



CARLETON UNIVERSITY
Master of Arts in Music and Culture

PROGRAM HANDBOOK

2026 – 2027

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	Where to Go for Help and Information	2
2.	MA Program Student Professionalization and Expectations	5
3.	The Program: Components	6
4.	The Program: Typical Timeline	8
5.	Summer Registration	9
6.	Information for TAs and RAs	10
7.	Ethics Clearance for Research Involving Human Participants	12
8.	Grants	13
9.	Guidelines for Music Practicum (MUSI 5300)	14
10.	Guidelines for Advanced Studies in Performance (MUSI 5400)	18
11.	Guidelines for Advanced Studies in Composition (MUSI 5401)	19
12.	Guidelines for Directed Readings and Research (MUSI 5900)	20
13.	Deciding Which Stream to Pursue	21
14.	Thesis/Research Essay (MRP) Supervisors	23
15.	Thesis and Research Essay (MRP) Proposals	24
16.	Guidelines for the Preparation and Defense of Theses	26

1. Where to Go for Help and Information

This handbook is intended to give general guidelines. Please ensure you are consulting the most up-to-date version of the handbook that aligns with the current academic year. Beyond the handbook, there are several offices and individuals on campus that you should get to know. To make sense of all these contacts, remember that there are several levels of administration involved with running the Music MA program.

Music itself is one discipline housed in the School for Studies in Art and Culture (SSAC), which also includes Art and Architectural History, Film Studies and Canadian Studies. For certain things you will be talking directly to Music faculty and staff, but for some other tasks you might be redirected to SSAC. All SSAC programs at Carleton, including Music, are overseen by the Faculty of Arts and Social Science (FASS) and graduate students are also supported through Graduate Studies; you may need to deal with them on occasion.

This all becomes easier to navigate once you discover a few key people and offices. Some of these are explained in more depth throughout the handbook, but below is a short list of crucial contacts.

Supervisor of Graduate Studies in Music

The Supervisor of Graduate Studies will be your single most important contact, since it is the job of the Supervisor of Graduate Studies to be aware of all program features and regulations, and to help you in whatever you need to get done. Whenever you are in doubt and this Handbook does not answer your question, the next step is to consult with the Supervisor of Graduate Studies. This applies as well to problems with a TA assignment, issues with the program, and other academic matters pertaining to your studies. The Supervisor of Graduate Studies is a confidential administrative position. For the 2026-27 academic year, the Supervisor of Performance Studies in Music is **Dr. Anna Hoefnagels** (annahoefnagels@cunet.carleton.ca, A815 Loeb Building)

Graduate Administrator for SSAC

For administrative help you should go to the Graduate Administrator of the School for Studies in Art and Culture (423 St. Patrick's Building), who is **Kristopher Waddell** (kristopher.waddell@carleton.ca). His telephone extension is 2342. He deals with detailed administrative issues, such as registration, student academic records and thesis submission. The Supervisor of Graduate Studies works closely with Kris to answer student questions and ensure that students fulfill degree requirements.

Graduate Committee

The Supervisor of Graduate Studies for Music chairs the graduate program on behalf of the School's Director and the Graduate Committee, which comprises four or five music faculty members. The Graduate Committee reviews admissions and specialized course applications (e.g., practicum, composition, performance and directed reading courses), approves thesis and research essay (MRP) proposals, determines curriculum, establishes policy, and generally provides a "legislative" body for graduate program decisions. Students access the Graduate Committee through the Supervisor of Graduate Studies.

Graduate Calendar and the Music Websites

This handbook offers guidelines, but for full descriptions of regulations, courses, and other program information, you should always consult the online Graduate Calendar (<http://www.carleton.ca/calendars/grad/current/>) and the Graduate page on the Music website (<https://carleton.ca/music/graduate/>).

Student Accounts

Please note that neither the Supervisor of Graduate Studies nor the Graduate Administrator for SSAC is able to handle or negotiate matters involving the payment of Student Accounts. For questions concerning tuition and fees, payment deadlines, etc., please consult <https://carleton.ca/studentaccounts/>. You can also contact a Student Accounts officer at student_accounts@carleton.ca, (613) 520-2600 x3626, or visit them at 301 Pigiarnvik (ΛΓ<⁴Δᵇ).

Faculty in Music

The MA in Music & Culture is supported by faculty members in the Music program and in affiliated programs. The research profiles and contact information for all full-time music faculty members is available on the Music website at <https://carleton.ca/music/faculty/>. When considering which faculty members you might want to work with, it is important to know that there are some restrictions around faculty supervisory responsibilities and duties.

Undergraduate Administrator for Music

For TA needs relating to specific Music courses, especially room bookings, you need to work with the Undergraduate Administrator for Music, **Tasneem Ujjainwala**, whose office is located to the left as you enter the Music area of the 9th floor of the Loeb Building (Room 911) or who can be reached through e-mail (tasneem.ujjainwala@carleton.ca). Her office hours are normally 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. weekdays. Academic graduate questions, documents, etc. should **not** be directed to Tasneem, but to the Supervisor of Graduate Studies and/or the Graduate Administrator.

Head of Music

This person is responsible for the academic side of the Music programs. You may not need to deal with them at all, but the Head of Music for 2026-2027 is Dr. Jesse Stewart for 2026-2027.

Graduate Studies

You may need to deal with Graduate Studies for practical matters connected to being enrolled at Carleton. (www.carleton.ca/graduate-studies, 512 Tory Building).

Office of Research Ethics

The Carleton Office for Research Ethics manages and supports ethics applications for research projects to ensure compliance with policies and guidelines for conducting research involving humans. This is the office you will consult and work with if you need ethics clearance for your research (more about this in Section 3).

