

Written Comprehensive Exam:

The written comprehensive exam will consist of a written document about an applied/pedagogy issue or topic. This question will be given to the student in advance. For those instruments with two professors teaching applied and pedagogy, the professors will collaborate and select a question that will apply to both areas. The question/topic will be given at the start of the last semester of study (or the semester of comprehensive examinations). The document will be due a minimum of three weeks before the oral comprehensive exam date to give time for the applied/pedagogy professors to grade it. It will be graded by the applied/pedagogy professor(s) as “pass,” “low pass,” or “fail.” In the case of a “low pass,” the instructor(s) may choose to address that topic in the oral comprehensives or ask for a rewrite. In the case of a “fail,” the instructor(s) will usually ask for a rewrite. In case this rewrite is deemed unsatisfactory, the student will be required to retake the written comprehensive exam in a subsequent semester. If a student fails the written comprehensives for a second time, he/she will not be allowed to finish the degree program. Students who pass the written comprehensives and rewrites are eligible to take the oral comprehensives.

Oral Comprehensive Exams:

The oral comprehensive exams will take place at least three weeks prior to the last day of scheduled classes for the semester in accordance with the VSU academic calendar. Committee members will submit to the student a list of topics, suggested readings, and potential questions one month prior to the scheduled exam. The Committee Members will be applied/pedagogy and a choice of theory or history. If this is only two professors, the graduate coordinator will choose another committee member, typically one from the same or similar area as that of the student. Topics to be addressed will be derived from material from the student’s course of study. These exams usually include some questions from the major field of study and some that are more comprehensive in nature (history, theory, style, analysis, literature, performance practice, etc). Exams may not take place on official school holidays. The Examination will be up to 90 minutes in length. In order for a student to receive a satisfactory or passing grade, two-thirds of the committee must vote to pass the student. In the event of an unsuccessful completion of the exam or a portion of the exam, a written response from the committee will be given to the student. The student will be eligible to retake the exam during finals week of that same semester. If the exam is again unsuccessful, the student will need to retake the exam again in the following Fall or Spring semester. If a student fails the oral comprehensives for a second time, he/she will not be allowed to finish the degree program.