



GRADUATE PLACEMENT EXAM INFORMATION

All entering graduate students are required to take placement examinations in music theory and music history before registering. In addition, MM students in Performance and Literature, Piano Accompanying and Chamber Music, Early Music, Conducting, Contemporary Media/Film Composition, and Opera Stage Directing are required to take a listening exam.

Students majoring in Jazz Studies and Contemporary Media (Performance or Writing) and/or Contemporary Media and Film Composition should read the information for Jazz Studies and Contemporary Media Film Composition students below.

Should you have any questions about graduate placement exams, please contact the Associate Director of Graduate Advising and Services, Mr. Zachary A. Peterson, at zpeterson@esm.rochester.edu.

MUSIC THEORY

A study guide provided by the Music Theory department is included later in this handout.

Attention Continuing ESM Graduate Students: MM and MA degree students who continue on to a DMA or PhD program will be required to take only Part 3 of the Graduate Placement Exam in Theory (Counterpoint/Style Composition), as distinct from Parts 1-2, which they previously took when entering the Master's degree. **DMA degree students majoring in Jazz Studies and Contemporary Media must complete the full exam.**

MUSIC HISTORY

A study guide provided by the Musicology department is included later in this handout.

Note: MM students majoring in Jazz Studies and Contemporary Media (Performance or Writing) do not take this exam.

Attention Continuing ESM Graduate Students: Students entering a doctoral program with an MM or MA from Eastman must have achieved passing scores on the Medieval and Renaissance portions of the music history placement exam when first taken. Deficiencies in these areas will be evaluated prior to registration, the Associate Director of Graduate Advising and Services or the Musicology Department Coordinator will contact students individually should they need to retake any part of the exam, and students will be advised as to recommended or required courses as needed.

MM LISTENING EXAM

The Listening Exam is required for Master of Music degree students in the following majors: Performance and Literature (PRL), Piano Accompanying & Chamber Music (ACM), Early Music (EMH), Conducting (CNC, CNW, and CNO), Contemporary Media/Film Composition (CMFC), and Opera Stage Directing (OPS).

The MM Listening Test evaluates the student's ability to identify by ear specific works taken from a published list of works which represent a broad spectrum of historical periods and performance media. It also tests the student's ability to identify works not on the published list, by style-period rather than by title, with some brief description of the characteristics of the work that suggest the period choices. The exam consists of 25 excerpts, 20 of which involve identification of specific works from the published list and 5 of which cover style-identification. The basic list of works is published annually and serves as the source for the Listening Test administered prior to orientation. Streaming audio of all the repertoire is available at <https://learn.rochester.edu> (you will need your NetID to log on; see the orientation website for information on obtaining your NetID).

JAZZ STUDIES (JCM/JCW) AND CONTEMPORARY MEDIA FILM COMPOSITION MAJORS

MM students in Jazz Performance (JCM) and Jazz Writing (JCW) must take the jazz history and theory exam. MM JCM and JCW students do not take the traditional music history or music theory exam.

MM students in Contemporary Media/Film Composition (CMFC) must take the traditional music history exam. CMFC students with undergraduate degrees in jazz take the jazz theory placement test, while all others take the traditional music-theory placement test. The Associate Director of Graduate Advising and Services will confirm this via e-mail.

DMA Jazz students must take both traditional music history and music theory exams in addition to jazz history and theory exams.

GRADUATE PLACEMENT EXAMS IN MUSIC THEORY

All entering graduate students at the Eastman School are required to take aural and written theory placement examinations. Entering master's students will take Part 1 (Aural) and Part 2 (Written); entering doctoral students will take the same Parts 1 and 2, as well as Part 3 (Counterpoint/Style Composition). Students who earned their MM or MA at Eastman and then continue on to a DMA or PhD program will be required to take only Part 3 (since they previously took Parts 1-2 when entering the master's degree). These examinations serve two purposes. First, for all students, the exams assess students' preparation for graduate study and thus permit appropriate placement in theory courses. Second, for all DMA students, successful performance on the exam satisfies the musical skills requirement formerly tested on the DMA comprehensive examination (some DMA programs may have additional skills requirements).

Graduate students (both masters and doctoral) whose background in music theory is found to need support will be required to take one or both remedial music theory courses, TH 117 and TH 118: Theory, Analysis and Musicianship Review I and II (1.5 credits each). These courses will not count toward the total credits of any degree program nor fulfill any degree requirement, and they may not be used as electives. However, credits earned in these courses will count toward the student's credit load during the semester that they are taken. Doctoral students must pass TH 118 with a minimum grade of B+ and masters students with a minimum grade of C. TH 117 must be passed with a minimum grade of C, which is the minimum passing grade in all graduate courses at Eastman.

To maintain satisfactory academic progress, doctoral students may not accumulate three or more credits of C or E and masters students may not accumulate six or more credits of C or E. Please see the following link for details on grading for graduate students: <https://www.esm.rochester.edu/registrar/policy/05-00/#05.05>. Additionally, information on the Satisfactory Academic Progress policy for graduate students is found at the following link: <https://www.esm.rochester.edu/registrar/policy/05-00/#05.06>.

