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Welcome to the Graduate Student Handbook

Welcome! This Handbook is intended to gather in one document current rules, regulations and practices for graduate students at Westminster Choir College of Rider University. It outlines general degree requirements, approved by the faculty and Westminster Academic Policy Committee, as well as policies and procedures on grading, transfer credits, auditions, oral exams, etc. It contains information on certain policies and regulations that can also be found Westminster’s Academic Catalog, as well as The Source – the official student handbook for Rider University students. In case of conflict between this handbook and any officially-published regulation or practice of the College and/or University, the official publications prevail. Changes will occur. Students are responsible for any changes that are adopted officially. Please contact the Graduate Program Director or Academic Coordinator with any concerns regarding your degree program, course requirements, and other questions that you may have.

Administration, Faculty and Staff Information

Dean and Director          Robert L. Annis annis@rider.edu x 8206
Associate Dean for Administration Marshall Onofrio monofrio@rider.edu x 8108
Registrar                 Marybeth Consiglio mconsiglio@rider.edu x 8225
Financial Aid             Dennis Levy    dlevy@rider.edu x 5360
Academic Coordinator      Marjory Klein mklein@rider.edu x 8230
Director of Graduate Studies Thomas Faracco tfaracco@rider.edu x 8257

Area Contacts

Conducting, Organ and Sacred Music
Joe Miller, Chair            joemiller@rider.edu x247
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Tom Shelton, Sacred Music   tshelton@rider.edu x274

Music Education
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Music Composition, History and Theory
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Joel Phillips, Composition   phillips@rider.edu x241

Piano and Voice
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Ingrid Clarfield, Piano      clarfield@rider.edu x290
Christopher Arneson, Voice Pedagogy carneson@rider.edu x269
The Westminster Graduate Committee 2014-2015

Christian Carey (MCHaT)
Al Holcomb (Music Education)
Tom Shelton (Organ and Sacred Music)
J.J. Penna (Piano)
Kathy Price (Voice)
Amanda Quist (Conducting)
TBA student representative
Thomas Faracco, Chair
Marjory Klein, Academic Coordinator (ex officio)

Degree Programs
Master of Music with concentrations in the following areas:

Music of the United States and Public Musicology
Choral Conducting
Composition
Music Education
Organ Performance
Piano Accompanying and Coaching
Piano Pedagogy and Performance
Piano Performance
Sacred Music
Voice Pedagogy and Performance (Pedagogy Track)
Voice Pedagogy and Performance (Performance Track)

Master of Music Education
Master of Voice Pedagogy

Graduate Scholarships and Assistantships

Graduate Scholarships
At the time the admission decision is made, every incoming full time graduate student is reviewed automatically for merit scholarship. Scholarship amounts range from $2,000 per year up to $12,000 per year and are based on audition results and academics. Scholarships are renewable for two years as long as recipients maintain a 3.0 GPA, are enrolled full time, and are in good academic standing. Additionally, some academic departments also have named endowed or memorial scholarship and grant opportunities for new incoming students. Students will be notified if they qualify to receive any additional endowed or departmental scholarship.
Graduate Assistantships

Graduate Assistantship Awards are available each year for a number of incoming graduate students. The following offices and departments offer assistantships (this list is subject to change):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Office of Admission</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Alumni and Development Offices</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Choral Activities Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Departments: Choral Conducting, Music Education, Voice, Piano, Sacred Music, Organ, Theory/Composition/Music History</td>
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<tr>
<td>Library and Performance Collection</td>
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<td>Performance Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Associate Dean/Registrar’s Office</td>
<td>Office of Information Technology</td>
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</table>

All applicants to Westminster Choir College graduate programs are considered for graduate assistantship assignments at the time of admission. Selection for an assignment will be based on some or all of the following criteria:

- Academic Record
- Audition Results
- Previous Work History

The graduate scholarship amount will vary depending on audition results and previous academic records. Work study assignments are made at the discretion of the Graduate Assistantship Award Committee. The Graduate Scholarship portion of the award is credited each semester to student accounts (half of the total amount each semester). The Work Study assignments involve up to 20 hours per week of service to the college, earnings to be paid directly to the students. Consideration will be given only to full time students accepted into the graduate program. International students must have a minimum of 550 (paper based test) or an 80 (internet based test) on the TOEFL and a valid Social Security number to be employed on campus. Assistantships are reviewed at the end of the first year and are not renewable after the second year. Students holding assistantships must maintain a 3.0 GPA at all times, enroll with a full-time load of 9-15 credits each semester, and are in good academic standing. Please note: No forms of tuition remission are included in the Graduate Assistantship program at Westminster Choir College.

