Graduate Handbook
2010-2011
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Welcome

Welcome to graduate studies in the School of Music at Stephen F. Austin State University. Our desire is to make your experience here exciting, successful, and academically challenging. We take great pride in the quality of our facilities, the accomplishments of our students, and the dedication of and diversity of our faculty. We take the responsibility of educating our students very seriously, and you will find the faculty supportive and eager to help you reach your goals.

Though graduate students are expected to display a high level of self-sufficiency, this Graduate Student Handbook is designed to answer many of the most commonly asked questions about our programs. You will find information about our facilities, services, ensembles, and applied music study, as well as academic policies and procedures that will impact you as a student. It also contains check sheets for the various degrees offered.

Many graduate students at SFASU take much or even all of their coursework online. The online offerings allow flexibility for those active in the workforce, yet they are substantive and challenging courses that require the same about of diligence as face-to-face classes. Students enrolled in online coursework must be particularly self-motivated to stay on pace with assignments. Both local students and online students should remain in contact with their advisors on a regular basis.

Please know that our faculty and staff are here to help you. We want you to call on us any time you have a problem or a question about the School or one of our music programs. Do let us know if there is anything we can do to help you as a member of the SFA family.

Sincerely,

Dr. Stephen Lias
Assistant Director for Graduate Studies
School of Music
Mission

The School of Music at SFA is committed to providing graduate curricula with a wide variety of musical experiences, designed to prepare students to confidently begin or continue careers in music education, performance, and composition. Its goal is to graduate persons who are highly competent musicians, accomplished performers, sensitive artists and articulate musical leaders who clearly understand the value and role of music as part of our cultural heritage and welfare and also as part of the very essence of human existence.

1. Introduction

1.1. Sources of Information
This handbook describes policies and procedures that can be modified at any time, and does not constitute a contract between Stephen F. Austin State University and a graduate student. The information in this handbook comes from two principal sources:

- The Graduate Bulletin for SFASU.
- The rules, regulations and working procedures of the School of Music at SFASU as they pertain to the graduate program.

This does not preclude the possibility of subsequent changes, including programs, course titles and descriptions, and university policies or other subsequent changes which may result through action by the School of Music faculty, the SFA Board of Regents or the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Information concerning changes will be made available through the School of Music office. More extensive information about the University and about the School and its programs may be found in the Graduate Bulletin.

1.2 Usage of the Graduate Music Handbook
The Graduate Music Handbook is to be used to enhance the information found in the Graduate Bulletin, and to clarify procedures and policies of the School of Music not covered in the Graduate Bulletin. The Graduate Music Handbook does not replace or supersede the Graduate Bulletin.

The Graduate Music Handbook can aid in keeping track of the requirements you need to fulfill for your particular degree program. You must meet all requirements specified for your degree program as announced in the Graduate Bulletin for the year you entered the University. Each student is personally responsible for meeting degree requirements. Advisors will assist, but accountability and liability belong to each student.
1.3 Graduate Studies at Stephen F. Austin State University
The School of Music at SFA is committed to providing graduate curricula with a wide variety of musical experiences, designed to prepare students to confidently begin or continue careers in music education, performance, and composition. Currently the School of Music at SFASU offers:

- Master of Music in Performance, with concentrations in the following:
  - Accompanying
  - Instrumental (strings, winds or percussion)
  - Keyboard
  - Opera
  - Vocal
- Master of Music in Conducting, with concentrations in the following:
  - Band Conducting
  - Choral Conducting
  - Orchestral Conducting
- Master of Arts in Music Education, with concentrations in the following:
  - Choral
  - Elementary/general
  - Instrumental
- Master of Arts in Music, accommodating concentrations in areas such as:
  - Composition
  - Music Theory
  - Musicology

1.4 Administration and Faculty
Dr. A. C. “Buddy” Himes, Dean
Dr. John W. Goodall, Associate Dean
Dr. John N. Roberts, Director, School of Music
Dr. Stephen Lias, Assistant Director of the School of Music, Graduate Coordinator
Lisa Rodrigues, Administrative Assistant to the Dean
Missy Devine, Administrative Assistant to the Director of the School of Music

A list of graduate faculty members can be found in the current Graduate Bulletin.

