



UNC  
**GREENSBORO**  
School of Music

# **Graduate Handbook:**

## Doctor of Musical Arts

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# *DMA – Doctor of Musical Arts in Music*

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The DMA in Music requires a minimum of 90 semester hours of post-baccalaureate course work (60 at UNCG). Up to 30 hours earned in a master's program from a National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) accredited graduate school may be applied to the elective portion of this degree. These credits may count toward any elected cognates or help to satisfy competencies with the approval of the Doctoral Advisory Committee and the Graduate Program Director in accordance with the academic regulations of The Graduate School. These credits may not be used to satisfy any non-elective requirements. A student who received a master's degree in music at UNCG must successfully present a doctoral audition/interview to be admitted into the doctoral program.

The plan of study is developed individually in consultation with the student's advisory committee. At least 75% of all course work (36 credits), exclusive of the dissertation, must be at the 600- or 700-level. A music theory diagnostic examination is administered prior to the entrance semester and must be successfully passed by the conclusion of the program.

## **DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

The following 60 hours must be completed at UNCG (the Graduate School transfer credit policy applies, for details visit: <https://catalog.uncg.edu/academic-regulations-policies/graduate-policies/>)

### ***Performance Studies (18 hours minimum)***

- MUP 751 – Performance Studies
  - *Students enrolling in more than one credit of MUP 751 must simultaneously enroll in at least three credits of non-performance, non-ensemble music course work.*

### ***Reading/Writing/Speaking Intensive Courses (9 hours minimum)***

- One (1) musicology/ethnomusicology course:
  - MUS 706 – Seminar in Music History (topics vary each semester)
- One (1) music theory course (select one of the following):
  - MUS 639/739 – Tonal Counterpoint
  - MUS 660/760 – Rhythm and Meter
  - MUS 662/762 – Schenkerian Analysis
  - MUS 664/764 – Theory & Analysis of West. Euro. Post-Tonal Music & Related Traditions
  - MUS 692/792 – Advanced Analysis of West. Euro. Tonal Music and Related Traditions
  - MUS 707 – Seminar in Musical Analysis
- One (1) other course chosen from the above listed courses OR the following:
  - MUE 605/709 – The Measurement of Musical Behavior
  - MUE 618/718 – Psychology of Music
  - MUE 627/727 – Issues in Multicultural Music Education
  - MUE 633/733 – Music for Exceptional People
  - MUE 634/734 – Contemporary Trends in Music Education
  - MUE 645/745 – Teaching Elementary Music: Theory and Practice
  - MUE 650/751 – Seminar in Music Education
  - MUE 653/753 – Music Supervision

- MUE 659/759 – Philosophy of Music
- MUP 750 – College Teaching: The Tenure Track

***Electives (21 hours minimum)***

***Dissertation (12 hours minimum)***

- MUP 799 – Dissertation

***Required Competencies***

Satisfactory completion of competencies is determined by the Doctoral Advisory Committee.

- Area Literature
- Area Pedagogy
- Language (if required by area, see below for details)
- Research (Students who have not earned a B or higher in a bibliography/research course at the master's level from a NASM accredited school must take MUE 601 or MUS 602.)

***Required Cognates***

All students are required to develop a cognate that comprises 12 credit hours from any one area of study. These credits may come from the master's degree, the required doctoral courses, or any other courses taken at UNCG as electives. If a student applies for and completes one of our Post-Baccalaureate Certificates or Post-Master's Certificates, this fulfills the cognate requirement. For more information on our certificate programs, please see the appropriate section in the Graduate Bulletin. Satisfactory completion of cognates is determined by the Doctoral Advisory Committee.

***Dissertation***

The dissertation for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree is comprised of three major sections: a performance portion, a written portion, and an oral defense.

1. *Performance.* Three recitals are required for all DMA students to fulfill the performance portion of the DMA Dissertation. **Students must be registered for MUP 751 and MUP 799 each semester during which a dissertation recital is presented.** Each recital must be evaluated by every member of the Doctoral Advisory Committee through the online evaluation rubric tool: <https://vpa.uncg.edu/music/evaluation-rubrics/doctor-of-musical-arts-performance-degree-recitals/>
2. *Doctoral Document.* The written portion of the dissertation is a document that represents original scholarship, is carried out at the highest level of scholarship, and is relevant to the particular major field's repertory, pedagogy, history, or practice. (see the Graduate School's information on the preparation and submission of dissertations at the following link: <https://grs.uncg.edu/the-graduate-school-unc-greensboro/enrolled-students/thesis-and-dissertation/>)
3. *Defense of the Document.* The doctoral candidate who has successfully completed all other requirements for the degree must defend the dissertation orally (Final Oral Examination).

***Required Examinations***

- Diagnostic
- Continuation Jury
- Preliminary (Written and Oral)
- Final Oral (Dissertation Defense)

# DMA Timeline and Checklist

(based on three-year timeline)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ ID: \_\_\_\_\_ Concentration: \_\_\_\_\_

## First Year

**1. Diagnostic exams.** The music theory diagnostic exam is administered during orientation week (the week immediately preceding the start of classes each fall and spring semester).

**2. Doctoral Advisory Committee (DAC).** The [Doctoral Advisory Committee Appointment form](#) should be submitted before the student has completed 18 credit hours of coursework. No dissertation recitals may occur until the DAC is approved. Once the DAC is in place, discussion should begin regarding the student's research interests.

**3. Plan of Study (POS).** The first draft of the [Plan of Study form](#) should be submitted before the student has completed 18 credit hours of coursework. This must be completed at the same time as the DAC Appointment Form.

**4. Doctoral Continuation Jury.** The Doctoral Continuation Jury must occur by the end of the first year of study. The Doctoral Continuation Jury is assessed by the Doctoral Advisory Committee using the [Continuation Jury Evaluation form](#). The major professor will advise the student if there are area-level continuation exams that must be passed before scheduling the Doctoral Continuation Jury. Upon completion of the Doctoral Continuation Jury, additional juries may be required at the discretion of the DAC Chair and/or the Area Coordinator.

