

Black Sacred Music (BLSM)

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Degree Conferred:

M.M. in Black Sacred Music (MUSC)

The Master of Music in Black Sacred Music is a three-year, summers-only program housed within the Department of Music. The program offers a unique opportunity for advanced study in Black Sacred Music and its derivatives. Because American music largely finds its roots in Black music, the preservation, proliferation, production and research of this music is included in the study of music in higher education. The curriculum is designed to equip students with the essential tools needed for professional careers that involve the presentation, teaching, and research of Black sacred music. Program participants will receive interdisciplinary training and significant internship opportunities consistent with the work experiences associated with Black sacred music spaces and related industries. The program prepares students for top careers in Black sacred music, and for music study at the doctoral level.

Requirements for M.M. in Black Sacred Music

Admission to Program: Application for admission to the M.M. program in Black Sacred Music, is a 2-step process. Each applicant must:

1. Apply to the Graduate School at the University of Arkansas (application.uark.edu): deadline of January 15.
University of Arkansas requirements are:
 - a. A baccalaureate or post-baccalaureate degree
 - b. GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale in the last of an accredited degree
 - c. TOEFL/IELTS/PTE-A scores (for international students), as detailed in the Graduate Catalog (<http://catalog.uark.edu/graduatecatalog/admissions/#englishlanguageproficiencyrequirementstext>).
2. The prospective student must schedule an interview with the Program Director to determine the best degree plan and cognate area.

Black Sacred Music Courses (18 hours)

MUSC 5253	Research Methods in Black Sacred Music	3
MUHS 5263	History of Black Sacred Music	3
MUSC 5773	Special Topics in Black Sacred Music	3
MUSC 5212	Hymnology	2

MUSC 5222	Theological Perspectives and The Black Church Experience	2
MUSC 5232	Seminar in Worship Arts	2
MUSC 5102	Black Gospel Conducting Methods	2
MUSC 5111L	Black Gospel Conducting Methods Lab	1

Supportive Studies in Music (12 hours)

MUHS 5973	Seminar in Bibliography and Methods of Research	3
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Choose a total of 3 hours from the following: 3

MUSC 5273 Pop Music of the African Diaspora

MUTH 5723 Advanced Jazz Analysis

MUAC 5482 Innovators of Jazz Seminar

MUAC 5421 Advanced Studies in Improvisation

Choose one Capstone Option for a total of 6 hours: 6

MUAP 521V Graduate Recital II

Electives (6 hours)

Choose a minimum of 6 hours from the following: 6

MUSC 5983 The Black Messiah: Music, Religion, and Activism

MUAP 510V Applied Voice/Instrument

MUSC 5011 Gospel Songwriting and Arranging

MUIN 5102 Production Internship

MUEN 5271 Advanced Jazz Combo

MUSC 5242 Vocal Literature of Black and African Diasporic Composers

MUEN 5421 Inspirational Chorale

MUTH 5803 Advanced Jazz Composition and Arranging

MUEN 5251 Arkansas Soul Band

MUIN 5563 Artist Development

MUSC 5421 Gospel Improvisation

Total Hours 36

- 1 Students must pass with a "B" or higher to enroll in subsequent MUHS courses.
- 2 May be taken across multiple semesters until a minimum of 6 hours is completed.
- 3 May be taken across multiple semesters until a minimum of 6 hours is completed.
- 4 May be taken across multiple semesters until a minimum of 5 hours is completed.

All M.M. candidates in the Department of Music are required to take comprehensive written examinations followed by an oral examination after the completion of coursework. These exams are evaluated by a three-faculty committee chaired by one of the student's primary instructors. Students electing the recital capstone option do not need to have the same committee evaluate the recital and the comprehensive exam. Once the student passes the written portion of the exam, they proceed to the oral portion. A student must receive a "pass" on both portions of the comprehensive examination in order to successfully graduate. A student who does not satisfactorily pass the comprehensive examination on the first try may be given one opportunity to re-write the exam or portions thereof, at the discretion of the committee. In the time between the first and second attempts, the student may receive direction from the committee, as the committee deems appropriate. Failure to pass the comprehensive examination on the second attempt will result in removal from the program.

