



Musicology Departments Today

Findings from the 2024 Department Survey

A REPORT FROM THE HUMANITIES INDICATORS PROJECT
OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ARTS & SCIENCES

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Musicology Programs: A Profile

Discussions about the ongoing health of the humanities in higher education tend to focus on a single data series: the trend in undergraduate degrees. The American Academy's Humanities Indicators developed the Humanities Department Survey (HDS) to provide a fuller picture of the field and supply the data necessary for a more substantive conversation about the humanities in four-year colleges and universities.

All the counts, percentages, and averages included in this profile are estimates generated from data collected for the fourth round of the survey (HDS-4). The estimates are based on a sample of all institutions of higher education reporting to the U.S. Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System that they had conferred at least five degrees from academic year 2017–18 to 2021–22 in “Musicology and Ethnomusicology” or “Music History, Literature, and Theory.” The sample was stratified by Carnegie Classification to ensure that the study's findings were nationally representative. HDS-4 was administered from November 2023 to June 2024. The survey response rate for musicology departments was 44%.

Degree-granting departments of musicology were first included in HDS-2, which collected information for the 2012–13 academic year. This is the only round of the survey that, like HDS-4, involved sampling from the entire population of musicology departments. For this reason, only the findings from HDS-2 are comparable to those from HDS-4.

For more information on the survey's methodology and how to interpret the results, see the [technical report](#) for the study.

Findings and Trends

Departments

- As of fall 2023, approximately 65 departments were awarding degrees in musicology at colleges and universities in the United States. These departments included large, freestanding departments in the discipline as well as programs within departments awarding degrees in multiple disciplines. In the latter case, the department chairs were asked to report information for musicology only.
- Of the 65 departments awarding degrees in musicology, 52 (80%) were awarding graduate degrees in the discipline, with 33 (51%) awarding PhDs.

Faculty

- Musicology departments employed 590 full- and part-time faculty members in fall 2023, with an average of 9 faculty members per department.
- Approximately 70% of musicology faculty members either had tenure or were on the tenure track.
- Faculty members employed full time with tenure or on the tenure track taught an average of 34 undergraduate students in fall 2023, while full-time faculty employed off the tenure track taught an average of 116 undergraduates. Faculty employed part-time taught an average of 23 undergraduate students during that fall term.
- While 30% of musicology departments had made at least one new hire for the 2023–24 academic year, amounting to 40 new permanent faculty, the departments collectively had lost an average of 30 faculty per annum over the previous two years. Among the faculty who left, 67% had retired.
- An estimated 22% of musicology department chairs thought the number of tenure-line faculty in their departments had increased from fall 2020 to fall 2023, while 13% estimated that their tenure-line faculty count had decreased during that period (the smallest share among all the disciplines in the survey by a wide margin, but musicology was also the discipline with the smallest number of departments and faculty in the survey). In addition, 26% of chairs in the discipline thought the number of nontenure-track faculty had increased over the same period, while 9% thought the number had decreased.

- Looking ahead, 40% of musicology department chairs expected the number of tenure-track faculty in their departments to increase over the next three academic years, while 20% thought the number would shrink. (The remainder thought the most likely outcome would be no change or were not sure what would happen.) In contrast, 29% thought their nontenure-track faculty count would increase, while 7% thought the number would decrease.
- About 37% of the departments had a faculty member come up for tenure during the previous two academic years. Averaging over those two years, 10 faculty were granted tenure per annum nationwide, none were denied tenure, and none left prior to a tenure decision.
- Because it is not appropriate for a person to assign a demographic identity to another person, the survey did not ask department chairs to report their faculty members' races or genders. However, the survey did ask chairs to describe themselves. Women constituted 40% of the chairs in musicology departments in fall 2023, and 87% identified their race/ethnicity as white.

