

CORNELL UNIVERSITY
Graduate School
Field of Music

THE Ph.D. IN MUSICOLOGY AT CORNELL

Revised August 2016

The doctoral program in musicology is uniquely flexible; it is developed individually, in consultation with the student's Special Committee, and students may combine their study in the Field of Music (historical musicology, ethnomusicology, theory, composition and performance practice) with work in other Fields of study at Cornell. The phrase Field of Music, or Field, is the official Graduate School designation for the graduate programs and the Graduate Faculty in music. The Graduate Faculty includes Professors Appert, Bjerken, Boettcher, Ernste, Harris-Warrick, Hicks, Holst-Warhaft, Krumhansl, Madrid, Moseley, Peraino, Piekut, Pinch, Pond, Richards, Sierra, Yearsley, and Zaslav. Retired members of the Graduate Field may also continue to participate on graduate student committees; currently they include Professors Bilson, Groos, Hatch, Rosen and Webster. The Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) coordinates the activities of the Field, including such concerns as admissions, financial aid, advising, and job placement, and represents the Field vis-à-vis the Graduate School. For 2016-17, the DGS is Professor Judith Peraino; as of the academic year 2017-18 it will be Professor Piekut. More information about the structure of the Field and major and minor concentrations may be found at the end of this document.

Residence: The normal minimum residence requirement is six residence units (a unit equals one satisfactorily completed semester of full-time study). It is possible to earn credit "in absentia," while studying away from Ithaca. A student who comes with a master's degree from another institution may petition for reduction of the minimum requirement, usually to four units. At least two of the minimum six units must be spent in consecutive semesters of full-time study on the Ithaca campus. At least two of the six must *follow* successful completion of the Admission-to-Candidacy exam (colloquially "A Exams"; see below, although this requirement, too, can be waived upon petition).

Diagnostic exam: Entering students take an individual diagnostic exam at the beginning of their first semester of residency. The exam consists of harmonization and aural dictation exercises, sight singing, realizing figured bass at the keyboard, and keyboard sight reading. If any issues are noted, the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) will discuss possible options with individual students.

Language study: The Field of Music requires reading proficiency in two foreign languages pertinent to the student's area of specialization. **This requirement must be satisfied before attempting the special areas portion of the A Exams.** Students who have not already gained proficiency in two suitable languages are advised to begin this work during the summer before they arrive at Cornell. German, French, Italian, and Spanish exams are given regularly by the Graduate Field; exams in other languages may

be requested as appropriate, and arranged with suitable faculty outside the music department, in consultation with the DGS. Native speakers of languages other than English may submit a written request to the Graduate Field to waive one language requirement if their native language will likely be appropriate for their dissertation research.

Graduate language exams test for reading comprehension of substantial pieces of prose and for ability to translate accurately shorter passages of prose and poetry. Sample exams are available in the Music Library. Exams are generally offered during the Fall orientation period and, if needed, at another time during the year.

Courses: During the first two years (4 semesters) students are expected to take graduate research seminars with at least 6 different music faculty members, within the guidelines described below. The distribution of faculty members ensures a broad grounding in topical areas and methodologies, and a sufficient number of seminar research papers from which the student will choose one to revise for the General Exam (see below). This policy also allows time for students to take courses outside the music department. During the third year, students should take at least two seminars; there are no formal requirements for the fourth year and beyond, although students are encouraged to enroll in seminars of interest.

Course/distribution requirements:

As part of the 6 required seminars, students must take:

- 1) The introductory course on Research and Critical Methodologies is team-taught by the Music Librarian and a musicologist or ethnomusicologist, and typically taken in the first semester of residency;
- 2) at least one course on an ethnomusicological topic and 3) at least one course on EITHER a topic of music analysis OR a popular music topic.

Graduate seminars are normally taken for a letter grade, but it is possible to take one research seminar per semester on an S/U basis, with the instructor's permission; students taking the S/U option are required to participate fully in the seminar, but are not required to write the final paper.

