

2020 Berklee Exit Survey | Results Summary

The infographic below highlights results from Berklee's annual exit survey, which was administered to recent Berklee College of Music, Boston Conservatory at Berklee, Berklee Valencia, and Berklee Online graduates. Data reflects respondents who graduated between Summer 2019 and Summer 2020. Due to the transition to remote learning, this year's survey was administered in fall 2020 instead of cap and gown pickup.

RESPONDENTS

376
graduates

View a dashboard of results by learning environment and level: <http://bit.ly/2020berkleeexitsurvey>

KEY FINDINGS

1. **83% of graduates said COVID-19 impacted their plans after Berklee.** Many are struggling to find employment in performance and entertainment due to the pandemic.
2. **Most satisfaction scores have increased from last year.** 2019-2020 graduates are more satisfied with their professors, program of study, activities and events, and overall experience than 2018-2019 graduates.
3. **This year's graduates report being less satisfied with their preparation for plans after graduation** than in 2019. This is likely due to the impact of COVID-19 on the performance industry, which was a common theme in open-ended comments.
4. Common themes from student comments included favorable experiences with faculty and classmates, and recommendations related to career preparation and curriculum.

SATISFACTION WITH EXPERIENCES AT BERKLEE

Percent of respondents who were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the following at Berklee.

	2018	2019	2020
Professors	86%	86%	92%
Program of study	83%	87%	91%
Overall experience	82%	84%	85%
Service from faculty and staff	-	-	85%
Activities and events	70%	67%	71%
Sense of belonging and community experienced	-	-	67%
Preparation for plans after graduation	-	77%	60%
Likelihood to recommend Berklee to others	79%	81%	82%

PLANS AFTER BERKLEE

Primary activity after graduation

Activity	%
Self-employed/freelancer	33%
Employed	30%
Seeking employment	25%
Continuing education	7%
Internship	3%
Other	2%

Of the 66% of respondents who indicated they were employed, self-employed, or in an internship...

Industry	%
Education (including music education)	21%
Recording industry	17%
Live Music	10%
Film, video, television	9%
Music and audio tools	7%
Technology	6%
Business Services	5%
Artist services	4%
Hospitality or Service	4%
Video Games	4%
Theater	2%
All other industries were under 2%	

80%

of those employed, self-employed, or in an internship are related to the entertainment industry.

Of those continuing their education...

Level of education pursued	%
Master's Degree	57%
Doctoral Degree	17%
Other Degree/Certificate	17%
Bachelor's Degree	9%

Most common schools include: Boston Conservatory at Berklee (3 graduates), Berklee Online (3), and Berklee Valencia (2). For a list of all schools and programs, please see page 6.

CAREER CENTER

76%

of those who attended Career Center activities were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with those activities.

COVID IMPACT ON PLANS AFTER BERKLEE

83%

said the **COVID-19 pandemic impacted their plans after graduation.** For more details including open ended comments, see page 2.

STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

Of students who participated in on-campus student employment...

93%

were satisfied with their student employment experience.

83%

feel their student employment experience provided them with skills they can use in their future career.

MOST COMMON LOCATIONS AFTER BERKLEE

Country: United States (84%), Spain (4%), and the United Kingdom (1%).

State: California (26%), Massachusetts (21%), New York (13%), Texas (6%), Tennessee (3%).

271 graduates responded to the open ended question, "How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted your plans after graduation?"

Common Themes	%
Career/Job Opportunities	55%
Live Performances	31%
Relocation	24%
Innovation/Adaptation	8%
Education	7%
Networking Opportunities	6%
Visa	6%
In-person Teaching	5%
Finance	3%
General	3%
Berklee Experience	2%
Travel Restrictions	1%
Motivation	1%

Note: Comments may be coded with multiple themes.

Some graduates shared ways they are adapting and innovating amid this global crisis.

"I planned to launch my project recording studio in March but the pandemic slowed my business way down. I was still able to gain a lot of potential customers through word of mouth. Thanks to the education I received at Berklee I barely have to advertise my services."

"I was planning on moving to Miami and working there, but COVID was taken me back home. But that has also led to an opportunity to start my own LLC and work on virtual audio visual productions will universities, high schools and non profits producing virtual concerts. That would never have happened had it not been for COVID."

