

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO
COLLEGE OF MUSIC
Department of Musicology

Graduate Musicology Handbook

Adopted by the musicology faculty and effective academic year 2022–2023

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DECLARATION

This handbook is meant to complement the information contained in the Degree Plan for the Ph.D. in musicology, to serve as a more practical and detailed document, beginning with a timeline for progress through the degree. No manual of this sort, however, can anticipate all contingencies and circumstances, and students are therefore encouraged to consult the Chair of the musicology department about any concerns they may have regarding policies and practices.

The College of Music at the University of Colorado, Boulder, acknowledges that the University sits upon land within the territories of the Ute, Cheyenne, and Arapaho peoples. Forty-eight contemporary tribal nations are historically tied to the lands that make up the state of Colorado. Their forced removal from these territories has had devastating and lasting effects. While the University of Colorado, Boulder, can never undo or rectify the devastation wrought on them, we commit ourselves to improving and enhancing relations with Indigenous peoples and issues locally and globally.

Table of Contents

Declaration	2
Preamble	4
Degree Timeline	5
Coursework & Advisement	8
Fourth-Semester Review	10
Comprehensive Exam	10
Dissertation Prospectus and Its Defense	12
Dissertation	16
Miscellaneous	17

PREAMBLE

Welcome to the musicology program at the University of Colorado College of Music. Located within one of the largest public flagship music schools in North America, the musicology program is unique in its integrated and interdisciplinary nature.

Our program boasts a world-class faculty who are among the best in their areas of specialty, and which freely range over ethnographic and historical fields of research. The world music ensembles provide students with hands-on experience in a variety of styles and genres.

We acknowledge the converging nature of the broader field of musicology in which scholars of historical studies are increasingly drawing upon the ethnographic methods of ethnomusicology, while ethnomusicologists are also making use of historical analyses to better understand the music of the diverse human cultures in the world. For this reason, our program is designed as one disciplinary field with emphases in either historical musicology or ethnomusicology. Our students are trained and equipped to be conversant in both areas of emphasis, the differences being mainly in their dissertation research.

TIMELINE

Comments on summer activity are advisory only. Comments on semesterly activity should be understood as compulsory but “typical”; that is, some students will advance through the program more quickly or more slowly depending on their backgrounds. This schedule also assumes the first semester of enrollment is the fall semester.

Summer Zero (before you arrive on campus)

Once admitted into the doctoral program and after having fulfilled all enrollment requirements, students are able to create their University E-mail accounts and have automatic access to the University’s online portal, the student version of which is currently called the “Buff Portal” but whose name changes frequently.

- The portal will provide a guide with links to information on graduate preliminary exams in the college. You may reach out to the musicology chair or to the College’s graduate office for questions on the administration of preliminary exams. (Please note that “graduate office” refers to the office of the Graduate Dean inside the College of Music, whereas “the Graduate School” is a University-wide, higher authority housed in Regent Hall.)
- For incoming students receiving funding, which normally entails work as a teaching assistant (TA) in an undergraduate course or as a graduate assistant (GA) in the AMRC, you may contact the chair between late July and early August about your work assignment for the fall semester. If assigned to assist in a course, you may then contact the instructors for those courses to learn about their syllabi and your preparation.

Year 1

The first year in the doctoral program is crucial to your success. Try to meet with every member of the departmental faculty over the course of the academic year, however informally. This will afford you the benefit of knowing each professor’s specific interests and how yours may dovetail with theirs. The following additional actions during year one will help put you on solid footing going forward and through the course of your training. The Chair will serve as your advisor until you identify (and consult with) your own advisor, based on your research interests.

First Semester

- Upon arrival, use orientation week to look at your past transcripts with the chair or other designee: identify gaps and possible transfer of credits after your first semester.

