

Conservatory of Music  
Brooklyn College

# GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

Conservatory website: <http://bcmusic.org> or <http://www.brooklyn.edu/conservatory-of-music>  
Conservatory Phone: 718-951-5286

Please note that this Graduate Student Handbook, prepared by the faculty of the Conservatory of Music, presents specific policies of the Conservatory of Music for its graduate students. Any information about curricula, course descriptions, requirements, etc., is found in the College's official Graduate Bulletin at: <http://www.brooklyn.edu/registrar/bulletins>

## CONTENTS

Conservatory Leadership/Staff	2
Preface	4
Degree Requirements	5
Ensemble Assignments	5
Registration	6
Matriculation	7
Time Limit	7
Probation	7
Degree Works	8
Practice Rooms & Instrument Storage	8
Music Buildings	8
Performance Juries	8
Incomplete and Absent Grades	9
Language Exam	9
English Proficiency for International Students	9
Comprehensive Exam (MA; MM students)	9
Pre-Recital Juries for M.M./Adv. Certificate/Adv. Diploma in Performance	10
Master's Thesis Recital (Music 7950)	10
Professional Studies Recitals	11
Master's Thesis (Mus 7930) or Music Education Project (Mus 7920)	11
Master's Composition Project (Mus 7940; completion procedures)	12
Master's of Fine Arts (MFA: Sonic Arts; Media Scoring)	13
Graduation & Diploma	13
Future Career	13
ADDENDUM: Preparing Program Notes for Your Degree Recital – Procedures & Recommendations	14

## Administration

Professor Douglas Geers—*Director*  
[dgeers@brooklyn.cuny.edu](mailto:dgeers@brooklyn.cuny.edu)  
Tel. 718 951-5286 (WH-422)

Professor Douglas Cohen—*Deputy Director, Undergraduate Studies*  
[dcohen@brooklyn.cuny.edu](mailto:dcohen@brooklyn.cuny.edu)  
Tel. 718-951-5954 (WH-423)

Professor Alexandra Lewis—*Deputy Director, Graduate Studies in Music/Performance/Musicology*  
[alewis@brooklyn.cuny.edu](mailto:alewis@brooklyn.cuny.edu)  
Tel. 718 951-5000 x2649 (WH-401s)

Distinguished Professor Jason Eckardt—*Coordinator, Graduate Composition*  
[jeckardt@brooklyn.cuny.edu](mailto:jeckardt@brooklyn.cuny.edu)  
Tel. 718 951-5000 x2598 (WT-350)

Professor Douglas Geers—*Director, Center for Computer Music;  
Coordinator, MFA Programs in Sonic Arts*  
[dgeers@brooklyn.cuny.edu](mailto:dgeers@brooklyn.cuny.edu)  
Tel. 718 951-5000 x1418 (RH-107a)

Professor Jonathan Zalben—*Coordinator, MFA in Media Scoring*  
[jonathan.zalben@brooklyn.cuny.edu](mailto:jonathan.zalben@brooklyn.cuny.edu)  
Tel. 718 237-3410 x1011 (Feirstein Graduate School of Cinema)

Riki Braunstein—*Coordinator, Music Education*  
[Rbraunstein@brooklyn.cuny.edu](mailto:Rbraunstein@brooklyn.cuny.edu)

## Staff

Karen Dinerman and Evelia X. Heslop—*Conservatory Director's Assistants*  
[kdinerman@brooklyn.cuny.edu](mailto:kdinerman@brooklyn.cuny.edu) – [exheslop@brooklyn.cuny.edu](mailto:exheslop@brooklyn.cuny.edu)  
**Conservatory Office: 422 Whitehead Hall**  
Tel. 718 951-5286

Aaron Wilson—*Office Assistant to the Deputies*  
[MusicAdvisement@brooklyn.cuny.edu](mailto:MusicAdvisement@brooklyn.cuny.edu)  
**Graduate Office: 423 Whitehead Hall**  
Tel. 718 951-5954

Bim Strasberg—*Concert Office Coordinator*  
[bstrasberg@brooklyn.cuny.edu](mailto:bstrasberg@brooklyn.cuny.edu)  
**Conservatory Concert Office: 415 Whitehead Hall**  
Tel. 718 951-5792

### **Performance Area Coordinators**

Professor Malcolm J. Merriweather—*Coordinator, Vocal Studies*  
[m.merriweather99@brooklyn.cuny.edu](mailto:m.merriweather99@brooklyn.cuny.edu)  
Tel. 718 951-5000 x (WT-370)

Professor Marianne Gythfeldt—*Coordinator, Instrumental Performance,  
Woodwind and Brass Studies*  
[mgythfeldt@brooklyn.cuny.edu](mailto:mgythfeldt@brooklyn.cuny.edu)  
Tel. 718 951-2888 (WT-348)

Professor George Rothman—*Coordinator, String Studies*  
[gr@riverside.org](mailto:gr@riverside.org)  
(WT-346)

Professor Alexandra Lewis—*Coordinator, Piano Studies*  
[alewis@brooklyn.cuny.edu](mailto:alewis@brooklyn.cuny.edu)  
Tel. 718 951-5000 x2649 (WH-401s)

### **College Lab Technicians**

Professor George Brunner—*Director of Music Technology*  
[gbrunner@brooklyn.cuny.edu](mailto:gbrunner@brooklyn.cuny.edu)

Zeno Wood—*Piano Technician*  
[zwood@brooklyn.cuny.edu](mailto:zwood@brooklyn.cuny.edu)

## Preface

Welcome! This Graduate Student Handbook has been put together by members of the Conservatory faculty to help you through your graduate music studies at Brooklyn College. **It is especially important for you to be aware that for almost all requirements, such as exams, juries, and performances, you must apply in advance of the scheduled time.** Information on when, where, and how such applications must be made is found in this booklet, in the Graduate Bulletin, and in the Schedule of Classes. At all times, it is important to keep the Registrar (West Quad Building) informed of your correct address.