Students are required to submit what they consider to be their best seminar paper from their first year of residency at the beginning of their third semester. Students will receive written feedback on their submission and their overall performance in seminars during their first year, reflecting their progress during the first year and suggesting any areas for improvement. Students are required to take the first part of their A Exams during the week preceding the beginning of their fifth semester of study, and the Special Areas Exam (part two of the A Exams) no later than the end of their sixth semester.

Recommended schedule:

Year 1: Seminars: 3 plus 3 (may include a language; discuss with the DGS)

Summer 1: language study, if the language requirement is not yet satisfied

Year 2: Seminars: at least 2 plus 2; teaching

Summer 2: Generals exam study

Year 3: General qualifying exam at beginning of year; Special Areas Exam at end of year. Seminars: at least 1 plus 1; teaching. Begin to work on dissertation area as well as prepare for Special Areas Exam.

Summer 3: prepare dissertation proposal and topics for Special Fields exam

Year 4*: Special Field Exam in August prior to the start of the semester; teaching plus optional seminar; dissertation research and writing

Summer: dissertation research and writing

Year 5: Dissertation research and writing

*Note: One of the two post-A's years (Years 4 and 5) will include teaching duties; the choice of which is made by the Department Chair in consultation with the DGS.

Special Committee: Each graduate student's program is supervised by a "Special Committee" of professors. Although the Field as a whole sets policies, it is the Special Committee that certifies that the various requirements for graduate degrees have been satisfied. The Special Committee of a doctoral candidate comprises three or four professors who are members of the Graduate Faculty; each student selects the members of his or her Committee, subject to their agreement. Every Committee comprises a Chair and two or three "minor members." The Chair always represents the major subject. Two minor members also represent official subjects or concentrations (see "Graduate minor" below). Retired professors with the status of Graduate School Professor may co-chair a committee; however, a second co-chair from the active faculty must also be chosen.

If students wish formal supervision in an area that is not adequately represented at Cornell, they may, with the approval of the Special Committee, petition the Graduate School to permit the appointment of an authority from outside Cornell. **Students must have three Cornell members** on the Special Committee; the outside authority serves as an additional member. All decisions regarding the composition of the Committee are subject to the approval of the entire Committee.

Graduate Major Subject and Concentration: The Field of Music includes two major subjects, each with one or more associated "concentrations" that represent our three degree programs. As a Ph.D. student, the major subject and concentration is "musicology." By contrast, the major subject for D.M.A. students is "music"; their concentration will be either "composition" or "performance practice." Below is a list of the current faculty and their concentrations.

Musicology/Ethnomusicology

Appert, Boettcher, Harris-Warrick, Hicks, Holst-Warhaft, Madrid, Moseley, Peraino, Piekut, Pinch, Pond, Richards, Yearsley, Zaslav

Music Performance

Bjerken (piano), Richards (organ), Yearsley (organ, harpsichord, clavichord), Harris-Warrick, Zaslav.

Musical Composition: Ernste, Papalexandri-Alexandri, Sierra

Theory of Music: Ernste, Krumhansl, Moseley, Sierra

Note: there is much confusion about the difference between a “subject” and a “concentration.” The Special Committee form asks for a faculty member’s “concentration.” This is a category that is recognized and tracked by the legislation of the State of New York and represents our degree programs. For most faculty members in the Field of Music, **the concentration will be the same as the subject.** The one exception is the concentration “Performance Practice.” Professors Bilson and Bjerken should be listed with this concentration; Professors Harris-Warrick, Richards, Yearsley, and Zaslav may be listed with this concentration, or with “musicology”

Students must make sure that their committee members, whatever the Graduate Field, represent an official **concentration**. The “Academics” page of the Graduate School website has a link to a PDF file listing officially recognized “Fields, Subjects, and Concentrations.”

