

University of North Texas College of Music



Division of Composition Studies

Dr. Joseph Klein, Chair

www.music.unt.edu/comp

About the UNT Composition Program:

- **Seven** faculty members, representing a wide range of compositional experience and aesthetic approaches.
- Over **sixty** students (c.35 undergraduate and c.25 graduate).
- Around **twenty** concerts produced each year.
- Other resources in the Division of Composition Studies include:
 - Center for Experimental Music and Intermedia
 - Nova Ensemble
 - Music Now
 - Composers Forum

Acceptance to the Composition Program:

- Based upon admission to the College of Music through the instrumental/vocal audition.
- There is **no composition portfolio** requirement.
- Prospective composition majors are evaluated regularly throughout the first two years of study; acceptance to the program is determined at the sophomore jury.
- Continuation in the composition program is determined by:
 - Evidence of development as a composer, as demonstrated through the creation of a portfolio and performances of original works.
 - Participation in composition division activities.
 - Success in all theory courses (B or better), including aural skills.
 - Evidence of progress in applied lessons.
 - Continuous enrollment in laboratory ensembles.

A Comprehensive-Immersive Approach to Composition Study

- Composition is an inherently comprehensive activity, encompassing the following areas:
 - Performance/conducting
 - Improvisation
 - Music theory
 - Music literature
 - Music notation
 - Orchestration
 - Technology

- Additionally, a general understanding of other art forms (literature, visual arts, dance, film), as well as cultural, social, and historical trends, is an important component of a comprehensive-immersive approach to composition studies.

- Exposure to contemporary styles and techniques is critical to the understanding and application of compositional tools.

- The **Bachelor of Arts** degree in Music is a desirable option for composers.

UNT Composition Studies: Undergraduate Program Overview

Year 1 (Freshmen):

- Enrollment in the **Beginning Composition** course concurrently with **Theory I - II, Aural Skills I - II,** and **lessons** on an instrument or voice.
- Students who have successfully completed the Beginning Composition course and want to be considered for continuation in the composition program must pass the **Freshman Barrier Examination.**

Year 2 (Sophomores):

- Enrollment in **composition lessons** with a graduate teaching fellow.
- Weekly **composition seminar** with the faculty mentor.
- Official acceptance to the composition program is determined at the end of the year during the **Sophomore Composition Jury.**

UNT Composition Studies: Undergraduate Program Overview

Years 3-4 (Juniors and Seniors):

- Enrollment in **composition lessons** with a composition faculty member.
- Enrollment in **advanced composition courses** required for the degree (e.g., instrumentation, electroacoustic music).
- Compilation of the **composition portfolio**, which will include the following:
 - Solo work
 - Electroacoustic work
 - Work for chamber ensemble
 - Vocal work
 - Large scale (multi-movement) work
- Demonstrated competency in composing for each family of instruments, voice, and electroacoustic media.
- Presentation of a **senior composition recital** following the recital hearing and final portfolio review.

