

Doctoral Degree Policies

Degrees Offered

Doctor of Musical Arts (D.M.A.)

The D.M.A. is the terminal professional practical degree in music, designed for performers and conductors wishing to acquire the highest performance abilities.

Doctor of Nursing Practice (D.N.P.)

The Doctor of Nursing Practice degree is a clinical doctorate offered for post baccalaureate nurses with specialization as a Family Nurse Practitioner. An individually-tailored program of study for the D.N.P. is also available for the certified advanced practice nurse with a master's degree.

Doctor of Education (Ed.D.)

The Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) is available with options in Institutional Analysis and Occupational and Adult Education. The degree requires extensive field service involving qualitative and/or quantitative research, leading to a dissertation that will apply a theory at an institution.

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

The Doctor of Philosophy degree is awarded in recognition of high scholarly attainment as evidenced by a period of successful advanced study, the satisfactory completion of prescribed examinations, and the development of an acceptable dissertation covering some significant aspect of a major field of learning.

Residence Requirements

Graduate study for the Doctor of Philosophy degree normally requires a minimum of three (3) years of full-time study beyond the baccalaureate degree. A student who has a master's degree or equivalent must devote at least one of the two remaining academic years of study in residence at North Dakota State University.

Language Requirements

Each graduate program will determine whether it will require a language and, if so, the language or languages applicable to the candidate's field of study and the level of reading proficiency required. Low-level proficiency will measure the candidate's comprehension of material in the major field in the foreign language with unlimited use of linguistic reference sources (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, etc.); high-level proficiency will measure a similar reading comprehension with limited use of such reference sources.

All examinations will be administered under the supervision of the Department of Modern Languages, which will certify the proficiency in the specified foreign language by signing the Ph.D. program of study in the appropriate place. International students whose native language is not English may satisfy the language requirement in their native language, providing their graduate program approves. In these cases, the basis for proficiency will be the candidate's use of English, rather than the foreign language.

Supervisory Committee

The supervisory committee should be formed during the term immediately after the major adviser is identified for the student, and members should be identified before the plan of study is formulated, so that all committee members have a chance to contribute to the Plan of Study.

The supervisory committee will have at least four members. The members consist of:

1. The major adviser, who must be a full or associate member of the graduate faculty. The student selects the adviser with approval of the program administrator and the Dean of the Graduate School. The major adviser-student relationship must be a mutually acceptable one. The major adviser will act as the chair of the student's supervisory committee and will be in charge of the Plan of Study. The remaining members of the committee must be agreed upon by the student, the major adviser, and the Dean of the Graduate School.
2. A second member, who must be a full or associate member of the graduate faculty.
3. A third member, who could be either a faculty member or a qualified off-campus expert in the field. If this committee member is not a full or associate member of the graduate faculty, the approval of the Dean of the Graduate School is required. Approval by the dean requires a recommendation from the program administrator accompanied by rationale and a curriculum vitae.
4. The Graduate School Representative (GSR) is chosen by the student, in consultation with the committee chair, at the time of the supervisory committee formation.

Eligibility Requirements: The GSR must be a full member of the graduate faculty, AND be either a tenured faculty member outside the committee chair's/co-chairs' home department(s) or OR a faculty member outside the primary college of the committee chair/co-chairs. If the student is in an interdisciplinary program, the GSR must also be outside of that program. Additionally, the GSR must be clear of any conflicts of interest with either the student or the committee chair/co-chairs (i.e., budgetary relationships, family or financial, personal relationships, or research and/or publication relationships between the GSR and either the student or the committee chair are examples of possible conflicts of interest).

The role of the GSR is to ensure that Graduate School policies are followed, that the expectations for the student's performance are reasonable, that the interactions with the supervisory committee are conducted on a professional basis, and to submit a report to the Graduate School after each examination. Graduate School Representatives serving on a committee for a program that has been approved by the Graduate School to use an outcomes-based approach to assess doctoral student performance also have the responsibility to document that the process and assessment of the student's performance in the doctoral program matches the defined program outcomes. A list detailing the specific responsibilities of the Graduate School appointee is available here.

