

EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
Department of Music

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION FOR PERFORMANCE CONCENTRATIONS

I. GRADUATE RECITAL REPERTOIRE (to be answered by all graduate music students in a Performance Concentration. Complete sections **I.A** and **I.B** or sections **I.A** and **I.C**.)

A. Select one major work-from your graduate recital and discuss the following:

1. The significance of the piece in relation to the literature of the period in which it was composed;
2. The ways in which it reflects or differs from the style of the period;
3. Specific musical and technical challenges you have overcome in preparing the work for performance.

(Discuss EITHER section **I.B** or section **I.C**)

NOTE: This question must be completed prior to taking the Exam and turned in at the time of the Exam. The answer must be typed or word processed and clearly legible. The answer must follow every applicable guideline in the most recent edition of *A Manual for Writers of Term, Papers, Theses and Dissertations* by Kate Turabian.

B. Present a complete analysis of a selected work from your graduate recital. Include a thorough discussion of those criteria listed below. (5 to 10 pages).

1. Specific stylistic features that help identify the time and/or place of the composition and/or its composer.
2. The form of the piece. If it is a conventional pattern, explain it thoroughly. If it does not reveal a traditional pattern, explain the factors that determine sections or provide unity within the composition.
3. The harmonic style. Comment on the scale basis (or bases).
 - If *tonal*, provide a thorough Roman Numeral harmonic analysis of a characteristic or interesting 8-16 measure passage and describe the overall key scheme of the piece.
 - If *freely tonal, pantonal, modal etc.*, identify the source(s) of pitch material (e.g., sets, rows, motives, pandiatonic pitch collections).
4. If appropriate, comment on:
 - the melodic style
 - the rhythm
 - the contrapuntal style
 - the texture
 - the notation
 - the instrumentation
 - the relationship of the text to the music

C. Present a paper detailing pertinent information related to your graduate-recital (5 to 10 pages of text plus bibliography; follow every applicable guideline in the most recent edition of *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations* by Kate Turabian). Be sure to discuss the following:

1. Rationale for repertoire selected and the historical significance thereof in regard to the literature;
2. Biographical information on the composers;
3. Significant samplings of formal and/or harmonic compositional techniques used in selected works (approximately 25% of the program).

II. SELECTED TOPICS (discuss TWO of the following most relevant to your performing medium)

A. Give a brief history of your instrument from its origin to the present. Be sure to discuss the following:

1. Changes and improvements in mechanism;
2. Advancements in technique;
3. Musical works that mark significant evolutionary stages;
4. Important virtuosi and instrument makers.

B. Discuss examples of 20th-century techniques in music (other than works discussed elsewhere in the Examination) for your instrument/voice. (Be sure to include specific works and composers.)

C. Discuss the use of your instrument/voice in chamber music during one of the major eras of music history. Be sure to discuss the following:

1. Important genres;
2. Major composers;
3. Technical concerns;
4. Stylistic and musical concerns.

D. Name the period of music history you believe is most significant for your instrument/voice. Be sure to discuss the following:

1. Reasons for your choice;
2. Specific composers;
3. Specific works;
4. Types of compositions;
5. Innovational accomplishments that support your choice.

E. Select four (4) of the following and briefly discuss the purpose for which each was written. Name specific examples and list composers where appropriate:

1. Gregorian chant
2. Madrigal
3. Motet
4. Cantata (sacred or secular)
5. Oratorio
6. Passion
7. Requiem
8. Mass

F. The development of the piano played an important part in the history of the Art Song. Trace the relationship of the piano accompaniment to the vocal line in Art Song. Give examples beginning with 18th-century song to the present. Be sure to discuss the following:

1. Relationship between text and melodic line;
2. Text and accompaniment;
3. Dramatic effects;
4. Formal structure of the song;
5. Harmonic influences;
6. Tonal coloration and descriptive motive effects.

G. Outline a four-year course of study for a typical undergraduate student on your instrument/voice. Be sure to discuss the following:

1. Repertoire list (solos, etudes, etc.);
2. Pedagogical rationale for the repertoire selected;
3. Goals and objectives for each year;
4. Means of assessing student progress and achievement.

H. Outline an effective rehearsal plan for an SATB choir (high school, university, church or community). Be sure to discuss the following:

1. At least 4 vocal exercises that address general vocal/choral singing techniques;
2. At least 3 different pieces or movements to be studied at the rehearsal;
3. At least 2 exercises that specifically relate to the music being rehearsed;
4. The order of presentation and the specific aspects of each that need to be covered.

I. Select two composers of compositions for your performance medium. List ways in which these composers are remembered for their contributions to the genre. Be sure to cite differences between specific compositions in your discussion. Select from the following eras:

1. Renaissance
2. Baroque
3. Classical
4. Romantic
5. Twentieth Century

J. Consider the evolution of opera from 1600 to the present:

1. Discuss the stylistic differences and performance practices that occurred throughout that evolution;
2. List important composers and cite representative works from French, Italian, German, and English language operas.