Placement Exams

Diagnostic placement tests in music history, musicianship (theory), and 20th century analysis are required of all entering master students before they enroll for coursework. Students who received a baccalaureate degree from Westminster Choir
College within five years of application to the graduate program may be exempt from these tests if they maintained a 3.0 average in each of the three areas. These written exams, as well as other one-on-one hearings (as required by the major) in the areas of piano proficiency and diction are administered during Orientation Week, prior to the start of classes at the beginning of each semester.

Students may not enroll in any music history (other than Introduction to Musicology) or theory courses until these exams have been taken and passed, or whatever remedial courses are successfully completed. **If the student fails any or all tests, the student must enroll in the appropriate remedial course/s at the earliest opportunity that the class is offered. Students will not be permitted to re-take the test in the event of failure.** Failure to take a placement test is considered an automatic “fail” and the student will be required to take the appropriate remedial course(s). Deficiencies are removed by earning a “Y” or “B-” grade in required review courses. Students may be placed in a variety of remedial courses based on the results of these placement tests.

### Academic Policies

**Minimum Cumulative Grade Point Average (G.P.A)**

A minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.00 must be maintained at all times. A 3.0 cumulative grade point average is required for graduation.

**Conditional Academic Standing**

Students who fall below the minimum grade point average of 3.00 are placed on conditional academic standing and become ineligible to receive graduate awards and assistantships. Students in this position must achieve a G.P.A of 3.00 or above in order to remove conditional standing. The Graduate Committee will state in writing a specific course of study in order to remove conditional standing. Students must be removed from Conditional Academic Standing to be eligible for graduation.

**Academic Dismissal**

The Westminster Choir College Graduate Committee has the sole authority to dismiss graduate students for academic reasons. In addition to minimum GPA requirements, graduate students may be dismissed if they fail to meet other minimum academic requirements listed under “General Degree Requirements” for master’s students in the Academic Catalog. A dismissed student may appeal in writing to the Graduate Committee for immediate rescission of a dismissal decision. Evidence should be submitted to suggest that it is in the interests of both the student and the college for the dismissal to be rescinded. However, any student who fails to pursue a course of study prescribed by an academic standing committee, or who does unsatisfactory work in the prescribed course of study, may be dismissed without right of further appeal.
Code of Academic Conduct
Academic honesty constitutes the cornerstone of the academic community. Learning, teaching and scholarship cannot be conducted in an atmosphere of dishonesty. Therefore, Rider University insists on strict adherence to the concept of academic honesty as indispensable to the continued existence and future development of the campus community. Every student has a direct personal interest in maintaining academic honesty since each evaluation of academic progress involves a judgment by the faculty member concerning each individual’s intellectual performance. The evaluation process is predicated on the assumption that an individual’s achievement reflects his/her own ability, effort and perceptions. Academic dishonesty includes any unauthorized collaboration or misrepresentation in the submission of academic work. In all written work, whether in class or out of class, the student’s name on the work is considered to be a statement that the work is his or hers alone, except as otherwise indicated. Students are expected to provide proper citations for the statements and ideas of others whether submitted word for word or paraphrased. Failure to provide proper citations will be considered plagiarism and offenders will be subject to the charge of plagiarism specified in the statement of regulations. Similarly, students are expected to adhere to all regulations pertaining to examination conduct. These regulations are designed to insure that the work submitted by the student on examinations is an honest representation of that student’s effort and that it does not involve unauthorized collaboration, unauthorized use of notes during the exam, or unauthorized access to prior information about the examination. Please see The Source for complete information about regulations, conduct and procedures.

