



UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS®

Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences

Department of Music Graduate Student Handbook

University of Arkansas Department of Music
01/2025

Directory by Area

ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF:

[Alan Gosman](#), Department Chair
[Er-Gene Kahng](#), Associate Chair
[Tomoko Kashiwagi](#), Associate Chair
[Er-Gene Kahng](#), Director of Graduate Studies
[Justin R. Hunter](#), Director of Undergraduate Studies
[Connie Vick](#), Administrative Support Supervisor, Band
[Carla Summers](#), Office Manager & Assistant to the Chair
[J.R. Hinkson](#), Associate Director of Band Finance, Marketing, and Operations
[Christopher Scherer](#), Percussion Logistics and Music Events Coordinator
[Britt Graves](#), Student Services and Communications Manager
Regan Turner, Administrative Support, Music

BAND:

[Chris Knighten](#), Director of Bands
[Chase Jones](#), Assistant Director of Bands
[W. Dale Warren](#), Senior Wind Band Conductor
Christopher Agwu, Assistant Director of Bands

BRASS:

[Katelyn Jahnke](#), Horn
[Cory Mixdorf](#), Trombone
[Benjamin Pierce](#), Tuba and Euphonium
[Richard Rulli](#), Trumpet

CENTER FOR BLACK MUSIC:

[Kurt Carr](#)
[Leo Davis](#)
[Amanda Lenora Green Turner](#)
[Jake Hertzog](#)
[Alisa Lola Jones](#)
[Matthew Mihalka](#)
[Jeffrey Allen Murdock](#), Founding Director, Arkansas Center for Black Music
[Rod Vester](#)

CHOIR:

[Stephen Caldwell](#), Associate Director of Choral Activities
[Jeffrey Murdock](#), Director of Choral Activities

JAZZ STUDIES:

[Claudia Burson](#), Jazz Piano

[Lauren Clare](#), Voice

[Jake Hertzog](#), Guitar

[Nikola Radan](#), World Music Ensemble

[Richard Salonen](#), Jazz Lab Ensemble

[Fernando Valencia](#), Percussion

MUSIC EDUCATION:

[Daniel Abrahams](#) - Area Coordinator

[Alice M. Hammel](#), Lecturer

[Janet Knighten](#), Instructor

[Dale Misenhelter](#), Professor

[Jeffrey Allen Murdock](#), Professor

[W. Dale Warren](#), Professor

MUSIC INDUSTRY & TECHNOLOGY:

[Lendell Black](#), Instructor

[Bryan C. Hembree](#), Director, Arts & Culture

[Jake Hertzog](#), Assistant Professor

[Kenneth J. Lamb](#), Lecturer

[Nikola Radan](#), Instructor

MUSICOLOGY:

[Christa Bentley](#), Area Coordinator

[Sophie Brady](#), Musicology

[Amy Nicole Cooper](#), Instructor

[Justin R. Hunter](#), Ethnomusicology

[Matthew Mihalka](#), Musicology and Ethnomusicology

MUSIC THEORY, COMPOSITION:

[Jeremy Allen](#), Music Theory

[Alan Gosman](#), Area Coordinator

[Zachary Lookenbill](#), Music Theory

[Robert Mueller](#), Composition, Music Theory

[Marco-Adrian Ramos](#), Composition

OPERA:

[Jonathan Stinson](#), Director of Opera Theatre

ORCHESTRA:

[Robert Mueller](#), Symphony Orchestra

[Jesse Collett](#), Chamber Orchestra

PERCUSSION:

[Chalon Ragsdale](#), Area Coordinator

[Fernando Valencia](#), Instructor

[Chris Scherer](#), Instructor

PIANO:

[Claudia Burson](#), Instructor

[Tomoko Kashiwagi](#), Area Coordinator

[Scott Montgomery](#), Organ

[Miroslava Panayotova](#), Teaching Assistant Professor

[Henry Runkles](#), Director of Class Piano

[Xiting Yang](#), Teaching Assistant Professor

STRINGS:

[Er-Gene Kahng](#), Violin - Area Coordinator

[Timothy MacDuff](#), viola

[Pecos Singer](#), cello

[Garrett Jones](#), double bass

[Jake Hertzog](#), guitar

[Asher Perkins](#), guitar

WOODWINDS:

[Nophachai Cholthitchanta](#), Clarinet – Area Coordinator

[Theresa Delaplain](#), Oboe

[Cristina Ballatorj](#), Flute

[Sarah Hetrick](#), Saxophone

[Melanie Ferrabone](#), Bassoon

VOICE:

[Lauren Clare](#) – Voice, Area Coordinator

[Amanda Green Turner](#), Voice

[Moon-Sook Park](#), Voice

[Jonathan Stinson](#), Voice

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DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

1. INTRODUCTION

Welcome to The University of Arkansas Department of Music. In this handbook, we organize various policies and information affecting graduate students. Please refer to the [Graduate Catalog](#) to confirm all requirements for graduate education.

In conjunction with this handbook, the Graduate Catalog, and the current Schedule of Classes, the Graduate Coordinator, [Dr. Er-Gene Kahng](#) will serve as your advisor. Advising takes place twice a semester, (August and November, January and April).

This handbook outlines the details of progress between taking the Diagnostic Exams and applying for graduation. You will find steps to apply for graduate school, an application for graduate assistantships, audition information, curriculum guides for all Masters programs, a list of graduate faculty, advising procedures, assistantship duties and issues, a record of yearly progress, and reminders concerning the final term. [The Graduate School and International Education website](#) can also provide further information.

Step 1: Application and Acceptance

Prospective students must apply to [the Graduate School](#). The Department of Music operates on rolling admission; however, applicants are encouraged to apply early, and Graduate Assistantship decisions are usually decided around April of each year. Domestic applications will be processed through the Graduate School; International applications will first go through the International Admissions Office. All applicants, regardless of citizenship, whose first language is not English, must meet the University's English Language Proficiency requirement by submitting a minimum score on an approved standardized test of English Language Proficiency (TOEFL or IELTS).

Graduate students who earned a bachelor's or master's degrees from U.S. institutions or from foreign institutions where the official and native language is English are exempt from this requirement.

Step 2: Take Music History and Theory Diagnostic Exams

(Except for MM Education and Online Music for Special Needs Students)

Tests are administered the first week of the semester (usually, the

**Step 3: Advising; Consult major professor; plan the sequence of coursework in degree plan
Submit Committee Form with Dr. Kahng**

[Masters Committee Form](#)

[Certificate Committee Form](#)

Step 4: FINAL SEMESTER

[Apply for graduation](#)

Finish Thesis/project and defend or perform final recital

Form your exam committee (of three); take written and oral exams

File Record of Progress form – submit to Dr. Kahng

Record of Progress for MM Students [here](#)

Record of Progress for Certificate students [here](#)

2. MASTER'S DEGREE AND CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS OFFERED

Degrees Conferred

- Master of Music - M.M. (MUSC)
- Master of Music in Black Sacred Music

Graduate Certificates

- Advanced Performance (non-degree)
- Certificate in Music Education for Special Needs Students (online)
- Certificate in Black Sacred Music

Areas of Concentration for the Master of Music

- Performance
- Collaborative Piano
- Composition
- Music Theory
- Music History
- Instrumental and Choral Conducting
- Music Education

Curriculum Guides

<https://catalog.uark.edu/graduatecatalog/procedures/>

3. ADMISSION

4. ADVISING, REGISTRATION & SCHEDULING

Requirements for the Master of Music Degree

In addition to the general requirements of the Graduate School the following must be met: All candidates pursuing the Master of Music (except for Music Education) are required to take a diagnostic exam (entrance exam) for aural and written music theory and music history prior to the beginning of their first semester of study. These exams are scheduled the week before classes begin in the fall semester. Any student diagnosed with deficiencies will be required to register for remedial courses.

Candidates needing to augment their piano skills will be required to take additional piano study. Candidates are required to take comprehensive written examinations followed by an oral examination after the completion of coursework.

All candidates must participate in at least one ensemble per semester throughout their residence unless pursuing a concentration in Composition, Music Theory, Music History, or Music Education.

Candidates for the Master of Music in Music History are expected to have or acquire reading and writing proficiency in the foreign language corresponding to their field of research.