Teaching and Learning Services

Teaching and Learning Services offers many programs to help you develop your university teaching skills and integrate them into an overall plan of professional development. They offer many programs and supports designed specifically for Teaching Assistants, including certificate programs, consultation, workshops and they recognize outstanding TAs through annual awards.

MacOdrum Library

Carleton's main library is a key site for research materials for courses and students' individual research projects. It provides access to monographs, periodicals, sound recordings, music scores and many other resources; some resources are available on site, whereas others are available electronically.

The subject specialist for Music is David Jackson (davidc.jackson@carleton.ca) who is available for consultation. Students are also advised to consult the Subject Guides for Music as well as the Citation Guides that are available online; many faculty prefer that students adhere to the Chicago Style. A quick guide is located on the library website and students also have access to the full guide online through the library catalogue.

Graduate Students' Association and your GSA Representative

The GSA is a student-run organization that provides assistance of all kinds for grad students, and also provides grad student representation on various Faculty- and University-level administrative bodies. The Music GSA representative for 2026-2027 has yet to be determined at the time of printing.

Music and Culture Graduate Student Society

The Music and Culture Graduate Student Society (MCGSS) is a student-run association for all graduate students in the Music and Culture program. The MCGSS provides a forum for the discussion of academic and program-related issues and for the advancement of knowledge and skills through special events. The MCGSS Executive team is reconstituted anew at the beginning of each academic year; all graduate students in Music are considered members of the Society and may wish to serve on the MCGSS Executive. Among other things, the MCGSS curates and runs our annual Graduate Colloquium Series and our annual spring Graduate Music Student Symposium. More information is available from the Society itself at mcgss@carleton.ca.

If you ever feel unsafe on campus, contact the Emergency Assistance line of Campus Safety Services, ext. 4444.

2. MA Program Student Professionalization and Expectations

The MA in Music and Culture is a specialized program intended for students interested in advanced academic studies in Music. Students are selected for the MA based on their research interests and their academic excellence and potential. To create an enriching learning experience for students, the Music program and various offices at Carleton University provide opportunities for students to participate in programming and workshops that will enhance students' critical thinking, teaching, and research skills and develop their professionalization. Effective 2026, students in the MA in Music and Culture must register for **MUSI 5800 Professional Development**, an unweighted course that focuses on and tracks your participation in professional development activities and opportunities. See the corresponding course outline that will be made available in August.

Throughout the academic year, guest speakers are invited to participate in the Music & Culture Graduate Colloquium series. Often guest speakers are recognized scholars from other institutions whose works intersects with or is of interest to current students in the program. Attendance at these colloquia is considered mandatory for students.

In consultation with the Supervisor of Graduate Studies, the Music & Culture Graduate Student Society organizes an annual student conference, which usually takes place in March. This conference is an opportunity for students to share their research in an academic context beyond the classroom, while also hearing the work of other students, including those from other programs or institutions. Participation in the conference is optional, but students in the program are expected to attend the conference.

In terms of being physically present on campus, the expectation is that you will attend all classes and colloquia and that you will be available to fulfill your TA or other work-related commitments. You should expect to be around campus a great deal when your course load is heavy. It is imperative that you are available to fulfil any assigned TA responsibilities during the exam periods; if you plan to travel during the exam period, ensure that it will still allow you to fulfil your TA contract before booking travel. For important dates and deadlines, please refer to the [University Calendars Academic Year](#) website. Once your courses are completed and you are working mostly on research and writing it is usually possible to come to campus only occasionally for consultation with your advisor and/or the Supervisor of Graduate Studies, to attend colloquia and special events and to fulfil TA obligations.

Beyond the Music program, Carleton offers professional development resources and programs to help you improve your skills and plan your career trajectory; to learn more, see Graduate Studies' [Professional Development](#) page. [Teaching and Learning Services](#) offers support, workshops and training opportunities for graduate students interested in developing their teaching skills.

3. The Program: Components

There are three main types of requirements for completing the degree:

- Core courses
- Elective courses
- Thesis or Research Essay (MRP) or additional courses

See the graduate calendar for specific details about the MA in Music and Culture degree and various collaborative specializations that students can register for as part of their degree (African studies, accessibility, digital humanities).

When you complete various components can vary somewhat, depending especially on whether you are a full- or part-time student and whether you do a thesis, a research essay or complete your MA by coursework only. There are, however, certain general principles for the timing of your degree which should be observed if possible.

(i) Order of the core courses. There are two 0.5 credit courses that are required for the MA in Music and Culture, MUSI 5002: Research Methods in Music and Culture, and MUSI 5003: Intellectual Histories and Current Directions in Music and Culture. Generally, these core courses are offered in the fall term and should be completed in your first year of study.

(ii) Other courses. In addition to the core courses, students will take a number of electives, depending on their stream (coursework-only, major essay, thesis). Students may register for Music electives as part of their degree and can also take courses outside of Music, with approval of the Supervisor of Graduate Studies; it is the responsibility of the student to secure the permission of the department and/or instructor in question in order to register for a course outside of Music (including those in the other units of SSAC). Students who began their MA in 2026 can take up to 1.0 credit at the 4000-level or in courses cross-listed with 4000- and 5000-level course codes; students who begin their MA in 2027 can take 0.5 credit at the 4000-level or in courses cross-listed with 4000- and 5000- level course codes. A student may also register for a course at the University of Ottawa, granted that Carleton does not offer the course or an equivalent.

(iii) Completion of coursework. The timing of your coursework depends on the stream you pursue for your MA, as the number of courses depends on the stream.