Transfer Credits
Graduate students may request transfer of a maximum of six credits from other graduate schools. A maximum of six additional credits earned through the Westminster Continuing Education program may be applied toward graduation requirements in the M.M. and M.V.P. programs. A maximum of twelve additional credits earned through the Westminster Continuing Education program may be applied toward graduation requirements in the M.M.E. program. Currently enrolled students are strongly encouraged to obtain permission to transfer a course before enrolling for a course at another institution, using the form available in the Assistant Registrar’s Office. If prior approval is not obtained, there is no guarantee that transfer credit will be granted. Approval of transfer credits is given by the appropriate academic department, following receipt of a written petition and an official transcript. Official transcripts must be submitted before any transfer or continuing education credits can be accepted.

Time Limits for Completing Degrees
Graduate students must complete all degree requirements within seven years of initial enrollment. Students who have not satisfied requirements by this time may be required to repeat courses and/or meet further requirements. Credits earned at another institution or through Westminster Continuing Education outside the seven or ten year period that
commenced with initial enrollment in a degree program must be approved for transfer into that program by the department offering the degree.

Advising and Registration

Responsibilities of Students and Faculty Advisors
Each graduate student is assigned an academic advisor upon entering the college. The role of the advisor is twofold – to be available for academic counseling upon request of the student and to meet with the student each semester to assist in planning a program of study which will fulfill all degree requirements. While the advisors are there to assist in this process, each student is ultimately responsible for personally ensuring that all degree requirements are satisfactorily completed. Periodically, the Academic Coordinator will email each student and advisor a degree audit listing all of the remaining degree requirements. It is important that you check this audit carefully and immediately inform the Academic Coordinator of any errors. All degree requirements can be found in the Academic Catalog under the year of each student’s matriculation.

Registering for Courses
Students must meet with their academic advisor before registering for classes. After the meeting, the advisor will “greenlight” the student which allows them to register online through myRider on the university website. Graduate students are allowed to register on the first day of the registration period. Register early in the day to avoid getting closed out of classes. Students will not be able to register until all financial obligations are met.

Auditing a Course
Subject to space availability and the permission of the instructor, students may register to audit courses other than those which are performance-based (e.g., applied music lessons, acting courses, coaching, studio dance, ensembles and productions). Auditors may not register before the first day of classes but must register by the end of the course add period, typically the first week of classes. Auditors may not change from Audit to Credit during the semester. Students originally registered for Credit may change to Audit only during the schedule adjustment period, typically the first two weeks of each semester. No credit is earned for any audited course. Part time students are charged a fee to audit courses.

Independent Study Procedures
In order to challenge students of exceptional talents and interests and to provide opportunities for individual study and research, independent study is available for credit to qualified students under the terms stated below. Each project must be directed by a Rider University faculty advisor. The advisor-student relationship is one of mutual agreement between a faculty member and the student. Possible areas of independent study include theory, music history, performance, and composition. The choice of project is limited
primarily by the availability of an advisor who has some knowledge and interest in the field.

The following policies apply to independent study courses:
1. Approval for an independent study course must be secured in writing, normally during the term prior to that in which the study will be carried out, but in any case in advance of the first day of classes of the applicable term.
2. A student may not enroll for more than one independent study course per term. Courses usually carry two or three credits, with a maximum of six allowable in special cases involving a full year of work.
3. A maximum of 18 credits may be earned in all independent study courses at the college.
4. A student is normally ineligible for an independent study course which would begin during a first year at Westminster.
5. A student who applies for approval of an independent study course should have a cumulative grade point average of 3.00 or better.
6. A student is expected to earn a minimum grade of “B” in any independent study course, as assigned by the faculty advisor for the project. A grade of “B-” or lower may result in ineligibility for future independent study courses.

The procedure outlined below should be followed by the student interested in an independent study course:
1. After deciding upon a desired project, the student should approach a faculty member under whose guidance the study might proceed. If the faculty member agrees to serve as advisor, the project is then discussed and defined.
2. The student should then submit an Application for Independent Study form, available in the Office of the Assistant Registrar. The form should be completed in its entirety and signed by both the student and the faculty advisor.

