Bachelor of Music Therapy Program
Information and Application Package
Dear Prospective Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the Bachelor of Music Therapy Program at Capilano University. I have designed this package of information to guide you through the process of making your decision to apply to the program, and prepare for the audition and interview.

Capilano University offers the longest running Canadian Music Therapy program. Of the five Canadian training programs, Capilano offers you the largest permanent faculty of Music Therapists, which allows a diverse and rich learning environment.

Music Therapy education and training at Capilano University has been designed to offer a balance between theory and practice. We focus on both didactic and experiential learning. Music Therapy is a very rewarding profession. It can also be challenging. Life experience and emotional maturity are important qualities. In our admissions procedures, we emphasize "readiness". We advise you to acquire some experience in your community working as a volunteer, within clinical or preventative settings, before applying to the program.

You are welcome to complete the first two years at a college or university of your choice, as long as it offers transferable credits. Page 8 of the package, the Prerequisite Worksheet, lists the courses needed for these two years. Capilano University offers these courses through programs in the School of Performing Arts. If you are interested in doing the first two years at Capilano University, you will need to apply to the Diploma in Music program (classical) or the Jazz Studies program. Information on these admission requirements is available on the Capilano University website. Be sure to mention that you hope to continue your studies in your third and fourth year by transferring to Music Therapy. Admission from these programs into the third year of the Music Therapy program is not automatic.

If you have questions after reading through this package, I am usually available in the mornings on Mondays and Thursdays in my office (604-986-1911, local 2307) or by email at mtherapy@capilanou.ca.

Sincerely,

Stephen Williams, MTA
Coordinator, Bachelor of Music Therapy Program

Revised May 2019
There are a number of ways to contact us:

Telephone:  604-986-1911 Local 2307

Email:   mtherapy@capilanou.ca

Address:   The Coordinator
Music Therapy Program
Capilano University
2055 Purcell Way
North Vancouver, BC
Canada   V7J 3H5

Submission deadline each year: April 15

Where this date falls on a weekend, the following Monday will be an acceptable submission date.
Information about the Profession of Music Therapy

What is Music Therapy?
The Canadian Association for Music Therapy defines Music Therapy as the “skillful use of music as a therapeutic tool to restore, maintain, and improve a client’s mental, physical, and emotional health.”

Values of Music Therapy
Music has been recognized as a healing agent for thousands of years. Today, Music Therapy is effectively used in most countries around the world. As a non-verbal language, music reaches within to motivate, soothe, and bring joy to almost everyone.

The Profession
Music Therapists are employed in hospitals, clinics, long-term care homes, schools, community organizations, and private practices. They work with clients of all ages, with physical and psychological disorders, and on a group or individual basis. As an integral part of a treatment team, Music Therapists assess client’s needs and abilities, set treatment goals, design and implement programs, and evaluate and report on client progress.

The Program
Capilano University initiated Music Therapy training in Canada in 1976 and at present, there are six training programs in the country. The Bachelor of Music Therapy program at Capilano offers the third and fourth years, as well as pre-professional practicum (formerly known as the internship), leading to the Bachelor of Music Therapy degree. This degree program is designed so that students may enter third year with a variety of backgrounds: music, general arts, education, nursing, etc. You are welcome to complete all four and a half years at Capilano University.

This program provides students with the opportunity to gain knowledge and develop competencies in such areas as music therapy practice, clinical disorders, assessment, planning and intervention, improvisation and music of many eras and cultures, interpersonal and counselling skills, group dynamics, basic research, and documentation. Students also develop competencies in communication, music, teamwork, therapeutic skills, professionalism, knowledge of human growth and development, critical thinking, and theoretical foundations.
Students learn to integrate a variety of Music Therapy styles with a focus on the interactive qualities between the clients, the therapist, and the music. There is a strong emphasis on the combination of practice and theory as well as upon creativity and therapist self-awareness.

The program blends academic and experiential course work. Students deepen their experience of music, creative expression and the role of the arts. They are encouraged to explore their values, beliefs, feelings and communication patterns, to increase their effectiveness in the field. Each of the four terms includes a unique field trip or practicum where students are given increasing responsibility to design, implement and evaluate their own client treatment programs, under clinical supervision.

Continuance in the Bachelor of Music Therapy program will be contingent upon an adequate level of personal, academic and clinical skills as jointly evaluated each term by the Music Therapy faculty. Music Therapy is a helping profession in which Music Therapists work with clients who are in a state of disability. In the therapist-client relationship there is an assumption that the therapist is in a well enough state of health and well-being to mediate client difficulties with an appropriate clinical approach. In other words, the therapist must function in clinically suitable ways, be emotionally stable, and able to respond generally vis-à-vis the client’s needs.

