



2027 Student Conducting Masterclass Application Information

**Application Opens September 1, 2026
Application Deadline is October 15, 2026 at 11:59pm Central Time**

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 model, shifting the emphasis from competition to mentorship.

For 2027, this opportunity will again be offered as the Student Conducting Masterclass, featuring both Undergraduate and Graduate categories.

Objectives

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 the advancement of conducting and rehearsal skills
3. To promote greater engagement in student activity at the ACDA National Conference

Selection Criteria

Acceptance will be based on:

- Conducting technique
- Rehearsal pedagogy
- Expressive musicality
- Use of appropriate performance practice

The student conducting masterclasses will take place at the 2027 ACDA National Conference in Minneapolis, with the undergraduate session scheduled for March 8 and the graduate session scheduled for March 9

I. Eligibility Requirements

Applicants must:

- Hold a valid ACDA active or student membership.
 1. To confirm membership status or locate your membership number, visit www.acda.org and click “Sign In” in the upper right corner.
 2. To join, visit www.acda.org/membership.
- Applicants must be a degree-pursuing student, either full or part time, at the time of application and conference workshop at a college or university in the United States or U.S. Territory at the time of application and at the time of the Masterclass (March 8 & 9, 2027). Status will be verified by submission of a student ID card and sponsor verification.
- Submit a complete application portfolio via ACDA application portal including:
 1. Personal information (not visible to video adjudicators)
 2. Verification of video validity (faculty sponsor name and faculty sponsor ACDA membership number)
 3. Verification of student status; Student ID upload (.png, .jpg, .jpeg)
 4. Audition video upload (.mp4)
 5. Fully marked PDF scores of the two selections (2 separate PDF uploads)
 6. One–two page résumé of conducting experience (.pdf)
 7. Headshot (.png, .jpg, .jpeg; for conference website and publicity, if chosen)
 8. 900 character biography (for conference website and publicity, if chosen; not sure what character is? [Click here](#))
 9. \$20 entry fee (online payment only via debit/credit card at time of application)*

*If an applicant is experiencing financial hardship and cannot pay the \$20 entry fee, please contact Dr. Jenny Bent, Collegiate Activities Coordinator (bentje@sonoma.edu) by September 15, 2026.

II. Audition Video Information

Musical Submission Requirements

1. Applicants will rehearse and conduct two choral compositions. The video should show the conductor’s ability to communicate and rehearse effectively with the ensemble and use appropriate and expressive gestures when conducting.

2. A fully marked, color PDF score analysis of both works must be uploaded (2 pdf uploads)
3. Repertoire Requirements;
 - a. One selection must be by a historically marginalized or underrepresented composer. One selection must be from the 17th, 18th, or 19th century. One selection must be from the 20th or 21st century. One of the selections must include mixed and/or asymmetrical meters (eg. 7/8, 5/4)
 - b. Graduate applicants only: one selection must be conducted with baton.

Additional repertoire considerations:

- Selections must contrast in tempo and style.
- Selections may be accompanied or unaccompanied. Keyboard reductions may substitute for orchestral accompaniment.
- Excerpts from larger works are permitted.

Repertoire resources (not exhaustive and not an endorsement by the committee):

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

Format & Duration

- Both selections must be recorded consecutively without stopping the device.
- No editing, sound enhancement, or post-production is permitted
- The total conducting time, for both works, is a minimum of 10 minutes and maximum of 12 minutes.
- Rehearsal time should be balanced between selections.
- Applicants are encouraged to begin the uploading process early to avoid any technical issues. Late applications will not be accepted FOR ANY REASON, including technical issues the applicant may experience.

Camera & Audio Requirements

- Camera angle showing all conducting movements (full-frontal view is recommended and preferable)
- Clear, audible choral sound
- The applicant must announce title and composer before each selection

Anonymity

- The applicant must not identify themselves or their institution in the video.
- No institutional logos, clothing, or signage may be visible.
- No spoken or written identification may be made.

Sponsor Verification

- The applicant will be required to provide the Name, Email Address, and ACDA member number of one faculty sponsor who can verify the recording and student status, if asked.
- The sponsor must have either been present at the recording or viewed the final submission.

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure compliance with all guidelines.

III. Application Deadline

All materials must be submitted by: **11:59 PM CDT on October 15, 2026**

All materials become the property of the American Choral Directors Association.

Technical support will be available via membership@acda.org until 5:00 PM CDT on October 15, 2026.

Late applications will not be accepted for any reason, including in cases of technical difficulty. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit early. Applicants are responsible for planning ahead to ensure they can complete the application process on time.

Incomplete or erroneous applications will result in disqualification.

IV. Audition Review Process

The National Student Conducting Masterclass Committee (NSCM Committee) will appoint a review panel to evaluate submissions.

- Up to four undergraduate and four graduate conductors will be selected.
- Review panelists may not evaluate their own students.

Applicants will be notified by email on or before December 4, 2026.

V. Conference Session Information

The Masterclass Sessions will be held during the 2027 ACDA National Conference.

Each selected conductor will:

- Participate in a pre-conference coaching session with a Masterclass Clinician.
- Receive live feedback on gesture, rehearsal technique, and score study during the conference session.

Selected conductors will receive a \$250 honorarium to assist with conference attendance and complimentary registration for the conference. Additionally, they will be formally recognized in official ACDA publications and acknowledged publicly at the 2027 National Conference.

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.

For questions about the application process, please contact Jenny Bent, Collegiate Activities Coordinator (bentje@sonoma.edu)

For technical support or membership support, please contact membership@acda.org

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