The *Graduate Bulletin* is your official curricular guide. Containing degree requirements and course descriptions, it is revised every year and is available by late summer on the college website under the tab ACADEMICS; then click on the label *Course Schedules and Bulletins* for the appropriate term. The Schedule of Classes tells you when and where classes meet and is published on-line each May, December, and April for the Fall, Spring, and Summer terms, respectively. Graduate courses are listed separately in the back portion of the Schedule. Department locations, important dates and deadlines of the semester, registration procedures, tuition, and fees are given in the Schedule's invaluable opening pages. There is also a Brooklyn College Student Handbook located on the college website which may answer many general questions about the college and student life.

If you have questions or problems that are not addressed by any of the sources above, or these pages, please do not hesitate to call or come by the Conservatory Graduate Office in room 423 Whitehead.



### MISSION STATEMENT of the Conservatory of Music, Brooklyn College (CUNY)

Consistent with the historical mission of the City University of New York, the Conservatory of Music of Brooklyn College attracts and trains outstanding musicians with diverse musical backgrounds from around the world. Our specializations include the study of performance, composition, music education, and musicology, encompassing scholarship in Western and global musics. We educate students in the elements of musicianship essential to the pursuit of a musical career in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The Conservatory of Music serves the broader college student body through the General Education music classes and our music and culture classes for non-majors. In addition, we reach outside the college campus to the surrounding community, the borough of Brooklyn, and beyond through public concerts, scholarly symposia, and K-12 programs. Our programs boast a world-class faculty with emphases in classical performance, contemporary music, jazz, American music, and electroacoustic music.

The Conservatory prepares its students to attain their greatest potential as artists and citizens of the world.”

(Statement approved by Conservatory faculty, February 2011)

## I. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

- Master of Arts in Musicology: 30 credits and thesis,  
or 36 credits with no thesis
- MFA in Media Scoring: 60 credits, (over three years)
- MFA in Sonic Arts: 60 credits, (over two years)
- Master of Music in Composition: 30 credits,  
including four semesters of private composition, with thesis composition project
- Master of Music in Performance: 36 credits,  
including four semesters of performance and ensembles, with thesis recital
- Advanced Certificate in Music Education: 21 credits and 100 field hours  
leading to the New York State initial teaching certificate
- Advanced Certificate in Music Performance: 18 or 36 credits (pre-master's, 1-2 years)  
including 2-4 semesters of performance, ensembles, and repertory studies,  
with required recitals at the end of the second and fourth semesters
- Advanced Diploma in Music Performance: 18 or 36 credits (post-master's, 1-2 years)  
including 2-4 semesters of performance, ensembles, and repertory studies, with  
required recitals at the end of the second and fourth semesters.

Specific courses and other requirements for each of these degrees are listed in the *Graduate Bulletin*. In addition, all students should be directed to the degree maps found on the Conservatory's website, [bcmusic.org](http://bcmusic.org), which provide a suggested multi-semester plan for each program.

## II. ENSEMBLE ASSIGNMENTS

Students receiving performance lessons in performance are required to take at least one ensemble during the same semester, as a co-requisite. The major ensembles, as well as many of the other performance groups, usually hold placement auditions during the registration period as well as just before the first week of classes. Ensemble assignments at all levels are based on these auditions and/or departmental approval. All students receiving string lessons must register for Orchestra; voice students usually register for Symphonic Choir, Conservatory Singers, or Opera Workshop; woodwind and brass students usually register for Orchestra, Wind Ensemble, or Jazz Big Band, depending on audition results and Conservatory's assignment; percussion students should register for Percussion Ensemble and one major ensemble, depending on audition. All Performance students are required to take a minimum of two semesters of chamber music and two semesters of Contemporary Ensemble (*conTEMPO*) during their studies at Brooklyn College. In addition, all Performance students are required to take four semesters of studio class.

All M.M. and Advanced Certificate and Advanced Diploma Performance Majors studying orchestral instruments are required to perform in at least one large ensemble (either Orchestra and/or Wind Ensemble) as assigned by the ensemble directors in each semester of enrollment at the Conservatory of Music. This rule applies to part-time and full-time students.

Students will be assigned to a large ensemble based on their major instrument and level of proficiency. Seating and ensemble assignments are determined at the ensemble auditions in late August, or by special appointment to be arranged with Marianne the performance coordinator.

**Chamber Music** (Mus 7740x) may be taken when two or more students (with audition approvals) have organized a *legitimate chamber ensemble* (i.e. one whose members can actually rehearse together on a regular basis and for whom a Conservatory coach can be supplied). Professor Marianne Gythfeldt is the Coordinator of chamber music and questions about ensemble placement and coachings should be referred to her at [mgythfeldt@brooklyn.cuny.edu](mailto:mgythfeldt@brooklyn.cuny.edu). In order to receive a grade, the ensemble must have regular rehearsals and coachings and perform on a chamber concert on campus during the semester registered.

