

## GRADUATE/TRANSFERTHEORY PLACEMENTEXAMGUIDE

This guide is meant to help graduate and transfer students prepare for the Graduate/ Transfer Theory Placement Exam. This evaluation is meant to ensure that students have competence in basic tonal harmony. There are two parts to the exam: written and aural.

## PART ONE: WRITTEN

- Four voice part-writing to a given figured bass
- Harmonic analysis using Roman numerals
- Transpose a notated passage to a new key
- Harmonization of a simple diatonic melody


## PART TWO: AURAL

- Melodic dictation of a diatonic melody
- Harmonic Dictation of a diatonic progression, notating the soprano, bass, and Roman numerals
- Sightsinging of a melody that contains some functional chromaticism

Students must achieve a $75 \%$ on both the aural and written components of the exam. If a passing score is not received on one or both sections of the exam, the student may be required to take remedial coursework.

Recommended review materials include most of the commonly used undergraduate music theory texts such as: Tonal Harmony by Koska, Payne, and Almén, The Musician's Guide to Theory and Analysis by Clendinning and Marvin, and Harmony in Context by Francoli.

## THE EXAM IS GIVEN PRIOR TO THE BEGINNING OF BOTH THE FALL AND SPRING SEMESTERS. PLEASE CHECK THE TWU MUSIC WEBSITE (WWW.TWU.EDU/MUSIC) FOR THE EXACT DATE AND TIME.

For further information, contact:
Dr. Paul Thomas
Assistant Professor of Music Theory and Composition
pthomas12@twu.edu

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## PART-WRITING

Realize the following figured bass in four voices. Provide Roman numerals for each chord.

B.

C.

D.


## PART-WRITING | SOLUTIONS*

Realize the following figured bass in four voices. Provide Roman numerals for each chord. *The solutions below are one way of part-writing the following passages.
A.

B.

C.

D.


## PART-WRITING | IN-DEPTH

An in-depth look at the part-writing solutions, this includes tips and best practices for avoiding part-writing errors.

A few basics:

- Voices can move in parallel, contrary, and oblique (one voice moves while the other stays the same) motion. In a four-voice texture, contrary and oblique motion are most common.
- Parallel fifths and octaves are always bad.
- When in doubt, double the root of the chord.
- Never double the leading-tone.
A.

Double the bass or soprano in minor
When possible, first inversion chords.

B.

Always resolve the root of a fully-diminished seventh chord, regardless of what voice it is in, up a halfstep. All other voices will most often move down.

Do not double the bass in major first inversion chords. If the bass was doubled in the boxed chord below, we would get a doubled leading-tone - which is very bad.


Between the bass and tenor is the only admissible place to have larger than an octave space between voices. The space between soprano/alto and alto/tenor voices must always be an octave or less. And while on the topic of voicing, avoid voice-crossings as much as possible. Basic examples like these should not require the crossing of voices.
C.

Here is an example of a fully-diminished chord
resolving differently. Notice that while the alto and tenor voices appear to move in parallel fifths, upon closer inspection it is seen that they are actually unequal fifths - the B and F is a diminished fifth and the C and E is a perfect fifth.


The primary voice-leading rule for augmented-sixth
chords is the same regardless of the type (Italian, French, German): the augmented sixth interval always resolves in contrary motion out to an octave. In the example above, the G-flat and Enatural create the augmented-sixth interval. The G-flat moves a half-step down to F and the E natural moves a half-step up to F. All other voices of the augmented-sixth chord resolve by step or common tone.


## MELODY HARMONIZATION

Harmonize the following melodies in four voices. Every pitch of the melody should have an assigned harmony.
A. Include a deceptive cadence in the following harmonization.

B. Include at least one secondary dominant in the following harmonization.

C. Include a Neapolitan 6 chord in the following harmonization.

D. Include a perfect authentic cadence in the following harmonization.


## MELODY HARMONIZATION | SOLUTIONS*

Harmonize the following melodies in four voices. Every pitch of the melody should have an assigned harmony.
*The solutions below are but one of many ways to harmonize the following melodies.
A. Include a deceptive cadence in the following harmonization.

B. Include at least one secondary dominant in the following harmonization.

C. Include a Neapolitan 6 chord in the following harmonization.

D. Include a perfect authentic cadence in the following harmonization.


## MELODY HARMONIZATION | IN-DEPTH

When harmonizing a melody, it is important to remember the three types of chord functions: Tonic (T), Dominant (D), and Pre-dominant (P).

- The I chord is the primary tonic functioning chord though a vi can substitute for a I (a deceptive cadence is a good example of this). A tonic functioning chord may move to either a dominant or pre-dominant chord.
- Dominant chords lead to the tonic and the most common are V or vii ${ }^{\circ}$ chords.
- Pre-dominant chords precede the dominant but are not the tonic. Most common predominant chords include IV, ii, and vi.