- 1) For students who began their MA in 2026, all streams require 5.0 credits of degree work. If you are planning to write a thesis, you should aim to have your 3 credits of coursework (6 courses) completed by the end of the summer of your first year; the remaining 2.0 credits for your degree are fulfilled with your thesis. The research essay requires 4 credits of coursework (8 courses) and the research essay (1.0 credit) and the MA by coursework requires 5 credits (10 courses) which are typically taken over two years of study.
- 2) For students who began their MA in 2027, all streams require 4.0 credits of degree work. If you are planning to write a thesis, you must register in the thesis course in September of your first year and you should aim to have your 2.5 credits of

coursework (5 courses) completed by the end of the summer of your first year; the remaining 1.5 credits for your degree is fulfilled with your thesis. The research essay requires 3 credits of coursework (6 courses) and the research essay (1.0 credit) and the MA by coursework requires 4 credits (8 courses).

(iv) Thesis or research essay (MRP) proposal. Students admitted into the thesis stream of the MA, and those interested in completing the MA with MRP option, will need to indicate the topic of their project by mid-December of their first year by submitting a short summary of the project they envision. A faculty member will then be assigned to each student in January of the student's first year of study in order to assist in drafting a thesis or research essay proposal for Graduate Committee approval. The proposal needs to be completed and submitted by April 15. The graduate committee will review the proposal, offer constructive feedback and recommendations and, should the proposal be acceptable, approve it, allowing students to move forward in the degree (More information about the proposal is given in Section 15 of this handbook).

(v) Supervisor assignment. Upon approval of the thesis or research essay proposal by the Graduate Committee, each student will be assigned a supervisor. Students should meet with their supervisor as soon as they are assigned, to plan for the thesis/MRP work. All students are entitled to thesis/research essay advising during their studies, even if a supervisor is on leave; however, if a student is not registered in the summer, access to all university resources is suspended, including access to their supervisor. (More information about supervisors is given in Section 14, more about summer registration in Section 5).

Students can access detailed information about course load and required courses from the Graduate Calendar or the [Music website](#).

4. The Program: Typical Timeline

The anticipated timeline to complete the MA depends on a number of variables, including the stream in which the student is registered, and the course load undertaken in each term of study. For some students, completion of the MA can be accelerated if they take courses in the summer. Outlined below is a typical timeline for many students in the program:

Term 1 (Fall Term, Year 1)

- Register for 1.0-1.5 credits (three core courses, MUSI 5002, MUSI 5003, 5800 and possibly one additional elective course)
- Apply for external grants, as applicable (Ontario Graduate Scholarships, Canada Graduate Scholarships)
- Apply for second-term specialized studies course(s), if interested
- If considering a thesis or MRP project, begin to consider what area of inquiry you will examine

Term 2 (Winter Term, Year 1)

- Register for 1.0-1.5 credits (elective courses) and MUSI 5800
- Work on and submit thesis/research essay proposal if pursuing one of these streams
- Apply for summer specialized studies course(s), if interested

Term 3 (Summer Term, Year 1)

- Register for thesis/research essay, take summer course or take the summer off
- Apply for ethics clearance, if necessary
- Apply for second-year specialized studies course(s), if interested

Term 4 (Fall Term, Year 2)

- Register for courses based on the stream of studies (coursework, MRP, thesis) and MUSI 5800
- Apply for PhD programs and external grants, if applicable

Term 5 (Winter Term, Year 2)

- Complete thesis, research essay or courses and MUSI 5800
- Defend thesis, if applicable
- Apply for graduation
- Graduate!!!

5. Summer Registration

Please note: the information that follows is especially dependent upon rules set by Graduate Studies. Use it as a guide, but before making final decisions about summer registration, be sure to consult with the Supervisor of Graduate Studies, and the Graduate Administrator.

Students registered in the thesis stream are expected to maintain full-time status once they begin the program, which requires them to register in the summer term.

For those in the course-work or MRP stream, registration over the summer is often advisable but is not required. Students cannot take any courses while unregistered. So, if, for example, a student needs to do a directed readings course over the summer, they will need to register.

If students take the summer off, they will not have access to university resources, supports and organizations (library, gym), or their supervisor. Funding is also suspended in the summer term if you are not registered.

If students plan to do any research that requires ethics clearance, they must be registered in the term during which the research is to be done (i.e., ethics clearance is not given for terms in which students are not registered); as such, if students are not registered, they cannot conduct research that requires ethics clearance.

Students should consult with the Supervisor of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Administrator if they have questions about summer registration.

6. Information for TAs and RAs

Being a TA (Teaching Assistant) is a complex task, and the details of each assignment vary from course to course. Most TA positions are for 130 hours of work over the course of one term and can include attending lectures, holding office hours and/or tutorials, grading assignments and exams and providing administrative support to the instructor. TA hours can be allocated to one course or can be divided between two courses. The most important element of success is keeping open lines of communication with the instructor. TAs need to keep in mind that they are employees of the University, which carries rights, privileges and responsibilities.

TA positions are processed through the online TA Management System. Sometime in the latter part of the summer students will be encouraged to fill out the online Profile, in which they indicate abilities, experience and preferences related to their Teaching Assistantships. Before the start of the term in which a TA position is held, students will be informed of their assignment(s). Most important in the online procedures is the electronic submission of the Assignment of Duties form, which each instructor and TA must fill out together at the beginning of the year and which each TA must approve. It is important for students to pay close attention to the ways in which their work for the TA positions is allocated and to track their hours. TAs are not paid overtime for any work that extends beyond the time allotted in their contract.

If students are assigned work as a TA, they must attend mandatory orientation arranged by SSAC and Teaching and Learning Services (see Section 1), which should answer many basic questions. Beyond that, TAs should be aware that Teaching and Learning Services offers ongoing training programs and workshops and consider making use of them on a regular basis. The CUPE 4600 contract (which is the collective agreement for TAs as members of this union) currently stipulates that all TAs must complete **five** hours of training each year, towards which the TLS sessions count (and which do not figure in the allocated hours of each TA assignment).

