Keyboard Department
Graduate Audition Requirements

Prescreening:

All Keyboard applicants are required to submit an audio recording for prescreening purposes in order to receive an invitation to a live audition. It is not required that the format be a professional or studio recording, but the sound quality must be as good as possible.

Required materials for prescreening:

Applicants must submit recordings of two contrasting pieces that demonstrate performance ability. Any style of music is acceptable but keep in mind it should be a strong representation of the applicant’s ability, and should support the contemporary nature of the program.

Applicants should submit two musical samples to their admissions representative. Email containing digital audio files is preferred (mp3, mp4, aac, etc.), but mailed CDs will also be accepted. Individual pieces should not exceed a file size of 10 MB. 

Audition:

Applicants who pass the prescreening portion of the audition will be invited for a live audition. All auditions are approximately 30-60 minutes in length. Each applicant to the Master of Music in Performance program with a major in Keyboard/Piano will be required to present the following elements at an audition.

Required materials for live auditions:

1. Three selections in contrasting styles with a rhythm section composed of graduate faculty. Applicants must provide charts/lead sheets for Bass and Drums. Styles presented can include Pop, New Age, Rock, Blues, Jazz, Latin (Samba, Mambo, Bossa Nova, Songo, or 6/8 Afro-Cuban grooves), and Funk or R&B styles. Applicants must demonstrate style-appropriate comping and improvised solos on each piece. Solo length only needs to be enough to demonstrate applicant’s skill. Applicants have the option to use a play-along backing track, only with prior approval from the Audition Committee.

2. One piece demonstrating ability in Classical piano performance.
3. One additional solo piece, in any style, which showcases the applicant’s musical strengths.

4. All music and charts must be received a minimum of two weeks before the audition date, and should be sent to: Sean.Turner@mcnallysmith.edu.

5. The applicant can expect two sight playing examples, one in traditional grand staff and the other from a lead sheet/chord chart.