

DOCTOR OF MUSICAL ARTS (DMA) COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS

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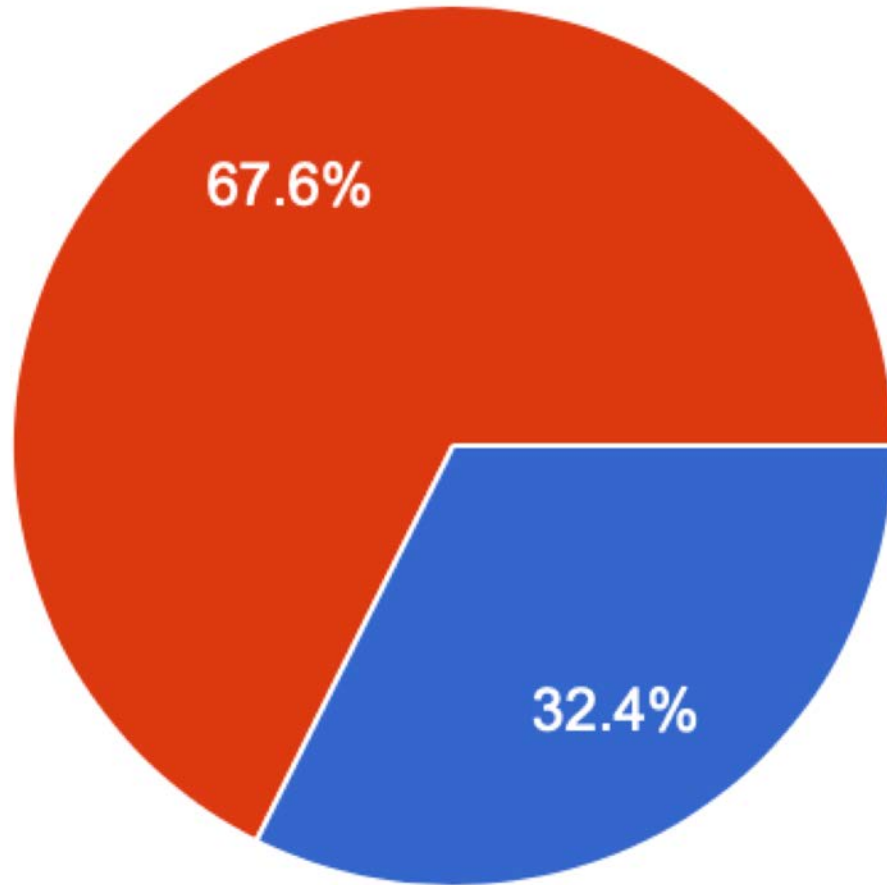


PURPOSE - DISSATISFACTION WITH AND CONFUSION ABOUT DMA COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS

- Anecdotal evidence suggested that School of Music faculty were dissatisfied with the DMA Comprehensive Exams
- A survey of School of Music faculty confirmed this



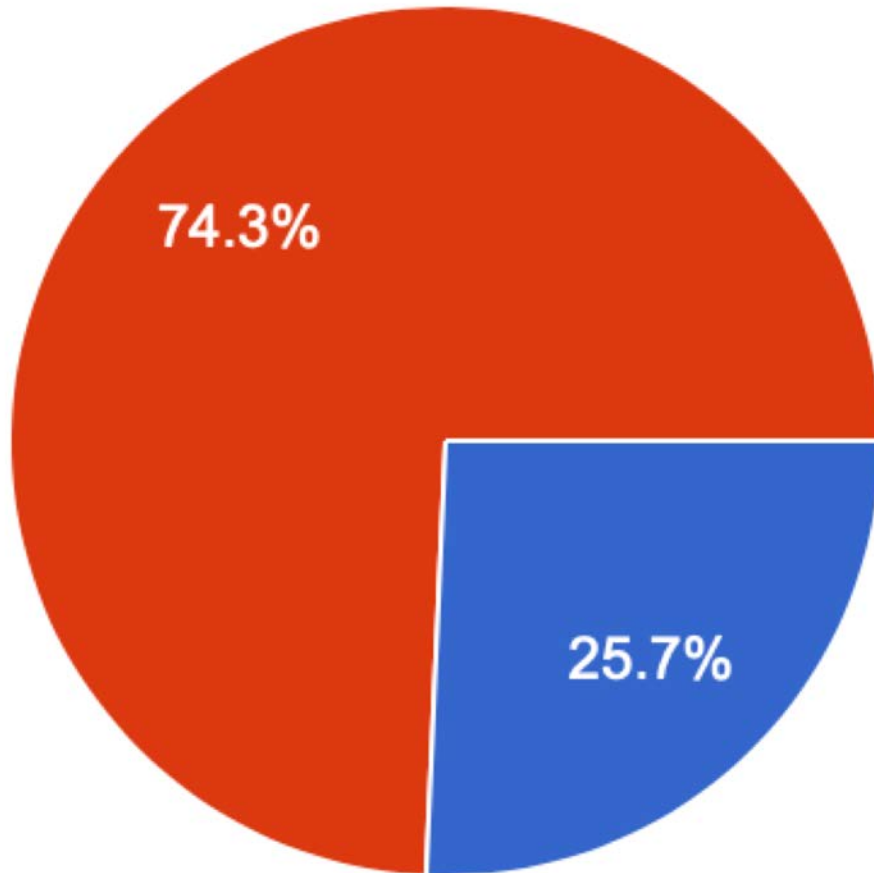
PURPOSE - DISSATISFACTION WITH AND CONFUSION ABOUT DMA COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS



