Carnegie Mellon University

School of Music

Guide to the Graduate Comprehensive Project

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Description

The Graduate Comprehensive Project serves as a capstone review to the master's degree curriculum in which the student analyzes, researches, and writes about the music to be performed on their final graduate recital.

The National Association of Schools of Music, the accrediting agency for Carnegie Mellon's School of Music, mandates that candidates for the master's degree in Music successfully pass a comprehensive review as an exit requirement for the granting of the degree. In keeping with this requirement, the graduate faculty of the CMU School of Music have designed a final project that meets this objective while maintaining a strong relevance to each student's major area of study.

The project is an integral part of the preparation for performance and composition students' graduate student recital. This project is to be pursued independently by each student in consultation with an assigned faculty Analysis Advisor and Program Note Advisor. The curriculum and related faculty provide the means for your successful completion of this project throughout your graduate program.
These means include:

A. Music Research Methods (required course)
B. Graduate Review Courses of music theory and music history
C. Coursework that reinforces analysis and writing about music
D. Annual Graduate Forum presentations on plagiarism, program notes and analysis
E. Access to University Resources, such as the Student Academic Success Center (https://www.cmu.edu/student-success/programs/communication-support/index.html) for students who seek assistance with their writing
F. Consultation at any time for any part of the project

Goals

The purpose of the Graduate Comprehensive Project is to provide a forum in which students finishing their master's degree can demonstrate mastery in the scholarship of music developed throughout the master's program. Mastery in scholarship is defined as the ability to independently research analyze and write about music at a high level, as demonstrated by the analysis, analytical paper, research paper, and/or researched program notes with bibliography as discussed below.

General Requirements and Grading

Students must submit their projects according to the requirements and timelines listed in this document. Grading for each part of the project is Pass (P)/No Pass (N). At the discretion of the faculty, and with the timeline for graduation in mind, any part of the project that received a No Pass (N) may be revised until passed.

Please see the **Grading Rubric: Program Note and Bibliography** in the Appendix. Students must pass all parts of the rubric in order to pass the Program Note portion of the project.

The Graduate Comprehensive Project should be an integral part of the preparation for the graduate student's recital. Failure to turn in either the comprehensives or the revisions to the assigned faculty by the deadlines for your intended graduation month (see Timeline and Deadlines) will result in the certification of your degree being delayed until at least the next graduation month. <u>The master's degree will not be granted to anyone who fails to successfully complete their graduate comprehensives.</u>

Note to ESL Students

Students with limited abilities in English are strongly encouraged to make full use of the University's resources for improved writing. Visit https://www.cmu.edu/student-success/programs/communication-support/index.html for more information.

Standards for writing style may be slightly adjusted for each ELS student's ability. ESL students are strongly encouraged to arrange for a native English speaker to carefully proofread their work before submitting it.

Timelines and Deadlines

For Graduation in May

Mid-October (of second year)	Comprehensive Project is reviewed in Graduate Forum Advisors are announced
December 1	Student Information Sheet and Plagiarism Pledge Submitted
February 15	Comprehensives Submitted to assigned Analysis and Program Note Advisors by email or on Canvas as per the instruction of the advisors.
March 8	Advisors respond with revisions (if needed)
March 31	Revisions submitted (if needed)
April 15	Faculty submit final grades to the Director of Graduate Studies

For Graduation in August

Mid-October (of second year)	Comprehensive Project is reviewed in Graduate Forum Advisors are announced
March 15	Student Information Sheet and Plagiarism Pledge Submitted
May 31	Comprehensives Submitted to assigned Analysis and Program Note Advisors by email or on Canvas as per the instruction of the advisors.
June 15	Advisors respond with revisions (if needed)
July 1	Revisions submitted (if needed)
July 15	Faculty submit final grades to the Director of Graduate Studies

For Graduation in December

Mid-October (of second year)	Comprehensive Project is reviewed in Graduate Forum Advisors are announced
June 30	Student Information Sheet and Plagiarism Pledge Submitted
September 15	Comprehensives Submitted to assigned Analysis and Program Note Advisors by email or on Canvas as per the instruction of the advisors.
October 1	Advisors respond with revisions (if needed)
October 15	Revisions submitted (if needed)
November 1	Faculty submit final grades to the Director of Graduate Studies

Detailed Requirements for Collaborative Piano, Instrumental Performance, Piano Performance, Vocal Performance

Analysis

Instrumental Performance, Piano Performance, and Vocal Performance majors must analyze an entire movement or complete song of at least 64 measures selected from the final recital program, approved by the theory faculty. Collaborative piano majors will analyze one art song and one movement of a chamber piece from the final recital (each of at least 64 measures), approved by the theory faculty.

