The Doctor of Philosophy in Music Education

Admission Requirements

Acceptance into the doctoral degree programs of the School of Music requires expectations beyond those in the Graduate Bulletin. See "Acceptance into the School of Music," this booklet. Members of all under-represented groups are strongly encouraged to apply.

Regular Admission
Students seeking regular admission to doctoral-level programs at The University of Southern Mississippi must:
- Have a graduate grade-point average of at least 3.5 (A = 4.0) on the previously-earned master's degree
- Submit test scores of the General Test of the Graduate Record Examination
- Pass a candidacy audition (if required)
- Submit at least three strong letters of recommendation
- Pass a personal interview (if required)
- Submit scholarly writing sample (a previously written music education research document or an original paper on a topic in music education at least 2-3 pages in length).

Conditional Admission
Students who are unable to meet regular admission standards may be considered for conditional admission. For details concerning conditional admission, see "Admission Requirements and Procedures," Graduate Bulletin, The University of Southern Mississippi. Please note: The Graduate Record Examination is required for both conditional and regular admission. Students who are admitted conditionally must pass a candidacy audition (if required) before completing 9 hours of coursework.

Acceptance into the School of Music
Admission to graduate study does not imply acceptance into the School of Music for doctoral-level study. A maximum of nine (9) hours of graduate work earned before one has gained admission to the School of Music can be applied towards a degree.

To gain acceptance, one must:
- Possess a Master’s degree in music or music education, and have experience teaching K-12 music.
- Take Diagnostic Entrance Examinations

Examinations

Diagnostic Examinations
All entering doctoral students are required to take a Diagnostic Entrance Examination consisting of three parts: music theory, music history and literature, and expository writing. The purposes of this examination are (1) to determine if the student has foundation-level deficiencies that need to be addressed in order for him/her to be successful in doctoral level courses, on the qualifying examinations, and on the comprehensive examinations; and (2) to provide information that will guide the student and his/her advisor in selecting useful and appropriate academic courses.
• Enroll in the appropriate course(s) (i.e., MUS 620: Graduate Theory Review and/or MUS 630: Graduate History Review) during the first semester of full-time study and earn a grade of “B-” or better in that/those courses. Exceptions to this requirement may be granted for the summer semester only and will be considered on an individual basis. Undergraduate music theory and/or history courses may be required as prerequisites to further study in graduate music theory or history. Students who do not pass the music theory or history review, or required undergraduate courses will not be allowed to enroll in further study in music history or music theory until the grade of “B-” or better is earned in the required course. **NOTE:** Resident students must enroll in MUS 620 and MUS 630. Only on-line MME students may enroll in MUS 620X and 630X for graduate credit.

• MUS 620 and 630 and undergraduate courses will not be counted toward hours earned in the doctoral degree.
• Students who do not pass the expository writing section of the Diagnostic Examination may be advised to take an appropriate writing course in the English department and will be required to take MUS 500 (“Writing About Music”), even if it is not one of their degree requirements.
• Students with deficiencies may be required to take additional course work beyond the minimum required in the degree program.

### Qualifying Examinations

All students complete a Qualifying Examination consisting of three written components (music theory, music history, and the student’s major area). This examination must be completed during the student’s second semester of full-time doctoral study. Part-time students must complete this examination at the end of the third semester of enrollment. The purpose of the Qualifying Examination is to determine if, after a year of doctoral course work (which may include review courses) and of independent study, the student is academically qualified to proceed with doctoral study. The exam will also guide the Advisory Committee in planning the student’s program.

The emphasis area portion of the Qualifying Examination (e.g., music education, conducting, music performance, etc.) will be graded initially by those members of the student’s committee representing the emphasis area, followed by the other members of the student’s committee. The music theory and history portions will be graded initially by theory and history faculty, respectively, followed by the other members of the student’s committee.

