

School of Music-Graduate Studies
Doctor of Musical Arts (DMA)
DMA Research Project Guidelines
Doctoral Performance and Research Committee (DPRC) and the DMA Research Project

Graduate students in the Doctor of Musical Arts program at UW-Madison School of Music make a contribution to their performance field parallel to the original research and scholarly writing of Ph.D. candidates. Since the DMA is a performance degree, this original work takes the form of recitals, one or more lecture-recitals, and a research project with an extensive written document. Taken together, the performances, lectures and written research project comprise a body of work that contributes significantly to an understanding of the art of music and also to the entire arts and humanities community.

For DMA Composition candidates, the Project consists of lecture-recitals and a project in the form of an original composition; the project should show a certain level of ambition and rigor, either in the size or scope of the creative work chosen, e.g., an opera, symphonic work, concerto, to name a few examples. Although it may be based on pre-existing text or other materials, the bulk of the project must be original creative work, done by the DMA Composition candidate. The composition is accompanied by a written document that describes in detail the methodology of the creative process.

During the first two semesters in the DMA program, each student works with their Major Professor to determine the makeup of a five-member Doctoral Performance and Research Committee (DPRC). The student obtains the signatures of those faculty members on the appropriate form and submits it to the Graduate Office. The primary responsibility of this Committee is to advise on and evaluate the student's DMA performance and research. The Major Professor is the person with whom the student works most closely in deciding recital repertoire and formulating the nature of the student's research.

All five members of the DPRC must review and approve the student's proposal for the DMA Research Project. (For the Project in Composition, DMA candidates should discuss their project proposals fully with their major professors and all members of their doctoral committee before starting their projects.) Such Projects might have a variety of subjects and take a variety of formats, but each will culminate in the completion of a final product that cohesively encapsulates the entire DMA Research Project. The final product of the DMA Research Project is an essential part of the student's DMA work, along with the recital recordings, printed programs and any written or printed materials relevant to the student's performance and research. When the candidate completes the degree, the entire body of work becomes a part of the collection at Mills Music Library, making it available to performers and scholars for reference and study.

For the DMA Research Project, the subject material and results shall 1) enhance the student's understanding of the major field; 2) be relevant to current performance and scholarship, and 3) culminate in a tangible object that is cohesive, understandable and useful to performers and scholars. The final product includes a written document, though the nature and extent of this component will vary. Each Project should be compatible with the individual candidate's abilities, interest and expertise. Within these broad parameters, the DPRC must approve the Project's topic and format as presented by the candidate in writing to Committee members. Committee members indicate approval of the Project by their signatures on the Registration of DMA Research Project form. The Doctoral Research Project proposal shall be approved as early as possible, usually no later than one full semester after prelims have been passed, but in no case later than the end of the semester preceding the completion of the research project so that members of the DPRC have an opportunity to offer advice or suggestions.

In many cases, the student seeks ongoing guidance on the Research Project from a faculty member other than the Major Professor. Such a Project Advisor may be a faculty member from any area of the School of Music. The student must obtain the consent of a Project Advisor (if not the Major Professor) through a signature on the DMA Research Project Proposal form prior to review of the proposal by the DPRC. The proposal is NOT a precise contract you're held to, but a way of helping you get organized. If you are going to be using your proposal to apply for a grant, you will want to look over the grant guidelines and conform to any requirements. Length can vary widely; the proposals are usually 5-10 pages long.

The School of Music requires that members of the DPRC receive the final version of the completed Research Project well in advance of the student's oral defense. For students planning to stand for defense for a December degree, the deadline for submission of the final version is October 15; for a May degree, the deadline is March 15. Should students wish to

schedule the oral defense earlier than the twelfth week of the semester, the Committee should receive the final version not less than six weeks prior to the defense date.

The subject matter and format of the DMA Research Project can vary widely, though the results of the research must be reported in the written document. The following general descriptions of DMA Research Projects successfully completed in recent years do not preclude other possibilities, but illustrate how Project topic and design can complement the abilities, interest and expertise of the candidate.

- Method book

A textbook taking specific approaches to teaching of repertoire or technique for the candidate's instrument. Material might be focused on a specialized repertoire (i.e., Extended Techniques) or cover a group of topics (i.e., Repertoire, Accompanying, Improvisation).

- Bibliography or catalog

An extensively annotated bibliography or catalog of works that deepens understanding of research on performance in the student's field. Annotations contribute the student's original thinking and conclusions on appropriate use of the resources included.

- Collected essays on Doctoral Performance and Research

A cohesive collection of essays on repertoire performed on the student's DMA Recitals. The collection is presented as a single body of work with a well-structured, consistent format. Such a collection of essays addresses issues like programming methodologies, contexts of the repertoire, and aspects of interpretation brought to bear on the performances. These essays are much more extensive than so-called program notes.

- Extended essay on a Lecture-Recital

A written presentation of a lecture-recital text with accompanying illustrations and examples. Recordings of musical illustrations are included so that the essay is comprehensible as a cohesive entity. As with the collected essays above, the written document should be more in-depth than is commonly the case with lectures.

- Edition or premiere performance of a major work

An edition or premiere performance of a major work with extended annotations and commentary on performance techniques, musical interpretation and editorial procedure. A recorded performance of the work is included.

- Performance study score

The candidate's performance study score of a major work with a written analysis and full description of the process of preparing the work for performance.

- Research paper

An analytical or historical study of a musical work or of a body of music that is related to the student's performance area. The document demonstrates the student's integration of analytical or historical research into performance, and thus is a significant contribution to the student's performance field.

- Professional-quality recording featuring the candidate as performer

A professional-quality, produced, studio recording (not a recording of live concert performance) featuring the candidate as a primary soloist or ensemble performer. The design of the repertoire content is a cohesive program, the candidate providing brief essays on aspects of the repertoire, the program, the performers, or any other relevant topics. The candidate assumes a leadership role in all aspects of the Project, including planning, production, and editing of the recording.