

Graduate Music History Diagnostic Examination Guidelines

The Graduate Music History Diagnostic Examination is administered to all incoming graduate students in the Department of Music. The exam consists of four parts: terms, listening, score identification, and short essays. Please find below summaries of each individual part.

Students preparing for the exam who are looking to brush up on their knowledge of music history are advised to consult one of the following textbooks (and where relevant the accompanying anthologies):

- J. Peter Burkholder, *A History of Western Music* (10th edition)
- Barbara Russano Hanning, *A Concise History of Western Music* (5th edition)
- Christopher H. Gibbs and Richard Taruskin, *The Oxford History of Western Music* (2nd edition)

Please contact Dr. Thomas Peattie (tpeattie@olemiss.edu) with any questions.

In **Part 1** you will be asked to provide concise one-sentence definitions for *twenty* music-historical terms drawn primarily, but not exclusively, from the following list:

- psalm tone
- neume
- organum
- *formes fixes*
- Franconian notation
- *Ars nova*
- isorhythm
- cantus-firmus mass
- paraphrase mass
- motet
- chorale
- madrigal
- *seconda pratica*
- oratorio
- da capo aria
- dance suite (allemande/courante/sarabande/gigue)
- cantata
- *galant* style
- program music
- character piece
- mazurka
- nocturne
- leitmotif
- symphonic poem
- march

- impressionism
- atonality
- *Sprechstimme*
- 12-tone music
- neo-classicism
- 12-bar blues
- popular song form
- total serialism
- electro-acoustic music
- indeterminacy
- minimalism
- polystylism

Part 2 consists of *five* brief audio excerpts taken from pieces composed between the Middle Ages and the present. For each excerpt you will be asked to identify a possible composer, the approximate date of composition, as well as the work's genre. You will also be asked to answer questions that test your ability to identify specific compositional features in the excerpts you hear.

Part 3 consists of *five* score excerpts taken from pieces written between c. 1200 and the present. For each excerpt you will be asked to identify the possible composer and an approximate date of composition.

Part 4 consists of *two* essays on selected music-historical topics. Possible questions might include:

- How did composers during the Middle Ages and Renaissance use borrowed material to create new compositions?
- Discuss three important works in the history of opera between the early seventeenth century and the present.
- Describe the most significant compositional trends that emerged between 1890 and 1950, paying particular attention to the new approaches developed by composers during this period for organizing musical material.