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Steps to Graduation: The Final Semester

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Graduating on time is not a difficult task, provided you take the necessary steps in the proper order, at the correct time. This document contains all of the administrative steps required for successful degree conferral. Keep it handy for easy reference during your last semester at Florida State.

To avoid confusion, the Graduate Music Office is here, in the College of Music, room 204-A HMU. The Graduate School is located on the 3rd floor of the Westcott Building, room 314.

Step 1. Apply for graduation.

Graduation does not occur automatically. If you intend to graduate, within the first three weeks of the final term, students must apply for graduation online. You must apply online by the deadlines found on the FSU Academic Calendar. Apply online through "Course Quicklinks" at my.fsu.edu.

****NOTE:** If you miss the application window, you will need to send me an email requesting that you be added to that semester's graduation list. I will then draft a memorandum for you to hand-deliver to the FSU Registrar's Office: football stadium, Building A. Please see below.

"Late Add" Requests: If a student misses the online window to apply for graduation they will need to hand-deliver a memo (in a sealed FSU envelope) generated by the College of Music Graduate Office (204-A, HMU) to the FSU Office of the Registrar (A3900 - University Center) requesting to be added to the current semester's graduation list. The student must pick-up this memo from the Graduate Music Office as it must be delivered to the Registrar in a sealed, FSU letterhead envelope. The student is then required to complete a paper application at the FSU Office of the Registrar.

Early Ceremony Participation Requests: The University Registrar's Graduation Section Office carefully monitors who applies for early ceremony participation, as to prevent overcrowding in the Donald L. Tucker Civic Center. Students may apply for participation in a graduation ceremony prior to the semester of degree conferral but this must occur very early in the semester. If a student wishes to participate in the University commencement ceremony prior to their official semester of degree conferral, they must submit their request to the Office of the Registrar. The Registrar's Office may require students to complete an early participation application request, which is reviewed by their office. Participation in the graduation ceremony does not guarantee that the student will be automatically placed on the next semester's graduation list, and receive their degree the following semester. Students who participate in the University commencement ceremony prior to their official semester of degree conferral and who wish to complete their degree and have the degree posted to their transcript the following term must remember to re-apply for graduation online (see above) during the next semester's online graduation application period. Failure to complete these steps will result in a delay in your intended semester of graduation. All doctoral students **MUST** enroll in a minimum of TWO (2) Dissertation or Treatise credits each semester, up through and including their

final semester. Master's students completing a degree with a thesis component are required to enroll in at least six (6) Thesis credits overall, and **MUST** be enrolled in a minimum of TWO (2) Thesis credits in the semester of graduation.

Step 2. Manuscript Clearance Process for Thesis, Treatise, & Dissertation.

Students with a Thesis, Treatise, or Dissertation component must adhere to the manuscript formatting and submission process published on The Graduate School's website, (<https://gradschool.fsu.edu/>): "Academics and Research" → "Thesis, Treatise, and Dissertation". In order to submit your manuscript successfully, you must follow the document formatting procedures found in The Graduate School's "Guidelines and Requirements for Electronic Theses, Treatises, and Dissertations". Students are also required to meet the University's manuscript clearance deadlines in order to complete their degree. (College of Music academic Areas may set their own deadlines in advance of these manuscript clearance deadlines. Students must adhere to their unit's deadlines **in addition to** those established by The Graduate School.) There are two deadlines to follow: the pre-defense format review deadline, which comes first, followed-by the post-defense, content-approved manuscript submission deadline. These deadlines occur before the semester ends so be sure to plan accordingly. FSU theses, treatises, and dissertations are to be submitted to the Manuscript Clearance Advisor through your ProQuest ETD account.