1.5 Graduate Student Records
All official records are maintained by the University Registrar. In addition, students may access certain information online through MySFA, or through the music office. When questions arise as to where to locate records, transcripts, or other data, contact your advisor.
2. Admission Requirements

2.1 Application for Admission
Admission to a graduate music program at SFASU is by formal application. An application can be found on the Graduate School portion of the SFASU web site which contains information regarding fees, submission of transcripts, and other details pertaining to admission into the Graduate School at SFASU.

2.2 Deadline
The Graduate Bulletin states “Official transcripts from each college/university attended must be included with the completed application form and sent to the Graduate Office at least 30 days prior to entering.”

2.3 Admission Requirements for Music
An undergraduate degree in music is required for all graduate music degrees offered at SFASU.

All graduate degrees in music at SFASU require a diagnostic Graduate Entrance Examination in Music. This examination is offered online. Here is a summary of what it involves:

Music History and Writing - consists of:
- A multiple-choice exam covering all periods of music history
- A listening test for style identification of musical selections from all periods
- A written essay on a topic of the student’s choice. This might take the form of a comparison of two stylistically different pieces, teaching methods, etc., which emphasize performance styles, methods, difficulties, etc. This essay should demonstrate the applicant’s command of written language and the ability to communicate relevant content in a manner commensurate with graduate study.

Music Theory and Analysis, Dictation - consists of:
- A number of analysis and part writing questions covering functional theory (through augmented-sixth chords) and questions regarding formal structure.
- Two dictation examples. A simple melody, as well as the outer voices of a four-part chorale.

The best review materials include A History of Western Music, by Grout and Palisca, for studying music history and any standard undergraduate theory text (such as Benward, Kostka/Payne, Aldwell/Schacter, Ottman, Turek, etc.).
Students should contact Dr. Stephen Lias to arrange for these examinations at slias@sfasu.edu. These should be taken as early as possible, but must completed at least 30 days prior beginning any graduate classes.

2.4 Audition Requirements for Performance
Students wishing to enter a master’s program in performance or conducting must contact the major professor for that area regarding audition requirements. See the faculty listing on the School of Music web site to locate contact information for the professor for your concentration.

3. Academic Policies and Procedures

3.1 Credit Load for Graduate Students
A full load for a graduate student during a semester is six semester hours, and the maximum load is 15 semester hours. A full load during a six-week summer session is three semester hours and the maximum is six hours. A student in a thesis program must register for thesis each semester during which the resources of the university (faculty, library, labs, etc.) are utilized. Credit for master’s degree thesis research and writing courses, however, is awarded only one time, and enrollment in these courses is not counted in determining the maximum course load for a semester or summer session.

A student on a graduate assistantship during a semester is required to enroll for a minimum of six semester hours of graduate work. Should a graduate assistant fall below the six-hour minimum for a semester, he or she will not be eligible for an assistantship the following semester.

3.2 Graduate Assistants
The School of Music offers graduate assistantships to carefully selected students. The stipends vary according to the major and extent of the assignment. To be eligible for an assistantship, a student must have clear or provisional admission to the Graduate School and be in good academic standing.

A graduate assistant may be assigned to research or administrative projects or to teaching. Graduate assistants assigned at the 50 percent rate are required to serve 20 clock hours per week in the department to which they are assigned. Those assigned to other percentages are required to work a proportionate number of clock hours per week. To aid the completion of degree requirements at the earliest practical date, graduate coordinators are not encouraged to offer graduate assistants additional responsibilities beyond the 20-hour norm.

A graduate assistant must be enrolled for at least six hours of graduate course work in the fall or spring semesters and three semester hours in each summer session in which
the student has an assistantship. Should a graduate assistant fall below the six or three semester hour minimum for a semester or summer session, he or she will not be eligible for an assistantship the following semester. Graduate assistantships are usually limited to four semesters. A student interested in a graduate assistantship should contact the Graduate Coordinator well in advance of the semester in which he or she is interested in the assistantship. Also, the student should apply for graduate admission by the first of March or the middle of October.

