

# MUSIC, PHD: MUSIC STUDIES

The graduate program in Music Studies at the University of Pennsylvania serves students who intend to conduct cutting-edge research, produce high-quality scholarship, and develop teaching and professional skills in order to pursue academic positions in music studies; it also serves those who want to consider career opportunities beyond academia in both music and non-music domains. Faculty apply methodological tools from ethnomusicology, sound studies, musicology, and music theory to a wide range of research projects. The goal of the graduate program is not to entrench these disciplinary distinctions, but rather to seek out productive and innovative means of placing them in dialogue with each other. This orientation toward holding all of the sub-disciplines in view is reflected in the graduate curriculum as well as in the multiple colloquium series that animate departmental life. The curriculum is designed with flexibility in mind—designed specifically to offer students the freedom to craft a path of study that best addresses the research needs and methodological concerns of their particular dissertation projects. It combines the wide range of courses offered by the world-class faculty in the music department with the possibility of enrolling in seminars in other Penn departments and taking classes at consortium schools such as Princeton, Yale, and Columbia. Our colloquium series provides another means of engaging in both disciplinary and interdisciplinary conversations. In addition, workshops, public performances, and working papers presented by graduate students, post-doctoral fellows and faculty offer a wide range of perspectives on musical practice and scholarship, focusing variously on public lives in music, current research, craft and compositional issues. The faculty is particularly interested in teaching and research in the following areas: Archives, Textualities, and Materialities; Audio Politics and Sound Studies; Conflict, Healing, and Displacement; Gender, Sexuality, and the Body; Global Medieval/Renaissance; the Global South; History, Memory, and Intangible Heritage; Life Forms and Forms of Life; Opera and Performance Studies; Race, Ethnicity, and Empire; and Religion, Ritual, and Secularism. The Department of Music at the University of Pennsylvania also offers a Ph.D. program in composition.

For more information: <https://music.sas.upenn.edu/>

## University PhD Benchmarks

In addition to Program requirements, the following milestones must be completed:

Code	Title	Course Units
	Qualifying Evaluation	
	Candidacy Examination	
	Dissertation Defense/Oral Exam	
	Dissertation Deposit	

For more information view the University's Academic Rules for PhD Programs (<http://catalog.upenn.edu/pennbook/academic-rules-phd/>).

Code	Title	Course Units
<b>Core Requirement</b>		
<i>Foundational Methods Core Courses</i>		
Must take 3 of the following:		3
MUSC 6300	Historical and Historiographic Approaches	

MUSC 6200	Creative and Compositional Approaches	
MUSC 6700	Analytical and Theoretical Approaches	
MUSC 6500	Ethnographic and Anthropological Approaches	
<b>Research Seminars</b>		
Select 5 research seminars (7000-level and above) taken from 5 different music faculty		5
<b>Additional Courses</b>		
Select 6 courses (5000-level, 6000-level, 7000-level or 9000-level) in consultation with advisor and graduate chair and including no more than 4 courses outside the department and no more than 2 sections of MUSC 9999: Independent Study		6
<b>Year 3: Preparation for Ph.D. Candidacy</b>		
MUSC 9940	Preparation for Ph.D. Candidacy in Music Studies (taken twice) <sup>1</sup>	2-6
<b>Additional Requirements</b>		
<b>Teaching Requirement</b>		
Three semesters of teaching are required		
<b>Language Requirement</b>		
Students must demonstrate proficiency in two languages <sup>2</sup>		
<b>Practicum Exam</b> <sup>3</sup>		
<b>Comprehensive Exam</b> <sup>4</sup>		
<b>Dissertation Proposal</b> <sup>5</sup>		
<b>Total Course Units</b>		<b>16-20</b>

<sup>1</sup> MUSC 9940 registration spans both semesters, (Fall and Spring), of year three in the Ph.D program. The Ph.D Candidate in Music Studies will finalize the dissertation proposal and comprehensive essays. They should also expect to continue attending the colloquium series sponsored by the department, participate in the writing and professionalization workshop, as well as complete remaining teaching pedagogy requirements. Registration in 9940 indicates full time enrollment while preparing for dissertation.

<sup>2</sup> Reading knowledge of two languages is required for all students in music studies and composition. Students will select their language exams in consultation with the graduate chair faculty, with the understanding that their selections should relate clearly to their projected plan of study and proposed dissertation topic. Students may request to do one of the exams in a computer language (subject to availability of faculty).

