# Master of Music

# Admissions Policies for Music Performance, Music Composition, and Music Pedagogy

# 2025-2026

## IMPORTANT CONTACTS

THE DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

| CONTACT | OFFICE | EXT [410.704-] | E-MAIL/WEB SITE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Dr. Melissa McCabe | CA 3095 | 2839 | mmcabe@towson.edu |
| Dr. Phillip Collister-Murray, MM Director | CA 2108 | 2815 | pcollister@towson.edu |
| Mary Ann Criss, Assistant to the Chair | CA 3095B | 2836 | mcriss@towson.edu |
| Karen Gempp, Administrative Assistant | CA 3095 | 2840 | kgempp@towson.edu |
| Music Department Website | | | www.towson.edu/music |

## COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS AND COMMUNICATION

The College of Fine Arts and Communication is one of six colleges of Towson University. The College, which consists of seven departments (Art, Dance, Electronic Media and Film, Mass Communication, Communication Studies, Music, and Theatre Arts), is under the direction of the Dean of Fine Arts and Communication. Each department has a chairperson who is nominated by its faculty and appointed by the Dean.

| **CONTACT** | **OFFICE** | **EXT [410.704-]** |
|---|---|---|
| Regina Carlow, Dean COFAC | CA 3001D | 3288 |
| Greg Faller, Associate Dean COFAC | CA 3001C | 3288 |
| April Parvizian, Executive Admin. Assistant | CA 3001 | 3288 |

## OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

This link will take you to the Graduate Studies homepage and many other useful resources and contacts
https://www.towson.edu/academics/graduate/contact.html
410-704-4723 (GRAD)

Dr. Sid Kaza, Dean Graduate School
Dr. David Ownby, Associate Dean

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# ADMISSION

Admission to the Master of Music program is granted by the Graduate School and requires a Bachelor of Music degree with a major in the area of proposed graduate study or its equivalent in addition to a successful audition for the Department of Music. A grade point average of 3.00 (B) overall or for the last 60 undergraduate semester hours is required for full admission. Conditional admission may be granted for a minimum grade point average of 2.50. Foreign students must obtain a TOEFL score of 550 or higher. TOEFL standards for students matriculating from UMBC's Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Contemporary American Music program are stated later in this document.

# AUDITION/INTERVIEW

A personal audition/interview is required where the professional competence in performance or composition is demonstrated. Once your application has been received, the graduate director will contact you to schedule an audition/interview. Audition requirements for each instrument as well as composition are cited later in this document. Applicants residing over 500 miles from Towson University may request permission to submit a video recording in place of a live audition.

# TA/GA POSITIONS IN MUSIC

Students who wish to be considered for TA positions in music theory or history & culture must complete the following by the Department of Music March audition date:

1) Audition or interview

2) Complete all application materials to Towson University and the Department of Music

3) Complete the music theory examination—music theory TA position only

GA positions are available in music technology and marching band. Requirements for these positions vary by the needs of the Department of Music.

# APPLICATION PROCESS

Please contact Dr. Terry B. Ewell, MM Director, via e-mail at tewell@towson.edu or by telephone (410-704-2824) if you have any questions regarding the program or admission.

Students apply online at the following web site: http://grad.towson.edu/. Data from the online application is immediately uploaded into the admissions database. Printable applications are available upon request. Send emails to grads@towson.edu. Application involves submission of the materials shown below. All materials should be submitted directly to the College of Graduate Studies and Research at the following address:

Graduate Admissions

7800 York Road, Suite 216

Towson University

Towson, MD 21252

# MATERIALS REQUIRED OF ALL APPLICANTS

1. General application form: http://grad.towson.edu/.

2. Supplemental application form specifically for the MM program available from Dr. Terry B. Ewell

3. Two reference forms with accompanying letters of recommendation. One reference should be from a current or former applied music teacher. The online reference form is available from the following link: http://grad.towson.edu/admission/recoma.asp.

4. Official transcript sent directly from the school where the undergraduate degree was/will be granted.

5. Auditions must be scheduled by emailing Dr. Terry B. Ewell at tewell@towson.edu.

## Additional Materials Required FROM International Applicants

Information on admission to Towson University for international students is contained on this website:

http://www.towson.edu/academics/graduate/admissions/apply/international.html

The information includes application requirements, admissions requirements, and information on provisional admissions. There is the possibility of provisional admissions for international graduate students who meet all other requirements except for the English proficiency.