If students are given RA (Research Assistant) work, they will not have the same level of institutional support as TAs, since RA contracts are normally held directly between an individual faculty member and a student. In most cases an RA is paid directly out of a faculty member's research funds, but in some cases, students might have an RA which is paid out of money in their financial package. If students receive an RA position, they should ensure that they know which of these two situations applies, because it will be helpful if they need to ask any questions about pay or hours.

Here are some general guidelines to keep in mind about RA positions:

- Since the nature of an RA is flexible and is highly dependent on the specific needs of the faculty member and the specific skills of the student, communication is paramount in making sure that everyone feels well-served by the experience. Students are encouraged to talk to their faculty employer frequently so that all issues of concern are fully addressed as soon as they become evident.

- RA work should be mostly directed towards assisting the faculty member with their academic research. Some of it might be mechanical or intellectually straightforward, but the bulk of it should allow students to develop their research skills in some way.
- There must be a contract specifying the beginning and end date of the RA job, the rate of pay, and the number of hours to be worked. Under no circumstances should students feel compelled to work outside the dates and beyond the hours specified in their contract. In terms of the hours worked, that is often dealt with more flexibly. Students won't necessarily work an equal number of hours in each week, but they should never work a total number of hours in excess of the contracted amount.
- If there are issues or concerns that are not resolved through talking to the faculty employer, or which students would feel more comfortable discussing with someone else first, students are advised to talk to the Supervisor of Graduate Studies.

7. Ethics Clearance for Research Involving Human Participants

At Carleton University, any research that engages with living human participants needs to receive ethics clearance before work can begin. Examples of the kind of research requiring ethics clearance include (but are not limited to): interviews; observation and reporting of any events involving named (or easily identifiable) individuals; surveys; and participating in musical practices or events that will then analyzed in a way that implicates the student researcher's relationship with other participants or that involves reporting observations made of named or identifiable individuals. In other words, if research involves or engages with other living humans, student researchers will need ethics clearance.

If student research is likely to involve this kind of activity, it is crucial that ethics clearance is obtained **before** the start of the research activity, because any material collected without clearance will not be accepted for use in the thesis or research essay. For most students, this means that they should start thinking about applying for ethics clearance immediately upon approval of their thesis or research essay proposal. Students should consult with their thesis/essay supervisor (if they have been assigned) or to the Supervisor of Graduate Studies if there is uncertainty about whether ethics clearance will be required for their research.

Although faculty supervisors can help you consider the methods for data collection and prepare the ethics application, ethics clearance is administered by the Carleton University Office of Research Ethics, so students should consult their website for all forms and procedures. Students will want to complete the TCPS CORE-2022 program in advance of applying for ethics clearance, as it is a requirement of the ethics board. The Office of Research Ethics has a committee which meets monthly during the academic year, so students need to ensure that their submit an application early enough to have it reviewed and approved by the committee.

We have found that this is the area where many students completing thesis/MRP projects have difficulties, arising from poorly defined or inappropriate interview questions, overly ambitious plans for ethnographic work, an unspecified number or type of informants, etc. It is thus important for the student to devote considerable thought to: 1) whether this type of research is really needed for the project; 2) if so, how it can be centrally built into the proposal and not simply serve as a casual component; 3) how the interview questions, surveys, observations, etc. can be framed in such a way to be most effective while best respecting the participant. The student's supervisor for the thesis/research essay can help work through these considerations and their approval is an essential step in the application process. The usual turn-around time for ethics approval is one month during the academic year, but students are regularly required to make revisions to their application, which can extend the time for approval. Thus, the ethics application cannot wait until the last minute.

8. Grants

EXTERNAL

While the primary sources of funding for MA students are Teaching Assistantships, Research Assistantships and scholarships provided by Graduate Studies, students are strongly encouraged to apply for financial support through external agencies, primarily the Ontario Graduate Scholarships (OGS) and the Canada Graduate Scholarships (CGS) programs. OGS funding provides \$15,000 for one-year support (the student must re-apply for the second year), while the CGS supports the student in the amount of \$27,000 for one year. Detailed information about these and other external sources of funding can be found at the [Graduate Studies Awards and Funding website](#).

Please note that our departmental deadlines for these applications are early in the fall term, so the student must request transcripts and secure references as soon as possible. These are merit awards, and so the successful applicant must possess at least at 10.0 grade point average for the last two years of coursework. Any student who does not meet that requirement will not be considered by the sponsoring agency.

INTERNAL

There are a number of [internal awards](#) for which students in the MA in Music and Culture are eligible. Music-specific awards include the Helmut Kallmann Scholarship and the A.T. Tolley Graduate Scholarship in Jazz Music. In addition to these department-specific awards, there are a number of university-wide donor-funded awards in the form of scholarships and bursaries to which students can apply.

Students are also eligible to apply for financial support from the Graduate Travel Research Bursary, which is administered by Graduate Studies in order to assist students for travel to conferences where they are presenting their research. Applications are due PRIOR to attending the conferences; retroactive applications will not be considered.

9. Guidelines for Music Practicum (MUSI 5300)

The practicum is a graduate course that involves a part-time student placement in an on- or off-campus work environment, which in the past has included work at libraries, archives, museums, and other relevant organizations, including various departments with the federal government, arts and culture organizations, and large-scale festivals and concert programs. The student is expected to spend one full workday per week with the host institution; the total time onsite is expected to be 130 hours for the practicum course. The student earns one half-credit for successful completion of a one-term placement, which should fall within a regularly scheduled academic term (fall, winter, summer).

The purpose of the practicum is to provide a learning experience of a kind not otherwise available in a standard academic setting. A practicum involves exposure to both **theory and practice** in a given field, and an opportunity to consider the application of broader ideas to specific settings. The choice of practicum should be based on a student's research interests, and the practicum itself should lead to a final paper that theoretically and/or critically engages with the practicum experience. This is not a course for students who are only interested in acquiring practical experience: the **academic component** is crucial for a successful practicum proposal and course.