- I already have a good understanding of what it means to pass a written comprehensive exam.
- It would be helpful to establish some guidelines about what is required to pass a written comprehensive exam.



PURPOSE - DISSATISFACTION WITH AND CONFUSION ABOUT DMA COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS



- I already have a good understanding of what it means to pass an oral comprehensive exam.
- It would be helpful to establish some guidelines about what is required to pass an oral comprehensive exam.



PURPOSE - INTENDED OUTCOMES/GOALS

Outcome: Develop a new DMA Comprehensive Examination

- Goals:
- An examination that is more comprehensive (i.e., more general knowledge; “back to basics”) – not necessarily a shared goal
 - An examination that adds value to the students’ education by focusing on relevant and practical information
 - An examination where the faculty will feel confident about the quality of student performance



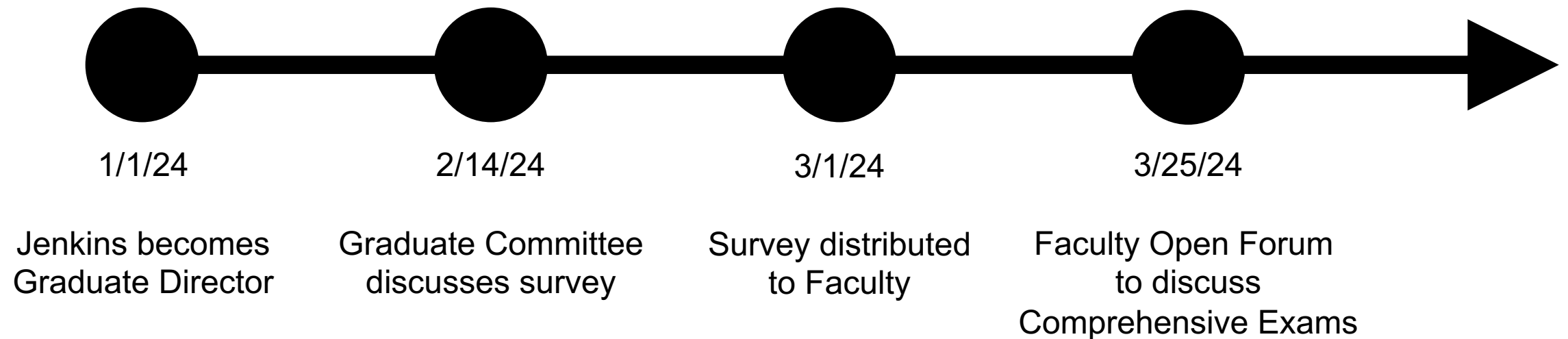
PEOPLE INVOLVED

School of Music Faculty

- 48 Graduate Faculty who are involved in the DMA Comprehensive Exam Process; faculty are divided into the following areas:
 - Brass
 - Composition
 - Conducting
 - Education
 - Piano
 - Strings
 - Voice
 - Woodwinds
 - History
 - Theory
- Graduate Committee – a representative body of 8 members of the School of Music Graduate Faculty, appointed by the Dean



