

M Manhattan
School of Music

**CONDUCTING
DEPARTMENT
HANDBOOK
2024–2025**

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Manhattan School of Music!

My name is George Manahan, and I am the Director of Orchestral Activities. It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the Conducting Program at Manhattan School of Music. This program is designed for young pre-professional musicians and offers the advanced training necessary to win and sustain a successful and fulfilling career.

If you need to reach me, please send an e-mail to gmanahan@msmny.edu or feel free to call or text me at 646-408-6947.

This handbook has been assembled to summarize the policies, procedures and requirements that apply to you as a student in the Conducting Program. Please read it carefully and keep it for reference throughout the year. I hope this handbook answers any questions you may have. The responsibility for knowing the information contained here, as well as all school policies and procedures, rests with you.

Please feel free to consult with me regarding any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,
George Manahan

APPLIED LESSONS

Your Teacher

This is one of the most important relationships while here at MSM. As your teacher, I will be a resource in helping you make career decisions, large and small. Issues may arise which need discussion or resolution. You are encouraged to discuss problems, as they occur, directly with me or JT Kane, the Dean of Instrumental Studies and Orchestral Performance, (jkane@msmny.edu).

You are entitled to twenty-eight hours per school year of private lessons (score study and preparation before an orchestra session).

Attendance Policy

Private lessons are central to study at MSM 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 studio teacher is not obligated to adjust lesson times or make up lessons that are canceled for non-illness, non-emergency reasons. Students who have two consecutive, unexcused absences in his or her private lessons are reported to the Office of the Provost.

Professional Leave

Students may request to be excused from school for professional engagements for periods not longer than two weeks. Students must submit a Limited Leave of Absence form, which is available in the Office of the Provost. It requires the signatures of all teachers, the Conducting Department Chair, Dean of Instrumental Studies and Orchestral Performance, International Student Services (as applicable) and signature and approval of the Dean of Academic Affairs.

Conducting-related Pain

If you experience pain before, during, or after conducting, discuss it immediately with your major teacher. Physical pain is a sign that you are not using your body correctly. There are referral sources available to help you with this before it becomes chronic or serious. If physical therapy or other help is needed, consult the Office of Student Affairs.

ENSEMBLE REQUIREMENTS

All conducting students must participate in Large Ensemble (Orchestra) and Lab Orchestra every semester. The goals of the Lab Orchestra sessions are the following:

- To evaluate the baton technique of the conductor: the clarity of the beat, the expressive sweep of the hands, and does the baton and the body language reflect the articulations, the dynamics, and energy of the music.
- To refine a technique for dealing with faulty intonation and balancing a complex chord.
- To develop a general rehearsal technique that is efficient with time and is clear in articulating what the conductor wants from the musicians. This includes dialogues and discussion with the orchestra players to give feedback.

Cultural Inclusion Policy

The MSM Conducting Department is committed to including underrepresented composers in its curriculum. 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. All students are required to conduct works by underrepresented creators for their juries and recitals. Underrepresented creators for conducting include but are not limited to, Black, Latinx, Women, LGBTQIA+, Asian and AAPI, Indian and Native American.

JURIES OR ADJUDICATED PERFORMANCES

An annual jury or adjudicated performance is required by the end of each school year and is conducted to allow the faculty to assess the growth and progress of each student. This is a vital part of your training as a performer and has a bearing on your academic record and scholarship. The jury performance can be either a small ensemble put together by the student conductor, or a performance with the full MSM orchestra.

These are a vital part of your training as a performer, and the resultant scores have bearing on your academic record and scholarship.

Jury Postponement

The Provost's Office will only consider a student petition requesting postponement of a jury in extreme medical conditions (documented by physician), sudden family emergencies, or other exceptional circumstances. In all other cases, any student who fails to play a scheduled jury will receive an F for that jury. A failed jury may result in academic probation or dismissal from MSM. A postponed jury must be successfully completed not later than the first two weeks of the subsequent semester.

RECITALS

Scheduling Required Recitals

Your graduation recital must take place within the last two semesters of major lessons. (This recital does not replace your jury.) A date for the recital must be applied for with the Scheduling Office. The recital program must be approved by the major teacher and the Conducting Department Chair, and a copy of this program must be submitted to Canvas. All recital programs will need to include a work by an underrepresented composer. Further, the recital repertoire approval form, also available from the Scheduling Office, requires the approval and signatures of your teacher (implies that the student is ready to perform) and the Department Chair (implies approval of the repertoire and programming). Students should be certain that the program is accurately written before submitting it for signatures. This approval form is to be filed with the Scheduling Office at least four weeks prior to the recital date.

Non-required Recitals

Students are encouraged to give recitals in non-graduating years. Consult with your teacher for approval. Most non-graduating recitals are given in the fall semester when recital space is less at a premium. Consult the Scheduling Office for a recital application.

Accompanists for recitals

Reimbursement for school accompanists for recitals is the student's responsibility. Payment to school accompanists for private lessons is covered by the school. Any extra rehearsal time is the student's responsibility.

Repertoire requirements

All recital programs are required to include a work by an underrepresented composer. Underrepresented repertoire includes works by Black, Latinx, Women, LGBTQIA+, Asian and AAPI, Indian and Native American