In consultation with the Supervisor of Graduate Studies a student will develop a **practicum proposal** outlining the practicum site, anticipated responsibilities, reading list and an outline of deliverables for the on-site practicum supervisor and the internal faculty supervisor. All requests for a *practicum* placement must be approved by the Graduate Committee.

I. RESTRICTIONS

- a) Practica in Music and Culture are available only to full-time students in the MA in Music and Culture program who have completed at least one full term of study.
- b) Up to one credit [1.0] of practicum experience can be used towards completion of the degree requirements.

The practicum is not a requirement for completion of the MA, so admission to the course is not guaranteed. All requests for a practicum placement must be approved by the Graduate Committee. Inadequate or incomplete applications, weak academic performance, or unavailability or unsuitability of the requested placement are all reasons for the rejection of an application. Although the program may assist in setting up certain practica, it is ultimately the student's responsibility to make and pursue contacts, develop and submit the proposal and carry out the work for the practicum.

Exceptions to the above restrictions may only be granted by the Supervisor of Graduate Studies in unusual circumstances.

II. APPROVAL/APPLICATION

a) Students interested in a practicum should contact the Supervisor of Graduate Studies early during the term prior to the anticipated practicum in order to discuss possible placements. It is the student's responsibility to make the contacts and develop the proposal. An Internal Supervisor (i.e., a faculty member who will oversee the academic component of the practicum) and External Supervisor (i.e., someone in the host institution who can provide reports and serve as a liaison) should also be identified.

b) A practicum proposal must be completed and submitted by the student. The proposal will include contact information for the host and indicate in detail relevant background information and experience for the applicant, the nature and scope of the practicum activity (including a proposed paper topic and bibliography of relevant sources), and the work that is expected to be completed (along with clear indications of how that work will be assessed). It is essential that the proposal details the nature of the academic component to the practicum and how it relates to the practical experience. The practicum should conclude with a formal paper that theoretically/critically engages with the work accomplished. This proposal is due on the first day of the month prior to the term in which the student wishes to take this course (April 1, August 1, and December 1 are the respective submission deadlines for the summer, fall and winter terms). The Graduate Committee will review the application and will communicate to the student the results of its deliberations by the middle of the month. Should any revisions be needed to the proposal, students will need to submit those and have the revised proposal submitted and approved before the start of term.

c) The Graduate Committee will consider the application and make a decision at the latest two weeks before the beginning of the term in which the practicum is to take place. The decision will include the assignment of an Internal Supervisor (i.e., a Carleton faculty member who will oversee your practicum). Note: This means that before your proposal is accepted your main point of contact is the Supervisor of Graduate Studies. But if you are approved, then you should communicate with and submit all required material to your Internal Supervisor.

III. ACADEMIC (CARLETON) TIMELINE

- a) April 1, August 1, or December 1 before the term in which the practicum will commencement: Deadline for submission of application to the Supervisor of Graduate Studies.
- b) End of prior term: Registration for MUSI 5300 (once approved by Graduate Committee).
- c) Submit placement forms to Kristopher Waddell:
 - Unpaid Placements: Letter to Placement Employers
 - Unpaid Placements: Student Declaration of Understanding and Agreement

- d) Middle of term: Submission to the Internal Advisor of; (i) midterm progress reports from both the student and the External Supervisor, and (ii) the student's outline and updated bibliography for their final paper
- e) Two weeks before end of term: Submission of draft of paper to Internal Supervisor.
- f) End of term: Submission of student paper to Internal Supervisor; submission of External Supervisor's report.

IV. EVALUATION

- a) A progress report and paper outline and updated bibliography will be submitted at mid-point in the practicum. This will allow any adjustments to the scope of the project to be noted. See below (under Instructions for Host Institutions) for more information about this report.
- b) The evaluation of work carried out during a practicum will be undertaken by the External Supervisor and the Internal Supervisor. A final report from the External Supervisor will comment on the work completed and will take into account performance during the placement. Ultimately, the final mark will be the responsibility of the Internal Supervisor. However, in determining that course mark, the Internal Supervisor will assign equal weighting to the work performed during the term (as assessed in the External Supervisor's report) and the final paper. That paper will be evaluated on the basis of its theoretical/critical rigour and its engagement with the practical placement, i.e., for its academic component, as well as its organization, style, etc.

V. INSTRUCTIONS FOR HOST INSTITUTIONS

Note: The material which follows partially duplicates material above. But for reference, it is being included in the handbook so that readers will know what instructions should be given to host institutions.

While the Supervisor of Graduate Studies for the Carleton MA in Music and Culture assists the student with securing the Practicum placement, it is ultimately the student's responsibility to make contact with the host institution and to develop the proposal. The host institution should appoint an individual to serve as on-site supervisor (the External Supervisor) for the practicum, who will function as representative for the host institution in dealings with the Music and Culture program, and provide on-site supervision for the practicum itself. Once initial contact is established, the potential host institution is encouraged to work with the Carleton Music Supervisor of Graduate Studies and with the student to assist in the development of the proposal and the practicum itself. The proposal must be approved by the Music Graduate Committee at Carleton before the practicum can proceed. Once the proposal is approved, the Committee will designate a Carleton supervisor (the Internal Supervisor) who will work with the student on the academic component of the specific practicum placement, which includes the student's midterm progress report and end-of-term paper (to be assessed by the Carleton Internal Supervisor). By accepting a practicum student placement, the host institution commits to providing one term of supervision for the student in an appropriate work context. Once approved, adjustments to the practicum components can be made, granted that compelling reasons for the change exist and

that the changes result from consultations that have taken place between the External Supervisor, the Internal Supervisor and the student.

