I. Goals and Purpose of the Exam

Oral comprehensive examinations provide a forum for MM and MA students to demonstrate:

- A command of content in the major area of study.
- An ability to apply appropriate historical knowledge and theoretical skills to the major area of study.

II. Take-Home Assignments/Preparation

See IV. Oral Exam, B. Pedagogy Questions below for details about what to prepare prior to the day of the exam; as well as questions which you will receive 3 days before the exam.

III. Before the Exams (30 minutes beforehand)

Score Excerpts: You will be given three pedagogical pieces to evaluate. You will be able to take the scores to a practice room piano, and you may make notes on the scores to bring with you to the exam. You may not access the internet, the library, the ped library, or other reference sources (cell phones & computers will be collected when scores are given to you).

IV. Oral Exam (60 minutes)

A. Score Evaluation (20 min): You will be expected to speak perceptively for about 6 minutes on each piece, providing this information:

1) Place in a stylistic or historic period, explaining what elements led you to this decision
2) Identify any performance practice or technical issues that might be unique to the piece
3) Discuss the structure of the piece in terms of form, harmony, texture, rhythm, phrasing, and any other salient features
4) Name the genre of composition and guess the composer
5) Discuss which technical and musical aspects you would address when introducing this piece to a student. How would you problem-solve any potentially challenging spots? What would be the reasons for assigning this piece? What level would you place it in the Magrath system?
6) The committee may ask follow-up questions about your remarks.

B. Pedagogy Questions (30 min): Three days before the exam, you will be given three specific questions for your orals, drawn from the list below. You may prepare these in
advance. At the exam you will be expected to take approximately ten minutes to respond to each one without notes. You will be evaluated on the clarity of your response and your ability to combine theoretical knowledge with practical applications. Your answers should demonstrate a thorough knowledge of pedagogical materials for each level as well as your thoughtful responses on your teaching experience thus far. Be prepared to refer to specific examples of method books, resources, or works by historical and pedagogical composers.

Topics will be chosen from these broad areas:

- Methods and materials for the elementary level
- Repertoire for the intermediate and early advanced levels
- Characteristics of each stylistic period
- Teaching strategies and comprehensive curriculum building for private and group piano instruction
- Historical and contemporary piano technique resources
- Your own research topic for your final project

C. (10 min) Members of the committee may ask additional summarizing questions about your presentations.

V. Results

Exams will be graded pass/fail, and no follow-up projects to remedy weaknesses exhibited during the exam will be permitted. If a student does not pass the exam, he/she will be allowed one retake the next semester (not including summer).