The therapist is the helper. The role of the Bachelor of Music Therapy program, in addition to student education, is to safeguard the standards of practice of the professional Music Therapy community through monitoring student readiness to work with members of the community-at-large who are at risk because of disability, disease, cultural and social deprivation, and otherwise disadvantaged. Safety of clients is essential.

Music Therapy Program Philosophy

The program faculty believes in the profound capacity of music to be transformative. We believe in the unique value of each human being and in their innate abilities to grow, to become self-aware and to be resourceful. In this program, we believe the development of these capabilities is best facilitated in a mutually respectful, creative environment in which the student is encouraged, inspired and challenged. We include traditional and transpersonal perspectives while grounding them in the unique context of Music Therapy.
### Bachelor of Music Therapy Program Content

#### Third year – First term
(September - December)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Name</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MT 320</td>
<td>Improvisation I</td>
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<td>MT 330</td>
<td>Clinical Skills</td>
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<td>MT 350</td>
<td>Influence of Music</td>
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<td>MT 360</td>
<td>Music Therapy I</td>
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<td>MT 364</td>
<td>Clinical Conditions - Adulthood</td>
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<td>MT 380</td>
<td>Intro to Counselling Skills</td>
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<td>Private Music Instruction – Concentration</td>
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#### Fourth year – First term
(September - December)

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<td>MT 450</td>
<td>Music and the Creative Arts I</td>
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<td>MT 460</td>
<td>Music Therapy III</td>
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<td>MT 490</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSYC201</td>
<td>Group Dynamics</td>
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#### Third year – Second term
(January – April)

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<td>MT 361</td>
<td>Music Therapy II</td>
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<tr>
<td>MT 370</td>
<td>Clinical Conditions - Childhood</td>
<td>1.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>MT 391</td>
<td>Practicum I</td>
<td>4.0</td>
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<td>MT 420</td>
<td>Improvisation II – Guitar</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSYC222</td>
<td>Abnormal Psychology</td>
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<td>Private Music Instruction – Concentration</td>
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<td>Private Music Instruction – Secondary</td>
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#### Fourth year – Second term
(January – April)

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<th>Course Name</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<td>Music and the Creative Arts II</td>
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<tr>
<td>MT 461</td>
<td>Music Therapy IV</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>MT 462</td>
<td>Principles of Research</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>MT 480</td>
<td>Improvisation III</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MT 491</td>
<td>Practicum III</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private Music Instruction – Concentration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private Music Instruction – Secondary</td>
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#### Post Basic Requirements

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<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Name</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MT 511</td>
<td>Pre-professional Practicum</td>
<td>15.0</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(formerly known as the internship)

| Total Program Credits: | 79.0 |
| Total Degree Credits:  | 124.0 |

For a full listing of course descriptions, please visit the program website.
Program Faculty

Stephen Williams, MCAT (Hahnemann), BMus, MTA. Program Coordinator. Instructs Music Therapy courses and practicum. Stephen is a Music Therapist in private practice with children and adults.

Nancy McMaster, MA (NYU), BA, DipMT, MTA, FAMI. Instructs Music Therapy courses, practicum and pre-professional practicum. Nancy is a Music Therapist in private practice.

Kevin Kirkland, PhD (University of B.C.), MA (California State University), BMT (Capilano U), BMus in Composition (University of Alberta), FAMI, MTA; Instructs Music Therapy courses and one practicum. Kevin is a Music Therapist working with adults recovering from substance abuse.

Susan Summers, PhD (Antioch), MMT (BC Open University), BPE, BEd, Dip.Sp.Ed and Rehab, Dip.MT, NMT, AVPT, MTA; Instructs practicum and Voice PMI. Susan is a Music Therapist working with seniors.

Kerry Burke, BA (Antioch), Dip.MT, MTA. Instructs Improvisation I. Kerry is a Music Therapist working with children in community settings.

Sue Baines, PhD (Limerick), MA (NYU), BMT, BMus, MTA, FAMI. Instructs Private Music Instruction Piano. Sue is a performer, researcher and Music Therapist in community practice.

Michael Sochor, BMT (Capilano U), MTA. Instructs Private Music Instruction Guitar. Michael is a performer and Music Therapist working with seniors in long term care.

Emily Teng, MMT (Nordoff-Robbins, London), BMus, MTA. Instructs Private Music Instruction Piano. Emily is a Music Therapist working with a variety of clients in contractual practice.

Camilla Schroeder, BMT (Capilano U), MTA. Instructs Private Music Instruction Guitar. Camilla is a performer and Music Therapist working with seniors in long term care.

Carolyn Neapole, BMT (Capilano U), MTA. Instructs Private Music Instruction Voice. Carolyn is a Music Therapist working with a variety of mental health populations.

Leonard George, PhD, MA, Bsc. Registered Psychologist. Leonard is a Psychologist who instructs the Abnormal Psychology course.

Janet Waters, PhD, MA, BA. Janet is a Psychologist who instructs the Principles of Research course.