You are not permitted to use a movement of a piece you have already analyzed for another class or independent study. You may use a different movement from that piece. The Analysis Project has three parts:

1) **Annotated Score** with measure numbers (at least once per system or every ten measures) and relevant thematic and formal information. For tonal music, every cadence must be labeled with key and type, and major tonal centers must be identified. Where standard forms are used (e.g. sonata form) standard terminology should be used. Handwritten annotations on a score are fine.
2) **Graphical Analysis** (e.g. "**form chart**") that visually depicts the piece's form, thematic material, and (for tonal music) large-scale harmonic organization (major keys used). This analysis should clearly show each section or phrase thematic area, and and for tonal music it should include all cadences and major tonal centers. It should also include standard terminology where standard forms are used. Ideally this analysis would be a single line with no breaks from beginning to end to more closely represent how we listen, but even in landscape format, you'll need to add a break to get it to fit on a page. Try to make your line breaks logical and align with the musical content; for example,

where possible avoid having a major section of the piece straddle two lines. Make every effort to be clear and legible with your ideas. Every feature labeled on the chart must include a measure number. A handwritten chart is fine, so long as it is clearly legible.

3) **Paper** that A) describes the piece in terms of its form, thematic language, and harmonic organization, and B) offers some personal insight. Essentially, A is a description of your graphical analysis (See 2). Your discussion must refer to your graphical analysis and explain it. Use measure numbers and thematic labels to reference specific passages in the annotated score and chart. Your paper should **NOT** include biographical information about the composer or bibliographic/historical information about the piece. For B, relate the analysis to how you have or might perform this composition. In other words, how does the knowledge of the formal, thematic, and harmonic content of this work influence your performance decisions? Word count is 750.

The paper must be in the Chicago Manual Style and include:

1. Title Page with your name and date of submission.
2. Any material from an outside source (book, journal, liner notes internet site, etc.) should be footnoted, whether paraphrased or directly quoted. (Such material is not required.)
3. Footnotes can be located either at the bottom of the page or at the end of the paper.
4. Bibliography citing your sources, if any. For further details on formatting, consult Chicago Manual Style: https://guides.library.cmu.edu/music/Chicago

The analytical conclusions, as well as the analyses themselves, must be the sole work of the graduate student. Any observations derived from researching other people's

writings on the composer must be clearly cited and should not form the primary focus of the paper.

To reach a passing standard, each of the three parts (annotated score, form chart, and paper) must be clearly legible and largely correct, with few if any omissions (e.g. missing cadences) or mistakes (e.g. inconsistency in labeling thematic material). For the paper, the writing should be grammatical and reasonably smooth, and the performance implications should be thoughtful and substantial.

Program Notes

Graduate Student must conduct research and prepare program notes for compositions on the final recital. Notes should be usable for a recital program and written for the non-specialist general audience member. The minimum word count for your program notes (all works) is 750, exclusive of text translations. You do not have to write about every piece in your recital, especially if you are performing several short pieces, many of them by composers about whom little has been written. Rather than write on every piece, choose between three to five works by different composers from your recital program, selecting works that you can research rather than ones about which you will have little to say.

A. Research the composer and piece. Quote authorities and historical figures. Your notes must show substantial research – that's what makes it worth reading. Choose your sources carefully; poor sources may necessitate revision.

B. Cite your sources and attach a list of works cited. Your notes are expected to be written by you as the expert, based on your research, and the words should be yours alone (except quotations). Cite your sources according to *The Chicago Manual Style (* https://guides.library.cmu.edu/music/Chicago)

C. Engage the reader with vivid prose and amazing research. A program note provides a lively introduction to the composer and the music by providing interesting historical, musical, and dramatic highlights, and possibly venturing a thoughtful interpretation of the music. *Avoid unnecessary biography of the composer and description of the music.* Do not imitate the tone of a dictionary; boring or poorly written program notes will require revision.