As noted on The Graduate School's website, "The Graduate School recommends that students submit their completed manuscript for an initial format review at the same time the manuscript is submitted to the committee prior to the defense. However, students must submit their manuscript for an initial format review no later than the relevant initial submission deadline for the semester in which they intend to graduate. Initial reviews are valid for two semesters (the original semester and one semester following). If the defense is delayed further than that, a new initial review must be completed by the appropriate deadline. While it is understood that content will likely change after the defense, it is expected that manuscripts submitted for the initial format review are at least 90% complete and have been formatted in full accordance with the criteria in the most recent version of the Guidelines and Requirements. Students must defend no later than the "last day for submission of final defended, content-approved thesis, dissertation or treatise and required forms" for the semester in which they intend to graduate. The Graduate School allows defenses up to this deadline with the understanding that all content corrections must be completed, approved by the major professor or committee, and submitted to the student's online ETD account no later than 11:59 p.m. on that deadline; however, to allow time for such corrections, The Graduate School recommends defending no later than 1 week prior to the deadline."

The **Manuscript Clearance Portal** is FSU's online system for all defense-related forms. The MC Portal may be accessed at the following link: <https://clearance.fsu.edu> To begin, by log in with your FSU ID and fill out the Manuscript Access Agreement and Defense Announcement. The Defense Announcement must be completed **at least 2 weeks prior to your defense date**. The Manuscript Access Agreement may be completed at any time prior to your defense.

You must complete the manuscript formatting and submission process as outlined on the Graduate School's website, using the ProQuest ETD Administrator and following all applicable deadlines.

Step 3. Register for the appropriate final semester exams/recitals/defenses.

Master's performance students must register for their Comprehensive Exam (MUS 8966) for zero (0) credit and their recital(s) for the number of credit hours outlined on the Program of Study guide. Non-performance master's degree students writing a thesis must have registered for a minimum of six (6) Thesis hours (MUS 5971), and register for Thesis Defense (MUS 8976) for zero (0) credit during the final semester. A minimum of two (2) Thesis credits are required in the semester of degree conferral. Non-performance master's degree students not requiring a thesis will need to register for their Comprehensive Exam for zero (0) credit, typically during their final semester. Students must complete a One-to-One Form in order to request the registration permission number they will need in order to enroll in the Comprehensive Exam, Thesis credits, and Thesis Defense.

Doctoral performance students must have completed a total of at least twenty-four (24) credits of combined Treatise and recital credits by the end of their degree. A minimum of two (2) Treatise credits are required, each semester, (including the final term!), until degree conferral. They must register for their Defense course (MUS 8985) for zero (0) credit during the semester in-which the defense occurs. Doctoral non-performance students must have completed a total of at least twenty-four (24) hours of Dissertation credits by the end of their degree. A minimum of two (2) Dissertation credits are required, each semester, (including the final term!), until degree conferral. They must register for their Defense course (MUS 8985) for zero (0) credit during the semester in-which the defense occurs. Students must complete a One-to-One Form in order to request the registration permission number they will need in order to enroll in Treatise, Dissertation, and Defense.

Please note that if your degree plan requires a Thesis/Treatise/Dissertation Defense, you must only register for the Defense course ONE time. **If you have registered for the Defense course and discover that you will not defend during the given term, you must DROP the Defense course from your schedule. You must then re-enroll in the Defense course during the semester that your defense is held.**

Please ensure that you are enrolled in the appropriate number of credit hours and the correct courses for your final semester. These courses should appear on your course schedule by no later than the end of the drop-add period. **Please also note that if you are enrolled in a zero (0) credit course by itself, you will be charged the amount for one (1) credit hour of tuition and fees for the semester.**

Step 4. Gather the appropriate documents for submission to the Graduate Music Office.

