

Ethnomusicology Graduate Program
School of the Arts and Architecture
Departmental Graduate Counseling Document
Revised September 24, 2007

(Please read this document in conjunction with the Program of Study, published on the Graduate Division's website.)

Advising

Students' interests inevitably evolve over time, and so for that reason the Ethnomusicology Department has devised a flexible scheme of faculty advising in which the Department assigns the student's first-year advisor. In subsequent years the student is free to choose his/her advisor. The student should let the Department Chair and the departmental Graduate Advisor know his/her choice by the end of the second week of fall quarter each year.

Program Requirements require the student to contact his/her advisor at the beginning of each quarter to discuss degree progress and to plan for the future. There is, however, no way for the Department to enforce this rule, so the onus is on you to take the initiative in this area. Though the faculty may appear busy, they definitely welcome at least a quarterly visit. One of the most common faculty complaints about students is their failure to meet regularly with their faculty advisor. The student can set up an appointment in advance or simply show up at the advisor's posted office hours.

In addition to the assigned or chosen faculty advisor, the student should consider the entire faculty as advisors and seek their help on any questions concerning professional development in the field as well as curricular and career choices.

The faculty meets in committee at the end of each year and evaluates students' performance and progress in the program. In advance of that meeting, held in late May, students are asked to submit an updated CV along with a cover letter outlining their main achievements during the year. The faculty reviews these documents and the student's academic and professional performance; a letter conveying the main points of the faculty evaluation is then sent to each student after the meeting.

As one aspect of advising, entering students are given a "music theory test" before classes start in Fall. This test examines knowledge of the rudiments of music theory including basic terminology and Western notation. The test also includes listening (aural skills) to identify and name melodic and harmonic intervals, triads and seventh chords, and transcribing simple melodies and rhythmic patterns. Since the Department screens at admissions for musical training, this test should be relatively easy. The Department needs to make sure that all students have the

theory background necessary to succeed in the core seminar on transcription and analysis. If significant problems are identified on this test, the student will be asked to take one or more quarters of Ethnomusicology 10ABC, World Music Theory, or another course to make up for this deficiency.

Financial Support

The Department is currently able to offer fellowships to about half of each year's entering class. In the second through fourth years of study we have been supporting every student whom the faculty ranks good or excellent with teaching assistantships or graduate student researcher positions in the Department's laboratory, publication program, or Ethnomusicology Archive. This pattern of support cannot be guaranteed, however, and may change due to changes in the University's—and the Department's—budget.

Department financial support is strictly merit based. At the time of admission, support depends on the faculty admissions committee's assessment of the relative strengths of those admitted. In subsequent years, this depends on the faculty's collective assessment at the annual evaluation meeting mentioned above.

In order to qualify to be a TA, the Department requires that students take Ethnomusicology 495B, Teaching with Technology. The course, normally offered in spring quarter, should be taken in the student's first year in the graduate program. Course Ethnomusicology 495A, Teaching Apprentice Practicum, is taken in the fall quarter of the first year in which a student serves as a TA. This is often, but not always, the second year of the program. An advanced graduate student under the supervision of the Department Chair teaches both courses.

In addition, every quarter a student serves as a TA, he/she must enroll in the appropriate units of Ethnomusicology 375, Teaching Apprentice Practicum.

Foreign Language Requirement

There are many good reasons to satisfy the foreign language requirements as early as possible in the program of study. In particular, as soon as the student has selected an area of study for the Ph.D. research, he or she should begin the study of the relevant language(s). (This may have already been done.) To this end, in the first quarter of the degree program, all students must file the Foreign Language Declaration (available on the Department web site) indicating the language to be used for the current degree and the means of satisfying the requirement. Any petitions must be submitted as soon as feasible.

For students who enter the graduate program at the M.A. level, at least one of their language requirements must be completed by the ninth quarter of enrollment, or funding will be jeopardized. For students who enter with an M.A., at least one of their language requirements must be completed by the beginning of their sixth quarter in residence, or their funding will be jeopardized.

Master's Degree

Course Requirements

The six core seminars are normally all completed in the first year. If a deficiency in music theory is detected and some undergraduate work in music theory is required, then the core seminar on transcription and analysis may be postponed to the second year.