- Meet with the chair during the orientation week (individual consultation and meeting with cohort).
- Take the applicable preliminary exams (“prelims”), and upon receiving your report, arrange immediately to meet with the chair to chart a way forward if you need any remediation.
- Register for whichever proseminar is offered (MUSC 5002 or 5112) and at least one MUSC 7822 seminar (you’ll be expected to enroll in all MUSC 7822 seminars during your coursework period).
- Begin to take any remedial courses; these will be identified in August or September based on past education or failure on prelims.
- Winter break or beginning of 2nd semester: consider applying for summer grants; deadlines often fall between 15 January and 1 March.
- Begin the process of securing Colorado residency (international students excepted). You will need to obtain a driver’s license and register your car with the state. Alternatively, you may apply for a state identification card (sometimes also called a voter ID).

Second Semester

The norm is for all students to take *two* 7822 seminars in the spring.

January-February: Submit transfer requests to the Graduate Dean (College) after discussing your plans for transfer credits with the chair.

Consult widely with department faculty, chairs, and directors of centers to guide you in applying for grants between the months of January and March to support opportunities and internships to learn foreign languages.

Complete paperwork to establish Colorado residency (international students excepted).

Summer 1

Research institutes, language-learning opportunities, seminars, and archival internships are some of the best ways to take advantage of unstructured time during the summer.

Year 2

Your principal advisor acts as a mentor who guides you through the various stages of your training. Therefore, you should consider identifying your principal advisor (and if possible members of the committee for Comprehensive Exams) during the second year of course work if you have not already done so. The chair or chairs of the Department remain(s) the advisor for students who are undecided. Students are expected to solicit each member of the committee individually to make sure each is on board for the role.

Second semester

The following are areas in which the student may work closely with the advisor:

- Plan horizon for taking Comprehensive Exams
- By the end of summer 2, language requirements should be fulfilled (or nearly fulfilled).
- By the first week of March: Fourth-Semester Review takes place during the spring semester of year 2. The student is required to provide unofficial transcript, an exemplary written paper from your Boulder coursework, and evidence of foreign language standings to the chair.

Summer 2

- Get foreign language competencies in order.
- Begin to scope out opportunities for dissertation research grants.

Year 3

By the end of Year 3, with only rare exceptions, it is expected that all students will complete required coursework (not including dissertation hours).

First semester

- Have a conversation with your advisor regarding the Comprehensive Exams. Take them in the third year or in the fourth year at latest. You *must* complete all pre-candidate coursework, including remediations and the two foreign language requirements, *before* attempting the Comprehensive Exams.

Second semester

- Further explore grant opportunities for travel to collections, fieldwork, and summer research support.

Years 4 and beyond

- Most students will have passed the Comprehensive Exams and advanced to candidacy by now.
- Within one year of passing your comprehensive exams, complete your dissertation prospectus and its oral defense (one-hour).
- The committee for the dissertation may be the same as or different from the one for the Comprehensive Examinations.
- Begin your doctoral dissertation.

COURSEWORK AND ADVISING

A minimum of thirty (30) credit hours of courses numbered at 5000 or above is required, although the minimum number is almost always exceeded. Courses taken below the 5000 level to remedy deficiencies do not count toward Ph.D. credit or the residency requirement. As part of the 30-hour requirement, doctoral students in musicology are required to take an integrated (historical musicology and ethnomusicology), ten-hour core of course work, as follows: Introduction to Music Bibliography and Research (MUSC 5708, 2 cr.), Proseminar in Historical Musicology (MUSC 5002, 3 cr.), Ethnomusicology (MUSC 5112, 3 cr.), and World Music Ensemble (EMUS 5467, 1 cr.), this last for two semesters at one credit per semester. Students may request to substitute Jazz or Early Music ensembles for these two credit hours.

Students are required to enroll in each 7000-level seminar offered by the musicology faculty during their coursework. A minimum of six (6) doctoral seminars in musicology (MUSC 7822) is required, and in practice, the number of seminars will typically exceed this minimum. Seminars in related disciplines, such as Music Theory and Analysis, Religious Studies, Anthropology, Sociology, and so on, may count toward the 30 credit hours but cannot replace the minimum six seminars in musicology. Students are expected to complete with distinction all work in the formal courses in which they enroll. A course grade below B- is unsatisfactory and will not be counted toward fulfilling the minimum requirements for the degree.

