

Piano Proficiency Requirements

For the Eastman Community Music School Diplomas

Non-keyboard majors may complete proficiency requirements by enrolling in a Diploma Piano Class at the ECMS. If already proficient in piano skills, students may elect to pass out of the piano proficiency requirements by scheduling an individual exam with the ECMS Piano Department Chairperson. **NOTE: This exam must be passed prior to the student's senior year of high school.** The following details what may be expected during the private exam: *Minimum requirement: successful performance of a formal Grade 2 piano examination as administered by an ECMS piano instructor.*

The following program must be presented:

- At least four major and four minor scales, played hands separately, one octave in quarter notes and two octaves in eighth notes, at a tempo of quarter note = 60.
- Demonstration of fundamental chord skills I, IV, V in the above keys.
- A short study from a collection such as Czerny/Germer Vol. I, *Celebration Series Studies, Vol. I/II* or the equivalent.
- A Baroque selection such as J.S. Bach's *Minuet in G*.
- A Classical selection, such as a Minuet by Mozart or Haydn, A German Dance by Beethoven, or a movement from Clementi's *Sonatina in C Major, Opus 36, no. 1*.
- A short 19th or 20th-century selection such as a children's piece by Schumann or Bartok.

Jazz Piano Proficiency requirements:

Non-Keyboard Jazz Majors may complete jazz piano proficiency requirements by enrolling in Diploma Jazz Piano Class. If already proficient in piano skills, students may elect to pass out of the jazz piano proficiency requirements by scheduling an individual exam with the ECMS jazz piano instructor – Paul Hofmann. The following details may be expected during a private exam.

Scales:

- Student should have MAJOR SCALE PROFICIENCY in the most common jazz keys, played by right hand, up and down two octaves, with proper fingering: C, G, A, E, A-flat, E-flat, B-flat and F.
- Students should know the differences between the THREE MINOR SCALES: melodic minor, natural minor and harmonic minor.
- Student should have MINOR SCALE PROFICIENCY in the most common jazz keys, (played by right hand, up and down, scale degrees 1 through 5): A minor, B minor, C minor, D minor, E minor, F minor and G minor.
- Students should have BLUES SCALE PROFICIENCY (1...2...flat-3...3...4...flat-5...5...flat-7...8[1]) in the most common jazz keys played by right hand, up and down two octaves, with students providing their own fingering: C, G, A, E, A-flat, E-flat, B-flat and F.
- Students should be familiar with the WHOLE-HALF SCALE (played by right hand, one octave) and when to use it (i.e., played over diminished harmonies or Dom 7 flat-9 harmonies).

Jazz Theory / etudes / exercises:

- Student should be fluent in playing through the CIRCLE OF FIFTHS (roots, thirds and sevenths): ii-V-I's;
- Student should be fluent in combining the three main chord types (minor 7s, Dom 7s, Major 7s), by learning SUGAR PLUM (an eight-bar harmonic exercise by Bill Evans which combines all three elements, moving through all twelve keys).

Jazz Playing

- BLUES TUNE, student chooses to play "The C Jam Blues" (Duke Ellington) in C, or another melody based on Blues changes, for instance: "Now's The Time" (Charlie Parker) in F; "Buzzy" (Charlie Parker) in B-flat; "Blue Monk" (Thelonious Monk) in B-flat; "Sonny's Mood" (Sonny Rollins) in B-flat; etc.
- RHYTHM CHANGE TUNE, student can choose to play "I Got Rhythm" (George Gershwin) in B-flat; or another melody based on Rhythm changes, for instance: "Cottontail" (Duke Ellington) in A-flat; "Oleo" (Sonny Rollins) in B-flat; "Moose the Mooche" (Charlie Parker) in B-flat; "Rhythm-a-ning" (Thelonious Monk) in B-flat; "Wail" (Bud Powell) in E-flat; "Flinstones theme" (Hanna-Barbera) in B-flat; etc.
- MODAL TUNES, student chooses to play one or both: "Peace Piece" (Bill Evans) in C; "So What" (Miles Davis) in D Dorian (Dmin13)