

UCI Music Theory and Musicianship Placement Exams

All incoming Freshman music majors and transfer students must take a music theory placement exam, which will indicate whether a student needs to take a remedial fundamentals of music course or can be placed into one of the four required quarters of music theory (16A-D) and musicianship (15A-C) offered by the UCI department of music. All students must take the brief fundamentals exam, which includes pitch notation and naming, rests, staves, the piano keyboard, simple and compound meters, minor and major scales, key signatures, diatonic and chromatic intervals and triad construction. Those who don't pass the fundamentals exam will be required to take fundamentals at some point in their Freshman year, prior to beginning the Music 16 sequence the subsequent Fall.

Qualified students are welcome to remain in the room and take further exams in sequence. Below is a summary of topics covered by each successive quarter of Music 16.

Music 16A

- seventh chords
- chord spacing
- part-writing in four voices
- melodic figuration and embellishing tones
- harmonic function
- proper use of the dominant seventh chord
- first inversion chords
- species counterpoint
- cadences
- elementary phrase construction.

Music 16B

- thematic analysis (period and sentence)
- linear chords (64, dominants, and others)
- pre-dominant part-writing
- advanced melodic figuration and rhythmic devices
- secondary triad function
- secondary dominants and leading-tone chords
- modulation to I and III
- diatonic sequence

Music 16C

- seventh-chord sequences
- binary, ternary, variation and compound classical forms
- modulations to related keys
- introduction to chromatic harmony (modal mixture, the Neapolitan and the augmented sixth chord)
- analysis of extended excerpts.

Music 16D

- introduction to sonata form
- augmented triads,
- altered dominants
- common-tone sevenths
- extended harmonies (9th, 11th, 13th and added-note)
- chromatic sequence
- dominant prolongation
- foreign modulations

Musicianship

The first three quarters of the Music 16 series are accompanied by a musicianship lab—MUS 15A, 15B, and 15C—which covers skills such as interval and chord recognition, sight singing, hearing and transcribing melodies and harmonic progressions, and recognizing elements of musical form (often known as “aural skills”). Each of the three sequential sections corresponds to one quarter of MUS 15. You may take the first, the first two, or all three, and you may choose to leave after the first, second, or third portion of the test. Students who perform well in the test will be invited for individual skills testing, which will include singing intervals, triads, and chord progressions, as well as sight singing. Skills that will be tested are as follows:

Music 15A

- Identifying, transcribing, and/or singing intervals in the diatonic (major and minor) scales, both from do and from other notes in the scale.
- Identifying, transcribing, and/or singing major, minor, and diminished triads.
- Identifying, transcribing, singing, and improvising over simple harmonic progressions (such as I-IV-I-V-I in different inversions).
- Count-singing and transcribing rhythms of moderate complexity (sixteenth notes and above, including syncopations) using the numeric method (1 e & a, etc.).
- Identifying simple forms of the musical “sequence” (such as the descending fifth and descending third sequences).
- Transcribing diatonic melodies (i.e. dictation) with limited rhythmic complexity (eighth notes and larger).
- Sight singing diatonic melodies with limited rhythmic complexity (eighth notes and larger).
- Conversant use, for all of the above, of “movable do.”

Music 15B

- Identifying, transcribing, and/or singing diatonic and chromatically altered intervals starting from do, starting from other notes in the scale, and abstractly (no tonal reference point).
- Identifying, transcribing, and/or singing major, minor, diminished, and augmented triads, in root position and inversions.
- Identifying, transcribing, and/or singing major, minor, dominant, and diminished seventh chords.
- Identifying, transcribing, singing, and/or improvising over more advanced harmonic progressions, including applied dominants and modal mixture.
- Count-singing and transcribing rhythms of increased complexity (including syncopations, tuplets, etc.) using the numeric method.
- Identifying, describing, and executing tonicization, using applied dominants.
- Identifying standard forms of the musical phrase, period, and sentence.
- Transcribing chromatically inflected melodies with moderate rhythmic complexity (sixteenth notes and larger, including syncopations).
- Transcribing harmonic progressions including applied dominants and modal mixture: melody, bass, and chords (using Roman numeral notation).
- Sight singing chromatically inflected melodies, including modal mixture, chromatic passing and neighbor tones, and applied dominants as well as moderate rhythmic complexity (sixteenth notes and larger, including syncopations).
- Fluent use, for all of the above, of “movable do.”

Music 15C

- Identifying, transcribing, and/or singing chromatically inflected chords including the Neapolitan and augmented sixth.
- Identifying, transcribing, and/or singing advanced chord progressions including the Neapolitan and augmented sixth chords.
- Identifying, transcribing, and/or singing symmetrical scales: whole-tone and octatonic.
- Identifying, describing and executing standard forms of modulation, including applied dominants, pivot chords, and common tone modulation. Understanding the difference between tonicization and modulation.
- Identifying and describing the parts of sonata form.
- Transcribing advanced tonal melodies, to include applied dominants, modulation, advanced tonal procedures (including the Neapolitan and augmented sixth), and other chromatic alterations, with advanced rhythms.
- Transcribing chromatically inflected tonal harmonic progressions: melody, bass, and chords (using Roman numeral notation).
- Count-singing and transcribing rhythms of significant complexity (including mixed meters) using the numeric method.

- Sight singing advanced tonal melodies, to include modulation, advanced tonal procedures, and other chromatic alterations, with advanced rhythms.
- Fluent use, for all of the above, of “movable do.”

The following websites and applications offer training and review of concepts covered by the placement exams:

Music Fundamentals

Music Theory Net

<http://www.musictheory.net/>

EMusic theory

<http://www.emusictheory.com/>

The Tonal Centre

<http://www.tonalcentre.org/>

List of Theory Apps

<https://coach4technology.net/tabletmusic.html#theory>

Online Intro to Music Theory course

<http://cnx.org/contents/LSnasyP3@5.68:ta2InDgE@26/>

Aural skills

Guides to organize your practice

Music Theory Prof

<http://musictheoryprof.com/category/aural-skills/>

West Michigan ET guide

http://www.wmich.edu/mus-theo/etg/et_guide.html

Drills

Aural Idiom Drill

<http://www.andrew.cmu.edu/user/johnito/aid/index.html>

Theoria drills

<http://teoria.com/>

Dolmetsch drills

<http://www.dolmetsch.com/musictheory43.htm>

Good Ear

<http://www.good-ear.com/>

Theta music

<https://trainer.thetamusic.com/>

Musical mind

<http://www.musicalmind.org/>

Earbeater

<http://www.earbeater.com/online-ear-training>

Musictheory.net

<http://www.musictheory.net/exercises>

https://www.iwasdoingallright.com/tools/ear_training/online/

Miles

<http://www.miles.be/software>

The Rhythm trainer

<http://www.therhythmtrainer.com/>

Sonic fit

<http://www.sonicfit.com/>