

Department of Recording Industry

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The Department of Recording Industry offers the Master of Fine Arts in Recording Arts and Technologies (MRAT).*

Requirements for the Master of Fine Arts

The purpose of the Master of Fine Arts program is to prepare practitioners in the field of audio recording and production for advanced work in an integrated electronic media environment. Preparation for advanced professional practice requires that students achieve a strong grounding in audio production and related technologies and develop a common understanding of the theoretical concepts behind other disciplines such as video production, digital animation, music, and computer science. The program offers a strong technical component utilizing the latest advancements in software and hardware. The degree plan also offers preparation for graduates to teach at the postsecondary level in the field of audio recording and production.

The M.F.A. degree is a 60-hour, six-semester program as outlined below including 33 hours of required courses, 18 hours of guided electives, and 9 hours of work on a final project. Students are required to attend full time, taking 9 to 12 hours per semester.

Guided electives are normally selected from Recording Arts and Technologies courses; however, up to 6 hours of guided electives may be from other departments upon permission of the student's advisor. A maximum of 12 hours of 5000-level courses may be counted toward the degree.

Admission Requirements

All students desiring to enroll for the M.F.A. program in Recording Arts and Technologies must make application to the Office of the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies. Minimum requirements for admission are

- a. possession of a bachelor's degree.
- b. a brief essay explaining the applicant's career goals, related work experience, and how this degree will help attain the stated career goals.

**Note: This graduate program is NOT designed for students who have graduated from the MTSU Department of Recording Industry with a concentration in Production and Technology. Graduates of the MTSU program are encouraged to seek employment in the industry or to pursue a graduate program that offers experiences different from their undergraduate program.*

- c. undergraduate preparation or significant professional experience appropriate to the graduate curriculum and a minimum overall grade point average of 3.00 on all courses attempted, excluding repeated courses.
- d. a satisfactory score on the general portion of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) that is not more than five years old. Typically, a successful student will have scores of 400 quantitative and 400 verbal or better.
- e. a portfolio of works representative of the candidate's creative achievements in the areas of audio recording, composition, video, film, multimedia, Web design, or areas strongly related to the degree curriculum. **Note:** The portfolio has no specific guidelines because applicants are expected to have developed varying types of creative skills. It is extremely important to document your contribution to each item you submit. For example, if you submit an audio recording, state if you were composer, performer, engineer, producer, or several of these things. Audio examples should be submitted on a compact disc and video on a DVD.
- f. two letters of recommendation for graduate study, one from the undergraduate major advisor if the student is a recent graduate.

Conditional Admission

An applicant who meets all requirements for admission to the M.F.A. program except the grade point average of 3.0 on all undergraduate work attempted may be granted conditional admission status if the applicant has a 3.0 average on all upper-division undergraduate work. An applicant who meets all requirements for admission to the M.F.A. program except the minimum GRE scores may also be granted conditional status. Conditional students must maintain at least a 3.0 GPA for the first 12 semester hours of graduate work or one year after first matriculation (whichever occurs earlier) in order to achieve regular status and continue in the program. Students may also be admitted under conditional status if the admissions review committee recommends that work be done at the undergraduate level to make up deficiencies. Conditional status will be removed when deficiencies are satisfactorily completed.

YEAR 1

Fall Semester

- MRAT 6030 MIDI and Music Synthesis Seminar, 3 hours
- MRAT 6040 Digital Audio Studio Seminar, 3 hours
- MRAT 6050 Multitrack Recording Seminar, 3 hours
- MRAT 6070 Visual Aesthetics and Technology I, 3 hours

Spring Semester

- MRAT 6010 Recording in Cultural Context, 3 hours
- LEST 6000/
MRAT 6000 Creative Leadership and Collaboration, 3 hours
- MRAT 6110 Production Seminar I, 3 hours
- MRAT 6090 Visual Aesthetics and Technology II, 3 hours

YEAR 2

Fall Semester

- MRAT 6130 Production Seminar II, 3 hours
- MRAT 6150 Legal Rights of the Creative Individual, 3 hours

Spring Semester

- Portfolio Jury
- MRAT 6150 Legal Rights of the Creative Individual, 3 hours
- MRAT 6210 Production Seminar III, 3 hours
- Guided Electives, 6 hours

YEAR 3

Fall Semester

- MRAT 6650 Final Project, 3 hours
- Guided Electives, 6 hours

Spring Semester

- Comprehensive Examination
- MRAT 6650 Final Project, 6 hours
- Guided Elective, 3 hours

Courses in Recording Arts and Technologies [MRAT]

