

GRADUATE THEORY ENTRANCE EXAM

Information and Practice Materials

Purpose

The AU Graduate Theory Entrance Exam assesses student mastery of the undergraduate core curriculum in theory.

The purpose of the exam is to ensure that incoming graduate students are well prepared for advanced studies in theory. If students do not take and pass all portions of the exam with a 70% or higher, they must satisfactorily complete remedial coursework *before* enrolling in any graduate-level theory class.

Scheduling

The exam is now taken online. Please contact the Graduate Program Director to learn how to register for the proctored test.

Exam format

- There are four sections of the exam: diatonic harmony, chromatic harmony, post-Romantic harmony, and aural skills.
- Before you start the actual test, there will be an initial "test" verifying you have the necessary equipment to play examples, record singing, and upload part-writing.

Activities and Skills

- Aural identification of intervals and sonorities
- Dictation and sight-singing of tonal melodies (both diatonic and chromatic). Notate both pitch and rhythm.
- Dictation of tonal harmonic progressions (both diatonic and chromatic). Notate soprano, bass, and roman numerals.
- Multiple choice
- Short answer
- Realization of a figured bass (four-part voice leading)
- Harmonization of a given melody (four-part voice leading)
- Harmonic analysis using roman numerals

Content

Graduate students are expected to be familiar with both the diatonic and chromatic harmonic materials of the common practice style, including:

- Key signatures
- Chords (spelling and inversions of triads, seventh chords, and extended tertian harmonies)
- Cadence types; period structures
- Types of non-chord tones
- Secondary (“applied”) dominants and seventh chords
- Modulation
- Augmented-sixth chords; the Neapolitan

Notation and Analytical Systems

Different undergraduate programs may use slightly different symbols to indicate the same information. On the exam, students are expected to understand and use the following system:

Roman numerals. In harmonic analysis, indicate both sonority (chord quality) and inversion.

- Uppercase roman numerals indicate chords that are MAJOR in sonority. Examples:
 - I (major tonic triad in root position)
 - IV⁶ (major subdominant triad in first inversion)
 - V^{6/4} (major dominant triad in second inversion)
 - V^{4/2} (major-minor dominant seventh chord in third inversion)
- Lowercase roman numerals indicate chords that are MINOR. Examples:
 - vi (*minor* submediant triad in root position)
 - ii^{6/5} (*minor* supertonic seventh chord in first inversion)
- Indicate DIMINISHED chords with a lowercase roman numeral and a superscript circle.
 - ii^{o6} (*diminished* supertonic triad in first inversion)
 - ii^{o4/3} (*fully diminished* supertonic seventh in second inversion)
 - ii^{o7} (*half diminished* supertonic seventh in root position)

Suggested Resources for Review and Exam Preparation

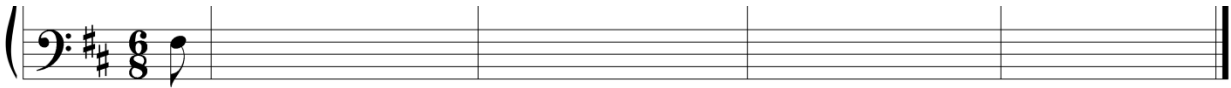
- Flores, Carlos. *Principles of Melody and Harmony*.
- Koskta, Stefan, and Dorothy Payne. *Tonal Harmony*.
- MacGamut (computer-based ear training)
http://www.macgamut.com/products/macgamut/ordering_user.asp

NOTE! The following practice materials are representative of the more involved exam activities. Keep in mind that you are also responsible for short-answer questions as described above (for example: key signatures, chord qualities, intervals, spelling chromatic chords, etc.). PRACTICE is the best kind of preparation—use these materials as examples to help you find more practice materials, not as your only review!

With the exception of the two practice dictation examples, no key will be provided.

