

The University of Texas Rio Grande ValleyTM

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School of Music

Student Handbook 2023-2024

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WELCOME!

The School of Music at University of Texas Rio Grande Valley is committed to improving the quality of life of its student body through education and the desire for all students to succeed through the practice of high ethical standards. The UTRGV School of Music is comprised of highly motivated, talented and caring students as well as dedicated and outstanding faculty.

We provide a nurturing environment with very high standards and consider the School of Music a place where dedicated musicians collaborate, thrive, and grow. Our programs and curricula are designed to help prepare students for a professional career in music. It is our hope that you will take full advantage of the educational and musical opportunities that we have to offer.

As you embark upon the first steps of your musical career, our faculty and staff are ready to serve your educational needs. We are very pleased that you have chosen the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley School of Music as the place to further your musical education and we wish you every success in the coming years.

Sincerely, Kurt Martínez
Director of the School of Music
Professor of Guitar

INTRODUCTION

The Music Student Handbook is designed to provide information concerning your musical studies at the UTRGV School of Music. It contains information about departmental policies and procedures, programs, facilities, services, curricula, and degree plans. The Music Student Handbook is considered official School of Music policy and is current as of January 2024. Please realize that there may be changes in policies, procedures, curricula, and degree plans that occur periodically. These policy changes will be updated in the handbook at appropriate times based upon the implementation of such new policies and procedures. For more information about the University policies and procedures, please read [UTRGV's Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs and Student Policies](#). Please consider the Music Student Handbook as a resource and tool to aid you in the successful completion of your musical education. As such, it is incumbent upon each student to be familiar with and to refer to the handbook periodically to ensure that all requirements and policies are being followed.

Mission Statement

The UTRGV School of Music prepares students to succeed as teachers, performers, and scholars by studying diverse musical styles, genres, and traditions; conducting research; and collaborating with each other as well as with local, national, and global communities. Through extensive community engagement, service learning, and exceptional performance opportunities, we expand the understanding of music and enrich the cultural life in our local communities and beyond.

Vaquero Honor Code

- WE ARE HONEST – We do our own work and are honest with one another in all matters. We understand how any act of dishonesty conflicts as much with academic achievement as with the values of honesty and integrity.
- WE HAVE INTEGRITY – We will make personal and academic integrity fundamental in all of our endeavors.
- WE ARE RESPECTFUL – We act civilly and cooperate with one another for the common good. We will strive to create an environment and a culture in which people respect and listen to one another. We recognize a university is, above all, a place for the exchange of ideas, popular and unpopular. It is the one institution in society that encourages challenges to conventional wisdom. Consequently, we pledge to encourage the exchange of ideas and to allow others to participate and express their views openly.
<https://www.utrgv.edu/studentlife/resources/vaquero-honor-code/index.htm>

Please also see the statement on [Testing and Academic Integrity](#) below.

SCHOOL OF MUSIC ADMISSIONS

Performance Audition

In addition to being admitted to the University, all potential music majors (including transfer students) must schedule and perform an entrance audition to be considered for admission to the School of Music.¹ Audition dates, as well as audition material, will be posted on the UTRGV School of Music website. Students who wish to audition should begin by reading the Audition Requirements and filling out the Audition Request Form on the School of Music website ([here](#)). Official audition dates for the 2024-2025 Academic Year are:

¹ Students who are accepted to the School of Music by audition are accepted to a specific degree plan (i.e. the BM in Music (Voice, Teacher Certification) or the BM in Music Technology). Students who wish to change degree plans (i.e. from a BM in Music (Teacher Certification) to a BM in Performance) may re-audition to change their degree plan either during School of Music audition days or at end of semester juries before a panel of faculty members in the specific applied area.

Brownsville Campus	Edinburg Campus
Saturday, February 17, 2024 Saturday, March 2, 2024	Saturday, February 24, 2024 Saturday, March 9, 2024

If a student misses the scheduled auditions, they should contact the [applied music professor](#) or [auditions coordinator](#) in their instrumental/vocal area to schedule an audition. Final deadlines for auditions to the School of Music are:

Fall Semester	Spring Semester
August 1	December 15

Note that acceptance to the university does not guarantee acceptance into the School of Music. Transfer students should be sure to check for their applied area's audition requirements. Note that transfer students must successfully pass a sophomore barrier audition in order to enroll in upper level study, and should contact their area's audition coordinator to ensure that they know what these requirements are. Students planning to transfer from South Texas College can view the articulation agreement for the Bachelor of Music between UTRGV and STC [here](#).

Theory/Piano Entrance Exam

All new music majors and music minors are required to take an entrance exam in music theory. The exam is for incoming students who have not previously taken Music Theory I or successfully passed Fundamentals of Music. The exam will be on the first day of class in either Music Theory I (MUSI 1211) or Sight-Singing and Ear-Training I (MUSI 1116) and will be held in Brownsville and Edinburg. The Music Theory Coordinator will contact all incoming students who have been accepted by audition to the School of Music with information about the exam expectations prior to the start of the fall and spring semesters. The exam allows the department to place you in the proper theory courses for your first two semesters at UTRGV.

School of Music Scholarships and Financial Aid

UTRGV offers numerous scholarships as well as other forms of financial aid – consult the resources and timeline on the [UTRGV Financial Aid](#) website to explore your options and to stay aware of deadlines!

School of Music Scholarships

To be eligible for a School of Music Scholarship, new and returning students should submit their application at www.utrgv.edu/applyscholarships by the appropriate deadline (see the [website](#) as well as the deadlines below). To be considered for a School of Music Scholarship for the 2024-2025 Academic Year:

- ✓ *Incoming music students must:*
 - Audition on one of the scheduled audition dates (see above) or submit their audition video by March 9, 2024
 - [Apply to UTRGV for admission](#) (students who have not been accepted cannot be considered for scholarships), and
 - Submit the FAFSA, and submit a [UTRGV Scholarship Application](#) (note that the scholarship deadline for incoming freshmen/first-year students is December 1).
- ✓ *Returning music students must:*
 - Submit a [UTRGV Scholarship Application](#) by February 1 for priority consideration (returning students who submit after this date may be eligible for scholarship consideration after this date if funding is available).

School of Music Scholarship awards are based upon musical achievement and potential, and are awarded based on the student's admission/scholarship audition (incoming students), academic and musical performance in the degree (returning students), faculty recommendations, eligibility, and the student's overall financial aid package. Note that most School of Music scholarships require that students be enrolled full-time (12 hours) and be a music major.

ADVISEMENT

Every music major has a music faculty advisor who is the student's applied teacher². It is incumbent upon the student to keep the faculty advisor informed of all plans relative to coursework taken each semester. The applied faculty advisor will meet with the student each semester to plan courses to be taken the next semester and to ensure progress towards the degree.

If you are a First-Year Student (or otherwise subject to [mandatory advisement](#))

- ✓ View the [UTRGV First Year Advising Guide](#) for instructions on UTRGV Orientations and Advisement
- ✓ Schedule your advising session (you can set up an appointment [here](#))
- ✓ Visit the UTRGV Academic Advising Center (locations on both campuses [here](#))
- ✓ Meet with your Applied teacher for music advisement

If you are a Second-Year Student or Beyond

- ✓ Contact your applied instructor for advisement.

Important Contact Information

UTRGV Academic Advising Center

Edinburg: International Trade & Technology Building (ITT)

Brownsville: Main 1.402

Email: academicadvising@utrgv.edu

Phone: (956) 665-7120

Website: <https://www.utrgv.edu/advising/index.htm>

School of Music Undergraduate Advising Coordinator

Dr. Jason Mitchell

E-mail: jason.mitchell@utrgv.edu

Note that students should take any advising concerns to their applied teachers/School of Music advisors first. Then, if the student's School of Music advisor is not able to address the problem, the advisor will contact the Advising Coordinator. School of Music advisors and/or applied teachers may refer students with particularly challenging problems to the Advising Coordinator for further advisement.

Advisement Holds

(Typically, these only apply to students for whom [Mandatory Advising](#) is required.)

An advisement hold is released after a student has been advised by an advisor from the UTRGV Academic Advising Center. Mandatory Advisement takes place according to the procedures outlined in the [First Year](#)

² If you are not currently enrolled in applied lessons, consult with your most recent applied teacher, your area coordinator, or with the School of Music director to determine your music faculty advisor.

[Advising Guide](#) and/or the [TSI Advising Program](#) as appropriate. Access the following websites for more information:

- [Mandatory Advising List](#) (Check here to see if Mandatory Advising is required for you.)
- [Schedule Your Advising Session](#)
- [First Year Advising Guide](#)

Rotation of Courses

Note that not all School of Music courses are offered on both campuses every semester – especially highly-specialized, upper-division courses. These courses are offered on a rotation. Students should consult their applied instructor, ensemble directors, or other appropriate faculty to find out which courses are offered on a rotation, and to plan ahead so they don't miss any classes! Students can view the current course rotation under Academic Resources on the [School of Music Student Resources](#) page, and should check with their advisors for updates.

MUSIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

The UTRGV School of Music is housed within the Performing Arts Complex on the Edinburg campus, and at the Music, Science, and Learning Center and the TSC Arts Center on the Brownsville campus. The Music Buildings on both campuses contain offices, studios, classrooms, storage areas, practice rooms, rehearsal halls, electronic keyboard lab, and computer music lab.

Acceptable use of UTRGV Property

Equipment and materials belonging to the Department of Music may not be used for any performance or event not directly associated with UTRGV. This includes, but is not limited to, all instruments, electronic gear, chairs, music stands, and sheet music. Students are not allowed to remove any items from classrooms, practice rooms, or storage areas without the specific permission of the appropriate School of Music faculty member. You must return all materials promptly to their original location after you use them. As is stated in UTRGV HOP Policy [STU 02-100](#) C.4.g., "Any student who engages in the unauthorized use of property, equipment, supplies, buildings, or facilities owned or controlled by the UT System or UTRGV is subject to discipline."

Facilities Usage

The Music Building days and hours of operation are from 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 midnight every day of the regular semester except during school holidays when the campus is closed. The music facilities are to be used only for university-sponsored events or ensembles (note that UTRGV Student Organizations must be in good standing with the Dean of Student's Office). Student access to specific facilities, (Practice Rooms, Rehearsal Facilities, and Classrooms), and procedures for requesting access, are detailed below.