- 5810 Topics in Recording Industry.** Three credits. Prerequisites: Permission of department. Examination and critical evaluation of current issues related to operation and function of various aspects of the recording industry. Subject matter varies. Course may be repeated once for additional credit.
- 6000 Creative Leadership and Collaboration.** Three credits. (Same as LEST 6000) Exploration of creative leadership and collaboration skills needed to undertake creative projects in entertainment, arts, and related fields. Applied concepts of participative leadership, creativity theory, group interaction, and the collaboration process through group discussions, research assignments, and projects.
- 6010 Recording in Cultural Context.** Three credits. Designed to acquaint learners with the evolution of the complexities of technologies and to provide tools for cultural analysis and critique of recorded artifacts. An interdisciplinary mosaic of scholarly approaches to the examination of contemporary recorded culture will be engaged.
- 6030 MIDI and Music Synthesis Seminar.** Three credits. Technical skills and conceptual foundation necessary to undertake advanced creative projects. Emphasis on mastery of hardware and software platforms currently used in MIDI-based production.
- 6040 Digital Audio Studio Seminar.** Three credits. Technical skills and conceptual foundation necessary to undertake advanced creative projects. Emphasis on the mastery of hardware and software platforms currently used for DAW hard disk-based digital audio systems.
- 6050 Multitrack Recording Seminar.** Three credits. Systematic examination of the technology used in the modern recording studio. Techniques for using this technology in the creative recording and mixing process examined.
- 6070 Visual Aesthetics and Technology I.** Three credits. Designed to help the beginning graduate student develop skills to effectively communicate an idea visually.
- 6090 Visual Aesthetics and Technology II.** Three credits. Prerequisite: MRAT 6070. Continuation of MRAT 6070 with introduction to visual elements and technology used in the entertainment industry. Introduction to creative conceptualization, elements of composition, and how the production process works. Demonstration of basic and advanced visual technology as a foundation for more advanced courses in the graduate program.
- 6110 Production Seminar I.** Three credits. Prerequisites: MRAT 6030, 6050, and 6070. Applications course in which students use skills and theory obtained in previous courses and work in a cooperative environment toward the completion of an audio or multimedia production.
- 6120 Disk-Based Audio Postproduction.** Prerequisites: MRAT 6030 and 6050. Advanced practitioner-oriented approach to the principles of tapeless digital audio recording on a variety of digital workstation platforms. In-depth discussion of the principles of digital audio, synchronization, and audio for video.

- 6125 Remote Production.** Three credits. Prerequisite: MRAT 6110. May be repeated once with permission of instructor. Remote, field, and other nonstudio-oriented audio recording applications emphasized. In-depth study, discussion, and application of techniques, equipment, interfacing with other systems, and location-oriented problem solving included. Activities may include audio only and/or audio for media applications. Participation in off-campus, non-class-time recording opportunities required.
- 6130 Production Seminar II.** Three credits. Prerequisite: MRAT 6110. Continuation of MRAT 6110.
- 6140 Graduate Seminar in Audio Recording.** Three credits. Prerequisites: MRAT 6030 and 6050. Advanced application of techniques in a digital multitrack setting.
- 6145 Seminar in Advanced Mixing Techniques.** Three credits. Prerequisites: MRAT 6040 and 6050. Advanced application of mixing techniques in a digital multitrack setting. Additional topics include applied critical listening, automation systems, focus and foundation mixing, and NARAS guidelines for delivery of recorded music projects.
- 6150 Legal Rights of the Creative Individual.** Three credits. Examines legal rights and duties of creative persons. Students apply concepts from copyright, trademark, trade secrets, privacy, publicity, defamation, and other branches of the law to media productions.
- 6160 Composition for Contemporary Media.** Three credits. Prerequisites: Fundamental skills in reading music notation, a basic understanding of harmonic analysis, and the ability to play either guitar or keyboard and sing. Students will apply concepts drawn from analysis of contemporary popular music for elements of melody, harmonic language, form, and lyric craft to their own compositions.
- 6170 The Art of Critical Listening.** Three credits. Prerequisite: MRAT 6110. Technology of sound reproduction and principles of auditory perception as they relate to the critical and technical analysis of sound recordings. Survey of popular music production styles and activities including specialized aural skills training.
- 6180 Introduction to Film Scoring.** Three credits. Prerequisites: Four semesters of theory/sight singing/ear training; MRAT 6030 and 6050. Overview of the film scoring process. Discussion of the aesthetic relationship between music and film. Thematic analyses of representative film scores. Composition exercises demonstrating traditional film scoring techniques. Application of compositional techniques through laboratory assignments using computers, synthesizers, and digital samplers. SMPTE time code, MIDI time code, and film time formats and their application to tape synchronization.
- 6210 Production Seminar III.** Three credits. Prerequisite: MRAT 6130. Continuation of MRAT 6110 and 6130.
- 6320 Directed Research.** Three credits. Prerequisite: Permission of department. Research in recording techniques and related topics.
- 6340 Directed Production.** Three credits. Prerequisite: Permission of department. Independent advanced audio production.
- 6360 Graduate Internship.** Three to six credits. Prerequisite: Permission of department. Practical experience for advanced students in a professional recording industry setting. Pass/Fail.
- 6650 Final Project.** One to nine credits. Prerequisite: Permission of department. A directed production project of substantial size and scope proposed, developed, and realized under the guidance of the major faculty advisor in consultation with the final project faculty committee. The culminating experience in the M.F.A. program. S/U grading used.