**Introduction**

This document contains information regarding language and musicianship (practicum) examinations in the Department of Music at the University of Chicago. Part 1 contains some general guidelines; Part 2 gives program-specific information; and Part 3 provides a checklist of requirements for programs in composition, ethnomusicology, and history/theory.

Please note that this is an informal document intended to help graduate students in Music understand and negotiate requirements for the language and musicianship examinations. However, it is not a replacement for conferring with faculty and senior lecturers and consulting the Department’s *Graduate Curriculum*, which is available from the Academic Secretary or online at [http://music.uchicago.edu/academic/graduate/index.shtml](http://music.uchicago.edu/academic/graduate/index.shtml).

Copies of previous language and musicianship exams are kept on file in the Main Office (on shelves located beneath the faculty/staff mail slots) or with the Academic Secretary. Official notification about the passing or failing of all exams comes from the Director of Graduate Studies.

**PART 1: Overview**

**A. Language Examinations**

Language examinations are administered by the Department of Music to its students. Students do not take the Foreign Language Reading Examinations administered by the University. Department examinations in German, French, Italian and Latin are given each quarter, except summer, and in other languages on an ad hoc basis. Language examinations are announced several weeks in advance and typically take place during the fifth or sixth weeks of the term. They require the student to translate about 400 words of a passage of medium difficulty from source materials or musicological literature. Students are given two hours to translate the entire passage with the aid of a published dictionary; the quality as well as the completeness and accuracy of the translation are judged. There is no limit to the number of times that a student may retake a language examination. Sample examinations are available in the Department office.

Any request for a departure from the languages used to fulfill degree requirements may be addressed in the form of a petition to the Graduate Curriculum Committee, including petitions for examinations in languages not regularly tested. Such petitions must demonstrate specific and direct relevance to the student’s research or compositional work. Petitions should be addressed to the Director of Graduate Studies, and must be submitted at least two months before the student would take the exam.
B. Musicianship Examinations (Practicum)
During the autumn, winter, and spring terms, the Department of Music also administers examinations in basic and advanced practical musicianship skills.

Examinations in basic musicianship include the following:
- Musical dictation
- Sight-singing
- Sight-reading at the piano.
Students may request to take the sight-reading examination on another instrument in the Western musical tradition. Such requests should be made to the Lecturer in charge of musicianship examinations at least one month before the regularly scheduled examinations.

Examinations in advanced musicianship include the following three skills to be realized either at the piano or in written form (for those with no basic piano skills):
- Figured bass
- Reading of open vocal scores in old clefs
- Orchestral score-reading (with a 24-hour preparation period).
Requests to realize an advanced skill in written form should be made to the Lecturer in charge of musicianship examinations at least one month before the regularly scheduled examinations.

Students in Ethnomusicology, History, or Theory may, upon consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies and in conformance with their program requirements, replace the advanced musicianship skills listed above with one or two of the following alternatives:
- Atonal dictation
- Transcription of music from oral or improvisatory traditions
- Improvisation within the context of a recognized improvisatory tradition,
- Performing a solo recital at the University
- Playing in a University ensemble for at least one academic year (including participating in all public concerts scheduled by the ensemble).

Aside from the dictation exams, which are administered to all examinees simultaneously, the exams are performed in individual appointments before the Practicum Committee. The score-reading exam is available 24 hours in advance, and the figured bass and clef-reading exams allow 10 minutes for preparation. There is no limit to the number of examinations a student may take at a single sitting, and no limit to the number of times that a student may retake a musicianship examination. Sample examinations are available in the Department office. Petitions for examinations other than those listed above must be submitted at least two months before the student would take the exam.
PART 2: Program-specific requirements

**COMPOSITION (1 language + 6 musicianship)**

**Languages.** A reading knowledge of one foreign language, normally chosen from German, French, and Italian. Other languages may be substituted upon approval of petition to the Director of Graduate Studies. The student’s language of origin (parent tongue) may not be used to fulfill this requirement.

**Musicianship.** The successful completion of six musicianship examinations, including three basic skills (dictation, sight-singing, sight-reading at the piano or another instrument in the Western tradition) and three advanced skills (figured bass, old clefs, score reading) realized either at the piano or in written form (for students with no basic keyboard skills; generally, no more than one advanced skill should be realized in written form).

**ETHNOMUSICOLOGY (3 languages + 4 musicianship)**

**Languages.** A reading knowledge of three languages. These include a language necessary for field research; a classical language with an established literary tradition; and a scholarly language important for broader research in ethnomusicology).

**Musicianship.** Successful completion of four musicianship examinations, including two basic skills (dictation and either sight-singing, or sight-reading on the piano or another Western instrument); and two advanced skills. Students may choose freely from the advanced skills listed above, however, performance with an ensemble can be used to satisfy only one of the requirements for advanced skills.

**HISTORY AND THEORY**

- **History Focus (3 languages + 4 musicianship)**

  **Languages.** Students preparing for a career oriented toward historical musicology are required to pass three language examinations. These include German and two other language exams normally chosen from among French, Italian, or Latin, or from other languages upon approval of petition.

  **Musicianship.** Students preparing for a career oriented toward historical musicology are required to pass four musicianship examinations. These include two basic skills (dictation, sight singing, or sight-reading on the piano or another instrument in the Western tradition) and two advanced skills from any of those listed. Students may replace only one advanced skill with one of the alternatives listed above.

- **Theory Focus (2 languages + 6 musicianship)**

  **Languages:** Students preparing for a career oriented toward theory and analysis are required to pass two language examinations. These include German and another language normally chosen from among French, Italian, or Latin, or from another language upon approval of petition.

  **Musicianship.** Students preparing for a career oriented toward theory and analysis are required to pass six musicianship examinations. These include three basic skills and three advanced skills. Students may replace only one advanced skill with one of the alternatives listed above.
PART 3: Checklists

COMPOSITION REQUIREMENTS

Languages (1)
☐ ______________

Basic musicianship skills (3)
☐ Dictation
☐ Sight-singing
☐ Sight-reading

Advanced musicianship skills (3)
☐ Figured Bass
☐ Old Clefs
☐ Score reading

ETHNOMUSICOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Languages (3)
☐ Field language ______________
☐ Classical language ______________
☐ Scholarly language ______________

Basic musicianship skills (choose 2 from the following)
☐ Dictation
☐ Sight-singing
☐ Sight-reading

Advanced musicianship skills (choose 2 from the following)
☐ Figured Bass
☐ Old Clefs
☐ Score reading
☐ Atonal dictation
☐ Transcription of music from oral or improvisatory traditions
☐ Improvisation within the context of a recognized improvisatory tradition,
☐ Performing a solo recital at the University
☐ Playing in a University ensemble for at least one academic year (including all public concerts)
CHECKLIST: HISTORICAL MUSICOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Languages (3)
- German
- ______________
- ______________

Basic musicianship skills (choose 2 from the following)
- Dictation
- Sight-singing
- Sight-reading

Advanced musicianship skills (choose 2 from the following)
- Figured Bass
- Old Clefs
- Score reading
- Alternative ______________

CHECKLIST: THEORY REQUIREMENTS

Languages (2)
- German
- ______________

Basic musicianship skills (3)
- Dictation
- Sight-singing
- Sight-reading

Advanced musicianship skills (3)
- Figured Bass
- Old Clefs
- Score reading
- Alternative ______________