"I lost concerts, commissions, and projects. But I picked up some consulting and other other work. Let's call it improvising."

"I studied performance, so not much of that happening now. I've successfully transitioned into more of a recording role, doing remote session work, producing other artist and releasing my own music independently."

"I was intending on opening a studio but now had to pivot to online content creation in the meantime."

"I was going to release a record and go on tour, but my sessions to finish the album had to get canceled, and the tour itself did as well. Instead I taught a camp and have done a few shows when I can. This has led me to work in the ski industry for the winter instead of music, but hopefully will slowly be able to tie music in as COVID settles down."

KEY FINDINGS

A majority of graduates shared their challenges in finding employment, or losing employment opportunities due to the pandemic.

"I originally planned on being a full time freelance music producer but instead stuck with my more stable employment."

"I lost everything and my job offers and had to relocate. Now I'm broke but I'll work my way up again."

"I was going to move cities and take on new clients, I was negotiating a deal to be the music director of an international tour, and I was able to safely meet with at risk clients. All of that fell through."

"I didn't get the job I wanted since they were not hiring anymore until things got back to normal. I had to move and lost many of my [lined up] gigs."

"I had a job lined up in Miami and sadly it didn't work out because of COVID."

"I was able to get an internship from May-Sept, where I did social media for a congressional campaign. Since the internship, I'm struggling to find another internship or job as I applied to a couple but got denied."

"It has left me unemployed and negatively impacted my musical plans such as shows/music releases. It is extremely hard for me to find a stable job in the music industry because of this."

"Had to pivot to a different industry because the pandemic made jobs in the music industry widely unavailable."

Graduates who were relying on live performance opportunities were especially impacted.

"As a freelancing live musician, I cannot play any gigs unless they are virtual and with members of my household, which severely limits my gigging options. Besides recording sessions and the occasional virtual gig, my music career is basically on hold."

"There is no live theatre. Agents are not looking to sign new talent. I have to pursue live performance fully online."

"Theaters are closed and therefore I don't have a place to actively seek work during this time."

"As someone who preforms on the stage, there is currently no work for me"

"I got concerts, gigs, my band tour, and album recordings cancelled. I have to use more than half of my savings to pay for rent for 5 months."

"All jobs that I had been looking forward to were shut down because I was looking to work in live music industry as a live sound engineer or lighting engineer."

Prior to the pandemic, many graduates said they had plans to move to new cities to pursue career opportunities. The pandemic forced them to stay home. Students on international visas had many challenges.

"I moved to an "in between" city for cheaper rent to wait out the pandemic before moving to LA. I also moved from mostly performing gigs to almost exclusively teaching and writing gigs."

"As an international student I still don't know if I will be able to get an artist visa after this year of OPT..."

"Intended to stay in the US, but the lack of paid jobs in the music industry at the lower level makes it very challenging to do so. The states also has a ton of unpaid internships, but I can't pay rent with that. Covid-19 made it even more difficult and Trump's laws on immigrant Visas requiring much higher salaries to obtain makes it impossible for anyone in the arts sector."

"I was working with Yamaha during my OPT, but since the pandemic, I was unable to secure a job that would support my STEM extension for another 2 years in the US. Now I have to travel back to Thailand but I will continue teaching."

"I was planning on moving to LA and working and gigging there, but instead I've been with my family in Utah and been working mostly through remote work. But I've been lucky to find good work that I enjoy. If anything, COVID has shown how some aspects of work in music can survive in an entirely remote environment."

"My move to Nashville has been postponed. My performances have been canceled. I have mountains of debt and less of a chance of landing a well-paying job to pay it off than ever."

"Instead of moving to another city to launch my career, audition, and create, I moved back home with parents in the Bay Area. I am fortunate to be working two dance teaching jobs with the time to continue my choreography and creation on the side freelance. I am teaching on zoom to high schoolers, and outdoors for young ballerinas which would have been unimaginable a year ago, but I have now adapted well."

2020 Berklee Exit Survey | Results by Demographics

The page below summarizes findings from the exit survey based on respondent demographic, as well as additional equity related questions. Note that sample sizes are small for some demographic groups.