Hammond Tarry, DPhil., MA, BA. Hammond is a Psychologist who instructs Group Dynamics.

Lies Botman, MEd, Bsc. Lies is a Physiotherapist who instructs the Health Conditions of Adulthood course.

Reuben Gurr, Instructs Guitar PMI and MT420. Rueben is a well-known performer, studio musician, songwriter, and producer.

For full biographical and publication information, please see our program website.
Information about Capilano University

The Music Therapy program is situated on the main university campus in North Vancouver. While Capilano University has regional campuses, the main campus is in North Vancouver. Capilano University has earned an international reputation for quality teaching, programs, and services.

The University has the equivalent of about 7,500 full-time students, which makes it a mid-sized university. Students of all ages and a variety of cultural backgrounds find there are a variety of degree and career-ready programs. Capilano became a teaching university in 2008, with 40 years of educating students as a community college, with an emphasis on employment related programs.

The North Vancouver campus has a natural and beautiful environment all year round. When you visit here, you will be impressed with the natural beauty of the North Vancouver campus. A walking tour of the campus takes less than 15 minutes.

The mission of Capilano University is to enable student success. You will find a variety of student services available to students, including a Learning Commons, Counselling Department, Writing Centre, Accessibility Services, Centre for International Experience, Learning Specialist, full service Library and First Nations Student Services. Other services include a Child Care Centre, and Athletics and Recreation.

At Capilano University, students are safe, comfortable and challenged, and find the individual attention that can make a difference to their professional and personal achievements. It is our goal to ensure that our students come first — not only at Capilano University, but also in all of their pursuits.
## Prerequisites Worksheet: Prerequisites for Applying to 3rd Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prerequisite Course</th>
<th>Credit</th>
<th>Course Checklist</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English Composition</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>English Literature</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intro Psychology I</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intro Psychology II</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Development Psychology</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology Elective (200+ level) (^1)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science/Math (^2)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music History I</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music History II</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music Theory I</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music Theory II</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ear Training/Aural Skills</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities/Social Science/Music I</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities/Social Science/Music II</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Elective/Music</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Please note:**
All courses are university or college 100 level or higher, unless otherwise specified. For BC institutions, consult the [BC Transfer Guide](#), for transfer credit information.

\(^1\) Avoid taking Abnormal Psychology, Group Dynamics or Research/Statistics courses as they are part of the third and fourth year courses, and are taught specifically to music therapy students. These courses will not satisfy the Psychology elective.

\(^2\) We will accept most 100-level Biology, Science or Math courses. For a listing of possible subject areas that satisfy this requirement, please contact the Program Coordinator.

The Program Coordinator can answer specific questions about the prerequisite courses, but a formal process of transfer credit assessment, led by the Registrar’s Office, occurs after your acceptance to third year.
Application Portfolio for Entry into the Third Year

In advance of the April 15th application deadline:

- Complete an online application form to Capilano University www.applybc.ca
- Send official transcripts of your college or university coursework to Capilano University, attention: the Registrar. In most cases, your final grades may not yet be completed; please plan for a few weeks for transcript delivery and processing.

Note: if you are at Capilano University student, complete the online application step only.

Send your Application Portfolio with the following components:

- 2 sealed letters of reference addressing personal and academic suitability. The reference letters can be someone who can speak to your character and your suitability for this program, such as previous teachers, community service, Music Therapist, or supervisors of volunteer service.
- Current resume
- 1,000 word “Life History” including personal, familial and cultural aspects, also including history of health or emotional difficulties, any other challenges you have experienced, and how you have worked with them.
- 500 word essay on “Why I wish to become a Music Therapist”.

Send your completed portfolio to:

The Coordinator, Music Therapy Program
Capilano University
2055 Purcell Way
North Vancouver, BC V7J 3H5

Submission Deadline each year: April 15
Where this date falls on a weekend, the following Monday would be an acceptable submission date.

Turn to page 11 for information on scheduling an interview and audition.
Hints for Preparing the Application Portfolio

1. Application Form:
   We prefer that you apply online well ahead of the program Application Portfolio deadline.

2. Official Transcripts:
   Request/send your official transcripts to the Registrar, Capilano University, even if your final grades are not yet completed. After your acceptance to third year, a finalized transcript can be ordered.

3. Letters of Reference:
   Ask your references to write a current letter of recommendation outlining your strengths and areas you continue to work on. Ideally, you will not see this letter. The reference can either send the sealed letter to the Music Therapy Program Coordinator or give them to you to include in your portfolio. The referee can also email the letter as a pdf with a hand written signature, directly to the program coordinator.

4. Resume:
   A standard format resume is acceptable and may outline academic history, employment, volunteer history, and any other elements that represent who you are.