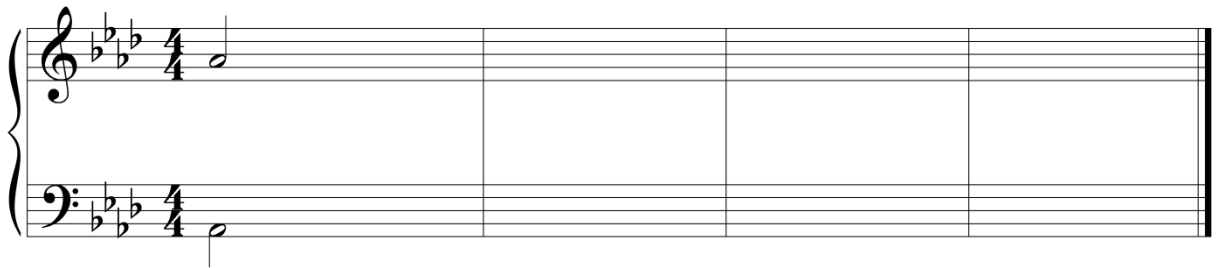
Melodic Dictation

- Notate both pitch and rhythm
- The excerpt will be played 5 times
- The audio sets up the key, plays starting note, then counts 2 bars
- Audio is attached to the email!
- Answer key is provided at the end of this packet



Harmonic Dictation

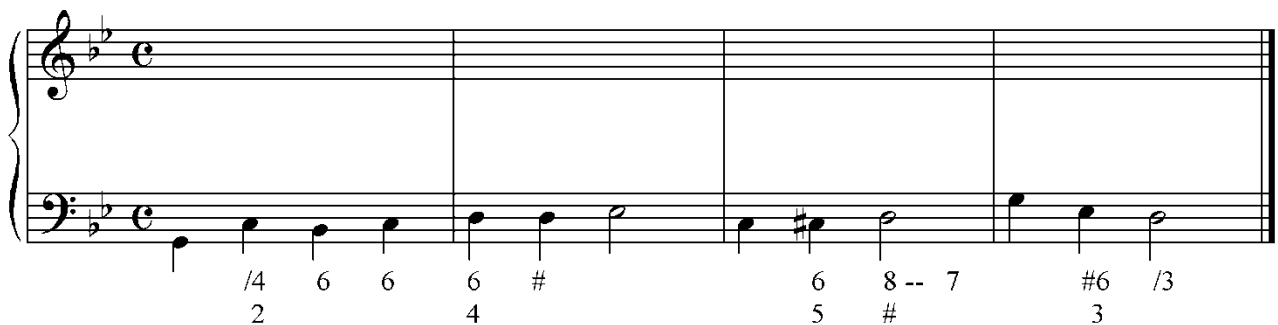
- Notate SOPRANO and BASS only
- Provide a complete roman-numeral analysis
- The excerpt will be played 5 times
- The audio sets up the key, plays starting bass and soprano notes, then counts 1 bar
- Audio is attached to the email!
- Answer key is provided at the end of this packet



Ab: _____

Realizing Figured Bass

- Realize in four voices
- You will receive credit for **stylistic voice-leading** as well as correct chord spelling
- (“/4” means the same as a 4 with a slash *through* the number)



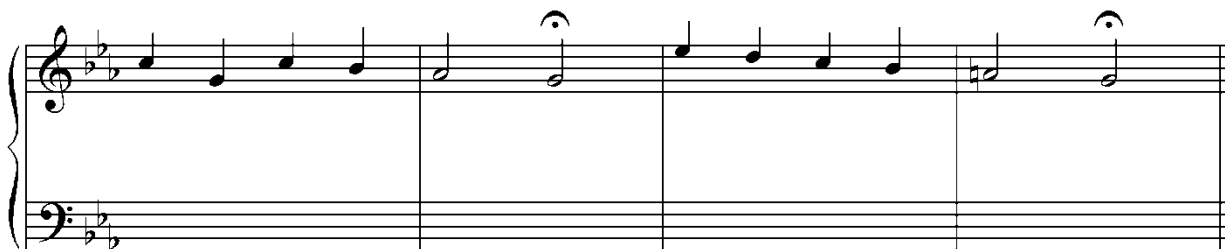
Non-Harmonic Tones (=Non-Chord Tones)

- Create a roman-numeral analysis
 - Be sure you label the overall key
 - Your roman numerals must indicate inversions and chord qualities
- Circle and label all non-harmonic tones. (For example: Anticipation, Appoggiatura, Escape Tone, Neighbor Tone, Passing Tone, Pedal, and Suspension)