The structure addresses three parts seamlessly:

1. Provide a brief biographical sketch of the composer, tying biography to the music. Include only biographical events of great interest or that are relevant

to the piece. The more famous the composer, the less biography is necessary. Explain how the piece came to be written and answer any obvious questions suggested by the title.

2. Provide a context for the work in the composer's career or among the works of contemporaries. Be willing to interpret the work in narrative, analytical, or other contexts. For example, Dvorak's "New World" Symphony can be discussed in terms of American music, Czech themes, pastoral qualities, its place in the symphonic tradition, etc. Here you can be thoughtful and creative.
3. Provide a *little* description of the music, *but not too much*. Avoid a purely descriptive account of each musical event. Focus on mood and emotional atmosphere and avoid technical language. Discuss only musical events which are of exceptional structural, narrative, or stylistic significance. Do not spend more than 1/3 of the note on description.

D. Submit the program note by email or on Canvas as per the instruction of your advisor. Label the document clearly at the top of the page with your name, date and the words "Graduate Comprehensive Project Program Note".

E. Tips on writing successful program notes.

1. *Follow these suggestions*. The note should be gracefully written, not overly formal or chatty. Unify the note around one topic and ensure good transitions at all levels. Follow conventions of popular, rather than academic, writing. Write with passion and creativity, using the active voice, and offering a well-informed interpretation of the music. Write clearly, trim unnecessary words, make your grammar and mechanics immaculate. Format titles, dates, numerals, etc. with consistency. Polish and proofread. Refer to your class notes from Music Research Methods.

2. *Avoid these problems*. Avoid cliches such as “Mozart was born in Salzburg in 1756” and superlatives such as “Beethoven was one of the greatest composers of all time.” Revise phrases such as “As you know…” or “As is well known…” Steer clear of performance-oriented issues (of bowing techniques, etc.) unless the piece clearly focuses on such sounds.

Detailed Requirements for Composition Majors

Analysis

Composition majors must provide a detailed analysis of a major 20th – 21st century work, approved by the theory faculty.

A. Choose a single work for both your analysis and research paper. The work must be at least 64 measures long and analyzed in its entirety. You are not permitted to use a piece you have already analyzed for another class or independent study as that would be couniting the same work twice.
B. Your analysis should address formal, linear, and vertical aspects of the piece.

Research Paper

After completing the analysis, students must write a research paper describing important analytical observations about the piece and the composer's language.

A. The minimum word count is 1500. It should briefly provide a context for the composer's overall work in the context of contemporary trends and colleagues, and then a context for the work chosen within the composer's other works. It must refer to the analysis and explain it. Include examples that clarify the analysis or refer to measure numbers of the analyzed piece. For examples of analytical research papers, see the following journals, available in Hunt Library: *19th Century Music* and *Perspectives in New Music*.
B. The Research Paper must be in the Chicago Manual Style - https://guides.library.cmu.edu/music/Chicago and include:
    1. Title page with your name and date of submission
    2. Material from an outside source (book, journal, liner notes, internet site, etc.) should be considered as a quotation, marked in quotation marks, and footnoted.
    3. Footnotes can be located either at the bottom of the page or at the end of the paper.

4. Annotated bibliography citing your sources. An annotated bibliography is more than a listing; it also includes a brief summary of the contents and importance of each source cited. For further details on formatting, consult The Chicago Manual; see https://guides.library.cmu.edu/music/Chicago
5. The analytical conclusions, as well as the analyses themselves, must be the sole work of the graduate student. Any observations derived from researching other people's writing on the composer must be clearly cited and should not form the primary focus of the paper.

Note for Music Education

All candidates for the Master of Music in Music Education degree must also pass a comprehensive review in their major area. Successful completion of this review is a requirement for graduation. The comprehensive review for Music Education consists of both a written examination and an oral examination covering all Music Education coursework. Dr. Susan Raponi is the comprehensive review advisor for all Music Education majors. Please consult with her for the specific guidelines for completion of the comprehensive review.

