

DMA HANDBOOK



ACADEMIC YEAR 2025-2026
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS | COLLEGE OF MUSIC

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1. IMPORTANT CONTACTS

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2. GENERAL DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Students must fulfill all requirements specified on the [UNT College of Music Admissions website](#).

They must also receive a grade of B or better for all courses counting toward the degree, including leveling and review courses. Finally, students must adhere to the following two policies, which pertain to all graduate students in music.

3. DEGREE PROGRESS AND ACADEMIC DISMISSAL POLICY

Students must maintain satisfactory progress towards their degree and are subject to university policies regarding academic probation and suspension. In addition, they will be subject to dismissal from the program if one or more of the following conditions apply:

1. If the student receives one grade of a “C” or lower in two consecutive semesters.
2. If the student receives two grades of a “C” or lower in a single semester.
3. If the student receives a grade of “NPR” for thesis or dissertation hours in two consecutive semesters.

“NPR” may be assigned if the student is not following the guidelines outlined in the DMA Handbook regarding registration, scheduling, repertoire, or satisfactory progress. The Major Professor assigns the recital grade.

In cases where one or more of these conditions apply, students will typically be removed from their program upon the recommendation of the director of graduate studies in consultation with the Division Chair and Major Professor. Students may appeal this decision by contacting the College of Music Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

4. PROFESSIONAL EXPECTATION POLICY

The UNT College of Music expects graduate students in music to be committed to their degree and to follow the UNT Code of Student Conduct (University Policy Manual, section 07.012). Success in a graduate program requires students not only to meet minimum academic standards but also to be active contributors to the artistic and scholarly community of the College of Music. Hence, students must exhibit professional behavior, which includes but is not limited to 1) attending classes and meetings, including seminars, masterclasses, and departmentals; 2) meeting area, division, college, and university deadlines; and 3) maintaining respectful interactions with all members of the UNT community. Students are also expected to adhere to professional standards as outlined in division/area handbooks. In cases where there is substantial evidence of unprofessional behavior, students will be removed from their program upon the recommendation of the Director of Graduate Studies in consultation with the Division Chair and Major Professor. Students may appeal this decision by contacting the College of Music Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

5. RESIDENCY

The minimum residency requirement for performance students consists of two consecutive long semesters (fall or spring) at UNT with a minimum of nine graduate hours in each term or three consecutive long semesters with a minimum of six graduate hours in each term. The minimum residency requirement for conducting students is four consecutive long semesters with a minimum load of nine hours each semester. Conducting students in Wind Studies may satisfy the residency requirements by enrolling in two summer sessions, two long semesters, and two additional summer sessions, taken consecutively. Hours used to establish residency must apply toward the degree. Undergraduate courses and deficiency courses are not counted towards the residency requirement. Courses in which a student

earns a grade of “C” or below and courses from which the student withdraws are not counted towards the residency requirement. Courses in which the student takes a grade of “Incomplete” are not counted towards the residency requirement unless the “Incomplete” is replaced with a grade of “B” or better. Finally, dissertation hours are not counted when determining residency. When submitting your degree plan, list the semesters that fulfill the residency requirement (ex: fall 2024 - spring 2025).

6. ENTRANCE EXAMS AND TRANSCRIPT EVALUATIONS

The Graduate Placement Examinations (GPE) in music history and music theory must be taken during orientation week of the first semester in which the student enrolls as a doctoral student, or as otherwise scheduled. Transcript evaluations are conducted by the appropriate Area Coordinator who evaluates each applicant’s prior college transcripts. Coursework deficiencies found in the transcripts will be emailed to the applicant. Questions concerning the transcript deficiencies should be addressed to the appropriate Area Coordinator. Students must enroll in remedial coursework (i.e. deficiency courses) assigned on the basis of the GPE and/or the transcript evaluation in the first semester in which these courses are available. Neither GPE nor transcript deficiency courses may be counted toward the degree plan or as electives.