5. “Life History” Essay:
   This is your opportunity to tell us about your life, your family, any challenges you have had, and any health or emotional difficulties you have experienced and how you dealt with them. While you don’t need to have a challenged life to be a therapist, how you’ve dealt with personal challenges informs the interviewers about your character, personal resources and self-awareness.

6. “Why I wish to become a Music Therapist” Essay:
   Write about your motivation, interest and desire to be a Music Therapist.

7. Portfolio Format:
   Portfolios will be assessed on their content. It is not necessary to prepare a decorative folder with individualized plastic sleeves or index pages.
Interview and Audition

An interview and audition appointment is made by contacting the Health and Education department at 604-986-1911 local 2231 or dmah@capilanou.ca. Appointments are typically in May. Appointments are generally one hour and fifteen minutes and involve the elements listed below.

1. Audition:
   a) Applicants will be asked to perform two pieces of music that offer contrasting emotions on their main instrument demonstrating technique and expressiveness. If an additional instrument is played, one short piece may be included. If an accompanist is required, please make your own arrangements.
   b) Applicants will be asked to demonstrate piano skills, if piano is not their main instrument. Any genre of music is suitable.
   c) Applicants will be asked to demonstrate guitar and voice skills. Typically, a folk or children’s song works well although a song from any genre of music is suitable.

2. Ear Training Assessment:
   Applicants will be assessed for practical ear training (for example, finding the starting note to a song you know, singing on key a capella, hearing the difference between I, IV and V on piano).

3. Review of Prerequisite Courses and Academic History:
   The interview team will review the prerequisite courses and your academic history.

4. Personal interview:
   Applicants will be asked about their family history, their “Life History” essay and other elements that assess suitability for entry to the program. Selection criteria used for the audition-interview can be found on the following page.

Note: In some cases, telephone interviews may be acceptable as well as video replacements for in-person auditions. Please consult with the Program Coordinator regarding this option.
Selection Criteria

Admission decisions will be based on the portfolio, audition and interview. Applicants will be assessed on the following criteria:

- Musicality on performance instrument, piano, guitar and voice
- Self-Awareness and insight
- Emotional maturity
- Strong communication skills (verbal, written and comprehension)
- Strong social skills
- Good academic history
- Readiness to enter a therapy-training program
- Completion of prerequisite courses

Admission to the Bachelor of Music Therapy program is competitive.

Decisions are normally made in late May. Letters indicating acceptance or non-acceptance will be sent by email.

Observing a Music Therapist

As part of making your decision to enter the Capilano University program we strongly recommend that you observe or job-shadow a Music Therapist working with clients prior to the audition-interview. Not all Music Therapists work in situations where you would be able to observe.

If you are in BC, you can contact the Music Therapy Association of BC (MTABC) for names of Music Therapists who you may observe: info@mtabc.com. Include information about yourself, days you are available and your geographic location.

If you are in another part of Canada, please contact the Canadian Association for Music Therapy for information on provincial associations that can assist you: camt@musictherapy.ca or 1-800-996-2268.

If you are outside of Canada, please check for your national Music Therapy association.
A Note to Applicants

The faculty of the Bachelor of Music Therapy program encourage applicants from a wide variety of backgrounds and cultures. For any number of reasons, including culture and family style, some applicants find the application and audition-interview process challenging. The following information may be helpful in making your decision to apply and in preparing your application.

The program values include self-exploration, growth and transformation, holistic and multicultural perspective, life-long learning, resourcefulness, flexibility, open-mindedness, creativity, spontaneity, balance and a good deal of heart.

During the interview portion of the audition, two Music Therapy faculty members will talk with you about your life, your family of origin, and any challenges that you may have experienced. The faculty recognize you might be nervous. They also recognize that talking about your family or your life difficulties to strangers may be very uncomfortable and unfamiliar - in many cases is culturally challenging. If you have concerns about this, you are encouraged to talk to the Program Coordinator well ahead of the audition-interview.

The faculty are also aware that talking about or showing emotion is unfamiliar to some people and some cultural backgrounds. The questions in the interview will be sensitive to your background but please know that the elements of emotion and self-disclosure are important parts of being a Music Therapist, from our perspective. The interview portion is partly to assess how you would fit into this particular program, how you would fit with the other students, how you would respond to the experiential exercises that are offered in some of the classes and your overall suitability to our approach to Music Therapy training.

If you have any questions about the application process or the interview and audition, you are encouraged to talk with the Program Coordinator. When you have arranged to meet with the Program Coordinator, you are very welcome to bring along a family member or a friend.
Music Therapy Program Information Meetings

The Bachelor of Music Therapy Program faculty offer information meetings a few times a year. The meeting covers information about the profession of Music Therapy, the prerequisites to enter the program, the audition-interview and an overview of the curriculum in third and fourth year. We also cover where Music Therapists are working in Metro Vancouver, and how new graduates create and obtain work. For information on the dates and times of the Information Meetings, please check the Music Therapy program page mentioned below. For those of you who are not able to travel to North Vancouver for the Information Meetings, you are welcome to contact the Program Coordinator and have your questions about the program answered by telephone or email.