Graduate minors: students in the Field of Music are required to have **one** minor subject of study, represented by at least one member on the special committee, and course work in that area as deemed suitable by that committee member. In addition to the two major subjects (music and musicology) the Field also includes three minor subjects: music performance, musical composition, and theory of music. The graduate minor can be chosen among the four distinct subjects within the Field of Music, which are 1) musicology/ethnomusicology 2) musical performance 3) theory of music 4) musical composition. A graduate minor subject may also be taken in an area of study outside of the Field of Music, such as Comparative Literature, Psychology, History, English. Some academic programs, such as the Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program (FGSS), offer graduate minors as well.

Those who hold minor member status on the Graduate Faculty may only participate as a minor member of the committee. Students may also petition the Field for permission to include as a minor member of the committee other members of the Music Department faculty who are not on the Graduate Faculty (e.g., Professors, A. Kim, C. Kim, or R. Isaacs).

During students’ first year, the DGS, acting as temporary Chair, will sign the necessary forms and can offer advice about forming the Committee. **Students must choose at least a Committee Chair by the beginning of their third semester;** ideally, the entire committee

will be established then, which must in any case happen before the end of the third semester. The most effective way to get to know the professors in the Field is to take courses with them or work with them independently. A professor's participation should not be taken for granted; any professor may decline to serve on any Committee. Requests to serve should be preceded by extended acquaintance and prior consultation.

The Field requires that students meet with their Special Committee every semester; it is the student's responsibility to organize the meetings.

Students may change the membership of their Special Committees if their academic focus changes or if other circumstances warrant a reformulation. Unless students have already passed the second part of the A exam (see below), no special permission is required except that of the remaining and new members of the reformulated Committee. (The DGS must also sign the form, so that the Field as a whole understands the reasons for the change.)

Admission-to-Candidacy Exam (General and Special Areas): The A Exam consists of two parts: the General Exam and the Special Areas Exam. The purpose of both exams is to assure professional competency in scholarship, teaching, and public presentations. Students will be able to demonstrate their knowledge and critical skills in written and oral form, developing a body of polished scholarly work and exercising their skills at oral discussion and argument.

The purpose of the General Exam is to develop a portfolio of six topics that reflect your course work in seminars, teaching interests, and a certain breadth of knowledge of repertoires and scholarly issues in order to be broadly conversant with your chosen subfield of musicology, ethnomusicology, or music theory. The purpose of the Special Area Exam is to develop special expertise in the larger area that circumscribes the dissertation topic, as well as one secondary area (the minor).

Paperwork to schedule the Special Areas segment of the A Exam **must** be sent to the Graduate School at least 7 days in advance of the exam, and the report of the exam **must** be sent within 3 days of completing the exam. If a committee member must participate remotely, a petition must be filed with the Graduate School in advance of the exam. The Graduate Field Assistant is available to assist with these requirements and to ensure that forms are submitted in a timely manner.

Cornell's committee-driven system means that minor variations to the exam structure outlined below may take place as deemed appropriate by the committee; major diversion from this structure may require approval from the Graduate Field.

I. Generals: to be taken no later than the start of the 5th semester

The entire cohort will take this exam at the same time, during the week prior to the start of their fifth semester. This exam consist of 4 parts

i) One revised seminar paper

In consultation with the committee, the student will choose one seminar paper from among those written in the first four semesters. In most cases this seminar paper will have originated in a departmental graduate seminar; exceptions to this are at the discretion of the committee. In revising the seminar paper, the student is expected not only to incorporate suggestions received from the seminar professor, but also to significantly clarify and polish arguments, address historical, critical, and / or disciplinary contexts, and expand the scope, bibliography, and repertoire list as appropriate. In the course of revising, students are encouraged to seek further feedback from members of their committee, the seminar professor, or other appropriate faculty. The expanded bibliography should define an area somewhat broader than the paper (such as a historical period, geo-political area, genre, or critical method) as well as the current state of research. Students will be asked to talk about these larger historical- critical contexts in the oral exam (see below).

