

**GRADUATE  
PROGRAM IN  
ORCHESTRAL  
PERFORMANCE  
STUDENT  
HANDBOOK  
2021–2022**

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## INTRODUCTION

Dear Students of the Orchestral Performance Program,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the Graduate Program in Orchestral Performance at Manhattan School of Music. This program is designed for the young professional musician and offers the advanced training necessary to win and sustain a successful and fulfilling orchestral career.

This handbook has been assembled in order to summarize the policies, procedures and requirements that apply to you as a student in the OP Program. Please read it carefully and keep it for reference throughout the year.

Our role is to provide OP students with the tools and resources necessary to have the most fulfilling possible experience during your time at MSM. Please use us as a resource as you navigate all that MSM has to offer.

### **Katharine Dryden**

Managing Director of Instrumental Ensembles

### **Alejandro López-Samamé**

Manager of Orchestral Operations and the Orchestral Performance Program

### **Glenn Dicterow**

Faculty Department Chair, Orchestral Performance  
Former concertmaster of the New York Philharmonic

## HISTORY

In 1991, Manhattan School of Music created the Graduate Program in Orchestral Performance, the first accredited degree program of its kind in the United States. The program seeks to produce polished musicians of the highest artistic caliber, who are prepared intensively in the orchestral repertoire for careers as symphonic players. Students are trained to participate fully in both performance and other nonmusical aspects of life in the modern orchestra, such as orchestra governance, artistic planning, community engagement, and audience development.

The Graduate Program in Orchestral Performance (1) recognizes that the art of orchestral playing is a skill in itself; (2) maintains that a career as a member of a symphony orchestra or other large ensemble is as desirable and, potentially, as artistically rewarding as a career as a solo performer; and (3) offers specific training vehicles and curricula to fulfill these objectives.

### **Statement on Cultural Inclusion:**

We believe an educational environment must be rooted in Cultural Inclusion to achieve academic and artistic excellence. Manhattan School of Music is committed to creating an inclusive environment that permeates every aspect of our students' experience. Cultural Inclusion at MSM includes learning and understanding individual identities and differences of people who constitute our community. Cultural Inclusion also requires the study and performance of works by and creators from a diverse range of backgrounds, including race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, able-ness, and/or sexual orientation.

Faculty and students share the responsibility of advancing MSM's commitment to Cultural Inclusion.

## PROGRAMS OF STUDY

Students enrolled in the Orchestral Performance Program have the option of one of two tracks of study. They are as listed below:

- Master of Music in Orchestral Performance
- Professional Studies Certificate in Orchestral Performance

The master of music degree consists of a total of 53 credits in the core curriculum as defined in the Manhattan School of Music catalog plus 8 credits of electives (including 2 semesters of concert attendance). There is a two-year residency requirement. Students who have not placed out of the prerequisites for the program will be required to take those courses in addition to other course requirements for the master's degree. Any 2000-level graduate course prerequisite, however, qualifies as an elective.

The professional studies certificate is a one-year course of study specifically designed for the doctoral-level student who wishes to further his/her studies in a more concentrated fashion. There is a minimum of 24 credits required for completion of the certificate. The course work includes Musician as an Educator in addition to all Orchestral Performance Program music performance courses and one semester of concert attendance.

## ORCHESTRAL PERFORMANCE FACULTY

### Violin

Glenn Dicterow, *former concertmaster, New York Philharmonic*  
Lisa Kim, *assistant principal second violin, New York Philharmonic*

### Viola

Karen Dreyfus, *former associate artist, New York Philharmonic, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra*  
Shmuel Katz, *viola, Metropolitan Opera Orchestra*

### Cello

Alan Stepansky, *former associate principal cello, New York Philharmonic*  
Qiang Tu, *cello, New York Philharmonic*

### Bass

Timothy Cobb, *principal bass, New York Philharmonic*  
Orin O'Brien, *bass, New York Philharmonic*

### Flute

Robert Langevin, *principal flute, New York Philharmonic*

### Oboe

Robert Botti, *oboe, New York Philharmonic*  
Sherry Sylar, *associate principal oboe, New York Philharmonic*  
Stephen Taylor, *principal oboe, Orchestra of St. Luke's; co-principal oboe, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra*

