

DEGREE PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Master of Music—Piano Performance

The following is an explanation of the expectations and procedures for graduate students seeking the Master of Music Degree in Performance whose area of concentration is piano. The motivation behind the requirements set forth within these guidelines is the desire of the A-State Music Department to ensure that the graduates aspiring to be professional pianists are both qualified and prepared to the highest possible level. These criteria pertain to piano students entering the MM in Piano Performance program at A-State during the Spring of 2019 or thereafter.

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

Admission—Students seeking admission into the Master of Music in Performance degree program must meet the [requirements for Graduate Admissions](#) and the specific program requirements (see [Graduate Bulletin](#)).

Auditions—Students seeking admission to the Master of Music in Performance with an emphasis in Piano Performance must audition for the appropriate applied faculty member prior to initial enrollment. At the discretion of the applied faculty member a three to five member committee may be convened to hear the audition. The applied faculty member (or committee) will evaluate the performance and report the results to the Music Graduate Program Director.

Music Entrance Exams—All students seeking admission to the Arkansas State University Graduate Music Program must take the Department of Music entrance examinations in music history, music theory, and ear training. This examination is generally administered during the week prior to the beginning of classes. The results of this examination assist in planning each student's exact course of study. Contact the Music Graduate Program Director for details. A grade of "A" or "B" must be achieved in any remedial coursework. Remedial coursework may not be counted as credit toward the degree. Arkansas State University graduates who begin graduate studies within eighteen months of graduation will not be required to take the entrance examination provided they received an "A" or "B" on all undergraduate music theory and history coursework. [Study guides](#) are available.

REPERTOIRE REQUIREMENTS

Graduate level (2 to 3 credits) 3 to 5 memorized pieces

The above repertoire requirements are the minimum to be accomplished each semester from memory. The student and teacher will select literature in various contrasting styles and from different time periods. As each student progresses, the difficulty of the repertoire assigned will increase. Failure to learn and/or perform the selected repertoire at the appropriate level will affect the final lesson grade. See the following section, **JURIES**, for further detail.

PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

All graduate students at least **3 studio classes** and **1 student recital** per semester

Studio Classes will occur in the Recital Hall on a weekly basis. Each is typically conducted as a performance class and/or master class in which members of the piano faculty will critique the performers; pedagogical aspects of the instrument will also be covered.

Student Recitals involve all applied areas and occur periodically in the Recital Hall on Tuesdays at 11:00. The format is a traditional recital for which the appropriate attire is required. Pianists usually perform one piece. All performances require consent of the major applied teacher by filling out the *Tuesday Morning Recital Form* found on the A-State Music Department Website under *Important Links*.

JURIES

Proficiency Jury—All graduate piano performance students are required to perform a proficiency jury at the end of the first semester of applied study. The number of works offered will coincide directly with the minimum repertoire requirements for the semester. If the faculty approves the candidate's performance, official admission to the MM program in Piano Performance will be granted. Students will receive written comments from the Jury members.

Jury—Following admission to the program, students will perform a standard Jury (final exam) before a majority of the piano faculty at the end of each semester. For the typical Jury, a grade will be given by each faculty member, the average of which will be the Jury Grade. An Applied Lesson Record will be presented to the Jury Committee by each teacher, and each faculty member present will submit an online Assessment Form. After a brief discussion, a final grade will be determined by the major applied teacher based on the jury grade, input from the Jury Committee and the student's progress throughout the semester. Attributes of a fine jury performance demonstrate mastery of style, interpretation, technique, and emotional expression. Exceptions to the jury requirement include students giving a graduate recital that semester. The following outline will be used by the applied piano teacher for assigning appropriate graduate level literature.

Literature for all Juries

- A **minimum of one** representative selection of sufficient difficulty from the Baroque, Classical, Romantic or Contemporary eras must be performed from memory
- Repertoire must be from the current semester

Presentation—Each student's performance of the graduate level literature will be examined for the following qualities:

- **Musicianship**—Ongoing progress in musical accuracy
- **Expressive Interpretation**—Progressive improvement in conveying the appropriate style and character of the music
- **Technique**—Continuing development of all technical skills necessary to become a professional pianist
- **Stage Presence**—Growth in professionalism regarding poise, artistry and communication skills

GRADUATE RECITAL

Each candidate seeking the MM Degree in Piano Performance must enroll in the course, MUS 6131 and present a **Graduate Recital**. The student is responsible for establishing the date and time of the degree recital in consultation with the major applied teacher and the Music Graduate Program Director. The student must schedule the recital at the beginning of the fall semester each year, whether the recital will take place in the fall or spring semester. The student must notify the Music Graduate Program Director as soon as the recital is scheduled, at least six weeks prior to the performance. The reviewing committee will consist of the major applied teacher, two additional applied teachers from the student's performance area, and two members of the Graduate Curriculum Committee. The Music Graduate Program Director is responsible for assigning the reviewing committee. The examining committee must be informed of the time and place of the recital at least two weeks prior to the event.