This portion of the exam is designed to give the student practice in the kind of revision required of any peer-reviewed article, as well as potentially lead to the publication of an article prior to entering the job market. The revised seminar paper is due least two weeks prior to the Exam date.

ii) One annotated undergraduate-level syllabus NOT RELATED TO a seminar they have taken

In consultation with the student's committee, this syllabus can be designed for a general non-music major audience, or an upper division music major audience. Annotation means that a written justification of the lecture topics, readings, writing, listening, and viewing assignments must accompany the outline of the class. Textbook chapters may be assigned but finding supplemental reading is required. The student should have familiarity with all assigned reading and listening, viewing, and should be prepared to be questioned on these items during the oral portion of the exam. This syllabus can be used as draft for the Randel fellowship, incorporating feedback received during the oral.

iii) Four shorter essays written over one weekend (defined as Friday 9:00 AM to Monday 11:59 PM (closed book/open note))

In consultation with the committee, the students will determine **four additional topics** that fall within the categories listed below, prepare repertoire lists of **ten** representative pieces per topic, and assemble bibliographies relevant to the chosen topics. One of the four essays (but no more than one) can be related to a seminar the student has taken. The final bibliographies and repertoire lists must be approved by the committee no later than two month prior to the weekend of the exam. At the discretion of the committee, one or two topics chosen for the Generals can overlap with essay questions developed in the Special Areas.

During the exam period, students will be given one question for each of the topics no later than Friday 9:00 AM of the weekend period. All essays are due to all committee members (usually as electronic attachments) by 11:59 PM Monday.

This portion of the exam is designed to ensure that the student has a solid knowledge of a broad but defined repertoire of music and scholarship, and a facility of thinking and writing about music that will allow the student to be conversant within the field as a whole. Successful essays will draw on specific examples from the paired repertoire lists to anchor arguments, and will demonstrate a familiarity with the classic and current scholarship on the chosen topic.

iv) A two-hour oral exam covering all the components of parts i-iii (revised seminar paper, syllabus, and four topics)

The student may be asked question on all bibliography and repertory items submitted by the student to the committee in conjunction with parts i-iii. Drop the needle or score identification is fair game: 'identification' taken loosely to identify and describe key stylistic markers etc.

This portion of the exam is designed to ensure that the student has the requisite skills of being able to craft on-the-spot oral explanations, arguments, and analyses required for the profession in the form of job interviews, Q&A, and teaching. It is highly recommended that students rehearse oral exams with their peers.

Categories for General Exam Topics

- Medieval
- Renaissance
- The long 17th century (chronological range dependent on topic)
- The long 18th century (chronological range dependent on topic)
- The long 19th century (chronological range dependent on topic)
- 20th-21st century
- Performance practice
- Popular Music
- Non-Western Area Musics
- Ethnomusicological methods and theory
- Music Theory and Analysis
 - Music and Constructions of Identity (including Gender, Sexuality, Class, Race, Nation, Ethnicity, Geographic Regions)
 - Critical Theory and/or Aesthetics and Criticism (including Sound Studies, Improvisation Studies, and other interdisciplinary configurations)

II. Special Areas: to be taken no later than the end of the 6th semester

i) Three long essays written over the course of a week each, on three questions each developed with a specific committee member

Students will develop bibliographies, repertoire lists, and probing topical questions for three areas under the supervision three different committee members. One essay topic must represent the graduate minor subject; the other two essay topics should relate to the student's conceived area of specialty and provide a context for the student's dissertation topic or associated teaching interests.