7. PARTICIPATION IN PERFORMANCE LABORATORIES/ENSEMBLES

Doctoral students on scholarship are eligible for zero credit for MULB/MUCM/MUEN. Doctoral students in Jazz Studies must fulfill the MUEN/MUCM degree requirements before being eligible for zero credit. After the MULB/MUCM/MUEN requirements have been met, students either register for MULB/MUCM/MUEN for elective credit or they may elect to register for zero credit. Doctoral students without a College of Music scholarship are eligible for zero credit by petition only. MULB laboratories are: A Cappella Choir, Brass Band, Chamber Choir, Concert Choir, Men's and Women's Choir, Grand Chorus, Symphony Orchestra, Concert Orchestra, Wind Ensemble, Wind Symphony, Wind Orchestra, Concert Band, Marching Band, University Band, Jazz Lab Bands, and accompanying. MUEN/MUCM ensembles are Opera Theater, Collegium Musicum, chamber orchestras, wind ensembles, brass choirs, flute choirs,

percussion ensembles, guitar ensembles, NOVA, and string, woodwind, brass, harp, and jazz chamber ensembles.

7.1 Zero Credit Enrollment

Teaching assistants and fellows are eligible for zero credit if the workload assignment requires enrollment in MULB/MUCM/MUEN. Doctoral students without a College of Music scholarship are eligible for zero credit if an ensemble/chamber director requests participation in a MULB/MUCM/MUEN ensemble. Signatures must be obtained on the Zero Credit Petition Form by the ensemble/chamber director, the Division Chair, and the Director of Graduate Studies.

Members of the Bancroft Quartet and other Center for Chamber Music Studies (CCPS) ensembles are awarded a 50% TA position. As part of the duties, members are expected to register for MUCM and MULB each semester, both of which are eligible for zero credit.

Students are enrolled for zero credit by the Graduate Studies Office in the College of Music. Zero credit does not count toward full-time enrollment for scholarships or financial aid. Students are restricted to 2 zero credits per semester and zero credit is not included in GPA calculations.

8. DEGREE PLAN AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Students should consult their Major Professor as they prepare a tentative program to meet the degree requirements and select an advisory committee. After enrolling in 18 hours of courses, which usually occurs in the second semester of study, the student must select an advisory committee by submitting the Designation of Advisory Committee Form to the Graduate Studies Office. The committee must be comprised of at least three members and should include: 1) the Major Professor, 2) the Related Field Professor (i.e. the related field representative), and 3) a third Committee Member. At least one of the committee members must have written a dissertation or a similar doctoral document.

At the same time, the student must submit a degree plan, which lists all courses required for the degree. Students are to enroll in their Major Professor's section of lessons on their major instrument. Any exceptions require the prior approval of GPDC. The degree plan is approved by the student's Major Professor, the Director of Graduate Studies, and the Dean of the Toulouse Graduate School. All changes

to the degree plan must be submitted in writing on the Graduate Degree Plan Change Form, approved by the Major Professor and the Director of Graduate Studies, and filed with the Graduate Studies Office.

Courses listed on the degree plan must carry letter grades with the exception of those in which the student is engaged in individual research and is not attending an organized class. These courses, with the approval of the department, may be assigned pass/no pass grades. Degree requirements are determined by the Graduate Catalog in force in the semester the student has matriculated. Degree plans may not be filed in the semester a student plans to graduate.

Degree plans can be found on the Graduate Studies Website under "For Current Students" > "Degree Programs" then under the respected degree program's section.

9. RELATED FIELD REQUIREMENTS

All DMA students must pursue a related field of not fewer than 12 hours. [The Graduate Catalog](#) as well as area/division websites, specify the requirements associated with individual related fields. Students are responsible for consulting these resources as well as relevant faculty in order to ascertain these requirements.