The recital must include fifty minutes of music. The recital repertoire will include literature from three or more stylistic periods. The major applied teacher will approve the content of the recital program. A typed program with times for all selections along with notes will be provided by the student, which will be turned in for grading at least two weeks prior to the recital hearing.

Hearing—Six weeks prior to the Graduate Recital, the student must perform a pre-recital hearing for the piano faculty to determine the readiness of the student to perform the recital repertoire. The student should be prepared to play any selections on the recital from memory (a portion of each selection will be heard). A typed draft of the recital program will be presented at this time as well as notes and translations. The hearing **MUST** be passed in order to present the Graduate Recital.

Literature—The Graduate Recital will consist of music from at least three different style periods, from the Baroque, Classical, Romantic and/or Contemporary eras. Variations of these provisions may be made at the discretion of the teacher. All solo music must be performed from memory. Some literature may be from previous semesters of study. Collaborative works or chamber music may be included in the program, and music may be used for these.

Presentation—Similar to performing a Jury, professional advancement in the areas of musicianship, expressive interpretation, stage presence and technique are expected.

Evaluation—Following the recital presentation, the Review Committee will convene. After discussion, each committee member will vote pass/fail and make comments. The recital must be approved on a vote of four to one. If the result is "fail" the committee may ask the student to replay the recital during the next semester with possible changes in repertoire. In such a case, a grade of "I" ("incomplete") will be assigned. If the recital is not completed in due time, the grade will be recorded as "F."

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS

In the final semester of study, all Master of Music and Master of Music Education students will take a Comprehensive Examination in three areas:

- **Major Area** (Performance, Pedagogy, Collaborative Piano, Conducting, Composition, or Music Education)
- **Music Theory**
- **Music History** (will contain a listening identification portion)

Exam questions will be tailored to the individual student, and will be distributed to the student two weeks prior to the exam. The student is expected to prepare the questions in advance. On the day of the test, the student will write the answers to the exam without the use of notes. He or she may write the answers longhand, or use a computer with disabled internet connection in the ITTC Lab in the Library. In some instances, musical scores may be brought by the student into the exam, provided they do not contain handwritten notes or analysis. Such scores must be checked by the faculty member proxying the exam. The student will be notified by the Director of Music Graduate Studies if this is required. Scores may be provided by the faculty member administering the test. Each section of the exam will be graded by the appropriate faculty member. In some cases, a faculty member may request that a student re-write all or some of a section of the exam, or provide verbal clarification. This should be done within two weeks of the original examination date. If the appropriate faculty member finds the revisions/clarifications to be satisfactory, the student may then pass. If the revisions/clarifications are not deemed satisfactory, then the student will re-take the exam the following semester.

OTHER POLICIES

Practice: For Piano Performance Majors, optimal results will occur with at least 3 hours of daily practice.

Sight Reading: Piano Students should take the SASR (Standard Assessment of Sight Reading) test on Piano Marvel at least ten times during the semester. See www.pianomarvel.com.

Learning/Memorization Schedule: The student will make a Learning/Memorization Schedule for each piece for the entire semester, due the second week of the semester. The schedule will include the following:

- Date by which student will look up all terms in foreign languages in the score (prior to first lesson on that piece)
- Date by which student will have all fingerings written in for each piece
- Dates by which student will complete a Memory Chart (Measure-by Measure Form and Harmonic Analysis) for each piece
- Dates by which student will have piece learned accurately and in consistent, slow tempo, using the music
- All dates to play in Studio Class, including performances using music and from memory

Collaborative Piano: Each student is strongly encouraged to collaborate with at least one singer or instrumentalist each semester, whether or not he or she is enrolled in the Collaborative Piano course. The pianist may invite that person to piano lessons for coachings.