

STUDENT HANDBOOK
MUSIC THERAPY DEPARTMENT
BERKLEE COLLEGE OF MUSIC

Revised Fall, 2002

Introduction

Welcome to the Music Therapy Department! You are in for an adventure.

This department introduces you to a new culture at Berklee College of Music. You will be challenged to be your most creative and most musical. You will be asked to comprehend a great deal of technical information and to communicate your ideas articulately. You will be expected to demonstrate the interpersonal skills that are reflective of being a therapist both in class and in the field.

You will find that becoming a music therapist entails a special process. First of all, you bring many aspects of yourself to this program. In approaching your studies, you must be prepared to do the following:

- use your music directly in therapeutic ways
- take risks to try new techniques and new ways of behaving
- participate actively at all levels
- seek to understand yourself
- support and reach out to others, putting their needs first
- use professional judgment when you interact with others
- take responsibility for your own learning and development
- become a member of a team
- find relevance in all things educational and therapeutic
- self assess and change for the better
- listen empathically
- act creatively
- think critically
- communicate effectively
- be ethical and committed to this work

This is a significant undertaking. If you are ready to commit to becoming a music therapy major, this can be one of the most rewarding professions you could imagine. If you are ready, read on.

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Eligibility and Application to the Music Therapy Major

Application

If you are enrolled at Berklee and are considering music therapy as your major course of study, you must first successfully complete the course, *Introduction to International Music Therapy*. If you are at mid-term in the course and successful to date, or you have completed the course, you may apply to the major.

Here is the process:

- 1) Go to the Counseling Center to get a *Declaration of Major Form*.
- 2) See the Music Therapy Department Administrative Assistant for an appointment for an official interview.
- 3) Bring your principal instrument, the *Declaration of Major Form*, and a one-page written statement of why you want to be a music therapist.

Music Therapy Interview

Your interview will take place in the Music Therapy Department and will occur in the course of 30 minutes. During this time, you will be required to do the following:

1. Play a musical selection of your choice using your principal instrument (a piano will be provided);
2. Demonstrate a high level of conversational English;
3. Demonstrate the reading and comprehension of English by reading a passage from a book (provided) and interpreting the content;
4. Describe your interest in becoming a music therapy major by written demonstration (essay) and through verbal expression;
5. Describe your response to a hypothetical clinical case example using verbal communication as a means of expressing personal self-awareness and professional judgment;

Once your interview has been completed, you will be notified within two weeks by the Chair of the Music Therapy Department as to your standing as a music therapy major. Successful completion of this process entitles you to enroll in courses in the major beyond the introductory course.

Retention in the Major

Grade Point Average

Within the music therapy major, it is necessary for students to maintain a Cum GPA of 2.70 in concentrate courses. If the concentrate Cum GPA falls below 2.70, the student must meet with the Department Advisor to discuss ramifications and solutions. Two consecutive semesters of earning Cum GPA below 2.70 will result in the student's being removed from the major and concentrate courses.

Students with a Cum GPA below 2.00 at the completion of a semester will be placed on academic probation for the following semester. In order to be removed from academic probation, a minimum Cum GPA of 2.00 must be earned at the next semester of enrollment. Students who are on probation are expected to meet with the Music Therapy Department Advisor to discuss their academic status, strategies for improvement, and options for another major.

Review of Student Progress

Music therapy majors must present themselves academically, clinically, and with emotional stability at all times as demonstrated by appropriate behavior in the classroom and offices of Berklee College of Music, and at all practicum sites. Failure to do so will result in an immediate review of their status and potential removal from the practicum site and course. Any behavior which is deemed inappropriate by faculty, site supervisor or other personnel at the practicum site constitutes grounds for immediate removal.

When a problem arises, the student must meet with the Department Advisor. When appropriate, she/he will prepare and enter into a binding contract to improve personal performance in defined areas. Students who fail to meet the conditions of the contract within a reasonable period of time (as defined by the department) will no longer be retained in the major. When a student loses major status, s/he may reapply only at the discretion of the Department Chair, and at the recommendation of Department Faculty.