Minimum-Maximum Credits per Semester
In order to have full-time status, graduate students must be enrolled in a minimum of 9 and a maximum of 15 credits per semester, of the equivalent including undergraduate and non-credit courses. Graduate scholarship awards and assistantships require full-time enrollment each semester.

General Program Requirements
MASTER OF MUSIC (M.M.)
MASTER OF MUSIC EDUCATION (M.M.E.)
MASTER OF VOICE PEDAGOGY (M.V.P.)

1. An applicant for admission as a graduate student must, by the time of initial enrollment, provide documentation of having earned a baccalaureate degree, normally but not necessarily with a major in music.
2. International students also should review “Admission as an International Student” in the Admissions section of the Academic Catalog for additional information and requirements.

3. 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 consult the Hearings and Tests web page. http://www.rider.edu/offices-services/orientation/princeton-campus-orientation/hearings-and-placement-testing/graduate-he

4. Graduate students must earn minimum grades of “B-” or “Y” 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 “C+” or lower is earned, the course must be repeated.

5. 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 reapply and re-audition for the program, and must meet all requirements in place at the time of their re-admission.

6. A minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.00 must be maintained at all times. Students who fall below this level 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.

7. Only courses carrying graduate credit may be counted toward master’s degree requirements.

8. Sacred Music, Choral Conducting, and Organ Performance majors must demonstrate, by means of examination or of transcript grades, a reading knowledge of either French or German equivalent to two years of study at the college level. Piano Accompanying and Coaching majors must present one year each of college-level study in French and German. Voice Pedagogy and Performance majors must present one year each of college-level study in two of the following languages: French, German, and Italian. Grades of C- or below are not accepted as a demonstration of these skills. See “Foreign languages” in the “Arts and Sciences” chapter of the Academic Catalog. Graduate credit is not awarded for foreign language study.

9. All graduate voice, choral conducting, and piano accompanying and coaching majors must take a proficiency examination in English, Italian, French and German diction as well as the International Phonetic Alphabet. For students who do not pass all or part of the proficiency exam, the Voice Department will recommend courses of other options to prepare to retake the exam. Students who do not pass the proficiency exam must retake and pass the examination as a graduation requirement.

10. Graduate students must earn credit for at least two terms of choral ensemble experience. For students pursuing the M.M. degree, these credits must be earned in Symphonic Choir except when, by petition to the conducting faculty, permission is granted to substitute other experiences.

11. 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 “Oral Examinations” in the Academic Policies section of this catalog.

12. A maximum of six graduate credits may be earned by transfer from other institutions. 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, unless stated otherwise by the department offering the course.

13. Apart from workshops taken to satisfy choral ensemble requirements, students pursuing the M.M. or M.V.P. degree may present toward “Electives” a maximum of six Continuing Education 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. Students pursuing the M.M.E. degree may present toward “Electives” a maximum of twelve summer workshop credits. Excess credits earned in the primary applied music field may not be presented toward “Electives.” In some degree programs, “Electives” must be chosen from discrete lists of courses unless otherwise approved by the major field department.

14. Students must register for applied study during the term when they plan to give a voice, organ, or piano recital, unless this requirement is specifically waived by the applied department.

15. In addition to the information given here and on the following pages, students are referred to the Academic Catalog for specific program requirements and individual department handbooks for additional information and requirements.

Foreign Language Requirements

Students must earn a grade of “C” in all foreign language courses. Grades of “C-“or below are not accepted.

Choral Conducting

Students must demonstrate a reading knowledge of French or German equivalent to two years of college study of one of these two languages.

Organ Performance

Students must demonstrate a reading knowledge of French or German equivalent to two years of college study of one of these two languages.

Piano Accompanying and Coaching

Students must complete at least one year of undergraduate study in French and German.

Sacred Music

Students must demonstrate a reading knowledge of French or German equivalent to two years of college study of one of these two languages.
**Voice Pedagogy (MVP)**

Students must demonstrate competency in at least two of the three major European singing languages (Italian, German, French). This may occur through completion of at least one year of college-level study in each language, intensive work through language institutes or practical experience living and /or working in a foreign country, as verified by diagnostic testing at Westminster.

