

Carnegie Mellon University
School of Music

Guide to the Graduate Comprehensive Project

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Timelines and Deadlines

Note: If the date below falls on a weekend or holiday, treat the due date as the next work day.

For graduation in May

Mid-Nov.	Graduate Forum reviewing Graduate Comprehensive Projects
Dec. 1	Student Information Sheet and Plagiarism Pledge submitted to your assigned Analysis Advisor and Program Note Advisor (one copy each)
Feb. 15	Comprehensives submitted to the assigned Analysis Advisor and Program Note Advisor
March 8	Faculty return comprehensives that require revision to students
March 31	Revisions submitted to the appropriate faculty member (not the Graduate Advisor)
April 15	Faculty return comprehensives to the Director of Graduate Studies

For graduation in August

March 15	Student Information Sheet and Plagiarism Pledge submitted to your assigned Analysis Advisor and Program Note Advisor (one copy each)
May 31	Comprehensives submitted to the assigned Analysis Advisor and Program Note Advisor
June 15	Faculty return comprehensives that require revision to students
July 1	Revisions submitted to the appropriate faculty member (not the Graduate Advisor)
July 15	Faculty return comprehensives to the Director of Graduate Studies

For graduation in December

June 30	Student Information Sheet and Plagiarism Pledge submitted to your assigned Analysis Advisor and Program Note Advisor (one copy each)
Sept. 15	Comprehensives submitted to the assigned Analysis Advisor and Program Note Advisor
Oct. 1	Faculty return comprehensives that require revision to students
Oct. 15	Revisions submitted to the appropriate faculty member (not the Graduate Advisor)
Nov. 1	Faculty return comprehensives to the Director of Graduate Studies

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 his or her 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 Masters 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, whether performance, composition, or conducting.

The project should be an integral part of the preparation for the graduate student's 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: 1) Music Research Methods (required course); 2) graduate review courses of undergraduate-level theory and history; 3) coursework that reinforces analysis and writing about music; 4) targeted presentations on plagiarism, program notes, and analysis; 5) access to the Global Communications Center in Hunt Library for students who seek assistance with their writing; and 6) 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 are able to demonstrate mastery in the scholarship of music developed throughout the master's program, much as a graduate recital demonstrates mastery in the performance or composition of it. 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/Not Pass. At the discretion of the faculty, and with the timeline for graduation in mind, any part of the project that receives a Not Pass may be revised until it passes.

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 above) will result in the certification of your degree being delayed until at least the next graduation month. The master's degree will not be granted to anyone who fails to successfully complete his or her graduate comprehensives.

Note to ESL Students

Students with limited abilities in English are strongly encouraged to make full use of the University's resources for improving writing. See the Global Communications Center in Hunt Library and the Intercultural Center's website at <http://www.cmu.edu/icc/>.

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

Detailed Requirements for Each Area of Study

COMPOSITION MAJORS

1. DETAILED ANALYSIS of a major 20th-21st century work, approved by the theory faculty.

- 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, since that would be counting the same work twice.
- Your analysis should address the formal, linear, and vertical aspects of the piece.
- After completing the analysis, your research paper should describe important analytical observations about the piece and the composer's language. (See below.)

2. RESEARCH PAPER on a major 20th-21st century work, approved by the theory faculty.

- A research paper must accompany the analysis. The minimum word count is 750 (about three double-spaced pages). 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 of New Music*.
- The research paper must be in the following format:
 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 by 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 MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing*; see http://www.libraries.psu.edu/content/psul/researchguides/citationstyles/MLA_citation.html.
- 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.

PERFORMANCE AND CONDUCTING MAJORS

- 1. ANALYSIS** of an entire movement of at least 64 measures selected from the final recital program, approved by the theory faculty. Collaborative piano majors: analyze one art song and one movement of a chamber piece from the final recital, 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, since that would be counting the same work twice. You may use a different movement from that piece.
 - You are free to complete this requirement using whatever analytical techniques are appropriate for the piece you select. Your analysis should include the formal structure, and both melodic and harmonic approaches.
 - A research paper must accompany the analysis. The minimum word count is 750 (about three double-spaced pages). It must refer to the analysis and explain it. Include examples which clarify the analysis, or refer to measure numbers of the analyzed piece. Apply what you have learned through the analysis to how you might perform this composition. In other words, how does the intimate knowledge of the formal, harmonic, and melodic content of this work influence your interpretive decisions?
 - The research paper must be in the following format:
 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 by quotation marks, and footnoted.
 3. Footnotes can be located either at the bottom of the page or at the end of the paper.
 4. Bibliography citing your sources. For further details on formatting, consult *The MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing*;
http://www.libraries.psu.edu/content/psul/researchguides/citationstyles/MLA_citation.html.
 - 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.
- 2. RESEARCHED PROGRAM NOTES** of 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 note (all works) is 750 (about three double-spaced pages), exclusive of text translations. You do not have to write about every piece in your recital, especially if you are performing a number of short pieces, many of them by composers about whom little has been written. *Rather than write on each and every piece, choose between three and five works from your recital program, selecting works that you can research rather than ones about which you will have little to say.*
- **Research the composer and piece.** Quote authorities and historical figures; your note must show substantial research – that's what makes it worth reading. Choose your sources carefully; poor sources may necessitate revision.

- **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 (excepting quotations). Cite your sources according to *The MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing*; see http://www.libraries.psu.edu/content/psul/researchguides/citationstyles/MLA_citation.html.
- **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.
- **Submit the program note on paper, double-spaced, paginated, and stapled.** Do not include a cover page or plastic cover sheet, etc. Simply label the document clearly at the top of the first page with your name, date, and the words "Graduate Comprehensive Project Program Note."
- **Tips on writing successful program notes.**

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.

Avoid these problems. Avoid clichés 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, extended techniques, etc.) unless the piece clearly focuses on such sounds.

**Graduate Comprehensives Project
Student Information Sheet**

**** Sign and submit one copy of this sheet to the assigned Analysis Advisor
AND one copy of this sheet to the assigned Program Note Advisor by December 1. ****

NAME: _____

Instrumental performance, piano performance, or conducting majors:

DATE OF RECITAL: _____

WORK(S) TO BE ANALYZED: _____

(composer, title, opus number, and movement to be analyzed)

WORKS TO BE RESEARCHED FOR PROGRAM NOTES:

Composition majors:

**MAJOR 20TH- or 21ST-CENTURY WORK TO BE ANALYZED AND RESEARCHED
FOR PAPER:**

(composer and title to be analyzed)

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DATE OF RECITAL: _____

WORK(S) TO BE ANALYZED: _____

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WORKS TO BE RESEARCHED FOR PROGRAM NOTES:

Composition majors:

**MAJOR 20TH- or 21ST-CENTURY WORK TO BE ANALYZED AND RESEARCHED
FOR PAPER:**

(composer and title to be analyzed)

Plagiarism Pledge

**** Sign and submit one copy of this sheet to the assigned Analysis Advisor
AND one copy of this sheet to the assigned Program Note Advisor by December 1. ****

- I hereby pledge not to plagiarize any part of my Graduate Comprehensive Project.
- I understand that plagiarism is a form of cheating.
- 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.
- 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.
- I understand that original work is required of the Graduate Comprehensive Project.
- I will show good faith in avoiding plagiarism by documenting my sources and consulting with faculty when I am unsure about what requires documentation.
- 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 Cheating and Plagiarism at <http://www.cmu.edu/policies/documents/AcademicIntegrity.htm>

NAME (print neatly): _____

SIGNED: _____

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