

**MU School of Music**  
***Music History Diagnostic***  
***Information for Incoming Graduate Students***

Each student entering the graduate program (MM, MA programs) will be asked to demonstrate a command of the history of music at the undergraduate level by taking a 2 - 2.5-hour diagnostic examination prior to enrollment. Performance on this exam is designed to determine whether the student has the level of knowledge considered necessary to complete music history electives at the graduate level or should engage in a formal review of the subject.

The examination will focus on the six style periods of Western music: Medieval, Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and Modern. The student will be asked to associate significant terms and ideas, landmark compositions, and prominent musicians to stylistic concepts. Some knowledge of American music is assumed. A sense of relative chronology is essential; no specific dates will be asked, however. In this context, facts are not perceived as ends in themselves but as the manifestations of musical thinking and musical practice.

The latter half of the test will be devoted to score identification and critical listening by means of a series of excerpts. The student will be asked to identify several aspects of the work presented, notably composer, title, medium, genre, historical period, approximate date of the selection, intended audience, etc. and to describe physically the musical gestures of the excerpt. Because it is assumed that the student will not be familiar with each example, he or she will be required to make educated guesses based on stylistic evidence in some instances.

The most reasonable manner of preparation for this entrance exam is a systematic review of essential historical information. Any music history text might be used. Especially helpful can be historical outlines, such as the most recent edition of *An Outline History of Western Music* by Wold, Martin, Miller, and Cykler (9<sup>th</sup> edition, McGraw Hill, 1997). Even more important would be a systematic study of musical examples in score. Many helpful anthologies are available in any music library and recordings are available on Spotify (<https://www.spotify.com/us/>). The answers, in general, are in the music.

Any questions concerning the music history proficiency examination may be directed to Dr. Michael J. Budds, Area Coordinator, Music History and Literature (573-882-0927 or BuddsM@missouri.edu).