



**American Choral Directors Association  
2021 National Conference  
Student Conducting Masterclass Application Guidelines  
Graciously sponsored by Manhattan Concert Productions**

#### HISTORY

The ACDA Student Conducting Awards were initiated during the 1993 ACDA national conference in San Antonio, Texas. We again offer this highly successful event at the 2021 ACDA national conference, this time in a virtual format.

#### PURPOSE

The objectives of the ACDA Student Conducting Awards are three-fold:

- (1) To acknowledge and reward outstanding graduate and undergraduate student conductors.
- (2) To encourage score preparation for clinician review and discussion and suggestions for enhanced conducting gesture.
- (3) To promote student activity at the ACDA national conference.

#### SCHEDULE

The 2021 ACDA national conference will be held virtually, Wednesday, March 17, through Saturday, March 20. The Student Conducting Masterclasses will be held:

**Friday, March 19, 4:30-6:15 p. m. CT- Undergraduate**

**Saturday, 4:15-6:00 p.m. CT- Graduate**

#### AWARDS

Four undergraduate students and four graduate students will be selected for masterclass participation. Their ACDA national conference registration fee will be waived, and each will receive \$250 as an award for being selected for this honor to aid in their work as aspiring conductors.

## APPLICATION

Due to the unusual situation affecting choral programs with regard to COVID-19, the Student Conducting Competition aspect of the event will be suspended, and a masterclass will be held for both undergraduate and graduate level conductors. Since not all students have access to choirs meeting in person, several options will be given for application.

### APPLICATION CHECKLIST:

- I have two selections of contrasting style, or one longer selection.
- I can see my full self, frontal view, in the video.
- I can clearly hear all of my verbal instructions to the choir.  
The sound of the choir is neither too loud nor too soft to be heard.
- I have clearly announced each selection before rehearsing it, or included the titles in the video.
- My video's total length is between 8 and 12 minutes, with the time equally divided between both selections if there are two.
- I have NOT identified myself in the video, nor does my name appear in the video title, nor YouTube channel to which I have uploaded it.
- I have submitted my application form, and have checked my YouTube video's URL for accuracy.
- I have set my YouTube video to **“unlisted” not “private” or “public”**.
- I have received verification from two non-student Active ACDA Members certifying that I have complied with the written guidelines of the application.
- I have submitted my application form, registration fee, and video URL by the deadline as printed in the guidelines. (December 1, 2020)

**Once you have completed ALL of the above, your application is complete.**

## SELECTION PROCESS GUIDELINES

## **I. Eligibility Requirements: *Applicants must...***

- A. Hold valid ACDA student membership. Memberships available at [www.acda.org](http://www.acda.org).
- B. Be a full-time student at a college/university at the time of application.
- C. Submit a complete application portfolio including the following materials (submitted electronically):
  1. Application form
  2. Verification of video validity
  3. Verification by a university official of the student's class standing and full-time status (letter from Registrar's office, unofficial transcript, etc.)
  4. Audition video recording, uploaded to YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com>)  
\*URL for "unlisted" YouTube video that DOES NOT include identifying information (please do not include your name in the URL; please DO NOT include your name in the YouTube channel)
  5. \$20 entry fee

## **II. Audition Preparation Guidelines**

Applicants will prepare and upload to YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com>) a video recording (unlisted) of an audition that meets the following criteria:

### **A. Video Preparation**

ACDA understands that not all students will have access to a choir meeting in person. Due to the COVID-19 social distancing restrictions presenting a variety of unique situations for choral programs, the committee will accept any of the following listed below. Preference will not be given to one type of video over another:

1. A previously recorded video of rehearsal and performance, which shows a clear view facing the conductor. If the only video available does not include rehearsal, this will be accepted.
2. A video with the student conducting a pianist in a live setting.
3. A video of a student conducting a choir in a live, socially distanced setting following CDC (Centers for Disease Control) and the student's institutional guidelines for safety.
4. A video of a student conducting a choral recording.

### **B. Musical Parameters - Undergraduate and Graduate**

1. If the video was created before COVID-19, please choose something that shows contrasting styles, if possible.
2. If the video is being created for the masterclass application, students will conduct and rehearse two compositions for chorus in contrasting style and tempi.
3. Selections may be unaccompanied or accompanied.
4. Excerpts of longer works may be selected.
5. In support of the work of the ACDA Diversity Initiatives Committee, students are encouraged to select one work from an underrepresented group of composers.

