

Piano Placement/Proficiency Information Sheet
Updated: 9/20/2023

A typical music major is required to enroll in four sequential class piano courses, however students with prior piano experience either as private lessons or piano classes taken at another institution will be placed in a course level based on their level of ability determined by a piano placement exam at their initial audition. Students with no prior piano background can opt not to take the placement exam and will be automatically placed in Class Piano I.

The placement exam consists of

1. Major and minor five finger patterns and triads in various keys
2. Major and minor scales
3. Chord progressions
4. Lead sheet with a melody in the RH and basic chord progression in the LH.
5. Sight-reading

Transfer students that have four semesters of class piano from another institution that wish to complete their piano requirement must take a piano proficiency exam and successfully pass all sections. If the student is deemed to have deficiencies, the piano area coordinator will recommend they be placed in the appropriate level course in the sequence. The student wishing to fulfill their piano proficiency requirements should contact the piano area coordinator to request and schedule the exam as early in the semester as possible and no later than the 12th class day. The exam materials will be drawn from Contemporary Class Piano by Elyse Mach and consist of:

1. Performance of one repertoire selection from Contemporary Class Piano. The piece will be chosen in advance at the discretion of the instructor. Memorization is not required.
2. Performance of two major and two harmonic minor scales (hands together, two octaves) to be selected from the complete list of major and harmonic minor scales, after having learned them all.
3. Performance of a simple melodic line selected by the instructor with an accompaniment to be created by the student. This accompaniment should be based on the chords indicated by the melody. The melody will be given to the student at his/her request during the week prior to the exam. The accompaniment may then be composed in advance or improvised at the time of the exam by the student.
4. Sight reading of a selection to be chosen by the instructor at or below the level of difficulty of pieces found in Unit 10 of Contemporary Class Piano, seventh edition.
5. Transposition of a simple accompanied melody