

Graduate Audition Requirements

Please click on the program of interest below to discover what is required for the audition. Within the requirements, auditionees are encouraged to choose repertoire they feel represents them at their best.

At this time, all in-state applicants should plan to audition in-person at the University Park campus. Out of state and international applicants may choose whether they would like to audition in-person or remotely when scheduling their audition. All audition requirements are the same for in-person and remote auditions.

Faculty Contact Information

Bassoon

Cello

Clarinet

Composition

Conducting

Double Bass

Euphonium

Flute French

Horn Oboe

Percussion

Piano

Saxophone Trombone

Trumpet

Tuba

Viola

Violin

Voice

Faculty Contact Information:

BASSOON

Dr. Margaret Fay
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CELLO

Distinguished Professor Kim Cook kdc3@psu.edu
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CLARINET

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COMPOSITION

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CONDUCTING

Band/Wind Ensemble: Dr.
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Choral:

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Orchestral:

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DOUBLE BASS

Dr. Patricia Weitzel
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EUPHONIUM

Professor Velvet Brown
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FLUTE

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FRENCH HORN

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PERCUSSION

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PIANO

Area

Chair/Auditions

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VOICE

Audition Coordinator: [Dr. Ted Christopher](#)

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814-863-0696

Bassoon

Solo Repertoire:

Auditionees for the M.M. in Performance or the Professional Performance Certificate should prepare three contrasting solo works of the level that would be suitable for an undergraduate performance major's senior recital. This program should include material from a range of historical periods and may include individual movements or etudes. Auditionees are encouraged to email Dr. Margaret Fay regarding audition repertoire. Piano accompaniment is not required.

Orchestral Excerpts:

Auditionees should prepare four contrasting orchestral excerpts of their choice.

Scales:

Auditionees will be asked to play a selection of major, harmonic minor, and melodic minor scales (any key, full range, any steady tempo, any articulation).

Other: Sight-reading may be required.

Example audition:

1. W. A. Mozart's *Concerto in B-flat Major*, K. 191, I. Allegro
2. Alyssa Morris's *Mathematics*, II. Trigonometry
3. Libby Larsen's *Jazz Variations for Solo Bassoon*
4. Excerpts: Figaro, Bolero, Shostakovich 9, Brahms Violin Concerto
5. Asked to play D-flat major scale, F# harmonic minor scale, and E melodic minor scale
6. Sight-reading

Cello

Repertoire:

Auditionees for the M.M. in Performance or the Professional Performance Certificate should prepare about 20-25 minutes of advanced repertoire demonstrating contrasting styles which reflect their technical and artistic abilities.

Please contact Prof. Kim Cook at kdc3@psu.edu with any questions about repertoire.

Clarinet

Repertoire:

Auditionees for the M.M. in Performance or the Professional Performance Certificate should reflect a mastery of the fundamentals of clarinet playing, including a high degree of technical achievement, articulation, and tonal control. The audition should reveal a mature approach to phrasing and expressiveness. Auditions will last about twenty-five minutes and should include the following:

- A repertoire list of previously studied literature and a biographical statement
- One complete solo piece (i.e., concerto, sonata, French conservatory piece)
- Two additional works representative of different style periods (These may be two contrasting movements from two contrasting pieces)
- A minimum of five excerpts from the standard orchestral repertoire

Scales:

- Preparation of all major and minor scales*

*If providing a recording, please record the following scales and arpeggios: E major (3-octaves), C# melodic minor, Eb major (2-octaves), Ab major (2-octaves), f melodic minor (3-octave), and a chromatic scale (3-octaves) Note: please position the camera so that both of your hands are viewable.

Composition

A pre-screening process is required before an invitation to interview is offered.

After a review of all materials, the most qualified applicants will be invited to interview with the composition faculty.

Portfolio:

Graduate portfolio submissions have a priority deadline of December 1.

In addition to a complete GRADS application, a successful portfolio submission includes the following items:

- Links for three to five sample notated scores (with optional recording links)
- List of works and performances

For Acoustic Works:

Please provide links to samples of your compositions below. 3-5 scores are required for MM applicants.

Scores must be in .PDF format (please no Finale or Sibelius files). Links to audio recordings are encouraged but not required. Links to recordings can be MP3 files, Soundcloud links, or YouTube links.