The evaluation of work carried out during a practicum will be undertaken by the External Supervisor and the Internal Supervisor. The External Supervisor will provide evaluation of the student at two times during the term:

(i) A progress report will be submitted to the Internal and External Supervisors by the student at mid-point in the practicum (in conjunction with a paper outline and updated bibliography). This will allow any adjustments to the scope of the project to be noted. The External Supervisor will submit a progress report to the student's Internal Advisor; this report does not need to be extensive, but should describe in a general way the work being undertaken by the student, the number of hours worked to date and the External Supervisor's overall level of satisfaction with the student's performance.

(ii) A final report from the External Supervisor will address the work completed, and will take into account performance during the placement. The following information should be included in that final report:

- What was the nature of the work undertaken by the student?
- What were the specific tasks?
- How successful was the student in undertaking these tasks?
- In general, what were the strengths and weaknesses of the student in this placement?
- To what degree did the student meet your expectations for this placement?
- What mark would you assign to the student's performance in the placement?

In assessing the overall success of the practicum, the final report by the External Supervisor should apply one of the following evaluative terms: Excellent, Very Good, Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory. The Carleton Internal Supervisor will then assign a letter grade for the practicum, giving equal weight to the External Supervisor's final report and the end-of-term paper. Final responsibility for the grade rests with the Carleton Internal Supervisor.

10. Guidelines for Advanced Studies in Performance (MUSI 5400)

In addition to the regularly scheduled graduate classes that are offered every academic year, some students may be interested in further developing their performance skills and experience as a vocalist or instrumentalist in classical, traditional or popular idioms. MUSI 5400 is an elective course designed to give students an opportunity to develop their practical skills on a musical instrument on which they already have proficiency, complemented with readings in an area related to their selected repertoire.

The course will culminate in an hour-long lecture-recital comprised of 25-30 minutes of music and 30-35 minutes of a lecture about the music that will be prepared throughout the year under the supervision of an applied study instructor and a faculty supervisor. Students will enroll in this course over two consecutive terms, and the course will be comprised of bi-weekly hour-long lessons with an applied study instructor, regular meetings with a faculty supervisor and a final lecture-recital. **Advanced Studies in Performance is not a requirement for completion of the MA, so admission to the course is not guaranteed.**

Students interested in pursuing MUSI 5400 must submit a proposal outlining the rationale for the course, the theme of the lecture-recital, a preliminary bibliography and repertoire list, and, if they choose, a proposed applied study instructor and/or faculty supervisor. This proposal is due on the first day of the month prior to the term in which the student wishes to take this course (April 1, August 1, and December 1 are the respective submission deadlines for the summer, fall and winter terms).

The Graduate Committee will review the application and will communicate to the student the results of its deliberations by the middle of the month. Should any revisions be needed to the proposal, students will need to submit those and have the revised proposal submitted and approved before the start of term. The Graduate Committee reserves the right to make a final assignment of faculty supervisor for the course, and, in consultation with the Supervisor of Performance Studies, it will also identify the studio instructor for the private lessons.

Once the course is underway, students are required to prepare a finalized reading and repertoire list by the mid-point of the course, created in consultation with their faculty supervisor and studio instructor.

At least two weeks before the lecture-recital the student will submit an annotated bibliography and draft of the content of the presentation for the lecture-recital. The lecture-recital will be evaluated by the instructor and faculty supervisor. The student's performance in the course will be graded according to the following criteria: 40% of the grade for the lecture-recital, 30% for the lessons with the applied instructor and 30% for the annotated bibliography/coursework with the faculty supervisor.

NOTE: Any additional expenses related to this course, such as accompanist fees, and space, equipment and/or facilities rental must be absorbed by the student.

11. Guidelines for Advanced Studies in Composition (MUSI 5401)

MUSI 5401 offers advanced study in composition, with individual instruction on a biweekly basis over the course of two consecutive academic terms. Under the guidance of a faculty supervisor, the student will be required to assemble a portfolio of work as a final project for the course. **Advanced Studies in Composition is not a requirement for completion of the MA, so admission to the course is not guaranteed.**

Students interested in enrolling in MUSI 5401 must submit a portfolio of their previous compositional work and a proposal that describes the project's main area(s) of focus. In their portfolio students should include one or two representative samples of their compositional output to date, preferably in a style most resembling the project on which they want to work. In their proposal students must also describe the compositional methodology/methodologies, notational system(s), and anticipated outcomes of the project including the anticipated duration of the piece, instrumentation, etc., and the accompanying analytical text. These materials must be submitted on the first day of the month at least one month prior to the term in which the course is to begin to allow for review and revisions to the proposal.

The Graduate Committee will review the submitted portfolio and course proposal and will communicate to the student the results of its deliberations by the middle of the month. Should any revisions be needed to the proposal, students will need to submit those and have the revised proposal submitted and approved before the start of term. The Graduate Committee reserves the right to make a final assignment of faculty supervisor for the course. April 1, August 1, and December 1 are the respective submission deadlines for the summer, fall and winter terms.

Once a faculty supervisor is assigned to the student, meetings will be scheduled bi-weekly at a time that is suitable to both the faculty supervisor and the student. While the course components for each student will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis, it is advised that the student will complete the following, submitted to the faculty supervisor:

- 1) An original (preferably ensemble) work of substantial proportions. All projects must be submitted with a high-quality digital sound file of the project and an appropriate notation or score of the corresponding work(s). Works requiring a score should be prepared using a recognized professional computer notation software program (unless an alternative professionally acceptable notational format is approved by the faculty supervisor). Works that are created within a predominantly aural tradition should be submitted using appropriate notations for the style (e.g., lyric sheets, lead sheets, graphic score, etc.). The stylistic orientation of the composition portfolio will be left to the discretion of the student in consultation with the faculty supervisor. However, the project should be centred on the creation of a large-scale original work rather than a series of smaller compositions.
- 2) The preparation of an accompanying analytical paper, at least 12-15 double-spaced pages in length (but no more than 25) that situates the work among broader musical trends and discusses the intentions, methodologies, and musical discoveries involved in the creative process.

