

## Piano Proficiency II Exam

### MTSU School of Music

The Piano Proficiency II exam described below must be successfully completed by all non-keyboard Bachelor of Music students with a four-semester Class Piano requirement: Performance (except Jazz Studies and Piano), Vocal/General Music Education, and Music Theory / Composition concentrations. It is offered as the final exam for students registered for MUS 2540 (Class Piano IV). If the exam is not passed, students are expected to retake the failed portions of the exam (up to two areas) by the end of finals week OR retake Class Piano IV the following semester

*Students must complete the following tasks with confidence, leadership, and artistry:*

1. Scales and Arpeggios
  - a. Three groupings given two weeks in advance, prepared from:
    - i. All white- and black-key major and minor scales & arpeggios
    - ii. Minor scales: harmonic and melodic white keys; harmonic only for black keys
  - b. 2 octaves, hands together
2. Score Reading: 4-voice vocal, easy string quartet, or 3-voice instrumental with one transposing instrument, given two weeks in advance
3. Harmonization: TWO (2) items (a and b):
  - a. Play "Happy Birthday" from **memory** in F and G (accompaniment style, no block chords). Singing optional (but should be practiced)
    - i. Must include at least one Secondary Dominant
  - b. Harmonize a melody with NO chord symbols or roman numerals provided (1 week preparation)
    - i. Two styles required:
      1. RH melody, LH accompaniment (no blocked chords)
      2. 2-hand accompaniment style (no melody)
    - ii. 8-16 measures in length
    - iii. Must include at least one Secondary Dominant (but NOT V7/IV)
4. Repertoire (TWO (2) prepared pieces – memorization NOT required)
  - a. Repertoire 1 (all students):
    - i. Repertoire at level of advanced selections from text (similar to *Alfred Masterworks 5*) or above
  - b. Repertoire 2: (varies by degree; please see below)
    - i. Music Education students, choose from:
      1. Lift Every Voice & Sing OR The Star-Spangled Banner (Ab)
    - ii. Non-Ed majors, prepare:
      1. Repertoire at level of advanced selections from text (similar to *Alfred Masterworks 5*) or above

5. Improvisation:
  - a. A melody over a given chord progression which includes at least one Secondary Dominant: V7/V, V7/ii, V7/vi (no V7/IV)
  - b. ABA' form: each section should be 8 measures long. For example:
    - i. A: I, IV, V7, I – V7/ii, ii, V7, I (4/4 time, D Major)
    - ii. B: Change of key, time signature, or accompaniment style
      1. Time: 3/4, 6/8, etc.
      2. Key: D Minor, B Minor, etc.
      3. Accompaniment style: Drop bass, keyboard style, etc.
    - i. A: A('): Exact repetition of A section progression & meter.  
Melody may be the same or slightly different
  - c. LH accompaniment style (no block chords)
  - d. RH should use primarily chord tones; passing and neighbor tones are acceptable; rhythms should be simple and clear
  
6. Instrument transpositions to include Bb, Eb, F instruments, & C clefs
  - a. Minimum 8 measures, provided 1 class in advance
  - b. All transpositions must be prepared
  
7. Accompaniment:
  - a. Vocal or Instrumental accompaniment at level of text or early instrumental/vocal method books
    - i. Instructor will play the melody on a second piano, or students maybe bring a singer/instrumentalist of their own
    - ii. "New Day Dawning" from Alfred Bk. II is not permitted
  
8. Sight Reading:
  - a. A simple hymn or short example comparable in difficulty to Alfred Masterworks Classics Level 3 or examples from text
    - i. Hymns should only be in the keys of F, C, G, or D

Tested in-class by the instructor over the last **4-5 weeks** of classes:

- |                             |                            |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| ▪ Instrument Transpositions | ▪ Happy Birthday (Harm. a) |
| ▪ Repertoire 1              | ▪ Improvisation            |

Tested during finals week for the instructor & Dr. Clark (15-minute appointments):

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|------------------------|-----------------|
| ▪ Scales and Arpeggios | ▪ Repertoire 2  |
| ▪ Harmonization b      | ▪ Accompaniment |
| ▪ Score Reading        | ▪ Sight Reading |

Additionally: To be tested as quizzes at some point during in the semester:

- Chord Progressions: Pg. 117 in C, G, D (memory encouraged)
- One prepared hymn, OR one selection from *Get America Singing*, OR another selection of the instructor's choice of comparable style

*Last Updated: July 2017*