Unless otherwise specified by departmental requirements, all courses at the 5000 level or above taken for the master's degree at the University of Colorado may be applied toward the doctoral degree.

Graduate coursework of high quality taken at another institution will only be accepted for transfer once a student has completed at least six credits of graduate-level coursework as a degree-seeking student on the Boulder campus with a minimum 3.0 GPA. Transfer credits are limited to 21 semester hours where a grade of B or better was received. All requests for credit transfer must be approved by the chair of the Musicology Faculty and other College and University officers as specified on a form for that purpose. Transfer credit will not affect the residency requirement (six semesters beyond the bachelor's degree, including two consecutive in one year), the six-seminar rule, or dissertation credit hours.

Before the Comprehensive Examination, you should select courses that help to clarify your understanding of past and current scholarship, research methods, historiography, as well as courses that will deepen and solidify your knowledge of musical styles and repertoires of different eras and geographical regions. Normally in the process of preparing for the Comprehensive Examination, you will gradually choose to focus on a major area within which to concentrate and eventually write a dissertation. Course work should be completed in close consultation with your advisor and advisory committee.

When the field of specialization has been chosen, you must ask a faculty member to act as chair of the advisory committee. The committee usually includes at least two other musicologists and a minimum of five members total by the time the Comprehensive Examination is scheduled.

For further limits on credit hours and residency requirements, consult the University Catalog. Doctoral students are expected to complete all degree requirements within six years from the date they start course work in the program, but petitions approved by the major professor and Associate Dean may be filed in the Graduate School if an extension is needed and justifiable.

On Foreign Language Requirements

Foreign languages will be chosen by the student under advisement and with an eye toward research and field relevance. Translation examinations in two foreign languages must be passed before scheduling the comprehensive exams. The level of competency should be equivalent to four semesters of undergraduate study.

Choosing a Principal Advisor

The current chair of the Department of Musicology is the default advisor for all students until you choose a principal advisor. You should then form a committee of four for the Comprehensive Examination. Students are encouraged to seek mentorship and advice from anyone in the department, but the Graduate Office will not recognize anyone but the Chair as the student's advisor until the

student makes a formal declaration with the form listing the advisor and other members of the examining committee.

FOURTH-SEMESTER REVIEW

The musicology faculty conducts a full review of each student enrolled in the doctoral program during the fourth semester of their residency, normally between March and April in Spring.¹ The purpose of this review is to determine whether a student should advance to attempt candidacy in the program and to provide feedback on progress to degree. Matters considered in the review include courses taken, grades received, job performance as a teaching assistant or graduate assistant, and academic performance in seminars and other courses.

Within a month of the fourth semester of their residency, every student should submit the following to the chair of musicology:

- A pre-candidacy statement that explains your degree progress and plans to meet all requirements (language, courses, and selection of major advisor/committee) prior to the Comprehensive Examinations. The statement may also describe what you consider to be your area of growth as a scholar and where you think you need support.
- A seminar paper (or publication) dating from your first two years of work on the Boulder campus that best represents your abilities.
- An unofficial transcript showing courses taken so far here at CU Boulder

DOCTORAL COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS

The Comprehensive Examination is constructed in order to test mastery of the broad field of musicology. When the Comprehensive Exam and the Dissertation Prospectus Defense are completed, the student will be advanced to candidacy.

Students, in consultation with their advisory committee, come up with four areas of study for their Comprehensive Exam. While these areas can (and probably should) intersect with the student's dissertation research goals, they should provide a much broader framework of the field in which that student's work will ultimately reside. It is not a problem for some of the areas to be completely unrelated, given these broad goals as a culminating study experience. The four areas should include the following:

¹ The timing is based on the assumption that every student enrolled in the doctoral program will have begun residency in the Fall of previous academic year without any interruptions. Therefore, an exception to this timing may apply for students who matriculate in the spring semester.

