

MUSICAL THEATRE: MUSICAL DIRECTION

Overview

The Musical Theatre: Musical Direction major at Rider prepares students for a professional career in musical theatre, working as a music director or in other aspects that focus on the music side of the industry. This program is provided in a nurturing liberal arts environment on Rider's campus, just one hour from New York City.

Degree Offered

- B.M. in Musical Theatre: Musical Direction

Contact

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Associated Department: Performing Arts (<https://www.rider.edu/academics/colleges-schools/college-arts-sciences/communication-media-arts/faculty-departments/performing-arts/>)

Related Programs

- Arts and Entertainment Industries Management (<http://catalog.rider.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/majors-minors-certificates/arts-entertainment-ind/>)
- Dance (<http://catalog.rider.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/majors-minors-certificates/dance-ba/>)
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General Requirements

B.M. - Musical Theatre majors must earn a minimum grade of "B-" each semester in the primary applied music field in order to make satisfactory progress. If a grade of "C+" or lower is earned, the student must repeat the semester.

Students must meet attendance and performance requirements in studio performance classes and Musical Theatre Lab.

All students must present a senior piano primary applied recital after qualifying according to applied area standards. Students must enroll for primary applied study during the term when any recital is to be presented unless specifically excused from this requirement by the Associate Dean.

Applied Music – Piano Primary Study

Piano primary students in the B.M.-Music Theatre degree must register for two credits of applied music in each semester of study, to a maximum of eight semesters. The section number corresponds to the instructor with whom the student will study.

Musical Theatre Lab

All majors are required to attend a weekly musical theatre lab during every semester of enrollment. The lab supplements curricular instruction with presentations by guest artists, managers, agents, and casting directors. This interface provides each student with an opportunity for interaction with some of the most important professionals in the musical theatre business.

Performing Opportunities at Rider University

The musical theatre program offers three fully staged productions led by faculty and experienced and notable directors, conductors and choreographers from the professional community. The Department of Performing Arts also offers a well-established theatre program that provides additional performing opportunities in three major productions. Majors also are encouraged to participate in student-directed and produced events, presented each year on both campuses. The Department of Performance Studies offers two Opera Theater productions each year. All productions are open by audition to all Rider University students except first-semester freshmen.

Code	Title	Credits
Choirs and Conducting		
MTR 105	Musical Theatre Practicum (2 terms, 1 credit each term)	2
CR 215	Fundamentals of Conducting	3
CR 315	Techniques of Conducting	3
Applied Music		
PI 513	Jazz Keyboard Techniques and Improvisation	3
PI 168A	Applied Piano (8 semester)	16
VC 103	Voice Secondary (4 terms)	4
Theory and Music History		
MUS 106	Survey of Music History II	3
MUS 110 & 110L	Music Theory I and Music Theory I Lab	4
MUS 111 & 111L	Music Theory II and Music Theory II Lab	4
MUS 210 or TH 431	Music Theory III Form and Analysis	3
MTR 120	Hist of American Music Theater	3
THE 105	Theatre History to 1700	3
THE 106	Theater History Since 1700	3
Select two of the following: ¹		6
TH 253	Orchestration	
TH 255	Song Writing	
TH 259	Electroacoustic Music	
TH 424	Choral and Instrumental Arranging	
Professional Studies: DANCE		
MTR 109	Ballet I	1
MTR 309	Jazz I	1
Professional Studies: ACTING		
THE 107	Acting I: Intro to Acting	3
MTR 317	MT Auditions:Preparation/Tech	3
MTR 215	MT Performance: Song as Text	3
Professional Studies: MUSICAL THEATRE		
MTR 111	Musical Theatre Lab (each semester enrolled) ²	0

MTR 218	Musical Theatre Scene Study I	3
MTR 255	Musical Theatre Repertoire I	3
MTR 256	Musical Theatre Repertoire II	3
MTR 493	Music Theater Production	1
Free electives		6
Total Credits		87

¹ MUS 210 is a prerequisite for all four courses.

