



ACDA 2025 National Conference
Student Conducting Masterclass
Application Information

The ACDA Student Conducting Awards and Competition were initiated during the 1993 ACDA National Conference in San Antonio, Texas. In 2019, the event was reconceived as a masterclass. For 2025, this opportunity will again be offered as a Student Conducting Masterclass with Undergraduate and Graduate categories.

Criteria for acceptance will be conducting technique, rehearsal pedagogy, expressive musicality, and the use of appropriate performance practice. Additionally, the student conductor's repertoire selections must include at least one historically underrepresented composer. We will honor the student conductors chosen by highlighting their names and their institutions both in publications and at the National ACDA Conference in 2025.

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

(1) To acknowledge and reward outstanding undergraduate and graduate student conductors; (2) To encourage score preparation and advancement of conducting and rehearsal skills; and (3) To promote greater engagement of student activity at the ACDA National Conference.

I. Eligibility Requirements

Applicants must meet the following criteria:

- A. Hold valid ACDA student membership. *Need to know if you are a member or find your ACDA membership number? Go to www.acda.org and click "sign in" in the upper right corner. Need to join? Go to www.acda.org/membership to join online.*
- B. Be a full-time undergraduate student or a full-time graduate student at a college or university in the United States or US Territory at the time of application and at the time of the Masterclass (March 18-22, 2025). This will be verified by your student ID card.

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- C. Submit a complete application portfolio through Submittable that includes the following materials:
- Personal information (this will not be seen by Video Adjudicators)
 - Verification of video validity. This will be verified by you providing the name and ACDA membership number of a faculty member/sponsor. You will want to have this information on hand, in advance, of filling out your application.
 - Verification of full-time status as a student (Student ID card, image upload)
 - Audition video recording, uploaded to Submittable
 - Fully marked score of your two selections–PDF upload
 - One to two-page résumé of conducting experience-PDF upload
 - \$20 entry fee; online payment only at the time of application*
**If the student applicant is in financial hardship and is unable to pay the \$20 entry fee, please contact Dr. Jenny Bent, Collegiate Activities Coordinator (bentje@sonoma.edu) by September 15, 2024.*

II. Audition Video Information

Applicants will prepare and upload an audition video that meets the following criteria:

A. Musical Submission Requirements

1. Applicants will rehearse and conduct two compositions for chorus in the video audition. (See Musical Parameters section for more information.)
2. Applicants will upload a fully marked color PDF of the score analysis of the two compositions conducted and rehearsed in the video audition.
3. Students must select one work by a historically marginalized or underrepresented composer. There are several resources to use to source repertoire that might help the application meet this request. A few of those resources are:

- <https://www.composerdiversity.com/>
- <http://chorosynthesis.org/esvdatabase>
- <https://guides.library.yale.edu/music-diversity/repertoire>

(This is not an exhaustive list of resources or the only resources available to you. Listing these resources is not an endorsement of the committee. This is simply provided as a starting point to aid students.)

4. **Graduate conductors only:** one selection must be conducted with the baton.

B. Musical Parameters

1. Applicants will rehearse and conduct two compositions for chorus in the video audition, including:
 - a. a 17th, 18th, or 19th century work, and
 - b. a 20th or 21st century work with asymmetrical meters
2. The compositions should be of contrasting tempi and style.

3. Selections may be unaccompanied or accompanied.
4. Excerpts of longer works may be selected.
5. Keyboard reductions may be substituted for orchestral accompaniments.

C. Camera Angle

1. The camera angle will show a full-frontal view of the applicant and all conducting movements.
2. The choral sound 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.

D. Personal Identification

1. The applicant will not identify themselves, nor the institution of higher learning in the recorded audition.
2. Ensure that you are not wearing clothing that indicates your institution or signage in the video does not reveal the institution. You should ensure your name is not used or referenced in the recorded section.

E. Audition Video Format and Duration

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, including the enhancement of sound or any post-production editing.
3. The length of the video recording featuring the two selections will show the applicant conducting for a minimum of 10 minutes and a maximum of 12 minutes.
4. The applicant should attempt to balance rehearsal time between the two selections.
5. Please be advised that the maximum upload file size is 400mb. You are encouraged to adjust your recording settings prior to recording or to use any number of available resources online to ensure your file size meets this maximum requirement.

F. Verification

1. Please list one (1) ACDA Member “Sponsor”. This must be a professor at your institution who has either been present at the recording of or viewed your video submission and will verify that you have followed the criteria. You must include one Sponsor’s ACDA membership number.
2. It is the applicant’s responsibility to ensure that they comply with the rules and regulations specified in these guidelines.

The completed application, verifications, all supporting documentation, and video upload to Submittable must be **completed no later than 11:59pm CDT on October 15, 2024**. All application materials become the property of the American Choral Directors Association.

Help desk support for technical issues will be available until 5pm CDT on October 15 by emailing membership@acda.org. After 5pm on October 15 CDT, technical support will not be provided. Late applications will not be accepted even if the applicant experiences technical difficulties. Please plan ahead to ensure you are able to meet the deadline and access support if you need it.

NOTE: Late applications will not be accepted. An incomplete or erroneous application will disqualify the applicant.

III. Audition Review Process

- A. The National Student Conducting Masterclass Committee, hereafter referred to as the “NSCM Committee,” will appoint a review panel that will review all submissions with the goal of selecting a maximum of four undergraduate and four graduate students to participate in the Student Masterclass. These review panelists will not be permitted to evaluate their own students.
- B. The review panel will place primary emphasis on gestural language, score study, and rehearsal technique - please see rubric for further clarification.
- C. Applicants for the ACDA Student Conducting Masterclass will be notified by email on or before December 4, 2024 of the student conductors selected to participate in the ACDA National Conference Conducting Masterclass.

IV. Conference Session Information

- The Masterclass Sessions will be held on Thursday, March 20, 2025 in Dallas, Texas.
- Each selected conductor will have a pre-conference coaching with a Masterclass Clinician.
- Masterclass Clinicians will provide students feedback on gesture, rehearsal technique, and score study.
- The 6-8 selected students will receive \$250 in honor of their excellence and to aid their attendance of the National Conference in Dallas, Texas, March 19-22, 2025.

Disclaimer

No person connected with the selection of masterclass participants may 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 Student Conducting Masterclass.