

HUNTER COLLEGE DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC  
PRIVATE INSTRUCTION ON AN INSTRUMENT OR VOICE  
Department Policies

**1. Approved teachers for private instruction.**

(a) All undergraduate music majors or minors taking private instruction on an instrument or voice, as well as graduate students enrolled in MUS 681–684, must study with a Music Department faculty member or a department-recommended Performance Associate (teacher). Most current active performance faculty and performance associates are listed on the “Faculty” page of the Hunter Music Department website. Permission to enroll in private instruction is granted when a student successfully completes the departmental auditions and exams required for entrance to a music program (see “Skills” below).

(b) Graduate students enrolled in MUS 781-784 may study with a Music Department faculty member, a department-recommended Performance Associate, or an outside teacher of their own choice (to be approved by the Music Department). Please note that only students who are matriculated M.A. or BA/MA students and have been accepted for a concentration in Performance may take MUS 781-784.

**2. Student obligations.**

Teacher Assignment Form: Teacher Assignment Forms must be completed each and every semester (fall and spring) and must be submitted according to deadlines that are posted on the Teacher Assignment Forms themselves. Late applications will be rejected. No exceptions! (You may submit a Teacher Assignment Form for study on a second instrument, but only if you have already auditioned on this second instrument and have received tentative approval to enroll in two private lesson courses within the same semester.

**For All Students Taking Undergraduate Lessons (MUSPF 401 or 431): There are TWO required components:**

1. ***Weekly private lessons given for credit to declared Music Majors or Minors. You and your private instructor will arrange a time and location to meet for lessons on a weekly basis, based on each other’s schedules.*** At the conclusion of each semester, students must give a Performance Jury, with the exception of MUSPF 431 students giving their Degree Recitals in the same semester.
2. ***A weekly Performance Class that is essentially a required lab component of private lessons. The time and location listed in your registration for MUSPF 401 or MUSPF 431 is the Performance Class time and location. You and your private instructor will arrange a time and location to meet for lessons on a weekly basis, based on each other’s schedules.*** The official The Performance Class will explore many dimensions of solo instrumental and vocal performance. In addition to performance and study of repertoire in a master class format, potential topics will include performance practice associated with different eras, exploration of particular genres, issues surrounding public performance and memorization, improvisation in different style, sight-reading skills, duo performance, and performance techniques for 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century music. Exact topics will vary each semester depending on the makeup of the class.

**Note: The Performance Class requirement does NOT apply to students taking graduate lessons (MUS 681-4 or MUS 781-4). There are no required Performance Class components of private lessons for graduate students.**

Participation in a Hunter ensemble and Service to the Department: All students enrolled in private instruction must participate in a Hunter ensemble. In instances where there is a large ensemble that is clearly appropriate for the lessons a student is receiving, the student is required to participate in that ensemble (e.g., a voice student in choir or chamber singers, a jazz saxophonist in jazz ensemble, a violinist in the orchestra), unless by prior arrangement with that ensemble’s director. This is by no means meant to discourage students from gaining additional musical exposure from other ensembles: the department encourages this.

Additional Obligations: In addition, we ask that undergraduate students serve as ushers at departmental concerts, and that all students consider serving as student representatives on departmental committees. All undergraduate students

taking lessons will be given ushering assignments in their PF401 or PF 431 performance classes. Requests to be exempt from the ushering requirement must be emailed to the Director of Performance Studies, and may be granted only when the student can demonstrate conflicts with all concerts on the concert calendar for any particular semester.

### **3. Assignment of a teacher.**

Students are assigned a teacher by the Music Department Performance Committee and provided financial assistance, if appropriate, to cover all or part of the cost of private lessons. Private lessons may consist of any combination of the following, depending on circumstances:

Assignment to a Hunter faculty member

Tuition waiver

Alumni Scholarship (awarded to the student)

Department Scholarship (private lesson tuition that is paid directly to the instructor by the Music Department)

The factors considered by the Performance Committee in making teacher assignments are performance ability, seniority, participation in Music Department performing ensembles, and academic record. Priority is given to students in the 60-credit degree program and to M.A. Performance Majors.

Undergraduate students taking private lessons (MUSPF 401, 402, or 431) are assigned to teachers on the Hunter faculty whenever possible. When an appropriate Hunter faculty member is not available, students are assigned to Performance Associates. Students may request specific instructors, but final decisions about teacher assignments are made by the Performance Committee.

Graduate Performance Majors taking private lessons (MUS 781-4) are assigned to their first choice of instructor wherever possible. If the requested instructor is neither a Music Department faculty member nor a Performance Associate of the Music Department, then that instructor must first be approved by the Performance Committee before an assignment is made. The teacher assignment policy for Graduate non-Performance Majors (taking MUS 681-4) is the same as the policy for all undergraduate students taking lessons.

### **4. Teacher Preference.**

In any given semester, all students taking private lessons for credit must understand that they are entering into a one semester contractual relationship with their assigned instructor. After studying with any one teacher for at least one semester, if a student believes strongly that they should be studying with a different department-approved teacher, they may make this known to the Director of Performance Studies by requesting a different teacher for the subsequent semester via their Teacher Assignment Form. **We will consider requests for a change of teacher assignment, but any such requests for an upcoming semester must be made via a Teacher Assignment Form submitted no later than the last week of classes of the prior semester.**

### **5. Withdrawals.**

Any student who withdraws from private lessons for any reasons other than serious personal emergencies will NOT be considered for private instruction in the following semester.