The comprehensive exams are intended to demonstrate synthesis across musical subjects and as such, generally include music history, pedagogy, theory, instrument-specific ideas, musical critique, and research skills. These evaluations are further meant to highlight the growing sense of artistic and scholarly identity expected of professional musicians with formal training. Students must integrate knowledge gained from the program of study, the human experience with music, artistic and cultural traditions, and theoretical and analytical concepts to produce the written work. The oral defense portion is designed to challenge students' ability to converse and argue intellectual ideas in music across the range of subjects described above. Furthermore, students' artistic identity is contingent upon the ability to produce and receive criticism — the oral defense provides an important experience for students to demonstrate those skills. As such, this requirement fits into the objectives of the M.M. program as well as larger institutional objectives for graduate education.

All M.M. students in Black Sacred Music are required to complete a capstone project in one of the following forms:

- A student may prepare and perform one recital MUAP 5211, which will be given in the final summer semester of the program. This recital is evaluated by a jury of three faculty chaired by the student's primary applied instructor. The student receives a grade for this recital, and it accounts for 1 credit hour. A grade of C or better must be ascribed to the recital to constitute a "pass."# Prior to the recital, a hearing (in the form of a dress rehearsal) may be scheduled at the instructor's discretion to ensure the candidate's recital presentation is prepared.# A student who does not pass the hearing may be asked to cancel or postpone the recital at the discretion of the chair of the student's committee. The purpose of the recital requirements is the demonstration of technical achievements and an artistic command of key repertoire and genres associated with Black Sacred Music. Through the graduate recital process, students must practice leadership skills, rehearsal techniques, critical evaluation of their own performances, and showcase professional presentation of material for an audience. This serves the objectives of the M.M. in Black Sacred Music, as this program is primarily focused on elevating students to a level of skill consistent with professional practice or further academic study at the doctoral level.
- A student may complete a worship planning project (for which the student would register for an independent study, MUSC 605V) designed in conjunction with the student's major professor. This project should be a 4-year strategic plan for worship in a Black worship space, following the liturgical calendar, complete with repertoire, creative arts, and special worship elements. The project should also reflect at least one major concert presentation in each calendar year (e.g., a Christmas Concert, Juneteenth Concert, Good Friday Cantata, etc.) and have a plan of execution. Students choosing this capstone option must enroll in 6 hours of MUSC 605V during the entire course of study.
- A student may complete a written thesis, with guidance from the student's major professor. The thesis may be on a topic of the student's choice and should contribute to the body of research in Black Sacred Music. The thesis will be defended and must meet the standards of publication for the University of Arkansas repository for theses and dissertations. Students choosing this capstone option must enroll in 6 hours of MUSC 600V during the entire course of study.

The Master of Music in Black Sacred Music is intended as a summer program. Courses will be offered during each summer and require a minimum of three summers (semesters) for completion. In the year of

matriculation, the incoming student would begin the degree program at whichever summer semester is being offered that year. Students will typically enroll in 12 hours each summer term.

A typical three-semester plan for a student is indicated below:

First Year	Units Summer
MUHS 5973 Seminar in Bibliography and Methods of Research	3
MUSC 5253 Research Methods in Black Sacred Music	3
MUSC 5212 Hymnology	2
Choose one of the following courses:	2-3
MUSC 5273 Pop Music of the African Diaspora	
MUAC 5482 Innovators of Jazz Seminar	
MUTH 5723 Advanced Jazz Analysis	
Electives or Capstone Option	1-2
Year Total:	12
Second Year	Units Summer
MUHS 5263 History of Black Sacred Music	3
MUSC 5222 Theological Perspectives and The Black Church Experience	2
MUSC 5102 Black Gospel Conducting Methods	2
Choose one of the following options:	3
MUAC 5482 Innovators of Jazz Seminar & MUAC 5421 Advanced Studies in Improvisation	
Capstone Option	
Electives	2
Year Total:	12
Third Year	Units Summer
MUSC 5773 Special Topics in Black Sacred Music	3
MUSC 5232 Seminar in Worship Arts	2
MUSC 5111L Black Gospel Conducting Methods Lab	1
Electives	3
Capstone Option	3
Year Total:	12

Total Units in Sequence:

36

Courses

MUSC 5011. Gospel Songwriting and Arranging. 1 Hour.

