



MUSIC AND MIND LAB



Background Information

Application for participation

Please email a one- to two-page statement of interest to Dr. Miksza (pmiksza@indiana.edu) and Dr. Goldman (angoldm@iu.edu). In your letter, describe your interest in music psychology, how it intersects with your studies at Indiana University, and your willingness to commit time to participation in the music and mind lab. Also describe any special skills or prior research experience that speaks to your qualifications. Last, include a brief synopsis of the particular research questions you would like to pursue.

Summary

The members of this laboratory will collaborate to pursue psychological investigations of music and mind. We plan to pursue four research projects per school year, on average. Lab members will meet once per week at a mutually agreeable time and should expect to devote 3 to 5 hours per week to ongoing research. It is expected that lab research projects will result in presentations at professional conferences and symposia as well as publications in peer reviewed research journals.

Ongoing research topics of interest *(neither a definitive nor exclusive list)*

Music perception and cognition

Psychological dimensions of music teaching and learning

Musical expertise

Musical skill acquisition and practicing

Self-regulated learning

Emotion and music

Motivation for music learning

Roles

Members can participate as *investigators* or *contributors*. Investigators will typically come to the lab with some prior experience in empirical research. Investigators are expected to co-design, propose, and lead projects. Contributors will primarily serve support roles. Contributors are expected to participate in weekly meetings and discussions, and they will help to manage projects and collect data. Through their participation, contributors can gain the experience necessary to be investigators in future projects.

Desirable Characteristics of Lab Members

#0 Prerequisites

- **Intellectual curiosity and enthusiasm.** A driving desire to learn something new about music and musical experience. A disposition towards asking questions, probing for causes and connections, and presenting challenging ideas. Most importantly, the willingness to invest the time and energy necessary for seeking insight.
- **Interpersonal skills.** All lab activities will be collaborative activities. Members must be willing and able to participate in a variety of roles. Members will be called upon to contribute their own original ideas and evaluate the ideas of others critically and respectfully. Members will also be asked to help, follow, advise, and lead at various times. Consequently, communication skills and an awareness of how you can interact with others effectively are essential. Assets that effective collaborators have include at least the following: clarity and patience in verbal communication, listening ability, negotiation and problem solving skills, manners, well-tempered assertiveness, and the ability to make decisions.
- **Sense of humor.** Research can be challenging. It would be ideal if, despite the challenges, it was also fun. Participants who take their work seriously and work hard (see below) but can also find a bright side to a situation will be appreciated.

#1 Personal effectiveness

Personal effectiveness is extremely important, and not just in grad school. It's shorthand for being a person who gets stuff done. Personally effective people:

- **Get it done on time.** Personally effective people work on final projects *prior* to the night before they're due, so that even if their computer crashes and there is a family emergency and they get the flu, the project is still in, on time. Even if they are procrastinators and start the night before and everything goes wrong, the project is STILL in on time, because they are **goal-oriented, not excuse-oriented**. It may not be to the standard they wanted, but it gets finished. They meet their responsibility. Of course, everyone needs a break once in a while. But do you ask for extensions, or come to meetings with your contribution unfinished, or send emails that you just 'won't be able to make it today' on a weekly basis? Termly basis? Yearly? Or Never? The excuse is largely irrelevant—the point of personal effectiveness is that **you work around problems and not explain why it's not your fault you failed to achieve**.
- **Take the next steps without needing to be asked.** Don't be satisfied with only having achieved the step you said you would by the meeting or deadline. If you finish a step early, work out (or find out) what the next step is and do it. Because most steps

take longer than expected, you will fall behind if you don't make up time when you can.

- **Try logical problem-solving steps BEFORE contacting Dr. Miksza and Dr. Goldman.** Ask around the lab to see if anyone has had this problem before. Search for information via peers outside the lab and other resources (e.g., Google). At least show that you've tried to figure it out yourself.

#2 Disciplinary Knowledge and familiarity with a literature base

- Those who are genuinely interested in participating in the lab should *read scientific papers on their topics of interest* (not just blogs and news articles). Read previous literature pertaining to the topics that are ongoing in the lab work as well. Read enough material that you are familiar with the scope and style of the typical research paradigms related to your topic of interest (e.g., prominent authors, leading theories, prototypical experimental designs, measures). People who follow up their interest with scholarly action are those who will contribute the most to the lab's work. It is highly advisable that you enroll in at least one of the courses offered by Dr. Miksza and/or Dr. Goldman.

#3 Methodological design and analysis skills

- Previous training in research methods is helpful. Much training can be acquired "on the job." However, prior knowledge or at least a dedication to acquire knowledge of measurement principles, data collection methods, and data analysis methods will be essential. The music education department offers several courses for masters and doctoral students on research design.

*Portions of these guidelines have been adapted from Jessica Grahn's lab membership criteria:
<http://www.jessicagrahn.com/studenttraits.html>