



2026–2027 Student Handbook

Last Updated: July 23, 2026

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I. General Guidelines for All Students

I.1 Important Links

- [Current faculty listing](#)
- [Current staff listing](#)
- [Student Resources](#) (including the Recital Packet and Mock Audition Packet)
- [2026–2027 Academic Calendar](#)
- [ASIMUT Handbook](#)
- [Orchestra 365 Folder](#)
- [Opera Department Handbook](#)
- [Syllabi](#)
 - [Orchestra](#)
 - [Rice University Chorale](#)

I.2 Important Forms

- [Independent Study Form](#)
- [Request to be Excused from School](#)
- [Chamber Music Credit by Recital Participation Form](#)
- [Jury Report Form](#)
- [Piano Jury Report Form](#)
- [Proposal for Apprenticeship Credit \(MUSI 749\)](#)
- [Travel Assistance Reimbursement Form](#)
- [Thesis Committee and Topic Approval Form \(MM and 5-Year\)](#)
- [Lecture-Recital Topic Form](#)
- [Doctoral Document Topic Form](#)
- [Doctoral Defense Committee Form](#)
- [Graduate and Postdoctoral Thesis Defense Form](#)

I.3 Advisors

Degree	Advisor
Bachelor of Arts	Geoffrey Scott, Assistant Dean
Bachelor of Music	Geoffrey Scott, Assistant Dean
Master of Music	Lexi Phillips, Graduate Student Administrator
Artist Diploma	Lexi Phillips, Graduate Student Administrator
Doctor of Musical Arts	Dr. Richard Lavenda, Director of Graduate Studies

I.4 Financial Aid

All new undergraduate applicants seeking financial aid and returning undergraduates who are already receiving need-based aid are required to complete:

- the CSS Profile and
- the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

In addition, tax returns and W-2s should be submitted to IDOC (Institutional Documentation Service). The CSS Profile, the FAFSA, and IDOC are linked through the [Rice Office of Student Financial Services](#) website. The FAFSA for 2026–2027 will be available after December 1, 2026, but should not be filed until January 2027 when information regarding 2026 income will be complete.

Graduate students should complete the FAFSA if they are interested in obtaining any Guaranteed Federal Loans.

In order to continue receiving financial assistance, you must be a student in good standing and demonstrate your financial need annually.

The deadline for filing all financial aid forms is April 15. The priority deadline is February 1 for the Rice University Office of Financial Aid.

NOTE: If a student plays an orchestral instrument and is receiving Shepherd School financial aid, that student must play in the Shepherd School Orchestra even if they have completed the required number of semesters of orchestra.

I.5 International Student Regulations

It is imperative that all international students entering the University report to the Office of International Students & Scholars (OISS) upon their arrival. This group includes undergraduate and graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, research associates, students on practical training from other schools, and any professors or lecturers who hold visas. The Office of International Students & Scholars is in Lovett Hall, Entrance A, Room 201, and can be contacted at 713-348-6095.

I.6 Title IX

Rice encourages any student who has experienced an incident of sexual, relationship, or other interpersonal violence, harassment or gender discrimination to seek support. There are many options available both on and off campus for all students, regardless of whether the perpetrator was a fellow student, a staff or faculty member, or someone not affiliated with the university.

Students should be aware when seeking support on campus that most employees are required by Title IX to disclose all incidents of non-consensual interpersonal behaviors to Title IX professionals on campus who can act to support that student and meet their needs. The therapists at the Rice Counseling Center and the doctors at Student Health Services are confidential, meaning that Rice will not be informed about the incident if a student discloses to one of these Rice staff members. Rice prioritizes student privacy and safety, and only shares disclosed information on a need-to-know basis.

If you are in need of assistance or simply would like to talk to someone, please call the Rice Wellbeing and Counseling Center, which includes Title IX Support: 713-348-3311.

Policies, including the Sexual Misconduct Policy and the Code of Student Conduct, and more information regarding Title IX can be found at <http://safe.rice.edu>.

I.7 Wellbeing and Counseling Center

The [Wellbeing and Counseling Center](#) supports student development and success by providing a good first point of contact for students who want to talk to someone about solutions to their wellbeing and mental health concerns. The Rice Counseling Center is open year-round except for scheduled University holidays, several designated days during winter break, and occasional all-day staff retreats. Emergency after-hours on-call services are available by telephone year-round, twenty-four hours a day.

I.7.1 The Student Wellbeing Office

To schedule a Wellbeing Advising appointment please [use their online portal](#). Note that this is not a request for an appointment with the Rice Counseling Center for clinical counseling; to schedule with the RCC, please call 713-348-3311 Monday through Friday, 9:00am to 5:00pm. You may also use this same number at any time for urgent concerns.

- **Location:** First floor of the Gibbs Wellness Center, adjacent to the Recreation Center
- **Hours:** Monday through Friday, 9:00 AM–5:00 PM
- **Phone:** 713-348-3311
- **Email:** wellbeing@rice.edu

A Wellbeing Advisor will work with you to help you resolve your concerns. The office can also answer questions you have regarding Rice policies and procedures.

Some common concerns:

- stress management

- adjustment concerns
- relationship issues
- roommate communication problems
- difficulty making decisions
- struggling with identity
- academic struggles
- taking time off
- navigating resources

I.8 Disability Resource Center (DRC)

The Disability Resource Center (DRC) is committed to providing access to the educational environment for all students. The DRC also assists faculty, staff, and visitors with accommodation requests to help ensure equal access and opportunity.

The roles of the Disability Resource Center at Rice University are to:

- obtain and file disability-related documents;
- certify eligibility for accommodations;
- help to determine reasonable accommodations;
- develop plans for the provision of accommodations for students, faculty, staff, and visitors; and
- advise Rice University regarding the implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 and the Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

It is the goal of the DRC, in the pursuit of its mission and its role, to achieve the standards of excellence from the Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD).

Furthermore, the DRC is committed to providing service that is:

- accessible to all,
- accepting of differences,
- inclusive of diversity,
- respectful of needs, and
- knowledgeable in implementation.

Students (including graduate students and postdoctoral trainees), faculty, or staff members who may need accommodations should contact the Disability Resource Center to discuss their needs and begin the registration process. Disability related requests for accommodations and resources are evaluated individually, based on documentation and completion of the registration process.

- **Location:** Allen Center, Room III
- **Phone:** (main) 713-348-5841
- **Fax:** 713-348-5888
- **Email:** adarice@rice.edu

1.9 The Honor Code and Academic Integrity

Established in 1912, the [Honor Code](#) is one of the most distinct aspects of the academic experience at Rice. Everyone who enrolls at Rice agrees to abide by the code, which covers such matters as [plagiarism](#) and giving or receiving aid on exams. Work completed under the Honor Code carries the pledge cited below followed by the student's signature.

“On my honor, I have neither given nor received any unauthorized aid on this (exam, quiz, paper).”

The Honor Code fosters a spirit of freedom, independence, honesty, and mutual trust that exemplifies the academic enterprise at its best. In most courses, students are able to schedule final exams when they want them, rather than having two exams on the same day or three or four in a row. In many cases, exams may be taken in the library or in the students' rooms. Exams for large classes are scheduled for specific times, but even those are not proctored. The student-elected Honor Council oversees the Honor Code and considers reported violations.

- [Undergraduate Honor Code](#)
- [Graduate Honor Code](#)
- [Code of Student Conduct](#)

1.10 Shepherd School Grading Policy

A minimum grade of B- is expected of all music students in their major applied area. A grade of C+ or lower is considered unsatisfactory and will be evaluated in the following manner:

A music major who receives a grade of C+ or lower in their major applied area will be placed on music probation. Music probation signifies that the student's work has been unsatisfactory enough to preclude graduation unless marked improvement is achieved promptly. A student on music probation may be absent from class only for extraordinary reasons and may not represent the school in any public function not directly a part of a degree program. If a student receives a second semester of C+ or lower in their major applied area, whether for consecutive semesters or not, the student will be discontinued as a music performance major and merit scholarship from the Shepherd School will be discontinued.

NOTE: For music history and musicology majors, a grade of C+ or lower in any music history course is considered unsatisfactory and will be evaluated as above.

Following FERPA guidelines, when a student is notified by email of their placement on music and/or academic probation, the student's applied faculty instructor, the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, and the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs will also be notified. Likewise, these individuals will be included on all future probation status updates.

Music and/or academic probation may limit a student's absence opportunities as they relate to external performances. Appeals may be sent to the Dean of the Shepherd School of Music.

Per Rice University policy, all graduate students must maintain a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.67 in order to be eligible to graduate.

I.II Rice University Transfer Credit Policy

I.II.1 Undergraduate Students

Students who earn credit at other accredited post-secondary institutions may be awarded credit applicable to their Rice undergraduate degrees. Please refer to the discussion of [transfer credit](#) in Rice University's General Announcements.

I.II.2 Graduate Students

Students who wish to transfer graduate courses to Rice should contact the Graduate Student Administrator. As a general rule, MMus students may only transfer up to nine hours of graduate credit to Rice. If approved, the equivalent Rice course will be entered on the student's record after the Shepherd School Graduate Student Administrator forwards to the Registrar an official transcript from the other institution. No grade is entered and transferred courses have no effect on a student's grade point average at Rice. Credit is generally determined on a pro rata basis.