² Double majors should consult their advisors to determine the most pedagogically appropriate lab to attend. Students should not register in more than one lab per semester. Students are required to complete at least three lab sections in each of their majors before graduation. Students must meet the minimum lab requirements for each of their majors.

Additional Requirements

- Sophomore Review
- Piano Juries
- Senior Piano Recital

The following educational plan is provided as a sample only. Rider students who do not declare a major during their freshman year; who are in a Continuing Education Program; who change their major; or who transfer to Rider may follow a different plan to ensure a timely graduation. Each student, with guidance from their academic advisor, will develop a personalized educational plan.

Course	Title	Credits
Year 1		
Fall Semester		
CMP 115 or CMP 120	Intro to Expository Writing or Seminar in Writing and Rhetoric	3
MTR 105	Musical Theatre Practicum	1
MTR 109	Ballet I	1
MTR 111	Musical Theatre Lab	0
MUS 110	Music Theory I	3
MUS 110L	Music Theory I Lab	1
PI 168A	Applied Piano	2
THE 107	Acting I: Intro to Acting	3
General Education Course		3
Semester Credit Hours		17
Spring Semester		
CMP 120 or CMP 125	Seminar in Writing and Rhetoric or Seminar in Writing and Research	3
MTR 105	Musical Theatre Practicum	1
MTR 111	Musical Theatre Lab	0
MUS 106	Survey of Music History II	3
MUS 111	Music Theory II	3
MUS 111L	Music Theory II Lab	1
PI 168A	Applied Piano	2
General Education Course		3
Semester Credit Hours		16

Year 2

Fall Semester

CR 215	Fundamentals of Conducting	3
MTR 111	Musical Theatre Lab	0
MTR 215	MT Performance: Song as Text	3
PI 168A	Applied Piano	2
MUS 210 or TH 431	Music Theory III or Form and Analysis	3
THE 105	Theatre History to 1700	3

Semester Credit Hours 14

Spring Semester

MTR 111	Musical Theatre Lab	0
MTR 218	Musical Theatre Scene Study I	3
MTR 309	Jazz I	1
THE 106	Theater History Since 1700	3
PI 168A	Applied Piano	2
VC 103	Voice Secondary	1
General Education/Free Elective Course		5

Semester Credit Hours 15

Year 3

Fall Semester

CR 315	Techniques of Conducting	3
MTR 255	Musical Theatre Repertoire I	3
MTR 111	Musical Theatre Lab	0
MTR 493	Music Theater Production	1
PI 168A	Applied Piano	2
VC 103	Voice Secondary	1
Music History Elective		3
General Education Course		3

Semester Credit Hours 16

Spring Semester

MTR 111	Musical Theatre Lab	0
MTR 120	Hist of American Music Theater	3
MTR 256	Musical Theatre Repertoire II	3
VC 103	Voice Secondary	1
PI 168A	Applied Piano	2
General Education/Free Elective Courses		6

Semester Credit Hours 15

Year 4

Fall Semester

MTR 111	Musical Theatre Lab	0
PI 513	Jazz Keyboard Techniques and Improvisation	3
PI 168A	Applied Piano	2
VC 103	Voice Secondary	1
General Education/Free Elective Courses		9

Semester Credit Hours 15

Spring Semester

MTR 111	Musical Theatre Lab	0
MTR 317	MT Auditions:Preparation/Tech	3
PI 168A	Applied Piano	2

General Education/Free Elective Courses	7
Semester Credit Hours	12
Total Credit Hours for Graduation	120

Courses and Descriptions

CR 215 Fundamentals of Conducting 3 Credits

This course provides the foundation of conducting technique and philosophy as it relates to choral ensemble. Primarily, it deals with the development of basic pedagogical proficiencies, specifically alignment, Laban gestural vocabulary, breathing, beat patterns, consistent tempo, and the development of expressive gesture for relaying various styles of music, i.e., legato, staccato and marcato. Basic philosophical understandings concerning the human aspects of the music making process and the role the conductor plays in that process also are emphasized. Specific techniques for dealing with technical elements, e.g., fermata, dynamics, changes of tempo, contrasts in style, also are covered. The overall focus of the course is to establish the important relationship between ear, body, and the choral sound.