### III. REGISTRATION

All graduate courses in Music require a specific permission for each desired course from the Conservatory prior to your registration. Please make time in your schedule to meet with the Graduate Deputy or your program's main advisor for advisement once each semester when registration season opens. Descriptions of a particular term's graduate music seminars will be distributed as soon as they are available. Seminar offerings at other CUNY campuses (e.g., City, Hunter, or Queens College) can be viewed at other campus websites located via CUNYfirst.

Students who have been officially admitted to the program (with no missing admissions documents) and who have their CUNYfirst I.D. number (a.k.a. EMPLID) may register via CUNYfirst, which is found at <http://home.cunyfirst.cuny.edu>. Suggestions for registering through this system are found at <https://www.brooklyn.edu/registrar>

Continuing students should register in May and December for the Fall and Spring terms, respectively. You will receive advance notice of the dates for registration counseling. **Make sure your e-mail is up to date with the college so that you can receive these announcements.** You can change your primary e-mail in your personal information profile on the BC Knowledge Portal:

[https://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/web/off\\_iss/Student\\_Accounts\\_Setup\\_Guideline\\_update2\\_0.pdf](https://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/web/off_iss/Student_Accounts_Setup_Guideline_update2_0.pdf)  
(where you can set up an 'alias' for receiving BC emails at your regular 'home' email).

**WARNING:** If you wait until after the term is over to contact the Graduate Advisement Office for a registration appointment, 1. You may not get immediate service; 2. You may discover problems with your transcript that cannot be fixed in time to keep you off of academic probation (e.g. academic holds, library holds, incompletes that have turned to FINs, etc.); 3. You may have to wait for permissions in order to register, and the class you want may close for under-enrollment. Therefore: watch for the appointment times when they come up, and take an early one!

Although a program of 12 credits is considered a full-time load, under a special equivalency policy, **7 to 9 credits is certified as full-time** for Conservatory students taking performance and ensembles. Students should consult the degree maps for their specific programs located here: <https://www.brooklyn.edu/ssu/degree-maps>. Note that all students registered for performance instruction must also register for at least one ensemble as assigned after audition and/or consultation with the Deputy Director. Students in the Advanced Certificate in Music Education program are urged to consult with Music Education Coordinator Prof. Riki Braunstein on specific questions related to the field of music education. Students in the Graduate Composition program are to consult with the Composition Coordinator Prof. Jason Eckardt. MFA students in Sonic Arts or in Media Scoring should consult with Professors Douglas Geers and Jonathan Zalben, respectively, about their course choices.

**CUNY Courses by ePermit** Students who wish to take a seminar at another campus of CUNY may do so by completing a Graduate Permit Application on-line (a CUNY “ePermit”) and securing its approval from the Deputy Director. Currently, an ePermit request is started through the CUNY portal, by signing in to: <https://www.cuny.edu/cuny-login>. You should also contact the Music Department at the other CUNY campus to make sure there are still seats for the course that interests you (and to make sure that they respond to your ePermit request). The application is then submitted through the Office of Transfer Services which registers you for the appropriate number of credits to be taken elsewhere. After finishing the course, the student must usually request that a transcript from the other campus be sent to Brooklyn College’s Office of Transfer Student Services. Websites for the other CUNY colleges can be found through the CUNY portal at [www.cuny.edu](http://www.cuny.edu).

#### IV. MATRICULATION

If you are a non-matriculated student, but want to earn a degree, apply for promotion to matriculated status as early as possible. Please consult with the Deputy Director about this change. **A maximum of only 15 credits taken as a non-matriculated student can be counted toward your degree.** For information regarding transfer credits, see the "Academic Standing" section of the college's *Graduate Bulletin*.

If you plan to take any exam (language or comprehensive), turn in a thesis, complete work on an incomplete, or do a recital, you must maintain matriculation by taking at least one credit or paying the Maintenance of Matriculation fee (you must register in CUNYfirst under MAM (in departments in the Bulletin in alpha order in the Graduate section). The fee is less than the tuition cost for a credit. But if you have not registered to maintain your matriculation, you will be ineligible to complete whatever work you do in that semester towards the degree. Customarily this is done at the end of the degree when all credits have been acquired.

#### V. TIME LIMIT

Music students typically complete their master’s degree in two years. The **maximum time** allowed by the College for completion of the degree is **seven years** from the date of matriculation, though this is not recommended.

#### VI. PROBATION

Students whose G.P.A. (Grade Point Average) drops below 3.0 are automatically put on Academic Probation. They must immediately have a conference with the Deputy Director of the Conservatory to discuss ways of improving their performance and raising the G.P.A. (You must raise the GPA to 3.0 or above within the next 12 credits of BC graduate Music courses taken.) Because you were accepted into our program, we are confident that probation will not likely become a problem for you, but sometimes extenuating circumstances may cause you to receive a grade lower than a B. Please note that Brooklyn College now has an “F forgiveness” policy. If you fail a course, and then retake and pass the same course, you are eligible to apply to the Registrar and have the F not counted in your G.P.A. No more than six credits of F can be “forgiven” in this manner. *All* courses taken, however, remain on the transcript. If you should fail to complete the work for a course in which you received an INC grade, it will turn to an FIN after

one semester, which counts as an F on the transcript. This can be changed to a letter grade by the professor once the work has been completed, but you must file a petition with the Committee on Graduate Admissions and Standards through the Graduate Deputy and Faculty Council first.

