



Department of Music  
Keyboard Studies for Music Majors (“Keyboard Skills”)  
Updated in June 2015

All music majors, with the exception of piano majors, at TCNJ are required to complete several levels of keyboard study depending upon one's major as follows:

**BA Major:** Keyboard Skills I, and II (MUS 111, MUS 222)

**BM Major in Instrumental Performance and Instrumental Music Education:** Keyboard Skills I, and II (MUS 111, MUS 222)

**BM Major in Vocal Performance, Vocal Music Education, Guitar/Choral Music Education:** Keyboard Skills I, II, and III (MUS 111, MUS 222, MUS 233)

In addition, all music majors are required to successfully complete the Keyboard Proficiency Exam (MUS 330) in prior to 1) an application for one's student teaching, or 2) one's graduation depending upon one's major.

The standard sequence is to start Keyboard Skills I during the second semester of one's study. Students who have prior experience at the keyboard may take a placement audition to gain advanced standing. The placement audition is given during the orientation week in summer and in January during the first week of the second semester. **Students will be given only one chance to take the placement audition: a re-examination is NOT available at other points in the program of study.**

### **Who Should Take the Placement Audition?**

Those students who have had **a substantial background both in keyboard (or piano) study and music theory** may attempt the placement exam, which could advance them into Keyboard Skills II or III. Such students still have to take the Keyboard Proficiency Exam during one of the regular testing periods.

The keyboard study at TCNJ is very rigorous, so it is highly recommended that one be enrolled in this first level even if s/he has had one semester of study at another institution. If a student has had less than one year of keyboard (or piano) study, they should simply register for Keyboard Skills I. If a student has had more than one year of keyboard (or piano) study, but has had no substantial study in music theory, it is still recommended that s/he register for Keyboard Skills I. Please note that **placement in these courses depends more on an application of one's knowledge of music theory onto keyboard, and far less on piano repertoire study**, which tends to be the main focus of the traditional piano private instructions.

**One does NOT need to take the Placement Audition in order to register for Keyboard Skills I.**

### **Students Who Have Had No Previous Keyboard Training**

Those who have no previous keyboard experience are encouraged to get started before the school year. The required textbooks for Keyboard Skills I include:

**Alfred's Group Piano for Adults Book 1 (second edition)**, Lancaster/Renfrow, Alfred Publishing Co., ISBN 0-7390-3526-6

**The First Book of Scales, Chords, Arpeggios & Cadences (Alfred's Basic Piano Library)**, Palmer, etc., Alfred Publishing Co., ISBN 0-7390-1297-5

Additionally, a remedial keyboard skills class (MUS 103: Class Piano for Non-Majors) is offered during the fall semesters. This is a non-required class that freshmen may take on a voluntary basis in prior to the first required Keyboard Skills class that is taken in the second semester.

### **Students Who Wish to Test Out of Keyboard Skills I and/or II (Advanced Placement Audition)**

To be exempted from Keyboard Skills I, one must be able to demonstrate the following skills:

1. Scales  
All Major Scales: 2 octaves hands together with appropriate fingerings.  
All Harmonic Minor Scales: 2 octaves hands together with appropriate fingerings.
2. Cadence Pattern (RH: chords, LH: roots)  
All Major Cadence Pattern (I-IV-I-V<sub>7</sub>-I) in root position.  
All Minor Cadence Pattern (i-iv-i-V<sub>7</sub>-i) in root position.
3. One Solo Piece  
A prepared piece equivalent to J. S. Bach Anna Magdalena Notebook or Burgmüller Op.100 (of any.) Memorization is NOT required.
4. Harmonization  
Harmonize the given melody with using I, ii, IV, V<sub>7</sub>, and/or vi and the inversions. (Play the melody in RH with the LH block chord accompaniment.) \*The excerpt may have the indication by roman numerals or letter symbols, or without any indications.
5. Transposition

Transpose the Harmonization excerpt up/down a step.

6. Sight Reading  
Sight-read a piece that uses intervals up to (and including) an octave and chordal patterns.

To be exempted from Keyboard Skills II, one must be able to demonstrate the following skills:

1. Scales  
All Major Scales: 2 octaves hands together with appropriate fingerings.  
All Natural, Harmonic, and Melodic Minor Scales: 2 octaves hands together with appropriate fingerings.
2. Cadence Pattern (RH: chords, LH: roots)  
All Major Cadence Pattern (I-IV-I-V7-I) in root position, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> inversions.  
All Minor Cadence Pattern (i-iv-i-V7-i) in root position, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> inversions.
3. Two Solo Pieces  
Two prepared pieces in contrasting styles. (The level of the pieces is to be equivalent to Beethoven Sonata Op. 49 or J. S. Bach Two Part Inventions.)  
Memorization is NOT required.
4. SATB Chorale Score  
Sight-read a Chorale Score (in 4 voices).
5. Instrumental Score Reading  
Sight-read a two-part instrumental score with one transposed instrument.
6. Harmonization  
Harmonize the given melody with using I, ii, IV, V<sub>7</sub>, and/or vi and the inversions. In addition to the above, at least one secondary dominant chord has to be included. (Play the melody in RH with the LH in an accompaniment pattern of your choice except for holding block chords.) \*The excerpt may have the indication by roman numerals or letter symbols, or without any indications.
7. Transposition  
Transpose the Harmonization excerpt up/down a step.
8. Sight Reading/Accompanying  
Sight-read a piece, while the examiner plays another part.

Questions/Concerns: E-mail Dr. Kanamaru at [kanamaru@tcnj.edu](mailto:kanamaru@tcnj.edu) with the subject line "Keyboard Skills Advanced Placement."