NOTE: Other qualified individuals may participate as committee members following approval by the graduate dean upon a recommendation accompanied by rationale and curriculum vitae by the appropriate program administrator and academic dean. The supervisory committee agreed upon by the major adviser and student, and approved by the program administrator and the academic dean shall be recommended to the Dean of the Graduate School for final approval.

Each committee member shall have an equal vote in committee decisions. The committee is to assist the student in the preparation of a plan of study and to advise him or her during the period of graduate work. The supervisory committee is encouraged to convene at least once per semester and meet at least once per year to review the progress of the student.

Plan of Study

The Plan of Study will be prepared by the student and the major adviser. It shall be approved by the supervisory committee, program administrator, academic dean, and Dean of the Graduate School.

The Plan of Study should be submitted to the Graduate School for approval no later than the term immediately after the supervisory committee is formed and must be filed in the Graduate School prior to scheduling the comprehensive/preliminary examination. Revisions in the program of study must be approved by the student, supervisory committee, program administrator, and Dean of the Graduate School. The graduate dean will officially notify the student, supervisory committee, program administrator, and the academic dean of all changes.

Each program has the responsibility of defining the requirements for a major in its disciplinary area. The total credits will be determined by each program but must not be fewer than 90 semester graduate credits, of which no fewer than 27 credits must be in courses approved for graduate credit numbered 601-689, 691; 700-789, 791; 800-889 and 891 (referred to as didactic courses). Of these 27 credits, no fewer than 15 credits must be in 700 or 800-level course work (700-789, 791, 800-889 and 891).

A student matriculating with a master's degree, including a degree earned at an international institution, must earn no fewer than 60 graduate credits at NDSU. Of these credits, no fewer than 15 credits must be NDSU courses at the 700 or 800 level (700-789, 791, 800-889, and 891). For specific requirements, the student should consult the specific programs.

Transfer of Credit

All graduate credits used to meet the requirements of a doctoral degree must be approved by the supervisory committee, the program administrator, the academic dean, and the Dean of the Graduate School.

The doctorate requires 27 credits of course work, and of these, no more than 12 may be transferred by the petition process.

All transfer credits

1. must carry only grades of A or B on a 4-point scale;
2. must have been earned within a 10-year period at the time of the final examination;
3. must be clearly graduate level (a course listed as both graduate and/ or undergraduate level will not be transferred);
4. must not be a continuing education, correspondence, extension, or workshop course;
5. must not be internship, individual study, special problem, or research (disquisition) courses, or courses graded Pass/Fail or Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory;
6. must not have been used to fulfill the requirements of a baccalaureate or master's degree;
7. must be verified by an official transcript; and
8. will not be used in calculation of the grade point average.

It is the responsibility of the student to provide official transcripts of graduate courses taken elsewhere to the Graduate School.

NOTE: The special problem credits in item (6) above are equivalent to North Dakota State University 696/796 Special Topic credits.

Time Limitation

Graduate credit for any course work that is more than 10 calendar years old at the time of the final examination cannot be used to satisfy degree requirements. The final examination must be retaken if the final copy of the approved dissertation is not submitted to the Graduate School within one (1) year of the date of the final examination or if any other degree requirements have not been completed within one (1) year of the date of the final examination.

If a period of time two (2) years or greater lapses before the final copies are submitted, the student must reapply to the Graduate School and must register for a minimum of two (2) credits. Degree date is based on the date when **final** copy is submitted to the Graduate School.

IRB, IBC, and/or IACUC Approval

If a proposed graduate research project involves human, animal, or biohazard subjects, it must be submitted for review and approval by the Institutional Review Board (IRB), the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), and/or the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC). This process should be initiated by the student after his or her supervisory committee has approved the final research design, because IRB, IBC, and/or IACUC approval must be obtained **before** the research project commences and cannot be granted retroactively. A copy of the appropriate approval letters are to be included when the dissertation is submitted for editing.