SATISFACTION WITH EXPERIENCES AT BERKLEE

In general, Graduates of Color are more likely to report satisfaction with their professors, program of study, activities and events, and overall experience, and recommend Berklee than White graduates. International graduates are more likely to recommend Berklee than domestic graduates.

	Overall	Female	Male	Am. Indian or Alask. Native	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic or Latinx	White	Domestic	International
Total Respondents	376	157	218	5	25	31	40	223	283	93
Percent "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with...										
Professors	92%	92%	92%	100%	95%	96%	97%	92%	93%	89%
Program of study	91%	90%	91%	100%	91%	96%	92%	91%	92%	87%
Overall experience	85%	84%	86%	100%	95%	93%	84%	83%	84%	89%
Service from faculty and staff	85%	85%	86%	100%	86%	82%	89%	82%	83%	92%
Activities and events	71%	72%	70%	100%	73%	86%	79%	68%	69%	76%
Sense of belonging and community experienced	67%	69%	66%	100%	73%	68%	76%	65%	66%	68%
Preparation for plans after graduation	60%	56%	62%	60%	64%	61%	68%	61%	61%	55%
Percent "likely" or "extremely likely" to recommend Berklee to others	82%	81%	83%	100%	91%	89%	84%	79%	79%	90%

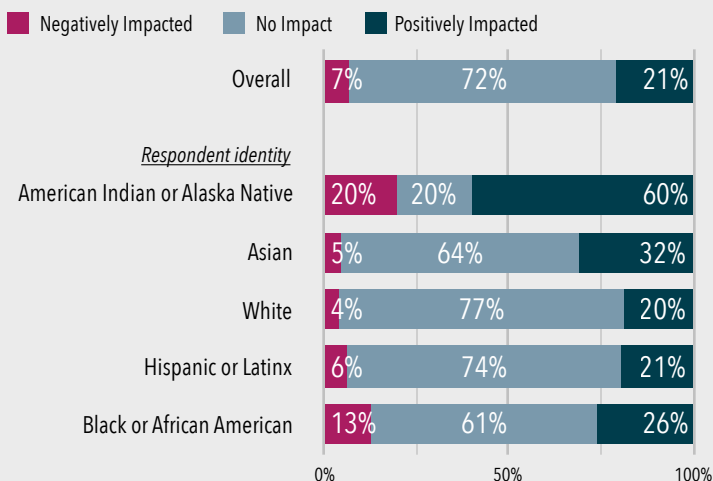
Race and ethnicity data in this section includes each race or ethnicity a student indicated on their Berklee application. If a student selects more than one race or ethnicity, they will be counted in each category. This also includes international students who select a race or ethnicity. This is different than the standard IPEDS definition.

HOW DO GRADUATES FEEL THEIR EXPERIENCE AT BERKLEE WAS IMPACTED BECAUSE OF THEIR IDENTITIES?

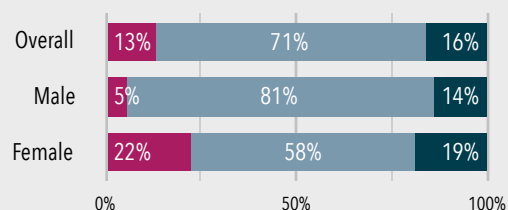
When asked if graduates felt their experience at Berklee was impacted by their identities, gender identity and immigration status had the most considerable differences, followed by racial and ethnic identity.

1. While only seven percent of Berklee graduates found their experience negatively impacted because of their racial and/or ethnic identity, graduates who identify as Black or African American were three times as likely than White graduates to feel that way. In addition, Black or African American graduates were more likely to say their Berklee experience was positively impacted by their racial and/or ethnic identity than White graduates.
2. Female-identifying graduates were four times more likely than male-identifying graduates to feel their experience at Berklee was negatively impacted by their gender or gender identity.
3. 27% of international graduates felt their immigration status negatively impacted their experience at Berklee. Less than 1% of domestic students felt this way. International graduates were also twice as likely as domestic graduates to feel their immigration status positively impacted their Berklee experience.