If the student accepts, he or she will then contact Human Resources to set up an appointment for a new employee orientation and complete the appropriate paperwork. A graduate assistant orientation program is offered to all new graduate assistants at the beginning of the fall semester each year. Details as to time and place for the orientation session will be provided through the academic departments. They also are available through the Graduate Office upon request.

Information regarding responsibilities of graduate assistants, assignment of duties, training, evaluation and reappointment can be found at the Graduate School Web site (www.sfasu.edu/graduate/) under Graduate Assistant Administration. Graduate assistantships are considered security sensitive positions by the university and criminal histories will be checked.

3.3 Grade-point Average, Probation, and Suspension

To remain in good standing in Graduate School and to graduate, a student must maintain a 3.0 on a 4.0 scale (B average). During any semester or summer session that the grade point average falls below a B, the student with clear admission to graduate study will be placed on academic probation; the student with probationary admission will be placed on academic suspension. A student placed on academic probation and failing to restore an overall 3.0 (B) average the following semester or summer sessions will be placed on academic suspension. A student placed on academic suspension is denied the continuation of an academic program as well as the privilege of registering for course work. This suspension period is for one semester or one summer session, whichever follows the period after which the suspension occurred. Thereafter, the student will revert to post-baccalaureate admission status and will be permitted to take course work not applicable toward a degree program. To be reinstated to a degree program, the student must be recommended by the appropriate academic department and approved by the academic dean, the Graduate Council and the Dean of Graduate School.

3.4 Withheld Grades (WH)

A grade of WH is assigned only when the completion of the work is not possible because of circumstances beyond the control of the student. A grade of QF is assigned only when the student quits attending classes without officially dropping the course. In the case of the awarding of a WH grade, the work must be completed within a calendar year or the grade automatically becomes an F. Exceptions to that regulation are thesis research and writing courses (589, 590, 591) in which the work is permanently awarded a WH grade.
until the thesis is completed. A student may not receive a grade of WH upon dropping a course.

3.5 Transfer Credit Towards the Masters Degree
With the approval of the School of Music and the academic advisor, a student may transfer from another accredited graduate school up to six semester hours of graduate work toward a master’s degree with a thesis and up to 12 semester hours toward a non-thesis master’s degree. Transferred work must be completed with a grade of B or higher and will be accepted only for credit toward a graduate degree at SFA and not for purposes of raising the grade point averages earned at SFA. The work must have been taken not earlier than six years prior to the student’s first graduate enrollment at SFA. Moreover, if the student fails to complete work on the graduate degree at SFA before the expiration of the six years, the work will not be applicable toward a degree here. The transcript must clearly show the course(s) to be transferred was (were) taken for graduate credit.

3.6 Comprehensive Examinations

A. Comprehensive examinations should be taken in the penultimate semester of study. Because of the time it takes to grade them and pass them on to the next committee member, we are in the process of setting a deadline near the end of a semester after which the student may not set a comprehensive examination date.
B. Committee consists of three members: the major professor, one from the area and one from outside, preferably musicology or theory. Committee members must be faculty members who taught the student in a graduate course.
C. The student should contact the professors and request their service, then report that back to the major professor.
D. The student should obtain the Comprehensive Committee Form from the Music Office and have faculty sign. (Faculty may aid distance students in this process.) They should turn the form into the graduate coordinator when complete.
E. Students may meet with each committee member to discuss what may be covered on the exam. It is up to the professor how much to guide them, but they do have the right to ask.
F. Material assigned should be relative to what was covered in courses taught by the professor to that student. The professor may also assign a specific topic and inform the student to research the topic in preparation for its inclusion in the exam.
G. Comps are planned in a six-hour framework: each professor may ask students to write for what they anticipate to be approximately two hours, though the student may divide the time as needed when taking the exam.
H. Current grading scheme of Comprehensive Exams in music:
   a. Pass
b. Probationary (written explanation as to the terms of this probation must be communicated to the graduate coordinator and then passed on to the student to be rectified).

c. Fail

3.7 Plan of Study Checklist by Degree
All current graduate degrees have check-sheets on the School of Music website that detail the courses required. Students should study these carefully and consult with their advisor with any questions.