### Clarinet

Pascual Martinez-Forteza, *second clarinet, New York Philharmonic*

### Bassoon

Kim Laskowski, *associate principal bassoon, New York Philharmonic*  
Judith Leclair, *principal bassoon, New York Philharmonic*  
Frank Morelli, *principal bassoon, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra; American Composers' Orchestra*  
Roger Nye, *bassoon, New York Philharmonic*  
William Short, *principal Bassoon, Metropolitan Opera Orchestra*

## Horn

Michelle Read Baker, *former second horn, Metropolitan Opera Orchestra*

Richard Deane, *associate principal horn, New York Philharmonic*

Javier Gándara, *horn, Metropolitan Opera Orchestra*

Allen Spanjer, *horn, New York Philharmonic*

## Trumpet

Ethan Bensdorf, *second trumpet, New York Philharmonic*

David Krauss, *principal trumpet, Metropolitan Opera Orchestra*

Thomas V. Smith, *fourth/utility trumpet, New York Philharmonic*

## Trombone

Per Brevig, *former principal trombone, Metropolitan Opera Orchestra*

George Curran, *bass trombone, New York Philharmonic*

David Finlayson, *second trombone, New York Philharmonic*

Colin Williams, *associate principal trombone, New York Philharmonic*

## Tuba

Kyle Turner, *principal tuba, American Symphony Orchestra and Orchestra of St. Luke's*

## Harp

Mariko Anraku, *associate principal harp, Metropolitan Opera Orchestra*

Susan Jolles, *harpist, NY Chamber Symphony; American Composers Orchestra*

## Percussion

Christopher Lamb, *principal percussion, New York Philharmonic*

Duncan Patton, *former principal timpani, Metropolitan Opera Orchestra*

Kyle Zerna, *assistant principal percussion, New York Philharmonic*

# APPLIED LESSONS

## Major Teacher

Your major teacher is an important resource and mentor during your time at MSM. As in any relationship, issues may arise which require discussion or resolution. You are encouraged to discuss problems as they occur directly with your teacher. Unresolved issues and/or the sense that you cannot discuss problems with your teacher need to be addressed with the department chair or the Office of the Provost.

You are entitled to and required to have twenty-eight one-hour private lessons with your major teacher in the course of the academic year. Some teachers give these lessons each week. Others, given the nature of other performance and teaching commitments, offer two-hour lessons and/or lessons at differing intervals. Others may have teaching associates or substitutes to give lessons at times when they are unable to do so. Make certain that you understand your teacher's lesson schedule plan. If you are concerned that you are not receiving the required number of lessons, or have a problem with the frequency of your lessons, please notify the staff in the Instrumental Ensembles Office.

## Change of Teacher

Teacher assignments are made with great care and consideration for each student. Requesting to change your major teacher is an important decision that should be considered carefully. Often, a desire to change teachers can be the result of a lack of communication with the current teacher; for that reason, the student is encouraged to discuss the desire to change teachers with the current teacher, your departmental chair, and the Dean of Students prior to submitting paperwork.

Changes can only be made via the submission of a Change of Teacher Request form which is available from the Provost's Office.

After a student changes teachers, the former teacher is excluded from grading the student at subsequent juries and auditions. In addition, teacher assignments are subject to change based on teacher availability.

## Attendance Policy for Private Lessons

Private lessons constitute the core performance study for every student. If a student needs to cancel a studio lesson for any reason, the student should immediately inform the studio teacher. In cases of documented illness or other emergency, the teacher will attempt to make up missed

lessons at a mutually convenient time. The teacher is not obligated to adjust lesson times or make up lessons that were canceled for non-illness, non-emergency reasons. Any student who has two consecutive unexcused absences in his or her private lessons will be required to see the Dean of Students before lessons may resume.

### **Professional Leave**

No student may be absent from the school for professional engagements unless permission for such absence is granted by the Office of the Provost well in advance of all such engagements. Students who wish to pursue a professional opportunity over several days must apply for a professional leave, using the Limited Leave of Absence form available in the Office of the Provost. This form requires the signature of the student's major teacher and department chair, as well as the signature of all instructors whose classes will be impacted by the absence; as a result, the student is advised to plan ahead for the time that it takes to obtain these signatures. Typically the professional leave may not extend for more than two weeks.