Prerequisite(s): TH 141.

CR 315 Techniques of Conducting 3 Credits

Continued development of conducting technique with emphasis on more complex styles and patterns, and on communication through appropriate gestures. Further improvement in conducting various dynamics and articulations, as well as more effective use of the left hand. Rehearsal procedures, repertoire programming, score preparation, and baton techniques are incorporated into the course.

Prerequisite(s): CR 215.

MTR 105 Musical Theatre Practicum 1 Credits

This course explores the literature of musical theatre vocal ensembles. It emphasizes examining a wide range of styles. This is a studio/academic class, not a performance ensemble.

MTR 109 Ballet I 1 Credits

This course introduces the basic elements of ballet technique. Technique is based on the five positions of the legs and feet, coupled with appropriate arm positions. The class consists of a basic ballet barre warm-up that includes stretching and developing strength and turn-out used in dance positions and combinations. Instruction includes jumping, turning, and connecting steps with movement. Ballet terminology is addressed.

MTR 111 Musical Theatre Lab 0 Credits

MTR 120 Hist of American Music Theater 3 Credits

The history of the American Musical from the first American production in 1750 of Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* up to the present will be traced. Emphasis will be placed upon those common elements which are solely intrinsic to the American stage. Developments and imported ideas (e.g., *The British Invasion*) will be highlighted.

MTR 215 MT Performance: Song as Text 3 Credits

In this course the student will learn how to develop a performance of musical text by making doable, actable choices and applying those choices to musical monologues – solo songs.

Prerequisite(s): THE 110.

MTR 218 Musical Theatre Scene Study I 3 Credits

Scene study class exploring the literature of the musical theatre – emphasis placed on two- and three-character scenes. Required of all second-year students.

Prerequisite(s): MTR 215.

MTR 255 Musical Theatre Repertoire I 3 Credits

This course provides the opportunity to encounter/examine the repertoire of the major musical theatre writers through the 1950s. The thrust of this class is split between studio work and academic work.

Prerequisite(s): MTR 121 with a minimum grade of C or THE 106 with a minimum grade of C.

MTR 256 Musical Theatre Repertoire II 3 Credits

This course provides the opportunity to encounter/examine the repertoire of the major musical theatre writers since the 1950s. The thrust of this class is split between studio work and academic work.

Prerequisite(s): THE 106 with a minimum grade of C and THE 107 with a minimum grade of C.

MTR 309 Jazz I 1 Credits

Based upon the ballet foundation, this course explores the expressive style of jazz dance, and basic Western theatrical dance forms and social dances used most often on the stage.

Prerequisite(s): MTR 109 and permission of the instructor.

MTR 317 MT Auditions:Preparation/Tech 3 Credits

This course, building upon skill-sets established in the Music Theatre singer-actor curriculum, will introduce and hone the required skill-sets for preparing to audition in Music Theatre. Genres and styles of music most often required for auditioning in the industry will be prepared and explored. An audition "book," based upon the demands of the industry, as well as the most suitable material for each student will be built. When appropriate, guests from the industry will be invited to present master classes and evaluations in a "mock audition" process.

Prerequisite(s): MTR 207, MTR 216, MTR 217, MTR 492.

MTR 493 Music Theater Production 1 Credits

Preparation and performance of a solo or ensemble role in a fully staged music theatre production. Concurrent participation in stage crew activities is required.

MUS 106 Survey of Music History II 3 Credits

A chronological survey of Western music from the classical through the contemporary periods stressing the origin and evolution of musical forms, musical styles, and the important composers since 1750. The relation between the music and the aesthetic movements of each period is studied.