Meeting with the Program Coordinator

Please know the Program Coordinator is available to answer any questions you have about the program and the profession. If you live locally, you are welcome to set up a meeting on campus with the Program Coordinator. For those that live farther away, you are welcome to have your questions answered through a telephone conversation.

Music Therapy Program Website

Recently the Capilano University Communications and Marketing Department revised the program websites, and we are working to rebuild the content. If you are not finding the information you are looking for on the program website, please contact the program coordinator directly. Turn to page two for their contact information.
Frequently Asked Questions

Q. How long does it take to complete the degree?
A. The prerequisite courses usually take two years of full-time study. Once accepted into the Music Therapy program, there are two more years of full-time study – 3rd and 4th year. The pre-professional practicum (formerly known as the internship) usually takes from 6 to 10 months depending on the number of days a week. The full degree is approximately 4.5 years.

Q. Are there summer courses or may I start the program in January?
A. No. The program operates on a September through April calendar, with a break in December. We close down for June and July, so the Program Coordinator and faculty are unavailable during this time.

Q. I am missing one or two prerequisite courses; can I apply in April with the intention to take those courses during the summer?
A. Yes. It is beneficial to have a plan for obtaining the missing prerequisites when you arrive for the interview-audition.

Q. How can I ensure a prerequisite course will be accepted and transfer to Capilano?
A. Check the BC Transfer Guide. Then you can send specific course questions (i.e. Eng 114) and the web link to the course description to the Program Coordinator. Unfortunately, the Coordinator is not able to pre-approve transfer credit, as this is a formal process that occurs through the Registrar’s Office once you have been accepted to the Music Therapy program.

Q. How much does the program cost?
A. Check the “Program Details” section of our program website for current tuition and fees

Q. Do I need a “Criminal Record Check” for entry to the program?
A. Yes, but not prior to the audition. Instructions on the process of obtaining a Criminal Record Check will be included in an acceptance package.
Q. Are Royal Conservatory of Music courses transferable?

A. No. However, we may have a solution for applicants that have completed an advanced level of history and harmony. Contact the Program Coordinator for more information.

Q. How do I find out more information on the job market in BC?

A. For information on the career and employment market in British Columbia contact the Music Therapy Association of British Columbia, and in the rest of Canada by contacting the Canadian Association of Music Therapists.

Q. How do I find out about other programs in Canada and the U.S.A?

A. For further information on Music Therapy contact:

Canadian Association of Music Therapists (CAMT)
1124 Gainsborough Road, Suite 5
London, ON N6H 5N1  www.musictherapy.ca

American Music Therapy Association (AMTA)
8455 Colesville Rd, Suite 1000 301-589-3300
Silver Springs, MD  20910 U.S.A.  https://www.musictherapy.org/
Music Therapy: A Health Care Profession

A reproduction of a pamphlet from the Canadian Association for Music Therapy

What is music therapy?

Music therapy is the skillful use of music as a therapeutic tool to restore, maintain and improve mental, physical and emotional health. The nonverbal, creative and affective nature of music facilitates contact, self-expression, communication and growth.

With whom is music therapy used?

Music therapy is used with a wide variety of individuals regardless of age, disability or musical background.

Children who benefit from music therapy include those with mental or physical handicaps, learning disabilities, speech impairments, behavioural problems, emotional disturbances, autism and Rett syndrome as well as those who are gifted.

Adults who benefit from music therapy include those with mental illnesses, neurological disorders, problems of substance abuse, acute or chronic physical illnesses and those incarcerated in correctional facilities. Music therapists also work with elderly adults in nursing homes, geriatric units, veteran’s hospitals and in senior citizen’s clubs.

Music therapy has positive applications in childbirth, pain management and stress reduction. Its effectiveness has been demonstrated with children and adults who are victims of physical, sexual and/or emotional abuse. As well, music therapy has an important role in the care of the terminally ill, both in palliative care and hospice settings.

Music therapists work with individuals and groups in institutional, community and private practice settings.

What happens in a music therapy session?

The music therapist establishes an environment of trust and creativity. Trust and rapport between the client and therapist is essential to the therapeutic process in which emphasis is placed on development of a person’s inner resources.

Music therapy sessions include a variety of planned musical activities including singing, playing instruments, rhythmic movement, improvising, composing and listening to music. Techniques utilized within the sessions are creative-expressive, educational, physiological or behavioural in nature. Sometimes related therapeutic activities and methods from the disciplines of art, dance, drama, poetry and psychology are used. All activities are tailored to the individual’s capabilities and preferences and are designed to utilize innate musical tendencies and personal strengths.

