V.C. Supplemental Document:
Regarding Part-Time Student Applicants
and Mentorship of Awardees

Context:

This year, one of our applicants was a part-time student, who is also working paraprofessionally as a librarian. We did not ultimately select this student as one of the recipients of the award, but their application did raise the question: should we update existing language so that we explicitly state that part-time students are encouraged/welcome to apply?

Our decisions:

Our committee had a discussion regarding this, and we decided on a number of things.

I. First, we definitely want to change the language on the application website to make it clear that part-time students are welcome and encouraged to apply. We would like to ask them to ensure they take at least one class a semester (which I believe is a requirement across the board at most colleges and universities); essentially, we’d like the students to confirm that they are meeting the minimum requirements for their college or university to be registered as a part-time student.

II. We also want to ask all applicants to write their expected graduation date, regardless of whether they are part-time or full-time, in their application materials (probably the CV). This stems from a longer conversation about how we want to make sure students who are awarded this scholarship don’t disappear or “take the money and run”. We’d like to keep track of these students to ensure that they don’t slip through the cracks, even after receiving this award, and feel like they don’t have mentors to turn to, or decide to pursue a different profession, as the whole purpose of this scholarship is to cultivate more future music librarians. We also know that especially because of COVID, it was very easy to feel isolated, so we want to be much more committed to checking in frequently with these students (even after their stated graduation date), to make sure they have the resources and tools they need to enter the profession.

III. Relating to point II, we want to be more intentional and involved with mentoring awardees, and maintaining contact with these individuals, even years after they are awarded this scholarship. To do this, we’re going to create a list of past awardees, with contact info, college/uni affiliation, and expected graduation date. We, and future committee members as well, will then schedule times, annually, to reach out to these individuals in order to check in, see how they’re doing, offer any advice we can give, and ensure these people are continuing to
receive the support they need in this career field. We hope that this can also help with retention of BIPOC folks in our organization and profession!