

# Thesis Proposal Due Date: April 3, 2017

## *Memo*

**To:** Junior Music Concentrators  
**From:** Mary MacKinnon  
**Re:** Thesis Proposals, Requirements, and Guidelines  
**Date:** February 15, 2017

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In order to submit your thesis proposal, complete the following steps *before* 4:00 p.m. on **April 3, 2017**.

1. Confer as necessary with your music faculty adviser (or possible advisers, from whom you select one).
2. On the attached form, write up a very brief (!) and succinct description of the proposed project.
3. Have the adviser sign your proposal.
4. Submit the signed proposal to the Undergraduate Coordinator in person or via mailbox in the department office.

Sample proposals might be:

- a. "I plan to study the reception of John Cage and his music in Germany during the 1950s, under the supervision of Prof. X." (Signed by you and Prof. X.)
- b. "I plan to write a string quartet, under the supervision of Prof. Y." (Signed by you and Prof. Y.) **\*See note below**
- c. "I plan to perform a piano recital, under the supervision of Prof. Z." (Signed by you and Prof. Z.) **\*\*See note below**
- d. "I plan to compare various methods for automated music analysis, applying machine learning technique to gain insight about the Lieder of Franz Schubert (1797–1828)." (Joint concentration in music and computer science, signed by you and your music adviser. Be sure it's OK with the Computer Science department!)

\*Students who wish to submit a musical composition as a thesis project should submit a portfolio of recent work for consideration by the composition faculty. Please submit all materials to the Undergraduate Coordinator no later than **March 6, 2017**. The faculty will evaluate this work to determine whether you are prepared to pursue a thesis in composition.

\*\*Students who wish to present a recital as a thesis project should submit the following for consideration by the performance committee:

- a. A résumé of training and performance history (including music coursework)
- b. An audition video of at least 15 minutes with three contrasting pieces
- c. A letter from the principal teacher recommending that the student be permitted to give a thesis recital.

Please submit all materials to the Undergraduate Coordinator no later than **March 6**. Further HUDM guidelines on a recital as thesis can be found on page 3 of this document.

It is OK to change your thesis topic next semester – in a reasonably timely fashion – if it begins veering substantially from what you propose now. However, you must resubmit a revised, signed proposal.

NB: Faculty who will be on leave and therefore unavailable for thesis advising next year:

- Emily Dolan
- Thomas F. Kelly
- Kate van Orden
- Alex Rehding
- Hans Tutschku

Faculty on leave *this* semester (Spring 2017) who may be available for thesis advising in the fall:

- Vijay Iyer
- Thomas Forrest Kelly
- Ingrid Monson
- Carol Oja

**Undergraduate Honors Thesis Proposal Form**

1. Complete, sign & date the form
2. Have your Thesis Adviser approve & sign
3. Turn in the form to Mary MacKinnon
4. Plan to take the Senior Tutorial (99r) in the primary concentration area both semesters of your senior year.

**Deadline is April 3, 2017**

Please PRINT CLEARLY

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Full Music Concentrator

\_\_\_\_ Joint Concentrator with \_\_\_\_\_ My primary is \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Thesis Title: \_\_\_\_\_

(Circle one)    Original Composition    Written Thesis    Performance Thesis

Proposed Thesis Description:

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Music Thesis Adviser Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Joint Field Thesis Adviser Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Guidelines for Students Considering a Performance-based Honors Project

The Department of Music welcomes proposals for honors projects including a substantial element of performance.

The performance-based honors project is intended to capture the spirit of a liberal arts education. The goal is for intellectual inquiry and artistic excellence to coexist, and to inform each other. The performance component of such projects is evaluated in relation to the student's intellectual argument and motivating ideas. This understanding encourages, and indeed requires, both the student and the evaluating committee to consider the artistic side of the project in the broader context of the humanities.

Projects should be discussed as early as possible with faculty members who might serve as advisers. The guidelines below are intended for solo recitalists, but the Department is willing to consider proposals of other kinds on an individual basis.

### Guidelines for Honors Recitals

Recitals are evaluated by a committee of three persons designated by the Music Department: your thesis adviser and two readers assigned by the Music Department. The principal studio teacher is not normally a member of this group, but will be invited to attend the recital and to submit a written evaluation to the committee.