Advising for Classes

The Music Therapy curriculum, as published in the College Bulletin, should be consulted and followed as much as possible in planning classes. During each pre-registration period, pick up the special informational packet which outlines specific course offerings for the new semester. Please refer any questions regarding exceptions to the Department Chair or Advisor.

You should note that you must pass competency examinations for keyboard, guitar, and voice. The final exams for your instrumental classes serve as the

competency examination for that instrument. Please see the instructor for clarification of the criteria.

Music Therapy Resources

The Berklee Library contains materials useful to students in the music therapy major. In addition to recordings, journals, and books, the library has access to many on-line databases for research projects. Hard copies of many on-line materials are available through the Berklee Library.

The Music Therapy Department also has an internal library with limited resources for checkout within the Department. Follow the checkout system with the Administrative Assistant if you would like to access internal resources.

Attendance Policy

Personal Responsibility

Attendance means being prepared for classes and clinical experiences, and being ready to learn. Attendance is critical to gaining the knowledge and skills you will need to succeed in the program. The music therapy faculty expects that you will inform them in advance if you need to miss class or a clinical session for any reason. You should know that the Music Therapy Department adheres to the attendance policy established by Berklee for all offered courses.

Berklee College of Music: Attendance Policy

The attendance policy of Berklee College of Music states that students who have two unexcused absences prior to the student deadline to withdraw from a course may be dropped from the course by the instructor at the instructor's discretion. Further, when any two unexcused absences occur after the deadline to withdraw, a course grade of "F" may be the result. The instructor may fail the student for excessive absence at his/her discretion.

Berklee's attendance policy distinguishes between excused and unexcused absences. Students seeking an excused absence must bring a signed note from the Counseling Center or attending physician on letterhead to class immediately following the absence and present it to the instructor. Unexcused absences are those for which there is no written excuse provided by the student.

Berklee College of Music: Attendance Policy

Students participating in performance tours sponsored by Berklee who know they will be absent from classes should provide written documentation of the event and tour dates from the ensemble instructor prior the tour. The student will be responsible for completing any work missed in a timely fashion.

Late Arrival to Class

On-time attendance at all scheduled classes and clinical placements is expected of all students enrolled in music therapy courses. Attendance will be taken at each class meeting and clinical session. Late arrival to class is disruptive to faculty and students. To discourage this practice, a late penalty may be adopted by your instructor. In this case, two late arrivals to class will result in one recorded absence. You should know that four late arrivals to class is equivalent to two absences and may result in your being dropped from the course. Your cooperation regarding timely attendance is appreciated.

Practicum

Placement

There are five practicum courses in the curriculum, and most are aligned with a related academic course. These courses expose students to children with special needs, elderly persons, adults with psychiatric diagnoses, administrative development, and research applications. Every practicum placement is designed to provide critical skills essential to your development as a student music therapist. You will be expected to place priority on the scheduling of practicum sessions, adapting your schedule as needed to accommodate available placements and needs of the Music Therapy Department.

Practicum classes follow a sequential order from one to five. The skills and knowledge you learn in each practicum build upon one another. As a result, you are required to successfully pass and complete each consecutive practicum before advancing to the next class.

Practicum placements provide supervised opportunities for hands-on experiences with clients in music therapy sessions. You will work alongside qualified music therapists who will nurture your development by providing graduated opportunities to apply knowledge and skills learned in academic and practicum classes. Practicum experiences are designed to assist you in learning to assess, plan, and implement objective-based music therapy interventions with clients having a variety of emotional, social, cognitive, and motor needs.