Practice Rooms

School of Music Students have access to practice rooms in the EPACC (Edinburg) and BMSLC (Brownsville) buildings during the School of Music's hours of operations. Practice rooms are strictly for the use of School of Music students enrolled in classes, and by ensembles directed by UTRGV faculty. All others need prior approval from the School of Music to use these facilities. Contact the Music Office at (956) 665-3471 (Edinburg) or (956) 882-7768 (Brownsville) to inquire about use of these facilities.

Practice Room Etiquette

Practice facilities are a valuable School of Music resource, and are in high demand. It is the responsibility of all School of Music students to show courtesy towards their fellow students, and towards the staff and student employees charged with monitoring and maintaining the practice facilities:

- Please use your practice-room time responsibly and efficiently. Do not leave practice rooms idle or “reserve” them by leaving your instrument or other belongings for undue amounts of time (10 minutes should be more than enough for a break!). Please remember that other students need to practice too!
- Please only use these facilities to rehearse or practice. If you are doing something other than those two activities, you should be doing it somewhere else.
- Food and drink (other than water in a closed container) are not allowed in the practice rooms. Please do not place water bottles or containers on the pianos!
- Note that some practice rooms are only for use by specific instruments (Piano or Percussion, for example). Please do not use these practice rooms unless authorized to do so.

Please report any maintenance issues (pianos or other equipment) or concerns about discourteous behavior to the practice room monitors, or to Norma Salinas or Brenda Vela.

Classrooms/Rehearsal Facilities

Classrooms may only be reserved for student use by School of Music faculty, and the faculty member must be present during the rehearsal or activity. Students who wish to reserve a classroom space should contact their instructor, student organization sponsor, or other appropriate faculty member to make these arrangements. Students (and the supervising faculty member) are responsible for resetting the room to its original condition at the conclusion of the activity. Please do NOT remove chairs, tables, music stands, or any other equipment from the room!

Lockers

A limited number of instrument lockers are available for student use. Lockers are checked out to students on a “first-come, first served” basis. Lockers will be issued to students and assigned according to the type and size of instrument they play, and locks will be provided by the School of Music.

- Students may only use a locker specifically assigned to that student.
- Assignment of a locker size and location is solely the purview of the School of Music. Students with documented physical disabilities or limitations should communicate their needs to the School of Music office and every effort will be made to assign them a locker in a location that will be accessible to them.
- No stickers or writing on any surface of the lockers, inside or out.
- Only locks assigned by the department are permitted.
- Students may not share the locker combination with anyone.
- Students must remove all contents of lockers and return locks to the department before the end of the final exam week in May.
- Lockers will be assigned at the beginning of the Fall semester. New assignments in the Spring semester will depend on locker availability.
- A lock that is lost, damaged, or stolen will be replaced at the student’s expense of \$8.00.
- The policies and appropriate disciplinary actions described in UTRGV HOP Policy STU 02-100 will apply to all student issued lockers and locks.

Failure to comply with these policies will result in loss of privileges and potential disciplinary action by the School of Music at UTRGV.

Instrument/Equipment Check-out

Some UTRGV School of Music equipment and instruments are available for check out by students for a limited period of time (typically a month or a semester) to enable them to fulfill course requirements. All students borrowing any of this equipment must abide by set School of Music deadlines and procedures. Please note that:

- You must return all instruments you have checked out immediately after the applied jury each semester or by the posted School of Music deadline.
- If a piece of equipment or instrument is damaged or stolen, it is your responsibility to repair it or replace it.
- Any UTRGV School of Music equipment is required to be stored in a locked locker if left on campus. Do not leave any UTRGV equipment/instruments in an unsecured location even for a moment.
- NEVER leave your UTRGV equipment/ instrument in your car.
- Please make certain that renters/homeowners insurance policy covers the replacement cost of the instrument. If not, you should purchase instrument insurance for the UTRGV equipment/instrument as you will be held fully accountable for its replacement should it be misplaced, stolen, or destroyed.
- It is assumed that any long-term need of equipment/instruments will result in the purchase of that item by the student.
- Equipment managed by the Music Technology program can only be checked out by students enrolled in a Music Technology degree plan. This equipment can only be checked out for short-term use (typically for a few hours), for the completion of assignments in Music Technology courses, and cannot leave campus. Any check-outs require approval by a Music Technology faculty member.

Performance Hall Scheduling

Only faculty are allowed to schedule performances, recitals, or other activities in UTRGV performing facilities and other UTRGV venues. Students who are expecting to schedule a recital or other performance should speak to their applied teacher or ensemble director/coach to ask about availability. Performance spaces currently available for performance on each campus are:

Brownsville Campus

TSC PAC Performance Hall (Not available for student recitals)

BMSLC 1.217 – Multipurpose Hall (Available for student recitals)

Edinburg Campus

UTRGV PAC Performance Hall (Not available for student recitals)

UTRGV Choir Recital Hall (Available for student recitals)

UTRGV Orchestra Hall (Available for student recitals)

Note that the Library Auditorium in Edinburg is unavailable for performances or other activities until further notice. As stated above, the UTRGV Choir Hall and the Orchestra Hall are available for student recitals. Students may also elect to hold their recitals off campus. Note that UTRGV is not responsible for any fees or liability associated with off-campus degree recitals.

MUSIC ENSEMBLES

Music Ensembles perform on campus and in various communities throughout Texas and the nation. Ensembles are open to all students by audition, regardless of major, and may serve as elective courses in any college of the university. Please contact the [ensemble's director](#) for audition requirements.

Major Ensembles

Major Ensembles are the flagship ensembles of the UTRGV School of Music. Each music major is required to take a specific number of semesters of Major Ensemble (see the UTRGV Undergraduate Catalog for specific requirements), and these ensembles are also open to non-majors as well by audition.

Major Ensembles:

- Wind Ensemble
- Concert Band/Marching Band
- Symphony Orchestra
- Master Chorale/Chamber Choir/University Choir (all listed under Master Chorale)
- Guitar Ensemble
- Mariachi Ensemble
- Piano Accompanying

Many of these ensembles can also function as secondary ensembles for other Music degree plans. Check your degree plan in the Catalog and in DegreeWorks, or check with your School of Music advisor.

Secondary Ensembles

All music majors are required to take a specific number of Secondary Ensemble courses. These courses are opportunities to experience different repertoire, musical styles, skill sets, and genres associated with the student's applied area and discipline. Many are chamber ensembles that stress the study, preparation and performance of small-ensemble music in like- instrument groupings, mixed-instrument ensembles and vocal ensembles, and many applied music studios have formed ensembles with their music majors. Many of the ensembles have performed at regional, national, and international venues such as the Texas Music Educators Association State Convention, the National Trumpet Competition, the Eastern Trombone Workshop, the International Tuba/Euphonium Conference, and the Percussive Arts Society International Convention. Current secondary ensemble offerings include:

Secondary/Chamber Ensembles

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Opera Workshop | • Brass Choir Ensemble |
| • Flute Choir | • Chamber Music for Strings |
| • Clarinet Choir | • Chamber Music for Piano |
| • Saxophone Quartets | • Guitar Quartet |
| • Trumpet Ensemble | • Pep Band |
| • Horn Ensemble | • Latin Ensemble |
| • Trombone Choir | • Jazz Combo |
| • Tuba/Euphonium Ensemble | • Jazz Ambassadors |
| • Low Brass Choir | • Modern Band |
| • Percussion Ensemble | • New Music Ensemble |

Note that all students who participate in ANY Major or Secondary ensemble must be registered for the class. Many of these ensembles have Zero-Credit sections for non-majors or for majors who have completed their ensemble requirements, so if you are interested in participating in an ensemble that is not currently on your degree plan, talk to the director to find out if a Zero-Credit section is an option.

A limited number of instruments are available to students who wish to join these groups.

ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

General Requirements

All full-time (12 semester hours or more) music majors are required to adhere to the following policies and procedures:

All students seeking a Bachelor of Music degree must:

- ✓ Register and participate in prescribed [Major Ensemble](#) until ensemble degree requirements are completed.
- ✓ Register for applied music until all applied degree requirements (including all jury, sophomore barrier, and recital requirements) are completed. (See [Sophomore Barrier](#) and [Junior](#) and [Senior Recital](#) Requirements below for more information).
- ✓ Register for and pass a minimum of three semester hours of class piano (Piano for Music Majors I-III) with a C or higher.
- ✓ Pass a sophomore barrier in order to progress to upper-level applied study (barrier requirements are determined by the applied area)
- ✓ Complete all required semesters of [Required Concert/Lab Attendance](#)
- ✓ Perform in at least one public recital or solo/chamber performance per semester (this can be fulfilled through performances in recital labs, studio recitals, or applied studio classes/seminars).
- ✓ Fulfill all degree recital requirements as prescribed in the degree plan prior to graduation.
 - These may vary by degree plan, but typically include a senior recital for BM Music with Teacher Certification, a junior and senior recital for BM Performance, and a sophomore barrier for all BM degrees. Look up the specific requirements for your degree plan [here](#).
- ✓ Make a grade of “C” or better in every music course taken toward the degree.
 - In sequential music courses, a grade of “C” must be made in order to progress to the next music course in the sequence.
 - In the Music Theory/SS &ET I-IV sequence, students must pass BOTH the concurrent Music Theory and SS &ET courses with a C or above to progress to the next level in either course (for example, a student who received a C in Music Theory I but received a D in SS & ET I would not be allowed to enroll in either Music Theory II or SS & ET II until they retook SS & ET I and passed it with a C or higher).
- ✓ Fulfill all other degree requirements as stipulated in the UTRGV Undergraduate Catalog.

Grading Policy

It is departmental and university policy that faculty list grading procedures and policies in their course syllabi. Faculty will follow the grading policies as outlined in their syllabi. Grades are assigned to students in a fair and equitable manner based upon the grading policies and procedures listed in the syllabi.