12. Guidelines for Directed Readings and Research (MUSI 5900)

The MA in Music and Culture offers a wide array of courses that support the aims of the program. We strongly encourage students to register first and foremost for graduate courses that are offered in your year/term of study, even if it falls outside their area of expertise (sometimes the most rewarding experiences take place in academic contexts outside one's specialization). However, on occasion a student may have a compelling reason to explore a topic that is not covered in one of the existing courses. MUSI 5900: Directed Readings and Research is an elective course designed to permit students to pursue research on a topic in music and culture chosen in consultation with a member of the faculty. Course expectations are the same as those for other graduate courses: regular meetings between student and faculty member; assigned readings and similar work in a clearly laid-out plan of study; one or more substantial results (reading journal, a research paper, a final project, etc.); and a mechanism for assessing the work. The Graduate Committee will only approve applications for students who will have completed at least one term of coursework at the time of the reading course. **The Directed Readings and Research Course is not a requirement for completion of the MA, so admission to the course is not guaranteed.**

The student must submit a proposal for a MUSI 5900 reading course to the Supervisor of Graduate Studies by the submission deadline. The proposal needs to state the course title, provide a description, rationale and context for the research topic, give a detailed plan of study (including the means of evaluation and a reading schedule) and include a full bibliography. Reading course proposals tend to average about ten pages in length, the bulk taken up by the bibliography. The proposal also must indicate the relevance of MUSI 5900 for the student's course of study, whether it is intended to investigate an area of interest or expertise for the student or to explore a topic in preparation for the thesis/research essay. The Graduate Committee will review the application and will communicate to the student the results of its deliberations by the middle of the month. Should any revisions be needed to the proposal, students will need to submit those and have the revised proposal submitted and approved before the start of term. The Graduate Committee reserves the right to make a final assignment of faculty supervisor for the course. April 1, August 1, and December 1 are the respective submission deadlines for the summer, fall and winter terms.

13. Deciding Which Stream to Pursue

As mentioned above, there are three possible streams students can pursue for completion of their MA degree. Students who indicate an interest in the thesis stream in their applications may be placed in that stream upon admission into the program; other students can apply for the thesis or MRP stream at the end of their second term of study. In these two streams, students will generate a thesis or a research essay (we call them Major Research Papers, or MRPs) as the culminating product of their degree; those students choosing the coursework-only option will fulfill degree requirements through the completion of additional courses (8 courses in total).

Choosing the route that best suits individual needs and abilities involves many factors, some of them subjective. As such, students are advised to talk early in their time in the program with the Supervisor of Graduate Studies. Generally, students interested in pursuing a thesis or MRP indicate their general area of exploration at the end of their first term of study, and in the second term of study they develop their proposals for theses and MRPs. Proposals are due April 15th for review by the graduate committee, although students can reconsider their stream after this point. As students consider which stream to pursue, guiding questions include:

(i) The research essay option and the coursework-only option require more coursework. So, one thing to consider is if a student generally prefers and/or does better with courses or with large independent projects.

(ii) A thesis must always involve some kind of original primary research and/or original analysis. In other words, a thesis must, to some degree, represent an original contribution to knowledge. A research essay, by contrast, does not place the same emphasis on originality. As such, another question to consider is if a student has new ideas to develop, if they would be happier spending more time absorbing and organizing already-existing work or if they would prefer to take more courses for breadth of knowledge.

(iii) A thesis is considerably longer and is broader in scope than a research essay (about 100 pages for the thesis, about 50 for the MRP). The thesis should contextually examine a topic that involves multiple primary and secondary sources and requires a multi-stage approach. If the topic deals with a limited set of primary sources or repertory, or has only a small body of secondary literature, and/or is modest in its research questions and results, that project would be better served by a research paper. Longer is not better: the research essay is a fully legitimate option for students whose topics do not warrant extended treatment, and is in no way inferior to a thesis. Similarly, an MA fulfilled through the coursework-only stream is an equally valuable and legitimate degree.

(iv) If students intend to go on to pursue a PhD or some other post-MA academic work, they *might* be better positioned with a thesis than with a research essay or more courses. The thesis allows the student to demonstrate an ability to tackle a larger project and to develop an original line of thought, both of which might make them more competitive in the PhD program application process. That said, an informal survey of selected PhD programs in Music revealed that for the majority of them, it does not matter which MA stream a student fulfills, as long as

they have a completed MA. In terms of employment outside of academia after the MA, the distinction between the type of final document normally also has little significance.

The Graduate Committee reserves the right to determine whether a proposal is better suited for a thesis or a research essay. Upon review of a proposal, the committee can recommend to the student that they undertake a research paper or thesis instead of what was originally submitted, which could require a new or thoroughly revised proposal. Keep in mind that students can change options in either direction during the course of their second year subject to approval of their supervisor (if one has been assigned) and the graduate committee. If students move from one stream to another they need to recognize that it will impact on the number of courses required to fulfill degree requirements in order to achieve the required credits of the MA.

14. Thesis/Research Essay (MRP) Supervisors

Students will be assigned a supervisor for their thesis/research essay proposal in January and for the thesis or research essay itself by the end of April in your first year. The reason for waiting rather than assigning supervisors at the beginning of the program is that it often takes students a few months to finalize their research plans, and it takes faculty a few months to get a sense for which students might match best with particular supervisors. Before the actual assignment, students have the opportunity to talk with various faculty members about their research, and get a sense of who they might like to work with. The proposal supervisor works with the student as they prepare a proposal that will be submitted to the Graduate Committee, while the thesis or MRP supervisor oversees the research and creation of the document itself through its completion and, for theses, defense. Although no guarantees can be given, students are welcome to communicate any preferences in supervisor to the Supervisor of Graduate Studies. Students should keep in mind that there are restrictions in terms of who can serve as faculty supervisors for graduate student work.

