

Music Education Guide to the Comprehensive Examination

Introduction

The comprehensive exam for the Master of Music – Music Education Emphasis serves as an opportunity for the student to demonstrate their ability to synthesize and apply their graduate university and teaching experiences and their ability to articulate real or potential changes in their teaching practice. This guide provides information concerning the comprehensive examination, which is a requirement for the completion of a Master of Music degree with a Music Education Emphasis. The examination consists of two parts, written and oral.

Catalog Description

The 2017-19 UTSA Graduate Catalog specifies that candidates for the Master of Music degree are required to successfully pass comprehensive examinations tailored to the student's program and area of emphasis.

Qualifications

Comprehensive examinations are given only to those students who have complied with the following requirements:

1. Completion of all conditions of admission, if any were assigned at the time of admission
2. Completion of all special admission requirements for the degree program, if any
3. Be in good standing
4. Have an acceptable program of study in the discipline in which the degree is sought
5. If a thesis is to be written, selection of supervising professor and thesis committee and acceptance of thesis topic

When to Take the Examination

The comprehensive examination is normally taken during the student's final semester. Comprehensive exams are offered each Spring and Fall semester. Summer comprehensive exams may be provided in special circumstances, pending faculty availability. In order to take the examination, the student must be currently enrolled in the university. Please see this page for important deadlines - <https://colfa.utsa.edu/music/students/graduate-students/comp-exams.html>

Supervising Committee

Each comprehensive examination is developed, administered, and scored under the guidance of a supervising committee with three or more members, one of whom is designated as chair. The chair should be a member of the Music Education Graduate Faculty. Students in the Music Education Emphasis taking MUS 6913 (Thesis in MUED) will select their thesis committee as their comprehensive exam committee.

In general, all committee members must be members of the Music Graduate Faculty with whom the candidate has taken coursework. Occasionally, scholars who hold non-tenured or tenure-track faculty appointments at the University, such as adjunct faculty members or off-campus scholars are appointed because their expertise would be valuable to the student. The composition of the committee is subject to approval by the Dean of the Graduate School.

The supervising committee is responsible for the quality, depth, and balance of the comprehensive examination. Each committee member should specify the format, length, and specifications for their section of the written portion of the exam.

Preparation and Registration for the Examination

The "comprehensive" nature of the exam denotes on-going preparation, followed by general review prior to examination time. Early every semester a meeting called by the Graduate Advisor of Record assembles students planning to take the examination. At this meeting an open discussion clarifies information, and provides guidance for preparation for the examination. Registration forms for the comprehensive exam are also provided at this meeting. Students who are unable to attend the meeting must obtain the registration form from the Graduate Advisor of Record, or the Student Development Specialist, and return the form prior to the deadline indicated on the form.

On the registration form, students will have the opportunity to request their committee members. The student's advisor will generally serve as chair. Efforts will be made to grant student requests, but changes may be necessary to provide an equitable distribution of faculty for the exams.

The Examination

The comprehensive examination consists of two parts: A written and an oral exam:

Written Exam

For students completing a thesis, that document will serve as the written portion of the exam.

For students not completing a thesis, the written portion of the examination consists of one written topic from each of the committee members. These written topics may take the format of a written paper, an analysis project, annotated bibliography, or similar projects that demonstrate the student's ability to synthesize and apply concepts from their coursework to their teaching. Each individual committee member should specify expectations for length, format, and depth of the project. Efforts will be made to ensure questions for each student correspond with material learned in the program.

All questions are developed collaboratively and approved by the music education graduate faculty.

Students are given a specific timeframe to complete the written portion in consultation with the committee. The deadline for completing the written exam should allow for sufficient time for each of the committee members to review each of the student's responses to each of the committee members' prompts – generally two weeks prior to the oral exam.

Oral Exam

Oral exams typically take place approximately two weeks following the completion of the written exam. The oral examination consists of questions developed by committee members after reviewing the student's written exams. Questions from the committee members provide students the opportunity to clarify or broaden their written answers, and allow for a deeper discussion than time may have allowed for on the written exam.