Master's students must have the following forms on file in the Graduate Music Office:

- a) **Program of Studies Form** signed by your Major Professor or faculty advisor
- b) **Master's Supervisory Committee Form** signed by your committee members
- c) **Master's Exam/Recital/Defense Pass Form(s)** w/ committee signatures, OR an email confirming successful completion of each requirement (i.e. Comprehensive Exam, etc.) sent by your Major Professor to the Graduate Music Office

- d) **Prospectus approval** via committee signature page, OR an endorsement email sent to the Graduate Music Office from your Major Professor (**Thesis writers, only**)
- e) **Manuscript Clearance Portal Forms** (**Thesis writers, only**)

Doctoral students must have the following forms on file in the Graduate Music Office:

- a) **Program of Studies Form** signed by your Major Professor or faculty advisor
- b) **Doctoral Supervisory Committee Form** signed by your committee members
- c) **Doctoral Exam Form** w/ committee signatures, OR an email confirming successful completion of required exams (i.e. Preliminary Exam, etc.) sent by your Major Professor to the Graduate Music Office
- d) **Doctoral Recital Form (performance majors, only)** w/ committee signatures, OR an email confirming successful completion of each recital sent by your Major Professor to the Graduate Music Office
- e) **Prospectus approval** via committee signature page, OR an endorsement email sent to the Graduate Music Office from your Major Professor
- f) **Doctoral Commencement Program Information Form**
- g) **Manuscript Clearance Portal Forms**

Form information:

Program of Studies: This is perhaps the most important form in your file. It outlines what courses you have taken and what requirements each course satisfies. For the most part, the master's degrees have very specific course requirements outlined on the POS; the doctoral degrees are much less prescribed in nature, and allow room for creative course loads. For a detailed explanation of how the POS is used in a "grad check", stop by the Graduate Music Office. **Fill out this form early in the semester of graduation (or even the prior semester) so that any problems can be detected with time to correct them; a late POS sometimes results in finding problems that can't be fixed in the remaining semester timeframe, causing graduation delays.**

Master's and Doctoral Supervisory Committee Forms: This form should be signed by your committee and in your file typically by the end of your second semester of study, or **as soon as possible if it hasn't already been submitted.** Specific requirements about master's and doctoral committees (directive status, outside members, etc.) are printed at the bottom of each form. The Master's Committee will consist of a minimum of three (3) members of the graduate faculty who have Graduate Faculty Status. The Doctoral Committee will consist of a minimum of four (4) members of the graduate faculty who have Graduate Faculty Status, one of whom serves as University Representative (a tenured member of the graduate faculty drawn from outside the student's area and degree program). Additional members may be appointed if deemed desirable. Please check with the Graduate Music Office if you are at all unclear about your Supervisory Committee requirement.

Master's Exam/Recital/Defense Pass Form: This is a form specifically for master's degree students. It contains the boxes for signatures of all possible requirements for the master's degree. Some students only take Comprehensive Exams; some take exams and do a recital. Some only do a Thesis Defense. Review the Graduate Music Handbook for specific degree requirements. This form must have the signatures of your committee for each required item. Please note: There is a separate recital form for MM, Piano Accompanying. MM, Piano Accompanying students will submit their own recital form plus the Exam/Recital/Defense Pass Form (with Comprehensive Exam signatures).

Doctoral Exam Form: This is a form specifically for doctoral students. It contains boxes for signatures for the Diagnostic Exam (if required by the program), Preliminary/Comprehensive Exam, and the Treatise/Dissertation Defense. All doctoral students need signatures for all of these requirements.

Doctoral Recital Forms: Doctoral performance majors will also need this form to document each recital completed as a requirement for their degree, and Committee signatures must be obtained for each recital. You are also required to submit recital programs to the Graduate Music Office, for your student file. Check the Program of Studies for specific recital requirements for your degree.

Doctoral Commencement Program Information Form: All doctoral students need to fill out this form, available in the Graduate Music Office and online, within the first six weeks of the semester. This is used to create the commencement program for the graduation ceremony, and must be completed early in the semester so the program can be assembled.

SPECIAL CASE FORMS

Dual Enrollment Form: If you are pursuing two degrees at once, or have graduated with one degree and are pursuing a second degree for which coursework overlaps with the first, you will need to submit this form to the Graduate Music Office. It is available for download from the “Forms” area of The Graduate School’s website, requires a statement from you about pursuing two degrees, and the signatures of: 1) the department head for each degree, 2) the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies in Music (204-A, HMU), and 3) the Dean of The Graduate School. Submit the form with your statement and the department heads’ signatures and we’ll take care of the rest.