Transfer courses may not be used to fulfill both academic and core requirements (i.e., lessons, orchestra, chamber music, orchestral repertoire, Career Skills courses, and any degree-specific requirements).

Graduate courses that are appropriate for a MMus degree at Rice that are taken at other institutions may be approved for transfer credit. This includes credit for graduate summer school courses. Credit is normally given for courses whose content makes them equivalent to courses that are or could be offered at Rice. Students must have earned a grade of B- or better; students may not transfer courses taken pass/fail.

The Shepherd School's Director of Graduate Studies and the relevant Shepherd School department chair determine whether courses are appropriate for transfer to Rice. Students are strongly advised to seek prior approval from their department and from the Director of Graduate Studies before taking courses elsewhere. Without prior approval, students cannot be certain that credit taken at another institution will be transferred.

I.I2 Independent Studies

An [Independent Study Form](#) must be completed, with both a description and final project stated, and turned in to the Shepherd School Graduate Student Administrator before a student may register for an Independent Study. (NOTE: Undergraduate students will also submit their independent study form to the Graduate Student Administrator.) This form should be submitted no later than the second week of classes. All independent study must be approved by the Dean.

Students who do not submit the form will be disenrolled from the course.

I.I2.1 Credit Guidelines

For one credit, the student must have at least five hour-long meetings and produce a final project. For two credits, the student must have at least eight hour-long meetings and produce a final project.

Graduate Students may not count more than three (3) semester hours of Independent Study as required electives.

I.I3 Piano Proficiency

Students seeking degrees from The Shepherd School of Music are required to attain prescribed proficiency levels in piano. These levels have been developed through discussions between the chair of the piano department and the faculty members of each music major area. While the requirements as outlined represent minimum standards, all music students are encouraged to develop their piano skills even beyond this level.

The Piano Proficiency Exam may be taken during the first two weeks of classes in each semester in order to fulfill the secondary piano requirement, and it will be offered again at the end of the semester during normal jury times. Should a student fail to pass the proficiency exam that is offered at jury time, they may not retake it until the beginning of the following semester.

At the beginning of their first semester, all incoming undergraduates and master's students must see Dr. Sohyoung Park, Secondary Piano Coordinator, about their piano proficiency level.

NOTE: The piano proficiency exam is not required of students in piano performance, organ performance, or the BA program.

I.I3.1 Music History Majors

Music history majors must pass the piano proficiency requirement for instrumental and vocal majors. Further study beyond that basic requirement is encouraged as well.

I.I3.2 Composition and Theory Majors

It is the agreed policy of the Composition/Theory Department that all majors should study piano each semester of the student's residency. In addition to passing the keyboard proficiency examination for instrumental and vocal majors, Composition/Theory majors should endeavor to acquire as much facility as time permits. A certain emphasis on sight reading, reading of literature, and score reading is advised.

I.I3.3 Instrumental and Vocal Majors

The following represents the minimum competency required to pass the examination. "KM II" refers to *Keyboard Musicianship, Book Two* (11th ed.) by Lyke, Elliston, and Caramia.

I. Technique

- (a) Play two short solos at the level of "Little Prelude" by Bach (KM II, p. 68), "Eccossaise" by Beethoven (KM II, p. 155), or "Old French Song" by Tchaikovsky (KM II, pp. 252–253).
- (b) Play a pre-approved accompaniment for your applied instrument. Voice majors will play a pre-approved art-song accompaniment. Material should be at the same level of the repertoire listed above.

2. Repertoire

- (a) Play two short solos at the level of “Little Prelude” by Bach (KM II, p. 68), “Eccossaise” by Beethoven (KM II, p. 155), or “Old French Song” by Tchaikovsky (KM II, pp. 252–253).
- (b) Play a pre-approved accompaniment for your applied instrument. Voice majors will play a pre-approved art song accompaniment. Material should be at the same level of the repertoire listed above.

3. Sight Reading

- (a) Sight read a vocal or instrumental accompaniment at a moderate but steady tempo.
- (b) Sight read any pair of parts from an SATB open score, open score for string quartet, or orchestra score including transposing instruments.

4. Functional Piano

- (a) **Chord Patterns**
 - i. Play modulation patterns to the dominant key or to the relative minor key in three keys of the student’s choice (KM II, pp. 169–170).
 - ii. Play chord patterns for harmonizing the major or minor scale in three keys of the student’s choice (KM II, p. 265).
- (b) **Harmonization.** Harmonize with a four-voice texture (three voices in the right hand and one voice in the left hand) a given melody using chord symbols and traditional harmony at sight.
- (c) **Transposition.** Transpose a song arrangement within and including the interval of a minor third up or down at sight.

1.14 Secondary Instruction

Secondary instruction (MUSI 251–297) is offered to all students of the Shepherd School. Unless secondary instruction is prescribed by one’s curriculum, permission of the Dean must be received before registration. Secondary lessons when prescribed by the student’s curriculum will be provided by the school for no extra charge. When secondary lessons are not required by a student’s degree plan, a secondary applied music fee will be charged. The fee for study with a graduate assistant is \$500 (subject to change) a semester. The student will be billed for these fees during the middle of the semester. Any student registering for secondary lessons must register with the Shepherd School administration prior to university registration.

Secondary courses are offered in bassoon, cello, clarinet, double bass, flute, guitar, harp, horn, oboe, percussion, piano, saxophone, trombone, trumpet, tuba, viola, and violin.

Courses are not offered every year; please refer to the Registrar’s website for the current course schedule.

1.15 Leaves of Absence and Voluntary Withdrawal

Music majors must secure permission in writing from the Dean of the Shepherd School prior to requesting a leave of absence from the university. Requests must be submitted before the first day of classes of the

semester for which the leave is to be applicable.

Music majors taking voluntary withdrawal from the University may be asked to re-apply and/or re-audition; they are not guaranteed re-admission into the Shepherd School. (Such students are encouraged to explain the circumstances of their withdrawal to the Dean of the Shepherd School before leaving campus.)

Medical withdrawals should follow all guidelines listed in the Rice University [General Announcements](#).

I.I6 Absence Policy

An absence is considered any performance, competition, audition, festival, etc. that takes the student away from classes/activities at the Shepherd School of Music.

1. Touring privileges apply only to graduate students and five-year students out of the core curriculum.
2. No more than a total of two (2) weeks (ten school days) per semester may be used for absences. Those students who wish to be away for more than two weeks in a semester should take a Leave of Absence or withdraw for that semester.
3. Students must notify Geoffrey Scott, Assistant Dean of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, at least thirty days in advance of the requested time away.
4. The student must submit the [Request to be Excused from School](#), which requires the signature of each faculty member in whose class they are enrolled.
5. The student is responsible for making up the work by the end of the semester.
6. Students may not be excused from performance to which they have been assigned.
7. These policies do not apply to students in the five-year BMus/MMus program who are doing apprenticeship work for a semester or a year away from the Shepherd School. Application for such projects is made through the Graduate Studies Committee.

University guidelines regarding petitions and appeals are found in the [General Announcements](#).

I.I7 ASIMUT Information

ASIMUT is a scheduling, room booking, and event management platform explicitly created for performing arts institutions. It is used by SSM students, faculty, and staff.

The [ASIMUT Handbook](#) offers complete information about using the new platform, making reservations, and how to customize your preferences.

ASIMUT can be accessed from any device with internet access at <https://shepherd.asimut.net>. You will be redirected to a Single-Sign-On page where you will enter your Rice NetID and password. This may redirect you to DUO.

1.I7.1 Booking Policies

- A reservation is required for all activity in both Alice Pratt Brown Hall (APBH) and Brockman Hall for Opera (BHO).
- Each student may reserve a location up to two weeks in advance.
- Each student is given a “rolling quota” of four hours; you can see your balance on your agenda page of ASIMUT just below your name.
 - You can reserve up to four hours in spaces in the next two weeks. The minute a reservation passes, you get that time back into your rolling quota.
- Students can reserve under three categories:
 - Ensemble Practice Provisional,
 - Individual Practice Provisional, and
 - Recording Provisional

NOTE: For Ensemble reservations, you need to include at least one other person in the reservation. This will add the reservation to that person’s agenda. The quota time will only be taken from the account of the individual making the reservation; not all of the people in the reservation

- Reservations must be at least thirty minutes long and cannot exceed two hours. Consecutive bookings in the same room must be separated by a gap of at least thirty minutes.
- You will need to confirm your reservation between sixty minutes before the scheduled start time and up to five minutes past the start time. If you do not confirm your reservation in this time frame, it will be canceled and someone else will be able to book that room.
- Students CAN reserve large classroom spaces.
 - Performance Spaces (Duncan, Stude, Morrison) can only be reserved through Alex Stutler (astutler@rice.edu)
- Individual Practice Rooms in APBH & BHO are still available on a first-come, first-served basis with no online booking required.