For Electronic Works:

For purely electronic works, in lieu of a score, please provide a description of the work (.PDF file), software, hardware, techniques, and any other information pertinent to the composition. For these works, recordings are required and the applicant should provide links to MP3 files, YouTube videos, or Soundcloud players. All recordings should be mixed to stereo.

Conducting

All conducting programs require a pre-screening process before an invitation to audition is offered. Auditionees for the subsequent fall will be given priority admission and graduate assistantship funding consideration if the following deadlines are met:

- ORCH/CHORAL: February 15: all application materials, including links to pre-screening videos, submitted via Grads.
- BAND/WIND: January 1: all application materials, including links to pre-screening videos, submitted via Grads.

All auditionees should follow these general pre-screening video guidelines:

- The unlisted recording link (YouTube, Vimeo, etc) will be submitted in GRADS
- The rehearsal should be conducted in the English language.
- The conductor should be facing the camera.

For information regarding specific conducting program requirements, see below.

After initial materials are reviewed, qualified applicants will then be invited to the University Park campus for a formal audition and interview. Changes to University pandemic protocols may require alternative audition procedures to be implemented.

For more information regarding Penn State's Master of Music degree options and requirements, click [here](#).

Band/Wind Ensemble

Pre-Screening

Auditionees must upload an unlisted YouTube video recording of themselves conducting in a wind ensemble setting to their application in GRADS. The recording should be no longer than 20 minutes in length and include both performance and rehearsal material.

Note: The conductor should be facing the camera in full frontal or a partial profile view. At least part of the ensemble must also be in view.

Audition Process

- A formal interview with Dr. Tonya Mitchell-Spradlin discussing the applicant's professional goals, teaching philosophy, and experience.
- A musical skills and knowledge diagnostic exam including topics such as aural skills and score recognition.
- A twenty-minute audition with the Penn State Symphonic Wind Ensemble. Repertoire will vary from year to year and will be communicated to applicants prior to their on-campus audition.

****Students wishing to be considered for the MM Wind Conducting studio should complete their application by January 1st, 2024. Materials will then be reviewed/screened and select candidates will be invited to campus for an in-person conducting audition with the Symphonic Wind Ensemble on a determined date in February.

For questions about the Penn State wind conducting master's program, please contact the Director of Wind Band Studies.

Choral

Pre-Screening

Auditionees must upload an unlisted YouTube video recording of themselves conducting in a choral setting (rehearsal and performance) to their application in GRADS. The recording should be no more than 16-20 minutes in length (8-10 minutes of rehearsal, and 8-10 minutes of a recent performance), with the applicant facing the camera.

Audition Process

Qualified applicants will be invited to the University Park campus for an interview with choral faculty; 20-minute audition conducting a university choir; sing a prepared piece; play a prepared piece on the piano; demonstrate functional keyboard skills; complete ear tests; and provide a written analysis of a choral composition (to be determined in consultation with the choral faculty).

For questions about the Penn State choral conducting master's program, please contact the [Director of Choral Activities](#).

Orchestral

Pre-Screening

Auditionees must upload an unlisted YouTube video recording of themselves. (on YouTube, Vimeo, or some other online video service). The recording should be 10- 15 minutes in length, include both rehearsal and performance material, and the applicant should be facing the camera.

Audition

After a review of all application materials, the most qualified applicants will be invited to the University Park campus for an interview and an audition conducting a university orchestra. Applicants who are invited to audition will also be required to demonstrate skills at the keyboard (reading a Bach chorale in four clefs), ear- training, transpositions, and knowledge of orchestral repertoire.

For questions about the Penn State orchestral conducting master's program, please contact the Director of Orchestral Studies.

Double Bass

Repertoire:

Auditionees for the M.M. in Performance or the Professional Performance Certificate should prepare 20 minutes of their most musical playing with repertoire that reflects their technical and artistic abilities. We encourage you to use the repertoire guidelines below:

- Two contrasting movements of a standard concerto or sonata
- A movement from any unaccompanied sonata or suite in the Baroque style
- Two contrasting standard orchestral excerpts
- One chorus of a walking bass line over a blues or jazz standard, or a groove demonstration such as funk, bossa nova, samba, Afro-Cuban, etc.

