

**MIAMI UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC  
OXFORD, OHIO**

## **PIANO PROFICIENCY General Information**

Miami University Department of Music requires every undergraduate student pursuing a degree in music to fulfill a piano proficiency requirement. The requirement was established according to the guidelines provided by NASM (National Association of School of Music), a national association that gives accreditation to college music programs in the United States.

There are two ways that music students can fulfill their piano proficiency requirement:

1. Piano Proficiency Exam – for students with advanced piano training

This comprehensive exam is offered two times in an academic year (once in each of the fall and spring semesters) in front of a committee of three music faculty members. It is designed for students who have advanced piano skills (at least six to eight years of solid piano training) before attending college. **The exam may be attempted only once.** The student must enroll in the Functional Piano Program if he or she does not pass the exam. Incoming students, who are interested in taking this exam instead of piano class, are required to audition for Dr. Tan at the beginning of their first semester of study at Miami University to gain permission to take the exam. **Students are not offered a choice of either taking the piano proficiency exam or class piano. They have to take a placement test and receive permission to take the proficiency exam.** Otherwise, they have to sign up for one of the piano classes. The students who receive permission to take the piano proficiency exam must take the exam during their first year of study at Miami University. Failure to adhere to this requirement will result in a forfeiture of permission to fulfill the piano proficiency requirement by examination. Interested students should contact Dr. Siok Lian Tan at (513) 529-3072 / [tansl@miamioh.edu](mailto:tansl@miamioh.edu) to schedule a placement test. Placement tests are given on the first and second day of classes in the fall semester.

2. Functional Class Piano

This is a 2-year course sequence designed for music students with no piano background or students with limited piano experience before attending college. Students will fulfill their piano proficiency requirements when they have completed MUS 260-261 and pass the final/exit exam. Materials covered in this course sequence include technique, repertoire, harmonization, transposition, score reading, sight-reading, improvisation, and ensemble playing.

There are four levels of piano classes offered:

MUS 160 (Fall) Beginning MUS 260 (Fall) Early Intermediate

MUS 161 (Spring) Elementary MUS 261 (Spring) Intermediate

Students with no or minimal keyboard experience should sign up for MUS 160. **For students with some piano training, please play a placement test for Dr. Tan on the first or second day of classes in the fall semester to be placed at the appropriate level of piano class. They need to contact Dr. Tan and play a placement test at the of beginning their first semester of music study at Miami.** Music Education students are encouraged to enroll in Functional Piano during their first year of study at Miami to complete their piano proficiency requirement before student teaching in their senior year.

At the end of the spring semester, all class piano students from MUS 161 are required to pass the final exam to move on to MUS 260 in the following year. Students from MUS 261 are required to pass the final/exit exam to fulfill their piano proficiency requirements. If a student does not pass MUS 261 final/exit exam, he or she would receive an "F" for the course and is required to take MUS 261 again. These exams are given in two parts. The first part is given one week before the last week of classes with just the class instructor present, and the second part is administered during the final exam week in front of the class instructor and Dr. Tan.

All Bachelor of Arts in Music majors are only required to complete MUS 161 and pass the final exam to fulfill their piano proficiency requirement.

### **Transfer Students**

All transfer students who have taken piano classes from other universities must schedule their placement tests with Dr. Tan at the beginning of their first semester of study at Miami University. Dr. Tan will evaluate their piano skills and grant transfer credits accordingly. Transfer students will be asked to take the functional piano class sequence again if their piano skills do not meet Miami University's piano proficiency requirement.

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**For complete information of the Piano Proficiency Requirements, please visit  
[www.users.miamioh.edu/tansl/pianoprof](http://www.users.miamioh.edu/tansl/pianoprof)**