## VII. DEGREE WORKS

Degree Works is a web-based advising tool and degree audit program, located on the CUNY portal, which allows students and their advisors to view up-to-date information about a student's progress towards graduation. **It is the student's responsibility to check Degree Works on a regular basis to keep track of their degree progress.**

## VIII. PRACTICE ROOMS & INSTRUMENT STORAGE

In the Tow Center, the Conservatory has 18 practice rooms and several rehearsal spaces for which an online Practice Room Reservation utility has been made available through the Brooklyn College portal. While the practice rooms are available for use by all Conservatory students, students who are currently enrolled in private lessons are able to reserve rooms in advance for a block of up to three hours. For the six rooms with grand pianos, this privilege is reserved for piano majors. **PLEASE HELP US TO TAKE CARE OF THESE PRACTICE ROOMS AND OUR FINE PIANOS. EATING IN THESE ROOMS IS STRICTLY FORBIDDEN! NO FOOD OR DRINK ARE EVER ALLOWED IN A PRACTICE OR REHEARSAL ROOM** with the exception of bottled water, which **MUST** be kept on a desk, when available, or the floor **AT ALL TIMES—NEVER NEAR THE PIANO! PLEASE:** Immediately report any damage to the Conservatory's pianos to Zeno Wood, the Conservatory's piano technician at x6630.

The Conservatory continues to maintain practice rooms on the first and third floors of Roosevelt Hall/Roosevelt Extension—along with classrooms and several rehearsal spaces. Please note that the BC Preparatory Center for the Performing Arts also has classes/lessons in the building (mainly on Saturdays). The locker room there is available to Sonic Arts students needing storage for equipment.

The Conservatory maintains lockers in the Tow Center to allow students convenient access to their instruments close to practice, rehearsal, and performance spaces. Access to all lockers is gained through application to the Concert Office (WH-424). **CAUTION:** *Always* secure your instrument properly when on campus; do not leave it unattended at any time. Keep a record of *serial numbers* of all your instruments when applicable as a precaution in case they are stolen.

## IX. MUSIC BUILDINGS

The bulk of the Conservatory's performance activities are held in the Tow Center. The Conservatory, however, does maintain classroom spaces in Roosevelt Hall/Roosevelt Extension as well as Whitehead Hall, where its offices continue to be located.

## X. PERFORMANCE JURIES

During the examination week at the end of each semester, students taking Performance (Mus 7791, 7792, or 7793; Mus 6791 or 6793; Mus 7795 or 7797) must play before a faculty jury the



new works that they have studied and mastered in that term. **It is each student's responsibility to make an appointment for their performance jury.** They should do so by emailing the Conservatory's Music Advisement Office well in advance of the jury date for instructions. (See Directory for contact information.) Students in Music 7793 must present a special pre-recital jury; see separate section below. Students should plan their jury repertoire early in the semester. Check with your area head regarding details about an accompanist. Medical emergency (with doctor's note) is the only accepted excuse for missing a jury exam on the appointed day. Students with such emergencies are urged to notify your area head as early in the day as possible.

## **XI. INCOMPLETE & ABSENT GRADES**

If you receive an incomplete (INC) for a course, ***it is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY*** to complete the work as soon as possible, but no later than the following semester. If more than a semester elapses, you must seek the professor's approval to complete the late work, and you are required to submit a petition to the Office of the Associate Provost (3208 Boylan) requesting the grade change, with legitimate supporting reasons for the excessive delay. Please see the Graduate Deputy for assistance in filing an academic petition. The petition and other commonly used forms for graduate students may be found under E-Services at the BC portal (<https://students.brooklyn.edu/portal>).

## **XII. LANGUAGE EXAM**

Those students that are enrolled in a program that requires proficiency in a second language should take the language examination (ordinarily in French, German, Italian, or Spanish) during the final semester of enrollment. You will be asked to translate a few paragraphs (ca. 250 words) into good, idiomatic English in two hours. You are allowed to use a dictionary. Consult the *Schedule of Classes* for the deadline by which to apply to take the exam. Contact the Music Advisement office [MusicAdvisement@brooklyn.cuny.edu](mailto:MusicAdvisement@brooklyn.cuny.edu). You may take the language exam more than once, if necessary. Students who completed their bachelor's degree in a country where a language other than English is the official language are exempted from this language exam requirement.

## **XIII. ENGLISH PROFICIENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

Conservatory instruction and required written work are in English. Students who speak English as a second language and who score under 550 on the TOEFL are admitted to the graduate programs in music on a probationary or conditional basis.

## **XIV. COMPREHENSIVE EXAM (for M.A. & M.M. candidates)**

The Conservatory's Comprehensive Examination offers an opportunity to evaluate your present mastery of the discipline. The examination is taken in your fourth semester or the semester you plan to complete your course work. See the *Academic Calendar* on the portal for the exam's application deadline date. **PLEASE APPLY ON TIME, i.e. THE START OF THE SEMESTER IN WHICH YOU PLAN TO TAKE THE EXAM – before the end of the third week of classes (usually the last Friday of Sept./Feb.).** Applications are submitted online via

the BC portal, under the eServices “tab” and Graduate Studies. Also let Prof. Lewis know that you are planning to take the exam.

The Comprehensive Exam is tailored to each program. Please see the Program Advisor for details. If you fail the comprehensive exam, you may apply to take it a second time. You must pass it the second time.

N.B. In addition, each MM and MA program also has a ***required written component*** as part of its graded capstone experience (e.g., faculty-approved program notes for one’s master’s degree recital or one’s master’s composition project; faculty-approved original research paper/project in musicology or music education).