Undergraduate Students

- In fall 2023, departments that awarded degrees in musicology had undergraduate course enrollments of 21,470, with an average enrollment of 330 per department and a median enrollment of 369. (These are duplicated enrollment figures, with students taking multiple courses in the discipline counted in every course.)
- Approximately 75% of musicology department chairs thought undergraduate enrollments had held steady or increased from fall 2020 to fall 2023.
- On average, musicology departments awarded 2 bachelor's degrees per department in the 2022–23 academic year. These departments had an average of 4 juniors or seniors with a declared major in the subject (with a median of 2).
- In the 2022–23 academic year, musicology departments awarded an average of 4 minors in the subject (with a median of 1 per department). Approximately 29% of departments reported awarding minors that year. A much smaller share of departments, 9%, awarded certificates or other microcredentials.

Graduate Students

- Approximately 830 students were working toward graduate degrees in musicology. The average number of students pursuing advanced degrees in

musicology was 16 (with a median of 8) per department that granted such degrees.

- The 33 departments awarding a PhDs in musicology admitted an average of 1.8 new doctoral students into their programs in fall 2023, for a total of approximately 60 new doctoral students in the discipline.

Departmental Practices and Concerns

- Approximately 60% of department chairs were optimistic about the future of musicology at their institutions (one of the largest shares among the 14 disciplines in the survey), while just 7% were pessimistic. (The remainder were either unsure or neither optimistic nor pessimistic.)
- The survey found that 27% of the chairs in musicology were concerned about the academic freedom of faculty members in their department. Among those chairs, the most common concern was threats to such freedom from federal or state governments (cited by 64% of chairs). The second most common concern was about boards of trustees (cited by 64%).
- While 100% of musicology departments provided research support for their full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty members, and 82% offered such support for full-time nontenured faculty, only 50% offered such support for part-time faculty.
- Asked what their departments had done in recent years to attract additional majors, 38% of musicology department chairs reported the introduction of diversity, equity, and inclusion programs designed to attract new student populations to the major (musicology being the only discipline for which that was the most common strategy employed).
- An estimated 50% of departments supported the career development of their undergraduates by offering (and for a small share of departments, by *requiring*) occupationally oriented lectures, while 36% offered internships, and 57% offered occupationally oriented coursework or workshops.
- In departments awarding doctorates in the discipline, 72% offered occupationally oriented lectures for their doctoral students; 29% offered internships; and 71% offered occupationally oriented coursework or workshops.

Appendix: Data Tables

To provide more specific points of comparison for your department or program the following tables provide additional estimates expanding on the findings above. For additional cross-disciplinary comparisons and details about the survey methodology, see the technical report at https://bit.ly/HDS4_TechRpt.

Musicology Table 1: Departments and Faculty Members, by Carnegie Classification of Institution and Highest Degree Offered by Department, Fall 2023

Carnegie Classification	Number of Departments	Average Number of Faculty Members per Department (Median)	Total Number of Faculty Members
All Institutions	65	9.1 (9.0)	590

Musicology Table 2: Faculty Members, by Tenure Status, Carnegie Classification of Institution, and Highest Degree Offered by Department, Fall 2023

Carnegie Classification	Tenured	Tenure-Track	Neither Tenured nor Tenure-Track, Full-Time	Neither Tenured nor Tenure-Track, Part-Time
All Institutions	250	90	60	190

Musicology Table 3: Faculty Activities Beyond the Department, by Carnegie Classification of Institution and Highest Degree Offered by Department, Fall 2023

Carnegie Classification	Number of Faculty Members Teaching For-Credit Undergraduate or Graduate Courses Outside the Department	Percentage of Departments with Faculty Members that Hold a Joint Appointment in a Non-Humanities Department	Percentage of Departments with Faculty Members that Teach For-Credit Courses with Other Non-Humanities Faculty Members
All Institutions	80	7%	13%

Musicology Table 4: Change in Faculty Numbers from Fall 2020 to Fall 2023, by Carnegie Classification of Institution and Highest Degree Offered by Department

Discipline	Total Number of Tenured or Tenure-Track Faculty Between Fall 2020 and Fall 2023			Total Number of Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Between Fall 2020 and Fall 2023		
Carnegie Classification	Increased	Remained the Same	Decreased	Increased	Remained the Same	Decreased
All Institutions	22%	65%	13%	26%	65%	9%

Musicology Table 5: Departments Offering Degrees, by Carnegie Classification of Institution and Highest Degree Offered by Department, Fall 2023*

		TOTAL
Carnegie Classification	Primarily Undergraduate	8
	Master's	11
	Primarily Research	46
All Institutions		65

* Not every department housed in an institution classified as Primarily Research using the Carnegie classifications offers a doctorate or master's degree.