1.I7.2 Last-Minute Bookings

- These are designed to encourage the use of large ensemble rooms and classrooms that are open and available in the near future.
- Most rooms are available for last-minute bookings within the next four hours, making as many spaces available for rehearsals as possible.
- These reservations can be made in addition to your “rolling quota” and are “free” to you.

1.I7.3 Cancellations

- If your plans change, you **MUST** cancel your reservation. This will free up time in your quota and will also let anyone else in the reservation know the event is canceled, allowing them to make different plans and reserve spaces as needed.

I.I7.4 Contacts

- [Alex Stutler](#), Schedule and Events Manager
- [Jen Rimmer](#), Director of Performance Operations for Music
- [Jessie Mullins](#), Director of Operations for Opera

I.I8 Chamber Music Policies

Chamber music is an important and integral part of your studies in music, for it is the synthesis of solo and ensemble performance. The faculty welcomes the opportunity to share this great literature with you.

Each student must enroll during their degree program in the appropriate number of semesters of chamber music. Please refer to the [individual degree plans](#) for these requirements.

NOTE: Voice majors in the MMus program must also perform a chamber work on one of their two degree recitals.

Chamber music is organized into three sections:

1. music for strings, string and wind combinations, and piano and strings (coordinated by Norman Fischer and Caio Diniz),
2. music for winds or piano and winds (coordinated by Richie Hawley), and
3. music for voice and instruments (coordinated by Brian Connelly).

You should know which faculty member will be coordinating your ensemble each semester, as there are different expectations in each section.

NOTE: Each small ensemble is expected to perform in a student chamber recital at least once in the semester.

A STUDENT SHOULD NOT ENROLL FOR MORE THAN ONE ENSEMBLE PER SEMESTER. Exceptions may be made by the faculty if there are particular needs in certain instrumentation or if a student needs an extra semester's credit for fulfilling the chamber music requirement.

An ensemble taken for credit must be registered for, and graded, during the semester of participation. One cannot request retroactive credit or a grade for an ensemble not taken for credit in an earlier semester. CAREFULLY CHECK THE ENSEMBLE REQUIREMENTS FOR YOUR AREA OF STUDY.

I.I8.I String and String/Piano Chamber Music Sections

- Each registered student, upon completion of the Chamber Music Survey, will be assigned to a small ensemble for credit.
- The repertoire is chosen by the group in collaboration with their faculty coach. The selection must be approved by the Chamber Music Coordinators.
- The ensemble will meet with their assigned faculty for individual coachings each week.
- It is expected that each group will study an entire work by the end of the semester.
- Each group is expected and required to perform on the Chamber Music Festival or the Final Chamber Music Concert. The dates for these concerts are communicated at the beginning of each semester and must be reserved in the student's schedule.

- If a pre-existing commitment conflicts with any of the concert dates, the student must let their Faculty Chamber Music Coordinator(s) know of such conflict before the applicable deadlines.

I.18.2 Chamber Music Credit for Student Degree Recital Performances

Credit may be earned in chamber music for participating as an “assisting artist” on degree recitals; please submit the [Chamber Music Credit by Recital Participation Form](#). The following criteria should be followed exactly:

1. To get one chamber music credit (one semester’s worth) a student must appear on three (3) student degree recitals, not necessarily in the same semester.
2. The repertoire on each recital should be one-on-a-part, non-conducted chamber music. It cannot be repertoire that the student has prepared for another chamber music credit.
3. After a performance on a student degree recital, the student desiring chamber music credit requests a grade on the performance by the recital committee. This grade is to be written on one of the programs and placed in the student’s file by a member of the committee.
4. When the third student degree recital appearance is anticipated, the student should enroll for chamber music, at which time the three grades are averaged and the student given credit.

NOTE: Chamber works for which a student has enrolled in chamber music class and received a grade may not be repeated on any of the student’s degree recitals.

I.19 Orchestra Guidelines and Procedures

Please consult the [Orchestra Syllabus](#) and [Orchestra 365 Folder](#) for guidelines, assignments, audition materials, and other important documents.

I.20 Opera Guidelines and Information

For additional information, please consult the [Opera Department Handbook](#).

Each voice student receives specialized individual attention from the internationally renowned opera and voice faculty and numerous guests from the professional opera world.

Undergraduate students must register for MUSI 377 (Undergraduate Opera Ensemble), and all juniors and seniors are enrolled in MUSI 336 (Opera Workshop). All master’s students are enrolled in MUSI 570 (Advanced Opera Studies) and MUSI 527 (Graduate Opera Performance), which focuses on acting techniques, movement, stage combat, and audition preparation.

I.20.I 2026–2027 Performance Dates

- Fall Production: October 30 and November 1, 2026
- Spirit of the Season: December 5, 2026
- Scenes Program: February 7, 2027
- Spring Opera Production: April 16 and 18, 2027

I.20.2 Faculty

Joshua Winograde

Director of Opera Studies
Professor of Opera
Office: BHO 222
jwinograde@rice.edu

Lyndsi Maus

Teacher of Opera Studies
Office: BHO 218
lyndsi.maus@rice.edu

Alex Munger (on leave Fall 2026)

Teacher of Opera Studies
Office: APBH 2202
alex.munger@rice.edu

Nino Sanikidze

Teacher of Opera Studies
Office: BHO 217
nino.sanikidze@rice.edu

Bethany Self

Principal Coach of Opera Studies
Office: APBH 2267
bethany.a.self@rice.edu

I.20.3 Staff

Jessie Mullins

Director of Operations for Opera
Office Phone: 713-348-2668
Office: BHO 116
jessie.mullins@rice.edu

Madison Elaine Sutton

Company and Stage Manager for Opera
Office Phone: 713-348-2151
Office: BHO 115
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Barbara Dolney

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I.21 Rice Chorale Policies

Please consult the [Rice University Chorale Syllabus](#).

I.22 Juries

At the end of each semester, a jury examination in applied music may be given over the material studied during the semester on their principal instrument and on any secondary instrument they have studied in

the course of the semester. Any student who gives a degree recital during the semester is excused from playing a jury. A schedule showing the date and time for all students' juries will be distributed at the end of the semester.

I.23 Jury Report Form

Please consult the [Jury Report Form](#).

I.24 Piano Jury Report Form

Please consult the [Piano Jury Report Form](#).

I.25 Poster Policy

I.25.1 Where You Can Post

- Posters for Shepherd School-sponsored events—including faculty, student, and class recitals; guest artist recitals; and master classes—may be displayed throughout both buildings, including:
 - locker doors,
 - faculty studio doors,
 - stairwells, and
 - walls near water fountains.
- Posters for Rice University community events (those sponsored by any Rice department, program, or student group) may be posted on the community bulletin boards in Alice Pratt Brown Hall, located near rooms 1131 and 1133, following campus-wide posting guidelines.
- Posters for events not hosted by Shepherd or Rice should be submitted to the Shepherd School administrative office for review and approval before posting.

I.25.2 Poster Size, Content, and Timing

- Posters should not exceed 11" x 17", unless otherwise approved.
- Posters should not include any content that is harassing, hateful, or in violation of Rice University policy or law.
- Posters must be removed by the earlier of:
 - two business days after the event, or
 - ten business days after posting (for non-event-specific materials).

I.25.3 Other Reminders

- Posters on glass doors will be removed.

- Please do not cover any window or door.
- Posters that do not meet these guidelines may be removed by building staff.

For full details, please see [Rice Policy 856: Display of Posters, Flyers, and Similar Materials in Public Spaces](#).

1.26 Center for Career Development

The [Center for Career Development \(CCD\)](#) supports students at every stage of their career journey, from identifying professional goals to navigating the job market. CCD services include one-on-one career coaching, resume and CV review, interview preparation, and access to Rice's global alumni and employer network. All students are encouraged to explore programming designed specifically for academic and non-academic career paths.

[i2twenty](#) is your one-stop shop for a personalized career development journey at Rice. Use i2twenty to apply for internships and full-time positions, schedule career counseling appointments, register for workshops and events, and access career research tools.

2. Bachelor of Music Degree Guidelines

2.1 Post-Admission Information

1. **Registration.** General advising for freshmen takes place during Orientation Week. Specific advising questions may be directed to Geoffrey Scott, Assistant Dean. The Bachelor of Music is a four-year degree that requires a minimum of twelve (12) credit hours each semester to maintain full-time student status. Students are welcomed and encouraged to schedule a meeting to discuss class selection each semester.
2. **Academic Requirements.** Specific degree requirements are available in the [General Announcements](#).
3. **Recitals.** Performance Majors are required to complete two (2) recitals (see [degree requirements](#)). Composition majors are required to complete one recital of original music. Musicology majors must write a thesis.

2.2 Distribution Requirements

For distribution (general-education) requirements, please refer to the [General Announcements](#).

2.3 Shepherd School Undergraduate Core Curriculum

Core courses, required of all undergraduates except Bachelor of Arts students, are as follows:

Music Theory MUSI 211, 212, 311, 312, theory elective* (see below)

Music History MUSI 222, 321, 322, 421

Aural Skills MUSI 231, 232, 331, 332

Theory Elective Defined as MUSI 315, 378, 403, 404, 405, 416, 417, 512, 513, 514, 517, 613, 617

Bachelor of Music students must follow the prescribed sequence in Music Theory, Music History, and Aural Skills in their first four semesters. Deviations are only permitted if the student successfully chal-

lenges a course. PLEASE NOTE: courses that are successfully challenged will satisfy the degree requirement but may require a student to fulfill the credit hours.