**5. Research Competency.** A student whose transcript does not list a music bibliography course from a NASM-accredited institution with a grade of B (3.0) or higher must take MUE 601 or MUS 602 to fulfill this requirement.

## First / Second Year

**6. Deficiencies.** Music theory deficiency must be removed no later than the beginning of the second year of course work. Students who have not removed deficiencies by this point will be removed from the program.

**7. Competencies.** Students should ensure they are satisfying the literature and pedagogy competencies in the requisite area of study and the research competency. The DAC is responsible for certifying competencies.

**8. Dissertation Recitals.** The student must complete at least two dissertation recitals prior to the start of the third year of study. Each member of the DAC must submit the [DMA Recital Evaluation Rubric](#) for each recital.

## Second / Third Year

**9. Cognate(s).** Students should ensure they are completing the required cognate or are pursuing a Post-Baccalaureate Certificate (PBC) or Post-Master's Certificate (PMC). The Doctoral Advisory Committee is responsible for certifying cognates. Any coursework transferred in to fulfill the cognate only must also comply with grade standards for the doctoral degree; no course for which the student received less than a B will be counted toward the cognate.

**10. Language Requirements.** Students in Voice, Collaborative Piano, and Choral Conducting must satisfy the language requirements as outlined in the Graduate Bulletin and DMA Handbook. Instrumental Conductors are assessed in the Preliminary Exams.

**11. Doctoral Preliminary/Comprehensive Exams.** The Preliminary Exams comprise a written portion followed later by an oral portion. The examination is preliminary in that you must pass both the written and oral portions before being officially admitted to candidacy for the degree by the Graduate School. Preliminary Exams may not be taken until deficiencies are removed, any language requirements are fulfilled, and all required competencies are certified. All transfer credits and competencies will be examined as part of the preliminaries. The Written Preliminary Exam should be taken after roughly 2/3 of the course work has been completed and two dissertation recitals have been performed. To stay on track for graduation in three years, students should schedule the Preliminary Exams no later than the fifth semester. The oral examination should be scheduled within one month following the evaluation of the written examination. **Beginning in the Fall 2025 semester, the Written Preliminary exam will be given over the Fall/Spring Break holiday on Saturday, Monday, and Tuesday.** Students should submit the initial request for preliminary exams to the Graduate Student Services Associate (Dr. Nick Lewis, [nelewis@uncg.edu](mailto:nelewis@uncg.edu)) by the end of the first week of class in the semester you are intending to take the Preliminary Exams. Please see the section on Preliminary Exams for more detailed instructions. [Doctoral Preliminary Exam Request form.](#)

**12. Approval of Written Preliminary Exam.** The Doctoral Advisory Committee chair formulates a balanced exam and forwards the exam to the Graduate Student Services Associate, which is then approved by the full committee. [Written Preliminary Exam Preapproval Form.](#)

**13. Prepare for and take Written Preliminary Exam.** Your committee is responsible for giving you guidance as you prepare for your Written Preliminary Exam. The level of guidance varies by committee.

**14. Evaluation of the Written Preliminary Exam.** If the Doctoral Advisory Committee unanimously evaluates the Written Preliminary Exam as Satisfactory, the student may proceed with scheduling the Oral Preliminary Exam. If evaluated Unsatisfactory in one or more areas, the student must retake only the part/s determined unsatisfactory by the DAC. If evaluated Unsatisfactory in its entirety, the student must retake the entire exam after at least one semester has elapsed. No more than one re-examination (whole or part) will be allowed. [DMA Written Preliminary Exam Evaluation Rubric.](#)

**15. Prepare for and take Oral Preliminary Exam.** The oral examination should take place within one month of passing the written examination. It is expected that many of the questions posed during the oral exam will derive from the student's performance on the written examination. However, the **oral**

**examination is not limited** to a repetition of the written questions. Questions on additional matters relevant to the area and cognate(s) will also be posed. The purpose of the orals is to provide an opportunity for students to give evidence of long, thoughtful, and critical consideration of questions related to the area and cognate(s).

**16. Evaluation of the Oral Preliminary Exam.** As with the written preliminary exam, **unanimous approval of the committee** is required for passing the oral examination. Upon completing the examination, the student will be excused while the committee confers. The committee may decide to render individual decisions by open discussion or secret ballot. If there is division within the committee, it is appropriate to discuss evaluations to see if agreement is possible. The entire committee should be present when the student is informed of the decision. If re-examination is required, the student should be advised about deficiencies in knowledge and/or presentation. No more than one re-examination (whole or part) will be allowed. [DMA Oral Preliminary Exam Evaluation Rubric](#).

Upon successful completion of the written comprehensive examination, the committee chair will submit the [Results of Doctoral Comprehensive Examination \(Written\) form](#) to the Graduate School.

Upon successful completion of the oral comprehensive examination, the committee chair will submit the [Results of Doctoral Comprehensive Examination \(Oral\) form](#) to the Graduate School.

### **Third Year**

**17. Dissertation Proposal.** The approved proposal with signed Topic Approval Form is turned in to the Graduate School using the [Dissertation Proposal Approval Form](#). The format for your proposal may be found later in the DMA Handbook (pg. 18-19). Although the Oral Preliminary Exam is considered the finalization of the Preliminary Exam, students who have developed the dissertation proposal prior to the Preliminary Exams are expected to discuss it at this time. If the student chooses to discuss the proposal during the Oral Preliminary Exam, the proposal should be circulated to the committee with enough advance notice for the committee to read and edit the proposal *before* the Oral Preliminary Exam. If this does not occur, then the formal proposal should be circulated to the Doctoral Advisory Committee for approval as soon as possible after the conclusion of the Preliminary Exams (see the Proposal section for more information).

