

# M.M., M.M.E. AND M.V.P GENERAL POLICIES

## General Policies and Program Requirements for the Master of Music (M.M.), Master of Music Education (M.M.E.) and Master of Voice Pedagogy (M.V.P.)

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## General Policies and Requirements

- An applicant for admission as a graduate student must, at the time of initial enrollment, provide documentation of having earned a baccalaureate degree, normally but not necessarily with a major in music.
- International students also should review International Student Admission (<https://www.rider.edu/admissions/international/>) for additional information and requirements.
- All entering students in the M.M. degree take placement tests in order to determine the level of their skills in a variety of areas. Please refer to Graduate Placement Testing Information (<https://www.rider.edu/about/offices-services/first-year-programs/new-student-orientation/westminster-welcome/graduate-placement-tests/>) and Diction Hearings (<https://www.rider.edu/academics/colleges-schools/college-arts-sciences/westminster-choir-college/graduate/placement-tests/>) on the University website for more information.
- Graduate students must earn minimum grades of "Y" or "B-" in all courses mandated to remove deficiencies in musical preparation, as determined by placement examinations at the time of initial enrollment. If a grade of "Z" or "C+" or lower is earned, the course must be repeated.
- A final course grade of "D" is not given at the graduate level in Westminster Choir College.
- All degree requirements must be completed within seven years of initial enrollment. Students who have not completed a degree within this time may be required to repeat courses and/or to meet further requirements. If more than one year has elapsed since the date of last enrollment, students may be required to re-apply and re-audition for the program and must meet all requirements in place at the time of their readmission.
- A minimum cumulative or semester grade point average of 3.00 must be maintained at all times. Students who fall below this level may become ineligible to receive graduate awards and are placed on conditional academic standing. Students in this situation place themselves at risk of academic dismissal. Grades earned in courses offered through Continuing Education are recorded but are not factored into the grade point average. A 3.0 cumulative grade point average is required for graduation, and students must be removed from Conditional Academic Standing to be eligible for graduation.
- Only courses carrying graduate credit may be counted toward master's degree requirements.
- Voice Pedagogy and Performance majors must present one year each of college-level study in two of the following languages: French, German, or Italian. Grades of C- or below are not accepted as a demonstration of these skills. Graduate credit is not awarded for foreign language study. A score of 3 on the AP (Advanced Placement) test or a score of at least 65 on CLEP tests is sufficient for language deficiency removal for graduate students providing that these tests were taken within the previous 5 years.
- Undergraduate foreign language study is sequential, each course being a prerequisite to the next. A minimum grade of C is required for advancement to the next level. Grades of C- or below will not be accepted. Placement tests are offered for students who have a background in French, German, or Italian. Advanced standing may be approved, but credit is not awarded except by transfer of credits earned in foreign language study at the college level. Most graduate students must demonstrate proficiency in foreign languages or show transcript evidence of completion of college level study as indicated below. Native speakers may be exempted from taking a course in their native language by the Dean or by recommendation from the appropriate language instructor. This exemption does not receive credit but fulfills graduate language requirements in that language.
- All graduate Voice and Choral Conducting students must demonstrate competency in the diction of the major languages they will encounter: English, Italian, German, French) as well as in the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). They may demonstrate competency by successful completion of a diction screening at the onset of graduate studies. If they cannot successfully pass the diction screening after one semester (two attempts), they must enroll in private vocal coaching (online) to improve their diction skills..
- Graduate students in Voice Pedagogy and Performance must pass a university-administered proficiency examination, both written and oral, in two foreign languages chosen from French, German, or Italian; or must provide transcript evidence of successful completion of one year of college study in two of those languages; or may take FRE 100 and FRE 101, ITA 100 and ITA 101, and/or GER 100 and GER 101, to satisfy these requirements. A grade of 'C' is the minimum accepted for all foreign language proficiency purposes. Grades of 'C-' or below will not be accepted.
- Graduate students pursuing the M.M. or M.M.E. degrees must earn credit for at least two terms of choral ensemble experience.
- All graduate students must pass a final oral examination in each major field. The oral examination may be scheduled only after completion of any and all non-credit-bearing courses being taken to remove deficiencies in musical preparation, and upon approval by the student's academic advisor. This stipulation does not apply to foreign language courses being taken to establish proficiency levels. The oral examination must be completed by the deadline published in the calendar section of this catalog. Please see Graduate Oral Examinations (<http://catalog.rider.edu/policies/graduate/oral-examinations-wcc/>) on the University website. Further information is available at Graduate Programs - Music Education. (<http://www.rider.edu/wcc/academics/graduate-programs/music-education/>)
- A maximum of six graduate credits may be earned by transfer from other institutions with departmental approval. Credit by examination is not awarded at the graduate level except in the case of applied music. In the case of course waivers, the credits involved must be replaced with other elective course credits.