PROJECT PATH – JANUARY TO MARCH 2024

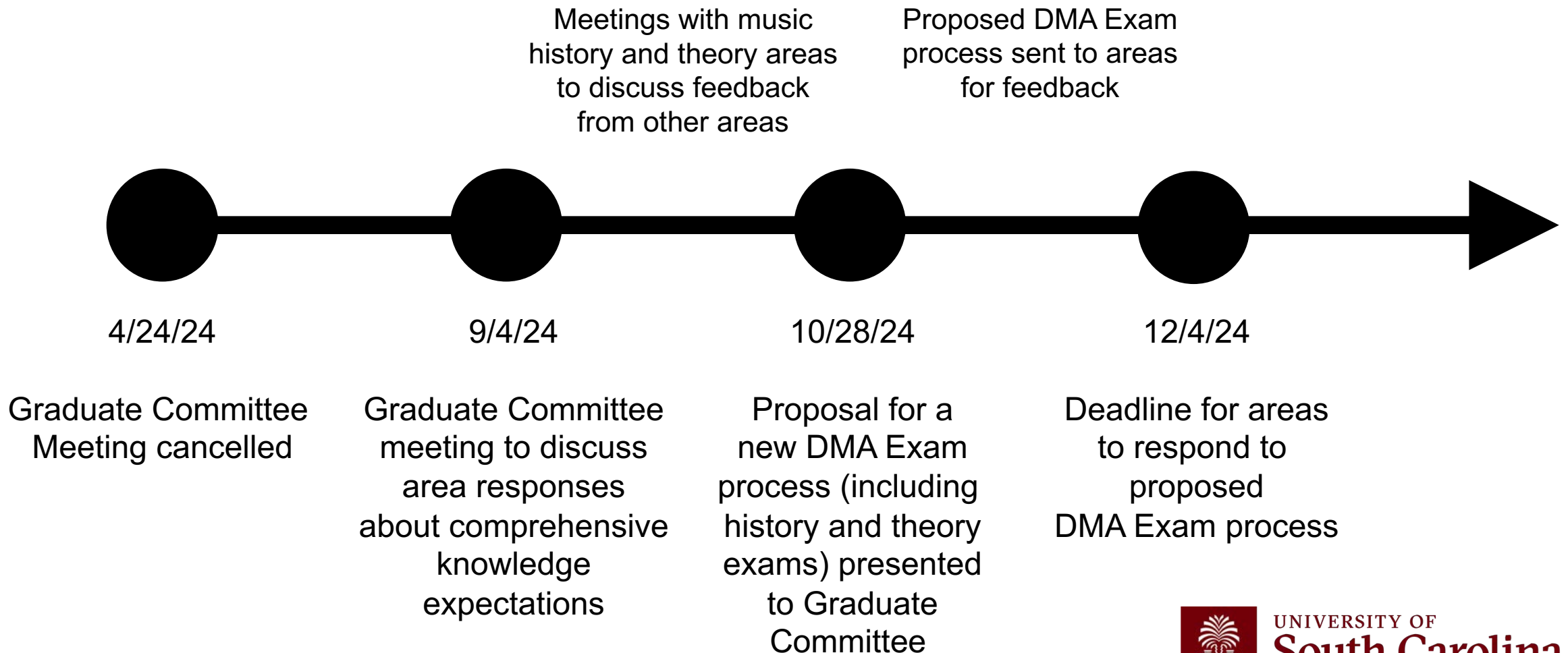


PROJECT PATH – OPEN FORUM (3/25/24)

