

# CLASS PIANO INFORMATION FOR INCOMING MUSIC MAJORS

## Overview:

- Class Piano is a required course for all music majors. The requirements vary based on degree concentration as follows:

CONCENTRATION	REQUIRED CLASS PIANO COURSES
Performance (all areas except Piano and Jazz Studies)	CLASS PIANO I, II, III, & IV
Music Theory / Composition	
Voice / General Music Education	
Performance (Jazz Studies)	CLASS PIANO I & II
Music Industry	
Instrumental Music Education	

- Class Piano focuses on a variety of skills, not just repertoire. These include:
  - Scales and Arpeggios
  - Transposition
  - Sight Reading
  - Instrument Transpositions
  - Harmonization
  - Improvisation
  - Score Reading
  - Chord Progressions
  - Accompanying
  - Repertoire
  
- All music majors must take Class Piano until they pass the piano proficiency examination prescribed by their degree program. These exams test many of the skills listed above. Each item on the proficiency exam must be passed with a C- or better.
  - Piano Proficiency I: Taken at the end of Class Piano II
    - Required for all students with a two-semester requirement
  - Piano Proficiency II: Taken at the end of Class Piano IV
    - Required for all students with a four-semester requirement
  
- Detailed overviews of each piano proficiency exam are available online in pdf format: <http://www.mtsu.edu/music/classpiano.php>

## Placement Information:

Students with some background playing the piano may be able to test out of one or more sections of class piano. Such students should schedule an appointment with Dr. Adam Clark (Coordinator of Class Piano) prior to the start of classes in order to ensure correct placement (Adam.Clark@mtsu.edu).

Students who do not meet with Dr. Clark prior to the start of classes will be asked by their class piano instructor to contact him as soon as possible and schedule a meeting during the first week of classes.

The piano placement itself is informal. Students are not expected to prepare anything. Dr. Clark will ask questions such as:

- How long have you played the piano? / Did you take lessons?
- Do you read piano music, or did you learn by ear?
- What is the name of the last piece that you learned using music?
- Can you play a little of it (even just a few seconds is okay)?
- Can you play a scale or two (ideally, 2 octaves, hands together)?
- Can you please sight-read this short example?

### **You will NOT need to be placed if:**

- You are registered for Class Piano I, AND:
  - You have never played the piano
  - You have played piano for only a few months
  - You cannot read treble and bass clef at the piano
  - You have never learned a piano piece using sheet music (as opposed to playing by ear or using YouTube tutorials)

### **You WILL need to be placed if:**

- You are registered for Class Piano I, AND:
  - You have a year or more of recent experience playing the piano (i.e. private lessons, experience learning pieces from reading sheet music, etc.)
  - You can read treble & bass clefs at the piano with some fluency
- You are registered for Class Piano II, III, or IV, AND:
  - You did not take the previous course in the sequence at MTSU
  - You were not placed into the section by Dr. Clark
  - You are uncertain you are in the correct section
- You are a transfer student

### **Testing Out:**

- Any student placing beyond the required level of Class Piano for their degree will still be required to **take and pass the appropriate piano proficiency exam** before a course waiver can be submitted.