MUS 110 Music Theory I 3 Credits

A practical introduction to the basic elements of music, beginning with the reading of music notation. Practice in scales and chords; ear-training in rhythm and pitch. Techniques may be applied to the student's own instrument (e.g., guitar, piano, winds) if he or she plays one.

Prerequisite(s): MUS 109S or placement.

Corequisite(s): MUS 110L.

MUS 110L Music Theory I Lab 1 Credits

Dictation, aural skills training, sight singing, and keyboard skills to accompany MUS 110 (Music Theory I). **Prerequisite(s):** MUS 109S or placement.

Corequisite(s): MUS 110.

MUS 111 Music Theory II 3 Credits

Continuation of MUS 110, leading to some original composition. **Prerequisite(s):** MUS 110 and MUS 110L.

Corequisite(s): MUS 111L.

MUS 111L Music Theory II Lab 1 Credits

Dictation, aural skills training, sight singing, and keyboard skills to accompany MUS 111 (Music Theory II). Prerequisite(s): MUS 110 and MUS 110L or placement.

Corequisite(s): MUS 111.

MUS 210 Music Theory III 3 Credits

Analysis of musical forms, including binary, rounded binary, ternary, and popular song. Identification of techniques that support musical form, including harmonic language, contrast/repetition, compositional process. Advanced sight singing and aural drills.

Prerequisite(s): MUS 111 and MUS 111L.

PI 513 Jazz Keyboard Techniques and Improvisation 3 Credits

This course will enable pianists and organists to become familiar with the theory, harmony, and improvisational techniques of jazz piano. Emphasis will be placed upon getting each student to create spontaneous improvisations. The fundamental goal will be that of enabling students accustomed to following a score to move beyond it. Extensive exposure to material from the "Great American Songbook" as well as to jazz standards will provide a structural basis for the course.

Prerequisite(s): TH 142 and PI 168A, or equivalent knowledge and technical proficiency. Students must be in their third semester of piano study or receive permission from the instructor or Department Chair.

PI 168A Applied Piano 2 Credits

One-hour, 2-credit required lesson. Included in tuition – no extra charge.

TH 253 Orchestration 3 Credits

A study of the orchestra and its individual instruments from the standpoints of the composer, arranger and conductor. May be taken as a level I theory elective.

Prerequisite(s): minimum "C-" grade in TH 142.

TH 255 Song Writing 3 Credits

Solo vocal composition in various styles. May be taken as a level I theory elective.

Prerequisite(s): minimum "C-" grade in TH 142.

TH 259 Electroacoustic Music 3 Credits

An introduction to the history and literature of electroacoustic music emphasizing hands-on creative opportunities in sequencing and digital sound processing. May be taken as a level I theory elective.

Prerequisite(s): minimum "C-" grade in TH 142.

TH 424 Choral and Instrumental Arranging 3 Credits

Arranging for various ensembles of voices and instruments. May be taken as a level II theory elective.

Prerequisite(s): TH 241 with a minimum grade of D.

TH 431 Form and Analysis 3 Credits

Study of the compositional process as observed in selected examples of music literature, predominantly from the tonal repertoire. May be taken as a level II theory elective.

Prerequisite(s): minimum "C-" grade in TH 241.

THE 105 Theatre History to 1700 3 Credits

The history of theater from the primitive time through the Baroque era. Examines major plays and playwrights, emphasizing the Greek, Roman, Medieval, and Elizabethan eras. This course counts towards the fulfillment of the Disciplinary Perspectives element of the CLAS general education curriculum.

THE 106 Theater History Since 1700 3 Credits

The history of theater from the Restoration to the present. Examines major plays and playwrights, emphasizing the Restoration, Romantic, and Realistic movements. This course counts towards the fulfillment of the Disciplinary Perspectives element of the CLAS general education curriculum.

THE 107 Acting I: Intro to Acting 3 Credits

Students will learn and practice the fundamental techniques and skills for authentic acting: pursuit of objectives, struggles against obstacles, and use of various tactics.

VC 103 Voice Secondary 1 Credits