Musicology Table 6: Enrollment (Duplicated) in Undergraduate Courses, by Carnegie Classification of Institution and Highest Degree Offered by Department, Fall 2023

Carnegie Classification	Number of Departments	Average Enrollment per Department (Median)	Total Number of Students Enrolled
All Institutions	65	330.4 (369.0)	21,470

Musicology Table 7: Bachelor's Degrees Awarded, by Carnegie Classification of Institution and Highest Degree Offered by Department, 2022–23 Academic Year

Carnegie Classification	Number of Departments	Average Number of Bachelor's Degrees Awarded per Department (Median)	Total Number of Bachelor's Degrees Awarded
All Institutions	65	2.1 (2.0)	140

Musicology Table 8: Juniors and Seniors with Declared Majors, by Carnegie Classification of Institution and Highest Degree Offered by Department, Fall 2023

Carnegie Classification	Number of Departments	Average Number of Juniors & Seniors with Declared Major per Department (Median)	Total Number of Juniors & Seniors with Declared Major
All Institutions	65	3.9 (1.5)	260

Musicology Table 9: Students Completing a Minor, by Carnegie Classification of Institution and Highest Degree Offered by Department, 2022–23 Academic Year

Carnegie Classification	Number of Departments	Average Number of Students Completing a Minor per Department (Median)	Total Number of Students Completing a Minor
All Institutions	19	◇	◇

◇ too few respondents to provide reliable estimates

Musicology Table 10: Minors Tied to Non-Humanities Subjects Offered by Department, by Carnegie Classification of Institution and Highest Degree Offered by Department, 2023-24*

Carnegie Classification	Percentage of Departments Offering Minors Tied to Non-Humanities Subjects
All Institutions	7%

* E.g., medical humanities, environmental humanities, etc.

Musicology Table 11: Students Completing a Certificate or Microcredential, by Carnegie Classification of Institution and Highest Degree Offered by Department, 2022-23 Academic Year

Carnegie Classification	Number of Departments	Average Number of Students Completing a Certificate or Microcredential per Department (Median)	Total Number Completing a Certificate or Microcredential
All Institutions	6	◇	◇

◇ too few respondents to provide reliable estimates

Musicology Table 12: Change in Undergraduate Student Enrollment (Duplicated) from Fall 2020 to Fall 2023, by Carnegie Classification of Institution and Highest Degree Offered by Department

	Total Number of Undergraduate Student Enrollment in Courses Between Fall 2020 and Fall 2023		
Carnegie Classification	Increased	Remained the Same	Decreased
All Institutions	19%	56%	25%

Musicology Table 13: Recruitment Efforts for Undergraduate Students from Fall 2020 to Fall 2023

Recruitment Effort	Percentage of Departments that Performed Each Recruitment Effort
Engaged in outreach to/recruiting of students in local high schools	0%
Engaged in outreach to/recruiting of students in community colleges	6%
Engaged in outreach to/recruiting of students currently in other majors or who have yet to declare a major	19%
Added high-interest introductory courses intended to attract students	19%
Introduced a new minor field, certificate, or other microcredential for non-majors	6%
Offered events, classes, or other activities designed to aid majors in thinking about future jobs or careers	25%
Introduced diversity, equity, and inclusion programs designed to attract new student populations into the major	38%
Changed requirements for major (e.g., eliminated final paper or other benchmark requirements, created additional pathways into major, etc.)	19%

Musicology Table 14: Enrollment (Duplicated) in Graduate-Level Courses, by Carnegie Classification of Institution and Highest Degree Offered by Department, Fall 2023

Carnegie Classification	Number of Departments	Average Enrollment per Department (Median)	Total Number of Students Enrolled
All Institutions	52	116.7 (55.0)	6,070

Musicology Table 15: Total Number of Graduate Students, by Carnegie Classification of Institution and Highest Degree Offered by Department, Fall 2023