History. You will display comprehensive knowledge of the historical period in which you plan to specialize. You should understand the historiography of the period, major issues and debates, key figures, etc. Equally important is the history of ideas in the field of ethnomusicology, enduring debates, and abiding issues.

Area or Genre Studies. You will select a geographic area or genre and develop a broad understanding of major forms, styles, and classification systems; key scholars; various historiographies and epistemologies; and issues and debates.

Methodology. You will explore scholarship on and the application of a particular area of methodology. This selection should represent a broad methodological field (e.g., ethnography), not a specific method (e.g., participant observation).

Theory. You will select an area of theoretical inquiry to explore. This should be a broad theoretical area with multiple scholarly inputs, rather than writings by or about one particular theorist (e.g., semiotics rather than Peirce, topic theory rather than Sisman). The student should have facility in discussing the theory itself (especially if not originally connected to scholarship in music) as well as its musical applications, showing fluency in discussing the work of key scholars, major issues and debates, and shortcomings or opportunities for future application.

With regard to your study and the formulation of questions, the faculty understands that there may be some overlap between *History* and *Area or Genre Studies* on the one hand, and *Methodology* and *Theory* on the other.

TIMELINE

- Academic Year 2 (AY 2), February 1: After consulting with your advisor(s), you should submit your four topic areas to the committee for review.
- AY 2, April 1: You should submit a bibliography to the committee for each of the four areas. Each bibliography should consist of 25 to 30 entries. The committee will review the bibliography and will approve it or make recommendations for additional research.
- AY 3, September 15 (i.e., about six months later): You should submit annotated bibliographies for all four exam areas. Annotating the bibliography is an integral step in studying and understanding the major scholarly contributions and arguments of a specific author or work. The annotated bibliography provides the committee an opportunity to assess the student's readiness to proceed with the exams.

Thirty days after the committee has approved your annotated bibliography, you will submit two to three potential essay questions in each of the four areas for approval by the committee. When the questions are approved, the committee will also inform you of the schedule of the exam, i.e., which three areas will be examined as full-day essays, and which area has been selected for the week-long paper. These questions are designed to show your understanding of major issues and research problems in these subfields as well as your ability to investigate these areas in both general and specific ways. The questions may appear on your exam in reformulated or revised versions. Three of the questions will be all-day, in-house essays, taking place on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday.

- Scheduling the exam: *Administration of the comprehensive exam must take place between the first and the next to last week of classes, fall or spring semester. There is no summer administration.*
- The fourth essay will consist of a week-long paper on a topic chosen by the committee. The committee will select one of the four topic areas for the week-long paper. You will receive the fourth exam question on Friday morning of that week and have until the following Friday morning to complete the essay.

Once the chair of the student's committee has established the student has passed the comprehensive exam in all parts, he or she will inform the student and the Graduate Office of the College of Music at the same time.

DISSERTATION PROSPECTUS AND ITS DEFENSE

The dissertation prospectus for the Ph.D. in musicology must be examined by the musicology faculty. The faculty and student will join in an oral examination at which the latter will be expected to answer questions and discuss any aspect of the project. The meeting will normally last slightly under an hour and take place during the time scheduled for Department meetings; therefore no special room or time need be arranged. The major advisor, through communication with the chair, will make an appointment for the examination on behalf of the candidate. As with a faculty meeting, all members of the musicology area are expected to attend, as there is a common investment in the quality of dissertations associated with our faculty and our university. However, attendance is only strictly *required* of the four members of the examination committee.

The prospectus must be presented at this oral examination no later than two semesters (not counting summer) after passing the Comprehensive Examination. In this document, “musicology” is taken to include any emphasis in ethnomusicology, historical musicology, or theory

and analysis. In the case of this last area, members of the theory faculty will also be invited to attend the examination.

