Manhattan
School of Music

WOODWIND DEPARTMENT HANDBOOK 2026–2027

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WELCOME

Dear Student:

Welcome to Manhattan School of Music! Your presence here is an indication of the faculty's strong belief in your potential as an artist, and it is our hope that your time here will be productively challenging and artistically rewarding.

This document is intended to answer many questions you might have about processes and expectations at MSM. The responsibility for knowing the information contained in this handbook, as well as other school policies and procedures, rests with you. Please consult your major teacher or myself with any departmental questions or concerns.

All of those around you - fellow students, faculty, and staff - wish you a productive year, and are committed to doing everything we can to provide you with the tools you need to achieve a successful, fulfilling life in music.

With very best wishes,

William Short

Woodwind Department Chair

This handbook does not apply to students enrolled in the Orchestral Performance Program or Doctoral of Musical Arts. Please consult their respective Handbooks for information.

APPLIED LESSONS

Your Teacher

This is one of the most important parts of a musician's development. Your teacher is among the most vital sources in helping you to make career decisions, both large and small. As in any relationship, issues may arise which need discussion and/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 departmental chair and/or the Dean of Instrumental Studies and Orchestral Performance.

You are entitled to and required to have fourteen one-hour private lessons with your major teacher during each semester you are enrolled. 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 still have teaching associates or substitutes to give lessons at times when they are unable to do so. Early on, make certain that you understand your teacher's lesson schedule plan.

If you are concerned that you are not receiving the requisite number of lessons or have a problem with the frequency of your lessons, notify the departmental chair.

Each applied lesson faculty member has created their own course syllabus that describes the objectives, grading, attendance, and other policies related to your lessons. Please be sure to read over the syllabus carefully and discuss any questions you have with your teacher.

Change of Teacher

Teacher assignments are made with great care and consideration for each student. Before considering a teacher change, students should speak with either the Department Chair, Dean of Instrumental Studies and Orchestral Performance, or Dean of Academic Affairs. Students may initiate the request as early as the preceding semester and no later than the end of the add/drop period of the term in which the change is to take place. Requests for teacher change will only be accepted through submission of the Change of Teacher Request Form available on the student portal. After a student changes teachers, the former teacher is excluded from grading the student at subsequent juries and auditions. In general, teacher assignments are subject to change based on teacher availability.

Split Lesson Policy

MSM students are eligible to request having lessons split between two teachers. In order to split lessons between two teachers, they must first receive approval from their current teacher, requested teacher, Department Chair, and Division Dean. After approval from all parties, students must submit a Split Lesson Request petition available on the student portal. All students receiving split lessons must fill out the form each semester if they wish to continue splitting lessons.

Students may also request to split lessons between their major instrument and lessons in another division (e.g. classical clarinet and jazz clarinet). The student must receive approval from all parties before submitting the Split Lesson Request petition. Split lessons in an area other than the student's major instrument and division are only permitted one semester per year of study per earned degree, and student may not split in their first semester of study.

Students will only participate in juries in their major instrument/degree program and are upheld to the jury requirements as published in their major instrument/degree handbook.

Attendance Policy

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, in accordance with the faculty member's cancellation policy, 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 were canceled for non-illness, non-emergency reasons. Faculty must refer to the Office of the Provost and the Dean of Students any student who has two or more unexcused absences in their private lessons.

Limited Leave of Absence

A planned Limited Leave of Absence for personal or professional engagements may be requested through the Office of the Provost.

A Limited Leave of Absence for sudden family or personal situations may be requested through the Dean of Students. A limited leave of absence generally is not granted for a period more than two weeks per semester. A planned limited leave of absence requires that the Limited Leave of Absence Form be submitted at least four weeks in advance of the requested limited leave unless opportunities

or situations are truly unforeseen. The form requires review and approval by the Dean of Academic Affairs, the Academic Division Dean, Office of the Provost, and approval from each of the student's instructors. International students also require the approval of International Student Services.

The student remains registered for the semester and is responsible for all missed course work, exams, and juries, and for all fees associated with that semester.

Playing-Related Pain

If you experience pain before, during, or after playing your instrument, 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, please contact Campus Health.

TECHNICAL STANDARDS

In order to maintain the integrity of the educational process at Manhattan School of Music, the school has developed a set of standards for entrance to, and graduation from, all degree programs offered at MSM. These standards include a combination of both technical and musical skills and they are the result of consultation with faculty, administration, and professionals throughout our musical community.