### C. Video Conducting and Rehearsal

1. The applicant should focus on gestural communication, technique, and the development of the musical product (in much the same manner as a guest conductor in a festival setting).
2. The selection panel will place primary value on gestural communication, musicianship/listening, and technique.
3. If the applicant is using a video created before COVID-19 and cannot include a rehearsal, a performance video will be accepted.
4. Students who are selected for masterclass participation will prepare their score before the event, and submit it to the clinician to be reviewed and incorporated into the masterclass discussion.

### D. Camera Angle

1. The camera angle will show a full frontal view of the applicant and all conducting movements.
2. The choral sound and comments of the applicant must be clearly audible on the video recording.
3. The applicant will begin each selection by announcing the title and composer of the work to be presented. If the video was prepared before COVID-19, please include selections in the editing of the video.

### E. Personal Identification

1. The applicants will **not** identify themselves nor the institution of higher learning in the recorded audition.

### F. Audition Format and Duration

If creating the video with a socially distanced choir:

1. The video recorded selections will be presented consecutively **without stopping the recording device between selections.**
2. The video recording will **not be edited** in any manner.
3. The video recording will show the applicant conducting and rehearsing the choir for a **minimum of eight minutes and a maximum of twelve minutes.**
4. The time should be divided equally between the two selections.

If using a video created before COVID-19 and prior to the publishing of these guidelines:

1. When possible, please include a balance of rehearsal and performance.
2. Two separate videos will be permitted, please only edit the start and stop from one piece to the other, and submit them as one total video.
3. Please identify the title and composer of the piece on the video.
4. Please **do not** identify yourself or the institution.

### G. Audition Submission

1. It is the responsibility of the applicant to upload the video audition to YouTube .

2. It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide the selection committee with the correct URL for accessing the video. (It is strongly suggested that the applicant cut and paste the URL directly from the browser into the application.)
3. Videos must be anonymous and submitted as “unlisted”. **A video with the applicant’s name in the title or in the YouTube channel name will be disqualified.**
4. Applicants whose video auditions are not accessible to the committee will be disqualified.

#### H. Verification

1. A live video recording will be monitored (or a pre-made recording will be viewed) by two Active ACDA members (non-students), who will certify on the application form that:
  - a. the applicant is a student in good standing at their university or collegiate institution.
  - b. the applicant meets all of the criteria specified in these guidelines.
  - c. It is solely the applicant’s responsibility to ensure that they comply with the rules and regulations of the competition specified by these guidelines.

**DEADLINE: The completed application materials, verifications, all supporting documentation, and video upload to YouTube must be completed no later than midnight CT on December 1, 2020. All application materials become the property of the American Choral Directors Association. Applicants will be notified of results on February 1, 2021.**

**NOTE: An incomplete or erroneous application will disqualify the applicant.**

### III. Audition Review Process

- A. The National Student Conducting Competition Committee, hereafter referred to as the “NSCC Committee,” will appoint a review panel who will review all submissions with the goal of selecting a maximum of eight students (four undergraduate, four graduate) to participate in the masterclass.
- B. Applicants for the ACDA Student Conducting Masterclass will be notified by email on or before February 1, 2021, of the student conductors selected to participate in the masterclass.

### IV. Conference Session

- A. The masterclass will be held during the ACDA National Conference for the purpose of selecting a maximum of four graduate students and four undergraduate students to participate.  
Schedule:  
**Friday, 2:30-4:15pm PST- Undergraduate**  
**Saturday, 2:15-4:00pm PST- Graduate**
- B. Choral repertoire for the masterclass will be selected by the NSCC Committee, in consultation with the Executive Committee, and emailed to the selected masterclass

participants by February 1, 2021. It is the students' responsibility to acquire the selected compositions at their own expense.

- C. The NSCC committee, in consultation with the Executive Committee, will select masterclass clinicians and adjudicators for videos.
- D. All sessions in the ACDA Student Conducting Competition are open to all registered conference attendees.

#### Disclaimer

No member of the NSCC committee, nor any judge, teller, or person connected with the selection of semi-finalists or conducting of the semi-final or final rounds shall be involved with any decision involving that person's student (over the past three years) who has applied or been selected as a participant in the ACDA Conducting Competition. The NSCC Committee is under no obligation to award semi-final, final, or winner status if satisfactory candidates cannot be identified. All decisions made by the judges are final.