Practicum placements will be determined by the music therapy faculty in conjunction with music therapy supervisors in the Boston area. The placement process is demanding and time consuming and usually takes about two weeks to complete. Prior to placement or as a component of the placement process, you will be required to complete the following steps:

Pre-Placement Responsibilities of Students

Submit all necessary paperwork to the Music Therapy Department
Administrative Assistant:

1. Complete and submit a copy of your semester schedule to include your class and work schedule. Fill out placement worksheet:
2. Schedule and receive any required shots such as the TB shot. Provide written documentation and medical reports:
3. Complete and submit the CORI form:
4. Learn about and acquire personal liability insurance as instructed by the faculty.
5. Keep the original documents and make a copy for the records in the Music Therapy Department.

You are responsible for accomplishing these tasks prior to placement. If you fail to fulfill any of these obligations in a timely fashion, your placement at a practicum site will be delayed.

Professional Attitude

Practicum placements are considered to be an integral part of our music therapy training. Working with clients will demand personal responsibility, flexibility and creativity as you approach the demands of this work.

You may sometimes find yourself in a difficult clinical situation on site. It is imperative at these times that you seek to address any identified challenges both musically and personally, and in as professional a way as possible. Music therapists in training are always challenged by personal values and life events that have preceded or coincide with a current clinical experience. You will be encouraged to consider all issues that arise as an opportunity to further develop yourself and your professional identity. Support for this natural process will be provided by experienced on-site music therapy supervisors and Berklee faculty.

Attendance at Your Practicum Site

Weekly attendance at your practicum field site is a requirement of all practicum courses unless you are ill. Others, including clients, are counting on your being

at the site on time and prepared for each session. Be aware that the clinical success of individual clients may well depend upon your active participation in their music therapy experience.

If you are ill on the day you are scheduled to participate in a practicum session, you will need to contact a designated individual at the facility before the scheduled session concerning your impending absence. It is suggested that once you have been assigned a practicum site, you learn who you should contact, and how best to contact that person, in the event that you cannot attend a session. You must also contact the practicum instructor at Berklee immediately regarding your absence. Learn the rules of the facility that dictate when staff and students should stay away from a site.

Facility Cancellations

A practicum session may occasionally be cancelled due to weather or other unforeseen reasons. Just as you are expected to inform the faculty and practicum supervisor when you are unable to attend a session, we will make every effort to contact you regarding a scheduling change or cancellation. Session “make-ups” will be handled on a case-by-case basis, and will depend on feasibility for the client(s), supervisor, and facility.

Equipment/Instrument Check-out

The Music Therapy Department has a limited number of instruments and equipment that you are able to check out for the day for use with clients at your practicum site. If possible, please schedule checkout with the Administrative Assistant *at least 48 hours in advance* of site visit. Fill out the checkout forms in the office of the Administrative Assistant. If possible, return equipment on the same day it is checked out.

Practicum Dress

You are required to dress *conservatively* and in a manner appropriate to your particular clinical placement. Many facilities have dress codes for hygiene and safety reasons. You are responsible for learning and adhering to these guidelines. Ask your practicum supervisor about dress appropriate for your on-site experiences. In addition, be observant. Determine what other professionals in music therapy and related areas are wearing to work. Use these professionals as models for your own dress.

The Music Therapy Department asks you not to wear the following:

1. Visible body piercing including your tongue;
2. Jewelry including earrings that may be grasped and pulled by clients;
3. Open-toed shoes such as sandals (hygiene);
4. Sleeveless shirts unless layered;

5. Torn clothing;
6. Revealing or see-through clothing including shorts and tank tops;
7. Clothing bearing words (such as t-shirts or hats with sayings);
8. Clothes that make tattoos obvious to clients or staff;
9. Shoes without socks, etc.;
10. Perfume or after shave (some people are allergic & it distracts; moderate hair spray or gels are "OK" if not distracting);
11. Hair styles or colors that distract client attention;
12. Anything valuable that might be lost or stolen;
13. Anything that might be perceived as controversial or disturbing to clients or staff;

Clinical Internship

AMTA GUIDELINES

STUDENTS / INTERNS

Eligibility for internship:

- *Must have completed all required academic coursework at an AMTA-approved college or university prior to beginning internship.
- *Must successfully complete internship within 24 months of completion of AMTA-required coursework.