2.4 Recital Information

For additional information, please consult [Student Resources](#) for the Recital Packet.

2.4.1 Recital Requirements for Composition Majors

Undergraduate composition students hold one recital: Senior Recital (MUSI 441). This may be one full recital or two half recitals, with a total performance time of approximately fifty minutes or as determined by the department. One half recital may be given in the junior year.

For pieces to count for recital credit, they must be performed on the composer's recital. Individual performances in other venues do not qualify for recital credit. In certain circumstances, off-campus performances may be considered for credit by petition to the department.

If using electronic media, contact Chapman Welch (electro@rice.edu) at least one month before your recital.

3. BM/MM Degree Eligibility and Guidelines

The five-year Bachelor of Music/Master of Music program is an honors program. A student's intention to apply for this degree plan must be approved by both their department and the Graduate Studies Committee. In addition, the student must pass both a qualifying exam and a qualifying recital. The following rules govern entry into the five-year program.

3.1 Application

1. Application to the five-year honors program is made in the fifth or sixth semester, at least six weeks prior to the Qualifying Recital. An application consists of two letters directed to the Graduate Studies Committee: one from the student, detailing why the student wants to enter the program, and one from the major teacher, discussing the student's performance level, potential for master's level work, and general appropriateness for this accelerated program. Both letters should address how this particular student is suited to complete a six-year program in five years. The student's department chair must also acknowledge the student's application to the honors program by signing the application form.
2. Students approved to audition for the 5-year honors program who:
 - (a) fail to pass the qualifying exam in history and theory four weeks before the recital will be given a second opportunity two weeks prior to the recital.
 - (b) fail the second attempt at the qualifying exam in history and theory will not be admitted into the five-year honors program. The recital will be credited as a junior recital if successfully completed.
 - (c) pass the qualifying exam in history and theory, but fail the recital, are not eligible for further consideration in the five-year program.
3. The qualifying recital must be evaluated by a three-person committee. In addition, the recital (on tape, if necessary) must be approved by a majority of the student's department. All evaluations should comment on the student's performance level and potential for master's level work. The recital should be beyond the level of a junior recital. After reviewing the results of the qualifying examination and the evaluations of the qualifying recital, the Graduate Studies Committee will

determine whether the student is admitted to the honors program. If the student is not admitted to the honors program, then the recital will be credited as a junior recital.

4. Transfer students are eligible to apply for the five-year honors program, but in order to preserve the intent of the five-year program, the following guidelines have been established:
 - (a) All music academic core requirements must be complete at the end of the fifth semester of schooling. Semesters attended at other schools will be counted toward the total of five semesters.
 - (b) Special consideration for extenuating situations will be given by the Graduate Studies Committee.
5. To preserve the honors component of the five-year program, it must be completed in five years. If the degree is not completed in five years, the student is removed from consideration for the Master of Music degree and becomes eligible only for the Bachelor's degree, which will be awarded if and when all of the requirements for the degree have been met. Students who still wish to pursue the MMus will have to apply for regular admission to the graduate program. Any exceptions to this time frame must be approved by the Graduate Studies Committee.
6. A student refused admittance into the five-year honors program must select between the BA and BMus degree plans.

3.2 Guidelines for Qualifying Exam and Recital

NOTE: These guidelines are limited to students in the five-year BM/MM program.

1. **Qualifying Recital.** For students wishing to apply for this degree, the junior recital will become the qualifying recital if the qualifying exam is passed.
2. **History/Theory Oral Qualifying Examination.** Please see the Graduate Student Administrator to arrange a committee. Exam specifics and preparation guidelines are given below.
3. **Graduate Record Examination.** Required for music history majors, this examination must be taken by the conclusion of the sixth semester. You must register approximately four weeks in advance.

3.2.1 Theory/History Qualifying Examination Specifics

1. The oral examination in music history and music theory will be based on the qualifying recital pieces and must be taken at least four weeks before the Qualifying Recital (i.e., at least one week before the preview).
2. The exam will be 90–120 minutes in length.
3. The first part should be a presentation by the student on the theoretical aspects and historical background of the planned recital music.
4. Questions from faculty in attendance will follow and the student should be prepared to:
 - (a) discuss the origins and development of forms and theoretical concepts as they apply to given pieces on the program;

- (b) discuss the general style of each composition and the historical background of that style, placing each piece in an historical context with regard to both the specific composer and the historical period; and
 - (c) discuss the unique aspects of the basic compositional elements (melody, rhythm, harmony, color, etc.) and basic structural principles and the composer's solution to each structural principle.
5. The student must supply the examining faculty with copies of their recital music at least one week prior to the oral examination.
 6. THIS EXAM MUST BE COMPLETED BY NOVEMBER 1 OF THE THIRD YEAR OF STUDY; NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE GRANTED.

3.2.2 Guidelines for Students Preparing for Theory/History Qualifying Exam

1. **Length.** The exam will be 90–120 minutes in length.
2. **When.** The exam must be completed at least one week prior to the recital preview; it must be scheduled during the process of recital scheduling.
3. **Purpose.** This exam is a demonstration of your ability to apply theoretical and historical learning to your recital pieces prior to the recital so that new insights from the exam can be applied to the recital pieces.
4. **Faculty Committee.** The committee must have at least two individuals: one theorist and one historian. The student's major instructor is also encouraged to be involved.
5. **Format of Exam.** The exam includes an exposition by the student, questions from faculty, and discussion among student and faculty. The relative balance of the above is variable.
6. **Suggestions for Studying.**
 - (a) Know in a broad outline the history of that genre, especially for your instrument (e.g., the history of the violin sonata).
 - (b) Know at least some basic information about each composer.
 - (c) Find out the facts about the piece (e.g., when it was composed; how many exemplars are in this genre by this composer; how many works like this were composed in the same era, before, and after; etc.).
 - (d) Start with the "larger" analytical aspects of the piece (e.g., overall form) and gradually proceed down to the smaller aspects.
 - (e) Are the above traits typical (e.g., for the genre, of the time when composed, of the composer, of writing for that instrument)?
 - (f) Are there any unusual traits (e.g., harmony, structure, performance practices, technical difficulties)?
 - (g) In sum: by the end of your preparation for the exam, you should have synthesized the unique and typical aspects of your pieces and be able to analyze verbally any given segment from your pieces.
7. **NOTE:** At least one week prior to your exam, you must present a copy of each of your pieces (at school expense) to each member of your committee.

3.3 Proposal for Apprenticeship Credit (MUSI 749)

Please see the [Proposal for Apprenticeship Credit \(MUSI 749\)](#).

4. Master of Music Degree Guidelines

4.1 Post-Admission Information

1. **Registration.** General advising takes place during Shepherd School Orientation during which students meet within their instrumental groups. Specific advising questions may be directed to your major teacher or Lexi Phillips, Graduate Student Administrator. The Master of Music is a two-year degree; a minimum of nine credit hours must be taken each semester to be full time. Specific degree requirements are available in the [Graduate Announcements](#).
2. **Academic Requirements.** Each student must complete two three-hour academic courses (one approved theory course and the second course being either theory or history) and two [Music Career and Skills Enhancement](#) courses.
3. **Recitals.** Performance Majors are required to complete two recitals or one recital and one mock audition (see the degree requirements). Composition majors are required to complete one recital of original music and publicly defend an original composition of major proportions. Musicology majors must publicly defend a thesis.
4. **Diagnostic Exams.** All entering MM students will take a diagnostic exam in music theory and music history prior to enrolling for the first time. An aural skills exam will be given early in the semester. Based on the outcomes of these exams, up to four possible remedial courses could be added to a student's degree requirements. These courses should be taken prior to satisfying the academic course requirements of each degree. Remedial courses do not count as credit towards the degree requirements.

4.2 Student Support

Students in distress should contact the Student Wellbeing Center, Rice Counseling Center, or Pia Byrd, the Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies Student Support Manager, for guidance and resources. Pia has open office hours. Students may [email her](#) to schedule an appointment, or they can stop by her office, Sewall Hall, 370, for a walk-in appointment.

Many graduate students experience enormous pressures, be they professional, personal, and financial. Between academic deadlines and the intense fatigue and isolation that sometimes accompany graduate work, it can feel like there is no way out. If you or anyone you know is feeling anxious or just needs to talk, help is available. 1-877-GRAD-HLP (877-472-3457) is a 24/7 national crisis-line staffed by trained

counselors who understand your unique pressures and know how to help. Keep this phone number handy. Use it anytime; support is out there. For more information about the crisis line, click [here](#). Together, we can prevent the kinds of tragedies that have become all too common on our campuses. Learn how to recognize the symptoms of depression [here](#).

4.3 Graduate Student Grievances and Conflict Resolution

For general information on dispute resolution, please refer to the Rice University [General Announcements](#).

