

ITHACA COLLEGE SCHOOL OF MUSIC, GRADUATE DEPARTMENT STUDY GUIDE FOR FINAL COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS

The comprehensive exams are concerned with the candidate's ability to draw together and articulate facts and concepts related to the candidate's graduate studies. Written exams are given in music history, theory, and sight-singing to all candidates. The oral exam covers the candidate's major field (Performance Studies, Education, Composition, Conducting, or Suzuki Pedagogy). The oral examination committee consists of the Graduate Chair (or designate) and two representatives from the candidate's major field. The final oral comprehensive exams are normally taken during the last term of study. Comprehensive exams in History, Theory, and Sight-singing may be attempted a maximum of three times, thus should be taken as early as possible. They are offered four times per year (August, January/February, April, and July). To provide for intelligent and informed curricular advising, students are encouraged to take the examinations at the beginning of their first semester of graduate study. Postponing assessment and proper curricular advising could seriously delay the completion of the degree requirements in a timely fashion.

A. MUSIC HISTORY AND LITERATURE (Minimum acceptable score 70%)

The Comprehensive Exam in Music History and Literature is divided into two parts: Part I, Music History from 1600 to 1800, and Part II, Music History from 1800 to the Present. Both parts have the same format and both follow the "menu" style in which you select from various options. The sections of the exams are as follows:

1. Short IDs. Select any 10 from a list of 30. (10 x 3 points = 30)
2. Composers and repertoire. For each title, identify the composer. Select 10 from a list of 15. (10 x 1 point = 10)
3. Personalities in Music History. Students are asked to list individuals who are NOT composers, but are significant to the world of music, and to indicate briefly what each person did. Individuals who might be selected may be choreographers, librettists, theorists, instrument builders, and so forth. (10 x 1 point = 10)
4. Essay. Cite repertoire, composers, theorists, treatises, dates, sources, and appropriate data in discussing the topic. Select any one from a list of eight. (1 x 20 points = 20)
5. Listening. For each example played, identify musical materials (3 points). On the basis of these materials, indicate a possible composer (1 point) and year of composition (1 point). All four listening examples are required. The musical examples of Part 5 will be played only once. (4 x [3+1+1] = 20)
6. Score analysis. Identify musical materials in the composition (6 points). On the basis of these, indicate a probable composer (2 points) and year (2 points). Select one from two score examples. (1 x 10 points = 10)

In preparing for the Comprehensive Examination in Music History, the student should review:

1. Music periods with approximate dates.
2. Prominent composers of each period.
3. General stylistic characteristics of the music of each period and of the styles of specific composers (including aural and score identification by chronology and composer).
4. Outstanding compositions by important composers (including orchestral music, opera, ballet, concerto, oratorio, cantata, etc.)
5. Standard musical forms and analytical terms.
6. Authors of treatises of major influence on the history of music.

NOTE: A student can exempt from one of both parts of the history exam by taking the appropriate coursework. *Music History 1600-1800* exempts Part I, and *Music History 1800-Present* exempts Part II. A grade of B or higher must be earned in the course.

B. MUSIC THEORY Part One = Writing skills (choice of melodic harmonization or figured bass). Part Two = Analysis of tonal music. Part Three = Analysis of post-tonal music. Minimum acceptable score is 70% on each individual part. See separate music theory and sightsinging guide for more detailed information and sample materials.

NOTE: A student can exempt from one or both parts of the theory exam by taking the appropriate coursework. *Intensive Part Writing & Analysis* exempts Part I & II, and *Post Tonal Analysis* exempts Part III. A grade of B or higher must be earned in the course.

C. SIGHTSINGING

This exam is administered by the Chair of Graduate Studies in Music on an individual basis by appointment. Sightsinging exams normally are not given the last week of a semester nor during the final exam period. See separate music theory and sightsinging guide for more detailed information and sample materials.

D. ORAL EXAM

Performance – Demonstration of knowledge of the following is included on the exam:

1. Major solo and ensemble music from all periods (Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and Contemporary) in your medium of performance.
2. Pedagogical books dealing with techniques, methods, etc.
3. Sequence of study material at beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels in your major performance area. (Be able to describe contents, strengths, and weaknesses.)
4. Historical development of the instrument and its predecessors, if any.
5. Equipment: its importance, availability, quality, etc.
6. Pedagogical procedures that you expect to employ.
7. Current and historical figures in the area.

Music Education – See separate handout on music education portfolio and oral presentation (the “gold sheet”).

Other Majors – Consult with your major professor(s) about the content of your exam.