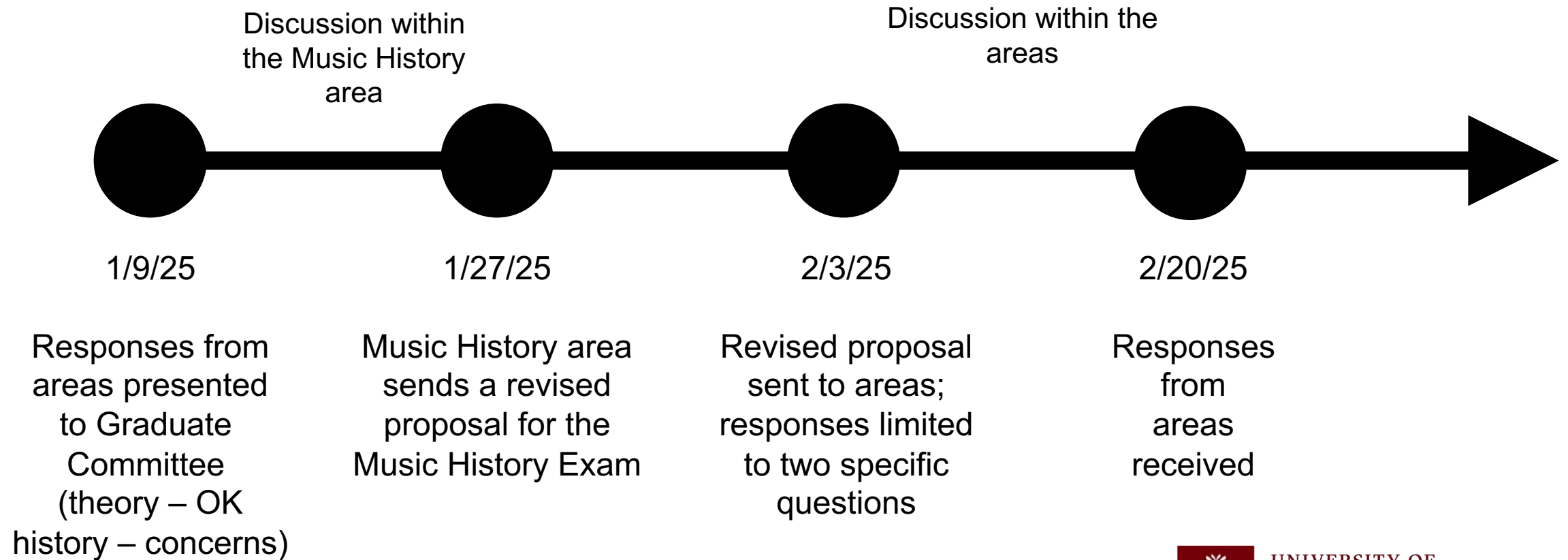
- Survey results presented
 - 35 participants, 12 of which provided comments (73% participation rate)
- Pre-determined Discussion Questions based on survey results
- Small group discussions – faculty encouraged to discuss with those from outside their area
- Faculty added comments to a google doc as they spoke
- Large group discussion about the contents of google doc
- Intense focus on music history and music theory content
- Followed up by asking the major area faculty to define comprehensive knowledge in regards to music history and music theory