All Woodwind students admitted to Manhattan School of Music will have demonstrated, and/or will develop, skills in the following areas.:

Technical Skills

- Hear and distinguish pitch relationships and intonation
- A basic sense of rhythm with an understanding and ability to play standard rhythms and meters
- A substantial degree of dexterity and technical consistency
- Understanding of, and ability to perform, a variety of articulations
- Control of breathing and sound production
- Have the focus and endurance to participate in orchestral and chamber music rehearsals and concerts

Musical Skills

- Understanding of musical notation and familiarity with the most common musical terminology
- A basic understanding of several musical styles
- A basic understanding of musical structure and harmony
- A basic understanding of musical nuance with the potential to grow as a musician

The Evaluation of Technical Standards at Juries

An annual jury is conducted to allow the faculty to assess the growth and progress of each student in all the above areas. All standards are judged in relation to the student's degree program and level of study. For BM students, the sophomore jury is a critical moment to evaluate the progress and potential of students to ensure that they are on the correct path to a successful completion of their Bachelor's degree.

Mental Wellbeing

Music study can be emotionally demanding, and it is normal to experience stress, performance anxiety, or other mental health challenges. If you are struggling with anxiety, depression, or other mental health concerns that affect your studies or performance, please reach out for support. The Office of Student Affairs can connect you with counseling resources and mental health professionals who understand the unique pressures faced by music students. Remember that seeking help is a sign of strength and self-care, not weakness.

OBJECTIVES, LEARNING OUTCOMES, AND ASSESSMENT MEASURES

Objectives/Goals

1. Develop instrumental technique and musicianship
2. Develop skills as a chamber, solo, and orchestral musician
3. Develop professional skills related to: audition preparation, organization of time, rapport with performers, quality of presentation, performance skills, concert etiquette, and concert production.

Learning Outcomes

1. Literacy: Demonstrate the ability to read at sight with fluency, exhibiting general musicianship and a level of skill relevant to professional standards appropriate for their major concentration.
2. Technique: Demonstrate the technical skill requisite for artistic self- expression at a level appropriate for their major concentration.
3. Performance Preparation: Demonstrate the ability to learn new works independently and accurately establishing the work in a stylistic period or interpretative approach.
4. Interpretation: Students will develop an original voice as a musical artist and will use theoretical and historical analysis to create an informed delivery of a musical work.
5. Collaborative Competence: Demonstrate the knowledge and skills to work at every level of an ensemble, from leadership positions to supporting roles, and to move easily between these functions, illustrating their understanding that music is a social art form that depends on collaboration and flexibility.
6. Career Preparation: Develop professional skills related to audition preparation, time management, collaboration, quality of presentation, performance skills, concert etiquette, and concert production.
7. Technology Competence: Demonstrate the ability to self-record videos for pre-screen auditions, competitions, and masterclasses.
8. Cultural Awareness and Inclusion: Study and perform repertoire that includes works by BIPOC, women, and/or LGBTQ+ composers.

Assessment Measures

1. Orchestral Placement Auditions (2x/year)
2. Annual Juries (graded by members of the department other than the major teacher)
3. Overall performance in large ensembles and chamber music
4. Woodwind Lab assignments
5. Expanded Repertoire Requirement:
    - Students must learn at least two works during their time at MSM written by underrepresented composers: BIPOC, women, and/or LGBTQ+ composers
    - **Students must perform at least one such work on their graduation recital.**
    - Faculty will keep records to ensure completion of the requirement.
    - Students will be encouraged to record these works to be included in a repository on the MSM Woodwind Department website page

Expanded Repertoire Requirement:

- Students must learn at least two works during their time at MSM written by underrepresented composers: BIPOC, women, and/or LGBTQ+ composers.
- **Students must perform at least one such work on their graduation recital and graduation jury.**
- Faculty will keep records to ensure completion of the requirement.
- Students will be encouraged to record these works to be included in a repository on the MSM Woodwind Department website page.
- A link to MSMs Cultural Inclusion Resource page is here: *https://msmnyc.libguides.com/culturalinclusion*

ENSEMBLE REQUIREMENTS

Large Ensembles

All BM and MM woodwind students must participate in orchestra, jazz philharmonic, and/or wind ensemble as assigned every semester until graduation. Placement auditions will take place at the beginning of each semester. These auditions take place behind a screen so that the audition panel cannot see the person playing. A list of required repertoire will be sent to students as early as is practicable.

Students are required to take this audition each semester. Anyone unable to attend the required audition must contact the Instrumental Ensembles Office prior to the audition date. Please consult the orchestra handbook for further information.

Chamber Music

Students are required to complete a minimum of four semesters (for both undergraduate and graduate students), by assignment, of chamber music. The Small Ensembles Manager makes assignments in consultation with the Departmental Chairs of Woodwinds, Strings, Piano, and Brass. Students are strongly advised to fill out a chamber music request form each semester. Specific requests for type of ensemble, fellow players, repertoire, and coach are given serious consideration.

Please consult the Chamber Music Handbook for further information.

Woodwind Lab

All undergraduate and Master's (except for saxophones) are required to enroll in Woodwind Lab, which meets every Tuesday from 4-6pm. PS students are permitted to enroll in Woodwind Lab as an elective with permission of the Woodwind Lab instructor(s). Please ensure that nothing in your schedule conflicts with this time.