SSM students should present their grievance in writing to the Chair of their department. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Chair, they can appeal, in writing, to the Graduate Studies Committee. If the student is still not satisfied, they can appeal, again in writing, to the Dean of the Shepherd School. Confidentiality will be maintained at all levels. If the grievance or conflict is with the Chair, the student should write first to the Graduate Studies Committee.

4.4 Recital and Mock Audition Information

For additional information, please consult [Student Resources](#) for the Recital Packet and Mock Audition Packet.

4.4.1 Recital Guidelines for Composition Majors

Master's degree students are required to perform one recital (MUSI 641). This may be one full recital or two half recitals, with a total performance time of approximately fifty minutes or as determined by the department. One half recital may be given in the first year.

For pieces to count for recital credit they must be performed on the composer's recital. Individual performances in other venues do not qualify for recital credit. In certain circumstances, off-campus performances may be considered for credit by petition to the department.

Music composed to satisfy the requirements for another degree—whether performed or not—may not be used to satisfy the recital requirement of the Shepherd School.

If using electronic media, contact Chapman Welch (electro@rice.edu) at least one month before your recital.

4.5 Procedures for Master's Thesis in Composition and Musicology

By December 1 of the fall semester of the year in which you expect to graduate:

1. Refer to Rice's [thesis webpage](#) for complete information regarding achieving candidacy, defending and submitting your thesis.
2. Form a committee consisting of a director and two other members from the Shepherd School of Music faculty. Complete the [Thesis Committee and Topic Approval Form \(MM and 5-Year\)](#), obtaining signatures from all committee members, and submit it to the Graduate Student Administrator.

3. In September or January of the semester in which you expect to graduate, check in with the Graduate Student Administrator to submit your application for candidacy to the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. This application must be submitted by November 1 or February 1, depending on the semester of the defense.
4. Students are expected to work in close consultation with the thesis director and must agree to and follow a suitable schedule toward the completion of the document or project. As the work approaches completion, set the Oral Defense date with the Graduate Student Administrator. The defense must take place before the last week of the semester. A complete draft must be submitted to the thesis director at least three weeks prior to the defense and to the entire committee at least two weeks before the defense.
5. **All defenses must be publicly announced no later than one week prior to the defense date.** Failure to do so will result in the cancellation of the defense. Students should submit the announcement at least one week before the scheduled defense by filling out the [Graduate and Postdoctoral Thesis Defense Form](#).
6. After successfully completing the oral defense, make the final revisions and submit the thesis to the thesis director for final approval before submitting it to the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. Always refer to Rice's [thesis webpage](#) for step-by-step instructions.

4.6 Graduate Electives

- For two-year MMus and DMA students, additional performance courses beyond those already required (lessons, orchestra, chamber music, orchestra repertoire) will not be counted towards elective credit.
- Courses below the 300 level will not count for graduate credit. The two exceptions: MMus students may count 100 and 200 level foreign language courses and secondary lessons as electives.
- Graduate students may not take required electives on a pass/fail basis.
- No remedial courses will count toward elective hour credit.

4.7 Guidelines for Graduate Teachers of Private Applied Music Lessons: Non-Majors and Secondary

Non-majors are Rice students other than music majors who register for private lessons in the Shepherd School. Secondary students are music majors receiving private lessons in an instrument (or voice) other than their major. In all areas except voice, guitar, and jazz, the lessons are taught by Shepherd School graduate students selected by the department.

After registration each semester, graduate teachers will be given the telephone numbers and email addresses of the students who have been assigned to them. It is the graduate teacher's responsibility to contact the students and arrange lesson times.

All non-majors and certain secondary students pay (in addition to tuition) a fee for each semester and receive two hours of credit. The student is entitled to one fifty-minute lesson per week. Make-up lessons

should be arranged if the student cancels and notifies the teacher by the evening before the scheduled lesson time. Any time the teacher finds it necessary to cancel a lesson, a make-up lesson should be arranged.

The graduate teacher is responsible for giving a grade based upon the student's performance, preparation, attendance, and a jury. Since jury arrangements and requirements vary by department, please see your department chair about the details for your department.

The Registrar's office sends grade rosters through Esther to instructors during exam week each semester. (First-term undergraduates also receive a mid-term grade.) Please check to see that all of your students are included on the grade roster and submit it to the registrar before the deadline. Also, please leave a telephone number where you can be reached in case of a problem regarding a grade.

4.8 Musicology Policy on Remedial Courses

- For entering graduate students, deficiencies in music history are fulfilled by taking the required courses as designated on the music history entrance exam.
 - For Master of Music students, these courses are limited to MUSI 521 (Music History Review through 1750) and MUSI 522 (Music History Review after 1750). Each course is three credits.
 - For DMA students, MMus musicology students, and students who do not hold an undergraduate degree in music, other courses may be required.
- The music history entrance exam is given online to incoming Master of Music students before enrollment in the fall semester, and it comprises two parts that correspond to the content of MUSI 521 and MUSI 522. Successful completion of one or both parts of the music history entrance exams will remove the requirement of taking MUSI 521 and/or MUSI 522 from the student's degree plan; however, no course credit is given for passing the exam. The exam may be taken only once; if the student does not pass the exam, then they must take the required course(s). Remedial courses do not count towards degree requirement credit.

5. Artist Diploma Degree Guidelines

5.1 Post-Admission Information

1. **Registration.** The Director of the Artist Diploma program is the advisor for all AD students. The first advising meeting, which takes place during SSM Orientation, may include the student's major teacher. At this meeting, an individual degree plan that is unique in its requirements and expectations will be created. AD students are provided with a degree of freedom and responsibility in creating a program of study that reflects the students' musical aspirations.
2. **Committee of Instruction (COI).** Each student is required to have a group of instructors that will mentor them regularly, participate in decisions about the Special Project, and collaborate with the student on individual goals. The committee will consist of the private teacher plus a minimum of two additional faculty members. The student and their private teacher will decide together who would best fit their career emphasis and have the greatest impact in helping during the AD program. The COI must be solidified by the end of the second week of school and submitted to the Graduate Student Administrator.

Students are required to meet with each member of the COI several times during the semester, especially at the beginning, to establish a relationship and decide the ways in which they could best serve as a mentor. Scheduling these meetings with members of the COI is completely the responsibility of the student (not the private teacher). The student may change the members of the COI during their degree, but it is recommended that they stay consistent for the first year.

3. **AD Seminar.** The AD Seminar Class (MUSI 762) is required and offered only once during the two-year program. It will generally be offered during the first semester. This is a performance course based entirely on enhancing creativity. It is team taught by several members of the Shepherd School of Music faculty. Each faculty member teaches a specific topic for a few class sessions. Subjects that might normally take an entire semester are taught in several sessions, so it is a fast-paced and intensive course. Because of this, a strict absence policy is enforced.
4. **Special Projects.** Special Projects (one project each year) are personally tailored to each student's individual interests and career path. They should be something that will enhance and inspire the student toward their ultimate goals. Special Projects are expected to be substantive in content and nature. At the beginning of each school year, each student should begin discussing ideas for

Special Projects with their private teacher. Meetings with each member of the COI to seek their input and approval should also be scheduled. Each student will submit their finalized, detailed, and formal written Special Project Proposal to the Graduate Student Administrator. These must be pre-approved by their teacher and COI members. The deadline for submitting the Special Project Proposal to the Graduate Student Administrator (Lexi Phillips) is November 1; therefore, it must be approved by your COI before that date. The Graduate Student Administrator will submit it to the AD Co-Directors of your area, and then to the AD Director and the Dean for final approval.

5. **Performance.** Ensemble requirements in orchestra, chamber music, sinfonietta, opera or scenes programs are curated specifically for each AD student, and their particular area of performance emphasis and must be equal to and worthy of three (3) credits.
6. **Curriculum Deadlines.** The student's COI must be in place and registered with the Graduate Student Administrator by the end of second week of school. Special Project Proposals must be formally submitted to the Graduate Student Administrator by November 1.
7. **Program Requirements.** Complete degree requirements may be found in the [General Announcements](#).

5.2 Recital Information

For additional information, please consult [Student Resources](#) for the Recital Packet.

6. Doctor of Musical Arts Degree Guidelines

NOTE: In addition to being in agreement with the regulations stated in this departmental handbook, students must also be in agreement with the [General Announcements](#) and the [Code of Student Conduct](#).

6.I Post-Admission Information

6.I.1 Registration

The Director of Graduate Studies is the advisor for all DMA students. The first advising meeting, which takes place during Orientation week, may include the student's major teacher and the department chair. At this meeting, an individual curricular plan will be created. Subsequent advising will be done each semester by the Director of Graduate Studies, in consultation with the major teacher, when necessary.

6.I.2 Time Boundaries for Completing the Degree

Rice University requires all doctoral students to complete the degree within eight years and to make consistent progress towards this goal each semester. The degree is divided into two parts: pre-candidacy and candidacy. Each has a maximum duration of four years.

Shepherd School doctoral students are expected to complete their coursework within six enrolled semesters. They are required to take the qualifying exams (see §6.6 for more information) in the semester following completion of coursework, and to complete all other requirements for candidacy by the end of their eighth enrolled semester (see §6.8 for more information).

