

Musicology Comprehensive Exam Guide
School of Music
University of Missouri
(Updated January 2023)

To Prepare in Advance

Score Preparation

Create a portfolio of seven compositions you find to be compelling expressions of a representative historical style for each of the seven so-called eras in Western Music: Medieval, Renaissance, Baroque, Classic, Romantic, Modern, and Post-Modern. You will be asked to defend your choices and explain each work in terms of its stylistic features and perceived importance for the period in question during the oral exam.

Syllabus Creation

Intended to offer a practical experience with a target audience that the student would likely confront in their professional career. This assignment also requires critical knowledge-appropriate decisions based on the target audience at each juncture of the task.

Design the university course assigned to you by your committee according to the instructions below:

- 1000-level course for non-music undergraduates at the University of Missouri
- Standard sixteen-week course, meeting MWF for 50 minutes per class
- Syllabus should include course objectives, learning outcomes, required textbook, additional readings, and listening materials (indicated in Chicago style format), as well as a tentative schedule of class/weekly topics with associated composers/pieces.
- Include four assignments (instructions and rubrics for grading)
- Include a written unit exam (with a combination of multiple choice, true/false, fill-in-the-blank, and/or short answer questions) as well as a listening component (with rubric for grading)

Submit your syllabus and assignment materials via email to your committee chair at least 48 hours before your oral exam. You will be asked about your materials and pedagogical strategies during the exam.

The Oral Exam

Ensures that the student completing the course requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Musicology has an adequate command of basic historical information about the history of Western Music and can draw on that knowledge to discuss a collection of scores and terms provided at the time of the exam.

60 Minutes before the Oral Exam

- You will be presented with a collection of twelve scores and a list of fifteen terms one hour before the oral exam begins. No access to the Internet or other help aids will be allowed as you are preparing.
- You must select eleven scores and twelve terms to discuss with the committee.
- Make sure you place the selected scores into chronological order by composition date from earliest to most recent.
- Prepare for your discussion by considering and making any notes you wish in terms of matters of style, historical context, possible time period, and composer of the work (as well as the name of the piece if you recognize it).
- You are allowed to consult these notes for the oral exam.

During the Oral Exam (two hours)

- First part: discuss the musical scores and terms you were given for the oral exam
- Second part: discuss your portfolio of scores prepared in advance
- Third part: discuss your syllabus materials prepared in advance

Results: Exams will be graded pass/fail. If the student does not pass the exam, they will be allowed to retake it during the next semester (summer not included).