

# GRADUATE ACADEMIC DEGREE COMMITTEE (GADCOM)

## PHD QUALIFYING EXAM INSTRUCTIONS

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### INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

The PhD qualifying exam consists of two phases, a Proficiency Review (Phase I) and a Professional Review (Phase II), each consisting of three exams. Both Phases must be taken by PhD candidates in Music History, Music History with an emphasis in Early Music, and Music Theory.

The Proficiency Review must be taken during the second year of PhD coursework. It tests general knowledge in music history and theory, including repertory, research methodology, and major aspects of current research.

The Professional Review will be administered after completion of coursework, demonstration of required language proficiency, and passing the proficiency review. It is highly recommended that candidates will have already formulated special fields for their dissertations and set up dissertation committees before signing up for the exam. The exam will test students' capability for professional research, including essay writing and language proficiency in their special fields, as well as professional knowledge in a related field or minor field.

### EVALUATION PROCEDURES

The members of the GADCom provide the exam questions and determine a grade of pass or fail for each examination. Should the committee fail to reach agreement, the Director of Graduate Studies is called upon to evaluate the exam in question and to render a final decision.

### PASS OR FAIL

Candidates must pass all three exams to qualify for further study at the doctoral level. All failed exams should be retaken in the following long semester and must be retaken no later than the second following long semester.

Candidates who do not pass these exams in two attempts will not be given permission to proceed in the doctoral program.

The following instructions describe the content, procedure, and policies of eligibility and assessment for both phases of the qualifying exam. This text is subject to change at the recommendation of the GADCom.

## SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

### PHASE I – PROFICIENCY REVIEW

The Proficiency Review consists of three exams, taken over two days. The dates of the exams will be announced at the end of the previous semester. Usually the exams will take place in March and October (this may change due to special schedule conflicts). They will not be given during the summer.

All candidates will take the exams in the same room. Each exam will be monitored. The exams may be handwritten or the candidates may bring their own computer. Please indicate your choice so that the room can be set up accordingly. If a computer is used, the student must provide for each exam one disc on which to save the text file. The file will be printed in the computer lab immediately after the exam, and submitted along with additional attachments such as handwritten examples, figures etc.

If the candidate has an established disability as defined by the “Americans with Disabilities Act” and wishes to request accommodation, a written request must be turned in to the Chair of the GADCom no later than the deadline to sign up for the exam.

### EXAM 1: MUSIC HISTORY, 2 HOURS

Candidates will be asked to write on four out of 12 topics and must choose at least one topic from each of the three following periods in music history:

Medieval-Renaissance	4 topics
Baroque-Classical	4 topics
Romantic-Twentieth Century	4 topics

**ASSESSMENT:**

Essays should be well organized, accurate, and focused on the question. They must demonstrate knowledge of representative musical examples.

**EXAM 2: MUSIC LITERATURE, 2 HOURS**

Candidates will be asked to discuss salient characteristics of eight musical excerpts, choosing at least two from each of the following periods of music history

Medieval-Renaissance	4 excerpts
Baroque-Classical	4 excerpts
Romantic-Twentieth Century	4 excerpts

On the basis of the characteristics cited (specify measure numbers), students will be asked to identify the genre, the decade of composition, and the name of a likely composer whose music embodies the characteristics described.

**EXAM 3: MUSIC ANALYSIS, 3 HOURS**

Candidates will be asked to write an analytical essay on one of two provided works, discussing significant structural aspects. The two works will be chosen from the period 1700-1900.

Specific questions, instructions or comments may be provided for each work. Candidates will have access to a keyboard. A translation will be provided in case of a foreign language text in vocal music. Original titles and musical instructions in the score will not be translated, if they are in French, German or Italian.

**ASSESSMENT:**

Answers will be evaluated on the quality and organization of the analytical observations. The presentations may include music examples, tables, etc. as appropriate.

## PHASE II – PROFESSIONAL REVIEW

Each candidate will be provided with an individual work space for Exams 2 and 3. The exams may be handwritten or candidates may bring their own computer. For further instructions, see under Proficiency Review.

### EXAM 1: PROFESSIONAL ESSAY

For the Professional Essay candidates will be assigned an essay to be completed within fourteen days. The topic shall be given at 9 a.m. on a given Monday and handed in Monday, two weeks later, at 9 a.m. All sources used by the student must be clearly cited in a bibliography.

The candidate's essay should include a discussion of current research literature and should consider analytical, methodological, and critical questions pertinent to the topic. In this essay, the candidates should demonstrate their understanding of original and secondary sources, demonstrating professional ability to synthesize these sources with analytical and critical observations. The essay should clearly and concisely address the given topic. The level of research should be that of an essay assignment in an advanced graduate course; the level of writing should be suitable for submission to a professional conference or scholarly journal.

The GADCom will formulate the topic in consultation with the candidate's major professor. Although centered in the candidate's projected field of specialization, the assigned topic will be broad in scope; it will not, for example, center on a single work. The topic may concern matters such as genre, a style period, a given repertory of works by a single composer, historical or methodological ideas, cultural issues, and philosophical or theoretical systems. In all cases, candidates must provide evidence in support of their arguments. The candidate will accordingly define the focus of the essay.

Grading of the professional essay is the responsibility of the GADCom in consultation with the major professor.

EXAM 2 FOR MAJORS IN MUSIC THEORY OR MUSIC HISTORY:

This exam will comprise two sections, of three hours each, taken on a single day.