JURIES

Jury for Non-graduating Students

Every enrolled student is required to take an annual Jury Examination, typically held in May. Students should be aware that the number of juries listed in the Department Major grids is the minimum needed to graduate. Some students may be required to take additional juries as a result of teacher requests, scholarship continuation, or the extension of the normal length of the degree program as the result of illness, leaves-of-absence, or other extraordinary circumstances. Students who are off-sequence as the result of being admitted in January or having taken a semester Leave of Absence take juries in December. There is a Sophomore Continuation Jury to ensure that a student's progress merits continuation in his or her program of study. The Office of the Registrar assigns jury days and times, and also emails jury comments to students two weeks after the end of the jury week.

Students are responsible for providing their own accompanists for juries. In all cases, if the works chosen require piano, the student must provide an accompanist. Early planning will avoid last-minute scheduling problems. The jury performance times allotted in non-graduating years are:

- **Freshman—ten minutes**
- **Sophomore—twelve minutes**
- **Junior—fifteen minutes**
- **First year of graduate study—fifteen minutes**

Sophomore Continuation Jury

This jury, at the end of the sophomore year of study, establishes that a student's progress has been sufficient to reasonably ensure completion of the program of study. The evaluation will determine whether a student may continue in that program.

Advanced Standing Jury

In rare cases, undergraduate students may accelerate their program in performance by means of an Advanced Standing jury. A successful Advanced Standing jury will allow a student to graduate early, provided all other academic requirements are also met early.

Advanced standing can only be granted for one semester. To start the process, the student must submit a petition for advanced standing to the Office of the Registrar. This petition must indicate the approval of both the major teacher and the department chair and must be turned in no later than March 1 of the academic year in which the advanced standing jury is to take place. Please consult the Academic Catalog for further information.

Jury for Students Graduating from Undergraduate, Master's, Professional Studies and Professional Performance Diploma Programs

Students expecting to graduate from the BM, MM, or PS programs during the current school year must play a graduation jury. PPD students play a jury in their first year and a recital in the second year. Consult applicable repertoire requirements. Students are responsible for providing their own accompanists. Graduation juries will take place during the May jury period and are scheduled by the Office of the Registrar. A graduation jury and/ or graduation recital does not serve as a substitute for an entrance examination to a higher degree level. For more information, review the Required Recital section of this handbook.

Note: All graduating students who take an entrance audition at MSM for a higher degree program and are accepted by the School are not required to play a graduation jury.

Jury for Doctor of Musical Arts

Please consult the Assistant Dean for Doctoral Studies for procedure and requirements.

Jury Comments

Students have a right to see their jury comments and scores. They may elect to allow their teacher to see them.

Grading System

All juries are graded on a 10-point scale. The student's jury grade is the average of all scores received at the jury. The student's primary teacher and any faculty member(s) who have previously been the student's primary teacher at MSM will provide comments, but not scores, and are therefore excluded from the jury grade.

Jury Postponement

The Office of the Registrar will only consider a student petition requesting postponement of a jury in extreme medical conditions (documented by a 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 will result in dismissal from MSM. An approved postponed jury must be successfully completed no later than the first two weeks of the subsequent semester.

REPERTOIRE GUIDELINES FOR WOODWIND DEPARTMENT JURIES AND RECITALS

Please note: *Any work that is composed with accompaniment MUST be performed as such. No exceptions permitted.*

Cultural Inclusion

Manhattan School of Music is committed to creating an inclusive environment that permeates every aspect of our students' experience. We believe an educational environment must be rooted in Cultural Inclusion to achieve academic and artistic excellence. 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.

Expanded Repertoire Requirement:

- Students must learn at least two works during their time at MSM written by underrepresented composers: BIPOC, women, and/or LGBTQ+ composers.
- **Students must perform at least one such work on their graduation recital.**
- Faculty will keep records to ensure completion of the requirement.

- Students will be encouraged to record these works to be included in a repository on the MSM Woodwind Department website page.
- A link to MSMs Cultural Inclusion Resource page is here *https://msmnyc.libguides.com/culturalinclusion*

These guidelines are to be followed, whenever possible. However, if special issues or questions arise, the student should consult with their major teacher and department chair as early as possible.

Freshman Jury: 10 minutes

- Repertoire determined by teacher and student, totaling at least ten minutes of music. No repetition of repertoire from entrance exam is allowed.

Sophomore Continuation Jury: 12 minutes

This jury establishes that a student's progress has been sufficient to reasonably ensure completion of the program of study. The evaluation will determine whether the student may continue in that program.

- Two contrasting movements from two major repertoire works. No repetition of repertoire from previous jury or entrance exam is allowed.