Please contact Dr. Patricia Weitzel at pvw5227@psu.edu with any repertoire questions.

Euphonium

Repertoire:

Auditionees for the M.M. in Performance or the Professional Performance Certificate should prepare 20 minutes of solo literature demonstrating a high level of proficiency for tone, articulation, technique, and musicality.

We encourage the inclusion of compositions of women, LGBTQ+, BBIPOC, and other underrepresented composers.

The literature should include:

- One unaccompanied solo written for euphonium
- Two additional works contrasting in style
- Three band or orchestral excerpts

Scales:

Auditionees should be prepared to play 2-octave major, harmonic, and melodic minor scales from memory.

Other:

- Auditionees should be prepared to sight-read. Reading of both bass and treble clefs, and performance techniques/skills appropriate to the graduate level are required.
- Please also prepare a repertoire list of previously studied literature.
- If you have recently played a recital, please supply a video or link.

Flute

Repertoire:

Auditionees for the M.M. in Performance or the Professional Performance Certificate should prepare the following:

- Mozart Concerto in G major, KV 313 (first movement exposition only)
- One solo work (flute alone) from the 21st century
- Two movements from a sonata/concerto from the 20th century
- Two movements from a Baroque sonata
- Two orchestral excerpts of your choice

Demonstration of memory is strongly recommended.

French Horn

Repertoire:

Auditionees for the M.M. in Performance or the Professional Performance Certificate should prepare two contrasting pieces of solo repertoire from two different composers and two different music periods. Additionally, auditionees should prepare both an étude (of their choice) and 5 - 7 orchestral excerpts; a mix of both low and high horn is preferred

Scales:

Auditionees should be prepared to play two-octaves major and minor (all forms) scales and a chromatic scale encompassing the auditionee's full range. All scales should be performed from memory.

Other:

Auditionees should be prepared to sight-read.

Oboe

Repertoire:

Auditionees for the M.M. in Performance or the Professional Performance Certificate should prepare:

- Three works from the major solo repertoire, including one from the Baroque era, one from the 20th/21st century, and one additional piece/étude of the auditionees' choice
- Four contrasting orchestral excerpts
- Repertoire by female composers and composers of underrepresented backgrounds is encouraged.

Scales:

Knowledge of all major and minor scales is assumed.

Other:

Sight-reading will be assessed during auditions.

Percussion

Repertoire:

Auditionees for the M.M. in Performance or the Professional Performance Certificate should prepare a 15–20-minute performance representative of their highest proficiency level as detailed below. Literature selections with stylistic variations is desirable and encouraged, including:

- Four to six excerpts from the orchestral repertoire demonstrating knowledge of standard literature on snare drum, xylophone, and timpani.
- Demonstration of performance ability in all major areas of percussion performance: snare drum (concert and rudimental), mallet keyboard percussion (two and four-mallet), and timpani.

Other:

- Auditionees are encouraged to submit audio and/or video performances of other applicable areas such as multiple percussion, chamber performance, drum set, and world percussion.
- All graduate and PPC candidates will complete a short interview.

Piano

Auditionees for the **M.M. in Piano Performance**, the **M.M. in Pedagogy and Performance** (with the track in piano), or the **Professional Performance Certificate** should prepare a program equivalent to an undergraduate performance degree senior recital (around 40-60 minutes total). For example:

- A complete Beethoven, Haydn, or Mozart sonata of significant size and difficulty (Beethoven's op. 49 is unacceptable)
- A Chopin ballade or comparable romantic work
- A Baroque work (e.g., an advanced prelude and fugue from the *Well-Tempered Clavier* by J.S. Bach)
- An impressionist or contemporary work of similar difficulty

The program is flexible; auditionees are not required to include all these sample categories.

Applicants to the **D.M.A. in Piano Performance** must prepare a prescreening video of no less than 30 minutes in length, containing two or more contrasting works. Prescreening videos are due on the GRADS application by December 1. Please include a web link in your application under the "program-specific questions" portion of the application.

If selected for an audition, auditionees to the DMA in piano performance should prepare a program of no less than 60 minutes in length, representing at least three style periods, and including at least two large-scale works and one virtuosic etude.

