

INFORMATION AND PROCEDURES FOR WRITTEN COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS DOCTORAL DEGREES

This document is provided to answer questions that typically surround the comprehensive examination (“Preliminary Examination” in [The Graduate Bulletin](#)) and is intended to serve as a procedural guide. The student should consult *The Graduate Bulletin*, published by The Graduate School, and the *Graduate Handbook*, published by The School of Music, for specific details.

Any questions relating to the examination procedures should be discussed with the Director of Graduate Studies well in advance of the exam date. Exam content questions should be directed to the advisory committee.

SCHEDULING

- 1) The doctoral comprehensive examination is designed to be offered over a three-day period covering the areas of performance practice and literature, theory, and history.
- 2) Students should submit the initial request to the Director of Graduate Studies or (designee) at least three months before the requested dates of administration. The exam dates will be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies in Music who will also administer the exam. The exam may be taken after:
 - a. Removal of conditions or provisions attached to admission
 - b. Completion of 75% of the course work approved in the Plan of Study
 - c. Passed the foreign language/research tools option requirement (D.M.A)
 - d. Passed the research and teaching requirements (Ph.D.)
- 3) Examinations are not administered on weekends or University holidays. Under special circumstances and with advance arrangements with the Director of Graduate Studies in Music, exams may be administered when the University offices are open but classes are not in session.
- 4) Students are encouraged to consult with committee members for examination study guidance well in advance of the day of administration.

EXAM CONTENT

1. The advisory committee will formulate examination questions and serve in an advisory capacity for the student’s exam preparation. The committee chair will assemble the questions from the committee and submit final examination along with Committee Approval form.
2. Questions may cover any phase of the course work taken by the student during the period of this graduate study or any subject logically related and basic to an understanding of the subject matter of the major and minor areas of study. Transferred course work is subject to examination as is diagnostic examination material.
3. Examinations are comprehensive in nature, i.e., answers generally should be written in essay form so that the item content is thoroughly covered. Areas such as theory and analysis, however, often lend themselves to objective responses. Short answers or one-word response questions may be included, but this type of question will not be common for the entire examination. When writing the exam, it is important to include, for example, names of authors, composers, researchers, pedagogues, titles of studies and compositions,

important dates, chronological order of events, socio-cultural ramifications, technological developments, and other specific information as well as broad concepts surrounding item content. Careful consideration must be given to the fine line separating comprehensiveness and “padding.”

ADMINISTRATION PROCEDURES

- 1) On examination day, the student will report to the Director of Graduate Studies (or designee) at 8:15 a.m. (or a pre-arranged time) to receive instructions, room assignment, the examination, and flash drive upon which exam will be saved. Items permitted in the examination room are as follows:
 - a. Writing instruments (pens, pencils, erasers, etc.)
 - b. Paper/writing pad
 - c. Standard dictionary (no music references or dictionaries unless informed otherwise before the exam)
 - d. Seat cushion, lunch, water bottle, etc. A lunch break outside The School of Music may be taken (must leave exam and floppy disk with Director of Graduate Studies or designee until you have returned to building). Otherwise, exam materials must remain in the testing location at all times. Short breaks at fatigue points are important.
 - e. The computer lab contains only Macs, no PCs. Be sure to save your work often to the flash drive. These computers are not designed to store files on the hard drive.
- 2) Conversations with anyone other than the Director of Graduate Studies (or designee), advisory committee members, or School of Music faculty/staff during the examination day are prohibited. If item interpretation is necessary, instructions and/or permission should be obtained from the Director or designee.
- 3) The UNCG Academic Honor Code is in effect for the examination.
- 4) The examination will be constructed so that the material can be covered each day in 6 – 7 hours. Under no circumstances will students be allowed to extend any section of the examination to a second day after having seen the prepared questions. If extenuating circumstances occur, e.g., sickness, the committee will decide on appropriate conditions for completion of the examination.
- 5) At the conclusion of each exam day, save exam on the flash drive provided for that day and return to the Director of Graduate Studies by 5:00 p.m.

EVALUATION

Upon completion of the examination, it will be circulated among the advisory committee for a Blind Evaluation by each member. This procedure takes an unpredictable amount of time, depending on the time of year and personal commitment of committee members. Students will be notified of the result in writing by the Director of Graduate Studies when the evaluation is completed. No more than one reexamination will be permitted and at least one semester must elapse before reexamination.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE OF USB FLASH DRIVE

Allow computer to fully boot-up before inserting flash drive. Insert flash drive into USB port on rear of computer only (do not use the keyboard USB connection).

Create ONE file in Word and give it a filename (“lastname_comp_exam”).

Make sure you are saving frequently to the flash drive, which will appear on the desktop as COMP EXAM. To eject the flash drive after saving your work, drag the COMP EXAM icon to the trashcan at the bottom right hand corner of the desktop. Then, you may safely remove the flash drive.

If you like, you may save an additional copy of your work to the STUDENT file on the computer’s hard drive. Just don’t power off the computer until you have confirmed that all of your work has been saved to the COMP EXAM flash drive.

Once the computer is shut down, the contents of the STUDENT file will be erased.