Students wishing to present a recital as a thesis project should submit the following for consideration by the performance committee no later than **March 6, 2017**:

- a. A proposal explaining the theme or focus of the recital, with a résumé of training and performance history (including music coursework).
- b. An audition video of at least 15 minutes with three contrasting pieces; the video should be unedited.
- c. A letter from the principal teacher recommending that the student be permitted to give a recital.

If preliminary approval is obtained, the student identifies a thesis adviser from among the Music faculty and submits a thesis proposal (according to distributed departmental guidelines) for consideration at the Department's April meeting.

### Booking Your Recital

A date for an approved recital should be *arranged by the student* in consultation with the Undergraduate Coordinator, the thesis committee, and the principal teacher. Honors recitals are normally given in the second semester of the senior year, either in Paine Hall or Holden Chapel, subject to availability. If the recital takes place in Paine Hall or Holden Chapel, the department will cover the expenses of the Hall/Chapel booking and audio recording. If you wish to have another venue, then you are responsible for booking the venue and any costs associated with booking and recording.

The recital must be take place by **March 7, 2018**. The recital may take place any time during the Spring semester up to that date and should take place during business hours. It is imperative that you contact your committee members and any assisting artists to find out their availability prior to consulting with the Undergraduate Coordinator to book Paine or Holden.

Recitals ordinarily last 65 minutes for singers, 80–90 minutes for instrumentalists, with intermission.

The student will be responsible for acquiring any assisting musicians.

The recital must be professionally audio recorded.

## Recital Program

Repertoire for the recital should be submitted to the adviser and to the undergraduate coordinator by **September 29, 2017**. Students may revise their program up to six weeks before the recital date with the adviser's approval.

The final program, suitable for distribution to the audience, should be submitted for the adviser's approval **six weeks before the date** of the recital. Suggested recital program template will be provided by the Undergraduate Coordinator.

The final program should include the following:

- Complete repertoire to be performed, include full titles, movements, and composer name(s) and dates using appropriate capitalization, use of italics, punctuation, and abbreviations.
- Works should be verified for accuracy by checking *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* for title and catalog information.
- Originally composed program notes.
- All performer names and their instruments.
- Student bio. Assisting musician bios are optional.
- Deviation from these guidelines will be considered upon request in certain circumstances, such as a non-traditional concert format.

## Additional Consideration

Make sure to communicate with the Undergraduate Coordinator about any piano, sound reinforcement, electroacoustic, instrumentation, and stage set-up needs at the time of booking the recital date.

There may be no reception of any kind in the Music Building or Holden Chapel.

The student will be responsible for printing the programs and advertising the recital.

## Research Component

All honors recitals include a substantial intellectual component formulated in collaboration with the adviser, and subject to departmental approval. This component is due **March 7, 2018**.

Typical research components might be:

- An essay exploring historical and cultural perspectives on the repertoire and the composer(s), issues of performance practice, or details of the development, premiere, and performance history/traditions of specific works.
- An analysis of a work's meaning and impact based on a detailed discussion of its contents.

## Thesis Deadlines: 2017-18

Please note the following regarding deadlines and requirements for your senior thesis. There are four deadlines, valid for all types of theses. All deadlines are effective at 4:00 p.m. that day.

Material for deadlines nos. 1, 2, and 3 should be submitted to both:

- a) the adviser, in electronic or paper format;
- b) the Undergraduate Coordinator, Mary MacKinnon. The material should be in electronic format (sent to mackinnon@fas.harvard.edu), although those submitting compositions have the option of doing so in hard copy. The material will be stored and will be made available to both the student and music department faculty other than the Adviser, for consultation.

### Deadlines:

#### **Composition, Ethnomusicology, Theory, or Historical Musicology**

#### **Performance-based Honors Project**

##### 1. Friday, September 29, 2017

*Prospectus.* For composition theses this should lay out the scope of the proposed project including performance forces, approximate duration, and text to be set (if any). For ethnomusicology, theory, and music history theses this should consist of an outline and a bibliography (approximately 4-5 pages total).

