

UNC Academic Studies in Music Graduate Handbook

The purpose of this handbook is to explain the curricular and administrative functions of the Academic Studies in Music Area, and to offer guidance on how best to succeed in academic coursework. It is not meant to replace anything in the UNC catalog, which is the authoritative document regarding graduation requirements.

Academic Studies in Music—Music History, Music Theory—are a required part of every graduate music degree offered at the University of Northern Colorado. The expectation of the Academic Studies Area is that students will graduate with a mastery of music history and theory appropriate to the level of their Masters or Doctoral degrees, in order to have the tools to pursue careers in teaching, performance, composition, conducting, and research; musical careers today most often consist of a mix of all these areas. These tools include style awareness and knowledge of musical language, the ability to study music on a deeper intellectual level and write persuasively about it, and a general mastery of the discipline in areas beyond execution. A professional approach to attendance, participation, and curricular mastery is required in all classes.

Graduate students need to be aware that, in many cases, a “C” is considered the lowest passing grade. While any grade above an “F” may be sufficient to be counted in unit totals for graduation, low grades on a transcript send a very negative message to potential employers.

I. Entrance Examinations

I.A. Music Theory. Entering graduate students in music are required to take placement examinations in music theory and aural skills (that is, ear training). This examination will determine whether you have retained enough undergraduate theory and aural skills to succeed in graduate-level music theory courses such as MUS 502 and MUS 503. If you do not demonstrate sufficient command of these skills, you must take MUS 401 and MUS 402, the graduate-level Music Theory and Aural Skills review courses, earning a grade of C or better, before you will be allowed to enroll in any graduate-level theory courses. While MUS 401 and MUS 402 count toward your semester credits, they will not count toward your degree.

I.B. Music History. On entrance, you will be required to take the Music History Advisory Examination, which will help to determine which graduate-level Music History courses will be most beneficial to your success in graduate study. Music History classes are differentiated by their approach: MUS 653 (*Vocal Literature and Styles*) and MUS 657 (*Instrumental Literature and Styles*) are survey- and skills-oriented courses, while the period-specific seminars (Medieval Seminar,

Romantic Seminar, etc.) tend to be more in depth and include a written research paper. Seminars on special topics in music history are also given periodically.

II. Academic Course Requirements

- II.A. Masters Degree.** Masters students are required to take a total of 6 credits of graduate-level courses (MUS 5xx or MUS 6xx) in Music History or Music Theory. Courses are determined in consultation with your advisor, but it is strongly suggested that you take at least 3 credits of Music History and 3 credits of Music Theory.
- II.B. Doctoral Degree.** Doctoral students decide on their course of study in consultation with their program advisors. While there are no specific requirements in Music History and Theory, your plan of study will be scrutinized by faculty representatives at your doctoral interview (see below), and the presence of appropriate academic courses on your plan will be expected. Because the Doctor of Arts degree requires a dissertation, doctoral students should expect to take some courses that include a written research paper—such as the Music History seminars—to work on their research and writing skills.

III. Plan of Study

At the end of the second semester of study, each Doctor of Arts student must attend a Doctoral Interview and present a Plan of Study to the music faculty. This document will list all the classes you will take as part of the degree coursework, and will in effect become your graduation checklist. The plan of study form should be filled out in consultation with your program advisor and Secondary Area advisor; it is your responsibility to ensure that all unit totals are correct and requirements met. The document may be emended during the Doctoral Interview.

IV. Secondary area.

- IV.A.** Each candidate for the Doctor of Arts in Music must complete the requirements for a secondary area of study in music. It is your responsibility to discuss the secondary area with your program advisor and with the faculty member with whom you would like to work. You are responsible for making arrangements with the faculty member, who must be an endorsed member of the Graduate Faculty, to serve in this capacity.

Possible secondary areas in academic subjects are music history, music theory, and composition. Work in the secondary area consists of 2 parts: courses in the area of study and a creative project.

IV.B. Courses.

The secondary area requires 10 semester hours of courses, chosen from the following lists, according to area. Specific courses to be taken must be approved by your secondary area advisor.