3.8 Style Manual
In the field of music, the standard style guide is *The Chicago Manual of Style* or the abridged version by Kate Turabian. Note that, by and large, MLA format is not used in music. That being said, each professor is free to require assignments to follow any style guide and the student would be well advised to make sure they clearly understand the teacher’s desires on this matter. The ability to correctly follow a style guide in scholarly writing is an important element of graduate work.
## 3.9 Projected Schedule of Graduate Course Offerings

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L = Local classes offered on SFA's campus.
W = Web classes offered online.
AN = Classes offered on an as-needed basis.
3.10 Timeline for Graduation/Lead Times and Sequences
Details regarding specific requirements for graduation differ somewhat depending on the area of study, and whether the degree includes a thesis or not. Students should consult with their advisor every semester to ensure that they are fulfilling all expectations for a timely completion.

3.11 Graduate Recitals
Students must enroll in MUP 595: graduate recitals. Students substituting an opera role for a recital still must register for MUP 595 the semester of the opera production. A recital committee form must also be completed and returned to the music office.

Reserving a performance venue (Cole Concert Hall or the Music Recital Hall)
- Select a date in conjunction with your applied instructor and accompanist. Hall reservation and payment must be made through the School of Music’s Administrative Assistant.
- The reservation fee is $75 for either Cole Concert Hall or the Music Recital Hall. The fee covers the use of the hall, rehearsal time, a CD, and Recital Puncher(s).
- Payment must be made at the time of reservation; reservations must be made at least two weeks in advance of the scheduled date.
- Scheduling of student degree recitals has priority in the first twelve class days of each semester.
- Students are allowed three hours of rehearsal in the selected hall. These times should be selected in conjunction with your applied instructor and accompanist, and scheduled through the School Administrative Assistant.
- Graduate students must assemble a recital committee of three faculty members consisting of the student’s applied teacher, one other person within the area, and one person from outside the area. This committee has full authority to accept or reject a recital for degree credit, and their decision must be documented by signing an approved recital form.

Standard Performance Times
- Evening hours Monday-Friday: 6:00 and 7:30
- Saturday and Sunday times: 2:30; 4:00; 6:00; 7:30
- Please note that voice recitals may only be scheduled Monday – Thursday

Student Responsibilities
Reital committee: It is the responsibility of the student to secure committee members. The committee must consist of two faculty members within the student’s applied area and one other faculty member outside the area.

Recital workers: It is the responsibility of the student to secure a stage manager and usher(s) if desired. Recital puncher(s) will be supplied by the School.
Programs: The student is responsible for the printing of programs. The applied instructor will guide the student in the format and proofreading of the program. The program should be submitted to the printer and then proofed by the applied instructor at least ten days prior to the program. There are several sources for printing the programs both on campus and locally. It is suggested that the student order 100 programs.

Faculty Hearings for Student Recitals - Instrumental, String and Keyboard Areas
1. A faculty hearing shall be scheduled by the student two to four weeks in advance of the student's recital date. The committee shall include:
   a. Non-Degree Recital-student's major professor only.
   b. Degree Recital-both area faculty members from the student's recital committee.
2. The student should be prepared to perform all music selected for the recital, with accompanist.
3. The student is ultimately responsible for the coordination of all aspects of the hearing. This includes, but is not limited to:
   a. Establishing the date and time for the hearing, and ensuring all parties involved are able to attend.
   b. Reserving the performance hall for the hearing.
4. The faculty hearing serves several purposes:
   a. To give the student an opportunity for a "dry run" prior to the graded recital.
   b. To solicit constructive advice from faculty.
   c. To prevent students from "cramming" for their recital.
   d. To ensure the student has adequate preparation time for the recital.
5. Two situations constitute grounds for forfeiture of a student's recital:
   a. Not passing the faculty hearing.
   b. Failing to perform the faculty hearing within the prescribed time period.
Under both circumstances the student's recital date and fee are lost, and another recital date must be scheduled and another recital fee paid.