NOTE: All selections must be memorized with the possible exception of avant-garde works of the 20th and 21st-centuries. These exceptions must be approved by the faculty before scheduling an audition. Auditions who wish too be considered for assistantships may be asked to sight-read. Specific questions about repertoire may be addressed to any member of the piano faculty:

Melody Quah (mquah@psu.edu) or Timothy Shafer (tps1@psu.edu).

Be prepared to discuss the background information of your audition repertoire; for example, composer information, other pieces written by the composer (piano and non-piano), and important stylistic trends of the composer's time period.

Other:

- Permission may be granted to submit a video-recorded audition for applicants who live beyond a radius of 300 miles from the University Park campus.
- The camera angle should include a view of the applicant's face, hands, and feet.
- Video auditions are due on February 10th.
- A prescreening video is not required for those submitting a video audition.
- For pre-screening videos and recorded auditions, you may submit each piece as a separate take with individual links. However, multiple movements from the same piece should be recorded in one take and submitted via one link.

Saxophone

Repertoire:

Auditionees for the M.M. in Performance or the Professional Performance Certificate should prepare the following:

- Repertoire selections totaling approximately 20-25 minutes of music, including at least one complete work, and a movement of a transcribed work from a pre-1900 composer.

Scales:

- All major and minor scales (harmonic and melodic), full-range
- All major and minor scales (harmonic and melodic), full-range in 3rds and 4ths.

Optional: auditionees may perform jazz selections in addition to the items above, specifically:

- A transcription of a recorded jazz solo, playing along with the recording
- An interpretation of the melody, and improvisation on a jazz standard tune or blues
- Note: Students must bring their own recordings or backing tracks

Auditionees may also be asked to demonstrate additional skills such as sight-reading, interpretive variations in the solo repertoire, ear training, altissimo, transposition, and scale variations.

Saxophone applicants should arrange an audition directly with Dr. David Stambler. Graduate applicants who wish to be considered for graduate assistantships should plan for an on-campus audition/interview and should schedule as early as possible.

Examples of Appropriate Repertoire

This is only a partial list - the selected piece need not be on the list to be acceptable. Some pieces from the undergraduate saxophone audition list may also be used.

Absil – *Sonata*
Albright – *Sonata*

Alessandrini – *Boite de Pandore* (Pandora's Box) Alessandrini –
Cronos
 Bassett – *Concerto*
 Bassett – *Duo Concertante*
 Bassett – *Music for Saxophone & Piano*
 Berio – *Sequenza VIIb* (soprano)
 Berio – *Sequenza IXb* (alto)
 Bolcom – *Concert Suite* Bolcom
 – *Lilith*
 Bonneau – *Caprice en Forme de Valse*
 Chambers – *Deep Flowers*
 Chang – *New Stories* Cooper
 – *Four Impromptus* Cowell –
Air and Scherzo Creston –
Concerto
 Dahl – *Concerto*
 Decruck – *Sonata*
 Denisov – *Sonata*
 Desenclos – *Prelude, Cadence, et Finale*
 Etazade – *Street Legal*
 Feld – *Elegie* (soprano)
 Feld – *Sonata* (alto) Feld
 – *Sonata* (soprano)
 Finney – *Concerto*
 Garrop – *Phoenix Rising* (soprano)
 Garrop – *Pieces of Sanity*
 Garrop – *Tantrum* Goldstein
 – *Fault Lines* Gotkovsky –
Brilliance Gotkovsky –
Concerto Harbison – *San*
Antonio Husa – *Concerto*
 Ibert – *Concertino da Camera*
 Lauba – *Balafon; Hard; Hard, Too Hard; Jungle; Steady Study on the Boogie; Sud;* etc. Larson –
Holy Roller
 Larsson – *Concerto*
 Lennon – *Distances Within Me*
 Lennon – *Symphonic Rhapsody*
 Maslanka – *Concerto*
 Maslanka – *Sonata*
 Muczynski – *Concerto* Pann
 – *Sonata*
 Peck – *Upward Stream* (tenor) Rogers,
 John – *A Savage Calculus* Rogers, John –

Breaking (soprano)

Rogers, Rodney – *Lessons of the Sky* (soprano)