Music Faculty grade and return homework, tests, and other assignments in a reasonable and timely manner given the circumstances of their teaching assignments. Faculty maintain accurate grades of students' work and will make available an accounting of a student's academic standing when requested by the students through a scheduled appointment.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Attendance

Responsibility for class attendance rests with the student, and students are responsible for reading and abiding by the attendance policies included in course syllabi, as well as UTRGV Attendance Policies (available [here](#)).

UTRGV policy states that UTRGV will excuse students from attending classes or other required activities (including exams), for the following reasons:

1. Observance of Religious Holidays (note that students need to notify instructors of the absence prior to the census date as per UTRGV policy). See the [UTRGV Attendance Policy](#) information on acknowledged holy days and accommodations requests.
2. Absences for University-Recognized Events
3. Active Military Service

In all of the above instances, students are responsible for notifying faculty of absences and making arrangements to make up work and assignments. Students who will be absent due to multiple School of Music activities should consult the School of Music Student Attendance Policy ([Appendix B](#)) to ensure that their absences do not exceed what is allowed by the School of Music.

Students should consult the syllabus for the instructor's policy on excused and unexcused absences, and should always alert their applied instructors of any absences (excused or unexcused) as soon as possible as a matter of professional courtesy. Excused absences in applied lessons may be made up at the discretion and convenience of the applied instructor. Unexcused absences will not be considered for a make-up lesson.

Student Conduct

Students are expected to comply with faculty expectations as stated in the syllabus in face-to-face and online classes and rehearsals (including the use of cell phones and other devices), and with the expectations outlined in UTRGV HOP Policy [STU 02-100](#): Student Conduct and Discipline in all UTRGV activities, including in person and online courses, rehearsals, performances, and other events. Faculty may ask any student who disrupts or obstructs teaching, learning, or performing activities to leave the classroom or venue until the conclusion of the activity. Bullying, hazing, and other forms of harassment are also subject to disciplinary action as described in [STU 02-100](#). Students who have concerns about disruptive behavior, bullying, or harassment by students, faculty, or staff should report their concerns via [Vaqueros Report It](#) or directly to the School of Music Director.

Testing and Academic Integrity

It is departmental and university policy that all tests be administered in a fair and equitable manner, and students are expected and required to follow testing procedures and policies and complete assignments in an atmosphere of honesty and truthfulness. The School of Music seeks to uphold the [Vaquero Honor Code](#)'s shared values of honesty, integrity and mutual respect in our interactions and relationships. In this regard, academic integrity is fundamental in our actions, as any act of dishonesty conflicts as much with academic achievement as with the values of honesty and integrity. The Writing Center is an excellent resource to assist in learning about and avoiding plagiarism in writing. Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to: cheating, [plagiarism \(including self-plagiarism\)](#), and collusion; submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person; taking an examination for another person; any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student; or the attempt to commit such acts (Board of Regents Rules and Regulations, STU 02-100, and UTRGV Academic Integrity Guidelines). **All violations of Academic Integrity will be reported to Student Rights and Responsibilities through [Vaqueros Report It](#).**

Student Travel

Students traveling as part of ANY School of Music trip (including, but not limited to, trips organized by university faculty/personnel, registered student organizations, and trips that are endorsed by UTRGV through financial support or by sending students to represent the university through ensembles, competitions, presentations, or performances) must abide by the policies detailed on the [UTRGV Student Travel website](#), the Student [Domestic](#) and/or [International](#) Travel Guidelines, and the UTRGV HOP [Student Travel policy \(STU 01—300\)](#). Students traveling in School of Music trips are expected to abide by the parameters and itineraries set by the travel coordinator and accompanying faculty, and inappropriate or irresponsible behavior will be reported to the Dean of Students and may be subject to disciplinary action. Please keep in mind that you are representing the UTRGV School of Music and act accordingly! These trips are exciting opportunities for performance, networking, professional growth, and camaraderie with fellow students. Please help ensure that they are also safe, productive and, yes, enjoyable for everyone involved.

SCHOOL OF MUSIC POLICIES

Ensemble participation

Each student must register for and participate in the appropriate major ensemble each semester until they have completed their degree plan's major ensemble requirement. See your applied teacher and refer to your degree plan for more information. Students must not register for upper-division (3000+) ensemble sections unless they have successfully passed their sophomore barrier and are registered for upper-division applied lessons. Students who have completed the required number of major ensemble hours are encouraged to continue to participate and enroll in available zero-credit sections of the major ensemble.

Applied Lessons – Auditions and Placement

Students must pass an audition for a panel of faculty members in the specific applied area in order to begin applied lesson study. Applied study is prioritized first for majors in that applied area, then for music minors and secondary students. Only after all of the above students are enrolled will students outside of the School of Music be considered for applied lesson enrollment.

Enrollment and/or placement in specific applied studios is at the discretion of the applied instructor and available hours within their teaching load. Those not sufficiently advanced for college level applied lessons are encouraged to enroll in “class” lessons, if offered in that semester.

Applied Lessons – Ensemble Requirement

All students enrolled in applied lessons must also enroll in appropriate major ensembles required for their degree plan (i.e. Master Chorale for voice, Symphony Orchestra for strings, etc.) until they have completed their degree plan's major ensemble requirement. See the list of [Major Ensembles](#) above.

Applied Lessons – Scheduling

At the beginning of each semester, students should contact their applied teacher to find out that teacher's procedure for scheduling or assigning lesson times. Procedures differ, but students should be prepared to submit a complete class schedule to the assigned applied instructor by the first day of classes if necessary. Lesson time assignments are at the discretion of the applied teacher in reference to registered course conflicts of the students. Students must schedule their primary lesson time prior to scheduling secondary applied lessons or coaching times. Non-university conflicts are not guaranteed to be accommodated in applied lesson scheduling. Lessons may be assigned anytime in the normal class hours of the university.

Applied Lessons – Grading

Applied lessons are typically graded through an assessment of attendance, preparation, an end-of-semester jury, barrier, or recital, and other requirements as determined by the applied instructor, and instructors will detail the criteria for assessing these activities and how they will be weighed in the applied student's final grade in the course syllabus. Applied areas have the prerogative to mandate that students achieve a specific grade on their barrier jury or recital in order to receive a grade of C or higher in the appropriate applied section and proceed to the next level of applied study; i.e., a student might be required to receive an averaged grade of 70% or higher from the jury panel for their sophomore barrier in order to receive C or higher in Applied IV and proceed to Applied V (any area policies regarding jury, barrier, or recital grading must be approved by a vote of area faculty). Students should consult their applied lesson syllabus and area policies to determine applied lesson, barrier, and recital grading policies.

Failure to Enroll in Applied Study

If prior to completion of your degree recitals, you do not enroll in applied lessons for two consecutive semesters, you will be administratively dropped from the degree, and will need to re-audition before continuing applied lessons or other music classes. Applied study enrollment and need to re-audition will be tracked by the applied teacher and/or the applied area as necessary, and students will be notified by their applied teacher or area coordinator if they need to re-audition.

Applied Lesson Juries

Juries are a formal performance covering all the work over the course of the semester. In some performance areas, students may be required to play a scale or technique jury, earlier in the semester. The day and time of the jury are assigned by the applied area. Not attending your required jury without express permission from your applied instructor may result in an automatic course failure. Consult your applied instructor's course syllabus for specific jury grading policies.

Note that in semesters that students have successfully performed a degree recital, they are not required to play a jury. Also, faculty in a specific applied area may decide that other substantive performances within the same semester can count as sufficient "performance testing" to waive the jury requirement. Such performances may include principal operatic roles, concerto performances, non-degree recitals, etc., and guidelines for these exemptions should be stipulated in the appropriate area handbooks. Specific area requirements for repertoire, memorization, length/number of selections, language (voice), and other requirements are specified in the appropriate area handbooks.

Collaborative Pianist Policies

All students who regularly perform with UTRGV Collaborative Personnel (faculty, graduate assistants, or students) should familiarize themselves with the current Collaborative Piano Policies – available in [Appendix A](#).

Students are responsible for understanding and following scheduling and rehearsal procedures, preparing for rehearsals, maintaining good, professional communication with their assigned pianist – especially when communicating any scheduling changes or conflicts – and for being responsible and respectful in all rehearsals and communications. Questions about the Collaborative Pianist Piano Policies should be directed to the Accompanying Coordinator or the School of Music Director.

Recital Lab Performance and Concert Attendance

Recital Lab Performances

Recital Labs are opportunities for students to perform for the School of Music community, and there are several opportunities for students to take advantage of this throughout the semester. Any music student taking lessons, chamber music group, or student enrolled in academic courses is eligible to perform or present a topic on these labs (with instructor approval).

Students who wish to perform will need to fill out the online Lab Request form on the School of Music website (<http://www.utrgv.edu/music/> under “Quick Links”). Note that students should confirm with their instructors, as well as any other performing personnel, before submitting the request (some instructors prefer to submit the requests themselves). In 2023-2024, Labs are typically scheduled from 3:30-4:45 on Tuesdays in Brownsville and on Thursdays in Edinburg. Specific dates are listed on the online form. More detailed policies and procedures for Recital Lab are available in the [Recital Lab and Concert Attendance Policies and Procedures](#) on the UTRGV School of Music website.

Required Concert/Recital Lab Attendance (Departmental Requirement)

All UTRGV music majors are required to complete a certain number of semesters of Concert/Recital Lab attendance as part of their Bachelor of Music degree:

- BM Music (Teacher Certification), Performance, Music Composition, Music Technology, and all other students pursuing a Bachelor of Music (BM) degree are required to complete **5 semesters** of Concert/Lab attendance.
- Music minor and graduate students do not have a School of Music Concert/Recital Lab attendance requirement, but are welcome and encouraged to attend, perform, and present.
- Concert/Recital Lab requirements for transfer students will be pro-rated based on the student's previous coursework and applied study placement. Transfer students should contact the recital lab coordinators to determine their recital lab requirements.

To complete one semester of Concert/Recital Lab attendance, students are required to attend 15 qualifying events during that semester. These events can be any combination of on-campus concerts or Recital Lab performances and may include up to 2 approved off-campus concerts per semester. Please see the [Recital Lab and Concert Attendance Policies and Procedures](#) for more detailed information.

