

Opera MM

Center for the Performing and Cinematic Arts / BOYER COLLEGE OF MUSIC AND DANCE

Learn more about the Master of Music in Opera.

This program is not accepting applications for the 2025-2026 academic year.

About the Program

The Master of Music in Opera is designed to prepare qualified performers for professional careers as singer-actors on both national and international operatic stages. The faculty only admits singers who demonstrate outstanding potential for the operatic stage, both vocally and dramatically, and strives to provide as thorough a graduate training as possible within a two-year framework. The ultimate goal is to produce singing artists capable of competing successfully in the professional world of opera.

Time Limit for Degree Completion: 6 years

Campus Location: Main

Full-Time/Part-Time Status: The degree program can be completed on a full- or part-time basis.

Interdisciplinary Study: With the approval of the major advisor, students may elect to take up to 6 graduate credits outside the field of music.

Accreditation: This degree program is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM).

Areas of Specialization: The program prepares students through a systematic approach to vocal technique, specialized studies in operatic literature, the refinement of language and diction skills, the development of acting techniques, the continued refinement of musical and theoretical skills, advanced study in musical style and performance practice, and the provision of operatic performance opportunities designed to emulate a professional environment.

Job Prospects: Graduates work throughout the world performing in opera houses, singing as soloists, and teaching in colleges and universities as well as in private studios.

Non-Matriculated Student Policy: Non-matriculated students may enroll in selected courses in music with permission, but may not take applied lessons until they have been fully admitted and matriculated.

Financing Opportunities: Boyer College of Music and Dance offers a number of assistantships and academic internships to full-time matriculated graduate students. Full awards carry a stipend plus full tuition remission for the Fall and Spring terms. Partial awards also are available in values of a quarter, half, or three quarters of a full award. Duties for assistantships and internships vary, but typically include teaching, tutoring, classroom assistance, research, artistic performance and/or direct service related to academic programs. All incoming graduate students are automatically considered for an award by the department and Dean of Admissions.

Admission Requirements and Deadlines

Application Deadline:

This program is not accepting applications for the 2025-2026 academic year.

APPLY ONLINE to this graduate program.

Letters of Reference:

Number Required: 2

From Whom: Letters of recommendation should be obtained from evaluators who can provide insight into an applicant's abilities, talents and aptitude for graduate study.

Coursework Required for Admission Consideration: All applicants must present credentials that are the equivalent of the appropriate Bachelor of Music degree at Temple University, which is based on a curriculum of 124 to 135 hours.

Bachelor's Degree in Discipline/Related Discipline: A degree in Music is expected.

Statement of Goals: Share your special interests within the discipline and expectations for the program.

Standardized Test Scores:

Applicants who earned their baccalaureate degree from an institution where the language of instruction was other than English, with the exception of those who subsequently earned a master's degree at a U.S. institution, must report scores for a standardized test of English that meet these minimums:

- TOEFL iBT: 75
- IELTS Academic: 6.5
- PTE Academic: 51

Audition: See <https://www.temple.edu/boyer/admissions/graduate-admissions/audition-requirements.asp> for audition repertoire requirements.

Resume: Current resume required.

Transfer Credit: A student who wishes to transfer credit should speak with their academic advisor and obtain a "Request for Transfer of Graduate Credit" form, found in TUportal under the Tools tab within "University Forms." Transfer credits must be approved by the advisor, the department chair, and the Associate Dean. The maximum number of credits a student may transfer is 6.

Other: Due to the large number of applications for admission and the competitive nature of its music programs, the College admits only a portion of its applicants. In addition to the general admissions credentials required of all Temple University graduate applicants, specialized admission criteria (i.e., auditions, portfolios, interviews, recommendations, departmental term papers, and standardized examinations) are very heavily weighted in admission decisions of the Boyer College of Music and Dance. Graduate applicants may be rejected for admission for failing to obtain the required level of proficiency in any one area of the specialized admission criteria regardless of the level of success in meeting the Temple University general admission criteria. In addition to the level of success demonstrated in the above-mentioned criteria, a final admission factor is the College's Optimum Enrollment Policy. This policy may preclude the admission of any student who meets the minimum requirements.

Program Requirements

General Program Requirements:

Number of Credits Required Beyond the Baccalaureate: 32

Required Courses:

| Code | Title | Credit Hours |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|
| Core Courses | | |
| MUSC 8213 | Opera Diction | 2 |
| MUSC 8216 | Aria Repertoire | 2 |
| MUSC 8220 | Opera Workshop (4 terms) | 8 |
| MUSC 8234 | Opera Major | 2 |
| MUSC 8244 | Opera Major | 2 |
| MUSC 8254 | Opera Major | 2 |
| MUSC 8264 | Opera Major | 2 |
| MUSC 8274 | Opera Role Performance | 1 |
| MUST 8701 | Research in Music | 3 |
| MUST 8708 | History of Opera | 2 |
| MUST 8709 | History of Opera | 2 |
| Electives ¹ | | 4 |
| Total Credit Hours | | 32 |

¹ A maximum of one term of vocal coaching may be taken.

Language Examination: Candidates in Opera must present undergraduate coursework in French, German and Italian languages (or pass a translating and speaking examination at Temple) at the time of admission to the program. Where the transcript or pass-off examination does not reveal such study, the appropriate deficiency course(s) must be taken prior to completion of the master's degree.

Additional Requirements:

Diagnostic Examinations:

Diagnostic examinations in Aural Theory, Written Theory, and Music History are **required** for all entering master's students, except students in the Jazz Studies, Music Education, Music Technology, and Music Therapy programs, who arrange their examinations within their respective departments. In addition, Keyboard students take an additional two-hour examination in Keyboard Literature. As stated in the Boyer College Graduate Handbook, "students may not take final qualifying examinations nor perform graduation recitals until all diagnostic examinations have been successfully completed."

