

THE DMA FINAL ORAL EXAM

The Final Oral Examination is taken after successful completion of all course work, qualifying exams, and recitals (solo, chamber, and concerto), but *before* the lecture recital and lecture-recital document or dissertation. The Final Oral Exam may be scheduled in person or over Zoom.

COMPONENTS OF THE EXAM

The Final Oral Examination consists of three parts and is approximately sixty minutes in duration:

PRESENTATION (35 minutes)

The student must give an oral presentation of no more than twenty (20) minutes on their selected topic (see below). The examiners will then question the student on any aspect of the presentation. The presentation should not be read but written notes may be used. Handouts and slideshows are allowed, but presentations may not include pre-recorded audio, video, or live performances.

REPERTOIRE (15 minutes)

The Musicology advisor will select an excerpt from the student's chosen repertoire topic (see below). The student will receive the specific excerpt from the Academic Program Coordinator thirty minutes before the Final Oral Exam is scheduled to begin. During this time, students may study the excerpt without the aid of additional materials. During the exam, the student will be asked to identify the excerpt and respond to questions on details such as harmony, counterpoint, performance indications, editorial practices, background, and context.

LISTENING (10 minutes)

The student will be asked to listen to a performance of music (an excerpt or complete piece of approximately three to four minutes in length) from the standard repertoire for his or her major instrument, or, in the case of a Composition major, from the standard repertoire of the past one hundred years. The student will then discuss and respond to questions on the performance and the music in terms of both interpretive and stylistic issues.

Students receive a grade of "P" (Pass) or "F" (Fail) for each part of the Final Oral Examination. With that in mind, students may be required to retake one or both parts of the exam. Students who fail the retake will be dismissed from the DMA program.

FINAL ORAL EXAM TOPICS

PRESENTATION TOPIC

The presentation topic is chosen in consultation with the student's Musicology advisor and should be accompanied by a one-paragraph statement which serves as an abstract of the thesis. The statement must indicate: 1) a line of argument that the candidate proposes to take; 2) what the presentation specifically intends to demonstrate; and 3) how it will do so. The paragraph abstract should include the title of the presentation. When formulating a presentation topic and preparing it for approval it is helpful to ask the following questions:

- Does the proposal have a clear, concise, and cogent thesis statement?
- Does the proposal articulate equally clear ways in which the presenter will support the thesis during the presentation?
- Is the topic as proposed one that can be reasonably addressed within a 20-minute timeframe?

REPERTOIRE TOPIC

The repertoire topic is based on music chosen by the student in consultation with the student's advisor. The repertoire topic should be of sufficient scope to allow the student to demonstrate command and breadth. The repertoire topic should be submitted in the following format: "I will be prepared to answer questions on the following piece(s): _____."

NOTE: The repertoire topic must differ from the presentation topic in terms of historical period. In addition, topics must differ in terms of genre (e.g., symphony, sonata, string quartet, opera, etc.) or instrumentation.

Topics for the presentation and repertoire portion of the exam must be approved by both the Academic Advisory Committee and the full Doctoral Committee. The student should submit finalized topics and approval emails from each member of the Academic Advisory Committee to the Academic Program Coordinator at least one week before the Doctoral Committee is scheduled to meet. Topics must be approved by the end of the semester prior to the student's graduation.

Please note that topics are not always approved upon first submission and it is important to begin this process early. Topics rejected by the Doctoral Committee must be revised and resubmitted for approval before the Final Oral Examination can be scheduled. Revised topics must be re-approved by each member of the Academic Advisory Committee. Since the Doctoral Committee is seeking breadth in each student's program, the Preliminary Oral Exam topic may not be used for any portion of the Final Oral Examination.

Source: DMA Guidelines