

FREDONIA SCHOOL OF MUSIC ACCOMPANYING POLICIES (ver. February 2, 2016)

A. General Guideline

The School of Music has a Head Staff Accompanist (I-Fei Chen-Markham), assistant staff accompanists, graduate assistants, student pianists, faculty pianists, and community pianists. The Head Staff Accompanist serves as the coordinator of accompanying services.

The Piano Area, which consists of the studio piano faculty, the collaborative piano faculty, and the staff accompanists, works together as a team to help the School of Music prepare pianists for accompanying and ensure that services are provided as equitably as possible.

Faculty members are requested to keep in mind that every piano-accompanied work they assign in an ensemble or studio impacts the overall workload of pianists. Not only do pianists have obligations to their own applied study and ensemble requirements, but they can be especially affected by the density of performances during critical weeks, the number of works programmed or assigned, the length of the pieces, rehearsal expectations, difficulty of the piano parts, and lead time. We must consider all these issues when selecting repertoire for our students and requesting accompanists.

Who can do accompanying?

Graduate Assistants in piano are like staff accompanists in that they are being paid by the School of Music for a given number of hours of service per week. All work and assignments of a graduate assistant must be coordinated through the Head Staff Accompanist. If it is determined that the service is outside the assistantship contract, the graduate assistant must be paid additionally for those services, as appropriate, according to agreed-upon terms.

Other graduate students and Masters of Collaborative Piano students are available to serve as accompanists. To prevent the overuse of certain students, all assignments must be arranged through the Head Staff Accompanist, who can coordinate the assignment with the student's private piano instructor. A determination will be made regarding compensation. Either the graduate student will be doing the work for credit or other curricular assignment, or the student accompanist will need to be paid for their services, according to agreed-upon terms.

Students who are upper class piano majors, or not piano majors but who have piano-playing ability may serve as accompanists. There is no restriction to their use, as long as their abilities fairly match the needs of the student being accompanied and his or her studio instructor. Non-major piano students are eligible to be paid for his or her services.

Faculty pianists may be asked to accompany. It is worth noting that tenured and tenure-track faculty must maintain a record of teaching, service and professional activity. Accompanying services to students may sometimes be appropriately listed under teaching, but more usually would be considered service. Generally, extra compensation from the School of Music would not be appropriate. Full-time faculty are expected to perform some duties in addition to their teaching; whether (or the degree to which) extra compensation for accompanying is warranted will be decided in a mutual manner. Part-time faculty have no such expectation; faculty in this category should be paid for their services, according to agreed-upon terms.

Staff accompanists receive a salary for a given number of hours of service. The Head Staff Accompanist coordinates these assignments and determines the workloads according to the repertoire, its difficulty, the hours required, and the schedule. As in the case of a graduate assistant, a determination is made whether the service is to be considered inside or outside the salaried contract. If the latter, additional pay must be provided, as appropriate, according to agreed-upon terms.

Community pianists are essentially freelancers. The School of Music has no authority over the amount of work they take on, the type of literature, or the nature of the services. However, it is always in our interest to pay people fairly, and pay should be provided according to agreed-upon terms.

How are pianists compensated?

Credit. Examples include a student in MUS 035 who is accompanying as an assignment of that class, or a pianist who performs as part of a student ensemble. These students should be compensated through earning credit, and they should not be additionally compensated.

Curricular assignment. Examples include a music education student who is working on a field assignment, a music therapy student who is using the piano in a clinical project, or a collaborative piano graduate student who has accepted an assignment for specific skill development under faculty mentorship. These students are involved in curricular activities and should not be compensated.

Salary and/or tuition remission. Staff accompanists and graduate assistants need to delineate where their contractual responsibilities end and extra services begin. They are eligible for extra pay for services beyond their contract.

If it is determined that additional monetary compensation is appropriate, either the School of Music will pay for services, or the services must be paid for directly by the student who is receiving the services. Considerations for making this determination include the extent to which budgeted funds are available.

The Piano Accompanist Reimbursement Time Sheet provides a basic level of pay from the School of Music for accompaniment services to recitalists and for juries. The timesheet is fairly self-explanatory. The form is available in the Music Office. It must be completed and signed by the accompanist, and authorized by the studio instructor of the student who received the services.

All other accompanying of students must be paid directly to the accompanist by the student receiving the services. For the benefit of clear communication and understanding, all services should be planned in advance, a rate of pay determined, and the expected cost agreed upon by both parties. An independent accompanying contract form is available in the Music Office. These completed agreements should be filed with the Music Office prior to the commencement of services.

There are many occasions for projects that require accompanying that fall outside this brief description: Audition Days, master classes, faculty candidate campus interviews, etc. Typically, the School of Music will pay for accompanying services of this type to the extent that the project supports recruitment or the School's other strategic initiatives. If in doubt how compensation will occur in a specific situation, please check with the School of Music Director, prior to the event.

B. Staff accompanist protocol

The School of Music will make every effort to provide accompanists for students' curricular recitals and juries. Due to the size of the School of Music, we encourage students to build professional collaborating partnerships or long-term working relationships with their piano peers. The School of Music also provides a list of community accompanists, which is located in the SOM office. All students who request an accompanist will receive a confirmation email containing details of their accompanist assignment.