## **XV. PRE-RECITAL JURY FOR M.M. IN PERFORMANCE**

The *semester before you expect to play your graduation (thesis) recital* (i.e. at the end of MUSC 7793 for MM students; MUSC 6791, 6793, 7795, or 7797 for professional studies students), you must take a pre-recital jury at which you should be prepared to play at least two thirds of the works on your program. This program should be planned well in advance with your performance instructor, and submitted in writing at the jury along with a completed Recital Application Form (available in the Conservatory Concert Office, 424 Whitehead Hall, with instructions). The following are part of the procedure:

- (1) When you sign up for your usual end-of-semester jury with the Music Advisement Office, you must request a double (30-minute) time slot.
- (2) Pick up a Recital Application Form in advance from the Concert Office and submit it with a Jury Evaluation Form, carefully completed, with "pre-recital jury" checked.
- (3) You must pick up the Recital Application Form from the Music Advisement Office and, if it has the jury's approval, take it to the Deputy Director for signature, and then to the Concert Office to schedule your thesis recital.

## **XVI. MASTER'S THESIS RECITAL (Music 7950G - for Performance majors)**

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING VERY CAREFULLY! YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE TO CARRY OUT THESE INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF YOUR DEGREE:

All recitals **MUST** be performed in the fourth semester of lessons—Master’s Recital. The deadline for recitals given in the Fall semester is the first week in December and, in the Spring, the first week in May.

**(1) Thesis Title:** In order to submit your recital’s program (see step 7), you will first need to complete the step called “Submission of Thesis Title.” When doing this step, please enter just “Thesis (or Certificate or Diploma) Recital being presented in [name of instrument/voice].” Please consult the Academic Calendar on the BC portal for the deadline for submitting your thesis title.

**(2) Scheduling:** Check in advance with all assisting performers, as well as with your lesson instructor, the area coordinator, and any other faculty members you would like to serve on

your recital jury, to make sure that they will be available on the dates you might possibly schedule your recital. The Director of the Concert Office (415 Whitehead) will keep your form and forward copies to the appropriate persons. **The recital must occur on the BC campus and on the date originally scheduled.** (Note: The scheduling of recitals is done on a first-come, first served basis. Forms must be complete when presented.)

**(3) Recital Jury:** In addition to your teacher, who *must attend* your recital as a member of the jury, you should inform the head of your performance area of your recital date. It is the responsibility of the area head to assign the other jury members and confirm their attendance. You may recommend to the area head any professors whom you would like to sit on your recital jury.

**(4) Recital Program:** A typewritten copy of your final program, with complete names of composer, titles of works and constituent movements, names and instruments of assisting artists, placement of intermission, etc., must be submitted to the Concert Office *at least six weeks before your recital*. **All MM in Music Performance students must prepare program notes.** Please consult “ADDENDUM: Preparing Program Notes for Your Degree Recital” at the end of this handbook for complete instructions and requirements.

**(5) Stage Requirements and Rehearsals:** Arrangements for moving instruments (pianos, large percussion instruments, etc.) and for rehearsal time in the performance space should be made as soon as possible after your date has been scheduled with the Concert Office.

**(6) Recording:** If you wish to have your recital audio- or video- recorded, submit a Concert Recording Request Form (available in the Concert Office) to the Concert Office with payment. All audio and video recording equipment are barred from all Brooklyn College performance halls, except in unusual situations and when permission has been secured in writing in advance from the Concert Office. Flash photography is discouraged at any time during the recital.

**(7) Submission of Official Recital Program to the “Thesis-Submission Online” system.** Immediately after your recital has been completed successfully, please a) submit a non-editable PDF of your entire program (including any program notes/texts) to “Thesis Submission Online,” which is found under “e-Services” in the BC Knowledge portal <https://students.brooklyn.edu>. (Complete instructions can be found at <https://www.brooklyn.edu/ees/graduate/guidelines-for-thesis-preparation-and-submission>. In addition, b) make sure that your Performance teacher signs and submits to the Graduate Deputy the Thesis Approval form for your MM recital. This form is also at the BC portal under commonly used Graduate Student Forms (under e-Services → Academic Forms.

## **XVII. PROFESSIONAL STUDIES RECITALS (Adv. Certificate & Adv. Diploma students: Music 6792 & 6794; Music 7796 & 7798)**

For the Adv. Certificate and Adv. Diploma in Performance, students should follow the above sections’ instructions for MM Music Performance and consult with both their teacher and the Performance Coordinator. Students will be expected to write program notes for their recitals. (See ADDENDUM.)

## **XVIII. MASTER'S THESIS (Mus 7930) or MUSIC EDUCATION PROJECT (Mus 7920) – ADVISEMENT & COMPLETION PROCEDURES**

Musicology candidates who choose to write a thesis (Mus 7930) should discuss the proposed thesis topic with the faculty thesis advisor and have the topic approved by the advisor and Deputy Director prior to registration for the course. Similarly, MA-Music Teacher candidates who wish

to complete a thesis (Mus 7930) or project (Mus 7920) should discuss their topic with a music education professor, who must approve the proposed topic. The Director or Deputy Director can offer suggestions about potential thesis advisors. Instructions for filing a thesis or project title, as well as writing and filing the thesis may be obtained from the Office of the Associate Provost (3208 Boylan Hall) or with the Graduate Deputy. To avoid delay in receiving your degree, PLEASE OBSERVE THE POSTED DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF THESES/PROJECTS EACH SEMESTER.