Students wishing to pursue a related field outside the College of Music must submit the "Request for Related Field Outside the College of Music" form to the Graduate Studies Office along with a justification of c. 300 words explaining how the proposed related field will further their professional and artistic goals. The Graduate Performance Degree Committee must approve the related field before the student files the degree plan and committee designation form.

10. DISSERTATION RECITALS

Before enrolling for MUGC 6951 (first dissertation recital), students must be accepted into the program by audition. To register for recital, students must send a request to GraduateRecitals@unt.edu including: name, student ID#, course code, Major Professor, the semester of registration, and the number of credits to be enrolled in. Students may perform a recital in their first semester of residence and may complete two dissertation recitals before taking the qualifying examinations. In addition, they may submit

a topic proposal before passing the qualifying examinations. Any exceptions to the policies listed below requires prior permission of GPDC.

After passing the qualifying examinations and having been admitted to candidacy, students must maintain continuous enrollment in MUGC 6954 during each long semester until the dissertation document has been completed and accepted by the Dean of the Toulouse Graduate School. MUGC 6951-6953 do not require continuous enrollment. Students are not required to register for MUGC 6954 during the summer if UNT facilities and faculty are not available. Students must be enrolled in MUGC 6954 during the semester in which they undertake the defense and apply to graduate.

10.1 Guidelines for Recitals 1-3 (MUGC 6951/6952/6953)

Repertoire should be of a professional level in artistic merit and technical challenge. With the exception of chamber repertoire, pianists and vocalists are expected to perform entirely from memory. Instrumentalists and conductors should consult with their area coordinator for specific memory requirements. All dissertation recitals in organ must include a minimum of 14 minutes performed from memory. Minimum length of a regular recital's total musical content is 50 minutes with the following exceptions: brass players and percussionists must include at least 40 minutes of music; choral conductors must include at least 30 minutes of music. Maximum length is 60 minutes

The major professor and the student may decide together that a portion of one DMA recital will have an independently prepared piece by the student. The major professor will choose the piece and hear it without comment to determine if it is ready for performance. The remaining jurors will be informed as to which piece has been independently prepared. Conducting majors may not choose this option. For performance majors, two of the recitals must be solo recitals and the remaining recital may be flexible (for example chamber music, or an opera role, etc.). For students majoring in Instrumental Studies, all three major recitals must be comprised of classical works. Please see the individual division handbooks for further policies regarding repertoire. Exceptions to these policies will only be considered in response to written petitions to the Graduate Performance Degree Committee.

Conducting majors will submit three recital video recordings (cumulative) in addition to the lecture-recital. Individual performances may be combined onto a single video recording and submitted as

one recital (3 hours of dissertation credit). The content of each of the three recordings will be determined in consultation with the Major Professor and must be approved by the Graduate Performance Degree Committee prior to the performances.

Candidates may complete two dissertation recitals before taking their qualifying examinations. A topic pre-proposal and topic proposal may be submitted before the qualifying examinations have been passed.

10.2 Excerpt Recitals

Students in Instrumental Studies may petition the GPDC to replace one DMA recital with an Orchestral Excerpts Recital. This requires written support from the Major Professor and the Chair of Instrumental Studies. A written petition must be submitted to the GPDC and approved three weeks prior to scheduling. The Excerpt Recital follows all the formal requirements of a traditional recital as far as forms, grading, program submission, recording guidelines, and venue. No retroactive requests will be considered. The Excerpt Recital may replace MUGC 6951, 6952, or 6953, one time only.

The Excerpt Recital must comprise a minimum of 45 minutes of music, and the full list of excerpts with measure counts and timing should be submitted as part of the petition to the GPDC. The recital must include a full concerto movement that is standard for auditions on that instrument. Where relevant, additional movements of solo repertoire commonly requested for auditions (such as solo Bach) should be included. Excerpt Recitals must include a UNT conducting faculty member on the recital committee. Excerpt Recitals must take place on campus, in person. No remote or off-campus options are permitted for this recital format. Participation in a professional orchestra audition does not constitute or replace an Excerpt Recital.

