

UBC School of Music
DMA Applicants' Zoom Interview in 2025:
Guide for Applicants
(rev. Jan 24, 2025)

The interview will be chaired by Dr. Hedy Law, Acting Director or Dr. David Fung, Associate Director Graduate, of the UBC School of Music. One of them will begin each interview by introducing the two interviewers and end the interview with standard closing remarks. Each interview will last 30 minutes. One academic faculty member and one performance faculty member who does not represent the applicant's division will ask the following questions. Note that the following interview questions are sample questions, which may not be the ones used in the interview. After receiving this list of questions, each applicant will have at least a week to prepare for the interview. The interviewers may modify the questions according to the applicant's specialization.

Sample Interview Questions

1. Choosing any composer you like, compare their compositional output for your instrument with their contributions to another genre such as orchestral, chamber, or operatic repertoire.
2. Research is often performed on pairs of composers who display clear intersections. Examples include Ravel and Debussy, Chopin and Liszt, Price and Bonds, and Stravinsky and Schoenberg. Compare the output of a significant composer pair of your choosing.
3. Please trace the development of one musical genre (e.g., opera, sonata, string quartet, song cycle, suite, cantata, symphony, concerto) from its incipience until now. Please discuss one significant work from at least three periods and note the work's important features.
4. How can a composer express his/her life and personal identity in music? Is this ambition even desirable? Why or why not? Compare and contrast several examples.
5. **Tonal theory sample question:** Please describe one typical common-practice harmonic sequence and describe where or why that harmonic sequence might be used in a piece of tonal music.
6. **Post-tonal theory sample question:** Please spell a whole-tone scale beginning on G, and name at least one composer known for using whole-tone scales in their compositions.
7. **Common-practice formal structures:** Please describe the formal structure of a first-movement or sonata form.
8. If you had a chance to create your dream recital program, how would you envision it and what elements would you include?
9. What kinds of repertoire are you interested in exploring, including music transmitted in the oral tradition and music outside the Western art music tradition, and why do you think these repertoires are valuable for your research?
10. You have been invited to contribute as a lecturer on a concert series featuring the work of a composer of your choosing. Which scholarly resources, musical works, primary sources, recordings, and individuals would you consult and why? What are your pedagogical goals? What ideas and experiences do you want your audience to reflect upon as they contemplate your chosen composer's life and work?
11. How would a DMA degree fit in your long-term career goals?