**All applicants (domestic and international) will be contacted by a letter from the Graduate School regarding the ultimate disposition of their application.**

# AUDITION DATES AND APPLICATION DEADLINES

The Department of Music holds auditions four times annually (usually in January, February, March, and April). Applicants with a performance concentration must submit their applications two weeks prior to the published audition dates. Check the Department of Music web site for audition dates. Applicants with a concentration in composition must submit application materials by the following dates to assure consideration: December 21 for Fall semester entry and October 1 for Spring semester entry.

Auditions by video file are possible for those who live outside the Baltimore region.

# AUDITION REQUIREMENTS: COMPOSITION

1. A selection of work (portfolio) that provides a profile of the quality and variety of compositional and/or arranging experience. The portfolio should include an assortment of notated works and represent completion of a Bachelor's degree in composition or the equivalent. The portfolio should include at least one work of substantial proportion. Compositions should be presented with clear music manuscript or computer notation.

2. Submit recordings of the works (if available) in portfolio. All recordings should be on a single, high quality cassette or CD with applicant's name and repertoire clearly labeled.

3. A single-page, written statement regarding musical background and goals. This should include a description of prior compositional experience, a description of compositional influences, and professional goals as a composer.

# AUDITION REQUIREMENTS: PERFORMANCE AND MUSIC PEDAGOGY

All candidates must bring a list of their repertoire to the audition. This list should be comprehensive and include dates of performances.

# APPLIED INSTRUMENTS AND VOICE

## BRASS INSTRUMENTS:

## TRUMPET, FRENCH HORN, TROMBONE, EUPHONIUM, TUBA

Audition repertoire must include a minimum of 30 minutes of solo literature encompassing three contrasting stylistic periods and five orchestral excerpts. At least one solo work must be a complete sonata or concerto. Memorization and piano accompaniment are optional. Trumpet players are recommended to demonstrate proficiency on piccolo trumpet as well as B-flat and/or C trumpet.

## CLASSICAL GUITAR

Applicants must perform a 30-minute audition demonstrating technical and musical proficiency using literature representative of contrasting styles. Applicants will also be asked to play scales and to sight- read.

## JAZZ/COMMERCIAL PERFORMANCE

Applicants must be prepared to perform three compositions. One of the compositions presented must be a standard jazz tune. One must be based on "I Got Rhythm" progression. The third may be a standard jazz blues, ballad, or an original composition in any jazz style. The university will provide a stereo system (turntable, cassette, or compact disk) for the audition if the applicant wishes to use a recorded rhythm track (such as the Jamey Aebersold Series). Applicants may choose to provide their own rhythm section, consisting of piano or guitar, bass, and drums. The university will have a piano available upon request.

## KEYBOARD INSTRUMENTS:

### PIANO

Applicants must perform a 30-minute audition demonstrating technical and musical proficiency using representative literature of contrasting styles. While no specific repertoire is mandated, the program should include at least three contrasting styles. Examples of representative literature include preludes and fugues from *The Well-Tempered Clavier* by J. S. Bach; Sonata in F minor, Op. 57, by Beethoven; *Andante spianato and Grande Polonais*e, Op. 22 by Chopin; and *Piano Variations* by Aaron Copland. The selections must be played from memory. The applicant may use his/her undergraduate recital

repertoire as the audition. All applicants will be asked to sight read and may be asked to play scales and/or arpeggios. Applicants will be judged not only on the quality of their performance, especially with regard to accuracy of notes, rhythm, etc., but also on the level of musicianship exhibited at the audition.

## ORGAN

The audition will be in the form of a program selected by the applicant, the duration of which must be at least 30 minutes. No specific repertoire is required, but the following should be used as a guide, and all categories of the literature should be covered.

1. Works from early Spanish, early Italian, early French, or 17th century North German repertoire.

2. A major work of J. S. Bach (a prelude and fugue, toccata, or similar work).

3. A chorale setting of J. S. Bach which is either in trio form or a florid treatment of the chorale melody.

4. A major work of the romantic period, either French or German.

5. A contemporary work written after 1930. The style should contrast with that of the romantic-period work selected.
6. Sight Reading.