Practice Expectations

Students are required to practice exercises, repertoire, and all assignments given by their applied instructor – the recommended practice time is a minimum of 12 hours per week depending on the needs of your instrument and best practices for maintaining good health and avoiding injury. Your applied teacher can advise you on appropriate practice habits. Students may be assigned to maintain a journal of practice habits by their applied instructor which can be counted in the semester grade as determined by their applied instructor. Since all applied students (Performance or Education tracks) receive the same amount of applied instruction, practice expectations are the same for both degree tracks. The specific applied instructor is permitted to alter this expectation as appropriate to each student and the needs of their development on their instrument.

Purchasing of Music/Scores/Études/Technique books

You **MUST** provide your own sheet music for applied lessons either via purchasing complete scores, anthologies, or collections; purchasing individual selections either via traditional publications or authorized online options; or

through public domain resources such as imslp.org. In order for the UTRGV School of Music to be in compliance with copyright laws and to maintain National Schools of Music Association accreditation standards, this rule must be strictly followed. It is permissible for your applied instructor to duplicate a page or two of a solo or etude to get you started working on your lessons. However, they are not permitted to duplicate an entire work or its accompaniment. You must also purchase your own method books as required. To assist you in finding a vendor you may want to ask your applied instructor for suggestions. The following is an incomplete list of vendors that may carry the music that you will need. Many of them can be found online through a Google search:

- <http://sheetmusicplus.com>
- <http://www.hickeys.com>
- <https://www.dornpub.com>
- <http://www.penders.com>
- <http://imslp.org> (free)
- <http://www.rbcmusic.com>
- <https://robertkingmusic.com>
- <https://www.steveweissmusic.com>

Textbooks and Course Materials

All students are expected to purchase the required texts for each course immediately after the first class and once the syllabus for that class has been received. An instructor will be within their rights to drop a student for failure to comply with this policy (instructors should note any deadlines to comply in their course syllabi). Students are encouraged to purchase textbooks at the University Bookstore.

ACADEMIC COURSEWORK AND ADVISING INFORMATION

Students are responsible for knowing the requirements of their degree plans, reviewing their progress in DegreeWorks, and actively collaborating with their school of music and UTRGV advisors to ensure their timely progress and success in the degree. All current School of Music degree plans are listed in the undergraduate catalog at <https://utrgv.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2023-2024/undergraduate-catalog/undergraduate-programs-by-college/college-of-fine-arts/school-of-music/>, and additional information about some aspects of the degree plans are included below.

School of Music Degree Plans

Undergraduate Degree Plans

All Undergraduate Degree Plans (major and minor) and Certificates available in the School of Music can be found in the catalog at <https://utrgv.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2023-2024/undergraduate-catalog/undergraduate-programs-by-college/college-of-fine-arts/school-of-music/>

Graduate Degree Plans

All Graduate Degree Plans available in the School of Music can be found in the catalog at <https://utrgv.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2023-2024/graduate-catalog/graduate-academic-programs-by-college/college-of-fine-arts/school-of-music/>

Music Theory Sequence

All music students must be proficient in music theory and the related coursework. All first-semester students will take a theory placement exam at the beginning of the semester (see [above](#)) to determine any theoretical

knowledge prior to attending college (transfer students should consult with their applied teachers and/or a member of the Music Theory faculty to assess their skills and determine and address any deficiencies). Results of the placement exams will determine where students will begin their music theory sequence at UTRGV. Music Theory and corresponding Ear-Training/ Sight-singing courses should be taken during the same semester to ensure coordination of material studied. Students should not proceed in the sequence of coursework without passing both the theory and ear-training courses with a grade of C or higher. The sequence for music theory courses is as follows:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ✓ MUSI 1211 Music Theory I | ✓ MUSI 1116 SS & ET I | ✓ MUSI 1114 Piano for Music Majors I |
| ✓ MUSI 1212 Music Theory II | ✓ MUSI 1117 SS & ET II | ✓ MUSI 1115 Piano for Music Majors II |
| ✓ MUSI 2211 Music Theory III | ✓ MUSI 2116 SS & ET III | ✓ MUSI 2114 Piano for Music Majors |
| ✓ MUSI 2212 Music Theory IV | ✓ MUSI 2117 SS & ET IV | III |
| ✓ MUSI 3211 Musical Form and Analysis | | |

Music History/World Cultures Sequence

All students must be proficient in music history and related coursework. The sequence for music history courses is as follows:

- ✓ MUSI 1309 World Music Cultures (040-Language, Philosophy, and Culture core requirement)
- ✓ MUSI 1308 Music History and Literature I (050 Creative arts core requirement)
- ✓ MUSI 3301 Music History and Literature II
- ✓ MUSI 3302 Music History and Literature III

Note that students may take MUSI, 3301, and 3302 out of sequence if necessary, but it is highly recommended that they take these courses in sequence if possible (note that MUSI 1308 is a prerequisite for both MUSI 3301 and 3302). Students should not take any of the Music History and Literature (MUSI 1308, 3301, and 3302) courses at the same time as any other Music History and Literature course!

There are several other courses offered in the music history area as electives. Many of these courses satisfy requirements for the general education core curriculum. These courses may be taken by music majors (depending on degree plan), music minors, and non-majors as areas of interest and enrichment.

- ✓ MUSI 1306 Music Appreciation
- ✓ MUSI 1307 Mexican Folk Music
- ✓ MUSI 1309 World Music Cultures (required for BM degrees)
- ✓ MUSI 1310 History of Rock

Sophomore Barriers and Degree Recitals

All undergraduate Bachelor of Music Degrees require students to pass a Sophomore Barrier and some combination of upper-level (Junior or Senior) recitals. Students should consult their advisors and check their degree plans in the UTRGV Undergraduate Catalog for specific degree requirements.

Sophomore Barrier

The Sophomore Barrier is the jury typically taken at the end of Applied IV, and is required for all music majors. This jury must be passed in order to be considered for upper-level lesson enrollment. If the student does not pass the sophomore barrier, they will be required to retake lower-level applied lessons until the barrier is passed. Procedures and requirements for the Sophomore barrier are determined by each applied area (see [Applied Lessons – Grading](#) above) – students should consult with their applied teacher and with the appropriate area

handbook for repertoire, language, length, and other requirements. Students should also note the “Progression Requirements” listed in their specific degree plan for enrollment in their Junior Year.

Junior Recital

The Junior Recital is required for all BM Performance, Music Composition, and Music Technology degrees. Students should enroll in MUSI 3299 concurrently with their sixth semester of applied study (MUAP 32XX). Procedures and requirements for the Junior Recital, including repertoire, memorization, length/number of selections, languages (voice), and recital jury/hearing procedures are determined by each applied area and documented in the area handbook.

Senior Recital/Capstone

All undergraduate Bachelor of Music degrees require students to pass a Senior Recital/Capstone, which typically occurs during the student’s last required semester of applied lessons:

- BM Music (Teacher Certification) students – for students pursuing a BM with Teacher Certification, the Senior Recital is part of the requirements for their seventh semester of applied study.
- BM Performance, Music Composition, and Music Technology – Students pursuing these degrees should enroll in MUSI 4299 concurrently with their eighth (or last) semester of applied study.

Procedures and requirements for the Senior Recital, including repertoire, memorization, length/number of selections, languages (voice), and recital jury/hearing procedures are determined by each applied area and documented in the area handbooks.

As stated above, students should consult their applied area handbooks and with their applied teachers for specific degree and applied area requirements.

Music Education Degrees

Students pursuing a degree with Teacher Certification must take several courses in Music Education. These courses include secondary methods courses, conducting courses, and music education courses. Many of the courses in this area require public school observations as an integral component of the coursework.

Secondary Methods Courses

These courses are designed to provide music students with knowledge and techniques involved in teaching instruments and voice other than their major area. Fundamentals of teaching and pedagogy are stressed along with some basic, practical performing experience. Requirements for these courses vary by degree plan – students should consult with their applied teacher/advisor, and review their degree plans in DegreeWorks and in the UTRGV Catalog to determine which classes are appropriate.

Conducting Courses

There are two required courses in conducting, MUSI 3102: Instrumental Conducting I, and MUSI 4102: Instrumental Conducting II for instrumentalists and MUSI 3101: Choral Conducting I and MUSI 4101 Choral Conducting II for vocalists and pianists (note that these courses are required for both BM Music and BM Performance degrees). These courses are typically taken during the junior year.

Music Education Courses – Teacher Certification

There are 27 hours of coursework required for Teacher Certification including School of Music (MUSI) and College of Education (EDUC and READ) courses. Note that all EDUC courses require admission to the CEP Educator Preparation Program (see below). Courses required for Teacher Certification are:

- ✓ MUSI 2313 – Introduction to the Music Teaching Profession (note that this is a prerequisite for both MUSI 4312 and 4313)
- ✓ MUSI 4312 – Implementing and Assessing Effective Secondary Music Content Pedagogy*
- ✓ MUSI 4313 – Elementary Music Methods
- ✓ EDUC 3302 – Knowledge of Student Development and Learning
- ✓ EDUC 3304 – Instructional Planning and Assessment in Culturally Sustaining Classrooms
- ✓ EDUC 3306 – Evidence-Based Teaching in Positive Learning Environments
- ✓ READ 4305 – Disciplinary Literacy in the Classroom
- ✓ EDUC 4611 – Student Teaching Secondary or All-Level**

*Different sections of MUSI 4312 are offered specifically for Instrumental and Choral education. Students should check with the instructor to ensure that they are enrolling for the correct section!

**Students MUST have completed their Senior Recital and all other School of Music Coursework before enrolling in EDUC 4611 to student teach.