**18. Final Dissertation Recital.** Usually given during third year. [DMA Recital Evaluation Rubric](#)

**19. Application for Graduation.** At the beginning of the semester in which the student plans to graduate, the student should visit the Graduate School website to view all pertinent information regarding graduation, and to file appropriate forms. [Graduate School Graduation Application](#)

**20. File Final Plan of Study.** Be sure the final POS exactly matches your transcript. [Doctoral Plan of Study Revision form](#)

**21. Application for Admission to Candidacy.** The student may submit this form once the following have been successfully completed: all major and cognate required courses, passed Written and Oral Preliminary Exams, any language or competency requirements, and a dissertation topic approval form and proposal that has been approved by the DAC. (Be aware that candidacy is often granted after

the final defense of the dissertation, depending on required course work.) [Application for Admission to Candidacy](#)

**22. Dissertation Document.** In order to provide adequate time for committee input and revisions, students must submit a complete draft of the dissertation document to the Doctoral Advisory Committee chair no later than the end of the first week of classes in the semester you plan to graduate. Students should expect multiple revisions before the document is sent out for Doctoral Advisory Committee review. The Defense Draft must be sent to the rest of the DAC *no fewer than three weeks prior to the scheduled defense*. Students who fail to meet either of these deadlines will not be allowed to defend the doctoral document in that semester.

**23. Schedule the Final Oral Exam.** Upon submission of the completed first draft, the student, in consultation with the DAC, will schedule the final oral exam. AT LEAST TWO WEEKS PRIOR to the final oral exam date, you MUST submit the [Final Oral Examination Schedule Form](#) and Dissertation Abstract to the Graduate School. This will be strictly enforced! Please check the Graduate School Calendar for the FINAL day for Final Oral Exam completion.

**24. Final Oral Exam (Dissertation Defense).** The doctoral candidate who has successfully completed all other requirements for the degree must defend the dissertation orally. At least two weeks prior, the Graduate School will publish the dissertation title and date, time and location of the final oral exam. The exam is open to the public. For options, see p. 18-19 \*NOTE: On the day of the exam, the student must fill out and submit the [Results of the Oral Examination in Defense of Thesis/Dissertation Form](#) to his or her committee chair, who will approve or disapprove using the Graduate School's form. Each member of the DAC must also submit the [DMA Dissertation Defense Evaluation Rubric](#).

**25. File one signed approval copy of dissertation.** \*\* The process for submitting the approval copy of the dissertation to the Graduate School has two components: submitting the signed approval and title pages, and electronically submitting the document. <https://grs.uncg.edu/the-graduate-school-unc-greensboro/enrolled-students/thesis-and-dissertation/>

**26. File FINAL copy of dissertation with the Graduate School.** \*\* After completing the formatting revisions requested by the Graduate School, submit the FINAL electronic copy of the dissertation.

**\*\* You will need to be very DILIGENT, as deadlines pertaining to the dissertation document change each semester. You may access these deadlines and others by viewing the Academic Calendar (<https://reg.uncg.edu/calendars/>) on the Graduate School or Registrar's websites.**

**Students are Responsible for Meeting All Deadlines**

# DMA Guidelines

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## DIAGNOSTIC EXAMINATIONS

Competence in music theory is required of all doctoral students. The diagnostic examination in music theory is administered during the week prior to the start of classes every fall and spring semester. All graduate students new to UNCG are required to take the examination at the earliest possible offering prior to enrollment. Students returning to UNCG are waived from taking the examination if they meet one of the following criteria: 1) the student received an undergraduate degree in music from UNCG and earned a grade of B (3.0) or better on all required courses in the undergraduate music theory sequences; or 2) the student is continuing in a doctoral program at UNCG after previously completing a master's degree at UNCG and passing the diagnostic examinations as a requirement of that degree program.

## DOCTORAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Please discuss the makeup of the DAC committee with your major professor during your first semester of study. The Doctoral Advisory Committee Appointment form should be submitted before the student completes 18 credit hours of coursework. This committee shall be comprised of at least three members of the Graduate Faculty including two from the performance area of the student and a third member decided in consultation with the DAC chair. If a member is selected from outside the Department (School of Music), that person will be considered to be a fourth member of the DAC. The chair must be a Graduate Faculty Member with an Endorsement to Chair. This committee will mentor the student throughout the degree program; approve the Plan of Study; evaluate the Doctoral Continuation Jury, dissertation recital juries (if required), and dissertation recitals; rule on special programmatic decisions and policy applications; certify the completion of all competencies; prepare, approve, and evaluate the preliminary (written and oral) examination; guide the student in the preparation of the topic proposal and written portion of the dissertation; and conduct the final oral examination (dissertation defense). The Doctoral Advisory Committee is approved by the Dean of the Graduate School upon the recommendation of the Graduate Program Director and must be mutually acceptable to the student and all members of the committee. The major professor will serve on the Doctoral Advisory Committee.

The committee chair normally serves as the dissertation advisor. In cases where another committee member is better qualified to advise the written portion of the dissertation because of particular research interests, this added responsibility should be recognized in the acknowledgment section of the document. Furthermore, the dissertation advisor becomes the co-chair of the Doctoral Advisory Committee. Students should contact the Graduate Program Director if an adjustment in committee membership will enhance the depth and scope of the document.

If at any time the advisory committee decreases in number to fewer than three members, an additional member of the graduate faculty must be appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School to bring the number to at least three. The Graduate Program Director coordinates committee appointments and adjustments and is ultimately responsible for ensuring compliance with Graduate School policies.

