

Music Therapy

Although music has been used informally for centuries to achieve therapeutic goals, it was not until World War I, when professional and amateur musicians visited veteran's hospitals to play music for injured veterans, that the medical community realized the healing power of music and began to incorporate this philosophy into health care regimens. Music therapy involves the use of music to accomplish a variety of therapeutic aims, including the restoration, maintenance, and improvement of mental and physical health. A music therapist may work with individuals of all ages who require treatment due to behavioral, social, learning, or physical disabilities. In essence, music is used as a tool to help people maintain or improve upon important life skills. Music therapy can be a satisfying career for individuals with strong musical backgrounds who are also interested in a health care profession. A bachelor's degree in music therapy is required to become a music therapist.

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Typical Courses:

- > Introduction to Music Therapy
- > Abnormal Psychology
- > Music in Recreation
- > Piano Methods
- > Percussion Methods
- > Guitar Methods
- > Studio Instruction
- > Music Theory
- > Music and Culture
- > Music Therapy Techniques

Potential Employers:

- > Hospitals
- > Schools
- > Rehabilitation centers
- > Psychiatric facilities
- > Prisons and correctional facilities
- > Hospice programs
- > Health care facilities
- > Private practice

Available At:

Music therapy degree programs approved by the American Music Therapy Association (AMTA) are available in all Midwestern states except for Nebraska and South Dakota.

ILLINOIS

Illinois State University (Normal)

309/438-7631

<http://www.cfa.ilstu.edu/music>

Degrees available: Bachelor's degree, master's degree

Western Illinois University (Macomb)

309/298-1544

<http://www.wiu.edu/music/html/options.shtml>

Degrees available: Bachelor's degree

INDIANA

University of Evansville (Evansville)

800/423-8633

<http://www.evansville.edu/prospects/areasofstudy/music/programs.asp>

Degrees available: Bachelor's degree

Indiana University-Purdue University-Indianapolis

317/274-4000

http://music.iupui.edu/Degree_MMTherapy.htm

Degrees available: Master's degree

Indiana-Purdue University Fort Wayne

260/481-6714

<http://www.ipfw.edu/academics/programs/undergraduate/m/music-therapy>

Degrees available: Bachelor's degree

St. Mary-of-the-Woods College (Saint Mary-of-the-Woods)

(female students only)

812/535-5151

<http://www.smwc.edu>

Degrees available: Bachelor's degree, master's degree

IOWA

University of Iowa (Iowa City)

319/335-1603

<http://www.uiowa.edu/~music>

Degrees available: Bachelor's degree, master's degree

Wartburg College (Waverly)

800/772-2085

<http://www.wartburg.edu/music/degrees.html>

Degrees available: Bachelor's degree

KANSAS

University of Kansas (Lawrence)

785/864-4784

<http://www.catalogs.ku.edu>

Degrees available: Bachelor's degree, master's degree, doctorate

MICHIGAN

Eastern Michigan University (Ypsilanti)

734/487-4380

http://www.emich.edu/music/html/degree_programs.html

Degrees available: Bachelor's degree, advanced certificate

Michigan State University (East Lansing)

517/355-8332

<http://www.msu.edu/common/academic/areas.html>

Degrees available: Bachelor's degree, master's degree

Western Michigan University (Kalamazoo)

269/387-4679

<http://www.wmich.edu/musictherapy>

Degrees available: Bachelor's degree, master's degree

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MINNESOTA

Augsburg College (Minneapolis)

612/330-1000

<http://www.augsburg.edu/musictherapy>

Degrees available: Bachelor's degree

University of Minnesota-Twin Cities (Minneapolis)

612/625-5000

<http://www1.umn.edu/twincities/index.php>

Degrees available: Bachelor's degree

MISSOURI

Drury University (Springfield)

417/873-7291

<http://music.drury.edu/index.html>

Degrees available: Bachelor's degree

Maryville University (Saint Louis)

800/627-9855

<http://www.maryville.edu/academics/hp/MusicTherapy> Degrees

available: Bachelor's degree, master's degree

University of Missouri-Kansas City (Kansas City)

816/235-1000

<http://conservatory.umkc.edu/musiceducationtherapy.asp>

Degrees available: Bachelor's degree, master's degree, doctorate

NORTH DAKOTA

University of North Dakota (Grand Forks)

701/777-2711

<http://www.und.edu/dept/registrar/FieldsOfStudy/FieldsOfStudy.htm>

Degrees available: Bachelor's degree

OHIO

Baldwin Wallace College (Berea)

440/826-2900

<http://www.bw.edu/academics/conservatory/academics/mtherapy>

Degrees available: Bachelor's degree

University of Dayton (Dayton)

937/229-1000

<http://artssciences.udayton.edu/Music/academics/programs.asp>

Degrees available: Bachelor's degree

Ohio University (Athens)

740/593-4249

<http://www.finearts.ohio.edu/music>

Degrees available: Bachelor's degree, master's degree

College of Wooster (Wooster)

330/263-2419

<http://www.wooster.edu/music/therapy.html>

Degrees available: Bachelor's degree

WISCONSIN

Alverno College (Milwaukee) (female students only)

800/933-3401

http://www.alverno.edu/academics/music_therapy.html

Degrees available: Bachelor's degree

University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

715/836-4260

<http://www.uwec.edu/ph/mt>

Degrees available: Bachelor's degree

Black Hawk College offers a program in music therapy, but it is not approved by the AMTA.

ILLINOIS

Black Hawk College-Quad Cities (Moline)

<http://www.bhc.edu/common/modules/documentcenter2/documentview.asp?DID=303>

Degrees available: Associate degree

For More Information:

American Music Therapy Association

<http://www.musictherapy.org>

Interview: Dr. Cynthia Colwell

Dr. Cynthia Colwell, associate professor and clinic director of the Music Therapy Program at the University of Kansas in Lawrence, Kansas, discussed her program and the education of music therapy students with the editors of *They Teach That in College!?: Midwest Edition*.