The exact dates of the examinations are determined by the Director of Graduate Studies and are publicized as soon as the University's Academic Calendar is available. **Students must register for the exam at least one month in advance with the student services office.**

### How are the exams graded?

Each part of the examination is graded by all members of the student’s committee, as described above. Results of the individual parts of the Qualifying Examination will be in one of three ways:

- Student shows no deficiencies.
- Student shows deficiencies, which are noted along with appropriate means to remove these deficiencies.
- Qualifying Examination is judged unacceptable for one or both of the following reasons:
  - Student has inadequate knowledge of the subject.
  - Student cannot write and/or spell adequately.

### What happens if there are deficiencies on the Qualifying Exam?

- Those who grade the examinations will make recommendations regarding the courses to be taken by the doctoral candidate.
- Students with deficiencies may be required to take additional course work beyond the minimum required in the degree program.
- Students with deficiencies may be required to take undergraduate courses for which no credit toward the doctorate will be gained.
- Doctoral students should consult their major professor and the Director of Graduate Studies.
regarding Qualifying Examination policies beyond those listed in the Bulletin.

**When a student performs unacceptably on one part of the Qualifying Examination:**
- The student’s major professor and committee must meet with the appropriate faculty to determine if the student will be allowed to continue in the program.
- If the student is allowed to continue, the recommendations of the area faculty regarding course work must be discussed and determined by the student’s Advisory Committee and appropriate area faculty.
- The recommendations regarding remedial coursework (if there are any) is given to the graduate coordinator and communicated to the student.

**When a student performs unacceptably on two parts of the Qualifying Examination:**
- The student’s major professor and committee must meet with the appropriate faculty to determine if the student will be allowed to continue in the program.
- In order to continue in the program the student must retake both parts of the exam that were deemed unacceptable. If either part is judged unacceptable a second time, the student cannot continue in the doctoral program in music.
- Students who fail on or more sections of the Qualifying Examination must re-take the exam on the next announced date the examinations are given.

**Comprehensive Examinations**
At the completion of all course work and examinations, the doctoral student is required to take a written Comprehensive Examination in the student's area of specialization; see Ph.D.in Music Education degree plan. Doctoral students should consult their major professor and the Director of Graduate Studies regarding Comprehensive Examination policies beyond those listed in the Bulletin.

**How is the test prepared and graded?** The examination in the student’s area of specialization will be prepared and initially graded by the student’s committee members from that area; all other members of the committee will then also grade the exam.

**Results:** The Director of Graduate Studies must receive the results of the Comprehensive Examination in time to notify the University Registrar and the Graduate Office.

**A failing grade on any part of the Comprehensive exam results in the following:**
- Students must retake the part(s) of the exam they failed within one calendar year of taking the prior exam.
- In those instances where a second examination is expected, the major advisor will inform the student, in writing, as to the specific or general areas which will be tested.

**What happens with the second exam?** The Comprehensive Examination can be retaken once.
- All parts failed must be repeated simultaneously.
- If the second examination is judged unsatisfactory by the Advisory Committee, in whole or in part, the student may not continue enrollment in the doctoral program.

**Advisory Committee**
Ph.D. candidates must choose a major professor in consultation with the division faculty, then choose an Advisory Committee in consultation with the major professor early in the first term of full-time residence, or before nine (9) hours of graduate credit have been earned. Ph.D. committees must include five members: 1) the major professor, 2) another professor from the major area, 3) another professor from the major area (or a substitute approved by the School of Music Director), 4) a member in the field of Educational Statistics, and 5) a member who must be either a music historian or a music theorist at the time of the qualifying exams, but will later be a member in the candidate’s elected area of concentration.
Changes to this formula must be pre-approved in writing by the School of Music Director. The Advisory Committee must be appointed before taking the Qualifying Examination.

Plan of Study

The student and the major professor shall develop a Plan of Study based upon Qualifying Examination information together with course requirements. In those cases where a student is required to take additional course work beyond the minimum required by the degree, the Advisory Committee will counsel the student and plan the program of studies. The degree Plan of Study must be completed, and appropriate paperwork filed with the Graduate School during the second semester of enrollment.