Entering master's students who require the diagnostic examinations in Aural Theory, Written Theory, and Music History will be contacted by the Music Studies department to schedule the testing date and time.

A. Graduate Diagnostic Examination in Aural Theory

The examination lasts approximately 40 minutes and asks students to:

1. Dictate a chord progression that modulates and contains chromatic harmony by writing out the bass line and identifying chords with Roman numerals and inversions.
2. Complete a two-part melodic dictation that modulates and contains chromatic pitches.

B. Graduate Diagnostic Examination in Written Theory

The examination lasts one and one-half hours and is in three parts:

1. Harmonic analysis of a diatonic chorale, and basic part-writing exercises using diatonic harmony.
2. Harmonic analysis of a chromatic chorale, and part-writing exercises using chromatic harmony.
3. Analysis of the form, motives and phrase structures of the first movement of a Classical-era piano sonata.

C. Graduate Diagnostic Examination in Music History

The examination consists of objective questions (multiple choice, matching, and/or true/false) covering musical works, composers, forms, styles, terms, and instruments. It is divided into five sections: Medieval/Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and 20th Century.

D. Conditions for Exemption from Diagnostic Examinations

The requirement to take the Diagnostic Examination in any area is waived only for graduates of the Boyer College of Music and Dance who:

- matriculate and enroll in the term immediately following completion of all undergraduate degree requirements; and
- received grades of "B-" or better in every undergraduate course taken in each individual examination area to be waived.

Piano Proficiency:

In addition to the written Diagnostic Examinations required upon entrance to the program, Opera majors take a functional piano examination encompassing the following points:

1. playing a prepared accompaniment (music can be used);
2. sight-reading a simple accompaniment; and
3. improvising an accompaniment to a simple melody.

Remedial coursework may be required.

Professional Development Policy:

In addition to taking the required subjects for their degrees, all students in the Boyer College of Music and Dance are obligated to serve in a number of capacities in order to enrich their academic and musical expertise. Boyer College of Music and Dance believes that such experiences give impetus to successful professional careers. Among the duties that may be required are conducting laboratory classes; tutoring; teaching private lessons; coaching; participating in the distribution and inventory control of Temple University-owned musical instruments and instructional materials; participating in ensembles; accompanying; performing at admissions and open house events; supervising performance classes; and engaging in other academic activities.

Performing Ensembles:

1. Touring: All students in touring performing ensembles are required to participate in all scheduled tours. These tours, usually one or two weeks in length, often take place immediately after termination of academic terms. Students must arrange their schedules to accommodate this requirement.
2. Non-Credit Participation: With special permission, graduate students for whom there is no ensemble requirement, or where previous ensemble credits exceed the graduation requirement, may participate in choral and instrumental ensembles without cost, with prior permission from the ensemble director, the department chair and the Associate Dean.

Independent Study Courses:

Independent study courses provide a special opportunity for graduate students to work in a highly individualized setting with one or more faculty members. All such study must receive the approval of the faculty member providing the instruction, the students' major advisor, and the Associate Dean. Approval is granted only after the student has presented a detailed description of the intended independent study project. Approval of independent study projects is granted only for students whose academic and musical record provides substantial support for the benefits of this type of study. In no case may more than 20% of a graduate student's curriculum be taken as independent study. Private lessons beyond those required in the curriculum are not an appropriate form of independent study.

Acceptable English:

All students, including those for whom English is not the native language, are expected to present all written work in acceptable English. No double standard exists to differentiate students on the basis of proficiency in the use of the English language. Students are also responsible for becoming familiar with the College's statement on plagiarism and academic honesty.

Graduate Private Lesson Policy:

Weekly one-hour private lessons are provided for all matriculated master's and doctoral performance majors in good standing, provided at least three additional credits of programmatically required graduate-level study are taken simultaneously. A \$250 per term lesson fee (subject to change without notice) is charged for all private lessons. Tuition remission may not be used to cover the private lesson fee.

Private applied lessons beyond the four-term requirement currently in effect for graduate performance students may be extended with the permission of the jury, department chair, and the Associate Dean or Dean of the Boyer College of Music and Dance.

Incompletes:

All incomplete grades and keyboard proficiencies must be fulfilled by the first day of the month in which the student expects to graduate.

Culminating Events:

Comprehensive Examination:

The Voice and Opera program requires a one-hour comprehensive examination in music literature and theory. When admitted to the College, a list of 100 musical works of the standard literature from the Middle Ages through the 20th century is made available to the student as an aid to prepare for the examination. This examination should be taken in the penultimate term of study.

The examination is in three parts: identification of specific selections from a list of 100 works, identification of a "mystery" selection, and score analysis. Two graduate faculty members grade the examination. Students must pass all three sections. A score of 70% or better must be achieved in the identification section, and a "Pass" or "Weak Pass" must be achieved in the "mystery" selection and the score analysis section.

The examination is administered approximately ten times each year. Students notify the Assistant Dean no later than one week prior to the requested examination administration date. For examination dates, see the Graduate Music Examination Schedule.

Adjudicated Roles:

Opera majors must have accumulated at least two major adjudicated roles or one major and two minor adjudicated roles in addition to opera theater assignments. Fully-staged opera productions with orchestra are typically presented each term. Opera roles are adjudicated by three full-time music faculty members.

Contacts

Program Web Address:

<https://www.temple.edu/academics/degree-programs/opera-mm-bc-opra-mmus>

Department Information:

Dept. of Vocal Arts
Center for the Performing and Cinematic Arts/Boyer College of Music and Dance
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Submission Address for Application Materials:

https://connect.temple.edu/portal/gr_applytoday

Department Contacts:

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