After your thesis advisor has approved your MA Music-Teacher Thesis or Project, please a) submit your “working title” of the thesis-in-progress through this BC portal, and then b) submit a *single, non-editable PDF* of your entire thesis (including its title page and front matter in one file) to “Thesis Submission Online,” which is found under e-Services in the BC portal <http://portal.brooklyn.edu>. In addition, c) make sure that your thesis advisor signs and submits to the Music Graduate Deputy the *Thesis Approval form* for your approved MA Thesis/Project. This form is also at the BC portal under commonly used Graduate Student Forms (under e-Services → Academic Forms).

You are responsible for making sure that the uploaded PDF has the final, *approved* version of your MA Thesis/Project.

#### **XIX. MASTER'S COMPOSITION PROJECT (M.M.-Composition candidates) – COMPLETION PROCEDURES**

MM-Composition students who have successfully completed three semesters of composition lessons (Mus 7321-7323) will register for the thesis, i.e. Master's Composition Project (Mus 7940G). In consultation with the advisor, the student will meet with a committee of composition faculty and present both (a) the large-scale piece completed as the thesis project and (b) the portfolio of all compositions (scores, programs, recordings, etc.) completed during the student's graduate studies. The thesis grade can be pass, fail, or satisfactory progress (SP). Although it is not required, a composition student may organize a concert of his or her compositions during the third or fourth semester in the program. Such students should secure a recital application from the Concert Office (424-WH) and have it approved by their composition teacher.

To avoid delay in receiving your degree, PLEASE OBSERVE THE POSTED DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF THESES EACH SEMESTER.

After your Composition teacher has approved your MM Composition Project (along with your total MM portfolio), please a) submit a *single, non-editable PDF* of your entire composition (all movements in one file, including any program notes/texts) to “Thesis Submission Online,” which is found under e-Services in the BC Knowledge portal <https://students.brooklyn.edu>. In addition, b) make sure that your Composition teacher signs and submits to the Music Graduate Deputy the *Thesis Approval form* for your approved MM Composition Project. This form is also at the BC portal under commonly used Graduate Student Forms (under e-Services → Academic Forms).

You are responsible for making sure that the uploaded PDF has the final, *approved* version of your MM Composition Project. If you desire to include a recording of your approved score, you should submit a Zip file that includes two files: the score and the sound file.

For electronic compositions, the MM-Composition candidate should submit one Zip file that includes (a) the composition's labeled sound file (as an MP3, MP4, M4V, WAV, ACC, ACC,

FLAC or MOV, etc.), and (b) a Word description of the composition (including its file format and program note).

## **XX. MASTER of FINE ARTS (Sonic Arts; Media Scoring)**

Students in these M.F.A. programs should consult carefully the separate guidelines distributed to them about their requirements and offerings. N.B. Courses for these programs take place both at the Feirstein School of Cinema (25 Washington Avenue) and at Brooklyn College's Flatbush campus.

## **XXI. GRADUATION & DIPLOMA**

At the beginning of the semester in which you plan to graduate you should **file a diploma application via CUNYfirst's Self-Service option (Apply to Graduate)** so that the office of the Registrar can check your degree progress and alert you to any missing items. See *Schedule of Classes* for this deadline, which is now Sept. 15 and Feb. 15. *No later than the start of your third semester*, you are strongly urged to meet with the Deputy Director and review your academic progress through the course requirements. Music Education students should keep in mind their State-mandated deadlines for completion of the master's degree. Advanced Certificate students should be sure that all necessary documentation for school-observation hours, required tests (LAST, ATS-W), and anti-violence/child-abuse seminars has been submitted in timely fashion. Course checklists are available at the office of the Deputy Director. Ultimately, it your responsibility to register for and complete the course requirements stated in the *Graduate Bulletin*.

## **XXII. FUTURE CAREER**

No matter what happens after you finish your degree, please keep in touch with the Conservatory of Music and let us know what you are doing and about any special successes and accomplishments. We enjoy hearing from alumni and publish news about them in the Conservatory's online newsletter, *Fermata*.

Completing your master's degree is only one step in the advancement of your career in music. It is important to develop and keep in mind your ultimate career goals throughout your graduate studies. Whether it is learning new repertoire, auditioning for roles and competitions, composing new pieces, teaching a music class, or writing a scholarly article for future publication, you are growing in your professional accomplishments. If you do not already have a resumé or *curriculum vitae* (C.V.), now is the time to begin one and keep it up to date. For more information about career development, students are advised to reach out to the Brooklyn College Magner Career Center at <https://www.brooklyn.edu/magner>.

## **ADDENDUM:**

### **Preparing Program Notes for Your Degree Recital – Procedures & Recommendations**

**All Master's & Certificate/Diploma Recitals** (M.M., Adv. Certificate, Adv. Diploma in Performance)

Program notes researched and written by the M.M. candidates are now required for all classical-music degree recitals at the Conservatory of Music of Brooklyn College. *Your teacher must read and approve your program notes in advance*, before you submit them to the Concert Office (424 Whitehead Hall), which will print the notes together with your program. Submission of your own degree-recital program notes is now a component of your capstone experience in the Performance program. The “checklist” below is to help you research, organize, and write your notes. If you have questions about preparing the notes, please check with Professor Alexandra Lewis (Graduate Deputy).