College of Education Policies

Completing your Music Education Degree Requirements for K-12 Teaching

Certification through the College of Education

All students pursuing a BM Music with Teacher Certification (degrees listed [here](#)) will need to complete their All-Level EC-12 teacher certification through the College of Education's [Office of Educator Preparation and Accountability](#)' Educator Preparation Program. Preparation for this process typically begins during the student's second year, and requires the following steps:

- ✓ [Apply for Formal Admission to Teacher Education Programs](#)
- ✓ [Complete the required Music Education Courses](#)
- ✓ [Complete the required UTRGV School of Music TExES Music Content Review Sessions](#) (including required practice tests)
- ✓ Pass the TExES [Pedagogy & Professional Responsibilities \(PPR\)](#) and Music Content exams
- ✓ Apply for Clinical Teaching

Applying for Formal Admission to Teacher Education Programs

Students are typically eligible to apply for admission teacher education programs once they have completed 60 hours towards their BM Music with Teacher Certification degree plan, have 12 semester credit hours completed in the major, are core complete, and have met TSI requirements (usually this happens towards the end of the student's second year, however, students who come in with dual enrollment credits or an Associate's degree may be eligible earlier). Students should refer to the [Formal Admission to Teacher Education Programs website](#) for current application timelines and requirements.

Criminal Background Check of Applicants

The Teacher Education Program requires field work in the public schools. This requires that a student be able to clear a criminal background check conducted by the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley during formal admission and during the program by school districts. It is the responsibility of the student to determine if their criminal history background will present a problem before applying for admission to the teacher education program. Note that students with a problematic criminal history will encounter difficulty in completing any field work requirements and therefore, may not be able to complete the

program. Students may request a Preliminary Criminal Background Evaluation if they have concerns about this requirement.

Music Education Courses

See the list of [Music Education Courses](#) above. Note that students must be accepted to the College of Education Teacher Education Program before taking EDUC courses. All degree and School of Music requirements – including all recitals and concert/recital lab attendance requirements – must be completed before students are permitted to student teach.

UTRGV School of Music TExES Music Content Review Sessions

BM Music students whose degree require teacher certification are required to pass two state exams, the TExES PPR (Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities)³ and the TExES Music EC-12 (177). Students must pass both exams before being eligible for clinical (student) teaching. The UTRGV College of Education will provide information for the TExES PPR during the required education courses. The UTRGV School of Music **requires** music education students to attend review sessions for the TExES Music EC-12 (177) exam. During the sessions, the testing procedures, requirements, and other important information will be explained. Students who are admitted to the UTRGV College of Education are eligible to attend the TExES Music EC-12 (177) review sessions. 9 hours of review sessions are provided, 3 hours for each session. **Students are required to attend a minimum of 2 sessions (6 hours).** However, all 3 sessions (9 hours) are recommended. These sessions are held early in the Fall semester and then again shortly after the TMEA Clinic and Convention in the Spring semester. The sessions are virtual and synchronous (live). Information on how to register and the schedule for these review sessions will be sent out to faculty and students at the beginning of each Fall and Spring semester.

TExES PPR and Music Content Exams

Students should consult the [Formal Admission to Teacher Education Programs website](#) for information on preparing and registering for these exams. Some helpful websites are:

- [UTRGV Certification Exam Support Hub](#)
- [TExES Test Approval and Initial Certification Process and Policies](#)
- [TExES Pedagogy & Professional Responsibilities Study Resources](#)
- [TMEA: TExES Practice Exam \(Music Content\)](#)

(Note that you will receive a lot of information about this process through your College of Education courses and the School of Music Review sessions so, if you are having trouble navigating this process – don't worry, there will be help!)

Apply for Clinical Teaching

Students should consult the Teacher Certification Roadmap on the [Office of Educator Preparation and Accountability](#) for deadlines and processes when preparing to apply for Clinical/Student Teaching. Please note that students must typically apply the fall or spring semester BEFORE they plan to student teach, so please be aware of these deadlines! Students must complete the following prerequisites in order to be granted approval to student teach:

- ✓ Students must pass committee hearing and perform their Senior Recital before student teaching
- ✓ Students must pass the TExES content exam before student teaching.

³Students may also be able to enroll in edTPA instead of taking the TExES PPR. Students should contact the College of Education or the Music edTPA coach ([Dr. Jason Jones](#)) for more information. Students should consult with their College of Education faculty and School of Music advisors to determine if this is a good option for them.

Undergraduate Music Degrees with Teacher Certification

- [BM Music \(Guitar, Teacher Certification\)](#)
- [BM Music \(Mariachi, Teacher Certification\)](#)
- [BM Music \(Piano, Teacher Certification\)](#)
- [BM Music \(String, Teacher Certification\)](#)
- [BM Music \(Voice, Teacher Certification\)](#)
- [BM Music \(Woodwind/Brass/Percussion, Teacher Certification\)](#)

Also see the [Educator Preparation Program](#) entry in the UTRGV Undergraduate Catalog.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND STUDENT SUPPORT

University Policies

We care about creating a safe and supportive learning environment for all students. The University policy statements below are intended to create transparency for your rights and responsibilities as students. We each contribute to ensuring a safe and positive environment through our actions and conduct, and students are encouraged to advocate for their needs.

Student Accessibility Services

Student Accessibility Services staff can be contacted at either campus to learn about and explore accessibility services.

Campus: Brownsville

Location: Music and Learning Center (BMSLC, 1.107)

Phone: phone (956) 882-7374

e-mail ability@utrgv.edu

Edinburg

Location: University Center (EUCTR, 108)

Phone: phone (956) 665-7005

Students With Disabilities

Students with a documented disability (physical, psychological, learning, or other disability which affects academic performance) who would like to receive reasonable academic accommodations should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) for additional information. In order for accommodation requests to be considered for approval, the student must apply using the mySAS portal and is responsible for providing sufficient documentation of the disability to SAS. Students are required to participate in an interactive discussion, or an intake appointment, with SAS staff. Accommodations may be requested at any time but are not retroactive, meaning they are valid once approved by SAS. Please contact SAS early in the semester/module for guidance. Students who experience a broken bone, severe injury, or undergo surgery may also be eligible for temporary accommodations.

Pregnancy, Pregnancy-Related, and Parenting Accommodations

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination, which includes discrimination based on pregnancy, marital status, or parental status. Students seeking accommodations related to pregnancy, pregnancy-related condition, or parenting should submit the request using the form found at [Pregnancy and Parenting | UTRGV](#). For questions about campus support services or public benefit programs for students who are pregnant, or parenting contact the Parenting Liaison officer in the Dean of Students Office.

Edinburg: UCTR rm. 325

Phone: 956.665.2260

Brownsville: BCAVL rm. 209

Email: dos@utrgv.edu

Sexual Misconduct and Mandatory Reporting

In accordance with UT System regulations, your instructor is a “Responsible Employee” for reporting purposes under Title IX regulations and so must report to the Office of Institutional Equity & Diversity (OIED@utrgv.edu) any instance, occurring during a student’s time in college, of sexual misconduct, which includes sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, domestic violence, and sexual harassment, about which she/he becomes aware during this course through writing, discussion, or personal disclosure. More information can be found at www.utrgv.edu/equity, including confidential resources available on campus. The faculty and staff of UTRGV actively strive to provide a learning, working, and living environment that promotes personal integrity, civility, and mutual respect that is free from sexual misconduct, discrimination, and all forms of violence. If students, faculty, or staff would like confidential assistance, or have questions, they can contact OAVP (Office for Advocacy & Violence Prevention) at (956) 665-8287, (956) 882-8282, or OAVP@utrgv.edu.

Dean of Students

The Dean of Students office assists students when they experience a challenge with an administrative process, unexpected situation, such as an illness, accident, or family situation, and aids in resolving complaints. Additionally, the office facilitates student academic related requests for religious accommodations, support students formerly in foster care, helps to advocate on behalf of students and inform them about their rights and responsibilities, and serves as a resource and support for faculty and campus departments.

Vaqueros Report It allows students, staff, and faculty a way to report concern about the well-being of a student, seek assistance in resolving a complaint, or report allegations of behaviors contrary to community standards or campus policies. The Dean of Students can be reached by email (dos@utrgv.edu), phone (956-665-2260), (956-882-5141), or by visiting one of the following office locations: Cavalry (BCAVL) 204 or University Center (EUCTR 323).

Student Support Resources

The UTRGV School of Music is committed to your personal, academic, and professional success. In addition to the resources below, students are encouraged to reach out to their instructors, School of Music staff, and School of Music administration with any question or concerns, and we will help you find the resources that you need. The following UTRGV resources are also available and ready to help!

Center Name	E-mail	Brownsville Campus	Edinburg Campus
Advising Center	AcademicAdvising@utrgv.edu	BMAIN 1.400 (956) 665-7120	EITTB 1.000 (956) 665-7120
Career Center	CareerCenter@utrgv.edu	BINAB 1.105 (956) 882-5627	ESTAC 2.101 (956) 665-2243
Counseling Center	Counseling@utrgv.edu Mental Health Counseling and Related Services List	BSTUN 2.10 (956) 882-3897	EUCTR 109 (956) 665-2574
Food Pantry	FoodPantry@utrgv.edu	BCAVL 101 & 102 (956) 882-7126	EUCTR 114 (956) 665-3663
Learning Center	LearningCenter@utrgv.edu	BMSLC 2.118 (956) 882-8208	ELCTR 100 (956) 665-2585
University Library	circulation@utrgv.edu charles.roush@utrgv.edu (Music Specialist)	BLIBR (956) 882-8221	ELIBR (956) 665-2005

Center Name	E-mail	Brownsville Campus	Edinburg Campus
Writing Center	WC@utrgv.edu	BLIBR 3.206 (956) 882-7065	ESTAC 3.119 (956) 665-2538

Many specific School of Music resources are also available on the [School of Music Student Resources](#) page.

HEALTH AND SAFETY INFORMATION FOR MUSICIANS

Introduction

The School of Music, as required by the National Association of Schools of Music, is obligated to inform students and faculty of health and safety issues, hazards, and procedures inherent in practice, performance, teaching, and listening both in general and as applicable to their specific specializations. This includes but is not limited to information regarding hearing, vocal and musculoskeletal health, injury prevention, and the use, proper handling, and operation of potentially dangerous materials, equipment, and technology.

The School of Music has developed policies, protocols, and operational procedures to guard against injury and illness in the study and practice of music, as well as to raise the awareness among our students and faculty of the connections between musicians' health, the suitability and safety of equipment and technology, and the acoustic and other health-related conditions in the University's practice, rehearsal, and performance facilities.

It is important to note that health and safety depends largely on personal decisions made by informed individuals. The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley has health and safety responsibilities, but fulfillment of these responsibilities cannot and will not ensure any individual's health and safety. Too many factors beyond the university's control are involved.