Carnegie Classification	Number of Departments	Average Number of Graduate Students per Department that Offers Graduate Degrees (Median)	Total Number of Graduate Students
All Institutions	52	15.9 (8.0)	830

Musicology Table 16: First-Year Students in Doctoral Programs, by Carnegie Classification of Institution and Highest Degree Offered by Department, Fall 2023

Carnegie Classification	Number of Departments	Average Number of Doctoral Students per Department that Offers the Degree (Median)	Total Number of First Year Doctoral Students
All Institutions	33	1.8 (2.0)	60

Musicology Table 17: Departments Tracking Career Outcomes for Graduate Students, by Carnegie Classification of Institution and Highest Degree Offered by Department, 2023-24

Carnegie Classification	Track All Graduate Student Career Outcomes	Track Only PhD Recipient Career Outcomes	Track Only Master's Recipient Career Outcomes	Do Not Track Career Outcomes
All Institutions	45%	0%	0%	55%

Note: A department was re-categorized as 'track all graduate student career outcomes' if they were a department that only offered a master's degree and selected 'track only master's degree recipient career outcomes' or a department that only offered a PhD and selected 'track only PhD recipient career outcomes.'

Musicology Table 18: Graduate Student Teaching Assistants, by Carnegie Classification of Institution and Highest Degree Offered by Department, Fall 2023

Carnegie Classification	Teaching Assistants that Provided Grading, Classroom Support, or Discussion Sections	
	Average Number per Department (Median)	Total
All Institutions	6.3 (5.5)	320

Musicology Table 19: Faculty Members for All Undergraduate Courses, by Carnegie Classification of Institution, Highest Degree Offered by Department, and Form of Control, Fall 2023

	Total enrollment (duplicated) in undergraduate courses taught by ...			
	Full-Time Tenured or Tenure-Track Faculty Members	Full-Time Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Members	Part-Time Faculty Members	Two or More Faculty* (Co-Teaching)
By Carnegie Classification				
All Institutions	13,850	4,790	3,100	50

* Multiple members of department faculty or department faculty with faculty from another department.

Musicology Table 20: Faculty Departures, Tenure Decisions, and New Hires, Fall 2023 and Over the Previous Two Academic Years

	Number	Percent of Faculty Members
Tenured Faculty Members as of Fall 2023	250	41% of all faculty members
Tenure-Track Faculty Members (not yet tenured) as of Fall 2023	90	16% of all faculty members
Faculty Members Who Left, Retired, or Died per Year (Two-Year Average) 2021-22 & 2022-23	30	5% of all faculty members
Tenure-Track Faculty Members Granted Tenure per Year (Two-Year Average) 2021-22 & 2022-23	10	11% of tenure-track, not yet tenured faculty members
Faculty Members Denied Tenure or Leaving Prior to Tenure Decision per Year (Two-Year Average) 2021-22 & 2022-23	0	3% of tenure-track, not yet tenured faculty members
Tenured, Tenure-Track and Permanent Faculty Members Hired for 2023-24	40	11% of full-time faculty members

Musicology Table 21: Availability of Institutional or Departmental Support for Research, Fall 2023

	Percent of Institutions or Departments Providing Support
For Full-time tenure or tenure-track faculty members	100%
For full-time non-tenured or non-tenure-track faculty members	82%
For part-time faculty members	50%

Musicology Table 22: Professional Programs, by Carnegie Classification of Institution and Highest Degree Offered by Department, 2023-24

By Carnegie Classification	Department Offers Professional Programs
All Institutions	27%

Musicology Table 23: Occupationally-Oriented Activities for Undergraduate Students, by Carnegie Classification and Form of Control, Fall 2022–23 Academic Year

	Activity					
	Occupationally-Oriented presentations by Employers, Employees, or Alumni		An Internship in an Employment Setting		Occupationally-Oriented Coursework or Workshops	
	Status*					
	Activity Is Offered	Activity Is Required	Activity Is Offered	Activity Is Required	Activity Is Offered	Activity Is Required
All Institutions	50%	0%	36%	0%	57%	0%

* There were three possible choices (Activity is not offered, Activity is offered but not required, Activity is required); respondents could choose only one. Thus, the total proportion of departments that participate in the activity is the sum of the two columns; the remainder to sum to 100% is the proportion of departments that do not offer the activity.