- Students pursuing the M.M. or M.V.P. degree may present toward “electives” a maximum of two credits of choral ensemble participation beyond “core” requirements. After the completion of primary applied lesson requirements, students may enroll in elective applied lessons and count those credits towards “free electives.” Elective applied lessons carry a fee. In some degree programs, “electives” must be chosen from discrete lists of courses unless otherwise approved by the major field department.
- Students must register for applied study during the term when they plan to give a voice, organ, piano, or composition recital unless this requirement is specifically waived by the applied department.
- Students in the M.M.E. and M.V.P. programs must register for 1 hour of thesis credit or one hour of capstone credit in the semester or summer term in which work begins, in the semester or summer term in which work is completed, and in any other semester or summer term in which assistance is provided by the thesis or capstone advisor.
- Commencement: Academic year requirements extend through the annual spring Commencement. All students enrolled in required ensembles (Chapel Choir, Schola Cantorum, Symphonic Choir) are required to participate in Commencement unless excused under extraordinary and unavoidable circumstances, such as serious illness. All other students are encouraged to participate in Commencement. In particular, credit for spring semester choir participation is lost if a student does not attend and is not excused from Commencement. Students participating with the members of the graduating classes are required to purchase or rent appropriate academic regalia, available through the college store.
- In addition to the information given here and on the following pages, students are referred to individual department handbooks for additional information and requirements.

## Graduation with Distinction

Graduate students will graduate *with distinction* upon earning a cumulative grade point average of 3.85 or better in all 500-, 600-, and 700-level courses.

## Graduate Assistantships

A limited number of assistantship positions and graduate scholarships are available to full-time graduate students. Interested students should visit the graduate assistantship website (<https://www.rider.edu/careers/events-resources/graduate-assistantships/>).

## Graduate Oral Exams

### General information

1. All students pursuing the M.M., M.M.E., or M.V.P. degree in the School of Westminster Choir College must pass a final oral examination.
2. The oral examination normally occurs during the last semester in which a student is enrolled prior to graduation.
3. **All courses required to remediate academic deficiencies in Musicianship and Music History must be completed successfully by the end of the semester prior to the oral examination.**
4. The oral examination must be completed by the last day of classes for the term.
5. Students who elect to pursue multiple graduate programs must pass a separate final oral examination in each major area.
6. Students who have not passed all portions of the oral exam must be re-examined within one year from the date of the original or previous

exam. Students failing to meet this deadline or who have not passed the oral examination after three attempts are no longer considered degree candidates and become ineligible to graduate.

7. Students must apply to schedule the oral examination by November 1 for a fall examination, by April 1 for a spring examination, or by June 1 for a summer examination.

## Examining Committee

1. The examining committee consists of no fewer than three Westminster **music** faculty members, full-time or adjunct, including two from the student's major area, and one member of the student's choice from outside the major area.
2. Departments may establish their own policies regarding membership for the major area portion of the examining committee.

## Structure and Content of Examination

1. The structure and content of the examination should support the general philosophy of graduate education, as previously endorsed by the Westminster Academic Policy Committee, which states:

Critical thinking is to be encouraged throughout the curriculum. Students should acquire a musicological sensibility and the ability to engage in a logical discourse about varied aspects of the art. In addition to overall musical competency, true expertise is required in a particular area. At the conclusion of their studies, students should have an understanding of what remains to be learned and the tools to continue their education throughout their lives. They should be fully prepared to embark upon—or continue in—their professional lives as performers, composers, teachers, ministers of music, conductors, doctoral students, and vigorous advocates for music.

While specific content is left to the discretion of the department, the examination should be designed to demonstrate the student's ability to engage in a logical discourse in the major area and its relationship to various aspects of the art and should transcend the mere recitation of factual information.

Departments will create written guidelines to assist students in preparing for the examination, which will be distributed to students at the onset of their graduate studies.

2. The Director of Graduate Studies will periodically attend examinations as a fourth, non-voting, member to ensure a degree of interdepartmental consistency in content and the standards to which students are held. The DGS will report his/her findings to the Graduate Committee and the WAPC for future review.