Since the tonic and dominant functions are the most important, first identify the key and determine the chord tones for the I and V in that key. Next, identify those pitches in the melody and determine which function those pitches imply. As a general rule, the last two pitches of a phrase will be supported by a dominant to tonic chord progression. For pitches that do not fit within a tonic or dominant functioning chord, such as scale degree six (la), consider a pre-dominant chord like IV. A progression can include a series of consecutive pre-dominant chords before arriving to the dominant. Note that a predominant chord bridges the gap between the tonic and dominant but not the other way around - a dominant chord will rarely be followed by a pre-dominant functioning chord.
A. Include a deceptive cadence in the following harmonization.

B.
3. Include at least one secondary dominant in the following harmonization.

A secondary dominant tonicizes (makes tonic) a chord that does not have a tonic function. In the example below, the IV and V are preceded by their respective dominants.


Secondary dominants
can be in root position or inversion.

Melody note ( $\hat{4}$ ) is not found in a I or V triad thus making it a good candidate for a pre-dominant chord (IV).
C. Include a Neapolitan 6 chord in the following harmonization.

D. Include a perfect authentic cadence in the following harmonization.

Leading tone in melody implies a dominant function.


## TRANSPOSITION

Transpose the following melodies on the blank staves below.
A. Transpose the melody to the key a major third below. Add the new key signature.

B. Transpose the melody to the key a major second below. Add the new key signature.

C. Transpose the melody to the key a perfect fifth above. Add the new key signature.


## TRANSPOSITION | SOLUTIONS

Transpose the following melodies on the blank staves below.
A. Transpose the melody to the key a major third below. Add the new key signature.

B. Transpose the melody to the key a major second below. Add the new key signature.

C. Transpose the melody to the key a perfect fifth above. Add the new key signature.


## ANALYSIS 1

Use Roman numerals to analyze the following chorale. Label all chords, non-chord tones, cadences, and modulations.

## J.S. Bach | Ach Gott und Herr | BWV 255



## ANALYSIS 1 | SOLUTION

Use Roman numerals to analyze the following chorale. Label all chords, non-chord tones, cadences, and modulations.

## J.S. Bach | Ach Gott und Herr | BWV 255



## ANALYSIS 2

Use Roman numerals to analyze the following chorale. Label all chords, non-chord tones, cadences, and modulations.
J.S. Bach | Ich hab' mein' Sach' Gott heimgestellt | BWV 351


## ANALYSIS 2 | SOLUTIONS

Use Roman numerals to analyze the following chorale. Label all chords, non-chord tones, cadences, and modulations.

## J.S. Bach | Ich hab' mein' Sach' Gott heimgestellt | BWV 351



## MELODIC DICTATION

Notate the pitches and rhythms as played. Play each melody up to 5 times.
A.

B.

C.

D.


## MELODIC DICTATION | SOLUTIONS

Notate the pitches and rhythms as played. Play each melody up to 5 times.
A.

B.

C.

D.


## MELODIC DICTATION | IN-DEPTH

When approaching melodic dictation, always determine the rhythm first.
Dictating the rhythm:

- Create a grid above the staff to show the number of beats (i.e. four tick marks for a melody in 4/4).
- Keep the beat with your hand or foot as you listen to the melody.
- Draw dashes when notes occur on a beat, dots when notes occur off a beat, and horizontal lines when a note lasts longer than a beat.
- For rests, do not write anything on the grid.
- Translate dashes, dots, and lines to traditional notation on the staff below.

Now that the rhythm has been dictated, the pitches can be simply overlaid on top of the established rhythm.
Dictating the pitches:

- Try to memorize the melody so you can replay the melody in your head in between hearings. Try figuring out the solfege for the melody.
- Listen for the overall contour of the melody to determine where the melody moves by step or by skip. Try to determine specific intervals.
- Locate where "do" and "sol" occur in the melody. Next listen for "mi" (the third in your tonic triad) and "ti" (the leading-tone).
- Once you have located those pitches, all other notes will just be a step away from one of the pitches you have already identified.

The following links lead to rhythmic and melodic dictation video tutorials:
http://tinyurl.com/hyhd6hs
http://tinyurl.com/j3xmxh6

## HARMONIC DICTATION

Notate the soprano and bass line and Roman numeral for each chord. Play each progression up to 6 times.


F\#m
D.


## HARMONIC DICTATION | SOLUTIONS

Notate the soprano and bass line and Roman numeral for each chord. Play each progression up to 6 times.

D.


## HARMONIC DICTATION | IN-DEPTH

While there are numerous methods for dictating harmony, a particularly effective approach is the guide-tone system. In a guide-tone system, the listener simply listens for two or three pitches (guide-tones) when listening to a progression. Once the guide-tones are dictated for each chord, the listener then chooses the correct chord from a small group of chords that contains that guide-tone. The particular guide-tones in this system are syllables "do", "ti", and "re".


