

MUSICIANSHIP FOR PIANISTS: THE FIVE PROFICIENCIES

OVERVIEW

Musicianship for Pianists provides a structure for the mentoring and evaluation of university piano students in the five areas of sight-reading, memorization, scales and arpeggios, improvising, and musical literacy.

Musicianship for Pianists is comprised of a series of five proficiencies which are incorporated into the private lesson curriculum (PLMU courses). Freshmen must complete all freshman musicianship proficiencies before passing the Freshman Review, and sophomores must complete all sophomore musicianship proficiencies before passing the Sophomore Review. **ALL PROFICIENCIES MUST BE PASSED BEFORE A STUDENT MAY REGISTER FOR SENIOR RECITAL (PLMU 4900).**

IMPLEMENTATION

At the beginning of each semester, students will receive a weekly regimen for working on the proficiencies, according to their class levels. During certain weeks all private lessons will be devoted to teaching the proficiencies. Likewise, certain studio classes will also be given over to the proficiencies. Every studio class throughout the year will have time set aside during which students will improvise.

EVALUATION

The proficiencies will be tested four times each year by means of mid-terms and juries. Mid-terms will be given during lesson time by the student's piano professor. Juries will be heard by committee as part of the regular end-of-semester jury. Progress on proficiencies will comprise a significant portion of the student's semester grade.

THE FIVE PROFICIENCIES

SIGHT-READING

The following examples are representative of the MINIMUM levels of sight-reading proficiency which the student must meet by the end of each academic year.

FRESHMAN: Hymns; intermediate literature such as Haydn and Mozart minuets or themes from Beethoven variations.

SOPHOMORE: Song accompaniments such as "Twenty-four Italian Songs and Arias"; the Sarabande from Grieg's Holberg Suite.

JUNIOR: Art song accompaniments such as Schumann's "Ich grolle nicht"; Schubert's Impromptu in A-flat, Op. 142 no. 2

IMPROVISATION

The following activities are representative of the MINIMUM levels of improvisation proficiency which the student must meet by the end of each academic year.

FRESHMAN: Perform from fakebook notation (melody and chord symbols); perform a familiar tune from "words-and-chords" notation (no music notation); Transpose simple tunes and harmonies into any key.

SOPHOMORE: Improvisation on a given tune, including creative use of figurations and interludes.

JUNIOR: Free improvisation which includes various key areas, thematic and rhythmic coherence, and appropriate use of supernumerary harmonies.

SCALES AND ARPEGGIOS

Scales and arpeggios must be performed according to the guidelines in the document "JURY REQUIREMENTS".

MEMORIZATION

For Performance and Keyboard Pedagogy, all juries and recitals must be memorized except chamber music and complex modern works. For all other degree programs, one piece on each jury must be memorized; the recital may be played from the score.

MUSICAL LITERACY

Students must listen to one hour of unfamiliar repertoire each week on recordings. Thirty minutes must be piano literature, and thirty minutes must be choral, orchestral, chamber, vocal, or jazz. A weekly report of listening activities must be turned in. This requirement cannot be fulfilled by recital and program attendance.