



Mead Witter School of Music

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

PIANO

This document contains the recording and audition requirements for the Piano area. Please refer to the “Graduate Application Guide” for detailed instructions about the application process and general requirements for admission to the School of Music.

When filling out the Graduate School application, please select
“Music: Performance MM” or “Music: Performance DMA”

PORTFOLIO (due on December 1)

As part of your application, you will submit a portfolio of recordings. Your portfolio must be submitted as a single URL link to a YouTube channel or another file sharing site (Google Drive, etc.). You may submit a single video or a folder containing multiple videos. Please be sure that your video(s) are set to “public” or “unlisted” so that they are accessible to our faculty.

Your portfolio will be used for audition prescreening within the Piano area as well as potential funding consideration within the entire School of Music.

Portfolio requirements:

- Minimum 20 minutes total. Can be audio or video.
- Sample solo works from at least 3 historical periods.
- Can be movements rather than complete works.
- We encourage applicants to include works by historically marginalized, underrepresented, and living composers, or a work from your own cultural traditions. Show us who you are as an artist!

Special instructions for Collaborative Piano:

Please submit collaborative repertoire plus one memorized solo work. Demonstrate stylistic and technical variety, representing both vocal and instrumental works.

Note: In consultation with the Piano faculty, you may supplement your portfolio with additional materials later in the process to be used for school-wide fellowship competitions.

AUDITIONS

Candidates who pass the prescreening round will be invited for a full audition. Auditions will be held on Saturday, January 16, and Saturday, February 13. Candidates may choose one of the following options:

Option 1

Travel to the UW-Madison campus and perform a live audition.

The audition slot will be 20 minutes (30 minutes for Collaborative Piano) and will include a brief interview with the Piano faculty. You may also be asked to sight read.

Please make a list of your prepared repertoire (title & composer) and bring 4 copies of the list to your audition, which the faculty will use to select excerpts and take notes. You do not need to bring copies of your actual sheet music.

Option 2

Stay at home and submit a final portfolio of recordings.

Meet the faculty in a short Zoom interview on the audition day.

The final portfolio is due no later than one week before your selected audition date. A submission template will be sent along with your audition invitation.

On the audition day, you will have a 15-minute interview with the Piano faculty on Zoom.

PREPARING FOR YOUR AUDITION

Piano Performance

- Prepare approximately one hour of music, sampling solo works from at least 3 historical periods. This can be movements rather than complete works.

Piano Performance & Pedagogy

- Prepare approximately one hour of music, sampling solo works from at least 3 historical periods. This can be movements rather than complete works.
- Contact Prof. Jess Johnson to arrange for a piano pedagogy meeting before or after the audition: jgjohnson@wisc.edu

Collaborative Piano

- Prepare approximately one hour of collaborative repertoire plus one memorized solo work. Demonstrate stylistic and technical variety, representing both vocal and instrumental works.
- Consult Prof. Deirdre Brenner for repertoire recommendations and to arrange a collaborative piano meeting before or after the audition: dbrenner2@wisc.edu

Accessibility

In an effort to foster accessibility, we encourage you to comment on your access needs and/or share any accommodations that may help ensure a meaningful audition experience. We cannot guarantee accommodations, and some accommodations may necessitate documentation from applicants. Please send any access/accommodation requests to James Doing at gpm@music.wisc.edu

Audition Repertoire

We welcome applicants to present a repertoire that highlights their musical strengths and identities. To this end, we encourage applicants to select from wide-ranging musical approaches. Show us who you are as a musician. If you wish to discuss your selected repertoire with us, please email your prospective major professor.

Last revised: September 4, 2026