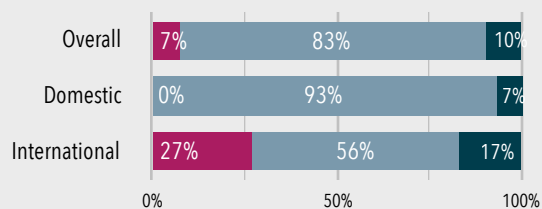
Do you feel your experience at Berklee was impacted because of your racial and/or ethnic identity?



...because of your gender or gender identity?



...because of your immigration status?



KEY FINDINGS

Many graduates shared highlights about their time at Berklee, especially their experiences with their faculty and classmates.

"My professors and classmates feel like family. I still reach out to my professors about questions, and they are always happy to help."

"I thought the international community present at Berklee was a very warm and welcoming one."

"The professors were absolutely top-notch; all with their own styles and areas of expertise. The environment was positive and healthy for creative minds. I'm super grateful to have made some seemingly life-long connections..."

"It would have been nice to have some events (maybe during orientation week or in the first semester) that take students around the city for cultural aspects. For students who live out of campus need some time to bond with friends in the first semester..."

"The American Roots music program fosters a deep sense of community among students and teachers alike."

"Berklee made me feel like I was at home. I met my best friends and had experiences I will never forget."

Graduates indicated both curricular satisfaction and dissatisfaction, and some had suggestions for curricular improvements.

"Music business courses would definitely help in the performance major. Learning about signing contracts, legal aspects, correct salaries and what to charge for recordings, performances, teaching, etc. Learning about how to become a corporation and taxes. All these skills are vital as a musician..."

"The harmony and ear training components, while challenging for me, forever changed my "fluency" in music and as a musician."

"Learning the skills of programming, VR/XR/AR, motion capture, and speaking to professionals is an unparalleled experience that not only benefits the students enormously, but puts Boco at Berklee on the map for creatively driven artists post-grad."

"I feel I would have gotten much more out of the program had the mixing class come before the production classes. I also found the vocal production class to repeat a lot of the same things that were covered in the earlier production classes. This issue of repeated information or teachers not seeming to know what was going on in the other classes..."

"I would've liked to see more cross-major collaboration within classes, much like you do once you're out in the industry nowadays."

"...I'd recommend some new age classes like marketing classes and branding and musicians in the social media era type stuff."

Experiences with diversity, equity, and inclusion varied based on race, ethnicity, and gender, but also of those who were provisionally accepted or were not offered the same opportunities as others.

"As a female music professional myself, I would invite Berklee to forge the change necessary in shifting the gender and racial imbalance in the music industry rather than have a faculty roster that reflects the current inequities."

"Berklee has an amazingly diverse student population, something that I believe gives it great strength. However, integration between these groups is not facilitated nearly well enough by the university. It was quite shocking to me to see just how ethnically separated peer groups were at Berklee."

"The "provisional acceptance" really took away from my experience at Berklee. Not only was the first semester stressful, I didn't feel like a real member of the community until my second semester. I never got to feel the gratification of receiving a true, unconditional acceptance letter from Berklee, and that had a deeper impact on how much I felt welcomed at Berklee."

"As a Black student, I felt that referring the Black music that we learned about as Black music was frowned upon, which I noticed didn't happen with other cultures' musics. I understand that there are programs in place to help Berklee progress in many ways, but many of my experiences of discomfort did either involve race or lack of care from [Berklee]. I strongly believe that until Berklee makes more of an effort to address the fact that we study music built on Black pain and suffering (and teach that history in the classrooms), Black students will continue to feel out of place."

"I personally enjoyed many of the opportunities that Berklee gave me. But while I was there, I could see that many of the opportunities I was given were not also given to others."

"I feel Berklee has favoritisms towards some students what appear all the time everywhere, where I consider the institution should give equal opportunities to all students instead of selecting always the same to perform/host/other."

Graduates shared recommendations related to career preparation, including interest in opportunities to learn skills needed to be successful freelancers.

"I felt very prepared for my job search when it came to cover letters, my resume, and interviews, but a I was uncertain regarding salary expectations and negotiations... More discussions on salaries, benefits, and how to negotiate would've been really great, especially for music business students... I think that students entering the freelance jobs market should learn about filing taxes as an independent contractor."

