

# Graduate Music Theory Entrance Examination

## University of Louisville School of Music

### PURPOSE OF THE EXAMINATION

The purpose of the Graduate Music Theory Entrance Examination (GMTEE) is to ensure that all entering graduate students in music have previously acquired basic musical knowledge and skill equivalent to the content of a typical two-year undergraduate music theory core curriculum. The GMTEE focuses on music from the common-practice period. Both written and aural skills are covered.

### Examination Procedures

**WHO AND WHEN:** Every entering graduate music student, with the exception of certain UofL graduates (see below), will take the exam before the first semester of study. The examination is administered in the week before classes begin.

**UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE B.M. STUDENTS:** If you earned a B (not B–) or higher in Theory III, you are exempt from the GMTEE. All other UofL graduates must take the exam.

**For Fall 2019, the GMTEE will take place on Wednesday, August 14, 2:45–4:45 PM, in the School of Music building, Room 263.** Students who are unable to take the exam at this time should immediately contact the Music Theory department at [musictheory@louisville.edu](mailto:musictheory@louisville.edu)

Students are required to complete the exam in the given two-hour time period. Students with learning disabilities should contact UofL's Disability Resource Center, [askdrc@louisville.edu](mailto:askdrc@louisville.edu), at least 2 weeks before the exam in order to receive appropriate accommodations.

**REQUIRED MATERIALS FOR THE EXAM:** Pencil and eraser.

### Outcomes

If you pass the examination, your theory entrance requirement is satisfied. If you do not pass the examination, you will satisfy your theory entrance requirement by passing either of the following two classes during your first year of graduate study:

- MUS 400 Graduate Theory Review—Most students will opt to take Graduate Theory Review. This course is specifically designed as a review course for graduate music students. It is taught during the fall semester and meets for four contact hours each week.
- MUS 241 Theory III—This is the regular, third-semester undergraduate music theory/musicianship course. It is taught during the fall semester and meets for five contact hours each week, Monday through Thursday.

Please note that, regardless of the outcome of the GMTEE or Theory III, all students must register for MUS 400 Theory Review, because MUS 400 is a curricular requirement. Students who have already passed the GMTEE or Theory III will receive an automatic passing mark for MUS 400 and will register for a special section of MUS 400.

## OVERVIEW OF THE EXAMINATION

This exam covers score-based and aural skills in the areas of music fundamentals, analysis, the ability to turn sound into notation, and the ability to produce stylistically correct music excerpts.

### Topics

- Music fundamentals: pitch identification, clefs (treble, alto, tenor and bass), major and minor scales and key signatures, intervals, triads, seventh chords, rhythm, and meter;
- Tonal harmony: diatonic and chromatic techniques in the common-practice era, modulation, species counterpoint, Roman- numeral analysis, and figured bass;
- Form: motives, cadences, phrases, periods, sentences, and small forms such as simple binary.

### Exam format

The exam has two parts. The first part consists of aural identification and notation of short items, such as interval and triads, and longer items, such as rhythms and melodies. The second part consists of written exercises (for instance, realizing a figured bass) and aural perception exercises (for instance, aurally identifying cadences and form in a composition that is played for you).

To pass the exam, you will need to display both accuracy and speed in your responses; basic understanding of a concept is often not sufficient to demonstrate expertise. This test is designed for the level of accomplished college sophomores.

### Recommended preparation

We encourage you to review and practice the skills and topics listed above to refresh and renew your abilities. In your preparation, work toward the dual goals of accuracy and speed.

The following textbooks are used in our undergraduate curriculum and may be used as reference in your review and practice; other textbooks used in undergraduate music-theory sequences may be substituted.

- Clendinning, Jane Piper, and Elizabeth West Marvin. *The Musician's Guide to Theory and Analysis*, 3rd ed. New York: W.W. Norton, 2016. ISBN 978-0-393-93081-8.
- Rogers, Nancy and Robert W. Ottman. *Music for Sight Singing*, 9th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2014. (ISBN 978-0-205-93833-9).
- Hall, Anne C. *Studying Rhythm*, 3rd ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2005. ISBN 978-0-13-040602-3.
- *Auralia* (aural exercises) and *Musition* (score-based exercises). Rising Software. For installation instructions, go to <http://louisville.edu/music/academics/areas-of-study/music-theory/computer-based-training>