Each individual is personally responsible for avoiding risk and preventing injuries to themselves before, during, and after study at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. The policies, protocols, and operational procedures developed by the School of Music do not alter or cancel any individual's personal responsibility, or in any way shift personal responsibility for the results of any individual's personal decisions or actions in any instance or over time to the University.

Performance Injuries and Prevention

Anyone who practices, rehearses or performs instrumental or vocal music has the potential to suffer injury related to that activity. Instrumental musicians are at risk for repetitive motion injuries. Sizable percentages of them develop physical problems related to playing their instruments; and if they are also computer users, their risks are compounded. Instrumental injuries often include carpal tunnel syndrome, tendinitis, and bursitis. Incorrect posture, non-ergonomic technique, excessive force, overuse, stress, and insufficient rest contribute to chronic injuries that can cause great pain, disability, and the end of careers.

What Instrumentalists Should Do

- ✓ Evaluate your technique. Reduce force, keep joints in the middle of their range of motion, use large muscle groups when possible, and avoid fixed, tense positions.
- ✓ Always warm up. As an athlete would not begin a vigorous physical activity without warming up, a musician must warm up carefully before practice or performance.

- ✓ Take breaks to stretch and relax. Take short breaks every few minutes and longer breaks each hour. Two or more shorter rehearsals each day are more productive than marathon single sessions. Even in performance, find those opportunities to relax a hand, arm, or embouchure to restore circulation.
- ✓ Pace yourself. No pain, no gain is a potentially catastrophic philosophy for a musician. Know when enough is enough, and learn to say 'no' to certain performances or lengths of performing that might result in injury.
- ✓ Check out your instrument. Does your instrument place undue stress on your body? Is your instrument set up optimally for you to relieve pressure on hands, joints, etc.? Is there a strap, carrier, or stand available to relieve the stress?
- ✓ Evaluate other activities. Pains and injuries affecting your music making could be caused by other activities in your daily life. Computer use is notorious for causing afflictions including carpal tunnel syndrome and tendinitis.
- ✓ Pay attention to your body. Pain is the mechanism by which your body tells you that something is wrong. Listen to your body; if it hurts, stop what you are doing.
- ✓ Get medical attention. Do not delay in seeing a doctor. A physician may prescribe a minor adjustment or, in worst-case scenarios, stipulate not performing for a period of time. As drastic as this may sound, a few months of rest is better than suffering a permanent, career ending injury. Likewise, the demands placed on singers' voices are immense. Hardly a month goes by where a top singer is not forced to interrupt a tour, take a break, or undergo a medical procedure due to problems with their voice. Medical professionals are making the case that the demands put on one's voice when singing one to three hours is as intense as those made on an Olympic marathon runner's body. Additional factors such as nutrition, smoking, drug use, noisy environments, and proper voice training (or the lack of it) all play a role in a singer's ability to perform at her/his best.

What Singers Should Do

- ✓ Maintain good general health. Get adequate rest to minimize fatigue. If you do become ill, avoid "talking over your laryngitis" - see your physician and rest your voice.
- ✓ Exercise regularly.
- ✓ Eat a balanced diet. Including vegetables, fruit and whole grains, and avoid caffeinated drinks (coffee, tea, and soft drinks) and alcohol. Avoid spicy, acidic, and dairy foods if you are sensitive to them.
- ✓ Maintain body hydration; drink two quarts of water daily. Avoid dry, artificial interior climates. If this is unavoidable, using a humidifier at night might compensate for the dryness.
- ✓ Limit the use of your voice. High-ceilinged restaurants, noisy parties, cars and planes are especially damaging to the voice. If necessary, use amplification for vocal projection.
- ✓ Avoid throat clearing and voiced coughing.
- ✓ Stop yelling, and avoid hard vocal attacks on initial vowel words.
- ✓ Adjust the speaking pitch level of your voice. Use the pitch level in the same range where you say, "Umm-hmm?"
- ✓ Speak in phrases rather than in paragraphs. Breathe slightly before each phrase.
- ✓ Reduce demands on your voice - don't do all the talking!
- ✓ Learn to breathe silently to activate your breath support muscles and reduce neck tension
- ✓ Take full advantage of the two free elements of vocal fold healing: water and air.
- ✓ Vocal athletes must treat their musculoskeletal system as do other types of athletes; therefore, vocal warm-ups should always be used prior to singing. Vocal cool-downs are also essential to keep the singing voice healthy.

What All Musicians Should Do

- ✓ Stay informed. Awareness is the key. Like many health-related issues, prevention is much easier and less expensive than cures. Take time to read available information concerning injuries associated with your art.
- ✓ Read. Musicians might find the following books helpful:
 - Conable, Barbara. What Every Musician Needs to Know About the Body (GIA Publications, 2000)
 - Klickstein, Gerald. The Musician's Way: A Guide to Practice, Performance, and Wellness (Oxford, 2009)
 - Norris, Richard N. The Musician's Survival Manual (International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians, 1993)

References

The following links may be useful:

- [Performing Arts Medicine Association](http://www.artsmed.org) (PAMA), an organization comprised of dedicated medical professionals, artists educators, and administrators with the common goal of improving the health care of the performing artist. <http://www.artsmed.org>
- [Texas Voice Center](http://www.texasvoicecenter.com), founded in 1989 for the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of voice disorders. <http://www.texasvoicecenter.com>
- [National Center for Voice and Speech](https://ncvs.org/) (NCVS), conducts research, educates vocologists, and disseminates information about voice and speech. <https://ncvs.org/>
 - Singers may also want to check out vocal tips on the NCVS Archive page at https://archive.ncvs.org/products_health.html.
- [Vocal Health Center, University of Michigan Health System](https://www.uofmhealth.org/conditions-treatments/ear-nose-throat/vocal-health-center), recognized locally, regionally and nationally as a leading institution for the treatment and prevention of voice disorders. At the heart of the Center is a professional team comprised of experts from the University of Michigan Health System and U-M School of Music, encompassing the fields of Laryngology, Speech Pathology, and Vocal Arts.
- <https://www.uofmhealth.org/conditions-treatments/ear-nose-throat/vocal-health-center>
- [Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music](https://us.abrsm.org/en/home) (ABRSM), the world's leading authority on musical assessment actively supporting and encouraging music learning for all. <https://us.abrsm.org/en/home>

Noise-Induced Hearing Loss

Note - The information in this document is generic and advisory in nature. It is not a substitute for professional, medical judgments. It should not be used as a basis for medical treatment. If you are concerned about your hearing or think you may have suffered hearing loss, consult a licensed medical professional.

Part of the role of any professional is to remain in the best condition to practice the profession. As an aspiring musician, this involves safeguarding your hearing health. Whatever your plans after graduation - whether they involve playing, teaching, engineering, or simply enjoying music - you owe it to yourself and your fellow musicians to do all you can to protect your hearing. If you are serious about pursuing a career in music, you need to protect your hearing. The way you hear music, the way you recognize and differentiate pitch, the way you play music; all are directly connected to your hearing.

Music & Noise

In the scientific world, all types of sound, including music, are regularly categorized as noise. A sound that is too loud, or too loud for too long, is dangerous to hearing health, no matter what kind of sound it is or whether we

call it noise, music, or something else. Music itself is not the issue. Loudness and its duration are the issues. Music plays an important part in hearing health, but hearing health is far larger than music.

Noise-Induced Hearing Loss (NIHL)

We experience sound in our environment, such as the sounds from television and radio, household appliances, and traffic. Normally, we hear these sounds at safe levels that do not affect our hearing. However, when we are exposed to harmful noise-sounds that are too loud or loud sounds that last a long time, sensitive structures in our inner ear can be damaged, causing noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL).

These sensitive structures, called hair cells, are small sensory cells that convert sound energy into electrical signals that travel to the brain. Once damaged, our hair cells cannot grow back. NIHL can be caused by a one-time exposure to an intense "impulse" sound, such as an explosion, or by continuous exposure to loud sounds over an extended period of time. The humming of a refrigerator is 45 decibels, normal conversation is approximately 60 decibels, and the noise from heavy city traffic can reach 85 decibels. Sources of noise that can cause NIHL include motorcycles, firecrackers, and small firearms, all emitting sounds from 120 to 150 decibels. Long or repeated exposure to sounds at or above 85 decibels can cause hearing loss. The louder the sound, the shorter the time period before NIHL can occur. Sounds of less than 75 decibels, even after long exposure, are unlikely to cause hearing loss. Although being aware of decibel levels is an important factor in protecting one's hearing, distance from the source of the sound and duration of exposure to the sound are equally important. A good rule of thumb is to avoid noises that are "too loud" and "too close" or that last "too long." It is very important to understand that the hair cells in your inner ear cannot regenerate. Damage done to them is permanent. There is no way to repair or undo this damage. According to the American Academy of Audiology, approximately 26 million Americans have hearing loss. One in three developed their hearing loss as a result of exposure to noise.

As you pursue your day-to-day activities, both in the School of Music and in other educational, vocational, and recreational environments, remember:

1. Hearing health is essential to your lifelong success as a musician.
2. Your hearing can be permanently damaged by loud sounds, including music. Technically, this is called Noise-Induced Hearing Loss (NIHL). This danger is constant.
3. Noise-induced hearing loss is generally preventable.
4. You must avoid overexposure to loud sounds, especially for long periods of time.
5. The closer you are to the source of a loud sound, the greater the risk of damage.
6. Sounds over 85 dB (your typical vacuum cleaner) in intensity pose the greatest risk to your hearing: Recommended maximum daily exposure times to sounds at or above 85 dB are as follows: 85 dB (vacuum cleaner, MP3 player at 1/3 volume) - 8 hours 90 dB (blender, hair dryer) - 2 hours 94 dB (MP3 player at 1/2 volume) - 1 hour 100 dB (MP3 player at full volume, lawnmower) 15 minutes 110 dB (rock concert, power tools) - 2 minutes 120 dB (jet planes at take-off) - without ear protection, sound damage is almost immediate.
7. Certain behaviors (controlling volume levels in practice and rehearsal, planning rehearsal order to provide relief from high volume works, avoiding noisy environments) reduce your risk of hearing loss.
8. The use of earplugs (Sensaphonics, ProGuard, Sensorcom) helps to protect your hearing health.
9. Day-to-day decisions can impact your hearing health, both now and in the future. Since sound exposure occurs in and out of the Department of Music, you also need to learn more and take care of your own hearing health on a daily, even hourly basis.
10. If you are concerned about your personal hearing health, talk with a medical professional.

