

MM & DMA Wind Conducting Information

OVERVIEW

The UCLA Department of Music offers master of music and doctor of musical arts degrees in wind conducting. In addition to graduate coursework in bibliography, musical terminology, analysis, and performance practices, students receive weekly conducting lessons and participate in a seminar covering wind literature, rehearsal techniques, score study and interpretation, and professional skills.

Multiple laboratory experiences include guest conducting the UCLA Wind Ensemble once per quarter, conducting the UCLA Symphonic Band, coaching sectionals, and conducting various chamber ensembles. While the program favors depth, students have plentiful podium time.

Graduate conducting students enjoy interaction with highly talented students and faculty in music, musicology, and ethnomusicology within the UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music; the fertile academic environment of one of the world's leading universities; and the enormous cultural resources of the Los Angeles metropolitan area.

ADMISSION

Applicants for MM and DMA programs in conducting must submit a pre-screening audition video (or videos) with their applications. Videos must contain at least 15 minutes of rehearsal and 15 minutes of performance footage. Rehearsal footage should include significant portions where the applicant stops and rehearses the ensemble, and should demonstrate how the applicant influences the musicians through both physical gesture and verbal communication; run-throughs in rehearsal settings are not considered rehearsal video. Both rehearsal and performance video should be framed from the perspective of the ensemble, with the conductor's face visible.

File types accepted: .avi, .flv, .m1v, .m2v, .m4v, .mkv, .mov, .mpeg, .mpg, .mp4, .webm, .wmv

Selected candidates are invited to interview on campus during mutually acceptable dates in January, February, or March. The interview includes meetings with wind conducting faculty, opportunities to visit with current graduate students, and a brief audition conducting and rehearsing the UCLA Wind Ensemble.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Outstanding students may be offered scholarships and/or teaching assistantships. Generally, the size of the program corresponds to the number of available teaching assistantships, which include remission of in-state fees and a competitive stipend.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What academic credentials are required for admission?

The UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music has rigorous academic standards. Graduate students need a minimum 3.0 grade point average in previous coursework, and English proficiency is required. The DMA program is intentionally small, and successful applicants demonstrate strengths in both musical artistry and scholarship (including advanced analytical and writing skills).


What kind of experience is necessary to be considered for admission?

Most successful graduate students in wind conducting have at least three to five years of experience as a band director at the middle or high school level. This background allows a student to seek growth more actively based on his or her understanding of existing strengths and weaknesses. Prospective students with teaching experience usually bring stronger listening and rehearsal skills, as well as better preparation for the logistical work expected of teaching assistants. Successful teaching experience also increases employment opportunities after completion of the graduate degree, especially for students interested in college teaching, which often emphasizes training of future music educators.

For graduate study in any area, a relationship with the potential teacher is enormously helpful; the student has some understanding of how the teacher teaches, and the teacher knows how the student responds to instruction. Graduate study—especially at the doctoral level—represents a commitment by the teacher to mentor and support the student through the rest of his or her career, so decisions about admission are not taken lightly. Ideally, a prospective student will have interacted with the potential teacher in a workshop or symposium setting on more than one occasion, demonstrating a growth trajectory over time.

What is the best way to work with a potential teacher prior to admission?

Like many graduate wind conducting programs, UCLA offers a summer wind conducting workshop where prospective students can study for a week with UCLA wind conducting faculty and a leading guest clinician. While workshops and symposia resemble only one small part of the graduate conducting experience, they provide the best way to see potential teachers and programs up close, along with wonderful musical growth opportunities.



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Prospective graduate students (or music educators who are simply interested) are welcome to attend on-campus classes, rehearsals, and performances at any time.

CONTACT

Questions? Please e-mail Travis J. Cross at tjcross@ucla.edu.