Rogers, Rodney – *The Nature of This Whirling Wheel*
Rosse – *Le Frene Egare*
Rueff – *Sonata*
Ruggiero – *Interplay* (soprano)
Sancan – *Lamento et Rondo Scelsi* –
Tre Pezzi (soprano) Schmitt –
Legende
Schumacher – *Deconstructing Eddie*
Stockhausen – *In Freundschaft* (soprano) Swerts –
Klonos
Swerts – *Kotekan*
Tomasi – *Concerto*
Torke – *Concerto* (soprano)
Tower – *Wings*
Wanamaker – *Night Set* (soprano)
Wuorinen – *Divertimento*
Yoshimatsu – *Fuzzy Bird Sonata*
Zupko – *In Transit*

Trombone

Auditionees interested in the M.M. in Performance, or the Professional Performance should contact Professor Lusk directly. Applicants under serious consideration will be invited to the University Park campus for an extended visit, where they will perform an audition recital, meet with the undergraduate trombone majors, and teach a sample lesson. Auditionees invited to the School of Music will be provided with audition repertoire guidelines from Professor Lusk.

Trumpet

Auditionees for the M.M. in Performance or the Professional Performance Certificate should prepare the following:

Repertoire

- 1st Movement of Haydn, Hummel, or Neruda Concerto
- One Movement from a 20th or 21st century Trumpet Sonata or Concerto (works by diverse and underrepresented composers are highly encouraged and welcomed)
- One movement from a Sonata or Concerto demonstrating ability on the Piccolo Trumpet
- Three standard orchestral excerpts

Scales:

- Please prepare all forms of Major and Minor Scales
- 2 Octave Chromatic Scale

Other:

- Optional: Jazz/improvisation/lead trumpet excerpts/etudes are highly encouraged and welcomed
- Optional: An advanced etude that shows lyrical and technical ability
- Basic Sightreading/Transposition

Tuba

Repertoire:

Auditionees for the M.M. in Performance or the Professional Performance Certificate should prepare 20 minutes of solo literature demonstrating a high level of proficiency for tone, articulation, technique, and musicality.

We encourage the inclusion of compositions of women, LGBTQ+, BBIPOC, and other underrepresented composers.

Literature should include:

- One unaccompanied solo written for tuba
- Two additional works contrasting in style
- Three band or orchestral excerpts

Scales:

Auditionees should be prepared to play 2-octave major, harmonic, and melodic minor scales from memory.

Other:

- Auditionees should be prepared to sight-read.
- Please prepare a repertoire list of previously studied literature.
- If you have recently played a recital, please supply a video or link.

Viola

Repertoire:

Auditionees for the M.M. in Performance or the Professional Performance Certificate should prepare the following:

- One movement of a major concerto (e.g., Walton, Bartók, Hindemith, Stamitz)
- Two contrasting movements of a solo suite, sonata, or partita by Bach
- At least one other piece or étude in a contrasting style
- At least one piece should be memorized.

Scales:

The audition committee may request three-octave scales and arpeggios.

Violin

Repertoire:

Auditionees for the M.M. in Performance or the Professional Performance Certificate should prepare the following:

- One movement of a romantic or twentieth-century violin concerto
- Two movements of an unaccompanied partita or sonata by J.S. Bach
- One contrasting work or étude (Dont, Rode, Gavinies, or a caprice by Wieniawski or Paganini)

Voice

Pre-screening:

A pre-screening process is required before an invitation to audition is offered.

Video link submissions are to be received through the GRADS application platform by December 1 to be considered for an audition in January or February.

Auditionees for the M.M. in Voice Performance, the M.M. in Performance and Pedagogy (with the track in voice), and the Professional Performance Certificate in voice should prepare 20 minutes of solo literature demonstrating a high level of proficiency for tone, articulation, technique, and musicality. We encourage the inclusion of new works and compositions by women, LGBTQ+, BBIPOC, and other underrepresented artists.

For questions about your video links or the application process, please email Dr. Ted Christopher at eucl1@psu.edu.

After a review of all materials, the most qualified applicants will be invited to an audition and interview. Auditionees who wish to be considered for graduate assistantships should schedule auditions/interviews as early as possible.

Important Dates:

December 1, 2024 – pre-screening videos due

December 15, 2024 – applicants will be invited for a live audition on either January 31 or February 14

Auditionees are invited to come to campus for the entire day to participate and observe classes. Auditions typically begin after courses are complete in the later afternoon. Frequently, there are evening events to attend.