide constructive suggestions. Hearings are not required for non-degree recitals. The Recital hearing form should be completed and provided by the applied teacher the day of the hearing.

- The recital hearing for students preparing a degree recital must occur at least three calendar weeks before and not more than four calendar weeks prior to the recital performance date
- The student must provide three copies of a draft recital program
- The student and studio professor are responsible for providing the program and making any changes suggested by the recital committee. The final program should be submitted to the office personnel for printing two weeks before the recital date. Office personnel in charge of recitals will schedule student workers for stage management and program distribution.
- Students are encouraged to perform their entire program for the hearing, with the approval of the applied teacher, committee, and collaborative pianist as applicable.
- If the entire program will not be performed for the hearing, students may begin with a composition or movement of choice and faculty members will request performances of additional repertoire from the recital program.
- All performers included in the recital must be present at the hearing; exceptions should be discussed and approved by the applied teacher and committee members prior to the recital hearing.
- At the completion of the hearing, performers will be dismissed, and the faculty committee will vote (pass/fail) on the hearing. At least two "pass" votes are required to pass the hearing. The vote and comments will be recorded on the recital hearing form which should be placed in the student's file

- If the hearing is not passed, it may be reattempted not less than four weeks or more than six weeks after the failed hearing. The recital date should be rescheduled following the same procedure and the Calendar Coordinator should be notified as soon as possible

BA PROJECT PRESENTATION

The BA project presentation consists of two parts: a research paper and a public presentation. The BA project paper should:

- Focus on a clearly defined topic, chosen by the student with the advice of the project advisor and input from the project committee (analogous to a recital committee)
- Clearly expressed in the form of a 250-word abstract, which, in turn, is approved of by the student's project committee no later than the third week of the semester
- Consist of at least 2500 words, exclusive of footnotes
- Use 12-point plain Times New Roman font for the text and author's name, 14-point bold Times New Roman for the subheadings, and 18-point bold Times New Roman for the title, with double spaced text, one-inch margins, and page numbers centered in the footer
- Contain at least five professional-quality musical examples, electronically inserted in the paper and headed by captions that specify which measures of the piece they represent
- Reflect the reading of at least five sources, drawn from books or articles, or approved internet sources, which are documented via footnoted references in the paper
- Use the format decided according to the advisor's preferred style
- Contain music terminology acquired in music theory and history courses, as well as through applied study, expressed within grammatically complete and correct sentences – all of which will be checked by the student for spelling before submission
- Submit the draft to the applied instructor no later than the tenth week of the semester and subsequently revised according to the applied instructor's suggestions regarding content, grammar, and spelling
- Submit the final paper to the student's jury members no later than one week before the student's presentation

The BA project presentation should:

- Contain the essence of the student's paper in a 25-minute verbal overview, given from an outline, before an assembled audience of the project committee and students
- Include a handout that prints the paper's most instructive illustrations
- Utilize a PowerPoint presentation that incorporates audio and visual illustration
- Conclude with questions posed by the audience and answered by the student

The BA project - paper and presentation should:

- Be voted on by the committee members
- Pass with a majority of positive votes

DEPARTMENT RECITALS

1. All piano majors are required to attend masterclasses and workshops related to the area

2. All piano majors are required to attend all recitals presented by piano majors
3. All piano majors are required to attend **ALL** piano faculty and piano guest artist recitals

CONCERT ATTENDANCE EXPECTATION

All full-time undergraduate piano majors and minors must demonstrate a persistent pattern of professional and musical growth through regular attendance and support for faculty and student recitals, concerts, and academic presentations on- and off-campus. 5% of your final studio grade is concert attendance and students should attend events in their entirety, save a program with a signature of a faculty member at the end of the events.

Your instructor will select events to attend besides the ones required for the piano area. Refer often to the [Department of Music Calendar](#) for performances updates. As another source is the [Lyceum Series](#).

CONCERTO COMPETITION

The competition is open to any music major, secondary major, or minor studying in the Department of Music at Mississippi State University. Performers must be currently enrolled as a student at Mississippi State University for both the competition and the performance.

Instrumentalists will perform one movement, with piano accompaniment, from a concerto for their instrument and orchestra or a concert piece, with piano accompaniment, for their instrument and orchestra. Vocalists will perform, with piano accompaniment, an aria from an opera, or any work originally composed for voice with orchestral accompaniment. All works must be for solo instrument or vocal soloist and orchestra. No double concertos or vocal duets, etc. will be permitted. In addition, each participant may only enter one performance per year. Performers must provide two scores or photocopies of the score of their piece for the judges for both rounds. Instructors will submit students' applications by email.

CHANGE OF STUDIO POLICY

To request a change of studio teacher assignment, the student must follow the protocol below:

1. Try to resolve any problems with the major teacher directly by discussing your concerns
2. Schedule a face-to-face meeting with the Area Coordinator to discuss why you wish to change teachers
3. Area faculty will meet to discuss the request and determine if a change is warranted

OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

Studio Classes: When possible, studio classes are scheduled weekly to provide students with the opportunity to perform for each other and other guests. Ask your teacher for studio times and schedule.

Practice Rooms: 2 practice rooms with Steinways A are designated for piano majors and minors. Food and drinks are not allowed inside the room, or close to the pianos. Always close the lid and place the cover after practicing. Practice rooms are checked out on a first come first served basis with an ID card.

Required Equipment: You are responsible for providing a metronome, recording device(s), and scores.

Juries, Performances and Concert Attendance Dress Code: The purpose for the dress code is so the audience can stay focused on the music during the performance and will not be distracted by inappropriate attire, showing professional behavior and respect to the audience. The dress code's purpose is to create the best-looking and cleanness appearance. Therefore, if a musician comes to a concert or jury in inappropriate attire, he or she may be asked to change before being allowed on stage.