

Degree Guidelines

Doctor of Philosophy: Music Education

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PhD Degree: General Description

The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree, with music education as a field of specialization, is offered through the Graduate School for students who demonstrate superior commitment to the music education profession and scholarly promise. This degree program requires that individuals think abstractly, generalize knowledge, apply research results to areas of specialization, and communicate effectively in both oral and written forms. Course work emphasizes the study of historical, philosophical, psychological and sociological foundations of music education, the theoretical and pedagogical principles of music teaching and learning, curriculum development, and research techniques. Graduates typically will pursue careers in music education at the college level or supervisory positions in elementary and secondary schools.

Admission Criteria

Educational preparation equivalent to the Bachelor of Music Education and Master of Music Education degrees awarded by the University of Colorado Boulder and at least three years of successful K-12 public or private school teaching experience are prerequisites for admission to the PhD program in music education. In addition to the music education essay required for all music education graduate program degree applicants, PhD applicants must also submit an example of their scholarly writing (major research paper, thesis or a published article), and a video of their public school teaching (recorded within the past three years) as part of the application file. Prospective students must also schedule an interview with faculty (on-campus is preferred). Although the primary emphasis in the PhD program is on scholarship and research, applicants also are expected to have attained an acceptable level of musicianship.

GRE scores (verbal, quantitative, and analytical portions of the general test) are required for

Intermediate Statistics

Students are required to take Intermediate Statistical Methods (EDUC 7316 or RSEM7110, 3 credit hours). This course is offered Spring semester of odd-numbered years in the School of Education, dependent on enrollment. The course is also offered every Fall semester at the University of Colorado

Degree Procedures

I. Preliminary Examinations

Students accepted into the PhD program in Music Education must complete preliminary exams in Music Theory, Aural Skills and Musicology or have completed equivalent coursework during their Masters degree program. The music education department chair will review incoming PhD student transcripts for preliminary exam course equivalency. Course equivalency will be considered separately for music theory, aural skills, musicology and ethnomusicology. Students need to have earned a B- or higher in a course in order for prior coursework to fulfill the preliminary exam requirement.

Students who fail sections of the preliminary exams must retake those sections the following semester or complete appropriate remedial course work. All required preliminary exams must be passed before students will be considered eligible to take the doctoral comprehensive exam.

II. Plan of Study

During the second semester of study, or no later than the semester during which the 18th graduate credit is earned, students must provide the music education faculty with a Plan of Study, which consists of a completed Advising Checklist with semester-by-semester planned courses to fulfill the degree requirements. Students are required to submit their Plan of Study/Advising Checklist and semester-by-semester calendar electronically to the department chair and program advisor by March 15 (or by October 15 if submitting in the fall). The PhD advising checklist and a sample completed checklist can be accessed at the [Graduate Advising >> Degrees page](#). Students should list the course number, course name, credits, and semester taken for each course listed as shown in the sample checklist. Please see Section III.

Comprehensive Examinations in this document for information on comprehensive examinations committee members who need to be listed on the advising checklist. The music education faculty, in cooperation with the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies, is responsible for approving the Plan of Study.

III. Comprehensive Examinations

During the final semester in which the final pre-dissertation coursework will be completed, students may apply for admission to candidacy and make arrangements to take the comprehensive examinations after coursework is complete. Doctoral comprehensive examinations consist of two components—one written and the other oral. The two components must be accomplished in succession in separate days.

Comprehensive examination committee members include three music education faculty members (with the program advisor serving as chair); one College of Music faculty member (outside of music education) who has instructed the PhD student in at least one course; and one University of Colorado faculty member (outside of the College of Music) who has instructed the PhD student in at least one course. Students may petition the graduate music education faculty for an exception to the normal committee membership, such as inclusion of committee members who have not instructed the PhD student in a course.

The comprehensive oral examination may last as long as three hours. After committee members have had at least three weeks to read and evaluate the written component of the comprehensive exam, it is appropriate for students to consult directly with them over preparation for the oral component. At the conclusion of the oral examination, the student's committee will discuss in private the evaluation of both the written and oral examination, and each committee member will indicate a "pass" or "fail" on the evaluation form provided. Students must receive a "pass" from a majority of the committee. Students who fail the comprehensive examination may attempt it once more after a period of time determined by the committee. On occasion, the student's advisory committee will grant a "conditional pass," on the comprehensive exam. The student's committee chair, along with the advisory committee, will determine what conditions must

such as committee members from other universities may be approved by the music education graduate faculty. While the comprehensive examinations and dissertation committees usually consist of the same faculty, it is possible to modify dissertation committee membership based on faculty expertise.

Following topic approval from the preliminary proposals, the student will then develop a full proposal which consists of chapters 1-3 of the dissertation, references, and appendices. Note that the full proposal must be presented to the dissertation committee for a defense, which will

the dissertation in the fall of the fourth year while employed as a full-time faculty member at a peer institution or in K-12 schools; most PhD students do not continue to receive assistantship support for a fourth year.

^Please note that students are considered a candidate by the graduate school the semester after the comprehensive exam is successfully completed (written AND oral). As a result, students registering for more than 5 credits of dissertation during the last semester of coursework will need to be sure the total dissertation credit registration during the fall of the third year does not exceed 15 credits when combined with the total dissertation credits registered during the last semester of coursework.

Students may petition to alter this typical dissertation credit registration schedule if the student and dissertation advisor determine a longer dissertation timeline will be necessary given the scope of the project.

Final grades for the dissertation are determined by the faculty committee. Upon completion, the IP grades are replaced by the letter grade (A, B, etc.) assigned by the dissertation committee. Doctoral students are required to complete all degree requirements within six years from the date they start course work in the program, but petitions approved by the dissertation advisor and Associate Dean may be filed in the Graduate School if an extension is needed and justifiable.

Further Information

PhD students are urged to consult the [PhD Student Checklist-Final Stages of the Degree Program](#). This document contains more specific information on required paperwork to be submitted to the graduate office, preparation for comprehensive exams, and dissertation completion.

Appendix A: PhD Student Checklist for Final Stages of Degree Program

1. Preparing