Students for whom English is not their native language may choose their native language as one of their two language exams if they plan to conduct significant research/fieldwork in that language or in cases where a major corpus of literature pertinent to the student's field of research exists in that language.

Language examinations are given once each semester and have flexible scheduling. Students must take an examination at each of these times until their language requirements have been met. Each language examination consists of a passage of approximately 500 words selected from a representative work of musical scholarship. The student is given 3 hours to write an English translation. Use of a dictionary is permitted.

Reading courses in French, Italian, and German are administered by the Graduate Division during the summer (May through June) and are available to Ph.D. students at no cost. Students may register for undergraduate language courses as a fourth course as 'auditors.' Graduate credit will not be granted for such undergraduate language courses.

<sup>3</sup> During the first year of study, each student will work collaboratively with two faculty (these faculty members will be identified by the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) according to student research and interest) to determine their areas of strength and opportunities for growth in reportorial knowledge. During the first meeting, each student should offer a self-assessment which will guide faculty toward a better sense of their listening habits and sound worlds. In subsequent meetings, students and faculty will explore a variety of possible areas/ topics/repertoires for listening and music study. During the second semester of study, the faculty and student will settle on 5 areas to be examined at the end of the first summer. These areas will be selected as follows: faculty will select 2-3 areas; faculty and student will agree on a further 1-2 areas; the student will propose the final area. The structure of the exam should be settled and communicated to the Director of Graduate Studies during the Annual Review meeting (see handbook).

Samples of successful practicum exam answers can be reviewed in the Exams Binder in the Director of Graduate Studies' office.

Practicum exams will be evaluated on the following structure:

**Pass:** A Pass on all portion of the examination is required for admission to the Ph.D. program.

**Partial Pass:** The student must take some portion of the examination again before the question of admission to the doctoral program is decided. Failure to achieve a Pass during the second sitting may result in an offer of a terminal master's degree.

<sup>4</sup> During the Spring of year 2, students will devise three comprehensive essay topics in consultation with their comps committee chair (who may be the same as the advisor). In consultation with the comps committee chair and the DGS, students should ask two additional faculty to be on their comprehensive exam committee. The exam topics, once approved by the comps committee, should be submitted to the DGS by the end of year 2. Students must inform the Graduate Coordinator of their comps committee members. In the summer between years 2 and 3 and during the Fall of year 3 students will complete the three comprehensive essays. The comprehensive essays will consist of three essays of no more than 3,000 words each. The essays will take the form of literature reviews, tracing the history and current state of research in fields related to but not directly overlapping with the dissertation project. While each student will constitute these essays in different ways, students will often include at least one essay on a theoretical topic and another on a more regional or temporal topic.

The essays must be submitted for review by the comps committee and DGS in early January of year 3. The student will sit for an oral exam with the comps committee and DGS in January.

In the oral exam, topics of discussion will include the comprehensive essays, the intellectual terrain that they trace, the quality of work, and the opportunities it suggests for ongoing research. If requested by the committee, students will re-do comps essays in the Spring of year 3.

<sup>5</sup> During year 3, students will write their dissertation proposal and assemble their dissertation committee. The dissertation proposal is an essay of approximately 15-20 pages plus bibliography outlining the dissertation project, illustrating the disciplinary and theoretical stakes of the work, indicating the interventions that this project will make within music studies and related disciplines, and laying out the arc of research and writing plan for the project. The proposal is prepared under the supervision of a dissertation advisor and at least two additional faculty (the dissertation committee).

Students typically ask a faculty member to be the dissertation advisor by end of year 2. The dissertation committee should be finalized by the middle of year 3, in consultation with the dissertation advisor and the DGS. The dissertation committee must be chaired by a member of the graduate group in Music and an additional member of the committee must be drawn from within the department. The third member of the committee may be selected from within the department, from other departments at Penn, or from an outside institution. Some students choose a committee of four. Students should inform the Graduate Coordinator of who is on their committee.

A final draft of the dissertation proposal, approved by the dissertation committee, must be submitted to the DGS and Graduate Coordinator for review to the graduate group faculty by March 15 or another day agreed on by the committee.

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The degree and major requirements displayed are intended as a guide for students entering in the Fall of 2025 and later. Students should consult with their academic program regarding final certifications and requirements for graduation.