## DOCTORAL DEGREE PLAN OF STUDY

A Plan of Study (POS) for the doctoral degree is a significant step in successful progress to completion. This POS must be outlined by the student in consultation with the major professor and the Graduate

Program Director and approved by the Doctoral Advisory Committee (DAC) at the earliest practical time, but before the student has completed 18 credit hours of coursework. At this point, the DAC will determine whether competencies have been met, and if not, how they will be satisfied. Determinations will also be made regarding the minor/certificate/cognate option and a tentative topic for the written portion of the dissertation. If changes are made to the Plan of Study, a revised version must be submitted and approved before the student applies for graduation. Failure to secure this revision may hold up the anticipated graduation. Copies of the approved POS must be filed in the student's permanent folder in the Graduate Student Services Office and The Graduate School.

- *STEPS TO COMPLETING THE PLAN OF STUDY:*

1. Meet with the major professor (DAC Chair) to complete the preliminary Plan of Study Worksheet. Find the plan of study for your academic bulletin year here: <https://vpa.uncg.edu/music/apply/music-advising/>
2. Email the completed Plan of Study worksheet to Dr. Nick Lewis, Graduate Student Services Office (nelewis@uncg.edu) and the Doctoral Advisory Committee.
3. Fill out the "Recommendation for Doctoral Advisory/Dissertation Committee Appointment and Plan of Study" form from the Graduate School's website. (<https://grs.uncg.edu/forms/>)
4. Obtain required signatures by all members of the DAC.
5. Return the form to the Graduate Student Services Office, where it will be signed by the Graduate Program Director and submitted by the Graduate Student Services Associate to the Graduate School.

Any subsequent changes to the Plan of Study or DAC must be reported to The Graduate School for approval via the appropriate revision form from the Graduate School's website.

(<https://grs.uncg.edu/forms/>)

### **DOCTORAL CONTINUATION JURY**

Doctoral students will have one significant jury (Continuation Jury) during their first year of study. The Doctoral Continuation Jury must occur by the end of the first year of study and will be assessed by the DAC. Voice and Keyboard require an area faculty hearing before the Doctoral Continuation Jury may be scheduled. The jury is graded pass/fail, with a simple majority required. Failure to pass the Continuation Jury on two successive attempts, regardless of repertory, will result in removal of the student from the DMA degree program. Once the Continuation Jury is passed, students may proceed with dissertation recitals. However, the major professor may request a jury at any point during the remainder of the program. The student, in consultation with the major professor, is responsible for scheduling any jury when all committee members are able to be present.

### **REQUIRED COMPETENCIES**

- *RESEARCH SKILLS COMPETENCY*

Competence in research is required of all doctoral students. A student whose transcript does not list a music bibliography course from a NASM-accredited institution with a grade of B (3.0) or higher must take MUE 601 or MUS 602 to fulfill this requirement. The research competency/skills requirement must be met prior to the Preliminary Examination, and prior to Admission to Candidacy.

#### *- PEDAGOGY COMPETENCY*

Prior to taking the Preliminary Written and Oral Examinations, each DMA student must satisfy the pedagogy competency requirement. The purpose of the requirement is to improve the preparation of doctoral graduates for teaching college-level students. The Doctoral Advisory Committee will determine how the competency in pedagogy can be satisfied. Options may include, but are not limited to the following courses:

- Methods and Materials of Music Reading Instruction (MUE 632)
- Advanced Music Teaching Techniques (MUE 657)
- Jazz Pedagogy (MUP 609)
- Piano Pedagogy I (MUP 612)
- Piano Pedagogy II (MUP 617)
- Seminar in Piano (MUP 620)
- Principles of Vocal Pedagogy (MUP 627)
- Pedagogy of Phonetics (MUP 630)
- Organ Pedagogy (MUP 638)
- Advanced Vocal Pedagogy (MUP 728)
- Practicum in Instrumental Pedagogy (MUP 748)
- Directed Study in Music Performance (MUP 797)
- Pedagogy of Music Theory (MUS 644)

#### *- LITERATURE COMPETENCY*

Prior to taking the preliminary written and oral examination, each DMA student must satisfy the literature competency requirement. The purpose of the literature requirement is to ensure a broad knowledge of the repertory and performance practice in the major area. The DAC will determine how the competency in literature can be satisfied. Options may include, but are not limited to the following courses:

- Piano Literature I (MUP 613)
- Piano Literature II (MUP 614)
- Seminar in Piano (MUP 620)
- Seminar in Choral Literature (MUP 622)
- Song Literature I (MUP 626)
- Song Literature II (MUP 634)
- Band Literature (MUP 636)
- History of Jazz (MUP 663)
- Organ Literature (MUP 668)
- Graduate Seminar in Contemporary Music Performance Practice (MUP 683)
- Directed Study in Music Performance (MUP 797)
- The Symphonic Tradition (MUS 655)
- History of Opera (MUS 665)

#### *- LANGUAGE COMPETENCIES FOR SPECIFIC AREAS (if required)*

**Voice** students will translate passages containing some 175-200 words each in German, French and Italian. **Choral Conducting** and **Collaborative Piano** students will select any two of these languages. The passages will be selected from relatively unfamiliar vocal scores and relevant prose passages, preferably with texts written between approximately 1750 and 1920. A dictionary

may be used. The language exams need not be taken at the same time, but *must precede the Preliminary Written Examination*.

If a student is specializing in some other language (Spanish, Russian, possibly even Swedish or Czech), or anticipates a research project involving literature in such a language, he or she may submit a request to the Doctoral Advisory Committee to substitute this language for one of the others.

In lieu of the language examinations, a student may offer study at the collegiate level through the 102 level (or its equivalent) in any or all of these languages. This study may include courses taken while an undergraduate or master's student, as verified by transcript, or languages taken concurrently with DMA study, either at UNCG or elsewhere.

