

STUDENT SUCCESS

The M.M. in Music Theory can be undertaken on its own as preparation for doctoral study in music theory. It can also be earned concurrently with a Master's or Doctoral degree in performance or composition, serving as a secondary credential for the many university positions that combine theory teaching and applied teaching.

Music Theory graduates of Michigan State University have gained admission to Ph.D. programs in Music Theory at prestigious schools such as the Eastman School of Music, Indiana University, Florida State University, McGill University, Ohio State University, and the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. Dual-degree students have gone on to teach music theory alongside their primary area of expertise at institutions such as SUNY--Potsdam, Oklahoma State University, North Dakota State University, Bradley University, the Interlochen Arts Academy, Xavier University, Michigan State University, Truman State University, Hong Kong Baptist University, Grand Valley State University, Grand Rapids Community College, and Del Mar College. 📍

OUR CURRICULUM INCLUDES:

- Pedagogy of Music Theory I & II
- Research Methods
- Analysis Seminars
- Modal and Tonal Counterpoint
- 20th- and 21st-Century Techniques
- Keyboard Skills
- Proseminar in Music Theory
- Research Seminars (rotating topics)

Each student completes a capstone assignment consisting of two research papers with accompanying public presentations, a formal teaching demonstration, and a keyboard-skills examination. Upon graduation, students have expertise and experience as both practitioners and teachers of music theory.

MUSIC THEORY FACULTY

Students grow as scholars, teachers, and professionals as part of a supportive cohort and through one-on-one mentoring with faculty members.

The music theory faculty consists of well-respected scholars who publish and present actively in a variety of research areas. At the same time, pedagogical excellence is a signature focus of the music theory area. The faculty includes winners of university teaching awards and prestigious fellowships.

Mentoring is a key component of the Master's program. In course work and independent studies, students develop research projects that they present first at the MSU music theory colloquium and then at graduate-student, regional, and national conferences. Several of these projects have turned into peer-refereed publications as well.



DR. MICHAEL CALLAHAN
Interests: Theory pedagogy, the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, texted music.



DR. RICHARD DESINORD
Interests: Gospel music, neo-soul music, music of Robert Glasper.



DR. PATRICK JOHNSON
Interests: Performance and analysis, form, film music, Galant style.



DR. GORDON SLY
Interests: Schenkerian analysis, analytical process, form, Britten.



DR. CARA STROUD
Interests: Narrative theory, 20th- and 21st-century music, popular music.



DR. JAMES SULLIVAN
Interests: Rhythm and meter, contemporary music, art song, identity, performance and analysis.