"I believe Berklee can do better in including the Boston Conservatory side in terms of internship opportunities. I know it is still fairly new in the merger, but I felt I needed to dig around a bit more to find the internship opportunities, and then ones that relate to me as a performer."

"I wish Career Center would also organize showcases for representatives like other schools for the students that want to be artists, the same way they organize the Internship Expo and Career Jam that help you with the more industry based jobs."

"...I was not prepared for real-life situations including how to get gigs, how to negotiate contracts, how to be entrepreneurial in the music business, how to make contacts in a new city, etc. These are important secondary functions all musicians need to know and should be taught."

148 graduates responded to the open ended question, **"Is there anything else you would like to add about your experience at Berklee that was not already asked in this survey?"**

Common Themes	%
Overall Satisfaction	31%
Curriculum	30%
Faculty/Staff	18%
Community/Environment	14%
Career Preparation	12%
Experience	11%
Diversity and Inclusion	11%
Career/Job Opportunities	6%
Resources/Facilities	6%
Finance-Tuition/Financial aid	5%
Opportunities	4%
Finance-Debt	3%
Misc	3%
Administration	2%
Official Communication	2%
Merger	1%
COVID-19	1%
Mentorship	1%

Note: Comments may be coded with multiple themes.

2020 Berklee Exit Survey | Jobs and Employers

The following are a list of job titles and employers of those who listed their primary activity after graduation as employed.

Employer	Job title
Berklee College of Music Graduates	
Arthouse Entertainment	A&R / Creative Coordinator
Ascendance Inner World Arts	Dance Teacher
Atria Senior Living	Life Guidance Program Specialist
Attitude City Music	Composer's Assistant
Berklee College of Music	Client Service Associate
Berklee College of Music	Temp. Asst. Admissions Comms. Coordinator
Blackbird Studio	Studio Intern
Bleeding Fingers Music Inc.	Assistant Composer
Brooklyn Conservatory of Music	Music Therapist
CannaSafe	Lab Assistant
Creative Arts	Business Manager
Crust Wood Fired Pizza	Server/Bartender
Darkroom	Label coordinator
Double Bar Music	Guitar Instructor/Social Media Manager
Douglass Recording	Intern
Drew Dixon	Assistant PA, Assistant A&R
Employer Not Listed	Composer, Orchestrator, Score Prep, Teacher
Eun Kyeong Jeong	Assistant Engineer
Groovy Baby Music	Canta y Baila Teacher
Guitar Center	Instructor
Herban Market	Shift leader/Manager
High Point Academy	Piano Teacher
Igloo Music	General Assistant
Interscope Records	Assistant Engineer/Technician
JAK Entertainment	Marketing Assistant / A&R
Jeff Russo	Technical Consultant/Composer's Assistant
Jun-Min Liao	Assistant
Larrabee Studios	General Assistant
LiveWire Sound and Image	Audio/Visual Technician
Narrator	Audio Engineer
Nathan Whitehead	Assistant
Nick South	Intern
Omnian Music Group	Social Media Manager
Positive Grid	Tech Support
Relix Magazine	Editorial Intern
Roads to Success	Instructor
S10 Entertainment	A&R
Saddleback Church	Campus Worship Leader
Saint Paul Advertising Agency	Composer
School of Rock	Instructor
Seattle Public Schools	Special Education Teacher
Sing Explore Create Llc	Music Therapist
Slone's Valley Village	Server
St. Mary's Catholic School	Music Teacher
State of California	Music Substitute Teacher
T-Mobile	Coach, Business Sales Support
Taste Bakery and Cafe	Cafe Manager
The Kurland Agency	Domestic Contract Manager / Marketing
TriWire Engineering Solutions	Cable Technician
Virtual Service Operations	Data Analyst
Warby Parker	Position Not Listed
We Are: The Guard / Brill Building	A&R / General Manager
Worcester Public Schools	K-6 general music teacher
XR Terra	VR Instructor
Yobe Inc.	Audio Specialist

