



# Department of Music

## GRADUATE DIAGNOSTIC EXAM STUDY GUIDE

Diagnostic exams in music theory, music history, aural skills, and piano will be given before the fall semester of graduate study begins. All or some diagnostics may be offered before the spring and summer sessions if there is a need.

### MUSIC THEORY

In preparation for the exam, it would be helpful for you to review a standard music theory text. Kostka/Payne, Roig-Francoli, or Benward are suggested. The website [musictheory.net](http://musictheory.net) is also helpful.

#### I. Basic Elements

- a. Chord qualities (e.g. major triad, diminished 7th chord).
- b. Non-harmonic tones (e.g. passing, neighboring, suspension).

#### II. Analysis of Harmony and Form

- a. Cadences (e.g. perfect authentic, half, Phrygian) and keys in which they occur.
- b. Harmonic analysis (Roman numerals and figured bass). Harmonies include secondary dominants and leading tone sevenths, Neapolitan chords, augmented sixth chords.
- c. Modulation and pivot chords.
- d. Melodic and phrase structure (e.g. motive, phrase, period, double period, repeated period, etc.).

#### III. Harmony and Voice Leading

- a. Notate four-voice chords which correspond to given harmonic analysis symbols (e.g., G minor: V6/5 of III).
- b. Harmonize melodic fragments in a given key using one or more specified chords.
- c. Realize a figured bass by notating soprano, alto, and tenor voices and providing harmonic analysis.

#### IV. Classical Forms.

- a. Identify form or compositional process of an entire movement (e.g. rondo, ternary, rounded binary, sonata, fugue, etc.).
- b. Identify, by correct term, specific compositional devices in particular passages (e.g. sequence, inversion, augmentation, diminution, retrograde, etc.).

## **MUSIC HISTORY**

The music history portion of the Graduate Diagnostic Exam is limited to the Western art music tradition from the Middle Ages through the twentieth century. World music is excluded, as are the vernacular and ethnic traditions in the United States. The exam concentrates on the understanding of music history as opposed to knowledge of facts. In preparation for the exam, it would be helpful for you to review a standard music history text that includes a listening anthology. Grout, Stolba, or Wright are suggested. Most music history textbooks also have companion websites with helpful study tools (outlines, quizzes, flash cards, etc.). The exam consists of multiple choice, matching, and short-answer essays. The listening section consists of identifying works by period and genre, and listing musical techniques and/or features of the works.

Knowledge of the following is important:

1. Vocal and instrumental styles, genres, and compositional techniques.
2. Standard classical forms.
3. Instrumentation typical of the works of major composers.
4. Nationalism in music.
5. Aesthetic and stylistic trends in music.
6. The relationship of society to music.
7. Major composers and landmark compositions.
8. Patrons, audiences, and consumers.

## **AURAL SKILLS**

In preparation for the exam, it would be helpful for you to review a standard sightsinging text such as Ottman. The website [musictheory.net](http://musictheory.net) is also helpful, as are computer ear training programs such as MacGamut.

**I. Sightsinging** Diatonic melody, major or harmonic minor, using solfege (either fixed or moveable Do) or numbers.

**II. Melodic dictation** Eight-measure diatonic melody, major or minor, either simple or compound meter.

**III. Interval Identification** Simple intervals.

**IV. Chord identification** Major, minor, diminished and augmented triads;  
major, minor, diminished and dominant seventh chords