Final Semester

<https://graduate-and-international.uark.edu/graduate/current-students/commencement-graduation.php>

There are several things that must happen before you can graduate.

First, you must apply for graduation. Early in the final semester visit the office of the Graduate School and ask for the papers that need to be filed. With the help of your major professor you will ask **three graduate music faculty members** with whom you have worked during the course of study to serve as the committee for your final comprehensive exams that will take place before the end of the semester.

There are two comprehensive examinations; a **written one** followed approximately one week later by an **oral one**. The written examination questions are given to the committee chair who then gives the questions to the candidate to answer on the day of the written examination. It is customary to ask committee members how to prepare for their questions. Generally, about 4 to 6 hours are set aside to answer these questions.

A week or so later the candidate will schedule an hour and a half session with the committee for the oral examination. The oral questions can be about the written answers or can address other degree-related information. At the successful completion of the exams each committee member will sign Record of Progress Form found at:

<http://grad.uark.edu/forms/student/progress-record.pdf>. This form must be signed by the graduate advisor and by the department chair. The candidate is responsible for taking it to the Graduate School.

A project/thesis requires another committee. Your project/thesis advisor will be helpful in selecting members for this committee. At the completion of the project/thesis there will be a defense, and it will be submitted to the graduate school for the library. (Please note that the project/thesis defense does *not* replace either of the comprehensive examinations.)

5. GRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE

Your committee will serve as your advisory committee, for advice and guidance on course requirements and administering the comprehensive exam for non-thesis masters' students. If you will have a thesis, you will also create a thesis committee (who can also be your advisory committee), which will oversee the writing of your thesis. The forms necessary to constitute these committees are available on the Graduate School website:

grad.uark.edu/graduate/current-students/forms.php

6. GRADUATE ASSISTANTS

Graduate students may apply for Graduate Assistantships (GA) when they apply to their program. A GA provides monthly pay and a tuition waiver in exchange for 10 or 20 hours per week of work. Students can visit the Human Resources website (hr.uark.edu) or search in Workday for graduate assistant positions currently available.

RULES AND REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO ASSISTANTSHIPS

I. Introduction

A. Graduate assistantships are awarded to graduate students who are regularly admitted into the Graduate School and accepted into a graduate degree or certificate program. To support consistent good practice in the treatment of graduate assistants and the allocation of graduate assistantships, the Graduate School has formally established the following policy guidelines concerning base pay rates, tuition waivers, and workloads. Any variation from these policies must be recommended by the administrator of a campus unit and approved by the Dean of the Graduate School. The Graduate School retains the right and responsibility to terminate any assistantship which violates these policies.

B. It is the policy of the University of Arkansas to promote graduate study by offering qualified students financial assistance via graduate assistantships without regard to race, color, sex, creed, sexual preference, or national origin.

C. It is incumbent upon the University to insure that: (1) all recipients of Graduate Assistantships progress toward completion of their programs; (2) all Graduate Assistants are treated equitably with regard to both their base pay rates and duties; and (3) in the administration of the foregoing, the University recognizes the diversities existing among programs within and among the departments and colleges of the University of Arkansas. In order to implement the spirit of the foregoing stated policy, the following rules and regulations shall be applied.

II. Obligations of Graduate Assistants

A. Graduate Assistants may be assigned duties in teaching, research, and administrative assistance. The work requirements of a Graduate Assistant may be a combination of such duties.

B. Graduate Assistantships are normally granted for a 25% or a 50% appointment.

C. Work assignments involve 20 hours per week (50 percent appointment) or 10 hours per week (25 percent appointment) as defined by the Chair; or serving as the instructor of record for a maximum of up to two 3-hour courses. If a student is absent from their work assignment, a supervisor may ask them to make up the work in subsequent weeks if the total hours per week do not exceed 30 hours. This accommodation can only be provided for domestic students as Homeland Security visa restrictions prohibit international students from working more than 20 hours per week.

