



Mead Witter School of Music

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

STRINGS, GUITAR, & HARP

This document contains the recording and audition requirements for the Strings, Guitar, & Harp 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 Strings, Guitar, & Harp area as well as potential funding consideration within the entire School of Music.

Portfolio requirements:

- Provide a minimum of 20 minutes of music.
- Must be video.
- Present a range of styles and periods.

Although use of a collaborative pianist is optional for the initial portfolio, we strongly recommend that Strings candidates work with a pianist in order to create high-quality recordings which can later be used for school-wide fellowship competitions. Guitar & Harp candidates should prepare solo recordings.

Note: In consultation with the faculty, you may supplement your portfolio with additional recordings/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 15 minutes for MM and 20 minutes for DMA and will include a brief interview with the faculty.

Please make a list of your prepared repertoire (title & composer) and bring 8 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 10-minute interview with the faculty on Zoom.

PREPARING FOR YOUR AUDITION

Minimum repertoire to be prepared:

Violin

- Two contrasting movements of a Bach solo partita or sonata
- One movement of a standard concerto
- A Paganini caprice (required for DMA) -or- an additional contrasting work
- DMA only: An additional work of the applicant's choice

Viola

- Two contrasting movements of a Bach Cello Suite, or Solo Violin Sonata or Partita
- One movement of a standard concerto
- One movement of a viola sonata
- DMA only: Short contemporary or virtuosic work (optional)

Cello

- Two contrasting movements from a Bach cello suite
- One or more movement(s) from a standard concerto
- A Popper Etude, Pjatti Caprice, or another work demonstrating virtuosity
- DMA only: A 20th- or 21st-century solo cello work (or movement of a longer work) composed after 1945

Guitar / Double Bass

- At least two or three contrasting selections, for example a movement from a major concerto (for most players this would mean a romantic concerto, but it could also be 20th century), one movement or more of unaccompanied Bach, and perhaps something else of your choice.

Harp (solo)

- One movement of a harp concerto
- Two contrasting solos. Solos should display a range of stylistic and musical skills.
- One orchestral excerpt from the standard repertoire

Note on piano accompaniment:

- For Strings auditions, use of a collaborative pianist is optional, but highly encouraged! If auditioning live, you may bring your own accompanist or hire one of ours. A contact list will be sent along with your audition invitation.
- Guitar & Harp candidates should plan to perform solo repertoire.

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 13, 2026