Dissertation

Defense of the Dissertation Prospectus

A formal defense of the Dissertation Prospectus is required. The required defense will take at a scheduled date with the entire Advisory Committee. At the defense the student will respond to questions about the prospectus. The Prospectus shall be distributed to the Advisory Committee a minimum of two weeks prior to the scheduled defense date. The student is responsible for distributing the prospectus to the Advisory Committee in the required time frame. If this deadline is not met the student forfeits the defense date and must reschedule the date at the convenience of the committee while still meeting the two week minimum for distributing the prospectus.

- The dissertation topic must be approved by the student's major professor and Advisory Committee, and must be an original and significant contribution to knowledge in the chosen field. Dissertation topics dealing with human subjects must also gain approval from the Human Subjects Protection Review Committee.
- Once a topic has been approved, the student must enroll in MED 898 in each semester/term until the degree is completed.
- Once a topic has been approved, the student must enroll in MED 797, or MED 898 in each semester/term until the degree is completed.
- A separate bulletin outlining University requirements concerning the preparation of dissertations is available in the Graduate Office, McCain Library room #205, (601) 266-4369.
- Additionally, instructions specific to the development of an approved topic in Music Education must be followed. See required pamphlet, “Prospectus Guide for the Doctor of Music Arts Degree,” available from the School of Music.

The Dissertation Defense

After the dissertation has been accepted and after all required course work has been completed, but at least four weeks before the candidate is scheduled to receive the degree, a final oral examination on the dissertation and related fields will be conducted by the student's advisory. The examination will be open to any member of the graduate faculty.

Scheduling the Dissertation Defense

The Major Professor must advise the student when the dissertation is acceptable for distribution for the Dissertation Defense. The Advisory Committee shall have seen drafts of the dissertation for comments, edits and revisions several times prior to final distribution. The Advisory Committee will set a mutually agreeable date for the defense with the student. The final draft of the dissertation must be in the hands of the Advisory Committee a minimum of three weeks prior to the defense date. If this deadline is not met the student forfeits the defense date and must reschedule the date at the convenience of the committee while still meeting the three-week minimum for distributing the prospectus.
Application for Degree

The **doctoral student** must complete the following steps one semester prior to the semester of graduation. For specific deadlines see [www.usm.edu/graduatestudies/deadlines.php](http://www.usm.edu/graduatestudies/deadlines.php).

- Obtain a copy of the Application for Degree Cover Sheet at [www.usm.edu/graduatestudies](http://www.usm.edu/graduatestudies) under “Application to Graduate” materials.
- Log in to SOAR and download the GRD11 (Advising Transcript) at [www.usm.edu/soar](http://www.usm.edu/soar). The path is SA Self Service, Learner Services, Academics, View Degree Progress Report, Print the Degree Progress Report.
- Complete the Cover Sheet and take it to the Director of Graduate Studies for signatures.
- Pay fees at the Business Office, then take the document to the graduate degree auditors in the Graduate Studies Office, locate in McCain, room 205.

When completed, in addition to the documents described above, the student’s file in the Graduate Office should contain the following:

- Graduate Committee Request Form
- Plan of Study
- Results of Qualifying Exams Form
- Results of Comprehensive Exams Form
- Dissertation Prospectus Approval/Admitted for Candidacy Form
- Results of Oral Defense of Dissertation Form
- Statements of proficiency in language and/or statistics

**Policies**

**Continuous Enrollment**

Doctoral students are expected to enroll continuously after they have taken required coursework until they complete their degree using the guidelines listed below.

- Students must enroll for a minimum of one (1) credit hour of Dissertation (MED 898) each semester, including summers, until the student graduates.
- The semester the student defends their dissertation they must enroll in three (3) credit hours of Dissertation (MED 898).

If a student does not successfully defend their Dissertation by stated Graduate School deadlines they will be required to enroll for 3 credit hours of MED 898 the following semester.

Failure to enroll for the appropriate hours will result in the student being discontinued from USM and require that the student reapply for admission to the program.

**Special Problems Courses (MED 692, 792)**

Students cannot enroll in special problems courses without appropriate approval. To gain permission students must complete a “Special Problems Form” found on the School of Music website.

**Residency Requirement**

The Residency Requirements as defined by the Graduate School are:

- Two (2) successive semesters with a minimum of 12 hours each,
• Three (3) successive semesters with a minimum of 9 hours each.