

University of Louisville
School of Music
Thesis Formatting Guidelines for MM in Composition

Introduction

Since the thesis for the Master's Degree in Music Composition is a musical score, rather than a prose document, there are differences from the standards of the School of Interdisciplinary and Graduate Studies (SIGS). This guide clarifies the requirements for the thesis in Music Composition.

Deadline

Given the differences between a musical score and a typical prose thesis in other disciplines, MM candidates in composition will be granted a different deadline for their thesis. Students should turn their thesis in on the next school day following the successful completion of their oral examination. If the oral exam takes place on a Friday, the thesis should be turned in by 5:00 pm that day. The students' private teachers should notify the appropriate person in SIGS of the names of their MM-composition candidates at least a month before the deadline.

Style and Format Requirements

Students are expected to use a standard music notation program, such as Finale or Sibelius. The student should secure approval of the software selected from the thesis advisor. In exceptional circumstances, manuscript scores of high quality may be accepted, if the student's thesis committee approves in advance.

All text parts of the submission (title page, program notes, signature page, etc.) should be laser-printed using a standard word-processing program, using standard fonts and sizes as described in the SIGS Guidelines.

Paper and Copying

Music composition theses are usually works for large ensemble. In this case, 11x17 (tabloid) paper should be used. In the unusual circumstance that the thesis is written for other than a large ensemble, smaller paper may be more appropriate, such as 8.5x14 (legal) or 8.5x11 (letter). In rare situations, pages larger than 11x17 may be needed. Paper sizes other than 11x17 require permission of the thesis committee.

As high rag content paper in large sizes is difficult to find and extremely expensive, the student may use non-acid archival quality 24 lb. paper, suitable for laser printing. The paper copy for submission to the School of Music library should be laser printed on this paper.

Unlike prose theses, the score should be printed double-sided. The prose sections of the thesis, however, should be printed single-sided. Prose sections should also be printed onto the same size paper as the score itself.

Margins and spacing

Prose portions of the thesis should use margins and spacing as described in the SIGS Guidelines, although as mentioned above, these sections will be on the same size paper as the music. The thesis should have an interior, binding edge margin of one and a

half inches (1.5”). Since the music portion of the thesis will be copied double-sided (not the prose sections), the binding edge margin will be on the left for odd numbered pages of music and on the right for even numbered pages of music. Other margins (top, bottom, non-binding edge) should be one inch (1”).

Pagination

Pagination for front matter should follow the SIGS Guidelines. The first page of music will be a right-hand page, and will be page one. (As per publishing standards, however, the page number will not appear on page one.)

Parts and Order of Pages for a Thesis

The title page through the dedication and/or acknowledgment pages should follow the SIGS Guidelines. However, in place of an abstract, the student will provide a program note of 200-500 words. In addition, if the work is a vocal work, or otherwise uses a text, the complete text, with English translation if necessary, should appear after the program note, unless the text is too long for such inclusion. The student should seek approval from the thesis committee in advance for such exclusion. The student must secure written permission from the copyright holder for the use of any copyrighted text. This should be secured well in advance of starting the project to avoid possible complications.

The score must also include a complete list of all instruments, voices and any other resources required for performance. It must also contain adequate explanation of any non-standard notation used, although if not extensive this explanation may be placed where such notation is used in the score itself, rather than in the front matter.

If the composition is in several movements or independent scenes, acts, or sections, the student must provide a table of contents, listing same, and their page numbers in the score. The durations of the movements or other sections, as well as the total duration, should appear following the program note and text, or at the bottom of the instrumentation page.

Lists of tables, as well as lists of figures, illustrations, charts, or graphs, footnotes, endnotes, references, citations, appendices, bibliography, etc., will rarely, if ever, form part of the MM Composition thesis. If they do, however, they should follow the SIGS Guidelines.

The curriculum vitae is required, and should be placed after the final page of the score, as per SIGS Guidelines, and numbered as though the last page of the score.

Submission copies

The School of Interdisciplinary and Graduate Studies no longer accepts paper copies of terminal documents. Students should submit their approved thesis electronically as per SIGS guidelines.

However, an unbound paper copy, on the archival quality paper described above, should be submitted to the Director of the Anderson Music Library in the School of Music. The Music Library will bind this copy and make it available for use according to their guidelines.