D. For each assistantship appointment, the Graduate Assistant must perform assigned duties and make satisfactory progress toward the graduate degree. Satisfactory progress includes:

1) earning at least 6 (or 9, if on a 25% appointment) credit hours per Fall/Spring semester and at least 3 for summer sessions (see Enrollment Guidelines:

grad.uark.edu/graduate/current-students/registration-enrollment/enrollment-guidelines.php) All degree-related registration, including thesis or dissertation, counts toward this requirement

2) maintaining a cumulative GPA of at least 2.85 on all work taken for graduate credit.

E. A 50% appointed Graduate Assistant must register for a minimum of 6 credit hours and may register for a maximum of 15 credit hours per semester, although this limit may be exceeded with approval of the Graduate School. A 25% appointed Graduate Assistant must register a minimum of 9 credit hours and may register for a maximum of 15 credit hours per semester, although this limit may be exceeded with approval of the Graduate School. Graduate Students who fall below these minimums may be terminated from the assistantship.

F. Graduate Assistants who resign or are terminated from their graduate assistantship appointments, whether they withdraw from the University, will be required to reimburse the appropriate University account for the tuition and fees paid on their behalf proportionate to the length of time remaining on the appointment during the current semester according to Board of Trustees Policy 520.9.

III. International Graduate Assistant English Language Proficiency Requirement

A. International Graduate Assistants whose native language is not English and who hold a Graduate Assistantship that requires direct contact with undergraduate students as an instructor of record for either a course, laboratory, or drill must meet the University's Graduate Assistant English Language Proficiency Requirement.

B. Details on this requirement may be found on the Graduate School website:
iao.uark.edu/graduate-studies/english-proficiency.php

C. This requirement may not be waived under any circumstance.

IV. Appointment Terms, Termination, Eligibility for Reappointment

A. Appointment for Graduate Assistants should be for one or both semesters of a nine-month academic year or for a twelve-month fiscal year. Where appropriate, additional appointments may be made for summer periods for those on 9-month appointments.

B. A Graduate Assistant who fails to maintain normal progress toward a degree or who fails to maintain a cumulative graduate GPA of 2.85 on all work taken at this University, or who fails to satisfactorily perform assigned duties may have the appointment terminated at the end of the semester in which the deficiency occurs. Board of Trustees policy 500.1 provides information about the termination of assistantships. The Associate Dean of the Graduate School shall be notified of all terminations for cause or convenience.

C. To be eligible for reappointment, a Graduate Assistant must have made satisfactory progress toward a degree with a cumulative graduate grade point average of at least 2.85; and must have demonstrated satisfactory performance of services normal to positions held.

V. Limits on Number of Appointments to a Graduate Assistantship

A. Students pursuing a master's degree may receive financial support as a graduate assistant for no more than six semesters, excluding summer appointments.

B. Students pursuing post-master's degrees may receive financial support as a graduate assistant for no more than ten semesters beyond the master's degree, excluding summer

C. Students pursuing a doctoral degree beginning with the baccalaureate degree may receive financial support as a graduate assistant for no more than twelve semesters beyond the baccalaureate degree.

D. Petitions for exceptions to these rules may be approved by the Graduate Dean.

VI. Graduate Assistantship Base Pay Rates, Tuition Payments, and General Registration Fees

A. All graduate students appointed to the position of graduate assistant, and whose percent appointment is equal to or greater than 25% shall, for tuition and fee purposes, be considered as residents of the State of Arkansas. Non-resident tuition shall be waived.

B. The resident tuition for all graduate students appointed to the position of graduate assistant whose percent appointment is equal to or greater than 50% shall be paid from the appropriate University account or by the division/department/grant designated by the unit who is appointing the Graduate Assistant. These tuition benefits are limited to degree-related credit enrollment costs and do not encompass costs for non-degree related elective courses, audited courses, late registration fees, drop-add fees, international student fees or any other similar costs. However, departments may petition to the Graduate Dean for audited courses, courses outside of the major, and ELAC courses, if they feel that these are necessary for the student to take.

C. Minimum base pay rates shall be established by the Graduate School for all graduate assistantships at the beginning of each fiscal year. The actual pay rate shall be set by the individual department or unit appointing the Graduate Assistant.