Employer	Job title
Berklee Online Graduates	
Applied Fundamentals Consulting	Analyst
Chicago Public Schools	Music Teacher
Cravath, Swaine & Moore LLP	Lead operator
DHL	Sorter
El Shaddai Congregation	Executive Pastor
Grace Christian Academy	Music Teacher
Grover Gaming	Composer/Sound Designer
GSA	Program Manager
Microsoft	Program Manager
Music Quarters; NC Music Center; First Baptist Church of Gastonia	Piano Teacher; Organist/Pianist
Red Giant Rights Group	Music Licensing & Business Development Intern
Spirit Sound & Light, LLC	Engineer
Target	Food Expert
United States Air Force	Bandsman
United States Air Force	Cloud Specialist
US Department of Defense	Quality Assurance Manager for Financial Management
Verizon	Equipment Engineer
Woodlands Church	Associate Music Director
Art Institute	Adjunct Professor
Collier High School	Audio Teacher
Fair Trade Services	National Promotion Manager
Foothill College	Adjunct Professor
Franklin Academy Charter Schools	Music and Music Technology Instructor
Montgomery County Community College	Instructor
University of Texas at Austin	Senior Audio Engineer
Visible Music College	Music Production Professor
Whitman College	Sr. Adjunct Assistant Professor of Music
Wlpwr / Bndwth Studios	In-house Producer/Engineer
Berklee Valencia Graduates	
Atli Örvarsson	Composer's Assistant
Bosse School of Music	Private Music Instructor
Employer Not Listed	Marketing Coordinator
Full Sail University	Career Development In Music Business
Guitar Center	Instructor
Jazeps Vitols Latvian Academy of Music	Docent
Sol Generation Records	Studio Operations Consultant
VMware	Costumer Service Rep
Westlake Recording Studios & Technical Services	Runner
Boston Conservatory at Berklee Graduates	
caraBdanza	Apprentice
Marin School of the Arts at Novato High School	Guest Artist and Lecturer
Milet	Receptionist
Santa Barbara School District	Theatre Assistant
Singapore Symphony Orchestra	Music Librarian
AnswerNet	Remote Call Agent
Berklee College of Music	Music Teacher
Boston Public Schools	Music Teacher
Conservatory of Salon de Provence (France)	Saxophone Assistant Professor
Employer Not Listed	Intern
Howard Hughes Medical Institute	Administrative Coordinator

2020 Berklee Exit Survey | Programs of Continuing Education

The following are a list of schools and programs students enrolled in after graduating from Berklee.

School	Level	Program
Berklee College of Music Graduates		
Boston Conservatory at Berklee	Master's Degree	M.M. in Marimba Performance
Berklee Boston	Master's Degree	M.M. in Contemporary Performance (Global Jazz Concentration)
Berklee Valencia	Master's Degree	M.M. in Contemporary Performance (Production Concentration)
Berklee Valencia	Master's Degree	M.M. in Music Production, Technology, and Innovation
Lesley University	Master's Degree	Masters of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling, Music Therapy Specialization
Loyola University New Orleans	Bachelor's Degree	Jazz Performance
Pepperdine Caruso School of Law	Doctoral Degree	Juris Doctorate
The Juilliard School	Master's Degree	Masters in Music
University of Florida	Doctoral Degree	Juris Doctorate
University of Southern California	Master's Degree	Screen Scoring
Berklee Online Graduates		
Berklee Online	Master's Degree	M.A. in Music Business
Berklee Online	Master's Degree	M.M. in Film Scoring
Berklee Online	Master's Degree	M.M. in Music Production
Bowdoin College	Bachelor's Degree	English and Music Performance
Saint Mary-of-the-Woods University	Other Degree/Certificate	Music Therapy Equivalency
Michigan State University College of Law	Doctoral Degree	Juris Doctorate
Boston Conservatory at Berklee Graduates		
Boston Conservatory at Berklee	Other Degree/Certificate	Graduate Performance Diploma
San Francisco Conservatory of Music	Master's Degree	Master of Music
Tufts University	Master's Degree	Masters in Composition
UMass Amherst	Other Degree/Certificate	Music Education Certificate
Boston Conservatory at Berklee	Other Degree/Certificate	Graduate Performance Diploma
Listaháskóli Islands	Master's Degree	New Audiences and Innovative Practices
University of Kentucky	Doctoral Degree	Doctoral of Musical Arts in Percussion Performance