At the end of a designated period of development and study, three successive weeks of one month (usually August) will be devoted to generating the essays. Essay length will be based on one week of writing on each question (one week = Monday 9:00 AM through Friday 11:59 PM, with two 2 days “rest”). Books and notes may be used. Essays should be submitted to the committee in succession, at the end of the designated week of writing for that topic.

ii) Dissertation proposal

The PhD thesis, or dissertation, is a substantial work displaying independent thought and research on an original topic in any area of musical study, including aesthetics, analysis, criticism, ethnomusicology, history, and performance practice. (Note: The dissertation is generally written under the supervision of the Chair, but a minor member may be the most active supervisor of the dissertation; the nature and extent of minor members' participation varies according to individual circumstances).

The dissertation proposal is due at the same time as the last essay. The proposal should include at least:

- 1) A proposed topic for the PhD thesis with a clearly argued rationale for its relevance and contribution to the field
- 2) A scholarly context in the form of a preliminary literature review (be sure to survey other dissertations registered with [Doctoral Dissertations in Musicology \[DDM\]](#))
- 3) An annotated chapter outline and an outline of a research and writing schedule
- 4) A preliminary bibliography (more expansive than the literature review)

Drafts of introductions or other chapters are also desirable, but not required.

iii) A two to three-hour oral examination on covering the topics of the essays and the dissertation proposal. Students will be expected to show an in-depth knowledge of the musical repertory, the important scholars past and present, current issues of their chosen areas of expertise, and to demonstrate a facility with oral presentation and argument. Scores and/or texts chosen by the Special Committee may be discussed in the exam, and will be given to students shortly before the exam.

The Final Examination (B exam), also known as the thesis defense

After the student has written and revised a complete draft of the PhD thesis, the student must complete two portions of a dissertation defense (known as the B exam in Graduate School documents). This consists of two parts:

- 1) A public colloquium of 45-50 minutes on a topic drawn from the dissertation, to be given during the same semester that the student plans to submit the entire thesis to the Special Committee.

- 2) A formal meeting with the student's Special Committee to defend the dissertation.
Students are expected to submit a complete draft of the thesis - including an abstract not to exceed 600 words - to all members of their committee six weeks before their defense, unless otherwise specified by the Committee.

Both parts of the dissertation defense must be announced to the Graduate Field no later than 7 days in advance of the dates; the thesis defense must also be scheduled with the Graduate School **at least 7 days in advance of the exam**, and the results must be submitted **within 3 days of the exam**. Ideally the public colloquium should take place during the regular departmental colloquium time as part of that series of lectures; therefore the student will need to submit a title and abstract to the Lecture Committee one semester in advance to facilitate scheduling. Exceptions due to scheduling conflicts will be accommodated.

[Note: the Thesis and Dissertation Guidebook, as well as formatting guidelines may be found at <http://www.gradschool.cornell.edu/thesis-and-dissertation> .]

A Exam Quick Guide:

Day 1: General Exam (1+1+4+oral)

- 1 seminar paper rewritten
- 1 syllabus NOT RELATED TO a seminar
- 4 shorter essays based on 4 topics, each with 10 representative pieces (**closed book/open note**)
 - 1 of the 4 essays (but no more than 1) can be related to a seminar taken
 - The four shorter essays should be written **over a weekend (defined as Friday 9:00 AM to Monday 11:59 PM)**
- Oral exam (2 hours)

Day 2: Special Field: (3+1+oral)

- 3 long essays, one tied to each committee member; 1 WEEK of writing on each
- A completed dissertation proposal.**
- Oral examination (2-3 hour)

Timing:

The General exam must be taken in August on the weekend BEFORE the first week of classes in the third year, with the orals to follow the next week.

Special Fields exams: The Grad School stipulates that the A exam (i.e. the completion of the Special Field Exam) must occur BEFORE the beginning of the seventh semester (i.e. year 4). Thus: writing in weeks 1-3 of the August before the seventh semester; orals in orientation week or week 1. Also possible: Writing in weeks 1-3 of May of the sixth semester; orals at end of May.

<http://gradschool.cornell.edu/requirements/exams/exams-phds>