**Voice Pedagogy and Performance – both Performance and Pedagogy Emphasis**

Students must complete at least one year of undergraduate-level study in two of the three major European singing languages (Italian, German, French). Students must earn a grade of “C” in these courses. Grades of “C-“or below are not accepted.

**Diction Requirements**

All graduate Voice, Choral Conducting, and Piano Accompanying and Coaching majors must take a proficiency examination in English, Italian, French and German Diction, and the International Phonetic Alphabet. For students who do not pass all or part of the proficiency exam, the Voice Department will recommend courses or other options to prepare to retake the exam. Students who do not pass the proficiency exam must retake and pass the examination as a graduation requirement.

**THE MASTER'S DEGREE ORAL EXAMINATION**

**General information**

1. All students pursuing a master’s degree at Westminster Choir College of Rider University 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. The Request for Exam form is available from the Academic Coordinator.
3. All courses required to remediate academic deficiencies must successfully be completed in the semester prior to the oral examination.
4. The oral examination must be completed at least two weeks prior to the last day of classes for the semester in which it occurs.
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 the oral examination after three attempts are no longer considered degree candidates and become ineligible to graduate.

**Deadlines to Schedule Oral Examinations**

Please refer to the Academic Calendar for specific dates.

Examining Committee

- 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.
- Departments may establish their own policies for membership on the major area portion of the examining committee.

Structure and Content of Examination

- 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 as 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. These guidelines are available from the Academic Coordinator.
- 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.
WELCOME TO WESTMINSTER!

The following is an unofficial and informal guide that was assembled by graduate students at WCC. It is intended only to help orient new music students to the Westminster campus and surrounding communities. The College and University do not assume any responsibility for the accuracy of the content.

Get plugged in!

- Join your incoming graduate class's Facebook group. Contact Kate Shields (kshields@rider.edu) in Admissions if you are for some reason not added
- Start checking your Rider Webmail as soon as you accept your admission offer
- You should receive information about Graduate Orientation by the end of June before the Fall semester

Start looking for housing yesterday!

- Use the Facebook group to find roommates
- Craigslist.com is a great resource for apartments as well as real estate sites like Trulia.com, Apartmentfinder.com, Apartmentguide.com

Nearby locales:

- Plainsboro (15 min. drive)
- Lawrence Township/Lawrenceville (15-20 min. drive)
- Trenton (cheaper and 20min. drive)

Counseling Services

Counseling Center offices are open for appointments from 9 am-4 pm Monday through Friday, while school is in session. Students can make appointments either by calling or walking into the Counseling Center on either campus.

- The Westminster Counseling Office is located on the 3rd floor of Williamson Hall and the phone number is (609) 921-7100 x8275.
- The Lawrenceville Counseling Center is located in Zoerner House on Lawrenceville Road between Rider University's two entrances (near Public Safety) and the phone number is (609) 896-5157.

When a student calls, he/she will be asked for background information such as name, age, phone number, whether a resident or commuter student, year, times available and the reason for scheduling. This information is helpful in assigning a counselor to the student.
Academic Support Services

The office of Academic Support Services is located in the basement of Taylor Hall, Room B-12. This office offers services directed to aid you in overcoming academic obstacles:

- **Peer Tutoring Service:** offers individualized tutoring in all subject areas
- **Services to Students with Learning Disabilities and ADD:** assures that students with documented learning disabilities and Attention Deficit Disorder receive all appropriate classroom accommodations and adaptive learning aids
- **Academic Counseling:** provides the opportunity for you to sit with a counselor, assess your approach to learning and develop new strategies to help you become a more successful college student

Stop in or contact Janett Guthrie at extension 8220 or guthriej@rider.edu.

Church Positions

There are many opportunities for students to work as soloists, sections leaders, organists and conductors in nearby churches. The Sacred Music office, located in the basement of Bristol Chapel, holds listings of available positions. Contact Kevin Radtke, Coordinator of Sacred Music, for further information, sacredmusic@rider.edu.