

Ph.D. in Music Education Comprehensive Exams

All Ph.D. in Music Education students will complete their comprehensive exams during or after the last semester of coursework. The purpose of these exams is to allow the student to explore a topic of interest while demonstrating mastery of coursework approaches and concepts. Students will complete three comprehensive exams, representing various areas of emphasis in their degree.

Exam questions must reflect the following:

- One exam based upon a completed music education core class
- One exam based on the student's selected research method area (qualitative or quantitative)
- One exam based on the student's cognate area

Format

Students will design their exam questions/prompts in partnership with the faculty member who represents that area. (Music education faculty will supervise the core class and research method prompts, and the cognate representative will supervise the cognate area prompt.) Questions should be designed in advance, so the student has ample opportunity to explore and prepare. Students are encouraged to read, take notes, and outline in preparation for their writing period. No writing may occur before the start of the exam period.

Exam responses should be approximately 15-20 pages in length (12 pt font, Times New Roman, double-spaced). All responses should follow APA 7 formatting. Graduate-level writing is expected (edited for clarity, flow, and grammar, ready for revision). Exam papers should function as complete literature reviews, journal articles, or potential foundations of dissertation chapters. The purpose of this format is to encourage students to develop their writing stamina in preparation for their dissertation as well as working towards professional standards of publication.

For the cognate area, the student may choose to complete an alternative format to the aforementioned article structure. Alternative options may include (but are not limited to): a variation in page length, a conference session with annotated bibliography, a course syllabus with readings and selected lectures/notes. Alternative formats must be approved in advance by the student's cognate representative and advisor, and should be applicable/beneficial for the student's future career goals.

Writing

Students will have six weeks to complete their responses. They may not seek outside assistance from peers, faculty members, or the writing center. Students will work independently on their responses (e.g., no proctored writing sessions). At the start of the response period, the student will email their advisor/committee to formally

acknowledge their questions and their timeline. At the end of six weeks, the student will submit their writing as .docx files to the advisor/committee.

Feedback and Oral Defense

Comprehensive exam committees will include a minimum of three members, including faculty who assigned questions. It is the student's responsibility to invite a third faculty member to participate in the review and defense, at the faculty member's discretion. (Students may choose to invite an additional faculty member to participate in the review process at the faculty member and advisor's discretion, although this is not required.) Following the submission of the exam documents, the faculty serving on the comprehensive exam committee will have four weeks to read and provide written feedback. After the four-week period, the student will meet with the committee members as a group to discuss the responses. At this time, the committee will certify or recommend revisions for the comprehensive exam process and distribute written feedback to the student.

Additional Notes

Students may not submit their dissertation proposal until they have successfully completed their comprehensive exams. Students (and their advisor) must also ensure their response windows do not overlap with peers by more than two weeks. This is to allow adequate time for faculty to read and provide feedback for each student.

Approved: February 2023