

Department of Ethnomusicology
UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music
Graduate Student Handbook
Revised November 2016

This publication supplements the Graduate Division publication “Program Requirements for Graduate Degrees: Ethnomusicology,” available at <https://grad.ucla.edu/programs/herb-alpert-school-of-music/ethnomusicology/>, which is the official statement of degree requirements. “Standards and Procedures for Graduate Study at UCLA” also provides extensive and detailed information pertinent to degree progress and is available on the same website. Students are responsible for reading and abiding by all the rules and procedures as set forth in these documents. Students are also responsible for tracking their own degree progress.

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 Director of Graduate Studies serves as the student’s advisor for the first year. In subsequent years the student is free to select his/her advisor in consultation with that faculty member. The student should inform the Department Chair and the departmental Graduate Advisor of his/her selection by the end of the second week of fall quarter each year.

All students should contact the Director of Graduate Studies or their advisor at the beginning of each quarter to discuss degree progress and to plan for the future. You *must* provide a current transcript for this discussion. 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 concerns about students is their failure to meet regularly with their faculty advisor. Students can set up an appointment in advance or simply show up at the advisor’s posted office hours. Diligence in these matters is a consideration for merit-based awards.

In addition to the Director of Graduate Studies, 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. Also, students are strongly advised to take courses with faculty in the department whose cognate field of study, area of specialization, or theoretical approach is relevant to the students’ research interests.

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, normally 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. Following the meeting, the Director of Graduate Studies sends each student a letter conveying the main points of the faculty evaluation.

Students are expected to enter with knowledge of music theory. If they do not, they should contact Prof. Beken to ascertain the necessary steps to take to address this deficiency.

Financial Support

The Department is currently able to offer fellowships to each year's entering class. In the second through fourth years of study, the Department supports 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, School's, or 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 addition, excessive incomplete coursework not satisfied in subsequent quarters will have a negative effect on your assessment.

In order to qualify to be a teaching assistant, the Department requires that students enroll in Ethnomusicology 495A, Teaching Apprentice Practicum, which is taken in the fall quarter of the first year in which a student serves as a TA. This is usually, but not always, the second year of the program. An advanced graduate student under the supervision of the Director of Graduate Studies teaches both courses.

In addition, every quarter a student serves as a TA, s/he 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 requirement 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) if s/he does not possess the requisite language competence already. To this end, in the first quarter of the degree program, all students must file the Foreign Language Declaration (available on the Department website) 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, the language requirement must be completed by the ninth quarter of enrollment or funding will be jeopardized. For students who

enter with an M.A., the language requirement must be completed by the beginning of their sixth quarter in residence, or their funding will be jeopardized.

Human Subjects

Before conducting ethnographic research (fieldwork) for the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees, students must submit to the Department copies of their approved Human Subjects exemptions or a document explaining why exemptions will not be needed.

For the M.A., Human Subjects material must be submitted along with the proposal for your M.A. paper, which is at the end of the fifth week of the fall quarter of your second year in the program. For the Ph.D., Human Subjects documentation must be submitted at the same time you request the approval of your topic proposal and dissertation committee.

All researchers need to file for review with Office of Human Research Protection Program (OHRPP) because of their use of human subjects. An online credential must be obtained, and then a separate form is filed to claim an exemption from review board action, a process often completed quickly. If the study does not meet the requirements for exemption, the application must go forward to the review board, a process that can take many weeks or months. For information on the application process and University Policy regarding Human Subjects, go to <http://ohrpp.research.ucla.edu>.

Master's Degree

Course Requirements

The four core seminars are normally completed in the first 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.

The non-Western music performance requirement reflects a fundamental facet of the graduate program in ethnomusicology at UCLA. From its inception, UCLA Ethnomusicology has always given special attention to performance as a research method. The ensemble experience allows students to observe and interact with master musicians as they perform and lead an ensemble. Having access to a master musician's expertise will help students develop ideas and theories in their own research as well as attain an intimate understanding of a culturally specific set of musical concepts. Therefore, a UCLA education will give the student the skill of identifying ethnomusicological issues and problems with a performer's insight. This experience may also qualify graduates to go on to lead their own world music ensembles in higher educational institutions.

