

# MASTER OF MUSIC: PIANO PERFORMANCE

## Program Overview

Piano at Westminster Choir College has multiple dimensions at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. It fosters the development of students who perform on a high level as soloists, as artist-teachers and as collaborators with other performing artists. A strong foundation of technique and knowledge of piano literature and style are essential to all the foregoing.

## Curriculum Overview

Students majoring in piano receive private lessons and play in weekly studio and performance classes. The program culminates with a full recital. Annual juries are required. Areas of study include chamber music or accompanying class, piano literature electives, musicology, Symphonic Choir and electives.

## Degrees Offered

- M.M. in Piano Performance

## Contact

### Margaret Cusack

Professor and Chairperson  
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### Ingrid Clarfield

Professor  
Erdman 11  
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**Program Website:** [www.rider.edu/wcc](http://www.rider.edu/wcc) (<http://www.rider.edu/wcc>)

**Associated Department:** Westminster Choir College

## Related Programs

- Piano Accompanying and Coaching
- Piano Pedagogy and Performance

## Faculty

**Ingrid Clarfield** • Professor, Piano, 1982. B.M., Oberlin College; M.M., Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester.

**Dalton Baldwin** • Adjunct Professor, Piano, 1984. B.A., Oberlin Conservatory.

**Miriam Eley** • Adjunct Assistant Professor, Piano, 1995. B.M., Baylor University; M.M. Indiana University.

**Ena Bronstein Barton** • Adjunct Associate Professor, Piano, 1983. Artist Diploma, Escuela Moderna de Musica and Conservatorio Nacional de Musica, Santiago, Chile.

**James Goldsworthy** • Professor, Piano, 1996. B.M., M.M., Southern Methodist University; D.M.A., Stanford University.

**Phyllis Lehrer** • Professor, Piano, 1975. A.B., University of Rochester; M.S., Juilliard School.

**Thomas Parente** • Associate Professor, Piano, 1993. B.A., Jersey City State College; B.M., Manhattan School of Music; M.A., Rutgers University;

Dalcroze Eurhythmics License, Longy School of Music; Ed.D., Teachers College, Columbia University.

**J.J. Penna** • Associate Professor, Piano, 1996. B.M., Binghamton University; D.M.A., University of Michigan.

**Agnes Poltorak** • Adjunct Assistant Professor, Piano, 2000. B.M., University of British Columbia, Canada; M.M., Westminster Choir College of Rider University.

**Paul Sheftel** • Adjunct Professor, Piano, 2010. B.M., M.M., Juilliard School.

**Betty Handelman Stoloff** • Adjunct Associate Professor, Piano, 1978. B.M.A., University of Michigan; M.A., Columbia University.

Learn more about General Graduate Requirements. (<http://catalog.rider.edu/westminster-choir-college/graduate-programs/general-requirements>)

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Major Area</b>		
PI 641A	Piano Primary (4 terms)	8
PI 633	Piano Literature Seminar (2 semesters)	6
<b>Select one of the following:</b>		2-3
PI 512	Chamber Music (Core)	
	or PI 713	Accompanying Class
<b>Core</b>		
MH 731	Intro to Musicology	3
CR 509	Symphonic Choir (2 terms)	2
	Theory or Music History elective (1 course)	3
	Core elective <sup>1</sup>	3
	Recital <sup>2</sup>	
<b>Electives</b>		
	Free electives	6
Total Credits		33-34

### Note

<sup>1</sup> The core elective must be a single, 3-credit graduate-level course outside the student's major area, area of emphasis, and/or area of applied study.

<sup>2</sup> Upon approval from the department, students are required to present a public recital.

### Year 1

Fall Semester		Credits
PI 641A	Piano Primary	2
CR 509	Symphonic Choir	1
MH 731	Intro to Musicology	3
	Free elective	3
Semester Credit Hours		9

### Spring Semester

PI 641A	Piano Primary	2
CR 509	Symphonic Choir	1
	Piano Literature elective	3
	Free elective	3
Semester Credit Hours		9

### Year 2

Fall Semester		Credits
PI 641A	Piano Primary	2

Theory or Music History elective	3
Core elective	3
<b>Semester Credit Hours</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Spring Semester</b>	
PI 641A Piano Primary	2
Piano Literature Elective	3
<b>Select one of the following:</b>	<b>2-3</b>
PI 512 Chamber Music or pi 713	
Recital	
<b>Semester Credit Hours</b>	<b>7-8</b>
<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>33-34</b>

**PI 512 Chamber Music 2 Credits**

Emphasis is placed upon rehearsal and performances of representative collaborative literature for strings and piano, and woodwinds and piano. Students will be assigned movements from major chamber works selected from different style periods. Professional instrumentalists will join them for rehearsals and performances in class. An overview of the development of this repertoire will be presented and listening assignments will augment the study of specific works. A project involving the study and presentation of a piano quartet or piano quintet will be included. Attendance at three concerts of instrumental chamber music is required. Permission of applied teacher and instructor is required.

**PI 513 Jazz Keyboard/Improv 3 Credits**

This course will enable pianists and organists to become familiar with the theory, harmony, and improvisational techniques of jazz piano. Emphasis will be placed upon getting each student to create spontaneous improvisations. The fundamental goal will be that of enabling students accustomed to following a score to move beyond it. Extensive exposure to material from the "Great American Songbook" as well as to jazz standards will provide a structural basis for the course.

**Prerequisite(s):** TH 142 and PI 201, or equivalent knowledge and technical proficiency.

**PI 516 Physical/Psych Aspects Piano 2 Credits**

The two major emphases of this course are: (1) the pianist as athlete and 2) the pianist as performer. The first includes a study of appropriate exercise, nutrition, anatomy and physiology as they relate to piano technique, implications for injury prevention, and how to deal with injuries should they occur. The second includes the reading process, strategies for practicing, memorizing techniques, and ways of coping with the behavioral, physical and cognitive manifestations of performance anxiety.