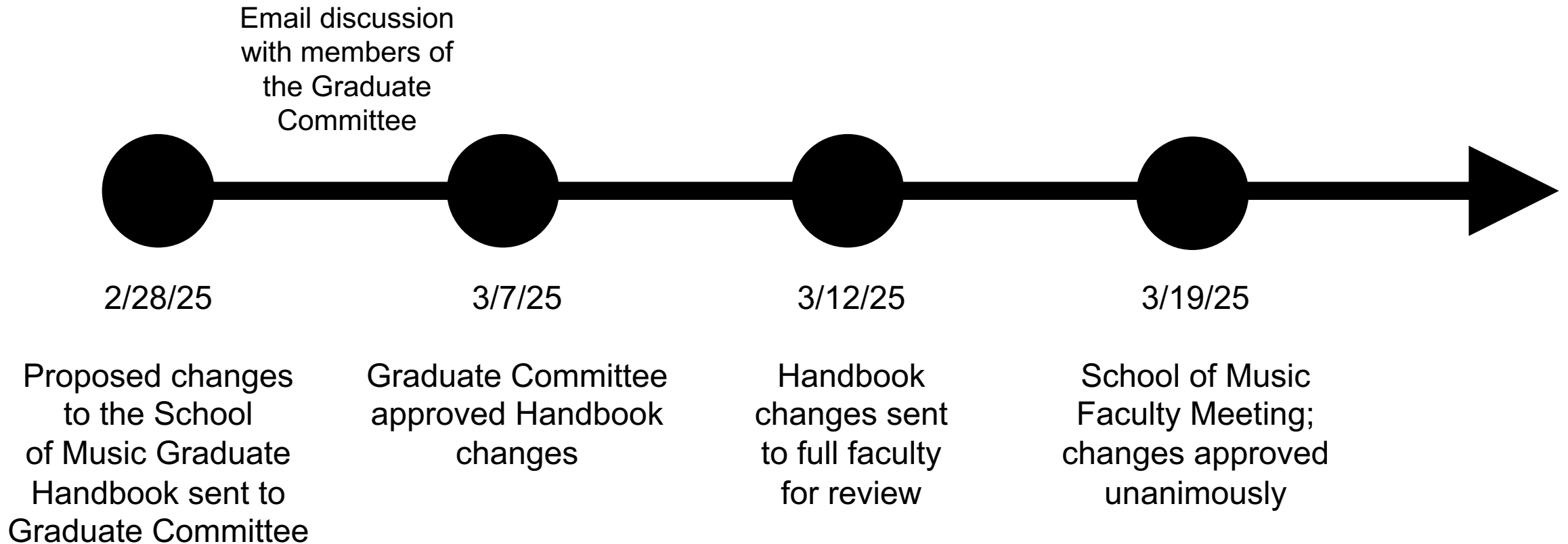
PROJECT PATH – APRIL TO DECEMBER 2024



PROJECT PATH – JANUARY TO FEBRUARY 2025



PROJECT PATH – FEBRUARY TO MARCH 2025



KEY IMPROVEMENTS – WHAT STAYS THE SAME

Before

Doctoral Candidacy Exam
and Recital (if applicable)
completed by the end of the
second semester

Continued Coursework

After

Doctoral Candidacy Exam
and Recital (if applicable)
completed by the end of the
second semester

Continued Coursework



KEY IMPROVEMENTS – NEW EXAM PROGRESSION

Before

Continued Coursework

Written Comprehensive Exam

9 hours of the major area (6 hours for piano)

3 hours in the minor area (if applicable)

3 hours each of history and theory (piano only)

Oral Comprehensive Exam

1 hour

- 3 faculty from major area
- 1 music history faculty
- 1 music theory faculty
- 1 faculty from minor area (if applicable)

After

Written DMA Exams in Music History and Theory

- 3 hours for music history
- 3 hours for music theory

Written Comprehensive Exam

3–6 hours in major area

3 hours in the minor area (if applicable)

Oral Comprehensive Exam

1 hour

- 3 faculty from major area
- 1 faculty from minor area (if applicable) or a faculty member of the student's choice



KEY IMPROVEMENTS – HISTORY AND THEORY EXAMS

DMA Exam in Music History

Part I: Historical Period Exam (120 minutes)

1. Medieval/Renaissance
2. Baroque
3. Classical
4. Romantic
5. Modernism and Beyond

Part II: Essay (60 minutes)

Prompts based on the specific courses students have taken

DMA Exam in Music Theory

- Write an analysis of one of five pieces relevant to their major
- The five pieces are known in advance
- At the beginning of the exam, students will learn which of the five pieces they must analyze



KEY IMPROVEMENTS – MAJOR AREA EXAMS

	History Exam (3 hours)	Theory Exam (3 hours)	Major Area Exam	Total Written Exam (without a minor)
Brass	Either history or theory		3 hours	6 hours
Conducting	Yes	Yes	3 hours	9 hours
Percussion	Either history or theory		3 hours	6 hours
Piano/ Piano Pedagogy	Yes	Yes	6 hours	12 hours
Strings	Yes	Yes	6 hours	12 hours
Voice	Either history or theory		6 hours	9 hours
Woodwinds	Yes	Yes	3 hours	9 hours

