At West Virginia University, the final research requirement for the Doctor of Music Arts degree is an extended written study not necessarily constituting original research. It is called a Research Project, because it is not required to be a doctoral dissertation. The oral examination for the Research Project is not called a defense, because – as noted in the Graduate Catalog – the final recital is considered the equivalent of the Ph.D. dissertation defense.

Like all final graduate research papers at WVU, the DMA Research Project must be submitted electronically after the DMA Research Project Oral Exam. At the end of the exam, the DMA committee determines whether access to the paper is to be worldwide, or restricted to WVU. Once that decision has been made, each member of the committee must sign the WVU Electronic Thesis and Dissertation (ETD) Signature Form, which has been prepared by the student.

If the student plans to print final complementary paper copies, the student should also prepare the Approval Page for the oral exam, so that the committee members may also sign it.

If the paper is especially strong, more like a dissertation, and worthy of publishing, the DMA committee has the option of recommending to the student that he or she submit it to ProQuest Information and Learning Company (formerly UMI) for publication. Students who accept this recommendation must follow the instructions in the WVU “Doctoral Dissertation Checklist for ETD Submissions” instead of the “Doctoral Research Project Report Checklist for ETD Submissions.”

Although the title of the paper must be recorded on the Division of Music Graduate Student Shuttle Sheet, the committee members do not sign the shuttle sheet at the time of the oral exam. The shuttle sheet is signed only after the Final Recital.