### **SATISFACTORY PROGRESS TO DOCTORAL DEGREES**

Every doctoral student is expected to register for three credits of MUP 751 and at least one 3-credit hour course (exclusive of 799) every term until all required course work is completed. It is important to note that students must complete the three required dissertation recitals during the 18 hours of required performance studies instruction. The election of performance instruction only (Ensemble and Performance Studies) does not represent satisfactory progress toward a degree and will not be approved, except in the case whereby a student has completed all other required coursework. Part-time enrollment may be permitted under special circumstances; any student electing a lesser load without permission is considered not to be making satisfactory progress toward the degree and may be recommended for dismissal. Students must also register for at least six credit hours (exclusive of dissertation hours) for at least two consecutive semesters, in order to satisfy the Graduate School's requirement for Residency (<https://catalog.uncg.edu/academic-regulations-policies/graduate-policies/>). Note that if a DMA student on assistantship elects only one course in addition to performance studies and finds it necessary to drop that course for any reason, the student will cease to be in good standing and the Graduate School will retract the assistantship.

#### **- TIME LIMITS**

All work beyond the Master's toward the doctoral degree must be completed within seven years from the date of first enrollment. If credits from the Master's degree are to fulfill cognate requirements, they must have been completed within three years prior to the date of first enrollment. Extensions may be granted by the Graduate School on the recommendation of the Doctoral Advisory Committee and the Graduate Program Director. A candidate who does not complete the dissertation (all portions) within seven years of initial enrollment or within three years of achieving candidacy, whichever is longer, may be required to re-take coursework which falls outside the stipulated time frame.

#### **- GRADING**

For the completion of a graduate degree program, an overall minimum average of B (equivalent to 3.0) is required. Grades in all courses applied toward the doctorate must be B (3.0) or better; additional hours must be taken for any hours earned with a grade of B- (2.7) or less. A grade of B or higher is also required for any course that will be used to fulfill a competency, even if the course was taken prior to the student's entrance into the DMA program.

#### **- TRANSFER CREDIT**

In some instances, work done at other institutions may be counted toward the degree, particularly work culminating in a Master's degree from an accredited institution and representing an appropriate area of study. If the student proposes the transfer of credit from another institution, the work for which credit was received must be covered by the Preliminary Examination, and the transfer must be recommended by the DAC (by inclusion on the POS) before the Graduate School will credit the work to the student's doctoral program. In no case will more than one third of non-dissertation course credit beyond the Master's degree be transferred to a UNCG doctoral program. Semester hours only, not grades, may be transferred from other institutions. Any coursework transferred in to fulfill the cognate only must also comply with grade standards for the doctoral degree; no course for which the student received less than a B will be counted toward the cognate.

The following conditions apply to transfer credit for doctoral programs:

1. All credit offered in transfer must have been taken at a NASM-accredited institution.
2. Such work must have been taken within a seven-year period of time. See the *Graduate School Policies and Regulations* for specific details. <https://catalog.uncg.edu/academic-regulations-policies/graduate-policies/>
3. The student must have earned a grade of "B" (3.0) or higher on all transfer credit. In a four-letter grading system, only credit earned with either of the grade of "A" or "B" is transferable.
4. The credit may not have counted directly toward another degree or certificate program. Only additional hours taken beyond the requirements for another degree program are acceptable. Credits that counted directly toward another degree or certificate program may only be used to fulfill the requirements of the competencies or the cognate.
5. The credit must be recorded on an official transcript placed on file with The Graduate School.
6. The credit must be approved both by the DAC (by inclusion on the Plan of Study) and by the Dean of the Graduate School.
7. The credit must be necessary to meet specific degree requirements.

#### - INDEPENDENT STUDY

Students may not register for independent study as a substitute for existing courses. If special research interests warrant independent instruction, enrollment is permitted with the advance approval of the instructor, Director of the School of Music, and Dean of the Graduate School. No more than 15 semester hours of independent study may be included in the Plan of Study, exclusive of the dissertation.

Steps to registration for independent study:

1. Complete the [Outline of Plan for Independent Study form](#). This form must be approved and signed by the Student, Instructor, and Director of the School of Music.
2. Complete the [Permission to Register for Independent Study form](#). This form must be signed and approved by the Student, Instructor, and the Director of the School of Music.
3. Take both completed forms to Dr. Catherine Keen Hock (Room 330, Music Building) who will assign a CRN and Section number to your course, and then submit the forms to the Graduate School and Registrar's Office.

## **DOCTORAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION**

The Preliminary Examination, constructed by the Doctoral Advisory Committee, comprises the written portion and a subsequent oral portion. The examination is rigorous and demanding, and requires synthesis on the part of the student. The questions are often historical, analytical, stylistic, biographical, bibliographical, pedagogical, or contextual in nature. The most successful examinations require the ability to recall, apply, analyze, and evaluate. Many questions deal with performance practices, ornamentation, traditions, history, and pedagogy, or any other substantive matter. Factual questions as well as interpretive questions are included. Any work for which transfer credit is received and all competencies must be included in this examination as well. A student must be enrolled to take the Preliminary Examination.

The Preliminary Examination may be taken when the student has satisfactorily completed all stipulations outlined below:

- All provisions, deficiencies, or special conditions that may have been attached to admittance to the degree program must be removed.
- All competencies must be satisfied.
- The residency requirement must be satisfied.
- The research competency must be satisfied (including language if required).
- Two-thirds of the course work must have been satisfactorily completed.
- DMA students must have satisfactorily performed at least one and no more than two dissertation recitals.

### ***- SCHEDULING THE PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION***

Beginning in the Fall 2025 semester, the Written Preliminary exam for DMA students will be given over the Fall/Spring Break holiday on Saturday, Monday, and Tuesday. The preliminary examinations are scheduled by submitting the [Doctoral Preliminary Exam Request form](#). The written examination period will last three full days; the oral examination will take place over a two-hour period on one day.