D. Each unit appointing a Graduate Assistant shall insure that equivalent pay rates are provided for equivalent duties paid by the same funding source. Generally, this shall be interpreted to mean that within a unit, all graduate assistants at the Masters level will be paid the same stipend for the same general type of duty (e.g., teaching or research or administration) and the same workload classification (25%, 50%, etc.). Pay rates may differ from one type of duty to another.

E. The University (as of July 1, 2023) currently requires a minimum base pay rate of \$1,666.66 per month for a 50% GA at the Masters level.

7. POLICIES & RESOURCES

Course Grades: Courses for which students have received a grade of “D” or “F” will not be accepted as meeting degree requirements. The full Grades and Marks policy may be found in the Graduate Catalog:

catalog.uark.edu/graduatecatalog/objectivesandregulations/#gradesappealstext

Academic Dismissal/Probation: Students may be dropped from further study in the Graduate School if at any time their performance is considered unsatisfactory as determined by either the program faculty or the Dean of the Graduate School. Academic or research dishonesty and failure to maintain a specified cumulative grade-point average are considered unsatisfactory performance. Whenever a regularly admitted graduate student earns a cumulative grade-point average below 2.85 on graded course work taken in residence for graduate credit, they will be warned of the possibility of academic dismissal. When a graduate student has accumulated a minimum of 15 hours of graded course work taken in residence for graduate credit with a cumulative grade-point average below 2.85, and has received at least one warning, they will be academically dismissed from the Graduate School. The student’s degree program may request that the academic warning period be extended if the program can offer extenuating circumstances as a rationale and is willing to provide a plan of remediation for the student’s success.

Additional Courses Above Requirements: Students in master’s programs may take only six hours in addition to degree requirements to raise the grade point average necessary to graduate. If a student first encounters academic difficulty after they have already completed six credit hours for the degree beyond the minimum degree requirements, no additional courses may be taken.

Enrollment Limits: Registration above 15 hours must be approved by the Graduate Dean. For registration in the summer, the enrollment limit is 12 hours without approval by the Graduate Dean. If a student is on a graduate assistantship, up to 15 hours of graduate enrollment during

the spring or fall semesters or 12 hours during the summer will be allowed without the approved of the Graduate Dean. See Enrollment Guidelines on the Graduate School website: grad.uark.edu/graduate/current-students/registration-enrollment/enrollment-guidelines.php

Full-Time Status: Enrollment in nine semester hours (not including audited courses) is considered full-time for graduate students not on assistantship. For graduate assistants or students with research fellowships on 50 percent appointment or more, six semester hours (not including audited courses) of enrollment is considered full-time in the fall and spring semesters. Graduate assistants who are on a 25% or 50% appointment for a five-week summer term must earn at least three hours of graduate credit during the summer. However, these credits do not have to be earned in the same session as the appointment and may be taken at any time during the summer. Tuition and fees for graduate assistants on 50% appointments for a week summer term will be paid up to a maximum of 6 hours and for graduate assistants on 50% appointments for 10-12 weeks will be paid up to 9 hours. Students not on graduate assistantships or fellowships must be enrolled for six hours (not including audited courses) to be full time in the summer. Undergraduate courses may, with the approval of the Graduate Dean, be approved to meet the enrollment requirement for a graduate assistant in an individual semester. However, the student should check with the Office of Financial Aid to ensure that their current enrollment meets financial aid guidelines.

8. DEGREE RECITAL RESERVATIONS

[Stella Boyle Smith Concert Hall](#) and [Giffels Auditorium](#) are available on-campus venues, but different venues may be available in particular semesters. There will be no degree recitals after Reading Day; the latest day to reserve a recital therefore will be the day before Reading Day of either semester. Students will be asked to complete a Pink Form and will coordinate with the office and their Recital Committee to ensure that the performer(s), committee and venue will be available.

9. LOCKERS

Students who wish to reserve a locker can contact Britt Graves at the Music Office. The contents of the lockers must be emptied by the end of Spring semester.

10. COLLABORATIVE PIANISTS

The department assigns collaborative pianists through a collaborative pianist request form. Currently, the department is able to support Degree Recitals, Department Honor Recitals (Spring semester), and Concerto/Aria Competition (in Fall). For studio recitals, short / long juries, and any other performance, performers will hire freelance pianists in the area.