



GRADUATE COMPOSITION STUDIES

Overview

The primary objective of the MM in Composition program is to provide advanced graduate study in the art of music composition. It is an exclusive program that admits one to four students per year, each of whom have earned a baccalaureate degree in music. Additional objectives include helping students prepare for doctoral studies in composition or for a career in which they will teach composition in an institution of higher learning.

Throughout their course of study, students are expected to create a substantial body of high-quality works for a variety of acoustic and/or electronic media that demonstrate a mastery of compositional techniques and an authentic, personal musical language. Each student is required to complete a thesis project in the form of a composition of significant breadth and substance, augmented by a written essay that provides analysis and discussion of influences and process. Graduate student composers are required to present a recital of their music and take a comprehensive examination during the final year of their study.

Students have the opportunity to have their works performed at three composition recitals during the year, including a special student composer recital at the annual Festival of New American Music. Some students organize performances of their work in the community as well.

Requirements for Admission to the Master of Music Program

Applicants to the Master of Music program in Theory and Composition must submit a portfolio containing:

- A short biography;
- An artistic statement of approximately 500 words detailing the applicant's philosophy of composition;
- Three works that best represent the applicant's craft. At least one of the compositions must use traditional staff notation, and at least one should be for an ensemble of four or more performers; and
- A document with links to video or audio recordings (not MIDI) of the three submitted works.

Submit portfolios electronically to Dr. Scott Perkins at scott.perkins@csus.edu. The document with links to recordings and all scores should be attached as PDF files; do not attach files that need to be opened with a notation program.

Scholarships

Students in the Master of Music in Composition program are eligible for the Jeffrey Hoover Memorial Scholarship in addition to School of Music general scholarships. Awards begin at \$500. Students who wish to enter the School of Music in or after Fall 2024 and be considered for a scholarship must complete a University Scholarship Application. To complete this application, visit <https://www.csus.edu/apply/financial-aid-scholarships/scholarships>.

The Sacramento State Composition Faculty

Dr. Stephen Blumberg, Director of the School of Music
Dr. Shuying Li, Head of Composition
Dr. Scott Perkins, Head of Music Theory and Musicianship
Dr. Josiah Catalan
Dr. Sarah Wald

More Information

Please direct questions about composition studies at Sacramento State to Dr. Scott Perkins at scott.perkins@csus.edu.