

**DISTINGUISHED RESIDENCY IN MUSIC THEORY PEDAGOGY**

# “What I Know Now: Reflections on Music Theory Pedagogy”

## Dr. Elizabeth West Marvin

**EASTMAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC  
Professor and Chair of Music Theory**

**Wednesday, January 31, 5:15 p.m.**

**Hart Recital Hall, Music Building**

Free and open to the public.



### **BIO**

Elizabeth West Marvin is Professor of Music Theory at the Eastman School of Music and Chair of the Music Theory Department; she holds a secondary appointment in the Department of Brain and Cognitive Sciences at the University of Rochester. Her research interests include the study of cognitive differences among musicians, non-musicians, and absolute-pitch listeners; pedagogical implications of music-cognitive research; and comparisons between language and music processing. Dr. Marvin is a past president of the national Society for Music Theory and the Music Theory Society of New York State. In 2013, Dr. Marvin was awarded the Gail Boyd de Stwolinski Prize for Lifetime Achievement in Music Theory Teaching and Scholarship. In addition to her research publications, she is coauthor of three textbooks *The Musician's Guide to Theory and Analysis*, *The Musician's Guide to Fundamentals*, and *The Musician's Guide to Aural Skills* (W.W. Norton)

### **ABSTRACT:**

“What I Know Now: Reflections on Music Theory Pedagogy” Ellyn Spragin’s 2008 book, *What I Know Now: Letters to My Younger Self*, provides a starting point for this talk that reflects on my personal experiences in 30 years of music theory teaching. For roughly 20 of those years, I have taught a music theory pedagogy course—a fertile field for my own learning as I observe young teachers hone their craft. I present some “punchlines” of that course, and demonstrate how what I learned through trial and-error, experimentation, and observation of others has a body of pedagogical and cognitive literature behind it. I conclude with a letter to my younger self.