Junior Jury: 12 minutes

- A complete concerto with applicable cadenzas. One complete recital work. One of the above should be from the 20th or 21st century. No repetition of repertoire from previous jury or entrance exam is allowed.

Bachelor of Music Graduation Jury: 15 minutes

- At least three significant, complete recital works from different style periods, including at least one from the 20th or 21st Century. No repetition of repertoire from previous juries or entrance exam is allowed.
- **One work must fulfill the expanded repertoire requirement.**

First-year Master of Music Jury: 15 minutes

- Complete concerto with all applicable cadenzas
- Two complete multi-movement works. No repetition of repertoire from previous juries or entrance exam is allowed. One of these should be from the 20th or 21st century.

Master of Music/Professional Studies/ First Year Professional Performance Diploma Jury: 15 minutes

- Four significant, complete recital works from three style periods, including the 20th or 21st Century. Students are encouraged but not required to perform at least one work from memory. A complete chamber work may be used as one of the recital works, at the discretion of the student and teacher. One work must fulfill the Expanded Repertoire Requirement.

RECITALS

Scheduling Recitals

A graduation recital must take place within the last two semesters of major lessons. 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 department chair, and an approved final version of this program must be submitted to Canvas as part of the student's graduation requirement. Please contact the Scheduling Office directly to schedule your recital.

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. Students are responsible for providing their own accompanists. Please contact the Scheduling Office (**scheduling@msmnyc.edu**) directly to schedule your recital.

Required Recital—Undergraduate and Graduate Programs

Students expecting to graduate from either program during the current school year are required to give a graduation recital in addition to the graduation jury. **Follow repertoire requirements carefully in building a recital program.** Make certain that your teacher approves of the chosen repertoire. Consult the scheduling office for a recital application. Note that, the recital repertoire approval form, also available from the scheduling office, requires the approval and signatures of your teacher and the departmental chair.

The teacher's signature implies that the student is prepared to perform. Once the major teacher has signed the form, the teacher is not permitted to request a postponement of the recital. The signature of the departmental chair signifies approval of the repertoire and programming. **The departmental chair will not sign a recital repertoire approval form until the major teacher has done so.**

Students should be certain that the program is accurately written before submitting it for signatures. To facilitate the approval process, a copy of the completed forms must be sent to the Department Chair, who will forward final approval to the Scheduling Office.

The recital repertoire approval form is to be filed with the scheduling office and the departmental chair **at least four weeks prior to the recital date**. Please make sure to carefully follow duration limits as stated on the Recital Confirmation Packet. Students must be enrolled for major lessons until the graduation recital and graduation juries (as applicable) have been successfully completed. A graduation recital and/or graduation jury does not serve as a substitute for an entrance examination to a higher degree program. Students are responsible for providing their own accompanists.

Required Recital—Professional Studies and Professional Performance Diploma

Consult the scheduling office for a recital application. Consult repertoire requirements carefully. Students are responsible for providing their own accompanists.

Doctor of Musical Arts Recitals

Consult the Assistant Dean for Doctoral Studies for procedures and requirements.

Recording of Recitals

The school records all required recitals when possible. Please refer to the Recital Confirmation Packet for further information regarding recording your recital.

EISENBERG-FRIED CONCERTO COMPETITION

Date TBD, Neidorff-Karpati Hall; Open to the public.

Applications will be available via online form; this information will be communicated to all eligible students via MSM email before winter break. The signature and approval of the major teacher are required. The concerto must be memorized.

APPLICATION DEADLINE WILL BE ANNOUNCED AT A LATER DATE.

Completed applications should be emailed to Maddi Lucas Tolliver, Dean of Performance and Production Operations at mtolliver@msmnyc.edu. Please observe the posted application deadline and repertoire exclusions carefully. Late applications will not be accepted.

The winner will be chosen from departmental auditions. There will be no interdepartmental finals, and there will be one annual winner and one alternate from the Woodwind Department.

MASTER CLASSES AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Throughout the school year, there are special events such as master classes, departmental recitals, and other performance opportunities. Pertinent information will be emailed to you as well as posted on the calendar on the MSM website.

SCHOOL-OWNED EQUIPMENT

All students who utilize school-owned equipment (e.g., instruments, reed-making machines, etc.) are expected to take immaculate care of that equipment. Failure to do so may result in loss of privileges to use it in the future. For further information about expectations, please consult your major teacher and/or department chair.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Woodwind Department Chair

If you need to contact the departmental chair, please send an email to William Short (wshort@msmnyc.edu) who will address your concerns as soon as possible or make an appointment to meet with you. If you are requesting a signature, please note that all forms must be completed and include the major teacher's signature before emailing it to the Department Chair as either a JPEG or PDF. Please indicate which form you are attaching in the subject line. Here is an example: **Leave of Absence Form—Department Chair Signature requested**.