As can be seen from the chart below, most all diatonic major and minor chords can be identified by one of these three guide-tones.

| Major Keys |  | Minor Keys |  |  |  |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Do | Ti | Re | Do | Ti | Re |
| I | V | ii | i | V | ii $^{\circ}$ |
| IV | vii $^{\circ}$ |  | iv | vii $^{\circ}$ |  |
| vi | iii |  | VI |  |  |

Below is a step-by-step approach to using this system:

- When listening to the progression, focus on hearing if the chord has either a "do" (scaledegree 1) or a "ti" (scale-degree 7). By determining if a chord has a "do" or a "ti", one is able to quickly narrow the possible chord choices (see chart above with list of chords). If a chord does not have a "do" or "ti", it will be a "re" chord. Write the syllables do, ti, or re in the space between the staves.
- Try audiating the chords as you hear them (i.e. do-mi-sol-mi-do is a I).
- Once the guide-tones and possible chords (Roman numerals) have been determined, fillin the bass pitches you know. Make an educated guess of which octave the bass pitches are in - this is called the bass guesstimate. Listen to the bass line to confirm your guesstimate.
- Listen to the soprano line as a melody. Notate any pitches you know but also note the contour between pitches by using directional arrows. You might also be able to note where the soprano has steps and where there are skips.
- Make educated guesses at the soprano pitches by referring to the chord spellings and contour. Where does the soprano end - R, 3, or 5 of tonic chord?
- Notate all soprano pitches - be sure to line everything up vertically.

Follow this link for a how-to video:
http://tinyurl.com/jz24zfn
Chord Singing in Major Keys
Do Chords

## Chord Singing in Minor Keys

Do Chords


$\mathrm{Re}-\mathrm{Fa}-\mathrm{La}-\mathrm{Fa}-\mathrm{Re}$


## SIGHTSINGING EXAMPLES

Below are representative melodies from the entrance exam. Melodies may be transposed to accommodate one's vocal range and should be sung using a syllable system (i.e. solfege - minor la, minor do, or fixed do - or numbers).
A.

B.

C.








## SIGHTSINGING | TIPS

Tonicization- always tonicize before doing any sightsinging or dictation exercise. To tonicize simply means to sing a short melodic pattern that centers your ear on the tonic of the key. There are numerous tonicization patterns but the following is recommended:

Tonicization pattern shown with the syllables for minor do, minor la, and numbers.


There are a two benefits of this pattern. First, all seven diatonic pitches are sung. Second, this pattern outlines not only the tonic triad but also the dominant seventh triad (sol-fa-reti), thus providing a very strong grounding in the tonicized key.

Always keep "do" - regardless of what happens in the melody, always be able to return back to the tonic ("do") if you get off.

Sing at a slow and steady tempo. Sing at a tempo where you have time to look ahead to the next note. If you make a mistake, do not stop - keep going!

A student will be given a short period of time to look over a sight-melody before having to sing. Some things to observe during that period include:

- The key and starting pitch/syllable
- Time-signature
- Recurring sections
- Repeated rhythmic or pitch patterns
- Large or awkward leaps
- Accidentals


## TERMS

Triads and inversions
Major scales
Minor scales
Natural
Harmonic
Melodic
6/4 chords
Cadential
Passing
Pedal
Function
Tonic
Predominant
Dominant
Cadences
Perfect Authentic (PAC)
Imperfect Authentic (IAC)
Plagal (PC)
Deceptive (DC)
Half (HC)
Non-chord tones
Passing tone (PT)
Neighbor tone (NT)
Appoggiatura (APP)
Escape Tone (ET)
Suspension (SUS)
Retardation (RET)
Anticipation (ANT)
Seventh chords
Major
Major-minor
minor
half-diminished
fully-diminished

Secondary dominant chords
Secondary leading-tones chords
Modulation
Diatonic and chromatic pivot chord
Common tone
Sequential
Phrase
Direct
Modal mixture
Augmented 6th chords
Italian
French
German
Neapolitan chord
Sequences
Modes
Ionian
Dorian
Phrygian
Lydian
Mixolydian
Aeolian
Locrian

## ONLINE RESOURCES

Music Theory for Musicians and Normal People (http://tobyrush.com/theorypages/ index.html)

- Excellent informational sheets on a wide variety of theory topics, ranging from beginning to advanced.
musictheory.net
- Basic ear-training and keyboard exercises
- Fundamental topics such as rhythm, meter, scale, key signatures, and intervals
- More advanced topics on diatonic chords, sevenths, progressions, and Neapolitan chords.
teoria.com
- Ear-training and theory exercises
- Jazz exercises

Dolmetsch Music Theory (http://www.dolmetsch.com/theoryintro.htm)

- In-depth lessons on numerous music theory and history topics, including figured bass and twentieth harmony.

8notes.com/theory

- Ear-training exercises and basic music theory topics.