### ***- PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION PROCEDURES***

1. The student submits the [Doctoral Preliminary Exam Request form](#) by the end of the first week of class in the semester you intend to take the Preliminary Exams. Scheduling of the oral exam may occur along with scheduling of the written exam, or the committee may choose to schedule the oral exam following the completion of the written exam.
2. The Graduate Student Services Associate, in consultation with the Chair, reviews the file for deficiencies and/or special conditions.
3. The Graduate Student Services Associate requests preparation of the written examination from the Doctoral Advisory Committee and includes a deadline for final preparation.
4. The Doctoral Advisory Committee Chair will coordinate the preparation and approval of the examination. After consultation with the DAC, the Chair will forward the examination (and any necessary scores, recordings, etc.) and a signed [Preliminary Examination Pre-Approval Form](#) (or approval email chain from the committee) to the Graduate Student Services Associate.
5. The Preliminary Written Examination is administered on the confirmed dates.
6. The completed examination is forwarded to the DAC by the Graduate Student Services Associate. Members of the DAC read/evaluate the exam and each will submit the [Written Comprehensive Examination Evaluation Rubric](#). When this process is completed and all evaluations have been submitted, the Graduate Student Services Associate notifies the Doctoral

Advisory Committee Chair of the evaluation results. The evaluation scale for this examination is Satisfactory, Unsatisfactory in one or more areas (retake only parts deemed deficient), or Unsatisfactory (retake the entire examination). Unanimous approval is required for passing the Written Preliminary Examination and moving forward to the oral portion.

7. The Graduate Student Services Associate notifies the student in writing of the results. To this point, the student will not receive any information regarding the evaluation. Students will be notified of the results of the Written Preliminary within 10 teaching days after the completion of the exam.
8. If a student should fail any or all parts of the examination, the Graduate Student Services Associate will consult the DAC Chair to determine appropriate action. The DAC will determine the required procedures and a timeline for the student to follow in resolving deficiencies. The DAC Chair will meet with the student to discuss probable causes for the failure and provide appropriate advice to be followed when preparing for a second administration of all or part of the examination.
9. If a student is required to retake a portion of the exam, it may be scheduled at a mutually agreeable time between the student and the Doctoral Advisory Committee Chair. If a student is required to retake the entire examination, this may not be scheduled until at least one semester has elapsed. If the exam is retaken in its entirety, the second examination will be different in specific content, but similar in structure. No more than one re-examination (whole or part) will be allowed. The re-examination should be evaluated following the same procedure as the original written exam, with the members of the Doctoral Advisory Committee individually submitting the [\*\*Written Comprehensive Examination Evaluation Rubric\*\*](#) to the Graduate Student Services Associate.

#### *- MEMORANDUM ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE*

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) programs and software other than spellchecking during the comprehensive exam is prohibited. Violations of this memorandum are subject to the academic integrity policy. UNCG is an Honor Code institution.

#### *- ORAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION*

Upon satisfactory completion of the written portion of the preliminary exam, the student will proceed to the oral portion of the preliminary examination. The oral examination should be scheduled within one month following the successful evaluation of the written examination.

The oral preliminary examination may be directed toward further investigation and evaluation of weaknesses apparent in the written portion, or areas may be addressed that were not included in the written examination. The evaluation scale for the oral preliminary examination is Satisfactory with Distinction, Satisfactory, Unsatisfactory in one or more areas (retake only the part(s) deemed unsatisfactory), or Unsatisfactory (retake the entire examination). Each member of the DAC should submit the [\*\*Oral Preliminary Examination Exam Evaluation Rubric\*\*](#).

The Graduate School requires unanimous approval by the DAC for passing the Preliminary Examination. The final assessment reflects a combination of both the written and oral portions of the exam and is graded Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory. The DAC Chair must submit the [\*\*Results of Doctoral Preliminary Exams form\*\*](#) upon successful completion of both portions of the Preliminary Exam. Approval may be conditional, however, upon the satisfactory completion of additional work as determined by the committee. However, if the student does not pass the Preliminary Examination, no more than one re-examination will be allowed. The re-examination

will not be permitted during the semester in which the Preliminary Examination was failed. If the student fails to pass the re-examination, The Graduate School will send the student a letter of dismissal from the program.

The complete Doctoral Advisory Committee must participate in the holding of the Preliminary Oral Examination. Students should be prepared to discuss the dissertation topic proposal when the examination portion of the Oral Preliminary has concluded.

*\*\*Faculty are not normally paid to develop, administer, and evaluate preliminary examinations nor supervise dissertations during the summer months. Students may appeal to the Director of Graduate Studies in Music after securing approval from the DAC (See "Scheduling the Preliminary Examination")*

## **DISSERTATION**

The dissertation for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree comprises three major sections: a performance section, a written section, and an oral defense.

1. Performance. Three recitals are required for all DMA students to fulfill the performance portion of the DMA Dissertation.
2. Doctoral Document. The written portion of the dissertation is a document that represents original scholarship, is carried out at the highest level of scholarship, and is relevant to the particular major field's repertory, pedagogy, history, or practice.
3. Defense of the Document. The doctoral candidate who has successfully completed all other requirements for the degree must defend the dissertation orally (Final Oral Examination).

### ***- PERFORMANCE SECTION OF THE DMA DISSERTATION***

#### **Recital Requirements**

Three Dissertation Recitals are required and each must contain a minimum of 50 minutes of music. The student's Doctoral Advisory Committee must unanimously approve exceptions to this minimum requirement. Candidates should complete two dissertation recitals before taking their Preliminary Examinations, although exceptions may be approved by the DAC. The candidate's performance instructor, the DAC, and the respective department will determine the nature, content, and type of recitals approved for presentation. Repertoire should be of a professional level in artistic merit and technical challenge. A candidate who is provided opportunity for performance of a concerto or comparable solo work with orchestra or other instrumental ensemble may apply, in advance, with approval of the major professor, to the DAC for acceptance of the performance as one of (or a portion of) the dissertation recitals. Following the same procedure, voice students may substitute one major operatic role for one dissertation recital. Voice students who receive approval to substitute a major operatic role for the first dissertation recital (in the first year of study) must successfully complete a Continuation Jury prior to the end of the second semester of the degree program. For keyboard students, no more than one of the required recitals may be fulfilled through any combination of concerto or chamber music performances.