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. Students must take 8 elective seminars within the department, from the two series described on the program

requirements website. The Department also 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 draw on some of the same contemporary social theories, ethnomusicologists and systematic musicologists are reading in a growing set of disciplinary perspectives, including cultural studies, sociology, history, women's studies, critical race theory, 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

In their first year, students should apply for a Graduate Summer Research Mentorship to receive faculty guidance and enable them to conduct the ethnographic research necessary for the M.A. paper.

The Graduate Division requires that in addition to courses, each M.A. student must complete either a thesis or a comprehensive examination. The Department requires an examination that is essentially a take-home paper, followed by an oral examination on the paper and how it participates in 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. 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, though the paper can be based on new research pursued in the summer following the first year. Three key features of the paper are: (1) it must be based on a significant amount of ethnographic research; (2) it must be positioned in the field of ethnomusicology and other disciplines consulted, and in relation to existing literature in the geographical or cultural area of study; and (3) it must include musical description and analysis (with or without transcription) if relevant.

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 someone selected by the student in consultation with that faculty member, who has particular expertise in the geographical or theoretical area of the paper.) 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. 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 and writing progress, the student should meet regularly not only with his or her principal advisor but also with the other members of the committee.

The oral examination focuses on questions and comments 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 two years.

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 is 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 cannot guarantee funding for students who take longer than two years.

Doctoral Degree

Admission

Once all other program requirements have been fulfilled, 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 ethnomusicology programs or non-ethnomusicology programs may be required to take one or more of the M.A. core seminars in addition to these six courses. If students have to make up one or more of the M.A. core seminars, they do not count toward fulfilling the Ph.D. requirements.

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. (Note: qualifying exams differ somewhat for specializations within the department, so please consult the Program Requirements online if you are in a specialization). 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 select the examiners for all four written examinations in consultation with those faculty members, 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). It is permissible for a faculty member from another department to serve as an examiner. The student is also free to select any examiners to serve as the chair or other member of the dissertation committee.

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 examination (if required). Nevertheless, the language requirement and all other requirements must be fulfilled—and the doctoral committee appointed—before the qualifying examination period may begin.

Some of the examinations may be take-home examinations, while others may be written during a prescribed period. The type of exam given is negotiated by students with their examiners. The examination subjects and the professors must be approved beforehand by petition to the Graduate Advisory Committee. Once an exam is submitted, its examiner will have two weeks to grade the examination and submit the grade to the Department's Graduate Advisor. When all the grades have been submitted, the Graduate Advisor will notify the student and each professor of the results, as well as the chair of the doctoral dissertation committee.

Each examination is graded by the professor giving the exam, and the student passes or fails each examination based on the evaluation of that professor. If a student fails any exam, s/he may retake it only once, on a specified date and time during the next regular quarter.

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).

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. 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. One must be from outside the Department of Ethnomusicology, and can be from outside UCLA. It is also permitted to have a second outside member of the committee. See also the Standards and Procedures for Graduate Study at UCLA (<https://grad.ucla.edu/academics/graduate-study/standards-and-procedures-for-graduate-study/>) for details on dissertation committee membership.

The doctoral dissertation proposal is a document of roughly 30-40 pages, including references, which presents the dissertation topic and problem(s) to be investigated and the theoretical literature(s) to be employed. The dissertation proposal should situate the dissertation's research and arguments within the existing ethnomusicological and related literatures with a thorough literature review. There should also be an in-depth discussion of methodologies to be employed. It is also common to offer a summary of each chapter in dissertation proposals. Evidence should be given that IRB clearance or an exemption has been granted or is underway.

The University Oral Qualifying Examination is primarily a defense of the doctoral dissertation proposal, especially its relation to previous research in the area and to theory and method in ethnomusicology.

The Dissertation

Students normally apply for grants to support research/fieldwork during the fall of their second year of doctoral (i.e., post-M.A.) 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 of doctoral study.

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 main 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.

Nazir Ali Jairazbhoy Colloquium Series

Graduate students are expected to attend the Nazir Ali Jairazbhoy Colloquium Series.

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"] <https://grad.ucla.edu/academics/graduate-study/standards-and-procedures-for-graduate-study/>.