

USC THORNTON SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Division of Classical Performance and Composition

Keyboard Studies Instruction for Non-Majors

For all questions regarding private and group piano instruction, please contact:
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PRIVATE PIANO INSTRUCTION ELECTIVE COURSES

MPKS 300 Elective Lessons for Undergraduate Students

MPKS 301 Lessons for Music Minors

MPKS 501 Elective Lessons for Graduate Students

Beginning or continuing your music studies at USC can be a highly rewarding and fulfilling experience. All USC students are eligible to enroll in one-on-one private piano lessons, or a group piano class within the Thornton School of Music.

MPKS 300 and 501 is primarily designed to help students with some prior music study continue to improve at the piano in private lessons, but beginning piano students may also register for private lessons.

MPKS 301 is designed for students who have already studied piano and are at an intermediate to advanced level, and who would like to achieve a minor in music performance. For audition requirements, please see below.

The final course grade for MPKS 300, 301 and 501 is based on demonstrated regular practice, progress made during the semester, and a performance jury at the end of the semester. Dr. Pierce will assign each student with an instructor as soon as they have registered and their registration is viewable on GRS.

[Click here for the Syllabus](#) for more information.

MPKS 301 Music Minor Audition Requirements for Piano

- Students may only register for MPKS 301 once they have been approved for the minor through both an application and audition process. Undergraduate students interested in pursuing a minor can apply during their first semester, but may only enroll as a minor beginning in their second semester. For more information regarding the application process, please visit:
<http://music.usc.edu/admission/minors/>

- Students auditioning to become piano minor students are required to play a piano audition. Auditions take place each semester on the Monday prior to final examinations.
- Students are required to play 3 different pieces of at least 2 different style periods for the minor audition. All 3 pieces must be memorized.
- Students auditioning to be piano minor students must receive an average grade of at least an A– to pass the audition.
- For students enrolled in MPKS 300, the audition also serves as their piano jury.
- Auditions for Piano Minors will take place on Monday, December 5 (morning) and Monday, May 1 (morning).

For further information about music minor requirements, please visit the following webpage: <http://music.usc.edu/departments/minors-and-electives/minors/>

GROUP PIANO INSTRUCTION ELECTIVE COURSES **MPKS 150A/B**

Group piano classes (MPKS 150A/B) are designed for students with little to no prior piano study. The course will provide students with an introduction to learning to play the piano.

- Classes meet twice per week throughout the semester for 50 minutes at each session. A maximum of 16 students can be accommodated in the Keyboard Lab for each section of the course.
- Students taking MPKS 150A/B may register for a letter grade, as Pass/Fail, or audit the course.
- Classes take place in the Keyboard Lab (MUS 213).
- Practice rooms are available in Gateway; students must request access through Music Operations (located in Booth Music Hall, Room 101) for registered students. Students may also practice in the Keyboard Lab (MUS 213) when group piano classes are not in session.

MPKS 150A

This one semester course focuses on basic note and rhythmic reading, technical development, harmonization, lead sheet reading, improvisation, ensemble playing, solo repertoire, and the fundamentals of music theory. The final course grade is based on three in-class examinations and an additional final examination, each weighted equally. The end of the semester will culminate in a solo performance in front of the entire class during the last class period.

[Click here for the Syllabus](#) for more information.

MPKS 150B

This one semester course is a continuation from MPKS 150A. It focuses on basic and intermediate techniques of piano performance. Topics include development of technique, reading, applied music theory through harmonization and simple improvisation, ensemble playing, and solo repertoire. The final course grade is based on three in-class examinations and an additional final examination, each weighted equally. The end of the semester will culminate in a solo performance in front of the entire class during the last class period.

[Click here for the Syllabus](#) for more information.