The comprehensive examination and precandidacy come to a close with the successful oral defense of the prospectus. Thus, there are two stages: first, the written comprehensive exam; second, the prospectus and its oral defense. A successful candidate must receive affirmative votes from a majority of the members of the examining committee at both stages. In case of failure at either stage, the examination may be attempted a second time (no more than that), 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. In such cases, the student's principal advisor, along with the advisory committee, will determine what conditions must be met before the exam will be considered to have been passed, or what parts of the written examination are to be repeated. If any part of the exam is to be repeated, you should not expect the same questions. In all cases, you will be notified in writing by the major professor as to the requirements prescribed by the advisory committee and a deadline for completing the requirements. In case the dissertation prospectus or its oral defense is found to be deficient, the principal advisor will relay directions for revision to the student and provide a deadline for the second defense of a revised prospectus.

PROCEDURE

You should take the following steps:

1. Discuss the prospectus with your major advisor. Consult other members of the faculty whose expertise intersects with your topic.
2. Put the prospectus in writing (see below), indicating the scope of your topic, the approach to it that you wish to take, and the major bibliographical sources that you will use. Recommended length for the prospectus, not counting the bibliography, is about 1500 to 3000 words. This is a flexible guideline. Submit a draft of the prospectus to your advisor and continue refining it until the advisor deems it acceptable for distribution to the musicology faculty.
3. At least **two weeks** before you wish the exam to be administered, you will [give notice](#) to the committee and to the Graduate Coordinator in the College of Music. Administration of the prospectus defense must take place between the first week of classes and finals week, fall or spring semester. There is no summer administration. The default hour for the prospectus defense is the same as the Musicology Department meeting time, currently on Monday afternoons.
4. After the oral examination, write a summary of the meeting. Note strengths and weaknesses that were discussed. It is vital to list specific critiques or objections and who made them. The student will return this signed summary to the advisor, who may distribute it to the faculty if so desired.

5. Complete any recommended revisions and resubmit the prospectus to your dissertation committee. The dissertation committee (which may already have been formed, or which may be formed now) is a distinct group. It is this group which advises the dissertation after the admission to candidacy. Every dissertation committee has at least one external member (i.e., faculty outside the College of Music) and may have two. One external member must be from the Boulder campus, but there may be more than one external member, including members from off campus. External members need not come to any meetings except for the final defense but are welcome at all earlier meetings. Members from other campuses may be asked to send a c.v. and other credentials to the Graduate School in order to be appointed to faculty status as members of the committee.
6. All members of the comprehensive examination committee must receive a copy of the prospectus, which is subject to further revision at this stage. Approval of the prospectus by the committee does not require another meeting. Discussions may be conducted with individual members in any appropriate manner, so long as the major advisor receives a final version that has incorporated revisions, answered concerns, and is deemed acceptable.

Once work on the dissertation begins, the prospectus is a document of the past, "dead" in some sense, but some students have found it a useful starting point for writing an introduction or first chapter.

Description of the Prospectus

The precise format is open, but the prospectus should comprise the following four elements:

1. **Working title**
2. **Abstract** of the project (500 words or fewer), including a provisional justification of its significance and relation to existing work in the field, some indication of methodologies informing the new work, whether historical, documentary, ethnographic, theoretical, experimental, analytical, critical, cross-disciplinary, etc.
3. **Prospectus**
 - Propose the topic and scope of your dissertation; unfold the reasons for undertaking the research and your aims; identify research problems (unanswered questions) and their relation to the current state of the field. Give the reader some idea of the sorts of evidence you intend to use to make your arguments. Include a summary of existing scholarship in the field (and closely related fields, as applicable), and be as clear as possible about what prior research will be most important in relation to your proposed topic.
 - Detail as closely as is possible, at this stage, your plans for proceeding: general methodological premises (starting point); anticipated stages of research; anticipated structure of dissertation; structure of the underlying argument (as far as this applies);

order in which material will be presented. To the extent that results and conclusions remain contingent on findings of research, try to set out the nature of these contingencies, and the nature and variety of possible or foreseen results. If possible, include an outline of proposed sections, chapters, and subheadings for the dissertation.