11. If you are concerned about your hearing health in relationship to your study of music, consult with your applied instructor, ensemble conductor, or Department Chair.

Hearing and Hearing Loss Resources

Information and Research Hearing - Health Project Partners

National Association of School of Music (NASM) <https://nasm.arts-accredit.org>

Performing Arts Medicine Association (PAMA) <http://www.artsmed.org>

Bibliography (search tool) <http://www.artsmed.org/bibliography>

General Information on Acoustics

Acoustical Society of America <http://acousticalsociety.org>

Acoustics. com <http://www.acoustics.com>

Acoustics for Performance, Rehearsal, and Practice Facilities Available through the NASM web site:

<https://nasm.arts-accredit.org>

Health and Safety Standards Organizations American National Standards Institute (ANSI) <http://www.ansi.org/>

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/>

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) <http://www.osha.gov/>

Medical Organizations Focused on Hearing Health American Academy of Audiology <https://www.audiology.org>

American Academy of Otolaryngology "Head and Neck Surgery" <http://www.entnet.org/index.cfm>

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) <http://www.asha.org/>

Athletes and the Arts <http://athletesandthearts.com/>

House Research Institute "Hearing Health" <http://www.hei.org/education/health/health.htm>

National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders <https://www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/noise-induced-hearing-loss>

National Hearing Conservation Association <http://www.hearingconservation.org/>

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Associate Director Dr. Rebecca Coberly EPACB B1.119 (956) 665-7154	Administrative Assistant II Brenda Vela BMSLC 2.214 (956) 882-7768		
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Audition Coordinators	
Woodwinds Dr. Krista Jobson	Voice Dr. Matthew Coffey
Piano Dr. Brendan Kinsella	Dr. Sean Taylor
Guitar Dr. Michael Quantz Dr. Hector Rodriguez	Brass Dr. Scott Roeder Dr. William Haugeberg
Strings Dr. Tido Janssen	Music Technology Dr. Anthony Marasco
Percussion Dr. Mark Ramirez	Composition Dr. Justin Writer

Major Ensemble Directors and Times/Locations – Spring 2024		
Ensemble	Director	S24 Time and Location
Concert Band/Marching Band	Dr. Allison Davis	MW 12:30pm-3:15pm – EPACA A1.320
Concert Band/Marching Band	Ms. Ashley Perez	TTh 2:00pm-3:15pm – BTACB 1.025
Guitar Ensemble	Dr. Michael Quantz	MTWTh 2:00pm-3:15pm – BTACB 1.018
Guitar Ensemble	Dr. Hector Javier Rodriguez	TTh 2:00pm-3:15pm – EPACA A1.308
Mariachi Ensembles	Mr. Francisco Loera	Sec. 01: TTh 2:00pm-4:45pm – EPACA A1.310 Sec. 02: MW 5:00pm-7:45pm – EPACA A1.310 Sec. 03: MW 2:00pm-4:45pm – EPACA A1.310
Master Chorale	Dr. Sean Taylor	TTh 12:30pm-3:15pm – BMSLC 1.217
Master Chorale	Dr. Matthew Coffey	MW 2:00pm-4:45pm – EPACA A1.308
University Choir	Dr. Matthew Coffey	TTh 12:30pm-1:45pm – EPACA A1.308
Symphony Orchestra	Dr. Norman Gamboa	MW 2:00pm-4:45pm – EPACA A1.315
Wind Ensemble	Mr. Ronnie Rios	TTh 12:30pm-3:15pm – EPACA A1.320

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Appendix A: Collaborative Piano Policies

Collaborative Piano Policies 2023-2024 (Applied Lessons and Recitals)

1. Statement of Purpose

The UTRGV School of Music is committed to providing accompanying services to eligible music majors who wish to perform with a pianist. Students, applied faculty, and pianists are all strongly encouraged to actively participate in the process of collaborative music making from preparation and rehearsals to the final performance.

2. Applies To

This policy applies to UTRGV Collaborative Piano Personnel (Faculty Collaborative Pianists, Graduate Assistants (GAs), and Student Pianists) and UTRGV School of Music Applied Faculty and Students.

3. Eligible Activities

- A. UTRGV Collaborative Piano Personnel will accompany the following activities for their assigned applied students (assignments will be made by the Accompanying Committee).

1. Degree recitals
2. Sophomore Barriers
3. Accompanying juries for music majors on their primary instrument
4. Studio recitals (maximum one recital per studio per semester)
5. Lab performances
6. Voice Auditions on official audition dates

- B. Collaborative Piano Personnel are not expected to accompany:

1. Non-required degree recitals
2. Music minors, non-majors, secondary students, and concurrent enrollment students
3. Events that are not explicitly described in the degree plans (*This may include (but is not limited to) NATS, the Concerto Competition, or any other performance that is not explicitly specified on the degree plan.*)
4. Collaborative pianists are not expected to rehearse or perform with students over Winter, Spring, or Summer break or other official Holidays

- C. Collaborative pianists will play for student recordings if the recording is made during a regular coaching time and is completed within said rehearsal time. Pianists are not expected to play for student recordings outside of these regular rehearsal times.

4. Accompanied Music Time Limits (per semester)

- A. Maximum Recital/Barrier Lengths (accompanied portion): The accompanied portions of all degree recitals will follow the maximums below.

1. Graduate and Senior Performance – 45 minutes of music
2. Senior Music Ed and Junior Performance – 30 minutes of music
3. Sophomore Barrier – 15 minutes of music

- B. Maximum Jury/Studio Recital Lengths: The maximum accompanied portions of jury and studio recitals are as follows.

1. Instrumental Students: Accompanied repertoire prepared for instrumental juries and studio recitals cannot exceed the minimum jury requirements for the area or 10 minutes of music (whichever is smaller) per student.
2. Voice Students: Accompanied repertoire for voice juries cannot exceed the stated jury requirements (4-6 songs/arias for undergraduate students, and up to 10 songs/arias for graduate students) in the Voice Area Handbook.
3. Students exceeding this will be required to perform a cappella or with digital accompaniment.

Collaborative pianists are not expected to accompany more than the maximum length of time designated here.

5. Rehearsal Scheduling

- A. Faculty Collaborative Pianists will allot the following number of 30-minute rehearsals (or the equivalent amount of time*) for each student based on the following categories:

1. Graduate and Senior Performance Recitals: 10 rehearsals per semester maximum.**
2. Senior Music Education/Junior Performance Recitals: 8 rehearsals per semester maximum.
3. Sophomore Barriers: 6 rehearsals per semester maximum.
4. Jury Students: 4 rehearsals per semester maximum.

*For example, pianists might choose to schedule eight 15-minute rehearsals, or some combination of 15- and 30-minute rehearsals, for a jury student if that would result in a more effective rehearsal process.

**Note that these allotments indicate the maximum number of rehearsals collaborative pianists are expected to provide. Pianists may decide to allocate less rehearsal time to individual students (in consultation with the applied teacher) depending on the difficulty level of the repertoire, student preparation, and scheduling.

****A student's coaching time is to be allocated throughout the semester and may not be cumulatively spent in the later part of the semester unless agreed upon as the best course of action by the collaborative pianist and the applied teacher.**

- B. All piano GAs will be supervised by their Applied Piano Instructor, the Piano Area Coordinator, and the Collaborative Piano Coordinator.

1. GAs must maintain a 20 hr/week work schedule which combines practice time, rehearsals, lessons (voice and/or instrumental), studio class, master classes, performances, and juries.
2. The committee recommends that all piano GAs begin learning the assigned collaborative piano music as soon as the assignments are made, and start rehearsals and/or attend voice lessons by week 6 (late submission of music will delay rehearsals and any lesson attendance). GA attendance in lessons is strongly encouraged, but will depend on the compatibility of the GA's schedule with the student's lesson time, and on the recommendation of the GAs supervisor.
3. The committee also asks all supervisors to monitor the progress of the GAs regularly to ensure that the music is adequately prepared and ready for rehearsals, lessons, and performances.

(Note that Student Accompanists (non GA) are governed by the requirements in their accompanying instructor's syllabus. It is recommended that applied faculty consult with the accompanying instructor and familiarize themselves with their syllabus).

- C. Scheduling Procedures

Collaborative pianists will organize and schedule their accompanying activities in a manner to best serve students and to avoid long periods of unsafe, continuous or excessive accompanying. Please follow the procedures below.

1. Applied faculty must provide a contact list including student emails to the assigned collaborative pianists upon request as soon as they are notified of the assignment.
2. The collaborative pianist will notify their assigned students (copying the applied faculty) of their preferred method for scheduling. GA supervisors and accompanying class instructors will also send GA and student accompanist contact information to the applied teacher.
3. Students must adhere to the scheduling procedures – students will need to plan ahead, adhere to the pianist's preferred method for scheduling rehearsals. Students should not expect drop-ins to be accommodated.
4. Collaborative pianists will contact students to confirm their contact information and establish communication. Students who do not respond to their collaborative pianist's contact (faculty, graduate assistant, or student pianist) by the end of week seven will be dropped

from the accompanying roster, and will need to make their own arrangements for juries or other semester performances. Note that this is a hard deadline, and students should endeavor to make contact well before this point in the semester. The collaborative pianist will consult with the applied teacher before any action is taken if students are in danger of being dropped from the roster.

5. Students must follow the collaborative pianist's cancellation policy. Unexcused absences will be forfeited.
6. Applied faculty are invited to attend rehearsals by prior arrangement with the collaborative pianist. Please note that rehearsal time is very limited for all students, and priority should be placed on maximizing actual playing/singing time. Faculty are encouraged to give feedback during the student's lesson or otherwise outside of the rehearsal where possible.
7. Students must be adequately prepared for their coaching sessions so that the time is used effectively.