Evaluation of the Comprehensive Exam

The written and oral comprehensive exam will be evaluated utilizing the rubric in Appendix A. An initial score will be given based on the written exam, and may be adjusted based on the student's performance in the oral exam.

Dates and Location

The student will be notified, via e-mail to the student's official UTSA e-mail account, the day, hour, and location set for the written and oral portions of the comprehensive examination.

Meeting with Committee Members

Upon receipt of the confirmed list of committee members, students are encouraged to set an appointment with each member to review the relevant study guides and to outline a strategy for preparing for the exam. Faculty members on the student's committee may provide additional bibliographies and guidelines to further aid the student's preparation for the examination.

Student Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the student to keep informed of all required paperwork, payment of fees, and important deadlines in order to insure meeting all requirements for graduation on the anticipated date.

APPENDIX A
MM- Music Education Comprehensive Exam
Evaluation Rubric

	4	3	2	1	0
Key Concepts and Issues	Mastery demonstrated by thorough <u>summary and critical discussion</u> of key concepts and major issues.	Advanced knowledge demonstrated by thorough <u>summary</u> of key concepts and major issues.	Basic knowledge demonstrated by <u>limited summary</u> of key concepts and major issues.	Major gaps in knowledge demonstrated by <u>misunderstanding</u> of key concepts and major issues.	No key concepts or issues are discussed.
Reference to Scholarly Literature	All discussion of key concepts and issues is <u>supported by explicit</u> reference to specific scholarly literature and/or major scholars.	Most discussion of key concepts and issues is <u>supported by explicit</u> reference to specific scholarly literature and/or major scholars.	Discussion of key concepts and issues is <u>partially supported by explicit</u> reference to specific scholarly literature and/or major scholars.	Discussion of key concepts and issues is <u>mostly unsupported by explicit</u> reference to specific scholarly literature and/or major scholars.	Discussion of key concepts and issues is <u>completely unsupported by explicit</u> reference to specific scholarly literature and/or major scholars.
Relevance	Discussion and supporting references are <u>completely relevant</u> to the question.	Discussion and supporting references are <u>mostly relevant</u> to the question.	Discussion and supporting references are <u>partially relevant</u> to the question.	Discussion and supporting references are <u>mostly irrelevant</u> to the question.	Discussion and supporting references are either <u>missing</u> or <u>completely irrelevant</u> to the question.
Implications and Applications for Educational Practice	<u>Thoroughly developed</u> discussion of implications for or applications of concepts and issues to educational practice.	<u>Well developed</u> discussion of implications for or applications of concepts and issues to educational practice.	<u>Adequately developed</u> discussion of implications for or applications of concepts and issues to educational practice.	<u>Poorly developed</u> discussion of implications for or applications of concepts and issues to educational practice.	No discussion of educational implications/applications is offered.
Organization and Clarity	The rhetorical organization facilitates the presentation of ideas <u>throughout the response</u> AND <u>All ideas</u> are presented in cogently written sentences.	The rhetorical organization facilitates the presentation of ideas in <u>most of the response</u> AND/OR <u>Most ideas</u> are presented in cogently written sentences.	<u>Large portions</u> of the response are difficult to comprehend due to poor organization of ideas AND/OR <u>Portions</u> of the response are difficult to comprehend due to incoherent writing.	<u>The entire response</u> is difficult to comprehend due to poor organization of ideas AND/OR <u>The overall response</u> is difficult to comprehend due to incoherent writing.	No rhetorical structure is evident.
Completeness of Answer	The answer addresses <u>all portions</u> of the question.	The answer addresses <u>most portions</u> of the question.	The answer addresses <u>no more than half</u> of the question.	The answer addresses <u>no more than one-third</u> of the question.	The answer does not address the question.

Written Score ____
 Adjustments after Oral Defense ____
 combined written/oral performance = Pass *

Evaluation Criteria
 17 – 24 points,
 16 or below = Fail

* Students who pass three out of four questions may be given the option to re-write one failed question. Students who fail two or more questions must re-sit for the full comprehensive examination in a subsequent semester.