A student must be enrolled for dissertation credit (MUP 799) when presenting a degree recital except that, with the permission of the major professor, a degree recital may be presented during the first four weeks of a semester without being enrolled if the student was enrolled during the

previous semester. The four weeks are counted from the first day of classes. The grace period may not be extended by use of an "I" grade. DMA students need not be enrolled in performance studies when presenting a dissertation recital off-campus.

The student is responsible for scheduling recitals when the entire Doctoral Advisory Committee can be present. In compliance with regulations regarding dissertation work, the recital evaluations must receive unanimous committee evaluations. In cases of non-unanimity, the DAC Chair is encouraged to convene the committee to discuss, reevaluate, and confirm the original evaluations so that the student may be appropriately notified. The student will be notified orally by the DAC Chair of the results of recital evaluations within one week of the performance. Each member of the DAC is responsible for submitting a [DMA Recital Evaluation Rubric](#).

### **Recital Documentation**

Arrangements must be made well in advance for performance hall reservations, piano tuning, recording, and printing of programs. The student is solely responsible for submitting the [Online Recital Request Form](#) to make such arrangements. School of Music personnel and resources must be used for all official recordings. The Graduate Program Director must approve any exception to this policy. There is a fee for recording and the printing of programs.

Doctoral recital recordings are considered examinations, and like examinations, may not be altered once they have been recorded. Alteration includes deletion of material, substitution of material, or editing of material.

### **Cancelling or postponing the doctoral dissertation recital**

A student must perform the scheduled recital unless there is an extreme reason for a cancellation. Inadequate preparation is not normally considered an adequate excuse. A student wishing to reschedule will be placed at the end of the waiting list for available recital times. If a recital must be canceled or postponed, the performer must report the cancellation to the Events Coordinator (Dennis Hopson) and Graduate Student Services Associate (Dr. Nick Lewis) as soon as possible.

### **Non-local recitals**

In cases where non-local recital performance for dissertation credit is approved in advance by the DAC, a video recording and a high-quality audio recording of the complete recital must be submitted immediately after the recital to the School of Music office. All recordings must be unedited originals. The DAC will then review all recital materials independently and submit blind evaluation to the Graduate Student Services office.

### **- WRITTEN SECTION OF THE DMA DISSERTATION (Doctoral Document)**

The doctoral document should represent original scholarship and be relevant to the particular major field. This may follow more traditional lines of scholarship such as repertory, pedagogy, history, performance practice, library research, archival work, collection of repertory, source study, and/or musical analysis; or this may include questionnaires or surveys, observation, detailed curriculum, method or other instructional materials with a substantial prose component, a critical edition of a composition with a substantial prose introduction and critical materials, or an instructional multimedia product with a substantial prose component. By this work, students should demonstrate that they are able to conduct original and well-focused research from a clear plan and that they are able to organize and present their findings in clear scholarly prose.

Students are required to file a signed dissertation topic proposal before they begin work on the written section. The final dissertation document must be submitted to the Graduate School electronically (more info here: (<https://grs.uncg.edu/the-graduate-school-unc-greensboro/enrolled-students/thesis-and-dissertation/>) with original, signed hard copies of the document Title and Approval pages submitted directly to the Graduate School.

### **DMA Document Topic Proposal**

The required proposal pertains only to the Doctoral Document. You must complete the [\*\*Dissertation Proposal Approval Form\*\*](#) before beginning work on the dissertation document.

Although the Oral Preliminary Exam is considered the finalization of the Preliminary Exam, students have frequently developed the dissertation proposal and are expected to discuss it during the Oral Preliminary Exam. If this does not occur, then the formal proposal should be circulated to the Doctoral Advisory Committee for approval as soon as possible after the conclusion of the Preliminary Exams.

### **Topic Proposal Procedure for the Doctoral Document**

#### **1. Identify topic.**

In consultation with a prospective research director (most often the DAC Chair), the student identifies an original research topic and venue for the public defense (see options below). The research can cover any topic appropriate to the degree and field for which the student has the preparation to accomplish advanced work.

#### **2. Re-configure the Doctoral Advisory Committee if necessary.**

The DAC comprises three faculty members, at least two of whom are from the student's area. Although the major professor has typically served as DAC Chair, at this point the DAC may deem it advisable to re-assign the role of Chair, bring in a Co-Chair, or add someone to the committee with particular research skills in the student's area of interest. If the committee is to be reconfigured, a [\*\*Doctoral Advisory Committee Revision form\*\*](#) should be submitted to the Graduate Program Director. Such persons should be tenured or a tenure-track professor or librarian. The DAC may petition the Dean of the Graduate School to allow a non-tenure-track faculty member to serve.

#### **3. Draft a proposal in consultation with the Doctoral Advisory Committee Chair/Co-Chair.**

The student drafts a proposal in consultation with the Chair and/or Co-Chair or other faculty with particular research strengths related to the area of investigation. The student should also consult the [\*\*Theses and Dissertations site\*\*](#), complete the [\*\*Dissertation Proposal Approval Form\*\*](#) and, if appropriate (required for interviews, surveys, and all other uses of people as research subjects), the [\*\*Human Subjects Approval Form\*\*](#). In all cases, appropriate University format is required.

**Dissertation Topic Proposals should use the following outline as the proposal guide.**

**Title Page**

**Approval Page**

**Table of Contents** (for the proposal)

**Introduction/Description of Study**

1. Problem Statement/Objectives/Hypotheses/Assumptions/Thesis Statement/Sub-Problems/Research Questions.
  - State explicitly what you plan to discover, answer, or solve.

2. Justification/Need/Purpose.
  - State why the study is important.
3. Definition of Terms
4. Delimitations/Limitations

#### **Status/Survey of Related Research**

1. Survey the research in your subject area.
2. In the course of the narrative, indicate how your work will relate to other research.