VOICE RECITALS: Graduate performance majors perform 50-60 minutes of music. Required repertoire: a variety of styles/periods sung in four languages. Graduate students may substitute an opera role for one of the two required degree recitals. If the voice faculty determine that said role is not of sufficient length to warrant the replacement of a full recital, they may required the student to perform and additional recital, the length and format of which shall be specified by the voice faculty.
3.12 Special Problems/Independent Study

Having a faculty member agree to teach you independently in a “special problems” course is an honor. It provides the music faculty with a way to allow top students to explore special topics and advanced studies not normally available. Since most music faculty members teach heavy loads and have many demands on their time, it should be understood that they are not obligated to agree to a special problems request, no matter how good the reason. For clarification, some sample scenarios are listed below.

Requests that would be considered favorably:

• Promising student with good grades approaches qualified faculty member to request a special problems study in an area of study not currently available in a listed course (such as Advanced Aural Skills, Music Publishing, Jazz Improvisation, Ethnomusicology, etc.).

• Upper-level student needs a specific course prior to its next official offering in order to graduate on time. The situation must NOT have arisen due to poor academic performance in previous courses.

Requests that would NOT be considered favorably:

• Student failed to pass a required class and requests a special problems course to make it up and not fall behind.

• A student’s poor academic performance in previous semesters has resulted in the need to take two classes that are scheduled at the same time. They are, therefore, requesting an independent study in one of these classes.

• An upper-level student’s poor academic performance in the past has resulted in them needing a single course in order to graduate, but that course is not scheduled to be offered until after the graduation date.

A good rule of thumb is that special problems courses ARE an opportunity for the best students to go above and beyond. They are NOT a way to solve problems caused by poor planning or poor academic performance.

4. Graduate Thesis

Those students who are pursuing a thesis degree will need to comply with the following requirements in cooperation with their advisor and/or thesis director.

1. Determine a director for the thesis – usually done in the second or third semester of graduate study, but this is not required. A faculty member is not obligated to oversee a thesis.


3. Enroll in MUS 589 (Thesis Research). During this course, the student will do the bulk of the research for the thesis, hone the topic as appropriate, assemble a
thesis committee, and create a thesis proposal which the committee approves. Can be in the third or fourth semester.

4. Enroll in MUS 590 (Thesis Writing). Once the thesis proposal has been approved, the student must continue to enroll in MUS 590 every semester in which university resources are used, until the thesis is completed and successfully defended. As the thesis nears completion, the candidate should circulate drafts to the committee members to get their input regarding revisions, additions, etc.

5. Schedule a Thesis Defense – Consult the current Graduate Bulletin and/or the Graduate School website for deadlines regarding the defense.

6. Prepare final version for Graduate School - Once the thesis has been successfully defended, the final document will need to be provided to the Graduate School. There are stringent guidelines provided on the Graduate School website and the candidate should use meticulous care to ensure that their submission fulfills all the requirements.

5. Facilities and Services

5.1 Guidelines for use of the Wright Music Building
The School of Music is very proud of its facilities and of the equipment provided for student use. It is vital to your education and that of the students who will follow you at SFA to respect and maintain the buildings and equipment at all times. Therefore, students, faculty, and guests in the School are expected to use the facilities and equipment with the utmost care so that they endure normal wear and tear only.

The School follows a “zero-tolerance” policy concerning persons who abuse or misuse School facilities or equipment. Students not following this policy will be asked to assume the costs for any repairs that may be involved. Furthermore, failure to comply with this policy may result in university fines being assessed and/or the placement of holds on student’s ability to register for classes or secure transcripts from the University.

5.2 Practice Room Policy
Most practice rooms are located on the second floor of the music building. Most practice rooms are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Locked practice rooms are monitored by the area coordinator and keys are checked out upon paying a $5 fee each semester. Three practice rooms dedicated for use by percussionists are found in the percussion suite. A number of practice rooms with grand pianos are reserved for keyboard majors. Several practice rooms contain clavinova electronic pianos for use by all students who have been trained to use the instruments.