10.3 Procedures and Applications

1. You must be enrolled in the appropriate dissertation course (MUGC 6951-6954) in your Major Professor's section or be fulfilling an "Incomplete" from a previous semester, to receive credit for a dissertation recital. Students who perform a recital without being properly registered may not receive credit for that recital. Any exceptions require prior approval of GPDC.

2. Go online to the College of Music Scheduling Office's "[Make a Reservation](#)" page. Research available recital dates using the Mazévo scheduling app. The date you choose must be at least three weeks away to allow for the approval process to be completed.
3. When a date has been selected and approved by your Major Professor and committee members, you can submit your recital date on Mazévo. Once you submit your recital request, you will receive an email stating that your performance venue request has been submitted. Your committee and the Graduate Studies Office will receive automated notification and may approve or deny your request at this time.
4. Students are responsible for providing a full program complete with date, time and location of performance, titles and dates of works, names and dates of composers, assisting performers, and the appropriate recital course number and section (MUGC 6951-4), and length of piece to the [Event Program Submission Portal](#). This information is due no later than three weeks prior to the performance. The student is also responsible for proofing the program once the first draft is completed by the Program Office. Contact the College of Music Program Office for assistance.
5. The recital must be professionally recorded at a high standard. It is the candidate's responsibility to arrange for the recording through either the College of Music Scheduling Office or an outside source. If the recording is prepared by an outside source, it must be properly labeled with the student's name, instrument, recital date, time, place, and repertoire in correct track order. It is the student's responsibility to submit an outside recording to the Music Library immediately following the performance.
6. For MUGC 6954, your topic must be approved by the Graduate Performance Degrees Committee before you may reserve a recital date. After your topic has been approved, follow the steps above.

10.4 Cancellations

If you cancel or postpone your recital, you must immediately inform the Scheduling Office (MU 247H) so the date and time can be made available to others and publicity concerning your event can be cancelled. For assistance with scheduling or reservations, contact the College of Music Scheduling Office.

10.5 PR/NPR Grading for DMA Graduate Recitals MUGC 6951/6952/6953

A grade of “PR” may be assigned by the Major Professor for dissertation recitals MUGC 6951/52/53 if the student has demonstrated continual progress toward the preparation for a recital. A grade of “NPR” may be assigned by the Major Professor at the conclusion of a semester if a student has not demonstrated progress. These grading decisions are at the discretion of the Major Professor. Although a “PR” may be assigned before a student completes a recital, the recital must nonetheless be eventually completed and verified.

10.6 Procedures for Off-Campus Recitals

All off-campus DMA recitals must be approved by the GPDC, to which the student must submit a formal petition in addition to a scheduling request. The petition must demonstrate the following:

1. The actual solo playing time totals 50 minutes. Ensemble time only counts if the student is still playing or singing a solo line.
2. At least one member of the recital committee should be able to attend in person. If a recital occurs outside the DFW area, the student's full committee must agree to view the recording.
3. The student must submit a recording of the performance to the Graduate Studies Office. This should be a high-resolution file shared electronically, not a YouTube link. This is non-negotiable.
4. Students will follow procedures to file this recital recording with the UNT Music Library. Consult the Graduate Studies Office for the most up-to-date procedure.
5. You may not combine performances. The entire performance must occur during one concert. Conducting majors may split their events.
6. The petition must include a letter or email from the Major Professor and the Division Chair in support of the off-campus performance.
7. The performance must be in the future. Do not submit DMA recital applications for performances that have already taken place.
8. All degree recitals must be performed in a public venue. House concerts are not considered suitable substitutions for degree recitals.
9. Paid professional performances do not take the place of degree recitals.

