



May 11, 2020

Dear Spartan,

Welcome to the College of Music! As Director of Career Services and Music Entrepreneurship, I am excited to have you join our graduate program and I look forward to meeting you this summer and fall.

As a Michigan State University graduate student, your professional development starts the moment you arrive on campus. Although our graduates pursue a diverse array of paths after completing their degrees, music graduates often benefit from developing an entrepreneurial mindset. What is an entrepreneurial mindset? It's a way of being focused on opportunities and needs in your field, allowing you to cultivate new career opportunities and engage new communities, audiences, and perspectives. It's also about being career-ready: having your materials polished and knowing what the job market and industry looks like.

The [Running Start program](#) is here to support your development of this entrepreneurial mindset through programming, advising, and curriculum, and support you in the acquisition of skills that will complement your musical study.

Below are five opportunities for you to maximize your career readiness in your graduate degree:

1. [Career advising](#): A graduate degree in music can open up different professional options. Have you thought about what success looks like for you, and what additional knowledge, skills, or experiences you will need to maximize your success in your desired career path(s)?
  - a. [Make an appointment](#) with me this summer or early fall to develop a plan for your professional development (in consultation with your faculty mentors), create your own business plan, and/or review (or create) professional materials.
  - b. Undecided on your goals after graduate school? Make appointments with both our [graduate academic advisor](#), Susan Hoekstra, and myself to coordinate your academic coursework and career development.
2. [Running Start workshop series](#): During the year, Running Start offers workshops with guest artists and experts who provide fresh perspectives and training on entrepreneurial skills you may need in your career, as well as knowledge about the job market. Stay up-to-date on our events by following Running Start on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#). We also share news of other College of Music visiting artists. There are many chances to work with these guest experts—last semester alone, there were over 25 visiting artists with national and international reputations at the College of Music.
3. [Coursework](#): The [Graduate Certificate in Music Career Development](#) is designed for graduate students to explore the relationship between your creative practices and your business practices to prepare you to enter the US arts ecosystem. If you would like to explore courses in entrepreneurship or career development but are not sure about the certificate, explore MUS496, MUS491, MUS866, and MUS893.

4. [Running Start Pitch Competition](#): Graduate school is a great time to channel your creativity into an entrepreneurial endeavor. [Read about recent Running Start Competition winners](#), and start thinking about starting a project, ensemble, initiative, or business of your own.
5. [Experiential Learning](#): Gaining experience in your field can be a critical part of setting yourself up for success after graduation. Begin exploring some of our performance, teaching, and internship opportunities available to you as a graduate student, such as the [Greater Lansing Community Concert Series](#), the [Educational Engagement Residency](#), [Musical Memories Residency](#), or the [Certificate in College Teaching](#). Make an advising appointment to discuss other ways of gaining experience, such as competitions, conferences, or part-time work. You can also [browse information about music festivals, internships, jobs and more](#) on our website.
6. [PhD Career Services](#): In addition to Running Start, the Graduate School provides career support to doctoral students through [PhD Career Services](#). Take advantage of their multiple resources, workshops, and on-campus events to gain a cross-disciplinary view of career paths within and outside of academia.

We are living in a dynamic environment for developing new opportunities in the arts, and I am excited to help you plan how to translate your passion into your profession. To get inspired and see how some of our MSU alumni have developed careers as performers, educators, composers, administrators, and entrepreneurs, check out our weekly Thursday alumni spotlights on social media, or our highlighted [Running Start Spotlight interviews](#).

I have included my contact information below; don't hesitate to reach out if I can be of assistance. Enjoy the rest of your summer; I will see you soon!

All the best,

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