Masters students whose BM degrees were earned at Eastman are advised to take TH 401 rather than 400 for their masters' theory requirement unless they place into the TH 117-118 sequence. If they are required to take TH 117-118, then they should take TH 400 after successful completion of TH 118.

Graduate students required to take TH 117 and/or 118 may not enroll for any 400- or 500-level music theory courses until TH 118 has been completed satisfactorily. Should a doctoral student not attain at least a grade of "B+" in TH 118, s/he will be required to retake TH 118 (preferably in the subsequent summer session) before s/he is allowed to register for any theory courses at the 400 or 500 level.

The exams contain the following:

Aural Skills:

Melodic dictation. Notation of a four- to eight-measure melody from the literature.

Diatonic bass-line dictation. Notation of a bass line that completes a four-part keyboard progression.

Chromatic bass-line dictation. Notation of a bass line that completes a four-voice texture from the literature.

(over)

Written Skills:

Notation in treble, bass, and C clefs.

Identification of intervals, triads, and seventh chords.

Sequence identification and completion.

Roman numeral analysis.

Figured bass realization (SATB format plus roman-numeral analysis). The realization requires knowledge of non-harmonic tones, diatonic harmony, applied chords, mixture, and modulation.

Formal and stylistic analysis. A score, with accompanying questions regarding specific passages will be given. Questions concern harmonies or musical procedures (e.g., canon, invertible counterpoint, etc.), cadences, phrase and period structure, and key relations.

DMA/PhD students only. Counterpoint and Style Composition: students will have a choice to complete either a Baroque-style two-voice counterpoint or an early Classical-era two-voice counterpoint (about eight measures, based on a given incipit).

Recommended for Placement Exam Study:

Aldwell, Schachter, & Cadwallader: Harmony and Voice Leading (4th edition) Clendinning & Marvin: The Musician's Guide to Theory & Analysis (3rd edition) Laitz: The Complete Musician: An Integrated Approach to Tonal Theory, Analysis, and

Listening (3rd edition)

Laitz & Bartlette: Graduate Review of Tonal Theory: A Recasting of Common-Practice Harmony, Form, and Counterpoint

Online review course: <https://iml.esm.rochester.edu/store/product-category/etheory/>

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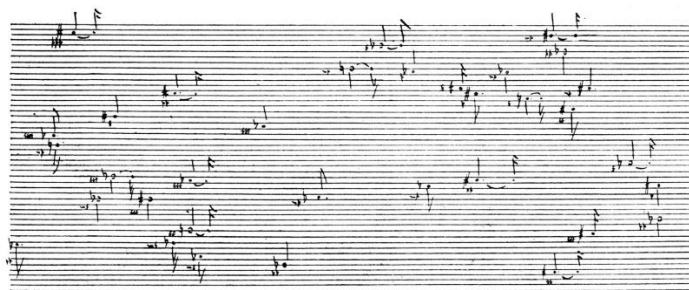
GRADUATE PLACEMENT EXAM IN MUSIC HISTORY

All entering graduate students of the Eastman School of Music are required to take a placement examination in the history of music during the orientation period preceding the first day of classes. The candidates may prepare themselves for this examination in various ways, but it is suggested that they review at minimum the most recent standard histories of music along with representative scores, such as: *A History of Western Music*, J. Peter Burkholder, Donald Jay Grout, Claude V. Palisca (New York: Norton); *Norton Anthology of Western Music* (New York: Norton).

Students whose music history background is judged to be deficient will be required to make up for this in a manner which may vary from individual to individual and dependent on area of study. Some will be required to take a review course that does not carry credit toward any degree (MHS 119); others may be required to take MHS 420 courses in particular periods of music history (e.g., MHS 423, Music in the Baroque Era; MHS 424, Music in the Classic Period; etc.). Those entering the DMA program with a Master's Degree from Eastman should have achieved passing scores on the Medieval and Renaissance portions of the placement exam when first taken. Deficiencies in these areas will be evaluated at the time of admission to the DMA, and students will be advised as to recommended or required courses as needed.

The Placement Examination is taken online through the learning management system and consists of 72 multiple-choice questions concerning the entire range of Western music from the Middle Ages to the present. While the exam is technically "open book"/"open internet," it must be completed within 90 minutes, leaving little if any time for consultation of outside materials. Further, the questions tend to emphasize synthesis of concepts over raw facts. The questions are drawn from a test bank, making each test unique. Sample questions:

- How did tenors change in the evolution of the thirteenth-century motet?
- Identify which of the items below was not a reform undertaken in Gluck's operas after 1762.
- Which composer likely wrote this passage?



Students are urged to prepare well for the exam, which is normally taken only one time. "Retakes" of all or part of the exam are given only in exceptional circumstances, with permission from the chair of the Musicology Department.

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