6. Music Submission Guidelines

It is essential that applied faculty provide collaborative pianists with music in a timely manner so that pianists are able to assess and learn the music, and also make assignments to student pianists and graduate assistants where applicable. The following policies are intended to facilitate this process.

A. Deadlines for Music Submission:

1. Applied faculty must submit music for student degree recitals by the end of the second week of class.
2. Applied faculty must submit student repertoire lists (and PDFs as needed) for all non-recital students to Collaborative Piano Coordinator no later than the third week of class (we recommend that applied voice faculty submit their students' repertoire by the end of the second week to facilitate GA and Student Accompanist assignments).
3. If there needs to be a repertoire change, the change must be made and approved by the collaborative pianist no later than the end of the 10th week of class. For 2023-2024 this deadline will be November 3rd for the fall semester and April 1 for the spring semester.

Failure to submit music by these deadlines will delay the start of rehearsals, may result in a reduced number of rehearsals for the student, and will eventually result in the student being dropped from the accompanying roster unless other arrangements are made between the pianist and the applied teacher. If the student is dropped from the accompanying roster, the student will need to make their own arrangements for accompaniment of their jury or recital. The collaborative pianist will consult with the applied teacher if the student is in danger of having fewer rehearsals or being dropped from the roster, and every effort will be made to communicate any concerns.

B. PDF Submission Guidelines

1. PDF copies of the music must be submitted by the faculty (please do not pass this responsibility along to the students!).
2. Copies must be legible.
3. Copies need to include all the notes to be played.
4. If the music is illegible, incomplete, or otherwise unacceptable, the collaborative pianist will notify the applied teacher so that a new copy may be submitted. Pianists are not expected to rehearse using unreadable scores.
5. Collaborative pianists are responsible for printing the music if they prefer hard copies.

7. Guidelines for Recitals

- A. Applied faculty must consult with the assigned collaborative pianist when scheduling student degree recitals, hearings, and studio recitals. If these dates are scheduled before the collaborative pianist assignment is made, the applied teacher must accommodate the pianist's schedule as needed.
- B. All recital dates must be determined and scheduled by the end of the third week of classes to allow for rehearsal planning. The recital hearing date must be determined and scheduled at least three weeks before the recital.
- C. Pianists are not expected to play for recitals that are scheduled after finals week. If a recital is scheduled after the official last day of the term, the student must hire an outside accompanist.
- D. It is assumed that the rehearsals designated for the recital and the recital hearing and performance will all take place within the same semester. Students who schedule their recitals early in the semester (January or February in the spring, or September in the fall) cannot expect to rehearse with a collaborative pianist prior to the start of that semester.
- E. If the student cancels their recital (or postpones to the next semester) for any reason, the pianist must be notified immediately, and all rehearsals will cease for that semester unless the student will be giving a jury, in which case the appropriate number of remaining rehearsals for the student's level and repertoire will be determined by the collaborative pianist and the applied teacher.

8. Best Practices for Successful Collaboration

The goal of the Accompanying Committee is to create an environment that fosters the spirit of collaboration. The committee is responsible for overseeing the policies created in this document. Making music with others is an integral part of music education and is highly encouraged during the student's time at UTRGV. To ensure success, we ask students, faculty, and pianists to work together as a team. Outlined below are responsibilities of pianists, faculty, and students.

A. Pianists will...

1. Organize and schedule their accompanying activities in a manner to best serve students and to avoid excessive periods of continuous accompanying.
2. Clearly communicate your method of scheduling rehearsals and performances.
3. Keep a record of rehearsals and performances.
4. Have plenty of available times for rehearsals and performances. Avoid ensemble times and other times when students are not available.
5. Communicate frequently with faculty regarding the student's progress.
6. Notify the faculty of excessive absences or lack of preparation.
7. Hold all rehearsals on campus; and when possible, during standard office hours and/or class times.

B. Faculty will...

1. Deliver the music to the pianist as soon as possible. Earlier delivery allows the pianist more time to learn the music. If you are planning on assigning a difficult piano part, early warning is especially helpful.
2. Ask the student if rehearsals have been scheduled and follow up to make sure they are ongoing.
3. Communicate frequently with the pianist regarding the student's progress.
4. Review with the student 'what to expect' during the rehearsal with a pianist. For many, rehearsing with the pianist is brand new.
5. Work with the student to plan a rehearsal timeline for upcoming performances.
6. Be patient and generous when working with GAs or student pianists.

C. Students will...

1. Make sure your pianist has your contact information at the beginning of the semester.
2. Contact your pianist for rehearsal procedures. Look at your semester calendar and schedule rehearsals early and in advance.
3. Keep track of how many rehearsals have been completed, how many you have left and plan accordingly.

4. Prepare for your rehearsal ahead of time by listening/watching a recording of your piece/song and by studying the score. If you do not have the piano part, ask your teacher for a copy.
5. You can also prepare by using various apps or playing along with accompaniments available on YouTube.
6. If you must cancel a rehearsal, contact your pianist immediately. No shows are unprofessional and will not be made up.
7. Be present and engaged.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Accompanying Committee and updated as needed.

Appendix B: School of Music Student Attendance Policy

School of Music Student Attendance Policy Draft:
Proposed to go into effect in Fall 2023.
Revised April 19, 2023.
Presented at School of Music Faculty Meeting on April 27, 2023
(Grammar, spelling, and wording edits May 4, 2023).

Absences Officially Excused by School of Music:

The UTRGV School of Music will excuse students from attending courses for the purpose of performing with official university ensembles for which they are registered or as invited guests of these ensembles, as soloists or chamber musicians at events where they will represent their studios, the School of Music, or the University, to participate in academic conferences or symposia relevant to music studies, to attend rehearsals and premieres of their original compositions, or otherwise pursue professional or artistic activities that advance their education and the visibility of the UTRGV School of Music and UTRGV.

Number of Absences Authorized per Student Per Semester:

Students may not miss more than the equivalent of two weeks of coursework during a Fall or Spring semesters due to absences officially excused by the School of Music. Exceptions to this number of absences may be approved by the dean at least two weeks in advance of when the official absence will happen.

Faculty Responsibilities:

Faculty requiring students to miss class for official School of Music reasons must do the following:

1. Notify the students of the required absences in the first week of the semester. Preferably, this information will be included in the course syllabus.
2. If a faculty member must require students to miss more than the equivalent of two weeks of coursework, they must first obtain the approval of the dean of the College of Fine Arts at least two weeks before the excused absences take place. The faculty member must communicate to the dean the total number of absences they are requesting for the student and a justification describing how such absences will benefit students, the School of Music, and the University.
3. Even when no one faculty member is requiring students under their instruction to miss more than the equivalent of two weeks of classes, students may still find themselves in that position if they participate in several courses, each requiring officially excused absences. In this case, academic advisors may obtain approval for these absences from the dean. The advisor will communicate the total number of days of instruction their advisees will miss, and the justification for why the student must do so.
4. In cases when a faculty member wishes to require an officially excused absence after the first week of school, they must get approval from the Director of the School of Music at least two weeks before the absence occurs, and must communicate this requirement

and its approval to the affected students, also at least two weeks before the absence occurs.

5. Faculty members requiring officially excused absences must provide students with official documentation of the official absence (a letter, an email, a syllabus) where the following is clear:
 - a. The motive for the student absence.
 - b. The times and dates of the required officially excused absence.
 - c. The approval of the Director of the School of Music (when applicable).
 - d. The approval of the Dean of the College of Fine Arts (when applicable).

Student Responsibilities:

Students must check their schedules and calendars and review all their officially excused absences. If a student notices that the combined number of the excused absences from all their courses and ensembles will cause them to miss more than the equivalent of two weeks of instruction, they must communicate this conflict to their academic advisor and seek a resolution.

- For example, a student may be enrolled in Ensemble A that will tour for two weeks in the middle of the semester, and Ensemble B that will tour for one week at the end of the semester. Upon reviewing their schedule, the student realizes that participating in both ensembles means they will miss three weeks of instruction, one more week than the School of Music policy allows.

Students and their advisors may seek resolution of these situations in the following ways:

- In consultation with their academic advisor, the student may drop a course that puts them over the limit of officially-excused absences.
 - In the example above the student may drop Ensemble A or Ensemble B from their schedule.
- In consultation with their academic advisor, the student may ask a faculty member to request an exception from Dean of the College of Fine Arts to provide an official absence beyond the equivalent of two weeks of instructions allowed.
 - In the example above, the student's academic advisor may request the dean to write an official excuse for the student. When requesting this excuse, the advisor would offer a strong justification of why the student must remain enrolled in Ensembles A and B in this specific semester and tour with both of them. If the dean approves all absences, the advisor will share documentation of the dean's approval with the student, who will then share it with the instructors of courses from which they will be absent.
- The student may request that the Director of the School of Music excuse them from participating in activities that will require absences that exceed the equivalent of two weeks from instruction. If the director of the School of Music excuses the student, the director will give the student documentation they will share with the relevant faculty members.

- In the example above the director of the School of Music may excuse the student from participating in the tour of Ensemble A, or the tour of Ensemble B, or a portion of each tour, to keep the student from missing too many days of instruction. The student will share documentation of the director's excuse with the instructors leading ensembles A and B so that the student is not penalized for not participating in the activity from which they have been excused.

Administrators' Responsibilities:

The Dean of the College of Fine Arts

- will evaluate justifications for any student missing the equivalent of more than two weeks of instruction in a Fall or Spring semester and determine whether the additional absences are warranted.
- If the dean approves absences exceeding the equivalent of more than two weeks of instruction, the dean will provide written documentation to the student and the student's advisor.

The Director of the School of Music

- Will evaluate requests for official absences when faculty members request them after the first week of class, provided that the absences will not amount to more than the equivalent of two weeks of instruction.
- Will provide documentation authorizing officially excused absences.
- May excuse students from participating in activities that will cause them to miss more than the equivalent of two weeks of instruction.

Enforcing the Policy:

School of Music Faculty will honor officially excused student absences when all the procedures above have been followed. If the processes above are not followed, faculty are under no obligation to excuse students from attending class and may enforce any attendance policy they have stipulated for their courses.

If a faculty member does not follow the above policy, the School of Music will not grant them official excuses for student absences the following semester or year.