**PI 540 Keyboard Skills 3 Credits**

The course includes in-depth study of numerous aspects of musicianship skills essential for all pianists within the broader categories of technique and practice strategies; memorization and sight reading; improvisation and lead sheet realization. All aspects of piano musicianship skills will be addressed from practical, pedagogical, and collaborative points of view. Assignments will include examples of studies from a wide range of levels all within the current and developing skill level of each student enrolled in the class.

**Prerequisite(s):** UG - Eight credits of applied keyboard study or permission of keyboard instructor or course instructor. GR - Permission of course instructor.

**PI 585 Piano Ensemble 1 Credits**

Study and performance of piano duets, two-piano works, and works for combinations of three or more pianists. The emphasis is on ensemble techniques for rehearsal and performance.

**PI 609 Graduate Piano Review 1 Credits**

A functional course concentrating upon sight reading of simple piano accompaniments and open score reading. Required for graduate students with deficiencies in these skills.

**PI 611 Piano Pedagogy Lab 0 Credits**

Discussions will include problem-solving related to piano teaching, discussion of observations, supervised and independent teaching, questions relating to repertoire, materials and technique. Comparative philosophies and psychologies and their applications, group and private teaching, business issues, professional organizations and publications, technology, career planning, recital and audition planning will be included. There will also be guidance in the preparation for the graduate oral examination.

**PI 622 Eval Piano Teaching Lit 3 Credits**

This course provides a critical survey of piano teaching materials, including standard teaching literature, approaches to piano technique in writings and music exercises, and repertoire for the elementary, intermediate, and early advanced student. All music is analyzed from the perspectives of performance, technical demands, strategies for teacher presentation, and student practice. Applications and demonstrations of technology are included. Graduate students demonstrate teaching and performance strategies in class and carry an assigned teaching load at the Westminster Conservatory.

**PI 633 Piano Literature Seminar 3 Credits**

A major area of piano repertoire is selected for intensive study. The emphasis of the seminar changes from semester to semester. Possible topics include the development of the Mozart concerto, keyboard works of J.S. Bach, piano writing of Debussy, and 20th Century piano music.

**PI 641A Piano Primary 2 Credits****PI 641B Piano Primary 1 Credits****PI 641C Piano Elective 2 Credits****PI 641D Piano Elective 1 Credits****PI 641E Piano Primary 2 Credits****PI 641F Piano Primary 1 Credits****PI 661 Graduate Piano Pedagogy 3 Credits**

This course serves as an intensive study of theoretical and practical aspects of piano study, through examination of instruction materials and developing a well-defined philosophy and approach to piano teaching. Students are challenged to increase their ability in connecting advanced and intermediate music study to the foundation of what should take place in the first weeks of piano lessons. The focus of the course lies in developing one's own curriculum, on its own terms, or associated with instruction materials already in publication. Various methodologies and significant areas of thought in the field of piano pedagogy are explored and compared. The course involves private and group lesson observations at all levels of teaching. Practical application of education theory to music lessons at the piano is done through demonstration and practice teaching at the Westminster Conservatory or the College. Practical application of educational theory to music lessons at the piano is done through demonstration and practice teaching through the Westminster Conservatory or the College.

**PI 690 Independent Research and Study 1-3 Credits**

Students may pursue a special topic for which they have prepared through prior course work. Only one project may be scheduled in a semester. The project may involve 1-3 credit hours. Approval of the faculty sponsor, department chair, and dean required prior to the first day of the semester in which the project is to be completed. Minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 required.

**Prerequisite(s):** graduate standing.

**PI 691A Piano Pedagogy Internship I 3 Credits**

The two-semester internship includes weekly teaching each semester, faculty observation of this teaching, and private discussion with the faculty observer. In addition, students themselves observe group and private lessons and are given readings, written assignments, and/or projects associated with their own teaching. Internships may include intensive study of private and/or group instruction, reading for children, working with college, adults, piano minor, gifted students or traditional studio of all ages and levels.

**PI 691B Piano Pedagogy Internship II 3 Credits**

The two-semester internship includes weekly teaching each semester, faculty observation of this teaching, and private discussion with the faculty observer. In addition, students themselves observe group and private lessons and are given readings, written assignments, and/or projects associated with their own teaching. Internships may include intensive study of private and/or group instruction, reading for children, working with college, adults, piano minor, gifted students or traditional studio of all ages and levels.

**PI 713 Accompanying Class 3 Credits**

Students will investigate aspects of ensemble in vocal accompanying. Discussion topics will include rubato and its connection to language, stylistic concerns, musical preparation as well as practical issues such as recital programming and balance. Students will be expected to absorb extensive repertoire through attendance and performance. Class format will include both student presentations and lecture sessions.

**PI 714 Techniques of Coaching I 2 Credits**

A practical course designed to furnish information and experience in all aspects of vocal coaching, including diction coaching, ornamentation and realization, issues of drama and presentation, stylistic considerations, stage deportment and specialized accompanying skills. Students are observed in the process of coaching singers. Semantics and pedagogical techniques are stressed and polished. Factors involved in translations of Italian, French, German and other non-English texts are studied.

**PI 715 Techniques of Coaching II 2 Credits**

A practical course designed to furnish information and experience in all aspects of vocal coaching, including diction coaching, ornamentation and realization, issues of drama and presentation, stylistic considerations, stage deportment and specialized accompanying skills. Students are observed in the process of coaching singers. Semantics and pedagogical techniques are stressed and polished. Factors involved in translations of Italian, French, German and other non-English texts are studied.

**Prerequisite(s):** PI 714.