4. **Bibliography** (annotated or not, at the advisor's direction)

In preparing the prospectus, students are encouraged to think in terms of a proposal for a grant or fellowship. The aim should be to convince a knowledgeable reader of the fundamental interest and importance of the topic, the candidate's qualifications to pursue the project and to carry it out successfully within a reasonable period of time, and reasons why this work, if successful, will be favorably regarded by the interested community of readers, listeners, and researchers.

At any point after approval of the prospectus, musicologists may wish to register their topic with Doctoral Dissertations in Musicology, which of course will already have been a bibliographic checkpoint for establishing the novelty of your proposed dissertation. Forms may be completed online at <https://www.ams-net.org/ddm/>. It is good practice, however, to wait until the dissertation is completed to register it.

DISSERTATION REQUIREMENTS AND FINAL DEFENSE

The dissertation should be an original and worthwhile contribution to knowledge in the field of musicology. The student will work closely with a faculty advisor (often referred to as the “principal advisor,” “major professor” or “chair”) who will serve as the first reader and critic before it is submitted to the other dissertation committee members. The time it takes the faculty advisor to read a chapter is measured in weeks, not days. Chapters should be submitted one by one for critique so that the finished dissertation is gradually drafted from segments that the student and advisor have already discussed.

The defense (also known as the final examination) of the dissertation, an open meeting that lasts up to three hours, will be scheduled when the chair and committee agree that the dissertation is sufficiently complete to warrant it. More than one negative vote will disqualify the candidate in the final examination. The examination committee will consist of at least five persons, one of whom must be from outside of the College of Music, and three of whom must be Boulder campus Graduate Faculty. The major advisor and outside member(s) must have regular or tenured Graduate Faculty appointments. The other committee members must have either regular or special graduate faculty appointments. All members of the committee must be approved by the Graduate School.

Deadlines and Paperwork

The complete draft of the dissertation must be submitted at least six weeks before the day of the dissertation defense and must be approved by the major advisor and made available for review by the examining committee four weeks before the defense. Once the scheduling of the dissertation defense has been arranged by the student—in consultation with the major professor and the other committee members—the student and major professor should inform the College of Music Graduate Program Assistant, who will coordinate official paperwork and notify the Graduate School. The date will be officially posted. The Ph.D. dissertation defense is open to the public. All dissertations must comply with the specifications of the Graduate School and the College of Music. The Graduate School specifications and other information about submitting your dissertation electronically are available online.

The student is urged to consult the dissertation advisor in the Graduate School and the College of Music Graduate Program Assistant to ensure that all requirements have been met in preparation for graduation.

MISCELLANEOUS

1. Colloquium

The faculty (Musicology jointly with Theory and Analysis), along with our graduate students, organize a colloquium series that runs throughout the academic year. All graduate students in the Ph.D. program who reside in Boulder and adjacent counties are required to attend all our colloquia, regardless of the topic or academic rank of the speaker. Further, all graduate students in musicology are expected to present original research at a colloquium at some point during their residency. If they have already fulfilled this exercise in public speaking through a regional or national conference presentation, they need not give an on-campus colloquium as well, though it may be beneficial.

2. Graduate Musicology Society (GMS)

The Graduate Musicology Society is a student organization that caters to the interests of students in the musicology and theory programs. A member of the musicology faculty, chosen by the student members, acts as its faculty advisor. All students are automatically members of the GMS once enrolled in the program and will remain so until graduation. Participation in the GMS activities allows students to hone their leadership skills and develop their sense of collegiality and community.

The GMS organizes professional development workshops, informal workshops to share work, brings guest speakers to campus, and works to raise travel support funds for members to attend AMS, SEM, and SMT regional and national meetings. The body also produces Newsletter edited by one or more of the current graduate students.

3. Service

Students are encouraged to volunteer their service on to the Colloquium and to committees and centers where the College or University includes student participation, as well as student government in the College and on the campus. Service is an important form of professional development that will continue and intensify in your post-doctoral career.