

**Music Theory Program, Academic Studies Division
The Hartt School, University of Hartford
Guidelines
Graduate Music Theory Placement Examinations
Revised 03-15-21**

These guidelines may be revised and will be dated accordingly.

There are five graduate music theory placement examinations: 1. music theory, 2. ear training, 3. tonal counterpoint, 4. keyboard harmony, and 5. score reading. Information given in these guidelines summarizes the purpose and content for each examination. Suggested materials for study are given for each examination.

The music theory placement examinations for music theory and ear training are given: 1. prior to the fall semester, 2. prior to the spring semester, and 3. during the summerterm. The music theory placement examinations for tonal counterpoint, keyboard harmony, and score reading are given only prior to the fall semester.

A student is permitted one attempt for any graduate music theory placement examination (music theory, ear training, tonal counterpoint, keyboard harmony, score reading). A student who does not pass any graduate music theory placement examination must take and pass the required review course. Retake of any graduate music theory placement examination is not permitted.

1. MUSIC THEORY

The Graduate Music Theory Placement Examination is a written examination covering three areas: 1. tonal harmony, 2. tonal form, and 3. post-tonal theory. The examination consists of short specific questions with musical examples requiring short specific answers. Each area is graded separately. Entering students are to prepare for the examination by studying the following topics.

1. Tonal harmony: chords (diatonic and chromatic triads and seventh chords), harmonic function (tonic, dominant, subdominant), harmonic progression (diatonic, chromatic), cadences (authentic, plagal, half, deceptive), voice leading (4-voice part writing), figured bass, non-chord tones, mode mixture, tonicization, modulation (closely-related, remotely-related).

2. Tonal form: phrase structure (subphrase, phrase, period, phrase group, sentence), forms (1-part, 2-part [simple, rounded, balanced], 3-part [simple, compound, *da capo*]; 5-part rondo, 7-part rondo; sonatina, sonata, sonata-rondo), procedures (variation [continuous, sectional], contrapuntal [fugue, invention, canon], concerto [Baroque, Classical]).

3. Post-tonal theory: harmony (modes, scales [pentatonic, whole tone, hexatonic, diatonic, octatonic], neotonicity/pandiatonicism), rhythm (polyrhythm, cross-rhythm, isorhythm, meters [symmetrical, asymmetrical, composite, changing, polymeter], metric/tempo modulation, golden ratio, Fibonacci sequence), texture (juxtaposition, superimposition, interpolation, stratification), pitch-class set theory (pitch class, interval class, normal form, prime form, distinct form, interval-class vector, Z-related sets, set-class table), twelve-tone theory (row forms, row matrix, hexachordal combinatoriality).

The following books are suggested for study.

1. *Tonal Harmony*, Stefan Kostka, Dorothy Payne, Byron Almén, 8th edition, McGraw-Hill, 2018.
2. *The Analysis of Musical Form*, James Mathes, Pearson Prentice Hall, 2007.
3. *Understanding Post-Tonal Music*, Miguel A. Roig-Francoli, McGraw-Hill, 2008.

Students not passing one or more parts of the Graduate Music Theory Placement Examination must take and pass one or more of the following music theory review courses before being permitted to take any graduate courses in music theory. Credits earned for the following review courses do not count toward any Hartt graduate degree or diploma program.

TH 611 (Graduate Music Theory Review: Tonal Harmony, 1.0 credit)

TH 612 (Graduate Music Theory Review: Tonal Form, 1.0 credit)

TH 613 (Graduate Music Theory Review: Post-Tonal Theory, 1.0 credit)

2. EAR TRAINING

The Graduate Ear Training Placement Examination is a sight-singing examination. Each graduate student will meet individually with an ear-training instructor and will be asked to sight sing solo for the instructor or may be asked to sing in ensemble with another student or the instructor. Students may use the sight-singing method (movable or fixed syllables or numbers) according to their training. Students will be expected to sight sing with a consistent pulse, accurate rhythm, and confident melodic content.

Entering graduate students are to prepare for the examination by studying the following topics. Clefs (treble, alto, tenor, bass), simple intervals (singing, recognition), diatonic triads and seventh chords (singing, recognition), melodies (modal, diatonic, chromatic), meters (simple, compound).

The following book is suggested for study.

Music for Sight Singing, Nancy Rogers and Robert W. Ottman, 10th ed., Pearson Prentice Hall, 2019.

The following websites are suggested for ear training practice.

www.good-ear.com, www.teoria.com, www.musictheory.net

Students not passing the Graduate Ear Training Placement Examination must take and pass TH 614 (Graduate Ear Training Review, 2.0 credits) **before being permitted to take any graduate courses in music theory**. Credits earned for TH 614 **do not** count toward any Hartt graduate degree or diploma program.

3. TONAL COUNTERPOINT

The Graduate Tonal Counterpoint Placement Examination consists of writing and analyzing tonal counterpoint: two-voice, three-voice, and four-voice tonal counterpoint (non-imitative, imitative), invertible counterpoint (octave, tenth, twelfth), genres (fugue, invention, canon) in the eighteenth-century style of J. S. Bach.

The following book is suggested for study.

A Practical Approach to Eighteenth-Century Counterpoint, Robert Gauldin, Prentice Hall, 1988.

Students not passing the Graduate Tonal Counterpoint Placement Examination must take and pass TH 511 (Tonal Counterpoint, 3.0 credits). Credits earned for TH 511 do count toward any Hartt graduate degree or diploma program.

4. KEYBOARD HARMONY

The Graduate Keyboard Harmony Placement Examination consists of performing at the piano the following: diatonic and chromatic chord progressions, cadences, figured bass, and melody harmonization.

The following book is suggested for study.

A New Approach to Keyboard Harmony, Allen Brings and others, Norton, 1979.

Students not passing the Graduate Keyboard Harmony Placement Examination must take and pass TH 627 (Graduate Keyboard Harmony, 2.0 credits). Credits earned for TH 627 do count toward any Hartt graduate degree or diploma program.

5. SCORE READING

The Graduate Score Reading Placement Examination consists of playing at the piano the following: transposing various instrumental parts, sight reading an excerpt from a Classical string quartet score, and sight reading an excerpt from a Classical symphonic score.

The following book is suggested for study.

Preparatory Exercises in Score-Reading, R. O. Morris and Howard Ferguson, Oxford, 1959.

Students not passing the Graduate Score Reading Placement Examination must take and pass TH 628 (Graduate Score Reading, 2.0 credits). Credits earned for TH 628 do count toward any Hartt graduate degree or diploma program.