### **Juries and Evaluation of Technical Standards**

In order to maintain the integrity of the educational process at Manhattan School of Music, the school has developed a set of criteria for entrance to and graduation from all degree programs offered at MSM. These standards include a combination of both technical and musical skills defined by the faculty in accordance with the artistic standards of the school.

An annual jury is conducted to allow the faculty to assess the growth and progress of each student. All standards are judged in relation to the student's degree program and level of study.

At their juries, students in the OP program are required to present repertoire specific to their instrument, distributed at the beginning of each academic year, to demonstrate that they have attained the necessary level of technical and artistic proficiency.

As students in the OP program are not required to perform a recital for completion of their degree, juries are considered the most important cumulative events in an OP student's time at MSM.

## **REQUIREMENTS**

Besides their lessons, OP students have the following performance-related program requirements:

- Orchestra (LP 1500)
- Chamber Music (SP 1500)
- Orchestral Repertoire Classes (OP 235I-2, 245I-2)
- Orchestral Performance Core (OP 1200) which includes the following activities:
  - Orchestral Performance master classes
  - Readings
  - Mock auditions
- End-of-year jury

### **Orchestra (LP 1500)**

Students enrolled in orchestra are assigned to projects with various orchestral ensembles. The typical assignment is between 3-4 concert projects per semester. Assignments are made based on audition scores with an eye to providing each student with a breadth of experience with various ensemble formats.

For more information regarding Orchestra at MSM, please see the Orchestra Handbook & Course Syllabus, available in room 211.

### **Chamber Music (SP 1500)**

OP students, with a few exceptions, are required to play in a chamber group every semester of enrollment. Please see the Chamber Music Handbook & Course Syllabus, available in room 405, for more information.

### **Orchestral Repertoire Coaching Classes (OP 235I-2, 245I-2)**

Taught by Manhattan School of Music program faculty and guests, the Orchestral Repertoire Classes have been designed as a four-semester, two-year sequence of coaching sessions on the craft of orchestral, ensemble, and performance techniques. The course offers students intensive study and performance experience in a diverse range of orchestral repertoire to help prepare students to win and sustain orchestral positions.

All OP students are automatically enrolled in the OP repertoire class for their instrument. These classes are occasionally joined by the highest scoring students from the classical division when it is deemed necessary and possible by the faculty instructors.

- Course structure: Individual instrumental sessions of two hours in length will be taught by a single faculty member or invited guest six times per semester (eight times for trumpets and horns).
- Course schedule: Schedules for the entire semester of classes for each instrument are posted on the OP Student Website at the beginning of the semester.
- Repertoire Packets: Repertoire packets for the entire semester are picked up from the Performance Library. The Performance Library staff will notify you when the packets are ready for pickup.
- Course Grading & Attendance Policy: Your grade in repertoire class will be based on attendance, preparation and performance. You are required to attend each repertoire class in a given semester. Absence is only permitted in the case of documented illness. Your course instructor will inform you of their specific grading policy.

### **Orchestral Performance Core (OP 1200)**

This one credit course encompasses all of the vital performance activities in which OP students are expected to participate. All OP students are required to enroll in OP 1200 each semester.

The value of the OP program lies in the rigor of the activities in the OP Core umbrella. For that reason, all OP students are expected to attend and participate in all OP Core activities to which they are assigned, with no exceptions.

OP Core includes the following activities:

- Mock auditions (2 per semester)
- OP Master classes (at least 2 per instrument per year)
- Readings (for wind, brass, and percussion only - 2 per semester)
- Special OP Performances:
- Commencement Brass Ensemble
- Orchestral Performance Camerata

### **General attendance and grading policy for all OP Core Activities**

The following attendance policy applies to all activities that fall under the umbrella of OP Core:

- Attendance is mandatory for all OP Core activities without exception.
- Conflicts with MSM-sponsored activities: The Instrumental Ensembles Office takes great care to ensure that OP Core activities are scheduled apart from other academic/ensemble commitments at MSM. Nevertheless, you must always make sure that OP Core engagements do not conflict with your other MSM commitments. If they do, you must communicate those conflicts as soon as you become aware of them and no later than fourteen (14) days prior to the OP Core activity. Except in the case of a true emergency, notifying Instrumental Office Staff of a conflict or a double booking inside of the 14 day window is unacceptable and will result in a lowered OP core grade.
- Conflicts with outside engagements: Students may request to be excused from OP Core activities for an approved professional gig or professional or educational audition. Students must submit a copy of their contract or written agreement (in the case of a gig or professional engagement) or a copy of the audition invitation in order for such requests to be considered. This must be done no later than fourteen (14) days prior to the OP Core activity in question or the student risks a penalty to their grade.
- Absence for illness or personal emergency: In the case of absence for illness or personal emergency, students must notify the Instrumental Ensembles Office by email as soon as possible. They must then submit a note from a doctor or other health professional for the absence to be considered excused.
- Grading criteria:
  - All unexcused absences for any OP Core activities will lower a student's OP Core grade by one full letter grade.
  - Any notification of conflicts with OP Core activities within 14 days from the affected activity will result in a lowering of one degree (e.g. A to A-)
  - Late submission of required materials (repertoire for master classes, etc) will result in a lowering of a student's grade by one degree (e.g. A to A-)

- For absence approval requests and all matters related to attendance for OP Core activities, please direct emails to:
  - Alejandro López-Samamé, Manager of Orchestral Operations and the Orchestral Performance Program  
alopezsamame@msmny.edu

### **OP Core Component 1: Mock Auditions**

Since mock auditions are a powerful tool in preparing to win an orchestral audition, Orchestral Performance majors will perform in a series of regularly scheduled mock auditions during their two-year program. Each student will perform two mock auditions per semester.

Mock auditions are designed to mimic realistic orchestra auditions, paralleling preliminary, semifinal, and final orchestra audition standards and practices. Adjudication panels for mock audition include, including OP program faculty as well as other coaches from major New York City and New Jersey orchestras and performing ensembles.

OP Mock Auditions are a critical part of your OP Core grade. Unexcused absences, last minute cancellations, failing to bring your materials, or showing up late and/or unprepared will result in a lower grade. Please consult the section entitled 'General attendance and grading policy for all OP Core Activities' for more information.

All mock auditions are performed blind.

*Schedule:* Mock audition schedules are posted on the OP section of the Orchestra Website. Students are notified when times are posted and are expected to cross-reference their personal schedule with their audition time and notify staff immediately of any conflicts.

*Format:* Each OP student is scheduled for a 20 minute mock audition slot. During the first 15 minutes of your mock audition, you will be asked by adjudicators to perform your solo work and excerpts. Immediately following your performance, the adjudicators will provide feedback on your performance for approximately 5 minutes.

*Repertoire:* Please use the year-end jury repertoire list as your guide and consult your teacher to determine which solo work and excerpts are best for you to perform at each mock audition. With the approval of your major teacher, you may substitute repertoire in preparation for an actual orchestra or summer music festival audition you may be taking.

*Mock Audition Materials:* You are required to provide two complete, collated, and annotated sets of your repertoire list, including copies of all solo works and excerpts. All of these assist the coaches in making comments on your performance. Make sure that these materials are typed, legible and well prepared. It will affect your overall presentation and results.

*Attire:* Although these auditions are played blind, students should dress appropriately for the portion of the mock auditions where feedback is received by adjudicators.

### **Required Format for Materials**

Two collated and stapled sets, each containing:

- A cover sheet listing your complete repertoire list, including movements or rehearsal/bar numbers where appropriate. Do not print your name on these sheet or anywhere on your materials.
- A copy of each of your concerto and solo choices, annotated and bracketed with felt-tip marker to indicate start and finish.
- A copy of each of your orchestral excerpts, in the order listed on your repertoire list, noting composers and titles of works at the top of each page, annotated and bracketed with felt-tip marker to indicate start and finish of each excerpt.
- Your name should not appear on any of these materials, as the first portion of your audition is performed blind.

*Printing of required materials:* If you do not have adequate access to a printer, the Instrumental Ensembles Office can assist you by printing your materials. In this case, a single PDF file containing all materials to be printed must be emailed to op@msmny.edu no later than 1 week before the scheduled mock audition. You will be sent an email when your materials are available for pickup.

## OP Core Component 2: OP Master Classes

One of the advantages of studying in New York City is that it is a cultural center and a major tour stop for international and American orchestras. In addition to the program faculty, Orchestral Performance students have the opportunity to perform for extraordinary orchestral musicians from other parts of the world. Each year, OP students will perform in at least two master classes given by members of national and international orchestras.