Students may perform their final recital after achieving candidacy, but it must be completed PRIOR to the document/dissertation defense.

After achieving candidacy, a maximum of eight additional semesters are allowed to complete and defend the doctoral document and to perform the final recital, if necessary.

Up to four semesters of leave of absence may be granted during the doctoral degree, although the University is unlikely to approve a leave of more than two consecutive semesters. Any leaves of absence taken prior to achieving candidacy will not count toward the eight-semester limit to candidacy. Because a leave of absence will "stop the clock," taking all four semesters will result in an absolute limit of ten years.

6.1.3 Residency

Six semesters of residency are required at the DMA level.

6.1.4 Teaching Responsibilities

All DMA students will take MUSI 611 (Classroom Pedagogy) during their first year of coursework. In most cases, students teach courses during their second and third years of study. The Director of Graduate Studies, in consultation with the professor of MUSI 611, will make the course assignments.

6.1.5 Funding

Doctoral students who are fully enrolled and in good standing will receive full tuition plus a stipend in each of their three years of coursework. In the fourth year, the tuition will continue to be funded, but the stipend will be discontinued. The tuition for all remaining semesters of enrollment is the responsibility of the student and will be charged at the University's reduced rate.

6.2 DMA Recitals

Please see [Student Resources](#) for the Recital Packet and Guidelines for Mock Auditions.

Solo, chamber, and concerto recital committees must include:

- the major teacher,
- a faculty member from either Musicology or Composition/Theory, and
- a faculty member from any area in the Shepherd School.

Composition students must have at least one member from outside the Composition/Theory department.

6.2.1 Lecture-Recital Committee

By the end of the second week of the semester in which the lecture-recital is scheduled, the student must submit a topic proposal to the Graduate Studies Committee. The student must obtain a signed agreement from a faculty member who will supervise the lecture portion and who will serve on the recital committee. This person can be a member of any Shepherd School department and can be the student's major teacher.

The lecture should reflect significant research and analysis, including a discussion of performance practice where applicable. The composer's biographical data should be restricted to material directly related to the work being discussed, so as to leave room for substantive discussion of the topic. If a large set of works is chosen, the discussion should include the general characteristics of the set, with detailed analysis of one or several of those works. Relationships to significant works that are contemporary with it could be included. Musical illustrations from the work may be used in the lecture.

The recital should be no more than sixty minutes in length, divided equally between the lecture and performance portions. The student is required to give a preview of the entire program, which should be attended and evaluated by the student's Recital Committee. It is recommended that the candidate

rehearse the lecture-recital in its entirety in the space in which it will be performed, employing any audio-visual equipment that is necessary. The candidate must submit the Degree Recital Form for the lecture-recital as for any other recital, and the Recital Committee must evaluate it on the Recital Evaluation Form. Please consult [Student Resources](#) for the Recital Packet and all necessary forms.

6.2.2 Chamber Music Guidelines

For doctoral programs that require a Chamber Music Recital, this recital must meet the following guidelines:

- The recital must have 55–70 minutes of music.
- A recital preview is required.
- Just as for other types of recitals, the candidate must submit the Degree Recital Form (see [Student Resources](#)), and the preview and recital must be evaluated by the doctoral committee on the appropriate forms.
- The preview should be performed without interruption and with all performers present, as if it were the actual recital.
- The student should provide musical scores for the committee.
- Recitals should consist of repertoire the student has not performed on any previous degree recital.
- Chamber works for which the student has enrolled in chamber music class and has received (or will receive) a grade may not be repeated on any of the student's degree recitals.
- Just as for other types of recitals, it is the candidate's and the major teacher's responsibility to prepare and present a polished performance. However, it is advised that the candidate seek coaching from other faculty members who specialize in the types of ensemble music programmed.
- The candidate is advised to consider the complex logistics of a recital involving different ensembles when selecting the program and scheduling the preview and recital.

6.2.3 Concerto Guidelines

The concerto requirement, for those students for whom it is required, may be satisfied in several ways:

- by winning the Concerto Competition and performing with the Shepherd School Symphony Orchestra;
- by forming an ad hoc orchestra and performing at the Shepherd School of Music;
- for piano majors, by performing with a second pianist playing the orchestral reduction; or
- by playing with an outside orchestra under the following conditions:
 - Permission must be obtained at least one month prior to the performances from the teacher, recital committee, and GSC, in that order.
 - Criteria for permission include: the quality of the orchestra, ability to supply a video recording of the performance, and a program.
 - There is no preview for the concerto. However, the recital committee must evaluate the performance as usual.

6.2.4 Guidelines for Composition Majors

DMA Students are required to hold two recitals of music composed while a doctoral student at the Shepherd School. At least one must be a formal recital in one of the Shepherd School's recital venues of 55–65 minutes of music. The student may choose one of these three options for the second recital:

- a second formal recital in one of the Shepherd School's recital venues,
- a lecture-recital on a piece of theirs, or
- a CD or set of links to pieces that were played elsewhere and cannot be performed at the Shepherd School.

The type of the recital done first is up to the student. At least one must be completed while a pre-candidate; the second can happen anytime prior to the dissertation defense.

For pieces to count as recital credit they must be performed on the composer's recital. Individual performances in other venues do not qualify for recital credit. Music composed to satisfy the requirement for another degree—whether performed or not—may not be used to satisfy the recital, thesis, or dissertation requirements of the the Shepherd School.

If using electronic media, contact Chapman Welch (electro@rice.edu) at least one month before your recital.

6.3 Crediting Master of Music Work to the DMA Degree

Courses taken at another accredited college or university are NOT automatically approved for transfer credit. Transfer credit is only granted with the endorsement of the student's graduate program and the approval of the student's major department. Transfer credits are subject to the following restrictions:

- Courses used toward a degree at another institution are NOT eligible for transfer.
- Only courses NOT REQUIRED FOR the Master's degree are potentially eligible to be transferred at the discretion of the Director of Graduate Studies.
- To transfer as graduate level equivalents at Rice University, courses must have been taken at the graduate level at the transfer credit institution.
- Transfer courses may NOT include:
 - performance courses, including lessons;
 - courses taken pass/fail; and
 - review and survey courses of any kind.
- For additional information, please see the Rice [General Announcements](#).

6.4 DMA Elective Credit

The following courses may count toward elective credit:

- courses 300-level or higher,

- up to four semesters of Chamber Music taken as a doctoral student, and
- up to three hours of Independent Study.

Elective credit will not be given for the following:

- remedial courses, defined as graduate review courses and any portion of the undergraduate core curriculum;
- additional hours of required courses (except for Music History and Music Theory courses);
- foreign language courses below the 300 level;
- more than three hours of Independent Study;
- any course taken pass/fail;
- any course graded below B-;
- secondary lessons taken as part of the Master's degree; and
- most music education courses.

6.5 Expectations for DMA Students

Courses assigned a grade lower than B- will not be counted toward the DMA degree.

To remain in good standing and to receive a stipend, each DMA student must maintain a B- or better in every course. If they receive a grade of C+ or lower in their major applied area the student will be placed on music probation. Music probation signifies that the student's work has been unsatisfactory enough to preclude graduation unless marked improvement is achieved promptly. A student on music probation may be absent from class only for extraordinary reasons and may not represent the school in any public function not directly a part of a degree program.

If a student receives a second semester of C+ or lower in their major applied area, whether for consecutive semesters or not, the student will be discontinued as a music performance major and merit scholarship from the Shepherd School will be discontinued.

Students who are teaching a course will continue only if supported by the Director of Graduate Studies and the results of the student evaluations.

If a student is deemed to not be making satisfactory progress, in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies and the major teacher, the student may have adjustments made in their degree plans, such as additional coursework and/or a reduction in the teaching requirement.

Following FERPA guidelines, when a student is notified by email of their placement on music and/or academic probation, the student's applied faculty instructor, the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, and the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs will also be notified. Likewise, these individuals will be included on all future probation status updates.

Music and/or academic probation may limit a student's absence opportunities as they relate to external performances. Appeals may be sent to the Dean of the Shepherd School of Music.

6.5.1 Proficiency

When required, all DMA students must satisfy all proficiency exams in aural skills and piano by the end of their second year of coursework.

6.6 Qualifying Exam Guidelines

The qualifying exam process, undertaken during the seventh semester and the summer preceding it, allows doctoral students to qualify for degree candidacy by showcasing their fluency with a range of musicological and music-theoretical methodologies and the ability to express that knowledge in both written and oral form.

At their initial advising session upon entering the program, each student will receive guidelines about the exam process, sample questions from each department, and an overview of what is expected in a passing answer; students can then tailor their coursework during their first six semesters to pursue particular areas of interest and/or to fill in gaps in their skill sets.