During the initial sessions a music therapy assessment is completed and specific
therapeutic goals are established. The therapist then develops a treatment plan with short-term objectives as steps to achieve the long-term goals. Evaluation of treatment effectiveness is an ongoing part of the treatment plan.

How is music used therapeutically?

The following examples illustrate some of the procedures used in music therapy. Although these are only a sampling of the methods used by music therapists, they provide a general idea of how music therapy can work.

Singing is used to help people with speech impairments improve their articulation, rhythm and breath control. In a group setting individuals develop a greater awareness of others by singing together. Songs help elderly people to remember significant events in their lives which they may then share with others. Lyrics are used to help people with mental disabilities sequence a task.

By playing instruments, individuals with motor impairments can improve gross and fine motor coordination. Playing in instrumental ensembles helps a person with behaviour problems to learn how to control disruptive impulses by working within a group structure. Learning a piece of music and performing it develops musical skills and helps a person build self-reliance, self-esteem and self-discipline.

Rhythmic movement is used to facilitate and improve an individual’s range of motion, joint mobility/agility/strength, balance, coordination, gait consistency, respiration patterns and muscular relaxation. The rhythmic component of music helps increase motivation, interest and enjoyment, and acts as a nonverbal persuasion to involve individuals socially. Improvising offers a creative, nonverbal means of expressing feelings. It helps the therapist to establish a bond of trust with a person and serves as a useful assessment technique. Through vocal, instrumental and movement improvisation a person interacts with another and explores feelings which are difficult to express verbally. Improvising offers an opportunity to make choices and deal with structure in a creative way.

Composing is used to develop cooperative learning and to facilitate the sharing of feelings, ideas and experiences. For hospitalized children, writing songs is a means of expressing and understanding fears. For people with a terminal illness, it is a vehicle for examining feelings about meaning in life and death, while creating a legacy to leave behind for loved ones.
The healing song, written for and with the client, can facilitate a dramatic moment of self-awareness and/or catharsis. Listening to music has many therapeutic applications. It helps develop cognitive skills such as attention and memory. It facilitates the process of coming to terms with difficult issues by providing a creative environment for self-expression. Music evokes memories and associations. Actively listening to music in a relaxed and receptive state stimulates thoughts, images and feelings which can be further examined and discussed, either with the therapist alone or within a supportive group setting. Additionally, listening to music provides a stimulating way to explore and understand our own and other cultures.

What does a music therapist do?

Clinical work involves preparing, implementing and evaluating music therapy programmes with individuals and groups. The music therapist begins this clinical process by a study of medical records and, when possible, by interviews. After the history is obtained an assessment is conducted in which information on how the person makes and responds to music is collected and analyzed objectively. The therapist may also observe the person’s interactions with others and with the environment.

Based on this information as well as input from the client, family members and other health-care professionals, the music therapist formulates goals. These are generally long-term and are achieved in time by the successful completion of smaller and shorter-term objectives. It is these goals and objectives, along with specific procedures and materials for use with an individual or group that constitute the treatment plan which the music therapist implements.

After implementing treatment for a reasonable period of time the therapist evaluates the plan to determine whether the methods of treatment are effective and whether the person is making progress in reaching the prescribed goals and objectives. The treatment plan is modified accordingly. Discharge from the therapy programme may occur when goals have been achieved, the person is discharged from the hospital/facility or when the person can no longer benefit from the services. Throughout the treatment process the music therapist documents assessments, progress, observations and recommendations in the person’s chart/file. There is also ongoing communication between the music therapist and the person who is the recipient of music therapy services as well as with other members of the interdisciplinary team.

Depending on the music therapist’s area of employment, different procedures and programmes are utilized.

In the hospital/rehabilitation setting the music therapist works with people who have a wide variety of physical, psychological, neurological and emotional problems. In this milieu the therapist uses many procedures including guided imagery and music, active listening, singing, music and movement, wheelchair dancing, visual art, drama, poetry, instrument playing and relaxation to music. In assisting people with problems of a psychological or emotional nature the therapist may combine techniques of music therapy with those of counselling and psychotherapy. In group work the
music therapist may also co-facilitate the therapeutic process with another health care professional. The therapist may coordinate “shows” or musical events in the hospital involving individuals receiving therapy services or musicians from outside the hospital.

In schools, a music therapist can further developmental goals and address the problems of children with special needs by working in conjunction with educators. The combination of music therapy with Orff and Kodaly pedagogical techniques often yields positive results.

Within the community setting, music therapists contribute to preventative health promotion by offering wellness programmes. Community-based music therapists may also work in conjunction with other health care providers to integrate people into the community following a hospitalization.

Music therapists in these various settings are often responsible for the administration and maintenance of their respective programmes. Some are also involved in clinical research studies to examine the efficacy of music therapy treatments and in addition may be supervising students who are completing practica and internships in music therapy.

What are the personal qualifications?