Note for Master of Science in Music and Technology

The following is the timeline for the Master of Science in Music and Technology student course work and thesis.

First Semester	
Early August	Select and register courses
Second Semester	
Due April 30	Thesis topic decided. Write a one-page description of your topic. Choose thesis committee. The thesis committee should consist of at least two people: your advisor and one other member of the Carnegie Mellon faculty or staff. To select the second member of your committee, you should first consult your advisor and get approval of one or more candidates. Then, you should ask the candidate to be on your committee.
Third Semester	
Early August	Select and register courses. Remember to sign up for reading and research to allow time for your thesis project.
Summer and early September	Prepare a thesis proposal of about 2 pages. The proposal should include: o Introduction o Review of the state of the art and related work o What knowledge and/or science is missing? o What will you do? o How will you evaluate your work? o What are the criteria for successful completion?
Due September 30	Oral thesis proposal given in Music and Technology Seminar. The committee in consultation with other faculty will decide to pass or fail the thesis proposal. If the proposal is not passed, the student must address the problems and present another proposal.

Fourth Semester	
January 1	Start (or continue) writing thesis
Due March 1	Finish thesis project
Due March 15	Completed thesis delivered to advisor
March 25	Make final revisions to thesis
Due April 1	Final thesis draft to committee
April 1 – May 1	Further editing and committee approval of changes.
May 1	Master's defense should be complete by this date. A defense consists of a **master's oral presentation and a master's recital**. The Master's oral presentation is a technical talk similar to a conference presentation. The talk should be carefully prepared and supported by slides with appropriate graphs and equations. If possible, the talk should include sound and/or video examples. The Master's recital should ideally be a concert or recital, possibly a joint recital or even one piece on a longer program. Alternatively, the oral presentation and recital can be combined. The music should be professional in quality and relate to the thesis. The Master's candidate need not be the performer or composer provided that the thesis results are used in the music composition or performance. A more technical thesis may not result in music appropriate for a concert. Although a music performance in a recital is the ideal, the recital requirement can be satisfied by a musical demonstration given as part of the oral presentation with the approval of the thesis committee. The committee can either pass or fail the thesis oral presentation and recital. The committee can also request further changes in the thesis.

Appendix

- Grading Rubric: Analysis
- Grading Rubric: Program Notes and Bibliography
- Graduate Student Comprehensives Project Student Information Sheet
- Plagiarism Pledge

GRADING RUBRIC: Analysis — Paper and Score

All students must pass all components of the rubric to pass the analysis portion of your comprehensive project.

Pass	Fail
Piece selection is submitted and approved by advisor before submitting the paper and score	Piece selection is not approved by the advisor
Title Page: includes student's name, title of paper. Graduate Comprehensive: Analysis, date of submission	Title page missing all or any of the passing information
The total word count for the paper is 750 words (1500 words for composers)	The total word count for the paper is less than 750 words (1500 words for composers)
Research Paper Content: Clarifies analytical work done with the score as shown in the form chart. Majority of word count goes to analysis, with only necessary background or contextual information provided. Score and annotations (by measure number) are cited in writing. Includes some writing on how analysis has informed the author's performance practice (for performers only).	Paper Content: Focuses too much of the word count on biography, history, or performance practice, avoids analytical writing. Score is not referenced in the paper.
Paper Writing: Very few grammatical errors. Sentences are complete and easy to understand. Overall, coherent and correct.	Paper Writing: It might be readable, but there are many grammatical errors. Demonstrates a lack of careful editing.
Paper Tone: Written for a technical audience, including technical musical language where appropriate. The tone isn't too informal.	Paper Tone: Written for a general audience by avoiding technical language. The tone is too vague and/or informal.
Annotated Score: score is annotated to show formal structure, elements of harmonic and melodic structure throughout the piece. For tonal pieces, this includes cadences at phrase endings. 20th- and 21stcentury rep will have more flexible requirements, but form, horizontal, and linear analysis are all required. Measure numbers should be included every 5 measures or at least at the start of every system. When possible, use rehearsal scores.	Score: No score is submitted, or score is submitted with minimal annotations.