Guest artists from visiting orchestras are selected by OP faculty members, based on the schedule of orchestras visiting New York City during the season.

*Scheduling:* You will be notified of the date and time of the OP master classes for your instrument by MSM email. This information is also posted on the OP section of the Orchestra Website.

*Format:* All students performing in an OP master class should prepare to perform a solo and/or concerto movement in addition to 4–5 orchestral excerpts. Students typically will perform for 30–45 minutes in a given class. Occasionally, if time permits, the OP program will invite the highest scoring students from the classical division to participate in the master class.

*Master Class Materials:* Students are required to submit their repertoire for all OP master classes at least one week in advance or risk a penalty to their grade.

Students should consult with their teacher to determine their repertoire and come prepared with one photocopy of their scores for the guest artist.

Student master class performances often capture the attention of noted national and international performers and conductors. In the past, they have opened doors for program students into orchestral and ensemble jobs. You should present yourself in a professional manner, as if it were an audition.

Students are not required to engage an accompanist for OP master classes. If they wish to do so, they may engage an accompanist at their own expense.

*Attendance:* OP Master Classes are OP Core activities, and follow the grading and attendance policies for general OP core activities.

## OP Core Component 3: Readings

Wind, brass, and percussion students are expected to attend two readings per semester. These readings are specifically designed for the needs of the OP students, and are aimed at exposing students to a wider variety of repertoire than what we are able to program in a given orchestral season at MSM.

*Structure:* OP students are expected to cover the principal and most important roles in these OP readings. Occasionally it is necessary for students from the classical division to join OP readings in order for all parts to be covered. With the exception of horns, OP students have the privilege of choosing which students to invite to these readings in order to create the most cohesive section and best experience. OP students will be responsible for communicating this information in accordance with deadlines given by Instrumental Ensembles Office staff. Instrumental Ensembles Staff will recruit additional horn students and assign parts for these readings.

*Attendance:* OP Master Classes are OP Core activities, and follow the grading and attendance policies for general OP core activities.

## OP Core Component 4: Special Performances

OP students represent the highest standard of instrumental playing at MSM and as such are occasionally called upon to represent the school for high-profile performances. These performances are administered and assigned through the Orchestra Office, and participation in these activities are evaluated in a student's Orchestra (LP 1500) grade. However, because these are specially assigned to students in the OP program, they are highlighted here:

- Commencement Brass Ensemble
- Orchestral Performance Gala Concert

## JURIES

As students in the OP program are not required to perform a recital for completion of their degree, juries are considered the most important cumulative events in an OP student's time at MSM.

OP majors will have a year-end final jury in the form of a professional orchestral audition, performing requested solo works and orchestral excerpts for the faculty of the OP program. The repertoire for first and second-year juries has been formulated by program faculty and is distributed each year via email. The jury repertoire lists have been created to assimilate standards for semifinal (first-year repertoire list) and final (second-year repertoire list) orchestra auditions. (Any special repertoire exceptions should be arranged in consultation with your major teacher.) Students will be allotted twenty minutes per jury, including concerto and excerpts.

*Schedule:* Jury schedules are created and communicated by the Office of the Registrar.

*Jury Procedure:* Please plan to arrive at least 10 minutes before your scheduled time. Warm-up rooms will be available during jury times. Please prepare accordingly and be especially attentive to communications regarding date, room, and time assignments. Your jury will be adjudicated by OP faculty members. Juries are modeled as an orchestral audition. As in an orchestral audition, you may begin with your choice of solo work, and faculty members will call the excerpts. In addition, members of the audition jury may interrupt students to request interpretive modifications.

*Jury Materials:* If you are performing works not on the OP jury repertoire list, please provide the adjudicators with copies of those excerpts, properly annotated, collated, and stapled together. Otherwise, a printed program following the format of your mock audition programs should be prepared for each adjudicator. Make sure that these materials are typed and organized. It will affect your overall presentation and results.

*Probationary Review:* The final jury for first-year students will also serve as a probationary review audition. At the final jury, faculty members will determine not only scholarship recommendations for returning students, but also their continuation in the second year of the program.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

### **Glenn Dicterow**

Faculty Department Chair  
Former Concertmaster of the New York Philharmonic  
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### **Katharine Dryden**

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