

PIANO PROFICIENCY EXAM (MUS 046)

- **Who Must Take the Piano Proficiency Exam?**

All music majors, including piano majors* and transfer students must pass the Piano Proficiency Exam (MUS 046) before entering 2nd year Theory and Keyboard Harmony. Passing this exam is required for graduation as a music major, but is not required for music minors.

- **When Is the Piano Proficiency Exam Given?**

The exam is held the first week of Fall term and also during finals week of Fall, Winter, and Spring terms. Students who think they can pass the exam should register early in the term. This is so those students who take, but do not pass, the Fall term exam given the first week of the term, there will still be time to enroll in Class Piano (MUS 191). Students Cannot Simply Show Up To Take the Exam. In order to sign up for the exam, you need to be registered for MUS046. Registered students will be given the Test Packet **five** days prior to the exam.

- **How Many Times Can A Student Take the Piano Proficiency Exam?**

Students are allowed **two** attempts to pass the Piano Proficiency Exam. If a registered student does not show up for the exam, this counts as one attempt. If the exam is not passed on the second try, the student is **required** to enroll in Class Piano (MUS 191), a three term course which will prepare them to eventually pass the exam.

- **What Is the Exam Like and How Can I Prepare For It?**

The test is extremely comprehensive, consisting of five categories. Students who intend to pass it must have an extensive theory background and be able to execute theoretical concepts at the piano. The course Class Piano (MUS 191, 192, 193) covers all information needed to pass the Piano Proficiency Exam. When students sign up in the Music Office to take the exam, they will receive the Test Packet (no sooner than **five** days prior to the exam) which must be brought to the exam. Test Packets can also be purchased at Clean Copy for ~\$5 sooner than five days before the exam.

* Piano majors may take Advanced Keyboard Skills in lieu of Class Piano, if skills allow.

The Exam Will Consist Of

CATEGORY ONE: HARMONIZATION & CHORDING

- a. Harmonize a melody at sight and add a chordal accompaniment.
- b. Read a melodic line with chord symbols and/or figured bass and add a chordal accompaniment as indicated.

CATEGORY TWO: SCORE READING

- a. Play two parts of a choral score at the same time.
- b. Play two parts of an instrumental score at the same time, transposing to concert pitch, if needed.

CATEGORY THREE: ACCOMPANYING

- a. Play a prepared accompaniment.
- b. Sight-read an accompaniment.

CATEGORY FOUR: TRANSPOSITION/SIGHT-READING

- a. Transpose folk songs prepared in advance into any key.
- b. Transpose a simple song at sight.
- c. Sight-read a musical example.

CATEGORY FIVE: KEYBOARD SKILLS

- a. Play major scales, ascending and descending, two octaves, hands separately with an approved fingering system.
- b. Play minor scales (natural, harmonic, or melodic), ascending and descending, two octaves, hands separately with an approved fingering system.
- c. Play any triad (major, minor, augmented or diminished) in blocked and arpeggiated form, with either hand, in any inversion as indicated by figured bass symbols.
- d. Play any seventh chord (major, minor, dominant, half-diminished or fully-diminished) in blocked and arpeggiated form, with either hand, in any inversion as indicated by figured bass symbols.
- e. Play authentic and plagal cadences in any major or minor key, with roots in the bass:
Ex: I-V-I, i-V-i or I-IV-I, i-iv-i
- f. Play basic harmonic progressions in four voices in any major or minor key, with roots in the bass:
Ex: I-ii-V-I, i-ii^o-V-i or I-vi-IV-V-I, i-VI-iv-V-I

Note: A student will receive a "Pass" for the Piano Proficiency requirement ONLY IF ALL CATEGORIES HAVE BEEN PASSED. All portions of a category must be passed to pass the category; if any portion of a category is failed, the entire category must be retaken. If one particular category is passed and another category failed, only the failed category must be retaken.