At the end of their sixth semester of coursework, each doctoral student will receive four exam questions, two each from the Musicology Department and the Theory Department, and be assigned a faculty mentor from each Department. With assistance from the mentors, the student will also generate one additional question in both musicology and theory on topics of the student's choosing. The students will use the summer to research and write draft answers to these six questions. In the fall semester, the student will have two check-ins with the mentor before the essays are submitted, one during the first week of class and another two to three weeks later. The students will submit their completed essays at the end of the eighth week of the fall semester. These will be evaluated by faculty from each department, and students will receive written feedback on each of their essays once the entire exam process is completed. If the student fails to submit all of the written materials, students will fail MUSI 700, be placed on academic probation by the University, and will need to petition the Graduate Studies Committee for the opportunity to do a fresh slate of six questions for the spring semester on an accelerated timeline and without the benefit of the time afforded by the summer break.

The students will also sit a subject exam for their major area. For performance majors, the subject exam will be a four-hour written exam, created and graded by the studio teacher. For composition students, students will receive a composition prompt at the end of the seventh week of the fall semester and have a week to complete the project.

The oral examinations will be scheduled in the tenth and eleventh weeks of the fall semester, and will last for two and one-half hours before a committee that will include the studio teacher and a non-mentor faculty member from each of the Musicology and Composition/Theory Departments. The main element that the student will prepare for the oral examination will be mock classroom lectures of approximately twenty minutes on one musicology and one theory question of the mentors' choosing. These will be followed by question-and-answer sessions that will cover the lectures, the remaining essays, and the subject exam.

In each academic discipline (musicology and theory), students will be graded pass/fail separately on each of the three essays and the oral exam. Failing one essay requires a revision of that essay; failing two essays requires successfully answering a new essay question, and failing three essays requires a revision of one essay and answering a new question. Failing the oral exam requires creating a new presentation, either on an existing successful essay or, if the student has also failed all three essays, on the topic of the new essay question. Failing the major area exam requires a revision of that exam.

The student will be informed of the results of all portions of their exam—six academic essays, one

subject exam, and three components of the oral exam—by the Graduate Student Administrator sometime within twenty-four hours of the oral examination.

For academic year 2026–2027, Professor Damian Blättler will coordinate the administration of the qualifying exam process. All questions and concerns about exam procedure and additional guidelines should be addressed to him.

6.6.1 Outline of Exam Format

History

The history exam will test the ability of students to:

1. gather a representative selection of published scholarship that is germane to a major historical issue/problem,
2. summarize the discoveries/arguments in that scholarship accurately and clearly,
3. articulate their own position or thoughts in response to the scholarly opinion that they have summarized, and
4. distill this into a well-organized classroom presentation.

A sample topic of this exam could be “the methods and aims of scholarship from the last forty years on historical performance practice.”

Theory

The theory exam will test the ability of students to demonstrate their facility in the three following subject areas:

1. **Analysis.** Students will be able to interpret individual musical works, applying theory both to understand the normative patterns in a given piece and, more importantly, the individuating elements that generate musical meaning. Students will also be able trace and explicate influences on composers’ styles, across repertoires, genres and musical periods.
2. **Multimedia and Technology.** Students will be able to analyze the relationship between music and other media in a multimedia work, and situate it within a broad understanding of the range of possibilities in multimedia art. Students will be able to analyze the role technology plays in shaping musical works.
3. **Performance Practice and Improvisation.** Students will be able to discuss performance as a mode of music analysis, and understand conceptual underpinnings of the performance-practice and improvisatory traditions of their primary instrument.

Sample questions for the theory exam include:

1. Produce an analysis of Richard Strauss’s “Im Abendrot” from the *Vier letzte Lieder*. How does the setting’s use of chromaticism interact with the poem’s views/perspectives about death? How do Strauss’s orchestrational choices either reinforce or undercut the underlying prose and pitch

narratives? Parse the composition's harmonic language through any paradigm or combination of paradigms that you find to produce a compelling interpretation.

2. In music, one of the most important technological developments of the twentieth century was the ability to capture a fleeting sound, store it in a physical medium, alter it, and re-play the transformed, recorded sound. The implications stemming from this ability to capture sounds, store them, transform them, and distribute copies of them continues to have an enormous impact on the development of music. Discuss the development of the technology behind recording from its beginnings to the present day, the impact of this technology on compositional styles, and the economic impact of recording on the professional careers of musicians.
3. Choose a solo work that is central to the repertoire for your instrument/voice or that has been particularly influential on your development as a musician. Analyze three widely differing recordings of the piece, comparing and contrasting each performer's interpretive choices in tempo, phrasing, articulation, and tone. Then argue in detail for your own interpretive approach to the work, justifying your decisions using whatever analytical, historical, or other means you think are appropriate.

6.7 Doctoral Documents

Performance majors must enroll in a minimum of two semesters of MUSI 750, composition majors in a minimum of two semesters of MUSI 800. The first semester should be taken when the student is ready to propose a document or dissertation topic and the second when she or he is ready to defend it. It is the student's responsibility to find a faculty member from the Musicology or Composition/Theory departments to serve as document director. In consultation with that faculty member, the student will decide on a topic and write a proposal for submission to the GSC. Composition doctoral students register for MUSI 800 Dissertation. Their proposals should consist of a description of the kind of piece that they will compose.

Proposals are due by December 1 of the fall semester or March 1 of the spring semester in order to receive a passing grade in MUSI 750/MUSI 800 for that semester.

6.8 Candidacy for the DMA

To achieve candidacy, the student must:

- Complete all required coursework.
- Complete all required recitals but one. One recital must be performed after candidacy is achieved, but it must be completed PRIOR to the document/dissertation defense.
- Enroll in one semester of MUSI 750 (performance majors) or MUSI 800 (composition majors), resulting in a document proposal approved by the Graduate Studies Committee.
- Pass the qualifying exams (written and oral).
- Form a Doctoral Defense Committee.

The Doctoral Defense Committee consists of at least three Shepherd School faculty members. This committee will consist of a director (who must be a member of the Musicology or Composition/Theory

departments), their major teacher, and a member of the complementary academic department. (In other words, if a Musicologist is the student's Director, then a member of the Composition/Theory department must also be asked to serve, and vice-versa.) The Director of Graduate Studies will name an additional committee member from outside the Shepherd School.

When all of the above listed things have been completed, the Shepherd School Graduate Office will prepare a Petition of Candidacy that is sent to the Rice Office of Graduate Postdoctoral Studies. It can be submitted at any time, but it must be submitted by October 1 (for December conferral) or by February 24 (for May conferral) of the academic year in which the student expects to graduate. At this time the topic for his or her doctoral composition or doctoral document will also be registered with the Graduate Office.

6.9 Doctoral Document and Defense

The doctoral document or composition is written under the supervision of (or "directed" by) a member of the History or Composition/Theory departments. The students are expected to work in close consultation with the Director and must agree to and follow a suitable schedule for the completion of the document or composition. As a reminder, Rice University **REQUIRES** that a student make progress towards their completion of their document or dissertation each semester. As work on the doctoral document or composition approaches completion, with the approval of the Director, the student should contact Lexi Phillips, Graduate Student Administrator, to set the defense date. The defense must take place before the last week of the semester. A complete draft must be submitted to the thesis director at least three weeks prior to the defense date. Once approved by the thesis director, the final draft should be submitted to the remaining members of the Doctoral Defense Committee no less than two weeks before the defense date. The student must ascertain if the committee members want their copy in printed or electronic form. The document or composition will be evaluated by the student's Doctoral Defense Committee (see §6.7 above), which will administer the public oral examination as described in the Rice General Announcements.

Doctoral Dissertation and Document defenses **MUST** be publicly announced at least two weeks in advance of the defense. Failure to do so will result in the cancellation of the defense. These announcements are submitted to the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies by entering the information into the [Graduate Students Thesis Defense Announcement Form](#). An automatically generated email will be sent to the Office of Research and Graduate Studies once the defense form has been submitted.

6.10 Doctoral Qualifying Exam Dates

NOTE: These dates are estimates and subject to change. Please contact [Lexi Phillips](#), Graduate Student Administrator, for updated information.

- Fall 2026
 - Written Exam Answers: Mid-October
 - Subject Exams: Late October
 - Oral Exam: Late October/Early November

- Spring 2027
 - Written Exam Answers: Mid-March
 - Subject Exams: Late March
 - Oral Exam: Late March/Early April

6.II Helpful Forms

- [Lecture-Recital Topic Form](#)
- [Doctoral Document Topic Form](#)
- [Doctoral Defense Committee Form](#)
- [Graduate and Postdoctoral Thesis Defense Form](#)

6.I2 Progress and Assessment Policies

6.I2.1 First Year Assessment

The Director of the Graduate Studies Committee will act as the advisor to all doctoral students. New students will meet with the director during orientation to plan their curriculum for the next four years. The student's major teacher may be present at this meeting as well. The director will monitor the student's progress during the first and second semesters and meet with them before registration for the subsequent semesters to assess progress. The major teacher will be consulted for feedback on musical progress.

6.I2.2 Annual Progress Review

An annual performance review will be conducted for all graduate students by the Director of the Graduate Studies Committee. The purpose of the review is to ensure that students make adequate academic and musical performance progress. This review will be conducted at the end of every spring semester. Additional reviews may be done upon request of the student's major teacher.

The review will be based on the following: course work, grades, performance level, and recitals presented.