The music therapist possesses confidence, self-awareness and a realistic perception of his/her strengths and weaknesses. Creativity, spontaneity, energetic purpose, flexibility and humour are other important attributes. Music therapists respect the dignity of the people they serve and must conduct themselves according to a code of professional ethics as established by the Canadian Association for Music Therapy.

What professional skills/training are needed?

A music therapist is an accomplished musician, able to play several instruments (usually including piano and guitar), to sing and to improvise in a variety of styles. Detailed studies in music theory, harmony, conducting, music history, solo and ensemble playing and composition form the solid basis for the therapist’s musical knowledge and skill. Professional music therapy training is a combination of theoretical and experiential learning. Students gain knowledge of normal and abnormal human development; of symptoms, problems and needs associated with people who have a variety of disabilities and illnesses; and of various treatment approaches and modalities. They are also
trained in observation, assessment, treatment planning, implementation and evaluation. Grounding in the theory, research and practice of music therapy and psychology is necessary to provide individuals and groups with effective therapeutic services.

What are the career possibilities?

Music therapy offers three main career options:

1. clinician/consultant
2. administrator/supervisor
3. university/college professor

A clinician spends the majority of time treating people, either in one-to-one or group settings. Music therapy clinicians may work in private or government agencies, including hospitals, institutions, schools, clinics, residential treatment centres, nursing homes, hospices, community centres, half-way houses, group homes and many other settings.

Not all clinicians are employed full-time by one agency. Many music therapists have developed private practices from their own offices and studios. Music therapists working as consultants provide diagnostic and treatment services to certain clients and/or develop programmes to be implemented by other health care professionals.

An administrator or supervisor directs clinical staff in public or private agencies. Administrators/supervisors have a variety of responsibilities, which include developing and managing budgets, ordering and maintaining equipment, establishing departmental policies and procedures, supervising music therapy interns as well as directing and evaluating staff.

After completion of appropriate graduate studies, music therapists may also become university/college professors who train others to become music therapists. Professors of music therapy teach classes, supervise students in clinics, evaluate students for admission, apply for research grants, oversee research projects, and perform the usual academic and administrative duties. University professors are also expected to carry out original research for purposes of publication and furthering the knowledge base of music therapy.

What is the job market for music therapists?

Several institutions and agencies in Canada maintain permanent full-time music therapy positions and because music therapists work with a diverse client base there are always opportunities to create new jobs. Often music therapists create their own positions by
demonstrating the effectiveness of music therapy to administrators and clinical staff through inservices and workshops. Consulting positions may also lead to establishment of a music therapy programme.

As in other health care, social service, and education professions, employment opportunities in music therapy are influenced by the economy and the amount of government funding given to these respective programmes.

To be employed as a music therapist in Canada, the therapist should be accredited by the Canadian Association for Music Therapy.

**How do I become an accredited music therapist?**

To apply for accreditation as a music therapist, an individual will have successfully completed a degree in music therapy at a university approved by the Canadian Association for Music Therapy.

In order to be accredited as a music therapist in Canada the person makes application to the registrar of the Canadian Association for Music Therapy, and provides documentation of completion of the academic requirements, including completion of a supervised *clinical internship* (min. 1000 hours), and then completes an accreditation exam. The successful candidate may use the title Music Therapist Accredited (MTA).
The Guitar and Music Therapy

Playing the guitar in preparation for auditioning to Music Therapy program:

- Be able to strum with the right hand - basic strum in 4/4 and 3/4
- Be able to do two basic chord progressions in the keys of D, G and A major:
  
  All suggested keys:  I    IV   I    V7   I   IV   V7   I  
  
  For the key of G only:  I    vi   ii   V7   I  
- Be able to sing and play the guitar while maintaining eye contact.

Buying a guitar:

For Music Therapy, you will need a steel, six string, folk-style guitar. Since the guitar is used with clients, we recommend a mid-range, good quality instrument. If you're buying a guitar, our instructors recommend Seagull brand or Simon & Patrick folk cedar “woodland” style guitars as they are Canadian-made, very good quality and moderately priced (around $400). The Simon & Patrick brand may be easier to find.

Other types of guitars are acceptable. Fender F series are good, although slightly large for smaller stature students. Be sure to ask the sales representative to check the guitar size is a fit for you (neck size fits your hand; body of guitar fits for seated playing).

The Vancouver area store that is used to selling Seagull and Simon & Patrick guitars to Music Therapy students is Long and McQuade in North Vancouver.

