

DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC: REPORT ON THE “2–4 PROJECT”

BACKGROUND

A subcommittee of representative faculty* meet throughout the fall to consider and discuss the department’s Ph.D. program, especially that portion pertaining to years two through four.

PROCEDURE

We gathered data about relevant issues from other departments within Yale as well as from programs at peer institutions.

We solicited student input, which we received in two parts: a small meeting of student representatives with the DGS near the beginning of the process, and a general meeting of students and subcommittee at the end.

We met with the faculty in mid-semester to preview and discuss some of the ideas.

A caucus of music-theory faculty met separately on three occasions to discuss matters that pertained solely to the theory program.

On December 11, 2006 and on April 16, 2007, the faculty of the Department of Music adopted the all of proposals attached herewith.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES

- The foreign language proficiency requirement for students in the Music History program has been lowered from three languages to two.
- The number of required courses has been lowered from 16 to 14; all students must take a new course (MUSI 997: Readings for Qualifying Examinations) in the spring of their second year.

* Membership: Professors Harrison, Hepokoski, Kreuzer, Quinn, Rosand, Weiss.

- The qualifying examinations have been revised to provide students with a better opportunity to experience them as the outcome of specialized, independent study that can launch them towards dissertation topics.
- Specific guidelines for the prospectus have been drawn up.

SPECIFICS OF THE NEW PROGRAM

Note: Except where modified, displaced, or augmented by the procedures enumerated below, all current rules, practices and requirements remain in place. The text of these procedures, approved by faculty vote, is designed for the department's "Graduate Handbook," the policy manual for students and faculty.

2. LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

Students must pass examinations in two foreign languages before the qualifying examination: German and either French or Italian. Language examinations last for three hours and have three components: an excerpt from a contemporary source; an excerpt from a historical source; and a longer excerpt or complete article. Students must provide a word-by-word translation of the first two, and a paraphrase or abstract of the third.

Dictionaries are permitted.

Commentary: Discovering that we were perhaps the last holdout from an earlier age of humanistic scholarship, we brought our language requirements in line with peer institutions. This change will make it easier for students to focus on discipline-specific work instead of scrambling to acquire basic "proficiency" in a third language through additional coursework or summer study. We believe that students who have research interests requiring special language proficiency (mediaevalists and Latin, for example) will matriculate already having a basic knowledge that they can augment on an "as needed" basis.

3. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

During the first and second years, students will take at least three courses per semester up to a total of fourteen.

- Eleven must be graduate seminars in the Department of Music.
- With permission of the DGS, two may be in other departments or schools within the university, as long as they are either graduate seminars or non-introductory undergraduate courses.
- In the spring semester of the second year, students will take MUSI 997b: Readings for Qualifying Examinations.

In the third year, students will enroll in MUSI 998a (Prospectus Seminar) and MUSI 999b (Dissertation Colloquium)

Commentary: The present course load of 16 (12 department seminars plus 4 “practicum” courses of an unspecified nature) has been felt by both faculty and students to be too much. Reducing overall load to 14 courses was felt to be more manageable. To preserve the interdisciplinarity that the practicum courses sometimes offered, we allowed that two of the 14 could be taken outside the department. Finally, we created a “ramp up to qualifying examination” course to create space for students to make the transition from course work to exam prep, and thence to more satisfactory performance on examinations. The department already offered a third-year program of prospectus seminar and colloquium, which will continue.

4. QUALIFYING EXAMINATIONS IN MUSIC HISTORY

During the second term of the second year of study, students enrolled in MUSI 997 will consult with the faculty members to begin compiling a list of possible topics for their examination. Four general topics are to be selected. Three of these should be drawn, one each, from these broad chronological categories: (1) Medieval/ Renaissance, (2) Baroque/Classical, (3) nineteenth century to the present. The fourth will be designed around broader

conceptual or methodological issues dealing with, say, historiography, criticism, popular music, or non-Western music. Preparation should include matters of repertory, bibliography, and current research. The examination consists of two parts:

1. A written portion spread over two days in which the student spends three hours on each of the four questions or analyses representing the chosen topics (these questions may include a discussion of music scores similar to but not actually present on the repertory lists).
2. An oral portion of up to three hours in length, administered several days later by the full history faculty, in which the four exam essays are taken as points of departure.

Commentary: The revision here deals with timing matters. The faculty having felt that the written portion of the present exam was not long enough adequately to display student command of material, the time allotted for this was doubled from 90 minutes per question to 3 hours. In addition, the readings course for the qualifying exam (MUSI 997) now allows students more time to prepare and research the questions.

5. QUALIFYING EXAMINATION IN MUSIC THEORY

During the second term of the second year of study, students enrolled in musI 997 will consult with theory faculty members to determine two broad yet distinct repertories (musical or analytic-methodological) from which examination pieces will be drawn. They may designate the repertories for the eight-hour and three-day analysis exams, described below, and should also submit a short written proposal outlining their chosen repertories and offering some justification for the choices. These reportorial choices must be approved by the theory faculty.

The qualifying examination in Music Theory given at the end of the summer consists of four parts:

1. A one-day (six-hour) examination in which the student writes essays on two topics chosen from a set of four that synthesize theoretical and aesthetic ideas across historical periods, and one chosen from a group of three that shows familiarity and command of current trends and literature in music theory. Two hours per essay is allotted.
2. An eight-hour examination in which the student produces an analysis of a representative work from the designated repertory.
3. A three-day examination in which the student produces an analysis of a work from the designated repertory.
4. An oral portion of up to three hours in length, administered several days later by the whole theory faculty, in which the student defends written-examination answers, offers other possible analytic approaches to the pieces, and discusses other matters not covered in the written examination.

6. PROSPECTUS

The prospectus should be written with the guidance of at least one faculty adviser. Although each prospectus will have its own form and outline according to the nature of the project, in general a prospectus should:

1. Describe the goals and methods of the project;
2. Explain the potential significance of the project;
3. Indicate how the project fits into the fields of scholarship and how it draws upon but is distinct from the work to which it is most closely related;
4. Describe the principal sources upon which the project will be based;
5. Suggest an outline of the chapters;
6. Do all of the above in as efficient a fashion as is appropriate to the project, with a goal of not exceeding fifteen pages;
7. Append a bibliography of anticipated primary and secondary sources.

Commentary: Students had asked explicitly for guidance about writing a prospectus, and they were especially concerned about controls on length.

MISCELLANEOUS

- Current first-year students, grandfathered under the present program, may elect the new program *in toto* – that is, they may not pick and choose elements from both present and new programs.
- We wonder whether a future program review might concentrate on “Years 0–2,” focusing especially on admissions procedures. Admitting students capable of handling the challenges of our program is, at present, more art than science.
- The faculty found this exercise both useful and stimulating, and we plan to do it every two years in scaled-down form (i.e., more for tweak and adjustment than for thoroughgoing revision).