C. Criteria for making assignment

Our staff accompanist coordinator (Head Staff Accompanist) makes an effort to match the appropriate pianists with students according to what repertoire is known by or can be played by each pianist, the availability of the recital date and an assessment of the difficulty level. A most important consideration is also how many recitals can be handled by a pianist without overly taxing her or him. The SOM currently has one full time piano graduate assistant, one one-third time staff accompanist (Mr. Welch) and one full time staff accompanist (Ms. Chen).

D. Curricular Recitals procedure

Recital assignments will be made according to the following Priority list:

- 1) Graduate Recital, 2) Senior Recital, 3) Junior Recital and 4) Performance Certificate (PC) Recital.

For Voice Partners:

- 1) The voice department faculty will select certain students at the end of each year to be eligible for staff accompaniment in the following year.
- 2) The Head Staff Accompanist will send a confirmation email by the first week of the academic year or at the beginning of each semester for the collaboration partners.
- 3) The Head Staff Accompanist will collaborate with voice students the entire academic year including all curricular events. This includes 50-55 minutes weekly for rehearsal and lessons, studio/area performances, jury, a dress rehearsal and a recital.
- 4) If the students miss a rehearsal, their time with the voice staff accompanist will be forfeited.
- 5) Recording sessions and master class are not part of staff accompanist services.
- 6) If the soloist misses two rehearsals, we may reconsider our service to the student.
- 7) It is also the student's responsibility to inform the accompanist if the faculty cancels a lesson.

Note: A staff accompanist will provide services for Opera Seminar Courses.

For Instrumental partners:

- 1) There are two deadlines for requesting an accompanist for a curricular recital. The deadline for a fall semester recital is usually the third week of the school year. The deadline for a spring semester recital is usually the last week of fall semester.
- 2) Staff accompanist request forms can be found in the music department office as well as outside of the staff accompanist coordinator's office (Rm. 2162).
- 3) If a student needs an accompanist provided by the SOM, the student will need to submit the staff accompanist request form before the deadline to Ms. Chen's mail box.
- 4) If forms are submitted after the deadline or are incomplete (no scores or recital date), there is no guarantee that a pianist will be provided.
- 5) If there is a need for the student to change recital repertoire, the student will need to discuss options with the accompanist before making any changes.
- 6) All request forms must be submitted to the staff accompanist coordinator; please do not make any private arrangements with accompanists before submitting the form.
- 7) Students must consult with their accompanist before scheduling a dress rehearsal or area performance.
- 8) If students miss a rehearsal, their time with the staff accompanist will be forfeited.
- 9) Recording sessions and master class are not part of staff accompanist services.
- 10) If a soloist misses two rehearsals, we may reconsider our service to that student.
- 11) Usually each rehearsal time is 50 -55 minutes or 20-25 minutes in length, depending on the repertoire.
- 12) Once the event is over, the pianist will be no longer at the student's service.

E. Jury procedure

- 1) The staff accompanist coordinator will usually begin accepting request forms six weeks before finals/jury week.
- 2) All scores (with the student's name written on them) must be provided along with the request form.

- 3) It is “first come first serve” until we reach the maximum number of juries that we can accommodate.
- 4) Since the staff accompanist is playing for many students during the end of each semester, it will not possible for staff accompanist to attend every student’s lesson and/or studio seminar performance.
- 5) If students fail to communicate with their pianist after the assignment is made or misses two rehearsals, the staff accompanist has the right to dismiss the assignment.

F. Concerto Competition

The deadline for the concerto competition usually falls in the first week of spring semester. It is not part of the staff accompanists’ services to cover players in the concerto competition since it is not a curricular requirement for students. However, staff accompanists will make every effort to accommodate this special event if our accompanists’ schedule allows for it.

G. Large ensemble protocol for ensemble directors

Collaborating with large ensemble is a marketable learning experience for our piano students. Therefore, we encourage our piano students to participate in the unique opportunity of collaborating with large ensembles at Fredonia. We strive to fill these positions with student pianists. However, sometimes a staff accompanist is needed. All requests for large ensemble pianists need to go to the coordinator at least a month before each semester. Late requests will not guarantee a pianist for the group. Also, due to the large number of ensembles at the school, please be aware that we may not always have enough student pianists to fill this role.

H. Guideline for successful collaboration

- 1) Please make sure that your collaborator has all the scores for the recital and/or juries. If it is a photocopied score, it needs to be legible with all the notes clearly defined and it should be double sided.
- 2) It will be the soloist’s responsibility to make the initial appointment to meet and set up the regular rehearsal time and lesson time.
- 3) Please contact the pianist at least 2 weeks in advance in order to schedule the first rehearsal.
- 4) Notify the accompanist immediately of any cancellation or schedule changes.
- 5) Keep an open mind, consult with your collaborator before scheduling any event.
- 6) Your staff accompanist/grad assistant will collaborate with you through all the curricular events, which include regular rehearsal and lessons, studio /area performances, jury, one dress rehearsal and recital. Once the event is over, your accompanist will no longer be at your service.
- 7) Please respond to all emails or phone calls in a timely manner.
- 8) Be prompt, communicative and professional.

I. Forms

-Staff Accompanist Request Form

-Piano Accompanist Honorarium Time Sheet
-Accompanying Agreement