

PLANNING GUIDE TO TOPICS

During First Year:

_____ **Choose 10 topics for Masters students or 20 topics for DMA students.**

- Topics may be derived from class papers, conference titles, and music reading sessions.
- Topics should reflect determined cognate area.
- The range of all Topics should show a breadth of academic areas: conducting pedagogy, vocal pedagogy, musicology, music education, and theory.
- Ideally, Topics should strengthen areas of weakness and highlight areas of strength.
- For DMA students, a 15 minute vocal exam is a required Topic.
- For DMA students, two topics may be enhanced Masters research.
- For DMA students, a Topic may lead toward dissertation.

_____ **Start a file folder for each topic.**

- Reference articles for later study.
- Any information pertaining to Topic can be stored for future use.

_____ **Research topics binders.**

- Note organization of topic binder.
- Note focus, scope, and variety of topics.

_____ **Attend Topics Exam.**

_____ **Brainstorm with colleagues and professors.**

- Narrow your topic if necessary.
- Determine if enough material exists to create a topic.

At end of First Year:

_____ **Present suggested Topic list to Dr. Boers.**

- Meet with Dr. Boers to confirm and discuss.

_____ **Establish committee for Topics Exam.**

- For Masters students, committee must consist of two graduate faculty members.
- For Doctoral students, committee must consist of three graduate faculty members, plus one other faculty representative from another department.
 - Choose professors that are able to assist you with topics planning and research in your specialty areas.
- Ask professors. Have them e-mail Brenda Banks in Graduate Advising Office to confirm that they have agreed to be on your committee.
 - Alternately, there is a form (available in the Graduate Advising Office) that can be used.

During Second Year:

_____ **Create a bibliography for each topic.**

- Use RILM, RISM, JSTOR, Grove, Books, articles, program notes, bibliographies.
- Write basic outline for Topics.
 - Fill in with research and reading.
 - Outlines should be extensive enough for a one-hour lecture presentation.
 - Only focus on 2-3 topics at the same time.

_____ **Set times to meet with your committee members individually to discuss your progress.**

- Ask questions that you may still have regarding your topics.
- Answer questions or determine where more research may still be needed.

Three Months before Topics Exam:

_____ **E-mail committee members and present one or two dates and times when you would like to hold your exam.**

- Exams may not be held during the last two weeks or finals week of any quarter.

_____ **When date and time has been established, e-mail Becky McGee in Music Office to reserve a room for the exam.**

- Fishbowl is usually used.
- Reserve the room for 3 hours (30 minutes before exam start time, two hours for exam, plus 30 minutes deliberation).

_____ **Send invitations to colleagues about exam date, time, and place.**

_____ **Practice presenting your Topics.**

- Be able to speak about your topics without having to read directly from your outline.
- Record and critique yourself.
- Have colleagues ask you questions about your Topics.

Two weeks before Topics Exam:

_____ **Meet with Dr. Boers with completed binder for approval for exam.**

One week before Topics Exam:

_____ **Prepare binders with Topic outlines and supplemental materials for yourself and all members of your committee.**

- Include score examples, recordings, charts or graphs, and voice recital program.

_____ **Send an e-mail reminding your committee members the time, date, and place of your exam.**

During the Exam:

_____ **Present a Topic of your choice.**

- Commonly, the committee will stop you after approximately twenty minutes.
- Question period regarding the Topic will ensue.

_____ **Present a Topic of the committee's choice.**

- Commonly, the committee will stop you after approximately twenty minutes.
- Question period regarding the Topic will ensue.

_____ **The committee may ask for a third presentation OR they may ask questions about any of the Topics in your binder.**

- Questions may be directly related or they may be general questions about the topic area.

_____ **The committee will deliberate privately and then present their decision.**