The Music Theory Diagnostic Exam consists of three sections: Theory, Aural Training and Sight Singing.

The Theory portion might include:
- Part-writing (diatonic and chromatic materials)
- Identification of contrapuntal techniques
- Common forms (including sonata-allegro)
- Harmonic analysis including chromatic harmonies
- Construction of non-tertian and extended-tertian sonorities
- Basic transformations of a given set

The Aural Training component might include:
- Melodic, harmonic, rhythmic, and/or contrapuntal dictation

A short Sight Singing exam will be administered individually in which you will be asked to sing a tonal melody at sight, sing a given set of intervals, and demonstrate rhythmic reading.

There are several theory texts that may be of benefit in preparation for the diagnostic exams:

All graduate students in the School of Music must sit for the music history diagnostic exam in the fall, prior to their first semester of study. The diagnostic exam is not intended as an exclusion device, but to ascertain the student’s level of competency in music history. Successful completion of this examination demonstrates that the student possesses the knowledge and understanding of music history as it is usually presented at the undergraduate level, and that they are prepared for advanced graduate studies in this area.

Format of the exam:

The music history diagnostic exam is presented in three sections:
- Part I – Antiquity through Renaissance
- Part II – Baroque through Beethoven
- Part III—Romantic, Twentieth, and Twenty-first Century.

Each section has approximately 40 multiple choice questions that cover the historical materials (repertoire, terms, artistic movements, genres, composers, etc.) of a standard undergraduate music history curriculum. Score identification questions are included in each section (approximately 4 per section).
Sample questions:

1. The term “cori spezatti” refers to:
   a. The practice of using instruments together with voices
   b. The practice of dividing choirs, used at St. Mark’s Basilica
   c. A method of clearing condensation from the tubing of brass instruments
   d. The windpipes on a church organ

2. Beethoven’s Eroica Symphony belongs to:
   a. His “early” style period (before 1802)
   b. His “middle” style period (1803-1816)
   c. His “late” style period (after 1817)
   d. None of the above

3. The composer responsible for popularizing the da capo aria was:
   a. J.S. Bach
   b. G.F. Handel
   c. Domenico Scarlatti
   d. Alessandro Scarlatti

Suggested texts for review:


For score identification, students should consult the anthologies that accompany the above texts.

Reviewing important figures, works, and terminology may also aid in studying for the **Music History Diagnostic Exam**.

1) Middle Ages -- Monophony
   - *Liber Usualis*
   - Mass Proper and Ordinary
   - tropes
   - bar form/strophic form
   - Divine Offices
   - hexachord
   - Vespers/Magnificat
   - solmization
   - Dies Irae
   - modes (authentic, plagal)
   - Troubadours/Trouvères

2) Middle Ages--Polyphony
   - *Musica enchiriadis*
   - organum
   - Motet
   - School of Notre Dame
   - Leonin/Perotin
   - Ars nova
   - Trecento
   - isorhythm
   - musica ficta
   - chace/caccia
   - lai
   - Mannerism
   - Landin/Machaut *Mass of Notre Dame*
   - formes fixes (ballade/rondeau/virelai)

3) Renaissance
   - *Old Hall Manuscript*
   - fauxbourdon
   - word painting
   - cadence structures
   - cantus firmus
   - cyclic Mass
   - cantus firmus Mass
   - mensuration canon
   - pavane/galliard
   - *Missa prolationum*
   - paraphrase technique
   - parody technique
   - points of imitation
   - Dufay
   - William Byrd
   - Ockeghem
   - Josquin
   - chanson
   - chorale
   - anthem
   - frottola/madrigal
   - Marenzio/Gesualdo
   - "L'Homme arme"
   - Palestrina

4) Baroque
Monteverdi
Italian Baroque opera
aria/arioso

monody
libretto
recitative

accompagnato/secco prima
pratica/seconda
orchestral suite

stile antico/stile moderno
basso continuo
suite

ricercare/fantasía/canzone
prelude/toccata
sacred concerto

ground bass/basso ostinato
passacaglia/chaccone
cori spezzati

polychoral motet
Giovanni Gabrieli
concertato

Heinrich Schütz
French Baroque opera
Concerto grosso

trio sonata/sonata da chiesa
fugue
Clavier-Übung

ritornello
cadenza
concertino
	

tutti/ripieno
The Musical Offering
B minor Mass

Brandenburg Concertos
Art of Fugue

Well-Tempered Clavier
French overture
chorale prelude

Opera seria
da capo aria
cantata

oratorio
cantata Mass/Missa solemnis

oratorio

5) Classic
terraced dynamics
passion settings

5) Classic
double exposition form
galant style
Rococo

intermezzo
opera buffa
rondo

opera finale
singspiel
opera-comique

parlando
symphony
sonata form

string quartet
London Symphonies
minuet/scherzo

Mozart's "Haydn" quartets
song (lieder) cycle
Lorenzo da Ponte

Beethoven’s Symphonies Nos. 1, 3 (Eroica), 5, 6 (Pastoral), 7, 9.

6) Romantic (Nineteenth Century)
grand opera
rubato
Italian opera

bel canto
caobaletta
Verismo

music-drama
Leitmotiv
idée fixe

character piece
étude
nationalism

program vs. absolute music
orchestral lieder
The Ring Cycle

Otello
Die schöne Müllerin

Symphonie fantastique
symphonic poem (tone poem)

7) Twentieth Century
impressionism
neoclassicism
expressionism

serialism
minimalism
primitivism

atonality
bitonal/polytonality
pointillism

Klangfarbenmelodie
total serialism
microtonality

musique concrète
aleatory music
chance music

Sprechstimme
Gebrauchsmusik
La Mer

The Rite of Spring
Lihistoire du soldat
Mikrokosmos

Wozzeck
Pierrot Lunaire

Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta
dodecaphonic (or twelve-tone) music

dodecaphonic (or twelve-tone) music

This list is intended to help in your preparation for the exam but is not exhaustive. There may be terms on the exam that are not listed and there may be terms listed above that are not on the exam.

Expository Writing Proficiency

Students will choose one of several given topics for discussion in a written essay. These topics are general in nature and will not require additional study for historical or theoretical content. The essay will be assessed for form, structure, argument and style. Students failing the Expository Writing diagnostic exam may be asked to retake the exam, complete a writing course, or work with the university Writing Center.