*Recital program.* The program should include the following information: complete work title with movements (if applicable), composition date, composer name, composer birthdate, arranger or transcriber name(s), approximate length of the work, and names of any assisting artists.

##### 2. Friday, December 1, 2017

*Completion of a minimum of 50% of the work.* For example, two out of four chapters. The draft should include footnotes as well.

*Schedule recital date and 50% of written component.* The recital must take place on or before **March 7, 2018** and be arranged by the candidate in consultation with the Undergraduate Coordinator, the thesis committee, and the principal teacher. The final program and program notes are due **six weeks before the recital date**.

##### 3. Tuesday, February 20, 2018

*Complete draft of the work.*

*Complete draft of the written component.*

##### 4. Wednesday, March 7, 2018

*Final document.*

*Final written component.*

Additionally, a **bound copy** of the final thesis (with the recital program, program notes, and CD for performance-based honors project) is required for submission to the Music Library. If you are awarded summa cum laude or magna cum laude for your thesis, you will also be responsible for submitting an unbound copy for the University Archives. This is a requirement for receiving the final award on the thesis. The Library and/or archive copies must be submitted to the Undergraduate Coordinator by **Monday, April 23, 2018**.

NOTE: After the due date, no revisions are accepted, except those mandated by the Thesis Adviser (copy editing will be allowed for library and archival copies).

**Important note for joint concentrators:** *Deadlines for other departments may be different. If the Department of Music deadline happens to be earlier, you must submit your complete, final thesis by our deadline. Likewise it is required that you follow our preliminary deadlines. This rule applies whether Music is your primary or allied concentration. If your other department's deadlines are earlier, their deadline prevails. The thesis submitted to each department must be the same. Additionally, the allied department usually defers to the primary department with regard to format requirements. The student should confer with the allied department to confirm this.*

## Undergraduate Thesis Formatting Guidelines

### Deadlines

All copies should be submitted to the Undergraduate Coordinator by the stated deadlines:

- The final version of thesis to the readers and the Department is due **March 7, 2018**. The final readers' copies of the thesis should be **bound** (three-ring binders are acceptable) and fully formatted. Either single- or double-sided copies are acceptable.
  - Three copies if you are a full music concentrator.
  - Two copies if you are a joint concentrator.
- The Music Library copy is due by **April 23, 2018**. This must be a **single-sided, bound** copy on acid-free paper (see "Binding" below).
- Students receiving summa or magna honors for their theses must also submit one **single-sided, unbound** copy on acid-free paper by **April 23, 2018**. This copy will be cataloged in the University Archives.

### Format

- Format for title page is illustrated on the following page.
- Thesis assembly order: Title Page, Honor Code Insert, Table of Contents (optional), Main Text, Tables and Figures (if not included in text), Appendices (if applicable), References. For performance-based honors project, the recital program should be included last and recital CD must be included in a sleeve on the inside of the back cover.
- Top, bottom, and right-hand margins should be one inch; the left-hand margin should be 1.5 inches. This allows for a small margin once pages are put in the binder. These measurements should be consistent on every page.
- All text pages should be numbered.
- Times New Roman 12 point, or another serif font comparable in size.
- The thesis must be double-spaced (except footnotes).
- For theses submitted by joint concentrators, the second department usually defers to the first department with regard to format requirements. The student should confer with the second department to confirm this.
- For compositions, it is not recommended that you submit a thesis in pencil. If a software program is not feasible, then a high-quality photocopy of a penciled work should be submitted. Please confer with your adviser to determine the best format.

### Binding

- The Music Library prefers undergraduate theses bound with ACCO press binders or glued binders like the Sourcebook. The binding must stand upright on the shelf (spiral plastic binding will not be accepted). Contact Sandi-Jo Malmon ([smalmon@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:smalmon@fas.harvard.edu)) for more information.

### Length

- For theses submitted by joint concentrators, the second department usually defers to the first department with regard to length requirements. The student should confer with the second department to confirm this.
- Depending on the topic, most theses range from 45 to 100 pages. Theses of any length will be accepted.
- Research component for performance-based honors project tend to range from 25 to 50 pages.

A New Music Building: Why We Need One

by John Knowles Paine

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for an AB degree with honors in Music

Department of Music  
Harvard College

March 8, 2010