For guidelines about setting up and scheduling your Master's Recital (using the Recital Application Form), please see the separate “Procedure for Student Degree Recitals” available at the Concert Office.

#### **Program Notes Checklist**

\_\_\_ Deadline: 4 weeks. Your completed program notes are due at the Concert Office no later than *four weeks before your scheduled recital date*. Make sure there has been sufficient time for your performance teacher to read and approve them. The approved notes should be submitted electronically to Bim Strasberg, Concert Office Coordinator ([BStrasberg@brooklyn.cuny.edu](mailto:BStrasberg@brooklyn.cuny.edu)).

\_\_\_ Only a Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx), Pages (.pages) or Rich Text (.rtf) file is an acceptable file format for your notes.

\_\_\_ Save the file as: YOUR LAST NAME, FIRST NAME – DEGREE – Recital Date. For example, if your name is John Smith and your graduate recital will be on December 18, 2017, your document should be titled: SMITH, JOHN – GRAD – 12-18-17.

\_\_\_ Once your approved notes have been submitted, the Concert Office will review your program notes. If major revisions in the notes are required from you, that office will inform you within approximately one week. If your program notes are submitted late, the Concert Office's review process will be delayed. In the spring semester, this 1-week review period may be extended to accommodate the high volume of recitals. Any questions about the status of your program notes should be directed to the Concert Office Coordinator (Mr. Bim Strasberg). *The required, timely submission of program notes is the responsibility of each graduate performance student*. Do not expect the Concert Office to “chase you down” and remind you to submit them.

\_\_\_ Program printing. Approximately one week before your recital, the program (including your notes) will be printed by the Concert Office. Programs will be delivered to the performance venue the day before your recital date (or Fridays if your recital falls on a weekend). The Concert Office will deliver the programs to the performance hall and the assigned usher will bring them out prior to your recital. Later, once you have completed a Conservatory-approved degree recital, you will need to submit a PDF of your approved program (with program notes) to the College's online thesis-submission system via the BC Portal.

## WHAT TO INCLUDE IN YOUR PROGRAM NOTES

–Full name of the composer and years of birth and death (if deceased). If exact dates are not known, it is acceptable to furnish ‘floruit’ (fl.) dates, or dates they were known to have worked or flourished.

–Full name of the piece, including identifying op. no., BWV (catalog number), keys, etc. Nicknames may be included where appropriate. Include the *approximate duration* of the entire work. Include all proper linguistic signs with correct diacritical marks.

–Use *Book Antiqua* font and 9-point size. Do not use fancy fonts or formatting. Keep the spacing to single-line.

–Order of notes: Your notes should have a separate paragraph about each piece in your program. The pieces are best described *in the order that you will perform them*.

Examples of Program-Note Headings:

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)  
Sonata No. 14 in C-sharp minor, “Moonlight,” op. 27, no. 2  
*Duration: 15 minutes*

John Adams (b.1947)  
*Short Ride in a Fast Machine* (1986)  
*Duration: 5 minutes*

A work composed within the past century should have the year of composition (in parentheses) appear after its title. For all other questions about formatting titles, musical terms, notation, etc., consult James R. Cowdery (ed.), *How to Write about Music: The RILM Manual of Style* (New York: RILM International Center, 2005).

## TIPS for WRITING EFFECTIVE PROGRAM NOTES

PLEASE NOTE: Program notes are to be the recitalist’s own work and not merely cut and pasted from other sources.

- Keep program notes concise and engaging to the reader, 1,200 words (max) for the entire program. Think of program notes as a written form of spoken pre-concert remarks that you’d otherwise give before each piece at your recital. Keep them short, witty, and interesting.
- Highlight ***one to three of the most interesting points*** about each piece or composer. There will always be more to say about a piece than there is room to include, and that’s okay; you’re not writing a musicological paper, and quality always trumps quantity. Most notes, however, usually recount briefly the circumstances of composition and first performance of the work, its scoring (if more than one instrument), and, if useful, brief information on its publication.
- A good way to enliven your notes is to include an interesting *anecdote, or quotation by or about composers/works* as long as they are relevant. Don’t overdo it by using this for every piece on the program – variety keeps things interesting.
- While citations are not needed in program notes, be sure to attribute direct quotations to the correct person. If the source of the quotation is not well-known to the general public, please include some qualifying information to give the reader some context; e.g.,

“According to the noted 20<sup>th</sup>-century musicologist and philosopher Theodor Adorno, this work represents . . . “