Food, beverages and smoking are prohibited in the practice rooms or any other room in the music building. Do not leave books, music, or any other personal items in the practice rooms. If a student leaves a practice room for more than 10 minutes, that
room shall be considered vacant and available to other students. Leaving one’s possessions in the room WILL NOT “hold” the room longer than 10 minutes.

Students are asked not to rehearse in Cole Concert Hall, the Recital Hall, classrooms, or stairways and hallways without specific permission from the Music Office. Information on access to Cole Concert Hall and the Recital Hall is available in the section on “Student Recitals”. See the Music Office for forms on reserving the performance halls for concerts and rehearsals.

5.3 University-owned instruments
SFA owns many instruments which can be rented each semester. These instruments are intended for use in SFA Ensembles, methods classes and lessons. Instruments may be checked out through the Band Managers' Office, MUS 121A.

Students checking out an instrument owned by SFA will be assessed a nominal maintenance fee for each semester they check out a given instrument. In cases where a student needs two separate instruments in a given semester (such as a sousaphone player who also wants to play tuba in one of the concert bands), the faculty member in charge of fee assessment (currently the Director of Bands) may waive the fee for the second instrument.

Students who check out an instrument owned by SFA are expected to take care of the instrument to a standard deemed satisfactory by the instrumental faculty or their student designate(s). Though a maintenance fee is assessed for these instruments, students may be asked to pay for damages which appear to be beyond normal usage.

5.4 Instrument Storage Lockers/Book Lockers
The Tom and Peggy Wright Music Building has numerous lockers available for student instrument storage. Virtually all the instruments owned by the university are assigned a locker. Students are expected to keep the instrument in the locker assigned to that instrument when not in use. There are also several “book lockers” available for student use. All lockers are provided for student use, free of charge.

- Instrument lockers may be checked out from the Band Managers' Office, MUS 121A.
- String students may check out lockers from the Orchestra Manager in MUS 173.
- Book lockers may be checked out from the Music Office, MUS 150.
- Lockers should be checked in at the end of each semester. Students may not put a different lock on an SFA School of Music locker without permission from the supervisory faculty member of that area (usually the Band or Orchestra Director).
5.5 MIDI/Music Technology Lab

The School of Music’s MIDI/Music Technology Lab is designed to help SFA’s music students learn the current music technology skills they will need as future music teachers or performers. The goal of the music technology program is to prepare future music students to be knowledgeable and proficient in music technology. In the future most, if not all music careers, will contain some use of music technology. It is therefore vital for future music educators and professionals to have knowledge of music technology. The lab currently has thirteen music technology stations and each station contains an Apple computer. Ten stations are MIDI stations connected to various MIDI equipment like synthesizers, samplers and various MIDI controllers. The other three stations are connected to the Internet so that music students can use the web for music research.

The MIDI/Music Technology Lab has many different types of music-related software available for music student use. Music software programs available include: music notation, sequencing, aural skills, theory, CAI, digital audio, marching band design as well as other music related software.

The School of Music’s MIDI/Music Technology Lab is open to all music majors, music minors and other SFA students enrolled in a music course. The lab is open over forty hours per week, including evening and weekend hours.

The MIDI/Music Technology Lab is maintained by the music technology coordinator and student workers. Each hour the lab is open, there is a worker available to assist students with the use of music technology.

5.6 Piano Accompanying

Faculty and student accompanists are provided for the following activities in the School of Music: choral ensembles, large instrumental ensembles, opera productions, instrumental studio recitals, convocations, small and collective vocal seminars, and instrumental and vocal barriers. Students performing degree recitals must secure their own accompanist. All other requests for accompanists should be submitted to the director of accompanying.

6. University Policies

There are many other practical, procedural, and academic issues outlined in the graduate bulletin. Students should proactively consult with their advisor and the graduate bulletin under which they entered the degree to make sure they are in full compliance. Remember that it is the advisors job to assist, but the ultimate responsibility for all matters lies with the student.