

MUSIC at MSU DENVER

Advising Information

Music Theory Placement

Important General Information

REQUIREMENTS:

- All students entering MSU Denver's music theory sequence must take a Music Theory Placement Exam or take MUS 1010 Essential Music Theory Skills.
- Theory Lab I and Class Piano I are co-requisites for Music Theory I. For advanced theory levels, check specific degree programs for theory co-requisite requirements.
- Students must be eligible to take Theory I or higher in order to receive private instruction.
- Students who have completed MUS 1010 Essential Music Theory Skills with a grade of C- or lower must retake Essential Music Theory Skills or take the Theory Placement Exam.

EXAM SCHEDULING:

- The exam is administered on Audition Day or by special arrangement. Audition Days occur in January, April, and August. Please check the Music Department website for exact dates.
- Contact the Music office to register for the exam: 303-615-1010.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT:

- An advisor will help the student determine the appropriate level(s) of exam to take. (See next page)

WHAT TO EXPECT:

- Plan to arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the exam with pencil and eraser in hand.
 - Exam results will be emailed the week following the exam.
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Music Theory Readiness Assessment: What You Need to Know to Pass the Theory I Placement Exam

Written exam:

- Identify and notate major key signatures on the staff
- Identify and notate minor key signatures on the staff
- Identify and notate various intervals, i.e., P4, m3, m7, A6, etc.
- Know time signatures/rhythmic note values
 - Including beat divisions and counting syllables
- Identify and notate major scales on the staff
- Identify and notate all forms of minor scales, i.e., natural, harmonic, and melodic
- Identify and notate all forms of triads, i.e., major, minor, augmented, and diminished
- Identify and notate all inversions of triads, i.e., root position, first inversion, second inversion

Ear training/Sightsinging exam:

- Intervals (size and quality)
- Rhythmic dictation
- Melodic dictation
- Triads
- Sightsing simple diatonic melody

If the placement exam is not passed, the student must register for MUS 1010 Essential Music Theory Skills and must drop Music Theory I and all Theory I co-requisites (Theory Lab I and Class Piano I).

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What You Need to Know to Pass the Theory II Placement Exam

Written exam:

- All the requirements for Theory I Placement plus...
- Roman numeral analysis using all diatonic triads with inversion symbols
- Four-voice part writing

Ear training/Sightsinging exam:

- All the requirements for Theory I Placement plus...
- Rhythmic dictation up to four measures
- Melodic dictation up to four measures
- Harmonic dictation using all diatonic triads
- Sightsing melodies that outline diatonic triads

What You Need to Know to Pass the Theory III Placement Exam

Written exam:

- All the requirements for Theory I and II Placement plus...
- Knowledge of cadences
- Knowledge of non-chord tones
- Knowledge of diatonic seventh chords
- Knowledge of secondary dominants

Ear training/Sightsinging exam:

- All the requirements for Theory I and II Placement plus...
- Rhythmic dictation longer than four measures
- Melodic dictation longer than four measures
- Harmonic dictation using sevenths and possibly a secondary dominant
- Sightsing longer melodies that may include minor keys and/or chromatic alterations

What You Need to Know to Pass the Theory IV Placement Exam

Written exam:

- All the requirements for Theory I-III Placement plus...
- Knowledge of secondary leading tones
- Knowledge of all chromatic harmony including borrowed chords
- Knowledge of Neapolitan, augmented sixths, and modulation

Ear training/Sightsinging exam:

- All the requirements for Theory I-III Placement plus...
- Longer dictations using elements of chromatic harmony
- Sightsing melodies with chromatic alterations

What You Need to Know to Test Out of Theory I-IV

Written exam:

- All the requirements for Theory I-IV Placement plus...
- Knowledge of serialism
- Knowledge of modes
- Knowledge of set theory

Ear training/Sightsinging exam:

- All the requirements for Theory I-IV Placement plus...
- Sightsing with lots of chromatics and outlined seventh and ninth chords