

# GRADUATE ORAL EXAMINATIONS - WESTMINSTER CHOIR COLLEGE

## General information

1. All students pursuing the M.M., M.M.E., MVPP or M.V.P. degree at the Westminster Choir College must pass a final oral examination.
2. The oral examination normally occurs during the last semester in which a student is enrolled prior to graduation.
3. **All courses required to remediate academic deficiencies must be completed successfully by the end of the semester prior to the oral examination.**
4. The oral examination must be completed by the deadline published in the Academic Calendar (<http://catalog.rider.edu/academic-calendar/>) in this catalog.
5. Students who elect to pursue multiple graduate programs must pass a separate final oral examination in each major area.
6. Students who have not passed all portions of the oral exam must be re-examined within one year from the date of the original or previous exam. Students failing to meet this deadline or those who have not passed the oral examination after three attempts are no longer considered degree candidates and become ineligible to graduate.
7. Students must apply to schedule the oral examination by November 1 for a fall examination, by April 1 for a spring examination, or by June 1 for a summer examination.

3. The Director of Graduate Studies will periodically attend examinations as a fourth, non-voting member to ensure a degree of interdepartmental consistency in content and the standard to which students are held. The DGS will report his/her findings to the Graduate Committee and the WAPC for future review.

## Examining Committee

1. The examining committee consists of no fewer than three Westminster **music** faculty members, full-time or adjunct, including two from the student's major program area, and one member of the student's choice from outside the major area.
2. Departments may establish their own policies for membership on the major area portion of the examining committee.

## Structure and Content of Examination

1. The structure and content of the examination should support the general philosophy of graduate education, as previously endorsed by the Westminster Academic Policy Committee (WACP), which states:

*"Critical thinking is to be encouraged throughout the curriculum. Students should acquire a musicological sensibility and the ability to engage in a logical discourse about varied aspects of the art. In addition to overall musical competency, true expertise is required in a particular area. At the conclusion of their studies, students should have an understanding of what remains to be learned and the tools to continue their education throughout their lives. They should be fully prepared to embark upon—or continue in—their professional lives as performers, composers, teachers, ministers of music, conductors, doctoral students, and as vigorous advocates for music."*

While specific content is left to the discretion of the department, the examination should be designed to demonstrate the student's ability to engage in a logical discourse in the major area and its relationship to various aspects of the art, and should transcend the mere recitation of factual information.

2. Departments will create written guidelines to assist students in preparing for the examinations, which will be distributed to students at the onset of their graduate studies.