APPLICATION AND ACCEPTANCE PROCEDURES:

- *It is the responsibility of the student to adhere to the following:
 - *Locate information on AMTA-approved Clinical Training Programs on musictherapy.org prior to requesting an application.
 - *Request, complete and submit necessary application materials.
- *No more than four active applications may be in progress at any one time.
- *Once an active application has been withdrawn or declined, another application may be submitted to an additional facility.
- *Applications may not be submitted more than 12 months prior to the date the applicant will be eligible for the internship. Clinical Training Directors must not make acceptance decisions more than one year in advance.
- *Each application for internship must be accompanied by a letter from chair or director of music therapy from the applicant's academic setting. This letter (a

form letter will suffice) must verify that AMTA-required coursework has been completed.

*Accept or decline each offer for internship, in writing, within one month of receipt of that offer. The acceptance offer will be rescinded if no response is received.

*Once a letter of acceptance has been sent to a Clinical Training facility, the student must notify, in writing, all other clinical facilities at which they have an active application.

*Must notify the academic setting when an internship has been accepted.

INTERN RESPONSIBILITIES:

*Adhere to Clinical Training Guidelines, clinical training program personnel requirements, policies and procedures.

*Adhere to AMTA Standards of Clinical Practice and Code of Ethics

*Seek feedback and clarification through regular communication with supervising MT-BC and Clinical Training Director.

*Report non-compliance with Clinical training Guidelines. Follow procedures detailed by AMTA

*An intern may elect to resign and/or withdraw from the internship with written notification to the Clinical Training Director and the academic setting in accordance with university and facility policies and procedures.

Certification Board for Music Therapists

The credential Music Therapist-Board Certified (MT-BC) is granted by the Certification Board for Music Therapists (CBMT) to identify music therapists who have demonstrated the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to practice at the current level of the profession. The purpose of board certification in music therapy is to provide an objective national standard that can be used as a measure of professionalism by interested agencies, groups, and individuals.

The Certification Board for Music Therapists administers a written objective examination, based on a nationwide music therapy job analysis that is regularly reviewed and updated to reflect current clinical practice. Both the job analysis and the examination are developed using guidelines issued by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and the American Psychological Association's standards for test validation. Once Board Certified, a Music Therapist must recertify every five years. The purpose of recertification is to encourage the MT-BC to maintain skills and to continue professional growth and

development. The Board Certification program is accredited by the *National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA)*. NCCA approval signifies that the CBMT adheres to the established criteria and standards set by the Commission.

The *Certification Board for Music Therapists* is an autonomous certifying agency that grants recognition to music therapists who have met predetermined CBMT standards and who continue to engage in professional growth and development through the CBMT Recertification Program. Board Certification is voluntary. Music Therapists who have elected to become certified demonstrate a special commitment to their profession and to the provision of quality services.

For Further Information:

Certification Board for Music Therapists **1-800-765-CBMT (2268)**
506 E. Lancaster Ave. Suite 102 **E-mail: info@cbmt.com**
Downingtown, PA 19335

American Music Therapy Association

Membership in the *American Music Therapy Association (AMTA)* entitles you to receive the *Journal of Music Therapy*, *Music Therapy Perspectives*, and *Music Therapy Matters*. Thus, membership is required as a textbook for several music therapy classes. Even if it is not required, it is strongly recommended that you join the AMTA. For the many benefits of membership, please consult musictherapy.org.

Useful Professional Websites

musictherapy.org
musictherapyworld.de
cbmt.com

American Music Therapy Association
 World Federation of Music Therapy
 Certification Board for Music Therapists

Music Therapy Faculty

Susanne Hanser, Ed.D., MT-BC Chair
 Karen Wacks, LMHC, M.Ed., MT-BC, Student Advisor, Practicum/Internship
 Coordinator
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