11. QUALIFYING EXAMINATION

Each student must pass Qualifying Examinations in their major field (6 hours) and chosen related field (3 hours). The Major Professor coordinates the exams with members of the advisory committee and, when necessary, may designate additional faculty to assist in the creation and grading of the exams. All members of the advisory committee grade the exams.

The Qualifying Examinations measure a broad knowledge of musical study. They are designed to establish the student's ability to engage both in scholarly research and in professional work in the major area supported by a complete musical comprehension and a broad perspective. Qualifying Examinations are only administered during long semesters.

The student may take the qualifying examinations when the following conditions have been met:

- 30 hours of course work beyond the master's degree have been completed.
- At least two degree recitals have been completed (performance majors only).
- An approved degree plan has been filed with the Toulouse Graduate School

Written Qualifying Exam (Part I)

The Qualifying Examinations are taken in two parts, of which the first consists of a written examination in the student's major field (6 hours) and related field (3 hours). Exams must be written in English and no reference tools or translation devices may be used. Students must submit the DMA Qualifying Exam Form - Part I (Written) to the Graduate Studies Office no later than three weeks prior to the date on which they take the written exam. No part of the exam may be discussed or shared with other students and faculty, inside or outside the institution, without the explicit written permission of the Major Professor. To do so would violate the integrity of the written qualifying exams. For more information see the [Student Academic Integrity Policy](#).

Oral Qualifying Exam (Part II)

After having passed the written exam, students proceed on to the second part of the Qualifying Examinations, a two-hour oral comprehensive exam that includes questioning on the written examinations and on all other areas appropriate to the degree. Students must submit the DMA Qualifying Exam Form - Part II (Oral) to the Graduate Studies Office no later than one week prior to the date on which they take

the oral exam. Students may not attempt the oral examination until the results of the written exams have been reported to the Graduate Studies Office.

Students may attempt no part of the Qualifying Examinations more than three times. Students must pass all parts of the Qualifying Examinations within fourteen calendar months from the first attempt at the written qualifying exams to passing the oral exam. Once a student has passed both parts of these exams and completed all coursework, they will be recommended for admission to doctoral candidacy for the degree.

12. THE GRADUATE PERFORMANCE DEGREE COMMITTEE (GPDC)

The functions of the Graduate Performance Degree Committee include:

- Formulating policies for the DMA degree program.
- Considering DMA topic pre-proposals and proposals for approval/denial. See DMA Topic Proposal Guidelines and Materials for more information.
- Considering all petitions for exceptions, including time extensions, course substitutions, etc. Petitions should be addressed to the Chair of the GPDC and in letter form. They must also be accompanied by a letter of support from the student's Major Professor.

The Graduate Performance Degree Committee meets on the first and third Monday of each month during long semesters at 4:00pm unless otherwise announced. All materials for the committee's consideration must be submitted to the Graduate Office (Chilton Hall 211) and uploaded to Canvas on the following schedule:

- Topic Proposals and Pre-Topic Proposals: by 12:00 P.M. noon on the first Monday of each month during long semesters prior to a GPDC meeting
- Petitions: by the Wednesday prior to a GPDC meeting

Additional meetings and email ballots may be convened at the discretion of the Chair.

13. TOPIC PRE-PROPOSAL AND TOPIC PROPOSAL GUIDELINES AND MATERIALS

Please see the Topic Pre-Proposal and Topic Proposal Guidelines and Materials page for information regarding topic pre-proposal and proposal submission.

14. THE DMA DOCUMENT

The DMA document comprises the written portion of the DMA dissertation and must conform to the requirements of style and format established in the College of Music Style Guide and the [UNT Thesis Manual](#).