Harmonization of a Modulating Melody

- Harmonize the following melody with **roman numerals** and a **bass line** in common-practice tonal style (do not write out a four-part harmonization)
- Your harmonization must begin in one key, then **modulate** to establish a new key (be sure to indicate both the **starting key and the new key**)
- The **harmony must change on every note**; change of inversion or addition of a seventh will not constitute a change of harmony
- Your roman numerals must show both **quality and inversion**
- You will receive credit for **stylistic tonal syntax** as well as vertical consonance



Tonal Analysis

- Create a roman-numeral analysis
 - Be sure you label the overall key
 - Your roman numerals must indicate inversions and chord qualities
- Form
 - Bracket and label every cadence as to its specific type
 - How would you describe or classify the phrase structure and form of this piece?

PRELUDE

F. CHOPIN, Op. 28, No. 20

Largo M.M. ♩ = 66

ff

Ped. simile

p

rit.

pp

cresc.

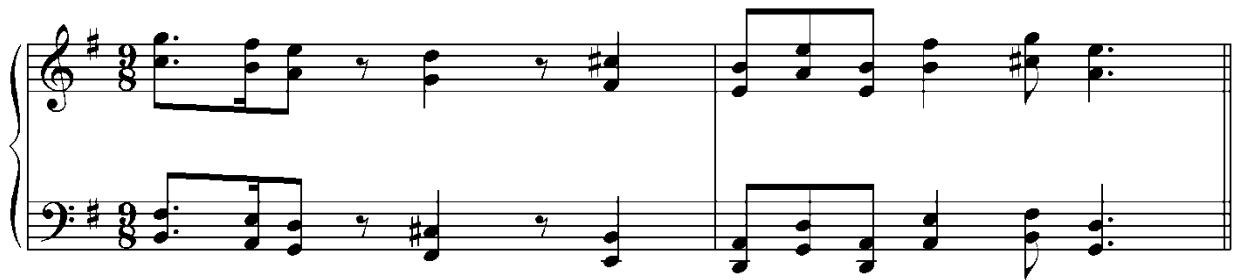
Post-Tonal Materials

Students should have a basic knowledge of post-tonal materials, including:

- Diatonic scales: modes, pentatonic scale
- Symmetrical scales: whole tone, octatonic
- Quartal and quintal sonorities, extended-tertian sonorities
- Basic manipulations of the 12-tone row in serial composition (inversion, retrograde, etc.)
- Terms: polytonality, pandiatonicism, minimalism, aleatoric, etc.

Post-Tonal Analysis 1

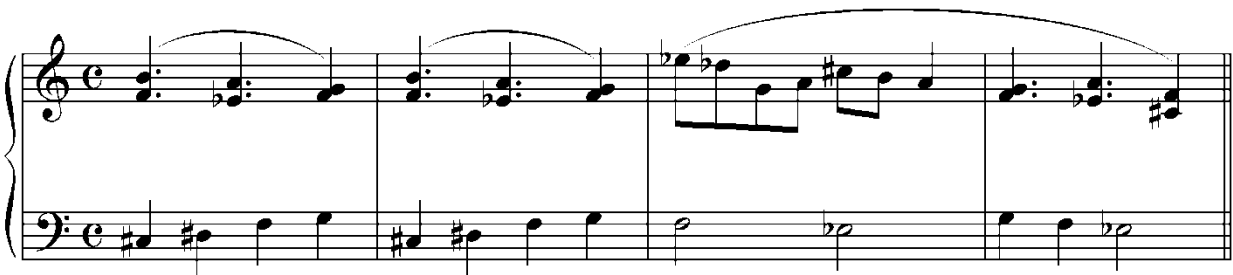
- If you consider the entire texture of the following excerpt, what term best describes the structure of its **sonorities**? _____
- If you consider ONLY the melody in the soprano, what term best describes the **scale**? _____



