

Music, Theater and Sound Studies

Music and Theater (MUSC and THEA)

Dr. Mark A. Pottinger, Ph.D. Musicology
Chair of the Department

The Department of Music and Theater offers a Major in Sound Studies and Minors in both Music and in Theater.

The Sound Studies Major presents a critical approach to the act of listening that is informed by a study of the socio-economic forces that shape our world. Combined with a larger liberal arts curriculum, sound studies redefines traditional music study (i.e., historical musicology, music theory and composition, music performance studies) by integrating it with the science of sound (i.e., music technology, music recording and editing, and the science of acoustics). The core areas of the major include music theory and analysis; music history and culture, including the history of audio technology; performance studies via a particular instrument such as piano, voice, or guitar; digital audio recording; and sound design. The investigation of how sound and by extension music influences who we are and what we desire to be is the main curricular focus of this program, which thus aligns sound studies with the college's mission of social justice and community engagement.

Over the course of a 30-credit program of study, students will develop a critical awareness of the history of music and music recording technology and their impact on society; create, capture, and edit sound data in order to cultivate and apply new approaches to music performance, research, and education; and support collaborations between music, science, and technology.

Major in Sound Studies Requirements

Majors in Sound Studies must take a minimum of 30 credits in music and audio taken from the following five areas:

Music Theory: 6 credits

MUSC 220	Fundamentals of Music Theory	3
MUSC 320	Advanced Music Theory	3
Total Credits		6

*Students entering with AP Music Theory credit (4 or 5 test score) can satisfy the course requirement of MUSC 220.

Music History, Culture and Analysis: 9 credits

MUSC 290	Early Music History: Antiquity to 1800	3
MUSC 300	History of Rock and Roll	3
MUSC 310	History of the Broadway Musical	3
MUSC 323	Music & Romanticism	3
MUSC 325	Modern Music & The Avant-Garde	3

MUSC 330	History of Jazz	3
MUSC 380	History of Sound Recording & Audio Technology	3

Performance (Piano, Guitar, or Other): 3 credits*

MUSC 208 or MUSC 209	Piano Skills and Techniques Guitar Skills and Techniques	3
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*Three semesters of MUSC131, MUSC 132 or MUSC133 (Ensemble Performance with instrumental lessons) OR MUSC 129/130 (Vocal Instruction) may be used to satisfy the 3-credit performance requirement. Although only 3 credits are required in performance, Sound Studies Majors are encouraged to continue their study of voice, piano or guitar in more advanced areas, including MUSC 258 or MUSC 259 and MUSC 308 or MUSC 309, or MUSC 410 (Independent Study).

Digital Audio and Sound Studies: 9 credits

MUSC 390	Digital Audio Recording and Editing	3
MUSC 393	Audio Mixing & Music Prod	3
MUSC 395	Acoustics & Sound Control	3
MUSC 375	Internship <small>At a Music Recording Studio can satisfy 3 credits</small>	3

Senior Project/Capstone: 3 credits*

MUSC 405	Senior Seminar: Contemporary Sound Design (Prerequisites: MUSC 380, MUSC 393, MUSC 395)	3
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A minimum final grade of C is required for courses to satisfy all Major requirements. Majors must have a contract signed and approved by the Department Chair no later than their junior year.

Minors in Music and Theater

The minor in Music and the minor in Theater are both designed to supplement majors in numerous disciplines. In addition to examining broad historical and cultural contexts, courses provide opportunities for individual creativity and performance as well as an introduction to the theory and technology shaping contemporary theater and music today. To fulfill certain areas of the minor, students may elect to participate in one of the many award-winning ensembles on campus, including the MC Orchestra, MC Jazz Band, MC Singers, MC Pep Band, MC Pipes and Drums Corps, and the MC Players (see Clubs and Organizations (<https://manhattan.edu/life-at-manhattan/clubs-organizations/?category=All&letter=All&pageSize=10&pageIndex=1>)).

A minor in Music or in Theater is an ideal choice for a variety of careers. In addition to preparing students for advanced training in music and theatrical performance, the minors offer career opportunities for actors, historians, sociologists, theater managers, dramaturges, psychologists, teachers, playwrights, copyright lawyers, non-for-profit business managers, journalists, librarians, sound engineers, stage designers, and advertising executives. Minors in the Department of Music and Theater may take advantage of several internship programs in New York City that give students an introduction to the professional working environment in both the music and theater industries.

Minor in Music Requirements

MUSC 150	Roots: Music	3
or MUSC 216	Introduction to World Music	
MUSC 208	Piano Skills and Techniques *	3
or MUSC 209	Guitar Skills and Techniques	
MUSC 220	Fundamentals of Music Theory	3
Electives (300 Level or above)		6
Total Credits		15

*Three semesters of MUSC 131 (MC Singers), MUSC 132 (MC Orchestra), or MUSC 133 (MC Jazz Band), may serve as a substitute.

Minor in Theater Requirements

THEA 190	Acting Skills and Techniques	3
THEA 260	Introduction to Theater	3
MUSC 310	History of the Broadway Musical	3
or ENGL 400	The Theater and the City	
Electives (at least 3 credits at 300 level or above)		6
Total Credits		15

Beyond the full list of three-credit THEA courses listed in the course catalog, ENGL 205 (Reading & Writing the Theater), ENGL 276 (Introduction to Drama), ENGL 329 (Shakespeare: Comedies, Histories, and *Hamlet*), ENGL 330 (Shakespeare II), ENGL 361 (Masterpieces of British Drama), ENGL 381 (Masterpieces of American Drama), and three semesters of THEA 134 (MC Players) may serve as a Theater elective.

A minimum final grade of C is required for courses to satisfy all minor requirements. Minors must have a contract signed and approved by the Department Chair.