### **6. Student-Teacher obligations.**

Once a teacher has been assigned, the student and teacher are to meet the following mutual obligations:

Number of lessons: MUSPF 401 and MUS 681–684 calls for 7 hours of lessons within the semester. This may be fulfilled in the form of 14 half-hour lessons, 7 one-hour lessons, or any combination mutually agreed upon by the teacher and student, including group lessons. MUSPF 431 and MUS 781–784 (private lessons for B.Mus. or M.A. performance majors) calls for 14 hours of lessons. This normally requires a one-hour lesson every week throughout the semester.

Makeup lessons: At the beginning of each semester, the instructor will create a schedule of lessons based on the mutual availability of both the instructor and student. Once the student has agreed to this schedule, the instructor is not obligated

to make up lessons subsequently cancelled by the student. However, any lessons cancelled by the instructor must be rescheduled.

Two unexcused absences will drop the student's grade a full letter. Excused absences are only granted for documented illness and other emergencies. Instructors are not obligated to make up excused absences.

*You must begin private instruction no later than the end of the second full week of classes.* Failure to do so will result in forfeiting your eligibility for any future Departmental funding and/or permission to receive degree credit for private instruction. Additionally, the final lesson MUST be scheduled before the day juries are to take place.

Grade reports: Near the end of the semester, instructors will write grade reports for each student, listing all repertoire covered and other work completed, and containing a justification for their recommended grade, which is taken into account by the Director of Performance in assigning a final grade. The repertoire list on the report must include the titles of the pieces, the composers' names, and, in the case of obscure composers, the composers' dates.

Punctuality to lessons: Students should arrive for lessons punctually, at the appointed time. Students who arrive more than 5 minutes late for half-hour lessons or 10 minutes late for hour lessons are considered tardy, and tardiness on two occasions is counted as an absence.

Termination of lessons: If the student or the teacher finds the lesson relationship unworkable, a notice must be issued *in writing* to the Director of Performance Studies so that appropriate measures can be taken to remedy the situation and possibly enable the student to obtain credit for the lessons taken. Under no circumstances should the student study with two or more teachers simultaneously. It is detrimental to developing a sound technique.

Incompletes: The Music Department policy regarding incompletes applies to students enrolled in private instruction.

## 7. Skills.

As a prerequisite to enrolling in private instruction students must successfully complete the departmental auditions and exams required for entrance to a music program. Students whose performance skills, do not demonstrate the equivalent of at least one year of private study must take MUSPF 211–212 (Voice 1–2), MUSPF 213–214 (Piano 1–2), MUSPF 121-122 (Elementary Guitar I-II), or private lessons at their own expense (without credit). Pianists, singers and guitarists who were not originally approved for credit-bearing private lessons due to insufficient skills, and who are 42 credit B.A. majors, will be approved for lessons after passing Piano 2, Voice 2 or Guitar 2. All other students who desire or are required to take credit-bearing private lessons must re-audition for lesson consideration after the further proscribed study.

## 8. Jury examinations, grading, and department recitals.

All students enrolled in private lessons take a jury at the end of the semester, with the exception of B.Mus or MA students presenting final recitals. **Please note that all MA Performance students and B.Mus. students must be enrolled in private instruction in the semester of their graduation recital.** The date for jury examinations is announced at the beginning of the semester, and normally falls on the first weekday following the last day of classes (that is, immediately preceding the final exam period). In essence, the jury is equivalent to a final exam and all students are expected to keep track of this date and to keep the day free. Juries are usually scheduled for the afternoon hours (from approximately 1–5). Please note that makeup juries will only be given under extraordinary circumstances. Students with work-related conflicts are expected to make the necessary arrangements with their employer in order to meet their scheduled jury time. Any exceptions must be approved by the Director of Performance Studies at least two weeks in advance of the jury.

### MUSPF 401 & MUS 681-4 JURIES

Students should be prepared to perform one piece (a song, an aria, a short instrumental piece or a movement of a larger work) or a sample of the work accomplished during the current semester. **Where it is a performance convention (piano, voice), the prepared piece should be memorized.** Students must present the juror with a typewritten list of the pieces (with composer's names) or exercises he or she has studied during the current semester. Please include the name of your current teacher on this list. For those students enrolled in MUSPF 401, the jury examination following the second and subsequent semesters of private lessons must demonstrate performance skills equivalent to at least two years of private study.

### MUSPF 401 JURIES FOR STUDENTS CONCENTRATING ON JAZZ/IMPROVISATIONAL STUDIES

Two selections are required, one of which must be fully notated (no chord symbols/lead sheets/etc.), following all tempo indications and written expressive markings.

### MUSPF 431 and MUS 781-4 JURIES

Student should be prepared to perform a program consisting of works from different periods and styles. **Voice majors** should prepare a minimum of **four selections**, out of at least 6 studied during the semester, in a minimum of at least 3 languages and styles. **Instrumental majors** should prepare a minimum of **three selections (movements of sonatas or substantial sections of larger pieces are acceptable)**. **Memorization is required where it is a performance convention (piano, voice)**. **Jazz performance majors** who are instrumentalists must include at least one fully notated selection, which can be a transcription or an original composition. Students must present each of the three jurors with a typewritten list of the pieces (with composer's names) he or she is prepared to perform. Please include the name of your current teacher. The jury panel will ask to hear portions of the works prepared. Works should NOT be presented that have been performed in previous juries.

The point of a jury is to provide an objective opinion of a student's progress. The overall grade for private lessons in a given semester is determined by averaging the grade given by the student's teacher together with the grade on the jury examination. All students enrolled in private instruction are urged to perform in at least one Music Department student recital each semester.

### **9. Adding names to the list of Performance Associates.**

Names may be submitted to the Director of Performance Studies for consideration by members of the Performance Committee. Requests from students should include a letter of explanation along with the instructor's curriculum vitae. It is not possible to honor all requests.