Applicants are judged not only on the quality of performance, especially in matters of accuracy of notes, rhythm, etc., but also on the level of musicianship exhibited at the audition.

## PERCUSSION

Applicants must perform one work for solo marimba or vibraphone demonstrating four-mallet technique and one etude, solo, or orchestral excerpt demonstrating two-mallet technique; one snare drum solo, etude or orchestral excerpt; and one timpani solo, etude, or orchestral excerpt. World percussion techniques and/or drum set are optional. All applicants will be asked to sight read on marimba and snare drum.

## STRINGED INSTRUMENTS: VIOLIN, VIOLA, CELLO, DOUBLE BASS

Audition Requirements: 1. two contrasting movements from a Sonata, Suite, or Partita by J. S. Bach from memory, 2. the first movement of a major concerto, and 3. one of the following: a contrasting movement of the same concerto, a sonata movement, or a virtuoso piece.

## VOICE

Six selections as follows (Nos. 1-5 memorized):

1. Art song in English.

2. Art song in Italian.

3. Art song in French.

4. Art song in German.

5. Operatic aria in original language and key.

6. Oratorio aria in original language and key.

All candidates must perform the equivalent of an undergraduate senior vocal recital. Each candidate's potential for completing the Master of Music Degree in Voice Performance will be judged according to the following criteria:

1. Musical skills: accuracy, phrasing, general musicality.

2. Basic knowledge of English, Italian, French and German diction.

3. Vocal skills appropriate for study of advanced vocal literature.

4. Performance potential: stage presence, poise, interpretation, expression, and communication.

## WOODWINDS:

## FLUTE

Applicants must perform a 30-minute audition which include at least three representative works from the Baroque, Classical, Romantic or Contemporary periods. At least one work must be a complete sonata or concerto. Memorization and piano accompaniment are optional. Applicants will also be asked to sight read.

## CLARINET

Applicants must perform a minimum of two major solo works, one from the 20th century and one from the 18th or 19th century. Orchestral excerpts from the Bonade or McGinnis Book I or II should also be included.

## BASSOON AND OBOE

Applicants must perform a 30-minute audition including at least three representative works from the Baroque, Classical, Romantic or Contemporary periods. Memorization and piano accompaniment are optional. All applicants will be asked to sight read.

## SAXOPHONE

Two contrasting complete pieces of considerable difficulty. Works by Albright, Dahl, Ibert, Denisov, Descenclos, Claude T Smith, Gotkovsky, and others serve as excellent examples of compositions to prepare for the audition.

# MUSIC THEORY PLACEMENT EXAM (OPTIONAL)

Those students with graduate level competencies in music theory may test out of MUSC 629, Concepts of Music Theory. Successful students will take MUSC 631, Advanced Theory. The theory exam is designed to be diagnostic, and questions may be asked in a wide variety of formats. Complete information including a practice test and online resources are available at

https://www.towson.edu/cofac/departments/music/programs/musictheory.html

Students should review and possess fluency in the following areas:

1. Have complete mastery and fluency with all music rudiments.
2. Know the conventions of common practice voice leading and part writing rules.
3. Know how to recognize all cadence types.
4. Know the functional use of all diatonic and chromatic harmonies in the common practice.
5. Know how to recognize non-harmonic tones.
6. Be able to analyze a tonal work.
7. Know how to recognize phrase structures.
8. Be able to analyze simple and large-scale forms.
9. Have the ability to do melodic and harmonic dictation.
10. Have the ability to sing a modulating tonal melody at sight.

The following textbooks are recommended for study:
1. Roig-Francoli, *Harmony in Context*, McGraw Hill
2. Aldwell & Schachter, *Harmony and Voice Leading*, Wadsworth Publishing
3. Laitz, *The Complete Musician*, Oxford University Press

Placement for music theory courses will be determined on the following criteria based on the optional theory exam.

1) Students scoring 80% or above may enroll in any graduate-level music theory course.
2) Students scoring below 80% must enroll in Concepts of Music Theory (MUSC 629) as part of their degree program Once Concepts of Music Theory (MUSC 629) has been completed with a grade of C or higher, students are eligible to take any other graduate-level music theory course.

For further information contact:

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