The undergraduate and graduate degree programs in music history at the University of Washington encourage students to explore music in a variety of eras and styles, with approaches to research that can include primary sources, the philosophy of music, analysis, and reception history. The program particularly welcomes students who want to earn an academic degree but also to pursue performance studies.

The music history faculty offer courses and seminars that range from the middle ages to contemporary...
music; recent and current graduate students have written theses on topics such as film music, early British music, Sondheim musicals, early British musical drama, and 19th-century philosophy. The faculty also encourage interdisciplinary research that can lead to formal certificates in other programs at the university, such as digital humanities, textual source studies, and cinema studies.

AREAS OF STUDY

The music history faculty conducts research and provides courses in a variety of areas, including music of the English and Italian Renaissance, British Restoration, opera, film music, and music of the French composers of the Belle Époque. For graduate applications in the 2019-20 cycle, the faculty are particularly interested in applications from students who wish to specialize in early music, combining early music performance with academic research in music history. Because Seattle is a center of professional early music performers, the music history program welcomes applications from students who are prepared for graduate study in music history, but who also want to incorporate some aspect of historical performance in their academic study, particularly in voice, early strings, and keyboard.

Graduates of the music history program are well-placed in teaching positions or Ph.D. programs around the country, with alumni employed at Stanford, Florida State University, University of Puget Sound, University of Rhode Island, University of Pittsburgh, West Chester University, and Baruch College. Master's degree graduates have entered Ph.D. programs at Columbia, Yale, Stanford, University of Virginia, New York University, and the City University of New York. Graduates of the UW music history program are engaged in diverse disciplinary approaches to the field, across all eras of music history. The program will welcome the medievalist and Oxford Professor Elizabeth Eva Leach to the university for a residency as a Walker-Ames Lecturer in Spring 2021, when she will be presenting public lectures and working with students.

APPLYING TO THE PROGRAM

For more detailed information on graduate programs in music history at the University of Washington, please consult the program requirements for the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees on the graduate programs overview page.

Students planning to apply for the masters-level program are expected to have the equivalent of the B.A. in music history, and applicants for the doctoral degree are expected to have the equivalent of the M.A. at the University of Washington, which includes a thesis in music history or a related area.

Applicants should submit two or three papers in the area of music history or another academic area of music; these should display the ability of the student to write thoughtfully and with clarity about issues in music. The “Statement of Purpose” is a significant aspect of the application, in which the applicant is expected to outline his or her areas of scholarly interest and eventual career plans; it is not intended as a personal statement, but a statement of professional intention.

STUDENT SUPPORT

Graduate students are supported through a combination of teaching assistantships and scholarship support. Teaching assignments include a range of courses, such as a survey of Western art music, a course in American popular music, the core history courses for music majors, and courses that focus on writing about music.

HOW TO APPLY

For more information, contact SoMadmit@uw.edu

FACULTY IN THIS AREA

JoAnn Taricani
Chair, Music History; Associate Professor; Graduate Program Coordinator
Stephen Rumph  
Associate Professor, Music History

Anne Searcy  
Assistant Professor (Arriving Autumn 2020)

Frederick Reece  
Lecturer (Arriving Autumn 2020)

Kerry O’Brien  
Lecturer, Music History

Mark Rodgers  
Lecturer, Music History

John Hanford  
Lecturer, Music History

Stephen Stubbs  
Visiting Scholar, Early Music
NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- April Symposium re-envisions Giselle (Feb 11, 2020)
- Winter 2020 Student and Alumni Notes (Jan 31, 2020)
- Winter 2020 Faculty Notes (Jan 24, 2020)
- Greenberg Award recording of JoAnn Taricani to be issued by Centaur Records (Sep 3, 2019)

RELATED RESEARCH

- Anthology, An Antidote against Melancholy (1661), directed by JoAnn Taricani; Centaur Records, available in 2020 as CD or in iTunes.
- Larry Starr, Gershwin, Yale University Press, 2010