To satisfy the course requirements, students typically take two seminars or courses per quarter for two years. In addition to these required courses, students often take from one to three quarters of Ethnomusicology 20ABC as well as language courses and one or more performance ensembles. Independent study (596) is recommended during the second year, to help with the preparation of the master's examination paper.

Beyond the core seminars, the curriculum is designed to give the student a great deal of flexibility in designing a program that meets his or her interests and needs. The Department encourages students to take courses outside the Department for two reasons: First, some courses may build on a student's strengths in traditional music disciplines such as music history, music theory, conducting, and so forth or in other fields such as anthropology or area studies. Maintaining strengths in areas outside Ethnomusicology and Systematic Musicology during the graduate career can make the student more attractive on the job market in the future. Second, Ethnomusicology has long owed intellectual debts to anthropology and musicology. In recent years, as the boundaries between disciplines have blurred and as disciplines increasingly use some of the same features of contemporary social theory, Ethnomusicologists and Systematic Musicologists are reading in a growing set of disciplinary perspectives, including cultural studies, sociology, history, women's studies, cognitive science, and so on. Keeping abreast of developments in these fields should help to make the student's research relevant to a broad range of scholars in the humanities, social sciences, and life sciences.

Comprehensive Examination Plan

The Graduate Division requires that in addition to courses, each M.A. student complete either a thesis or comprehensive examination. The Department requires an examination that effectively is a take-home paper followed by an oral examination on the paper and the way it fits into the history, theory, and method of the field of Ethnomusicology.

The relative brevity of the paper is designed to focus the student's attention on producing a high-quality document that is potentially publishable. As a proto-academic journal article, the paper is an aspect of professional training in the field and should help the student understand the professional standards for publication.

For the M.A. paper, most students extend, deepen, and polish a paper written for a seminar during the first year, very often the fieldwork seminar. Two key features of the paper beyond the particular ethnographic focus are: (1) attention to musical description and analysis (with or without transcription as relevant); and (2) position of the work within the field of Ethnomusicology and other disciplines used, and in relation to existing literature in the geographical or cultural area of study.

The oral examination focuses on questions arising from the paper, as perceived by the faculty committee, including issues the student may not have directly addressed. In preparation, students are advised to keep up with reading in the field on their own and to review readings from both core and elective courses taken over the last 2 years.

By the end of the fifth week of the fall quarter of the second year, the student should submit a brief 250-500 word proposal stating the themes of the paper, signed by the paper's principal advisor. (This is normally the student's faculty advisor for the year, but it may be someone else chosen by the student.) The paper will be due at the end of the fifth week of spring quarter. The examination committee will consist of the paper's principal advisor plus two faculty members selected by the Department. Normally the same two faculty members serve on every M.A. committee that year; the Department will announce the committee at the end of fifth week of fall quarter. As research progresses, the student should meet from time to time not only with his or her principal advisor but also with the other members of the committee.

The oral examination may take place a few days or up to two to three weeks after the paper is submitted. The results are announced later.

Time-to-Degree

The program has been designed to be completed in two years. Departmental support is tied to this timetable. Personal circumstances may require students to take longer, which they may do without prejudice toward eventual admission to the Ph.D. program. However, the Department in the third year of study will not fund students taking longer than two years.

Doctoral Degree

Admission

Students from outside UCLA with an M.A. in Ethnomusicology may apply for admission directly to the Ph.D. program. Students from the UCLA M.A. program must write a brief letter to the chair at the time they submit the M.A. paper requesting admission to the Ph.D. program or indicating their desire to take a terminal M.A. Admission to the Ph.D. program for UCLA M.A. students will be based on performance in courses and on the M.A. examinations; decisions are normally announced late in spring quarter.

Course Requirements

Six courses are required with no core courses, though students from non-UCLA programs may have to make up one or more of the M.A. core seminars. A minimum of three quarters of the one-unit departmental colloquium is also required. Students should select courses in conjunction with their faculty advisor, using the same criteria as for the M.A. courses. (Note: If students have to make up one or more of the M.A. core seminars, they do not count toward the six core doctoral courses.)