Often the faculty member assigned to assist in drafting the thesis/MRP proposal continues to supervise the project itself, granted approval of the Graduate Committee, which is given at the time that the proposal is accepted by the committee. However, a number of factors can lead to the assignment of a different faculty member at the time of proposal approval: an excessive supervisory load for the faculty member in question; a recommended shift of proposal topic; a difficult relationship between student and proposal advisor; among others. Students need to bear in mind that the Graduate Committee makes the final decisions regarding supervision, although individual student (and faculty) recommendations will be taken into account.

Students need to know that, although faculty members make every effort to be available for advising, there are times when supervisors may not be readily accessible, such as during the summer or over the fall and/or winter break. Please review Carleton's Graduate Supervision—Responsibilities & Expectations Policy for information on supervisor-supervisee expectations and responsibilities.

Students pursuing a thesis or MRP need to be prepared to engage in large-scale, multiple revisions of work as part of the advising process: it is not unusual for supervisors to return drafts several times before declaring the text suitable for submission and/or defense. Faculty supervisors have not only been through the thesis process themselves, but also have normally gone through the cycle for any number of students, so they know the most expedient and best procedures for completing the final document. If problems with thesis/MRP supervision should arise, the student needs to contact the Supervisor of Graduate Studies.

15. Thesis and Research Essay (MRP) Proposals

The thesis or research essay proposal is an important part of a student's training, whether for an academic career or for the business world: it is essential that graduate students be able to articulate goals and methodologies for publications, projects, etc. A well-structured and detailed proposal can drive the research project, which is why the MA in Music and Culture places such an emphasis upon it.

Students who submit proposals to the Graduate Committee should be aware that it is not unusual for a proposal to be returned for revision. The committee may recommend larger proposal revisions for any number of reasons: the topic is too broad, is insufficient in detail, has inadequate methodology, etc.

The Graduate Committee reserves the right to determine whether a proposal is better suited for a thesis or a research essay. Upon review of a proposal, the committee can recommend to the student that they undertake a research paper or thesis instead of what was originally submitted, which could require a new or thoroughly revised proposal. Upon request, the Supervisor of Graduate Studies can send out samples of successful proposals.

Although lengths can vary, ten pages (with bibliography) usually suffice for both thesis and MRP proposals. Be sure to include the following in your proposal:

- Title
- Abstract (no more than 150 words)
- Statement of the issue under investigation
- Justification for and importance of the topic
- Relationship to existing scholarship
- Objectives and methodology
- Chapter/Section breakdown
- Proposed timeline
- Preliminary bibliography

Abstract

This is a summary of the proposed work, including a working thesis statement. It is a short and clear description of the main argument, identifying the central topics and outlining the questions for discussion. (150-word limit)

Statement of the Issue under Investigation

This paragraph should begin with a general statement of the issue under investigation. As an opening statement, it cannot engage in detail, but it should state the overall area of interest, the nature of the issue itself, the range of subject matter relevant to it and the limits beyond which the student does not intend to proceed.

Justification for and Importance of the Topic

Here the student needs to make a case for the topic itself: Why is it worthy of treatment in a thesis/research essay? What is its importance for the field? A succinct statement should suffice

that details why this research is important and what kind of original contribution this work will make to the field.

Relationship to Existing Scholarship

Once the issue has been identified, the proposal should review the existing literature that bears on it. Some of the studies in the bibliography will be of special importance, either because they address the research issue directly or because they employ relevant concepts. The proposal should include systematic comment on those studies.

In providing a critique of the works in question, the student should outline the intellectual context from which the topic has been approached and the depth to which it has been investigated. The comment should end by explaining in general terms, the relation between the works reviewed and the proposed study. Which of them will the thesis accept or reject; what is there about the issue that they have left uninvestigated; how will the thesis contribute to their discussions? If the student cannot answer those questions, they have not yet defined a viable problem for research.

Objectives and Methodology

With the research issue identified and its relation to previous work described, it is now possible to be specific about the objectives of the proposed inquiry. This section should go into some detail about the questions to be asked, the hypotheses or arguments for adoption, the method of analysis and the theoretical paradigms by which the author hopes to sustain the hypotheses or arguments and the availability of evidence amenable to that method. The discussion here should include *anticipated* outcomes from the research and demonstrate how all of these methods will advance the overall goals of your project.

Chapter/Section Breakdown

The student should arrange the project into chapters (for a thesis) or sections (for an MRP) by providing a short summary of the contents of each. It may be helpful to indicate what will be discussed and analyzed in each of the chapters/sections, and if possible, to note their relevance to questions and arguments for the larger thesis/MRP.

Proposed Timeline

The proposal should outline a feasible timeline, showing all the steps the project will go through and when each step will be completed.

Preliminary Bibliography

The proposal should list the main sources for the project, primary and secondary. Such a list should include scores, recordings, internet videos, interviews, manuscripts and any other similar primary sources that will play a role in the thesis/research essay. This bibliography should also refer to the secondary studies mentioned in the section dealing with existing scholarship as well any other that are directly related to your argument and approach. It is important to use the *Chicago Manual of Style* (available online through the library) for proper referencing of these materials.

16. Guidelines for the Preparation and Defense of Theses

The Graduate Studies has extensive documentation regarding the [formatting and presentation of all theses](#). Please review materials available on this website to ensure adherence to these guidelines.

Consult the [Thesis Checklist](#) to ensure you are meeting all institutional requirements for the thesis.

Students wanting to explore how a thesis defense unfolds should see Carleton's [Thesis Examination Policy](#).