Graphic Analysis: clearly visually depicts the piece's form, key areas, and thematic material. Uses measure numbers clearly and consistently. This analysis should show each musical section or phrase, cadence, thematic area, and (if tonal) how keys change from one to another.	Graphic Analysis: annotations are illegible and/or inconsistent with the score, analytically incomplete.

Grading Rubric: Program Note & Bibliography

You must pass all components of the rubric in order to pass the program note portion of your comprehensive project.

	Pass	**Fail**
Page 1	Includes student's name	Missing student's name
Piece selection	Includes three to five pieces, each by a different composer	Includes fewer than three pieces and/or by fewer than three composers
Heading for each piece	Includes title (including opus numbers), composer, and date of piece	Is missing any or all of these elements.
Length	The total word count for all pieces reaches the 750 word minimum (approx. 250 words/each). Does not exceed 1200 words (approx. 400 words/each).	Below 750 words or over 1200 words.

Bibliography Formatting	Has the heading Bibliography centered at the top of the page. Sources are arranged alphabetically and follow Chicago style.	Issues with heading placement, alphabetizing entries, or formatting, including using a different style.
Source selection	Includes only the most applicable scholarly sources available through CMU Libraries. Includes the *Grove Music Online* article on the composer (if available). Includes 2-3 additional books or journal articles for each piece.	Some sources are not scholarly when scholarly sources are available. Off-topic sources used instead of more applicable sources. Does not cite *Grove Music Online* articles on the topic. Insufficient number of scholarly sources used for each piece.
Writing	Very few grammatical errors. Sentences are complete and easy to understand. Overall, coherent and correct.	It might be readable, but there are many grammatical errors. Demonstrates a lack of careful editing.
Content	Balances composer biography, work history, context, and description of the music. Well researched and interesting. Optional: include a couple of compelling quotations (no more than one per piece).	Issues with balance (e.g., too much biography) and relevancy (e.g., focus on childhood for a piece written near the end of the composer's life). Boring for the reader.
Tone	Written for a general audience by avoiding technical language when providing specific information. The tone isn't too informal.	The writing is too technical, formal, vague, and/or informal.

Carnegie Mellon University
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PLAGIARISM PLEDGE

*** Initial, Sign and submit one copy of the Plagiarism Pledge through CANVAS to the **Director of Graduate Studies** by the deadline (see timetables on pages 4–5 of the Guide to the Graduate Comprehensive Project) ***

- I hereby pledge not to plagiarize any part of my Graduate Comprehensive Project.
  _____ (initials)
- I understand plagiarism is a form of cheating.
  _____ (initials)
- I understand that plagiarism is defined as the use of work or concepts contributed by other individuals without proper attribution or citation. Unique ideas or materials taken from another source for either written or oral use must be fully acknowledged in academic work to be graded.
  _____ (initials)
- I understand that plagiarism can occur when cutting and pasting from a web resource directly into a document without providing quotation marks and proper citation of the source.
  _____ (initials)
- I understand that original work is required of the Graduate Comprehensive Project.
  _____ (initials)
- I will show good faith in avoiding plagiarism by documenting my sources and consulting with faculty when I am unsure about what requires documentation.
  _____ (initials)
- I understand that the penalty for committing plagiarism may include ejection from the University and the withholding of degree. See the Carnegie Mellon University Policy on Academic Integrity at www.cmu.edu/policies/student-and-student-life/academic-integrity.html
  _____ (initials)

Name: _____

Date: _____

Signed: _____

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GRADUATE COMPREHENSIVE PROJECT
STUDENT INFORMATION SHEET

*** Sign and submit one copy of this form to the assigned **Analysis Advisor** and one copy to the assigned **Program Note Advisor** by the deadline (see timetables on pages 4–5 of the Guide to the Graduate Comprehensive Project)***

NAME: _____

SIGNED: _____

DATE: _____

Collaborative Piano, Instrumental and Vocal Performance

Performance: _____

Date of Recital: _____

Work(s) to be Analyzed: *(composer, title, opus number, and movement to be analyzed)*

_____

_____

_____

Work(s) to be researched for program notes:

_____

_____

_____

Composition

20th or 21st -century work to be analyzed and researched for paper: *(composer and title)*

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____