Musicology Table 24: Occupationally-Oriented Activities for PhD Students, by Carnegie Classification and Form of Control, Fall 2022–23 Academic Year

	Activity					
	Occupationally-Oriented presentations by Employers, Employees, or Alumni		An Internship in an Employment Setting		Occupationally-Oriented Coursework or Workshops	
	Status*					
	Activity Is Offered	Activity Is Required	Activity Is Offered	Activity Is Required	Activity Is Offered	Activity Is Required
All Institutions	43%	29%	29%	0%	57%	14%

* There were three possible choices (Activity is not offered, Activity is offered but not required, Activity is required); respondents could choose only one. Thus, the total proportion of departments that participate in the activity is the sum of the two columns; the remainder to sum to 100% is the proportion of departments that do not offer the activity.

Musicology Table 25: How Department Chairs Feel About the Future of the Discipline at Their Institution, by Carnegie Classification of Institution and Highest Degree Offered by Department, 2023-24

Carnegie Classification	Very Optimistic	Optimistic	Neither Optimistic Nor Pessimistic	Pessimistic	Very Pessimistic	Not sure
All Institutions	13%	47%	33%	0%	7%	0%

Musicology Table 26: Department Chair Beliefs About the Change in the Number of Tenure-Track Faculty Over the Next Three Academic Years, by Carnegie Classification of Institution and Highest Degree Offered by Department, 2023-24

Carnegie Classification	Certain to Get Larger	Likely to Get Larger	Most Likely to Stay the Same Size	Likely to Get Smaller	Certain to Get Smaller	Not sure
All Institutions	20%	20%	40%	20%	0%	0%

Musicology Table 27: Department Chair Beliefs About the Change in the Number of Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Over the Next Three Academic Years, by Carnegie Classification of Institution and Highest Degree Offered by Department, 2023-24

Carnegie Classification	Certain to Get Larger	Likely to Get Larger	Most Likely to Stay the Same Size	Likely to Get Smaller	Certain to Get Smaller	Not sure
All Institutions	0%	29%	57%	7%	0%	7%

Musicology Table 28: Department Chair Concerns About Academic Freedom for Faculty Members, by Carnegie Classification of Institution and Highest Degree Offered by Department, 2023-24

Carnegie Classification	Percentage of Departments Concerned About the Academic Freedom of Faculty Members
All Institutions	27%

Musicology Table 29: Source of Department Chair Concern About Faculty Academic Freedom, 2023-24

Concerned About the Academic Freedom of Faculty Related to Pressures from...	Percentage of Concerned Departments
Federal or State Government	64%
Board of Trustees	64%
Academic Administration	55%
Faculty in Other Departments	0%
Students	27%
Parents of Students	18%
Alumni	0%
The Public	45%
Other	0%

Musicology Table 30: Gender Identity of Department Chairs (Self-Reported), 2023-24*

Gender Identity	Percentage
Woman	40%
Man	60%
Non-Binary or No Gender	0%
Transgender	0%
Some Other Gender	0%
Prefer Not to Answer	0%

* Respondents were instructed to select all categories that applied. The percentages may therefore add up to more than 100%.

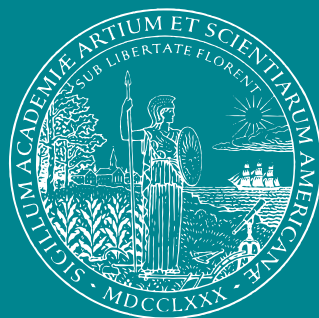
Musicology Table 31: Race/Ethnicity of Department Chairs (Self-Reported), 2023-24*

Race or Ethnicity	Percentage
Alaska Native, American Indian, or Native American	0%
Asian or Asian American	0%
Black or African American	7%
Hispanic or Latino/Latina/Latinx	7%
Middle Eastern or North African	0%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0%
White	87%
Some Other Race/Ethnicity	0%
Prefer Not to Answer	7%

* Respondents were instructed to select all categories that applied. The percentages may therefore add up to more than 100%.

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