Time Extension Request Form: If you have taken longer than the prescribed time to complete your degree, then you will need to submit this form to the Graduate Music Office. According to University regulations, a master’s degree student has seven years from the first semester of graduate enrollment to complete their degree; a doctoral student has five calendar years from the time they pass their Preliminary Exam. It is available for download from the Graduate School’s website, requires a statement about why you have taken longer than the allotted time and the length of extension requested (for example, “Please extend through the end of the Fall, 2024 semester”), and the signatures of: 1) all committee members, 2) the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies in Music (204-A, HMU), and 3) the Dean of The Graduate School. Submit the form with your committee’s signatures and we’ll take care of the rest. This form should be submitted as soon as the time limit for degree completion has exceeded.

Step 5. Schedule and announce your Thesis/Treatise/Dissertation Defense and schedule your final recital(s).

After consulting with your committee and finding a date that works for everyone, make sure that all appropriate parties have been informed of your recital/Defense. This includes checking with Tiawana Meeks (644-4649) to reserve a room for the Defense, or our recital hall scheduling office (644-2705) to reserve a hall for the recital. Students must complete a Defense Announcement Form

(online) *at least* two weeks prior to the scheduled Defense. This is mandatory and students who do not complete the online Defense Announcement Form through the MC Portal will not graduate! **Don't wait until the last minute to take care of these matters.**

Step 6. Defend, prepare and submit your final manuscript (Thesis/Treatise/Dissertation).

If your degree requires a Thesis, Treatise or Dissertation, you will need to defend and submit your final document to via the online portal by the published deadlines. The Graduate Music Office prints handouts that include the manuscript clearance deadlines. These documents are available just outside of the doorway to 204-A HMU. The manuscript clearance deadlines are also published online on The Graduate School's website.

There are two resources that you should obtain as early in the writing process as possible. The first is the Treatise and Dissertation Handbook, published by the Graduate Music Office. This handbook addresses issues specific to a music thesis/treatise/dissertation. It contains information that spans the gamut of the project, from committee formation to electronic submission. The second resource is the Requirements for Electronic Thesis, Treatise, and Dissertation (ETD) Writers, published by The Graduate School and available online. It contains the University-wide standards and procedures for writing and submitting your final document. Both sources are invaluable references for information about the final steps of submitting your Thesis/Treatise/Dissertation.

Once you have successfully defended your document, it must be formatted for electronic submission to the online portal. Final formatting must be approved by the Manuscript Clearance Advisor in The Graduate School (314 Westcott). It is to your benefit to meet with the Manuscript Clearance Advisor at least once prior to your defense; this will give you a chance to fix any recurring formatting issues in your document prior to your final submission. You may contact the Manuscript Clearance Advisor by sending an email to clearance@fsu.edu or by calling (850) 644-3501.

Step 7. Manuscript Clearance Online Forms (For Thesis/Treatise/Dissertation students, only)

If you are writing a Thesis/Treatise/Dissertation, these online forms are your 'ticket' to degree conferral. (That is, they are not required of students who do not have a Thesis/Treatise/Dissertation component in their degree program.) They are part of the final step in the graduation process, and are required by The University Graduate School. Students fill them out through the Manuscript Clearance Online Portal. Once the student has filled out these forms, their Major Professor and Supervisory Committee members will receive an auto-generated email to log-in to the Portal to review and approve them. The Defense Announcement Form and Manuscript Access Agreement Form are due prior to the Defense, while the remaining forms are due after the Defense. You must first fill them out with all of your information; then, ensure that the appropriate faculty members log-in to the Portal to review and eventually approve these documents: major professor and/or committee members (depending upon which form it is).

A few other miscellaneous items...

