

COLUMBUS STATE UNIVERSITY SCHWOB SCHOOL OF MUSIC  
STUDY GUIDE for GRADUATE DIAGNOSTIC EXAMS  
(Theory, Aural Skills, Music History)

**1. THEORY**

The Graduate Theory Exam is in three short portions:

- part-writing
- analysis
- definitions

The exam assumes mastery of the following concepts:

**Part-writing** - To demonstrate mastery, students will **realize** a figured bass progression in SATB. In this portion, students will demonstrate:

- Standard part-writing procedures (18th century practice), including doubling solutions and voice-leading
- Roman numeral identification
- Non-harmonic tones (passing, neighbor, appoggiatura, suspension, anticipation, nota cambiata, etc.), where applicable
- All modulation types (common chord, common tone, chromatic, enharmonic, phrase)
- Secondary dominant and secondary leading tone chords
- Modal borrowing
- Altered pre-dominant chords, including:  
Neapolitan 6<sup>th</sup> (and its usual resolution)  
Augmented 6<sup>th</sup> (German, French, Italian and their usual resolutions)  
Chromatic mediant/submediant (and typical usage)

**Harmonic analysis** - To demonstrate mastery, students will **label** a score(s) and provide a formal diagram(s), with proper labels for:

- Roman numerals
- Cadences
- Non-harmonic tones (passing, neighboring, appoggiatura, suspension, anticipation, nota cambiata, etc.)
- Modulations
- Secondary dominant and leading tone chords
- Altered pre-dominant chords, including:  
Neapolitan 6<sup>th</sup>  
Augmented 6<sup>th</sup>  
Chromatic mediant/submediant

**Formal terms** - To demonstrate mastery students will be asked to **write short definitions** of the terms and **graph diagrams** of the typical forms. Form diagrams should show the major formal divisions and include key centers commonly associated with different tonal areas. The following forms and terms will be included:

- Binary form (rounded and simple)
- Ternary form
- Sonata form
- Rondo (5- and 7-part)
- Theme and Variation
- Exposition
- Development
- Retransition
- Recapitulation
- Refrain
- Episode
- Principal Theme
- Second Theme

Suggested study resources: Steven Laitz, *The Complete Musician*; Kostka-Payne, *Tonal Harmony*; and James Mathes, *The Analysis of Musical Form*.

## 2. AURAL SKILLS

This exam is intended to assess incoming students' aural skills levels. At a minimum, they need to demonstrate aural skills proficiencies developed in our undergraduate Music Skills sequence.

### **PART I - Interval recognition and singing**

- Sing any interval ascending and descending within the octave
- Spell all intervals correctly when identifying and singing

PRACTICE SOURCE: <https://www.musictheory.net> · <https://www.musictheory.net/exercises/interval-construction> · <https://www.musictheory.net/exercises/keyboard-interval> · <https://www.musictheory.net/exercises/interval>

### **PART II – Rhythmic Performance**

- Execute any rhythms using duple and triple subdivisions in simple and compound time signatures

PRACTICE SOURCE: Alain Weber, *Leçons Progressives Vol. 3*  
<https://www.scribd.com/document/401108352/Solfege-Alain-Weber-Vol-3>

### **PART III - Harmonic**

- Maj/min/dim/aug triads: be able to identify, spell and sing any inversion played
- 7th chords: Maj7, min7, dom7, half-dim7, dim7

Identify, spell and sing all five types of 7th chords in root position

PRACTICE SOURCE: <https://www.musictheory.net>

<https://www.musictheory.net/exercises/chord-construction>  
<https://www.musictheory.net/exercises/chord>  
<https://www.musictheory.net/exercises/keyboard-chord>

### **PART IV- Reading/Literacy**

- Note Identification: Must be proficient in both bass and treble clefs
- Identify notes using solfege or note names only, no singing/rhythm
- Interval relationships: Must be proficient in both bass and treble clefs
- Identify intervals within the octave, no singing/rhythm

PRACTICE SOURCE: chapters 2-3-4 *Modus Novus* by Lars Edlund -  
<https://www.scribd.com/document/438484338/The-Modus-Novus-Lars-Edlund-pdf-pdf>

PRACTICE SOURCE: Alain Weber, *Leçons Progressives Vol. 3* -  
<https://www.scribd.com/document/401108352/Solfege-Alain-Weber-Vol-3>

EXPECTED PROFICIENCY: 75% in ALL areas

Failure to meet this standard will require the student to take a remedial class in the appropriate Music Skills level within the undergraduate sequence.

### 3. MUSIC HISTORY

**Suggested Resources:**

Grout and Palisca, *History of Western Music*, 9th edition

Poultney, David *Studying Music History*, 2nd edition

**Exam Format:** The exam will contain multiple choice and fill in the blank questions on the following topics:

Roman de Fauvel	Ars Nova	Trio Sonata
Color & Talea	Cantus firmus	Sequence
Hocket	<i>Sturm und Drang</i>	Ritornello form
Cantata	Opera	Rondo Form
Notre Dame Polyphony	Doctrine of Affections	<i>Emfindsamer Stil</i>
Aquitanian Polyphony	Madrigalism/ Word Painting	Concerto
Florid & Discant Organum	Madrigal	Concerto Grosso
Oratorio	Figured bass	Troubadour/Trouvère Song
Ars Subtilior	<i>Basso continuo</i>	monody
Coloration	Ground Bass	Sonata form
Motet	French overture	Da capo aria
Mass	Atonality	Second Viennese School
First Viennese School	Matrix	Twelve-tone system
Expressionism	Program Symphony	Symphonic Poem
<i>Sprechstimme</i>	Absolute Music	Indeterminacy
Leitmotif	Nationalism	Exoticism
Aleatoric Music	Minimalism	<i>Gesamtkunstwerk</i>
Music Drama	Octatonic Scale	Neoclassicism
Sonata-allegro form	First Viennese School	Symphony
Sonata da camera	Sonata da chiesa	Lied