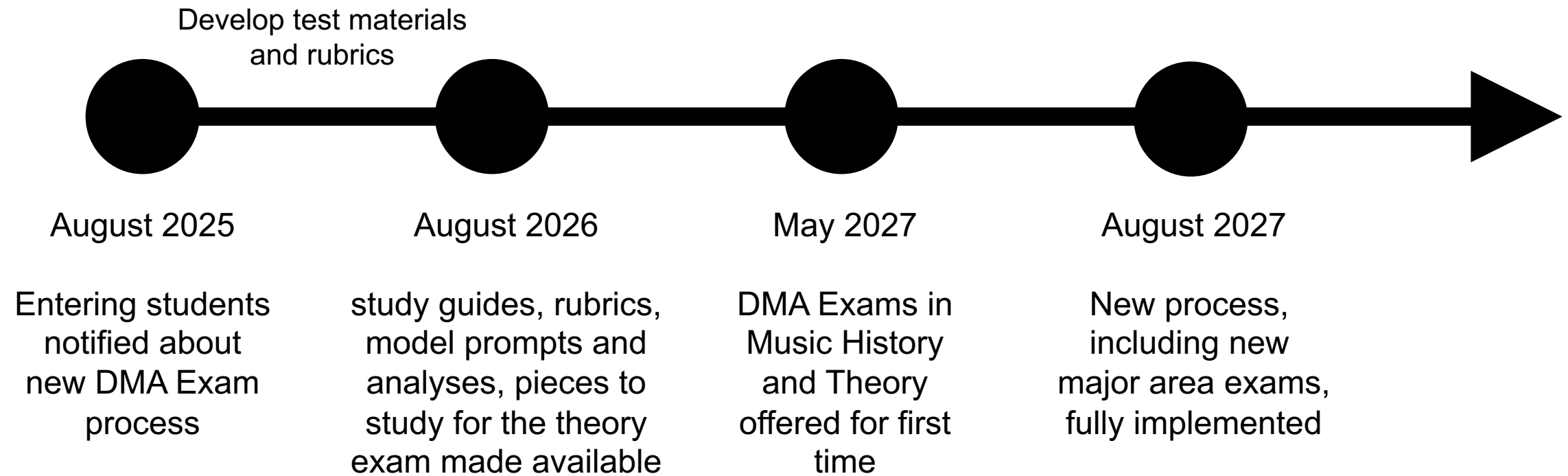


RESULTS

- Music History Exam will be a blend of “comprehensive” knowledge and new knowledge
- Students will learn five core pieces of their repertoire for the Music Theory Exam, making the exam very relevant to their development
- Better use of faculty and student time, particularly in regards to the oral examination



NEXT STEPS – EXAM DEVELOPMENT



NEXT STEPS – ADDITIONAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Master's Comprehensive Assessment

- The Master's Comprehensive Assessment has been an oral exam
- It follows the DMA oral exam model
- The DMA structure no longer exists
- It's time to ask, what is the best structure for the master's level?

Doctoral Dissertation/Document Process

- Faculty and students are dissatisfied with the DMA document process
- Issues are particularly evident in the DMA Performance degree
- For example, the guide to writing a prospectus is from December 1998
- Better integration into the degree process could improve timeliness and quality



REFLECTIONS

Time (particularly faculty time) is the most precious resource.

- Assume nothing will happen during breaks and end of semester
- End meetings by identifying accomplishments and setting goals
- When delegating work to subcommittees, clarify expected outcomes
- Set a deadline for each goal – and a backup deadline
- Be as transparent as you can (“When are we going to discuss...?”)



REFLECTIONS



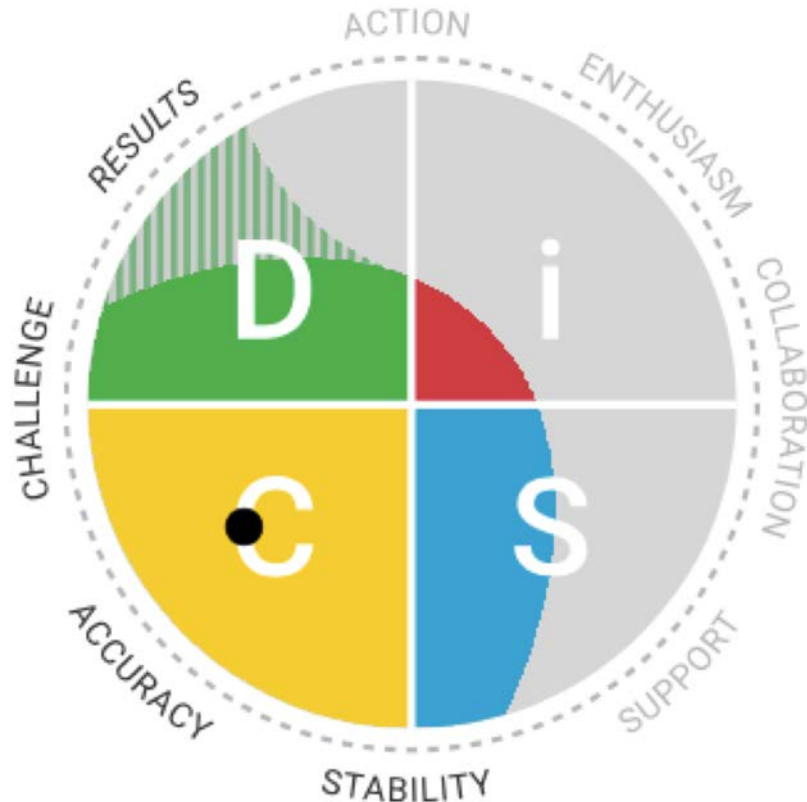
PERGE SED CAUTE

Proceed yet cautiously



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South Carolina

REFLECTIONS



PERGE SED CAUTE

Proceed yet cautiously

But proceed!



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THANK YOU!

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