If you are participating in the graduation ceremony, make sure to order your cap and gown at the appropriate disbursement time and place. Cap and gown order deadline dates are posted on the University Registrar's Graduation Section webpage, and are earlier than you may realize each semester. The Graduation Section of the Registrar's Office coordinates this with the FSU Bookstore. Please visit: <http://registrar.fsu.edu/graduation/>. If you are a doctoral student, you will also receive a hood and be hooded at the ceremony by your major professor. Make sure she/he knows where to be and at what time. There is a short briefing on the procedures just before the ceremony on how to wear the hood and how it will be placed around your neck during the ceremony. All the details regarding the ceremony, cap and gown, etc. are handled through the FSU Graduation Office. Please call 850-644-5850 with any questions.

If your family is coming to town, make your reservations EARLY –in January for the Spring ceremony, or August for the Fall ceremony. Don't wait until the last minute – hotels fill-up fast!

Steps to Graduation Checklist: MASTERS

PLEASE REMEMBER TO RETURN YOUR FSU KEY(S) BEFORE YOU LEAVE TOWN! YOU WILL NOT BE CLEARED FOR GRADUATION UNTIL ALL KEYS HAVE BEEN RETURNED TO THE COLLEGE OF MUSIC. CONTACT TIAWANA MEEKS FOR MORE INFO: 850/644-4649.

- Apply for graduation.
- Register for the appropriate final semester courses.
 - Exams
 - Recitals
 - Defense
- Gather the appropriate forms for your file: Master's students must have the following forms on file in the Graduate Music Office (SOME FORMS ARE NOT APPLICABLE TO ALL DEGREE PROGRAMS)
 - Program of Studies Form** signed by your Major Professor or faculty advisor
 - Master's Supervisory Committee Form** signed by your committee members
 - Exam Form/Recital/Defense Pass Form(s)** w/ committee signatures, OR an email confirming successful completion of each requirement (i.e. Comprehensive Exam, etc.) sent by your Major Professor to the Graduate Music Office
 - Prospectus approval** via committee signature page, OR an endorsement email sent to the Graduate Music Office from your Major Professor (**Thesis writers, only**)
 - Manuscript Clearance Portal Forms (Thesis writers, only)**
- Check for "Special Case Forms" - Dual Enrollment Form, Extension of Candidacy Form
- Schedule and announce your defense or recital.
- Defend, prepare and submit your final manuscript.
- Students must return all FSU College of Music keys to the University!

Steps to Graduation Checklist: DOCTORAL

PLEASE REMEMBER TO RETURN YOUR FSU KEY(S) BEFORE YOU LEAVE TOWN! YOU WILL NOT BE CLEARED FOR GRADUATION UNTIL ALL KEYS HAVE BEEN RETURNED TO THE COLLEGE OF MUSIC. CONTACT TIAWANA MEEKS FOR MORE INFO: 850/644-4649.

- Apply for graduation.
- Register for the appropriate final semester courses.
 - Exams
 - Recitals
 - Defense
- Gather the appropriate forms for your file: Doctoral students must have the following forms on file in the Graduate Music Office - SOME FORMS ARE NOT APPLICABLE TO ALL DEGREE PROGRAMS
 - Program of Studies Form** signed by your Major Professor or faculty advisor
 - Doctoral Supervisory Committee Form** signed by your committee members
 - Doctoral Exam Form** w/ committee signatures, OR an email confirming successful completion of required exams (i.e. Preliminary Exam, etc.) sent by your Major Professor to the Graduate Music Office
 - Doctoral Recital Form (performance majors, only)** w/ committee signatures, OR an email confirming successful completion of each recital sent by your Major Professor to the Graduate Music Office
 - Prospectus approval** via committee signature page, OR an endorsement email sent to the Graduate Music Office from your Major Professor
 - Doctoral Commencement Program Information Form**
 - Manuscript Clearance Portal Forms**
- Check for “Special Case Forms” - Dual Enrollment Form, Extension of Candidacy Form.
- Schedule and announce your defense or recital.
- Defend, prepare, and submit your final manuscript.
- Students must return all FSU College of Music keys to the University!