SECTION 1: FOREIGN LANGUAGE DOCUMENT

This section shall address a text in French or German. If the candidate's special field language is not French or German, then a document in another language may be added as appropriate. The history area will determine the appropriate documents for history candidates; the theory area will determine the appropriate documents for theory candidates.

SECTION 2: METHODOLOGY

For Music Theory majors:

This section might address pedagogical, methodological, or critical theories, including the history of theory. Depending on the content of Section 1, this section could deal with a contrasting topic.

For Music History majors:

This phase of the exam addresses historical, philological, methodological, or critical issues.

EXAM 2 FOR MAJORS IN MUSIC HISTORY WITH AN EMPHASIS IN EARLY MUSIC

SECTION 1: DOCUMENTS

Candidates will discuss the contents and viewpoints of various important treatises (1500-1800) that discuss performance practice issues. At least one of these treatises will be in a foreign language. Candidates will discuss various interpretations of performance practice topics (1500-1800), including modern writings pertaining to them.

At least two topics will be chosen from the following with pertinence to performance: rhythm and notation, ornamentation, tempi (including dance), pitch and temperament, history of instruments.

## SECTION 2: PERFORMANCE PRACTICE

Candidates will discuss their specialty (voice or instrument) from the perspectives of historical technique and performance practice. Questions will be formulated by the major professor in consultation with the committee.

Candidates will need to demonstrate from the following:

- a) Figured bass—knowledge of figures and demonstration of the role of continuo. This may be related to either keyboard or plucked instruments,
- b) Ornamentation of selected phrases in appropriate style (Renaissance or Baroque)
- c) Historical use of instruments in a vocal piece.

## EXAM 3: MINOR OR RELATED FIELD (3 HOURS)

This exam will comprise a single assignment in the candidate's minor or related field. Assignments will be provided by the faculty of the minor or related area subject to the approval by the GADCom.

### MINOR FIELD

“When an official minor is required or opted, the candidate's graduate advisory committee must include a faculty member from that area who will verify accountability in the minor area through comprehensive examinations, dissertation projects or other appropriate means” (Graduate Catalogue 2004-2005, p. 65).

### MUSIC HISTORY

The related field professor, in consultation with the GADCom, will formulate a two-part exam that will require students to write two essays. The essays should be focused, well organized, and clearly written. Each of the essays should summarize and evaluate scholarship relevant to the topic, articulate the candidate's own views on the issues involved, and demonstrate knowledge of specific repertoire as appropriate.

### SECTION 1 (ONE HOUR)

This section will examine knowledge of musicology as a discipline. Students will write an essay on one of two topics.

### SECTION 2 (TWO HOURS)

This section will examine knowledge of areas of musicology and music history pertinent to their special fields. Students will choose one of two topics.

### MUSIC THEORY

The related field professor, in consultation with the GADCom, will select two pieces representative of the standard repertoire. The pieces may involve original notation; they may be in full score (symphonic movements of moderate length).

Candidates will write an analytical essay on one of these pieces and should begin with a clear thesis, in which they indicate the purpose and the analytical approach of the essay. The essay should continue by addressing (at least briefly) salient large-scale issues of form and structure.

Candidates may then decide whether to write about large-scale matters, or whether to narrow down their discussion to particularly rich passages. The essay's analytical discourse must be supported by precise evidence in the form of musical examples, diagrams, and/or sketches. If relevant to the work, the candidate might address extra musical elements such as word-painting, poetic ideas, narrativity, rhetoric, and aesthetics, being careful to ground such elements firmly in the immediate details of the work at hand. A conclusion should provide a clear overview of the results and significance of the essay's thesis.

### EARLY MUSIC

Candidates will discuss various interpretations of performance practice topics (1500-1800), including modern writing pertaining to them.

At least two topics will be chosen from the following with pertinence to performance:

rhythm and notation, ornamentation, tempi (including dance), pitch and temperament, history of instruments.

Candidates will discuss their specialty (voice or instrument) from the perspectives of historical technique and performance practice. Questions will be designed in consultation with the candidate's committee.

## JAZZ HISTORY

### SECTION 1 (2 HOURS)

Candidates will write an essay that demonstrates a thorough understanding of jazz historiography. The essay should do the following:

- a) Describe the emergence of historical writing about jazz by U.S. and European authors before 1950 in terms of subject matter, conceptual approach (including such concepts, for example, as primitivism, racial essentialism, American exceptionalism, tragic and romantic modes of historical writing, critical vs. historical writing and anti-commercialism), and effect and influence of the writings on later works in jazz history.
- b) Describe the works that resulted in the Jazz Tradition paradigm, the Standard Narrative of Jazz History, and the approaches to jazz history typically followed by widely-adopted college textbooks from the 1950s to the 1980s.
- c) Describe the works in jazz history and historiography that challenge and broaden the Standard Narrative, including such topics as a questioning of the decade-by-decade progression of Jazz Styles and Great Man approaches, the inclusion of race and gender as explicit theoretical topics rather than as unacknowledged biases, and the recognition of jazz as a global music.

### SECTION 2 (1 HOUR)

Candidates will listen to five excerpts chosen from recordings made between 1920 and 1970 and make written comments, in prose or outline form, that do the following:

- a) Identify as many features of the excerpt as possible: artists, title, date, styles of composition, improvisation, and arrangement,
- b) Conceptualize the excerpt in two ways: 1) in terms of the lives and the works of the artists involved; 2) in terms of jazz and social history.

## ETHNOMUSICOLOGY

Details to follow

## OTHER RELATED FIELDS

Related fields outside the division of History, Theory, and Ethnomusicology will be formulated on a case by case basis.