Students whose academic progress is judged inadequate by this review will receive a written warning. It will include a specific time frame within which improvement must be made to the satisfaction of the advisor and the Graduate Studies Committee. Failure in demonstrating satisfactory improvement will result in dismissal.

7. Miscellaneous Information

7.1 Private Teaching and Performing Opportunities

The Shepherd School office frequently receives calls from members of the Houston community who wish to hire musicians to play for weddings, parties, etc. If you would like to be recommended for playing gigs, please leave your name and phone number with the Shepherd School Office Assistant.

REMINDER: Private teaching is not allowed in Alice Pratt Brown Hall or Brockman Hall for Opera unless being taught through the non-major program.

7.2 Procedure for Changing Teachers

In order to be eligible to change teachers:

1. the student must study with one teacher for a minimum of one year,
2. changes may be made only at the end of the academic year, and
3. any change requires permission of the Dean.

To change teachers, you must:

1. speak with the Assistant Dean,
2. speak with your current teacher to try to work out problems and reach an understanding,
3. speak with the proposed new teacher, and
4. receive acceptance from new teacher.

7.3 Recording Policies and Procedures

7.3.1 Music Library

1. **Performance Recordings.** The production department provides performance recordings for Shepherd School ensembles to the faculty or staff member responsible for that ensemble, to be distributed to those involved in each performance. Individual recital recordings can be requested as part of the degree recital process. Recordings will be made available no later than fourteen days after the performance date.

2. **Service to Students.** Due to copyright laws and other considerations, neither Fondren Library nor the Music Librarian will duplicate recordings.
3. **Copyright Law.** The Library will adhere strictly at all times to the 1976 Copyright Act (Public Law 94-553).

7.4 Equipment Use, Checkout, and Loan Policies

7.4.1 Equipment Use Policy for Non-Performance Activities

Any group or individual who requires the use of equipment from the Shepherd School for a rehearsal, preview, class, workshop, etc. must fill out an Equipment Request Form (see [Student Resources](#) for the Recital Packet). This form must be submitted and approved by the Director of Performance Operations for Music at least seven days in advance. These forms are available from the Director of Performance Operations for Music. If the activity is to be held in a space in which all required equipment is already present, the form is still required and must be submitted. The Equipment Request Form is needed to request:

- specific pianos in Duncan or Hirsch,
- harpsichords,
- percussion equipment,
- electronic equipment (including amplification, sound playback, or audio-visual aids), and
- special stage lighting (requiring authorization of the Director of Performance Operations for Music).

NOTE: The Equipment Request Form is needed even if any of the requested equipment is already provided in the space.

Tunings must be arranged through the Director of Operations for Music and performed by a tuner approved by the Shepherd School. This policy has no provision for the rental or purchase of any equipment. In those cases, the Director of Operations for Music should be consulted.

7.4.2 Equipment Use Policy for Student Recitals

Any group or individual who requires the use of equipment from the Shepherd School for a recital must fill out a Performance Production Request Form. These forms are available from the Director of Performance Operations for Music, and included with the Degree Recital Forms (see [Student Resources](#) for the Recital Packet). If the event is to be held in a space in which all required equipment is already present, the form is still required and must be submitted. The Performance Production Request Form will be needed to request:

- specific pianos in Duncan or Hirsch,
- harpsichords,
- percussion equipment,
- electronic equipment (including amplification, sound playback, or audio-visual aids), and

- special stage lighting (requiring authorization of the Director of Performance Operations for Music).

Tunings must be arranged through the Director of Operations for Music and performed by a tuner approved by the Shepherd School. This policy has no provision for the rental or purchase of any equipment. In those cases, the Director of Performance Operations for Music should be consulted.

7.4.3 Equipment Checkout Policy

School-owned instruments may be checked out by music majors. Usually, these instruments are small and valuable, often donated or loaned by Shepherd School supporters and benefactors, and their security is a very high priority. These instruments include:

- alto flute,
- bass flute,
- E-flat clarinet,
- B-flat bass clarinet,
- bassoon,
- contrabassoon,
- trumpets,
- violins,
- violas,
- cellos,
- double basses and bows, and
- various Renaissance and Baroque instruments.

Students must sign non-string instruments out with Stephen Bachicha, assuming full responsibility for their safekeeping and committing to a definite return time for the instrument. Instruments are not normally checked out while school is not in session because the instrument can only be covered by the school insurance policy while in the custody of a student during the school year (not including the break between the fall and spring semesters).

Exceptions to this policy are possible only by approval of the Dean's Office. A request form must be submitted, including a description of the intended use and signature of the student's major teacher. These requests carry the acknowledgement of a \$1000 deductible in the case of loss that is the student's responsibility. In cases of extreme negligence, the student may be held liable for the entire value of the instrument.

String instruments are checked out with the curator of strings, Professor Timothy Pitts. There are other policies and requirements in addition to the ones listed above. Please contact Professor Pitts for more information.

The Dean will be notified immediately if the instrument is returned late or damaged.

It is important to note that only school-owned instruments are allowed to be taken out over the summer. Instruments on loan to the Shepherd School remain on site during the summer break.

7.4.4 Equipment Loan Policy

The below represents the loan policy for various instruments owned by the Shepherd School.

- **Percussion Equipment.** Percussion majors may rent percussion equipment for a fee for jobs and performances not associated with the Shepherd School or Rice. The percussion instructor will decide the fee. Percussion majors may also borrow equipment for auditions and short-term practice (for no fee). In all cases of rental and borrowing, the written permission of the percussion instructor is required. Shepherd School percussion students should do the moving of the percussion instruments.
- **Harpsichords.** Five harpsichords (four double-manual and one single-manual) are available for use by Shepherd School students. A condition of use of the harpsichord is that rehearsals and performances must be scheduled with the Director of Performance Operations for Music to minimize moving the harpsichord between rooms. Non-Rice individuals may use the harpsichords only as part of a Shepherd School concert or while accompanying a student recital.
- **Harps.** The Shepherd School harps are for use by Rice harp students and faculty only.
- **Celeste.** The celeste is not available for use by non-Shepherd School organizations outside of Alice Pratt Brown Hall. The moving of the celeste should be scheduled with the Director of Performance Operations for Music and either be done by, or supervised by, Shepherd School personnel (e.g., the stage manager or student stage manager).
- **Organ.** The portative organ will be moved only by Shepherd School personnel. A condition of use of the organ is that rehearsals and performances must be scheduled with the Director of Performance Operations for Music to minimize moving the organ between rooms.
- **Music Stands and Chairs.** The use of music stands, chairs, or other miscellaneous equipment is prohibited outside of Alice Pratt Brown Hall or Brockman Hall for Opera unless permission is requested and granted from the Director of Performance Operations for Music at least forty-eight hours prior to the usage. If any Shepherd School of Music students are seen in possession of Shepherd School equipment at an outside venue by staff or faculty, or if you are seen entering or leaving the building with Shepherd School equipment without permission, you will be charged a fine of \$75. Folding stands for out-of-building use may be checked out at the Shepherd School front desk.

7.5 Building Access and Facilities Personnel

- **Michael Freese**, Director of Facilities Operations
 - 713-348-2172
 - michael.freese@rice.edu
- **Carlos Amaro**, Facilities Manager
 - APBH 2249
 - 713-348-4942
 - ca3@rice.edu

7.5.1 Hours of Operation

Alice Pratt Brown Hall (APBH) and Brockman Hall for Opera (BHO) will be open from 8:30 am to midnight every day by key card access with the exception of some university holidays.

Specific rules for Alice Pratt Brown Hall:

- All doors except for the Foyer, East Lobby, and loading dock will remain locked at all times.
- The Foyer and East Lobby will be open from 7:00 am until the final event of the evening has concluded every day. On non-event days, these doors will be locked at 8:00 pm.

Specific rules for Brockman Hall for Opera:

- All doors will be locked except for the doors around the Grand Foyer.
- The Grand Foyer will be open from 7:00 am until the final event of the evening has concluded every day. On non-event days, these doors will be locked at 8:00 pm.

Please remember to carry your Rice ID, which is your building access key card, with you at all times. If you accidentally lock yourself out of the buildings during non-business hours, please contact RUPD at 713-348-6000.

Please call RUPD at 713-348-6000 to report any suspicious activity.

7.6 Lost and Found

During normal business hours, found items should be turned into either Blair Doerge in the reception area of APBH or to the Facilities Manager, Carlos Amaro, in office APBH 2249. If neither are in the office, please leave the item on the desk with a note indicating where and when it was found. Items will be kept until the end of the day at which point they will be placed in a secure area. Valuable items such as laptops, phones, or keys will be taken to RUPD at the earliest possible time.

Items found after hours should be turned into the security desk in APBH. If there is no one at the desk please leave the item on the desk with a note indicating where and when it was found.

Items found on days or evenings that there is a performance, please give the item to a member of the staff at the front of the house. Found items will be kept until after the performance and the venue is vacated. If the item is not claimed it will be placed in the secure area. Valuable items will be taken to RUPD the next business day.

Lost items may be claimed by seeing either Blair Doerge or Carlos Amaro the next business day if after normal business hours.