Music History:

- MUS 643: Medieval Seminar
- MUS 644: Renaissance Seminar
- MUS 645: Baroque Seminar
- MUS 646: Classical Seminar
- MUS 647: Romantic Seminar
- MUS 648: Seminar in Music Since 1900
- MUS 649: Music History Pedagogy
- [Special Topics courses are also appropriate]

Music Theory:

- MUS 501: 18th-Century Counterpoint
- MUS 502: Harmony and Form
- MUS 503: Harmony and Form II
- MUS 504: Music Theory Pedagogy
- MUS 505: 16th-Century Counterpoint
- MUS 603: Analytical Techniques
- MUS 604: Schenkerian Analysis

Composition:

- MUS 677: Individual Instruction in Composition
- MUS 501: 18th-Century Counterpoint
- MUS 502: Harmony and Form
- MUS 503: Harmony and Form II
- MUS 504: Music Theory Pedagogy
- MUS 505: 16th-Century Counterpoint
- MUS 603: Analytical Techniques

IV.C. Creative project.

In addition to courses, you must complete a creative project in the secondary area, in close consultation with the faculty member who is supervising your work.

Projects can vary according to the area, and the ideas of you and your supervising faculty member; projects can be (but are not limited to) compositions, written theses, research projects, etc.

Time Frame for Completion.

The Creative Project is to be completed before the Comprehensive Examinations, so that when the dissertation committee is made up, there will be no remaining outstanding work in the Music History, Music Theory, or Composition departments. A signature on the Oral Comprehensive form will not be given until

the Secondary Area project is satisfactorily completed and documented in your graduate file.

V. Doctoral Comprehensive Examinations.

V.A. The Doctoral Committee. It is your responsibility to assemble a doctoral committee that includes, besides the advisor, at least one music history faculty member, one music theory faculty member, and one faculty representative from outside the School of Music. You must speak individually with the faculty members you would like to participate on the committee, and they must be willing to serve. Potential faculty representatives may be identified through consultation with your advisor and the Graduate School.

The presence of a music history faculty member and a music theory faculty member on your doctoral committee is required only for the doctoral exams. Because of the small number of faculty in these areas, it is not possible for them to be on every doctoral committee for the writing of the dissertation. After doctoral exams have been successfully passed, you may—after consultation with your advisor—remove the history and theory faculty members from the committee and replace them with other music faculty. A petition to change committee membership must be filed with the Graduate School after the Comprehensive Examination is completed.

Faculty who serve on doctoral committees must have the necessary graduate school endorsements to be able to do so. The University requires, in almost all cases, that all members of doctoral committees have Graduate Faculty status, and that committee chairs have Graduate Faculty status with Doctoral Research Endorsement. Because a minority of faculty in the School of Music hold Doctoral Research Endorsement, it often happens that Program Advisors, who usually chair the doctoral examination committees, are not able to serve as research advisors for lack of the DRE. In such cases, a new committee chair with DRE must be assigned, and a petition to change committee membership must be filed with the Graduate School after the Comprehensive Examination is completed but before the dissertation work. The new committee chair may serve as co-chair with your program advisor. It is your responsibility to gain the consent of the faculty members involved, to procure all necessary paperwork and shepherd it through to the appropriate people, and ultimately to make sure the proper faculty members are in the proper committee positions. It is likewise your responsibility to consult at a very early stage with the individual who will be your dissertation advisor to ensure that the proper protocols are followed and standards are being met as you pursue your research.

V.B. The Written Comprehensive Examination.

All students in the Doctor of Arts in Music program must take a written comprehensive examination in music history and one in music theory. The faculty member serving on the committee in that area should make up and grade the examination; you must be in communication with that faculty member regarding content, preparation, expectations, and scheduling.

PLEASE NOTE: Thorough preparation for the Music History and Music Theory comprehensive examinations is your responsibility. The subject matter of the examinations is not limited to courses you have taken. If you are concerned about what is covered by the exams, make arrangements to discuss it with the faculty member who is giving the exam. In the case of Music History, the two survey- and skills-oriented courses —MUS 653, *Vocal Literature and Styles*, and MUS 657, *Instrumental Literature and Styles* —are designed to reflect the subject matter and approach typically seen in the written comprehensive exams as given by the music history faculty; you may consider taking one or both of them, as your plan of study allows.

Examinations receive a grade of Pass, Fail, or Pass With Stipulation. A Pass With Stipulation means that the exam will be given a passing grade only after you complete one or more specific stipulated tasks to the satisfaction of the faculty member involved. Such tasks might include but are not limited to a partial re-take, a research paper of some kind, or an oral presentation, and are assigned and evaluated at the discretion of the relevant faculty.

- V.C. The Oral Comprehensive Examination.** After all written comprehensives have been successfully completed, you will take an Oral Comprehensive examination, during which you will answer questions posed by doctoral committee members over a two-hour period. Such questions may or may not relate to the written comprehensive examination or to coursework; you are advised, however, that areas in which your written exam performance was less strong often come up for more detailed attention in orals, so additional preparation in those areas is a wise course of action.