Disquisitions that involve research using humans or animals as subjects or using biohazard materials will not be approved by the Graduate School if such research has not been previously approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB), Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), or Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) as appropriate. Every effort should be made by advisers to ensure that students are aware of these University requirements.

Examinations

A comprehensive/preliminary examination will be required of each student after the greater portion of courses has been completed and any required language proficiency has been certified. This examination consists of a written part and an oral part. After passing the comprehensive/preliminary examination, the student will be formally admitted to candidacy for the Doctor of Philosophy degree. At least one academic semester must elapse between the comprehensive/preliminary examination and the final examination.

The final examination will be taken after the candidate has completed the course work and dissertation. This oral examination will be concerned primarily with the dissertation, but it may also cover material from course work, especially those courses fundamental to the dissertation.

Permission to schedule the comprehensive/preliminary and the final oral examinations must be requested. Permission to schedule the examination must be requested of the Graduate School by the student's major adviser using the Request to Schedule Examination form (http://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/gradschool.ndsu.edu/Forms/Student_Forms/Request_to_Schedule_01.pdf) . The request to schedule must be

received by the Graduate School at least two (2) weeks prior to the examination. The notification by the Graduate School will confirm this scheduled examination.

The examining committee shall consist of the supervisory committee. The dissertation in a near final form must be given to the committee members at least seven (7) days prior to the final examination.

At the conclusion of each oral examination, the examining committee shall record, in writing, its approval or disapproval of the candidate and file its report with the Dean of the Graduate School. The committee's decision filed on the Report of the Final Examination signifies that the student has been examined with respect to the knowledge required in the major area and that all course work has been satisfactorily completed. This form should be filed in the Graduate School within seven (7) days.

A negative vote by more than one member of the student's committee will signify failure of either the comprehensive/preliminary examination or the final examination. Upon permission of a majority of the supervisory committee members, a candidate is allowed to take each examination twice. The supervisory committee will set a date at least one month after the failed examination. Exception to this time limit will be considered by the Dean of the Graduate School upon presentation of written justification from the chair of the supervisory committee in consultation with the committee members. Should both attempts to pass an examination result in failure, the candidate may request to take the examination a third time. A request for a third examination requires the support of the supervisory committee and program administrator, and the approval of the Dean of the Graduate School after consultation with the Graduate Council.

Continuous enrollment is required until all degree requirements are completed, including submitting final copies. To participate in commencement, the student must have passed the final examination.

Dissertation Video

Doctoral students are required to submit a three-minute video summarizing their dissertation research for a lay audience. The video should be produced during the final semester of study (specific timing varies by program). Some programs require these videos to be shown to the supervisory committee at the time of final defense, while others do not. Students should consult with their adviser regarding program policies. At a minimum, a student cannot successfully produce the video until the results of his or her research are known.

Dissertation

The dissertation must show originality and demonstrate the student's capacity for independent research. It must embody results of research that constitute a definitive contribution to knowledge.

Filing the Dissertation

After the final examination, the student incorporates into the dissertation corrections suggested at the oral examination. Once the corrections are made, the student submits the signed approval page (http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/graduating_students/dtp/format/approval_page/#c151677) and the IRB/IACUC/IBC Compliance Notification (http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/graduating_students/dtp/research/#c150158) to the Graduate School. The student also makes payment (http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/graduating_students/dtp/payment/#c151874) at this time. The disquisition with a second approval page integrated into it is submitted to the Graduate School electronically (http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/graduating_students/dtp/submit/

[#c151889](#)) . After a review process to check for formatting, approval of the final version of the disquisition will be granted by the Disquisition Processor. The student will have one (1) year from the date of the final examination to submit the final electronic version of the disquisition and complete all other degree requirements. Should the disquisition not be deposited as specified or any other degree requirements not be completed, the student must retake the final examination and request an extension. If a period of time two (2) years or greater lapses before the final copies are submitted, the student must reapply to the Graduate School, retake the final examination, register for a minimum of two (2) credits and request an extension.

Degree date is based on the date when the **final** copy is submitted to the Graduate School.