Students choose one of four options:

1. 3 recitals (1-3 credits each); 1 lecture/recital (50–60 minutes) with performance and critical essay (a minimum of 6,250 words excluding front matter, footnotes, bibliography and appendices) for a total of 3 credits.
2. 3 recitals (1-3 credits each); 1 lecture (50–60 minutes) with critical essay (a minimum of 10,000 words excluding front matter, footnotes, bibliography and appendices) for a total of 3 credits.
3. 3 recitals (1-3 credits each); 1 thesis (a minimum of 25,000 words and a maximum of 60,000 words excluding front matter, footnotes, bibliography and appendices) for a total of 3 credits. A document exceeding 60,000 words needs approval of the Graduate Performance Degree Committee.
4. 3 recitals (1-3 credits each); a professional portfolio consisting of at least two discrete components as outlined on the DMA Topic Proposal Guidelines and Materials page.

If completing DMA options 1 or 2, the student must schedule their lecture-recital or lecture through the College of Music Scheduling Office. Students must also submit an Oral Defense Approval Form at least four weeks before the scheduled date of the lecture-recital, lecture, or if completing DMA options 3 or 4, the oral defense. Before the defense, the student needs to provide the Major Professor with an iThenticate similarity report for any written material that is part of their DMA document. The committee members will provide the student with feedback for revisions no later than two weeks before the scheduled date. In the remaining time, the student will consult with the Major Professor as they make the revisions and prepare for their lecture-recital, lecture, and/or oral defense. Due to reasonable limits of reading time, the script for a lecture-recital or lecture may be a judiciously abridged version of the written dissertation document.

14.1 Editorial Assistance

A student may make use of an editor, paid or unpaid, in the writing of their DMA document only if the Major Professor and Director of Graduate Studies approve this course of action via the Request for External Editorial Assistance Form, which must be submitted and approved prior to the approval of the proposal. The student and the editor agree to limit any editorial intervention to matters of citations, grammar, style, and formatting, as well as overall clarity and structure. Such intervention will not pertain to content. The student must retain copies of all drafts of the DMA document with editorial annotations and will acknowledge the role of the editor in the acknowledgments section of the document.

15. APPLICATION FOR GRADUATION

It is the responsibility of the student to stay abreast of progress toward the degree and to file the appropriate degree application in the Office of the Graduate Dean. Students anticipating graduation should consult the Academic Calendar and the Toulouse Graduate School website for filing deadlines, final dates for payment of fees, and other graduation requirements.

16. DISSERTATION SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

Once a student has successfully defended the thesis or dissertation, the Major Professor must submit the Oral Defense Form and Pre-Defense Checklist with the signatures of the student's advisory committee and Division Chair to the Graduate Studies Office. The student must submit a digital copy of the thesis or dissertation along with an updated iThenticate similarity report to the Graduate Studies Office two weeks before the deadline established by the Toulouse Graduate School. This digital copy must be formatted as a single “.doc” or “.docx” file and must be submitted via the Music Graduate Studies site on Canvas. This process provides the Director of Graduate Studies and the Dean of the College of Music adequate time to read and approve the thesis. It is the student's responsibility to meet the published final milestones and graduation deadlines.

Once the DMA document has been approved by the Director of Graduate Studies, the Graduate Studies Office will notify the student that they may submit their document to the Toulouse Graduate

School. The Graduate Studies Office cannot guarantee consideration of DMA documents submitted less than two weeks prior to the deadline established by the Toulouse Graduate School.

17. TIME LIMIT

DMA students must complete all required coursework within a period of 8 years from the date doctoral credit is first earned. No course credit beyond the master's degree that is more than either 8 years old at the time the doctoral degree is completed will be counted toward the doctorate.

Time limits are strictly enforced. Students exceeding the time limit may be required to repeat the Qualifying Examinations, replace out-of-date credits with up-to-date work, and/or show other evidence of being up to date in their major and related fields. Students anticipating that they will exceed the time limit should apply for an extension at least a year before they will exceed that limit. Those wishing to apply must complete the Time Extension Form and submit it with the support of their Major Professor to the Graduate Performance Degree Committee. Holding a full-time job is not considered sufficient grounds for granting an extension.