Beginning Composition: Course Structure & Content

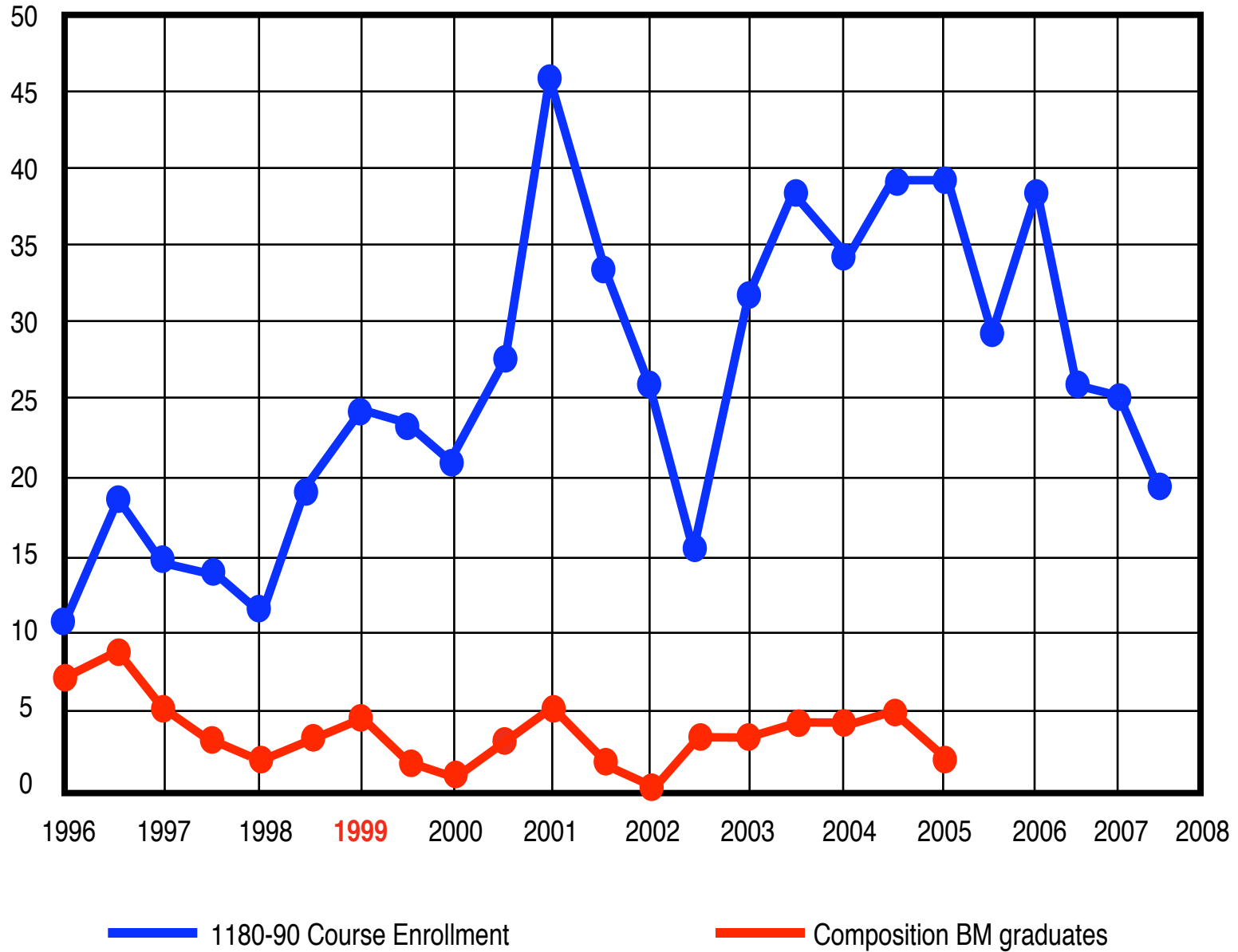
- Three-part course schedule allows for a thorough pedagogical approach:
 - **Lecture:** In this component of the course, the instructor presents basic concepts, analyzes literature demonstrating those concepts, and presents a contextual basis for the composers and works under consideration.
 - **Laboratory:** This component of the course is taught by the graduate teaching assistants and focuses on the practical application of material presented in the lectures.
 - **Departmental:** This component of the course — which coincides with the weekly meeting of the entire composition department — includes guest lectures, faculty presentations, roundtable discussions, and performances pertaining to contemporary music.
- In addition to prospective composition students, the course is required of all undergraduate theory and jazz arranging majors — and provides these students with compositional experiences outside of those within their respective degree programs.
- Course is open to any qualified student interested in studying composition — not just those who plan to become composition majors.

Goals

After completing the first year of composition studies, the student is expected to achieve the following goals:

- Acceptance of a broader definition of the term “music” through intensive exposure to contemporary musical idioms.
- Learning what to listen for in a piece of music, within the appropriate cultural, historical, theoretical, and aesthetic contexts.
- Development of critical thinking skills and the ability to assess “quality” in a variety of music.
- Recognition and application of various melodic, harmonic, rhythmic, and structural materials.
- The ability to create short but cohesive and effective musical compositions, drawing upon a wide range of techniques and stylistic approaches.

Enrollment and Graduation Rates (1996-2008)



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