

Last updated September 2020

MUSC 4599: Graduation Project

A graduation project is required for all students in the Bachelor of Music, General Degree Program and in the Concentration in Popular Musics. Students must obtain Fountain School permission by submitting a proposal (details below) and the Graduation Project Form to the Associate Director (Music) by **March 1 of the third year of study**.

MUSC 4599 is an independent project: The student undertakes an independent project, under the supervision of one or more members of the full-time faculty. In these cases, a sample of work (specifics below) must be included in the application by March 1 of the third year of study. The final grade is based on 50% final project and 50% work throughout the term (with the exception of the half recital & paper option: see 2b below), and a minimum GPA of 2.7 (B-) is required to graduate.

This project might take one of several forms. Suggested options are described below.

Students must submit a written progress report to their supervising instructor(s) by November 15 of the fourth year of study. Students working under the joint supervision of two faculty members (including an applied area instructor in the cases of students planning a half recital & lecture) must have a joint meeting with both supervisors for approval of progress.

Suggested Projects:

- a. **A half recital & paper.** For this option, students must audition and submit a paper as a sample of their writing skills to gain approval, along with the Graduation Project form. This sample paper can be an existing assignment from another class. Auditions are normally conducted the day after the end of classes in April. Students must obtain the approval of both the paper supervisor and the audition committee to proceed with this option.

The final paper will be 12-15 pages in length on a topic approved by the supervisor. In addition to working with their Applied Study teachers to prepare the half recital, students will also meet biweekly (minimum) with an academic faculty member to develop their paper. The student will submit two copies of the final paper on April 1 of the Fourth Year, to be evaluated by the supervisor and a second reader. The Director of the Fountain School of Performing Arts will select the second reader based on the supervisor's recommendation on the application form. The recital will consist of 30-45 minutes of music, which need not be related to the topic of the paper. **The final mark is based on 25% final paper, 25% work on paper throughout the year, and 50% performance.**

- b. **A lecture/demonstration**, in which a thoughtful, original, and well-researched argument is enhanced through the demonstration of relevant musical passages. Students pursuing this option must submit a paper as a sample of their writing skills by March 1 of their third year to obtain approval, along with the Graduation Project form. This sample paper can be an existing assignment from another class. The lecture/demonstration should be approximately 45 minutes in length, including 10-15 (maximum) minutes of music; the student is expected to consult with his/her applied instructor in selecting appropriate repertoire. In addition to working regularly with their Applied Study teachers, students will meet biweekly (minimum) with an academic faculty member to develop their lecture.
- c. **An arrangement & accompanying report.** For this option, students must submit a sample arrangement by March 1 of the third year of study along with the Graduation Project form. The sample arrangement can be an existing Orchestration assignment. The student is responsible for finding a Fountain School of Performing Arts ensemble willing to perform the arrangement, submitting the arrangement and all parts to ensemble director on a date specified by the ensemble director, attending rehearsals and making changes as needed. The accompanying report will analyze the process (challenges encountered, changes made, etc.) The student will

submit three copies of the arrangement and report for evaluation by the ensemble director and supervisor as well as by a third evaluator selected by the Chair on the recommendation of the ensemble director and the supervisor.

- d. **Program notes** of 2-3 pages each for 6 recitals, concerts, or other Fountain School productions. Students pursuing this option must submit a paper as a sample of their writing skills by March 1 of their third year to obtain approval, along with the Graduation Project form. This sample paper can be an existing assignment from another class. The student is responsible for:

- gaining the approval of the performers/directors;
- finding a supervisor among the full-time faculty;
- carrying out independent research on the music to be performed;
- preparing and formatting the notes to meet deadlines and specifications set by the Productions staff;
- revising the notes according to the supervisor's recommendations.

All the published notes together constitute the final project, collectively worth 50% of the grade.

- e. **Creative project in a popular music genre.** Student must either produce (and perform in) a 60-minute live performance OR submit a 30-minute professional-level recording OR submit a 20-minute professional-level artistic video recording. Students pursuing this option must submit a 250-word description of the proposed project and a 5 to 10-minute sample recording by March 1 of their third year to obtain approval, along with the Graduation Project form.