

SCHOOL OF MUSIC
MUSIC COMPETENCY PLACEMENT TESTS

All entering transfer students who desire to present transfer credit in any of the following areas must take the appropriate Music Competency Placement Tests: Sight Singing/Ear Training and Keyboard Skills. Students who have taken these courses at other colleges and universities but do not pass the equivalent placement tests at GMU will be required to retake these courses at GMU on a credit basis. The equivalent courses taken elsewhere, then, cannot be counted towards a GMU music degree. Students who desire to earn "Credit by Examination" in any of these areas should also take these tests. Students accepted into GMU's degree programs as piano, organ, or harpsichord majors need not take Keyboard Skills I & II (Keyboard Skills III must be taken or credit-by-exam must be earned). Keyboard Majors must substitute Techniques of Accompanying I & II for Keyboard Skills I & II. If students wish to see example of the requirements listed below, they can review the texts used for these classes. Students are not required to buy these tests, or any text, in order to pass the competency placement tests.

I. Aural Skills I & II (MUSIC 113, 114)

A. Sight Singing

1. Intervals
2. Melodies (diatonic, chromatic, atonal)
3. Rhythms in the following meters: 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, 2/2, 4/8, 6/8, 9/8, changing meters
4. Chords
5. Clefs: treble, bass, alto tenor

B. Ear Training

1. Melodic Intervals
2. Harmonic Intervals
3. Rhythms (see list under Sight Singing)
4. Diatonic melodies (4-8 measures in length)
5. Chord identification (root position, 1st & 2nd inversions)
6. Outervoices & chord functions in four-part texture

Text/Software suggestions:

Yasui/Trubitt: Basic Sight Singing (Mayfield Publishing Co.)

Kanyan/Smith: Sight Singing & Ear Training: Supplementary Materials for Practice (Sold in the GMU Johnson Center: Course Material Sales.)

Ottman: Music for Sight Singing, Third edition (Prentice-Hall, Inc.)

II. Keyboard Skills I (Music 171)

A. Sightreading

1. Harmonize & transpose a single line melody using I, IV, & V Chords
2. Read two parts simultaneously from a choral score (Treble & bass lines)

B. Perform, with preparation

You will be given this part of the exam when you arrive for the testing and will have ten minutes to prepare the following:

1. Harmonize & transpose a single line melody using I, IV, V Chords and a moving left hand accompaniment pattern (e.g. Alberti bass, waltz bass, broken chord style etc.)
2. Sightreading example from selected skill-appropriate repertoire.

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C. Prepared skills

The following skills/repertoire should be practiced in advance of the testing and must be well-prepared to be acceptable:

1. All major and harmonic minor scales (1 octave) hands together, beginning on any of the WHITE KEYS, with correct acceptable fingerings.
2. Major and minor broken chords in all white keys, all inversions, full octave pattern (e.g.: c-e-gc / e-g-c-e / g-c-e-g)
3. One prepared piece on the difficulty level of Dmitri Kabalevsky's 24 Pieces for Children or J.S. Bach's Anna Magdalena Bach Book. (Memory optional).

III. Keyboard Skills II (Music 172)

A. Sightreading

1. Harmonize & transpose a single line melody using all diatonic harmonies and secondary dominants
2. Read Treble & Bass simultaneously in a two-part contrapuntal keyboard texture.

B. Perform, with preparation

You will be given this part of the exam when you arrive for the testing and will have ten minutes to prepare the following:

1. Harmonize & transpose a single line melody using all diatonic harmonies and secondary dominants and a moving left-hand accompaniment
2. Alto Clef & Bass Clef reading in a two-part texture

C. Prepared skills

The following skills/repertoire should be practiced in advance of the testing and must be well-prepared to be acceptable:

1. Scales (2 Octaves), Arpeggios (2 Octaves), and standard chord progressions (e.g. I, IV, V7, I), including secondary dominants, in any major or minor key, with correct acceptable fingerings.
2. One prepared piece on the difficulty level of J.S. Bach's Anna Magdalena's Bach Book or more difficult level. (Memory optional).

IV. Keyboard Skills III (Music 273)

Each student is given a "take-home" exam and is given 24 hours to prepare.

The prepared test will include the following skills:

1. Playing functional chord progression with secondary dominants and modulations.
2. Harmonize & transpose melodies using secondary dominants.
3. Score Reading: Four-part Choral score & Four-part Instrumental score with Alto and/or Tenor Clefs.
4. Play from a standard "lead sheet."
5. Realization of a figured bass.
6. Play a simple accompaniment from a vocal or instrumental piece.

Text suggestions in preparation for these exams:

Keyboard Skills I & II: Piano for the Developing Musician Vol. I, Hilley/Olson

Keyboard Skills III: Preparatory Exercises in Score Reading, Morris & Ferguson