

**CURRENT STATUS, ANALYSIS AND DEVELOPMENT TRENDS OF
TEACHING THE SUBJECT "HISTORY OF UZBEK MUSIC" IN HIGHER
MUSIC EDUCATION IN UZBEKISTAN**

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Abstract: This study analyzes the current state of teaching Uzbek Music History within higher music education and outlines key tendencies shaping the field. In contemporary curricula, the subject typically balances national heritage content—maqom traditions, regional performance schools, folk-instrumental practices, and twentieth-century institutional developments—with modern pedagogical expectations for outcomes-based learning. The analysis highlights persistent challenges: uneven integration of archival and field materials, limited assessment alignment with analytical competencies, and a gap between conservatory-style performance training and academically rigorous historiography. At the same time, important positive trends are evident, including strengthened heritage safeguarding agendas, renewed attention to maqom as a national classical canon, and growing use of digital resources for listening analysis and repertoire documentation.

Keywords: Uzbek music history; higher music education; curriculum analysis; maqom; Shashmaqom; music pedagogy; constructive alignment

In higher music education, a national music history course is never only a chronology of styles and genres; it is also a structured way of transmitting cultural memory, forming professional identity, and developing analytical listening and scholarly writing. In Uzbekistan, “Uzbek Music History” occupies a particularly central role because the country’s musical heritage contains highly developed classical traditions, rich regional schools, and a modern institutional story shaped by twentieth-century reforms and the post-independence reevaluation of heritage. The teaching of Shashmaqom, for example, is not merely a topic inside the syllabus; it functions as an emblem of classical authority and continuity, internationally framed through heritage safeguarding narratives and national cultural policy discourses.

The current state of teaching Uzbek Music History in higher music education can be described as a hybrid model combining conservatory traditions with university-style

academic demands. In many programs, historical knowledge is taught alongside performance training, so that the student encounters history not only through lectures and readings but also through repertoire study, ensemble participation, and instrumental/vocal specialization. This structure is pedagogically powerful: it allows historical periods and genres to be “heard” and embodied, which is especially important for traditions where oral transmission, master–apprentice learning, and stylistic nuance are central. Internationally recognized descriptions of Shashmaqom underscore its complex fusion of vocal–instrumental practice, melodic and rhythmic idioms, and poetry, which makes it well suited to integrated teaching that links history, theory, and performance practice rather than treating them as separate compartments.

However, the same hybridity produces recurring weaknesses. First, content selection can become canon-heavy in a way that compresses diversity. A strong focus on classical maqom—often justified as safeguarding heritage—may unintentionally marginalize regional genres, popular urban forms, and the sociocultural histories of instruments, venues, and patronage networks. Recent Uzbek-language and regional scholarship frequently highlights instruments and material culture as crucial windows into heritage, implying that history teaching should systematically incorporate organology, iconography, and documented changes in ensemble practice rather than leaving such topics to separate instrument classes. Second, source literacy is uneven. Students may receive narratives about “what happened” in Uzbek music without sustained training in how historians and ethnomusicologists know it—how archives, early notations, institutional documents, recordings, and fieldwork interviews are evaluated. Studies discussing the early institutional history of music education and research in Uzbekistan (including the establishment of laboratories and the study of instruments in the early Soviet period) demonstrate that documentary evidence exists and can be pedagogically activated; yet in practice it is not always systematically embedded in coursework tasks.

Third, assessment frequently lags behind the stated educational purpose. If exams primarily reward memorization of dates, names, and definitions, students rationally optimize for recall, not for analytical listening, contextual comparison, or interpretive writing. Constructive alignment offers a direct remedy: define outcomes such as “compare two regional performance schools using audio evidence,” “interpret one maqom section in relation to poetic text and modality,” or “critically summarize an academic source and relate it to a repertoire example,” then design learning activities and assessments that make those performances necessary for success. In this course,

alignment also implies diversifying assessment formats: short source critiques, guided listening commentaries, repertoire-historical dossiers built from recordings and annotated bibliographies, and reflective essays connecting performance experience to historical frames. The point is not to reduce artistry to paperwork, but to ensure that artistic knowledge is accompanied by academically communicable understanding.

The teaching of Uzbek Music History in higher music education today stands at a meaningful intersection: heritage transmission remains a defining mission, yet contemporary academic standards increasingly require skills-based, evidence-aware learning. The current situation is characterized by a productive integration of historical content with performance practice, especially around classical maqom traditions, but also by persistent gaps in source literacy and assessment design. Strengthening the course does not require abandoning conservatory strengths; rather, it requires making those strengths academically legible through constructive alignment, explicit competency outcomes, and research-led learning tasks.

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