- Use the program notes to give the listener a sense of historical context within which to interpret the piece. This may include referencing the general time period from which the work comes (Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, etc.).
- If you’re writing for a musically knowledgeable audience, such as your fellow Conservatory peers, you may mention any relevant forms or structures that may help your listeners process the piece, e.g., by pointing out if the piece is a ground bass, rondo, or in a fast-slow-fast sonata form. However, please remember to use this sparingly and avoid too much detail; always stick to the “big picture” or main ideas in your notes – you are not writing a theory/analysis paper!
- For the general public, however, it is probably wise to *take great care in the use of technical musical terms* (our “jargon”), like sonata form or even *piano/forte* and *crescendo/diminuendo*; use only what will give the audience a richer experience of the piece and your performance. Whether you’re writing program notes, a research paper, or even a personal email to a friend, *always be mindful of the audience* and adjust tone and content to fit.
- Avoid mentioning specific keys or tonalities heard in the work, unless it is truly relevant to the point of your notes. For example, saying “The second movement is in the key of E major” is too matter-of-fact to mean anything to the listener/reader, while “Bach chose the remote key of E-flat minor in this aria to illustrate the suffering of Christ on the cross” helps the listener/reader interpret the meaning of what they are hearing.
- If the composer is not a household name, it is acceptable to give a brief one- or two-sentence biographical description that highlights their unique achievements, or place them within the context of another more familiar composer. We probably don’t need to know when and where this composer was born, or where he/she went to school, unless this point is directly relevant to a point you are trying to make in the notes (or to a possible “theme” of your program).
- *Avoid subjective assessments* such as: “The slow movement is followed by an Allegro of great difficulty and virtuosity.” What you consider to be “difficult” or “easy” may not be so to others; for conciseness, stick with objective facts whenever possible.
- *Avoid anachronistic comparisons*, such as describing a particularly jazzy movement of Bach as “Baroque-style Gershwin.” Bach can stand on his own without needing a reference to someone nearly 200 years distant to qualify his work, and vice versa.
- *Use the 3<sup>rd</sup> person*. Always write from an objective, third-person point of view and avoid “I” or “my” whenever possible. Your personal assessment of the piece, or the fact that you may consider a certain piece to be “my favorite Mozart sonata or aria” is irrelevant to the reader.
- *Premieres*. If you are playing the world- or New York premiere of a particular work, it is standard procedure to note this both in the program and its notes.
- FYI: Student bios are usually not included in the Master’s Recital programs or their notes.

#### Additional Special Notes for

Instrumental Recitals -- If you are performing a piece that makes use of an unusual instrument (e.g., theremin, baryton, gamelan, steel drums, prepared piano, etc.) it is enlightening to tell your audience about its origins and technical/timbral possibilities.



Vocal Recitals -- Ideally, voice students should also include a copy of all texts, laid out in “poetic” form, showing the original format of the lines and stanzas. It is required that the translation of any non-English text being sung be appended to the end of the program notes.

## **SAMPLES OF PROGRAM NOTES:**

### **Example 1**

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)  
English Suite No. 2 in A minor, BWV807  
*Duration: 22 minutes*

According to legend, J.S. Bach made a six-day, 200-mile pilgrimage by foot to hear Dietrich Buxtehude play the organ in the city of Lübeck, and ended up staying for two months absorbing all he could learn from the famous old master. Bach’s English Suite in A minor bears many influences of his study with Buxtehude, especially in the grand treatment of the fugal Prelude that opens the suite. The subsequent movements are fashionable French dances that typically appear in large-scale Baroque suites. Incidentally, the name “English Suites” came to be erroneously applied to Bach’s collection of six French-style suites after his first biographer Johann Nikolaus Forkel made the apocryphal claim that they were a commission by an anonymous English gentleman.

### **Example 2**

Hector Berlioz, arr. (1803-1869)  
Rouget de Lisle’s *La Marseillaise*  
*Duration: 6 minutes*

Berlioz prepared the first of his two settings of Claude Joseph Rouget de Lisle’s *Marseillaise* in the aftermath of the July 1830 Revolution. It was published by the Paris firm of Maurice Schlesinger in late 1830. The work is scored for pairs of clarinets and bassoons, four horns, six trumpets, three trombones and tuba, six timpani, bass drum, string, and chorus. We perform the first of six stanzas.”

### **Example 3**

Hector Berlioz, arr. (1803-1869)  
Marche funèbre pour la dernière scène d’*Hamlet* (*Tristia*, op. 18, no. 3)  
*Duration: 8 minutes*

This little-known but spectacular work of Berlioz’s was prepared in conjunction with a French translation of *Hamlet* scheduled for presentation in 1844 at the Odéon Theater, the very edifice in Paris where he had first seen Harriet Smithson play the role of Ophelia in 1827. (He composed two other works for the new production: the moving song of Ophelia’s drowning as offered by Queen Gertrude at the end of act IV, called *La Mort d’Ophélie*; and music for the mime-show, which has not been preserved.) The funeral march, which Berlioz never heard performed, was to be played after the last line of text, as the four captains bear Hamlet’s body from the stage. It is

scored for full orchestra, muffled drums, chorus singing the syllable “ah,” and, at the climax, a volley of rifle fire, as directed by Shakespeare. (We did not bring the Army ROTC, Davis detachment, to Vancouver, though they participated in a previous performance.)

The finished autograph score carries the date of 22 September 1848, just three weeks after the death of the composer’s father. Presumably the work can be thought of as a tribute to the grand old man who had contributed so much to his son’s poetic instincts.

**BROOKLYN COLLEGE LEARNING CENTER (Writing Assistance)**

If your program will need significant grammatical and syntactical assistance, we recommend that you seek assistance from the BC Learning Center located in 1300 Boylan Hall (Tel. 718-951-5821). See: <https://brooklyn.edu/lc>.

**CONSERVATORY RECITAL/AUDITION VIDEO/CD-RECORDING SERVICES**

Please consult with the Conservatory Concert Office about securing a recording or video of your recital. There are specific forms (Recording Request form) to be completed and a fee to be paid.

See form at:

<https://www.brooklyn.edu/conservatory-of-music/forms>

---

**Important Phone Numbers**

Conservatory Concert Office	718-951-5792
Conservatory Office	718-951-5286

---

**Acknowledgements:**

Examples are borrowed from

The School of Music, De Paul University: <https://music.depaul.edu/Pages/default.aspx>

D. Kern Holoman, *Writing about Music: A Style Sheet from The Editors of 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Music* (Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1988).