Basic songwriting styles and techniques specific to Gospel Music, focusing on melody writing and lyric structure. (Typically offered: Irregular)

MUSC 5102. Black Gospel Conducting Methods. 2 Hours.

Instruction in fundamental conducting gesture indicative of the Black Gospel Music styles. Includes appropriate posture, the use of the gesture to emphasize syllabic stress, expressive and independent use of both hands, beat patterns, cueing, and control of tempo, dynamics and phrase shaping. Corequisite: MUSC 5111L. (Typically offered: Fall, Spring and Summer)

MUSC 5111L. Black Gospel Conducting Methods Lab. 1 Hour.

Lab instruction in the fundamentals of effective teaching pedagogy with an emphasis in Black Sacred Music. Corequisite: MUSC 5102. (Typically offered: Fall, Spring and Summer)

MUSC 5212. Hymnology. 2 Hours.

Historical study of the origins and purposes of the hymns of the church, including examination of hymns as literature, theological expression, devotional material, and musical expression. (Typically offered: Fall, Spring and Summer)

MUSC 5222. Theological Perspectives and The Black Church Experience. 2 Hours.

Explores the ministry of the Black church. Examines its underlying theological rationale and practical implications for those aspiring to a vocation in the Black church. Emphasizes the perspective of cultural pluralism in the Black experience. (Typically offered: Fall, Spring and Summer)

MUSC 5232. Seminar in Worship Arts. 2 Hours.

Introductory study of creative worship and technologies used in worship ministry. Lighting design, audio and video production, presentation software, movement, staging, worship leadership, worship planning, and a variety of multi-media possibilities will be explored. (Typically offered: Fall, Spring and Summer)

MUSC 5242. Vocal Literature of Black and African Diasporic Composers. 2 Hours.

An in-depth survey of vocal music of African American and the African diasporic composers highlighting its history and vocal literature. (Typically offered: Irregular)

MUSC 5253. Research Methods in Black Sacred Music. 3 Hours.

Research methods for evaluating primary genres of Black music, from the slave trade to Black music futures. Emphasis is placed on listening to and interpreting the musical, sonic, and silent features of traditions and examining the ways in which they are interrelated and are cultural objects for appropriation. (Typically offered: Fall, Spring and Summer)

MUSC 5273. Pop Music of the African Diaspora. 3 Hours.

Explores various forms of popular musical expression from the African Diaspora as social practice across diverse locations, media, and societies. Examines the participatory, presentational, and political components of music making. (Typically offered: Fall, Spring and Summer)

MUSC 5421. Gospel Improvisation. 1 Hour.

Explores Gospel/Jazz chord voicings and interpretations of melodies and phrases rooted in any of the Gospel music-influenced styles. (Typically offered: Irregular)

MUSC 5773. Special Topics in Black Sacred Music. 3 Hours.

Subject matter not covered in other courses including specific performance techniques, in-depth research into various elements of theological and worship practice, and instructor-specific expertise. (Typically offered: Summer)

MUSC 5983. The Black Messiah: Music, Religion, and Activism. 3 Hours.

Considering Black religious traditions and the evolution of African American oral traditions, explores the creative work of African descendants who have sought to address oppression, white supremacy, gender inequity, socio-economic disinheritance, and political subjugation. Juxtaposes religious, performative, symbolic, and ritual perspectives on the study of Black messianic musical performance. (Typically offered: Irregular)

MUSC 600V. Master's Thesis. 2-6 Hour.

Preparation of a master's thesis as partial fulfillment of the requirement for the master's degree. (Typically offered: Irregular) May be repeated for degree credit.

MUSC 605V. Independent Study in Black Sacred Music. 1-3 Hour.

Individually designed and conducted worship planning project under the guidance of a faculty member. (Typically offered: Irregular) May be repeated for up to 6 hours of degree credit.

MUSC 700V. Doctoral Dissertation. 3-18 Hour.

Dissertation. (Typically offered: Irregular) May be repeated for degree credit.