#### **Procedures**

1. Outline the procedures you will follow in accomplishing your research. Include examination of music, archival study, trips to various collections, interviews, etc.
2. State any specific skills you will need in order to accomplish your research, e.g., knowledge of French, knowledge of interviewing methods, skills in theory, or skills in special computer procedures.
3. Describe special equipment and materials you will need (hardware and software) and the location of sources.
4. Anticipate any grants for which you may apply
5. How will you analyze and synthesize the data. (Greater detail in the procedure section will expedite the approval and the research.)

#### **Organization of the Text**

##### **Summary**

##### **Research Timetable**

##### **Bibliography**

##### **Appendix**

Any supporting materials pertinent to the research but not included in the body of the proposal should be included here, such as sample letters to be used in correspondence, facsimiles, score excerpts, analysis forms, questionnaires, surveys, and computer printouts. If IRB approval is required for your project, the official approval must be part of the appendix.

##### **Vita (1 page)**

The vita should be short and focus on documenting your expertise in the research tools required to complete your project.

#### **Doctoral Document**

Upon acceptance of the dissertation proposal, students may begin writing the doctoral document. Regardless of length and scope, the text must be supported by appropriate documentation such as a bibliography, works list, discography, or critical notes. In most cases, the written portion of the DMA Dissertation comprises four major parts: the abstract (including the three dissertation recitals), the preliminary materials, the text, and the references/bibliography. Some documents may also include appendices. The following table contains a list of all of the major and minor parts, in their usual order of placement. Please refer to the [UNCG Guide for Preparation of Theses and Dissertations](#) for descriptions for each specific part.

1. Abstract (See example of text.*)	Required
2. Preliminary Materials:	
• Title page	Required
• Copyright page	Required if seeking copyright
• Dedication	Optional
• Approval Page	Required

• Acknowledgements	Optional
• Preface	Optional
• Table of Contents	Required
• List of Tables	Recommended
• List of Figures	Recommended
3. Text	Required
4. References/Bibliography	Required
5. Appendices	Optional

The division of the main text (Section 3) of the paper should be appropriate to the character of the work and in accordance with the practices in the student's field of study. Normally, the text of the paper includes an introductory chapter, a documentation of previous work in the field, the specific proposition to be investigated, a complete explanation of the methodology used, a discussion of the results and their significance, and a summary.

*\*For an example of the dissertation abstract, including proper formatting for the dissertation recitals, please review the DMA Dissertation Abstract Sample document online at <https://vpa.uncg.edu/music/operations/>. Navigate to the Advising section and find the link under the "Graduate Handbooks and Guides" accordion.*

#### - FINAL ORAL EXAM/DISSERTATION DEFENSE

The culmination of the dissertation will take the form of a public oral defense (examination), presented before the committee and open to the public. The student must submit his or her full dissertation to the Doctoral Advisory Committee by the end of the first week of the semester in which the defense will take place. The student must also complete the [Final Oral Exam Schedule form](#) no later than two weeks prior to the oral defense date. In the public presentation, students should demonstrate that they are able to communicate what they have learned to the School of Music, the University community, and the public, and answer questions about their research. Upon conclusion of the public portion of the examination, the DAC may excuse the audience and continue examining the student. Regardless of chosen format, the student must schedule a two-hour block to ensure enough time for a thorough defense.

The student must choose from one of the following defense formats that best suites the purpose of the doctoral document:

1. Lecture Recital: If the purpose of the document is to demonstrate how the student's original research results in demonstrable changes in how repertoire is performed or reveals a previously unknown body of repertoire, then the format of a lecture recital may prove to be the best defense option. The lecture-recital is a 50-60 minute presentation (above and beyond the three dissertation recitals) that entails both a performance and lecture.
2. Lecture: If the purpose of the document is anything other than informed performance practice, then the lecture may be the preferred format. The lecture is to be a 40-50 minute presentation. Although there may be recorded or live performance examples, there is no full performance of any work in this option.
3. Traditional Defense: Any document, regardless of purpose, may be defended in the traditional sense. A traditional defense is open to the public and similar to a lecture. But rather than a fully-developed lecture intended for a more general audience, the student will give a brief overview of the document directed towards the Doctoral Advisory Committee,

followed by questions from anyone in attendance.

Questions from the Doctoral Advisory Committee will focus on degree-related topics and may include any or all of the following areas of inquiry:

- Defense of the document
- Topics from the field of study, including courses taken at UNCG and any institutions providing course credit transferred to a student's degree program
- Preliminary examination weaknesses
- Recital literature

The examination (defense) will follow the guidelines stated in *The Graduate School Bulletin*. The Graduate School will award all 12 credits of dissertation upon successful presentation of the three required recitals and acceptance of the written document. The DAC Chair should submit the [\*\*Results of Oral Examination in Defense of Thesis/Dissertation form\*\*](#) as the official notification for the Graduate School that the student has passed the defense of their dissertation document.

### **ADMISSION TO CANDIDACY**

A student may submit the [\*\*Application for Admission to Candidacy form\*\*](#) once he or she has successfully completed the following: all major and cognate (minor) required courses (some may be in progress), passed Written and Oral Preliminary Exams, satisfied any language or competency requirements, and submitted a dissertation topic approval form and proposal that has been approved by his or her advisor and committee. Be aware that candidacy is often granted after the final defense of the dissertation, depending on required course work.

### **EXIT REQUIREMENTS**

It is the responsibility of the student to meet the graduation requirements, policies, and deadlines as published by The Graduate School on their website. All scheduling and final graduation arrangements are the responsibility of the candidate and will be coordinated through the School of Music and/or The Graduate School. The candidate must submit the [\*\*Graduate School Graduation Application\*\*](#) directly to The Graduate School at the beginning of the final semester.