Other purchases for the guitar:

- Guitar strap - preferably a wide one to distribute the weight across your shoulders. Fabric style straps are easier to adjust while leather ones are typically wider and more difficult to adjust.
- Soft Guitar case rather than a hard case - a hard case weighs three times as much as the guitar and transfers all impact energy to the guitar in the case of a fall. Do not be deceived by the cheaper cases ($40 buys a bag but little padding; $80 buys something that you can drop and sustain no damage).
- Guitar strings - come in a variety of brands and styles. The beginner guitar player is encouraged to buy light gauge phosphorus bronze strings (about $9.00)
- Capo - there are only two types of capos: the screw type made by Scubb and the battery clamp type made by Kaiser. Both are around $28.00. Do not use the 1950’s hootenanny stretch type, as they are difficult to adjust.
- Metronome - suggested modes are Seiko or Quicktime (around $35.00). These models "click"; do not buy the ones that squeak. This item can wait until you are in Vancouver.
Protecting your guitar:

- Do not leave your guitar unattended in a car - thefts from cars in the Vancouver area are common and a guitar left in a car is risky.
- Do not leave your guitar in the hot sun or in the trunk of a car on a sunny day as the glue loosens, the neck may shift out of position, and then resets when the temperature drops.

Learning and Practicing:

You may be the type of person who learns well through lessons or you may see it as an instrument that you can learn on your own. Either way is fine. Please consider your posture when practicing the guitar – practice in front of a mirror rather than hunching over to see your chord hand.

- Practice 5 – 10 minutes twice a day in the beginner stage
- Begin playing in a seated position in a chair that has good lower back support.
- Do not practice through pain – rest if your fingers or neck hurts. Consider consulting a guitar teacher regarding hand position and ergonomics.
- As the guitar becomes more familiar, vary your practice style – use the guitar strap and practice standing up.
- Be very aware of pain or discomfort – these may be signs that you should stop playing and rest for a few days. If pain persists, consult a health care professional.
The Piano and Music Therapy
Information for non-piano majors

Playing the piano in preparation for starting the Music Therapy program:

- Be able to play a melody with the right hand and a bass line/pattern with the left (right/left hand independence).
- Be able to locate chords with either hand - basic chords (I, IV, V and vi) in the keys of C, D, F, G and B flat.
- Be able to sing and play the piano simultaneously.

Playing level for entry to third year:

- The follow segment demonstrates a basic level of playing that you should have prior to beginning the Music Therapy program in September.

The next page gives other examples of the functional technical level of playing that is required for entry to third year. Any genre of music style is acceptable, although a focus on geriatric, folk and children's songs would be an asset.
After the ball is over,

After the break of morn.

After The Ball Is Over
Charles K. Harris

Allegretto in F
J. B. Wanhal
Ear Training and Music Therapy

Successful Music Therapists have a keen ear for pitch, tuning, harmonic progressions, chord recognition, and the ability to sing in tune. While the prerequisite Ear Training, Sight Singing and Theory courses teach this material, not all students complete the courses with the necessary practical ability.

To do well in the Music Therapy program, you will need to have the following skills:

- Finding the starting note to a song
- Sing a melody unaccompanied
- Singing Intervals
- Hearing chord changes (I, ii, IV, V I for example), with chord inversions
- Singing on key

If you believe you have difficulty with any of these skills, you are encouraged to work with a teacher or mentor prior to the audition-interview. A conversation with the program coordinator well in advance of the audition-interview, in terms of resources and supports, may also be helpful.
Examples of Alumni Clinical Work

A few of our grads works at medical rehabilitation centres working particularly with children who have brain injury and adolescents who have spinal cord injury.

Three of our grads work in facility for children with autism working individually with young children who have severe difficulty communicating and relating yet they respond remarkably to music and the therapy services offered by the Music Therapists.

One of our grads works at a women’s hospital working alongside women who are pregnant. The Music Therapist offers relaxation services and even works in the delivery room for at-risk procedures.

One of our grads works at an inner city centre with people who have AIDS, mental health difficulties, and drug misuse problems. The participants at the centre often prefer expressing through music than through words.

One of our grads works at a Native Health Centre in the Health Promotion branch assisting First Nations participants to use their healing practices along with music as a therapy for expression, community, and health.

One of our grads works in a hospital setting facilitating Music Therapy groups and individual sessions in a psychiatric ward. This grad also works in the palliative (dying) care ward in the same hospital.

One of our grads works in a women’s prison assisting clients with adjustment, family and life issues through Music Therapy sessions.

One of our grads works at a children’s hospital with at-risk psychiatric teens. The teens work on social, expressive and coping themes through Music Therapy.

One of our grads works in the Maritimes with seniors who have Alzheimer’s assisting the clients in social and expressive goals in groups and individual session, calming anxious clients through music, and with decreasing staff stress through monthly relaxation groups.

One of our grads in the Prairies has her own company of Music Therapists. Her team works with infants, children with developmental difficulties, adolescents in the school system, adults in mental health, palliative settings, and with seniors in long-term care.

If you have any questions about employment for Music Therapists, feel free to contact:

Canadian Association of Music Therapists: www.musictherapy.ca
Music Therapy Association of BC: www.mtabc.com
Music Therapy Program Coordinator: mtherapy@capilanou.ca