Format and guidelines for the General Examination for the D.M.A. in performance

This format will apply to students who begin their doctoral studies after June 1, 2011

**Format:** That the general examination for D.M.A. programs in performance will consist of a written and oral examination in three areas/fields of expertise, to include both a qualifying written examination and an oral general examination, as described below.

**Fields of the examination:** Students will develop deep expertise in three fields/areas, usually defined as [A] repertory (a specific field such as the German Lied; or the genre of Classical string quartets, etc.); [B] research (such as current scholarship on American musical theater [*see example below*]; or current scholarship on Rossini operas), and [C] pedagogy (issues related to teaching in the student's primary area). The student will develop the fields in consultation with the supervisory committee, and will provide the committee with annotated bibliographies for review by the committee and to be used as the basis of the examinations (see below).

*An example of one deep field of study with specific sub-areas is “American musical theater,” which could include an overview of early musical theater in the United States, then move on to a more specific examination of “Show Boat,” which would involve a consideration of its antecedents and the ways that “Show Boat” broke through the expectations of the genre, then the influence of “Show Boat” in the subsequent history of musical theater. An exploration of the actual music in “Show Boat” could be another sub-area within the topic, as could another topic dealing with representations of race and gender in “Show Boat”.

**The supervisory committee:** The supervisory committee should be formed by the beginning of the second full year of doctoral study (it can be formed earlier), and the committee will participate in the definition of the areas of the general examination. Graduate School link: [http://grad.uw.edu/policies-procedures/graduate-school-memoranda/memo-13-supervisory-committee-for-graduate-students/](http://grad.uw.edu/policies-procedures/graduate-school-memoranda/memo-13-supervisory-committee-for-graduate-students/)

**The timing of the two parts of the examination:** The oral examination (the “General Examination”) would ideally be in the sixth quarter of full-time study (usually Spring Quarter of the second year), but will be preceded at least one quarter earlier by a written qualifying examination in *one* of the three areas, which must be passed in order to proceed to the oral examination.

**The qualifying written examination:** The preliminary written examination will be an essay examination on one of the three fields of expertise – the student may choose which area he or she prefers for the written examination. This will be a proctored examination, written in hand or on a computer provided for the examination. The questions and evaluation will be prepared by at least two Graduate Faculty members of the supervisory committee, who must receive an annotated bibliography on the chosen topic at least three weeks prior to the written exam. This written preliminary examination will focus attention on the need to be able to write clearly, and to write in the depth expected of doctoral study. This examination could be taken a total of two times; failure to pass on the second attempt would result in the student’s dismissal from his/her program.
**Outcome of the qualifying written examination:**

(1) If the student passes the qualifying written examination, he or she may move on to the preparation for the oral general examination, which will include **all three fields**.

(2) If the student does *not* pass the written examination on the first attempt, the committee must decide whether the student needs to address issues of writing ability by taking additional coursework or tutoring; *or*, whether the student may re-take the written examination at the start of the next quarter, and then proceed to the oral general examination in that same quarter (i.e., take the written examination of week one or two of Spring Quarter, and the oral General Examination no sooner than four weeks later). The specific recommendation will be communicated to the student within two weeks of taking the written examination.

**The oral General Examination:** will include an examination of all three fields, including material covered in the preliminary examination. The committee will receive the bibliographies and copies of the written preliminary examination at least three weeks in advance, in order to consider the types of questions that could be addressed to the student. The committee may allow the student to begin with a brief presentation, but most of the examination time will be devoted to questions directed to the student. The Graduate School link to the guidelines and scheduling for the General Examination:

http://grad.uw.edu/policies-procedures/doctoral-degree-policies/general-examination-admission-to-candidacy-for-doctoral-degree/

All other degree requirements must be completed before taking the oral General Examination. Upon successful completion of the General Examination and all other requirements, the student will have the status of Candidate for the Doctor of Musical Arts and will proceed to the dissertation.

**Ideal timeline for the preparation of the General Examination (written and oral)** (some programs may have requirements that will move the General Examination to Year Three):

**Year One:** Taking coursework, lessons, ensembles and becoming acquainted with faculty who might serve on the supervisory committee.

**Year Two: Autumn:** Continuing coursework and other requirements; formation of the Supervisory Committee and identification of the three fields of the General Examination in consultation with the committee.

**Year Two: Winter:** Continuing coursework and other requirements; taking the qualifying written examination in one field of study.

**Year Two: Spring:** Completing of all degree requirements; taking the oral General Examination in all three fields of study, including the field of the written examination.