Q. Tell us about your program.

A. Music therapy is an exciting field where students combine their love of and dedication to music with their desire to work in human service-related fields. Music is a powerful medium that resonates with most on a personal level, making it an ideal tool for facilitating therapeutic change. Our approach to music therapy is from a behavioral perspective with an effort to create an awareness of other approaches found within our profession. We offer degrees at the undergraduate and graduate level with both master's and Ph.D. programs.

Our undergraduate degree program has four years of coursework followed by the six-month internship. Students take the core music courses expected of all music majors, behavioral science courses, standard general education requirements, as well as a series of music therapy theory and practice courses. Internal to the coursework years are four clinical practicum experiences in diverse settings with varied populations. Students begin their freshman year with Introduction to Music Therapy and are enrolled each semester in a course internal to the Music Education and Music Therapy division designed to promote their professional growth as a music therapist.

At the graduate level, we offer an equivalency program for students who have an undergraduate degree not in music therapy but perhaps in a related field (i.e., music education or psychology). This is intended to provide the coursework that would have been obtained in the undergraduate program. This equivalency program is typically combined with a master's degree in which the student would also take additional graduate coursework and complete either a thesis or project as a culminating experience.

The doctoral program is a research-focused degree for those clinicians who desire to go on to more advanced clinical experiences or most frequently to college teaching and

Did You Know?

According to the American Music Therapy Association, music therapy can help children and adults who have developmental and learning disabilities, mental health needs, Alzheimer's disease and other aging-related conditions, brain injuries, physical disabilities, substance abuse problems, and acute and chronic pain.

research. Doctoral students typically choose a minor outside of the music department in an area of clinical/research interest. These students are provided extensive opportunities to team teach with the faculty as well as have primary responsibility for teaching a class in addition to completing rigorous research competencies prior to completing a dissertation. The dissertation is the capstone for the Ph.D.

For detailed information on these programs, please see the following website: <http://www2.ku.edu/~memt>.

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- Q.** What makes your program an appealing option for students interested in music therapy?
- A.** The University of Kansas had one of the first music therapy programs in the country and has a tradition of excellence in training therapists and researchers in the field. Many of the leading music therapy researchers and faculty members around the country have their training from KU. In addition, we are fortunate at The University of Kansas to have three full-time music therapy faculty who have diverse areas of clinical and research productivity. We collectively have experience with early intervention programs, school settings, hospitals, a variety of settings for elderly clients, and hospice programs. We are all working in clinical settings on a weekly basis where students can have immediate hands-on experience as observers or providers. The ongoing clinical work also adds to teaching through cutting-edge practice. The faculty are all active researchers who are involved at the regional, national, and international levels in the growth of our profession through our professional organization, the American Music Therapy Association (AMTA).

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- Q.** What type of internship opportunities are provided by your program?
- A.** Students participate in a minimum of four semester-long practica with diverse populations under the supervision of board certified-music therapists while still enrolled in coursework at the University of Kansas. Following academic courses, students complete a six-month internship. Our national association, AMTA, has a list of national roster internship sites from around the country. These are approved through AMTA with each having an internship director who is committed to training interns for a full-time, six-month internship. In addition to the national roster, we have university-affiliated internships at a few sites within our immediate area of Kansas City. After completion of the internship, students are eligible to sit for the board certification exam through the Certification Board for Music Therapists (CBMT). The CBMT is the credentialing body for music therapists (MTs) nationwide and provides quality assurance for MTs as well as the many people that we serve.
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- Q.** What high school subjects/activities should students focus on to be successful in this major?
- A.** To prepare for an undergraduate degree in music therapy, high school students should focus on becoming competent musicians. As music therapists, our music skills must become second nature so that our primary focus can be on the clients in our sessions. Functional skills in voice, piano, and guitar should be promoted and, although addressed at the college level, can be initially developed at the high school level. If available, classes in behavioral sciences as well as human anatomy and physiology can help prepare the future music therapist for coursework at the college level. Due to the professional documentation aspect of our field, good writing skills are essential and could be addressed through a variety of English courses. Volunteer/work experiences in the human services can also be an asset to individuals planning a career in music therapy-volunteering at the local hospital, participating in a school tutoring program, or being part of a “grandchild” program at a local nursing home.

Q. Where do music therapy graduates find employment?

A. The answer to this question is very broad. Music therapists can work with individuals before birth (labor and delivery) through death (hospice and bereavement). They work with individuals who have mental, physical, and cognitive disabilities as well as those in wellness programs. That being said, you can find music therapists working in hospitals, nursing homes, psychiatric facilities, counseling clinics, prisons and correctional facilities, rehabilitation centers, hospice programs, wellness centers, early intervention centers, school districts, and private practice.

Q. How will the field of music therapy change in the future?

A. The field will be impacted by a variety of factors. As the field grows, there is a growing interest in advanced levels of practice and advanced competencies appropriate for therapists in specific areas of clinical practice. Reimbursement remains a focus of the profession as we strive to be recognized as a therapist comparable to physical therapy, speech therapy, and occupational therapy that are all currently reimbursed through medical plans. Legislative issues are a new challenge as state task forces are being called on to advocate for appropriate language in legislation that may impact the practicing music therapist. Our national organization, the American Music Therapy Association, has kicked off a new initiative as part of our long-term strategic plan. This initiative is focused on outcomes-based research and how therapists in the field can participate in research within their current clinical settings to provide evidenced-based outcomes to support the efficacy of music therapy in a variety of venues.