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## Graduate Entrance Exam: Description and Study Guide

A two-hour entrance examination in music history and a two-hour entrance examination in music theory and aural skills are required of all graduate students before their first term of enrollment. The examination is given before the beginning of each term. Students who score below the designated levels must enroll in a prescribed course or courses at the first opportunity (review courses are offered in the fall and summer terms of each year).

### Music History

#### Part One

##### Listening

Ten listening examples will be played twice (each approximately 30–90 seconds in length). For each example, identify a probable or likely composer, a fifty-year span during which the example could have been composed (e.g., 1875–1925, 1700–1750), and a probable title, form or genre as far as it may be evident. (30 points)

#### Part Two

##### Short-Answer Questions

1. Nine musical terms will be listed (e.g., the term *madrigal*). You are to (1) describe each term as it applies to music and (2) name a specific stylistic period or periods associated with the term. (18 points)
2. Ten composers will be listed. Name the style period and nationality generally associated with each composer. (20 points)

#### Part Three

##### Essay

You will be asked to write on one essay question from a selection of four (e.g., discuss the main developments in opera from its beginnings to Wagner) (20 points). PhD students with a primary area in musicology will choose two essay questions. (40 points total)

#### Part Four

##### Score Recognition

Three excerpted scores will be provided. Give a likely composer, approximate date of composition (within the limits specified on the listening portion of the exam), possible genre, and one reason for your answer. (12 points)

### Suggested Study Materials for Exam Preparation

Music history textbooks such as:

J. Peter Burkholder, Donald J. Grout and Claude V. Palisca, *A History of Western Music*, 7<sup>th</sup> edition. (N.Y.: Norton, 2005).

Richard Crawford, *America's Musical Life: A History* (N.Y.: Norton, 2003).

Sarah Fuller, *The European Musical Heritage, 800-1750*, revised edition (Boston: McGraw Hill, 2006).

Donald J. Grout and Claude V. Palisca, *A History of Western Music*, 6<sup>th</sup> edition (N.Y.: Norton, 2001).

H. Wiley Hitchcock, *Music in the United States: A Historical Introduction* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1974).

David Poultney, *Studying Music History: Learning, Reasoning, and Writing About Music History and Literature*, 2nd edition (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1996).

K. Marie Stolba, *The Development of Western Music*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (Boston: McGraw Hill, 1998).

Anthologies of Western music and recorded anthologies of Western music such as:

*Norton Anthology of Western Music*, 2 vols, 4th edition, edited by Claude V. Palisca, and *The Norton Recorded Anthology of Western Music*, 2 vols, 4th edition, edited by Claude V. Palisca (N.Y.: Norton, 2001).

*The Norton Anthology of Western Music and The Norton Recorded Anthology*, 5th edition, edited by J. Peter Burkholder. (N.Y.: Norton, 2005);

K. Marie Stolba, *The Development of Western Music: An Anthology*, 2 vols. 3rd edition (Boston: McGraw Hill, 1998); Compact Discs, vol. 1-2 for use with *The Development of Western Music: An Anthology*, 2 vols. 3rd edition (Boston: McGraw Hill, 1998).

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## Music Theory and Aural Skills

### Part One, Aural Skills

#### A. Melodic Dictation (20 points)

A melody of moderate difficulty (diatonic with large skips) will be performed five times by the instructor at the piano. Clef and key will be given (i.e. “Eb major,” but not time signature or starting pitch. The student will determine the meter and starting note, and notate the melody correctly.

#### B. Singing a Melody at Sight (tested individually, 30 points)

The notation of a melody will be given. After one minute of preparation and a reference pitch from the piano, the student is asked to sing the melody.

Note: in this exercise, the melodies are not necessarily from a familiar repertory, but are equivalent in their level of complexity.

A typical example:

The image shows three staves of musical notation for a melodic dictation exercise. The first staff starts with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The melody begins with a dotted quarter note, followed by an eighth rest and a quarter note, then a half note, a quarter note, and a quarter note. The second staff starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody continues with a dotted quarter note, an eighth rest and a quarter note, a half note, a quarter note, and a quarter note. The third staff starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody continues with a dotted quarter note, an eighth rest and a quarter note, a half note, a quarter note, and a quarter note. The notation includes various note values, rests, and accidentals.



asked to harmonize the melody in four parts (including choosing appropriate chords), and realize the figured bass in four parts (the chords will be indicated by the figures). It is important for the student to follow proper voice-leading principles in this exercise: avoiding parallel fifths and octaves, resolving active tones in the right direction, and doubling and spacing chords correctly.

### **Suggested study materials for exam preparation**

Some textbooks/exercises that could be useful in preparing for the theory entrance exam:

**Aural Skills (melodic dictation and sight singing):** Robert Ottman, *Music for Sight Singing*

**Aural Skills (harmonic):** find a repertory of chordal music (any traditional Protestant hymn book will suffice—*not* one of the more recent ones), and have another student play you excerpts, stopping on certain chords after the first hearing and asking you to identify them.

**Concepts:** Stefan Kostka and Dorothy Payne, *Tonal Harmony*, Edward Aldwell and Carl Schachter, *Harmony and Voice Leading*, or Elizabeth West Marvin and Jane Clendinning, *The Musician's Guide to Theory and Analysis*

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