Written and Oral Qualifying Examinations

The Ph.D. examinations consist of four written examinations plus the submission of an extended proposal for the Ph.D. research, which must be defended in an oral exam conducted by all members of the dissertation committee. The Department sets some of the examination topics for the written exams and the student may choose some, with some of the same considerations in mind as for course selection. The student is free to choose the examiners for all four written examinations, but at least three different professors must be picked (i.e., you must either choose four different examiners, each administering one exam, or else three, one of whom administers two). The student is also free to choose the examiner for the chair and other members of the dissertation committee. In general, four people are required for the dissertation committee, all of whom must hold the title of Assistant, Associate, or Full Professor. No more than two committee members may be Assistant Professors. One must be from outside the Ethnomusicology Department. If you want a person who does not hold one of these titles on your committee, see the Graduate Advisor as to how that person may be accommodated. Also see the Standards and Procedures for Graduate Study at UCLA (<http://www.gdnet.ucla.edu/gasaa/library/spintro.htm>) for details on dissertation committee membership.

Students normally begin exam preparation during the summer between their first and second year of doctoral study. The examinations are typically taken during the second year of study at the Ph.D. level, and ideally during the winter quarter. Students normally submit the nomination of the examining committee at the end of the first doctoral year, possibly in advance of taking the language examinations. Nevertheless, the language requirement and all other requirements must be fulfilled—and the doctoral committee appointed—before the qualifying examination period may begin.

The four written examinations and the dissertation proposal are normally taken and handed in during a two-week period set by the student in conjunction with his or her committee. (Some of the examinations may be take-home examinations, while others may be written during a prescribed period in a room on campus.) After approval of the “request for qualifying exam committee” by the Executive Committee, the approved committee will be circulated to all the professors involved in the examinations. Once the two-week exam period ends, these professors will have two weeks to grade the examination and submit the grade to the Department’s Graduate Advisor. The Graduate Advisor will, when all the grades have been submitted, notify the student and each professor of the results, as well as the chair of the doctoral dissertation committee.

The professor who sets the examination, who, in turn, notifies the Department’s Graduate Advisor if the examination has been passed or failed, grades each examination. Once the graduate advisor determines that all the written examinations have been passed, (s)he notifies the student and the student’s doctoral committee, and the student is free to set a date for the Oral Qualifying Examination (the oral defense of the dissertation proposal).

The Oral Qualifying Examination (defense of the dissertation proposal) will be held after the four-week period of handing in and grading the qualifying exams has passed. This exam is based on a lengthy proposal that outlines the main theoretical issues to be examined by the dissertation as well as the history of the literature on the particular topic (region of the world, culture, genre, musician) that the student plans to study.

The Dissertation

Students normally apply for grants to support research/fieldwork during the fall of their second year of study. The research and writing of the grant applications, and therefore the preparation of the dissertation proposal, should be planned for the summer between the first and second year.

Students normally spend about a year conducting field research for the doctoral dissertation and take at least another year writing. Extramural funding is currently the only source for funding of the dissertation research. When a student's advisor can certify that he or she is within a year of completion of the written dissertation, the student may apply with Department support to the Graduate Division for a Dissertation-Year Fellowship. A Final Oral (Defense of the Dissertation) is required.

Time-to-Degree

We normally expect students to advance to candidacy no later than the end of the second year of the Ph.D. program. Students may take longer, but they will receive no departmental support in the third or subsequent years.

Academic Disqualification and Appeal of Disqualification

The faculty is committed to having each student complete the program they were admitted to, and works with the student to try to ensure that decisions about termination of study are mutual and understood to be in the best interest of the student. A graduate student may be disqualified from continuing in the graduate program for a variety of reasons. The most common is failure to maintain the minimum cumulative grade point average (3.0) required by the Academic Senate to remain in good standing. Other examples include failure of examinations, lack of progress toward the degree, poor performance in core courses, etc. Students whose cumulative grade point average falls below 3.00 are subject to dismissal upon recommendation by the Department. University guidelines governing disqualification of graduate students, including the appeal procedure, are outlined in Standards and Procedures for Graduate Study at UCLA ["Regulations and Policies: Standard of Scholarship: Academic Disqualification and Appeal of Disqualification"] <http://www.gdnet.ucla.edu/gasaa/library/spintro.htm>).