A musical excerpt in 9/8 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The piece consists of two staves, treble and bass clef. The texture is characterized by vertical sonorities, primarily triads and dyads, often with a common tone between staves. The sonorities are: F#4-A4-C#5 (treble), F#3-A3-C#4 (bass) in the first measure; F#4-A4-C#5 (treble), F#3-A3-C#4 (bass) in the second measure; F#4-A4-C#5 (treble), F#3-A3-C#4 (bass) in the third measure; F#4-A4-C#5 (treble), F#3-A3-C#4 (bass) in the fourth measure; F#4-A4-C#5 (treble), F#3-A3-C#4 (bass) in the fifth measure; F#4-A4-C#5 (treble), F#3-A3-C#4 (bass) in the sixth measure; F#4-A4-C#5 (treble), F#3-A3-C#4 (bass) in the seventh measure; F#4-A4-C#5 (treble), F#3-A3-C#4 (bass) in the eighth measure; F#4-A4-C#5 (treble), F#3-A3-C#4 (bass) in the ninth measure.

Post-Tonal Analysis 2

- If you consider the entire texture of the following excerpt, what term best describes its **pitch materials**? _____



A musical excerpt in common time (C) with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The piece consists of two staves, treble and bass clef. The texture is characterized by vertical sonorities, primarily triads and dyads, often with a common tone between staves. The sonorities are: F#4-A4-C#5 (treble), F#3-A3-C#4 (bass) in the first measure; F#4-A4-C#5 (treble), F#3-A3-C#4 (bass) in the second measure; F#4-A4-C#5 (treble), F#3-A3-C#4 (bass) in the third measure; F#4-A4-C#5 (treble), F#3-A3-C#4 (bass) in the fourth measure; F#4-A4-C#5 (treble), F#3-A3-C#4 (bass) in the fifth measure; F#4-A4-C#5 (treble), F#3-A3-C#4 (bass) in the sixth measure; F#4-A4-C#5 (treble), F#3-A3-C#4 (bass) in the seventh measure; F#4-A4-C#5 (treble), F#3-A3-C#4 (bass) in the eighth measure; F#4-A4-C#5 (treble), F#3-A3-C#4 (bass) in the ninth measure.

Post-Tonal Analysis 3

- If you consider the entire texture of the following excerpt, what term best describes the structure of many of its **sonorities**? _____
- If you consider ONLY the melody in the soprano, what term best describes the **scale**? _____

Sarabande

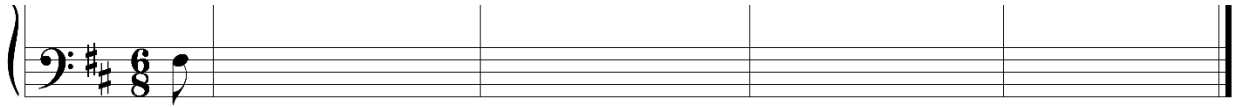
The musical score is for a piece titled "Sarabande". It is written in D major (two sharps) and 3/4 time. The score consists of two staves: a soprano staff (treble clef) and a bass staff (bass clef). The soprano line begins with a quarter note D5, followed by quarter notes C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, and D4. The bass line begins with a half note chord of D4 and F#4, followed by quarter notes G3, F#3, E3, and D3. The piece concludes with a final chord of D4 and F#4.

Aural Skills

1. Identify intervals played melodically or harmonically
2. Identify chord qualities and inversions of both triads and seventh chords; chords played harmonically = simultaneously, not arpeggiated]

3. Melodic Dictation

- a. Notate both rhythm and melody. 4 hearings
- b. Audio sets up the key, gives first note, and counts off 2 measures of 6/8



4. Harmonic Dictation

- a. Notate soprano, bass, and provide roman numerals. 4 hearings
- b. Audio sets up the key, gives first bass and soprano notes, and counts off 1 measure of 4/4

A grand staff (treble and bass clefs) in the key of A-flat major (three flats) and 4/4 time signature. The first measure of the soprano line contains a half note on A4, and the first measure of the bass line contains a half note on A3. The remaining three measures are empty for notation.

Ab: _____

....

Dictation Answer Key

....

Melodic dictation



(Modulation to closely-related key, in this case, to the relative major)

Harmonic dictation

Ab: I ii4/3 It+6 V I V7/IV IV N6 V7 vi