Piano Proficiency Requirements and Policies

Horne School of Music – Snow College

A basic level of piano skill is required of all music majors studying in the Snow College – Horne School of Music. All students entering the music program will be screened during the first week of class in order to assess piano proficiency. Students who do not possess the required piano skills will be placed in a music major section of Class Piano I. Students who possess some but not all of the necessary piano skills may be assigned to a more advanced section of Class Piano II, III, or IV.

Four levels of class piano will be offered including:

Class Piano I – (MUSC 1150) Fall and Spring Semesters

Class Piano II – (MUSC 1160) Spring Semesters

Class Piano III – (MUSC 2150) Fall Semesters

Class Piano IV – (MUSC 2160) Spring Semesters

Students who complete the four semester sequence with a passing grade in each class (C or better) or pass the proficiency exam will be deemed as piano proficient. Students may take the exam at any time during their studies at the Horne School of Music. Students who fail to pass the exam may retake it each semester until passed. Official student transcripts will indicate that piano proficiency has been achieved.

Each level of class piano will progress a student closer to completion of the piano proficiency requirements. Students will be graded on the following percentages:

Weekly proficiency quizzes - 30%

Attendance/Participation - 30%

Semester proficiency exam - 30%

Memorization and performance of solo repertoire – 10%

All music majors are required to pass the piano proficiency exam. Partial components of the proficiency exam will be given at the end of each semester. The complete piano proficiency exam will be administered at the end of Class Piano IV. The piano proficiency exam consists of four major categories:

- 1. Technique
- 2. Sight-Reading
- 3. Memorization and performance
- 4. Transposition and Score Reading

Technique Requirement:

- a. All major and white key minor scales (natural and harmonic) in 3 octaves hands together (quarter note mm = 144)
- b. All major and minor arpeggios in 3 octaves hands together (3 eighth notes mm = 42), Seventh-chord arpeggios in 3 octaves hands together (2 eighth notes mm = 60)
- c. Triad cadences in all major and white key minor keys with all inversions: I, IV, I, V7, I (quarter note mm = 80)
- d. Tonic inversions in triads, two hands together in half notes (quarter note mm = 120)
- e. Diatonic chords in all major keys 2 hands in half notes (quarter note mm = 120)
- * All components must be executed with correct fingerings

Sight-Reading:

- a. One short composition (one page) selected by the exam administrator, comparable to the level of difficulty found in the *Notebook for Anna Magdalena Bach* by J.S. Bach.
- b. One four-part hymn or anthem

Memorization and Performance:

- a. A memorized selection at least 3 minutes in duration on the level of an easy Mozart sonata, later Clementi sonatinas, Bach two-part inventions, or easier Chopin mazurkas.
- b. Memorization of the Star Spangled Banner or America.

Transposition and Score Reading:

- a. Two lines of a classical string quartet
- b. Two lines of a score with parts for wind instruments requiring transposition

Improvisation:

- a. Harmonization of a melody using primary and secondary chords
- b. Melodic improvisation on a given harmonic progression.

Piano Proficiency Requirements and Materials by Semester

Class Piano I – (MUSC 1150) Taught Fall and Spring Semesters

Class Piano I - Piano Proficiency Requirements

- a. All major and minor 5 finger patterns
- b. Chord building: Major, minor, Augmented and diminished chords
- c. Three octave scales (C, G, D, A, E) hands together
- d. All major and minor cross-hand arpeggios
- e. All major 3 note blocked and broken chords inversions (2 octaves)
- f. I-IV-I-V7-I chord progression in all major keys
- g. Reading in treble and bass clefs
- h. Transposing of melodies and repertoire pieces
- i. Improvisation Harmonization of melodies using blocked I, IV, and V chords

Melodic improvisation on a blues scale (12 bar blues)

- j. Sight-reading
- k. Repertoire pieces to be performed in class

Class Piano I - Technique Curriculum by Week/Testing Schedule

Week One Student evaluations

Week Two White Key 5 finger patterns

Week Three All Major 5 finger patterns

Week Four All Major cross-hand arpeggios

Week Five All minor 5 finger patterns

Week Six All minor cross-hand arpeggios

Week Seven All white key Major blocked and broken chord inversions

Week Eight All black key Major blocked and broken chord inversions

Week Nine All white key chord progressions (I-IV-I-V7-I)

Week Ten All black key chord progressions (I-IV-I-V7-I)

Week Eleven One octave Major arpeggios moving chromatically

Week Twelve Three octave scales (C, G, D, A, E) hands separate

Week Thirteen Three octave scales (C, G, D, A, E) hands together

Week Fourteen Recital with memorized solo

Week Fifteen Individual student evaluations/Semester proficiency exam

Class Piano II – (MUSC 1150) Spring Semesters

- a. Major and three white key minor scales (3 octaves, hands together)
- b. Chord building: Seventh chords
- c. All major and three white key minor arpeggios (3 octaves)
- d. Three white key minor three-note blocked and broken chord inversions, (3 octaves)
- e. All white key majors and three white key minor keys (in all inversions) using a I-IV-I-V7-I chord progression
- f. Reading four part hymns/chorales
- g. Transposing of repertoire pieces
- h. Reading in alto clef
- i. Improvisation Harmonization of melodies using primary chords

Melodic improvisation

- j. Sight-Reading
- j. Repertoire pieces to be performed in class
- 1. Memorization of America

Class Piano II - Technique Curriculum by Week/Testing Schedule

Week One Student evaluations and review of previous materials

Week Two Three octave scales (C, G, B) hands together

Week Three Three octave scales (F, B-flat) hands together

Week Four Three octave scales (E-flat, A-flat, D-flat, G-flat) hands together

Week Five All Major white key arpeggios – three octaves

Week Six All Major black key arpeggios – three octaves

Week Seven I-IV-I-V7-I chord progressions with all inversions (C, G, D, A)

Week Eight I-IV-I-V7-I chord progressions with all inversions (E, B, F)

Week Nine White key diatonic chords

Week Ten Three octave minor scales (a, d, g) – harmonic, melodic, and natural minor

Week Eleven Three octave minor arpeggios (a, d, g)

Week Twelve Three octave minor chord inversions (a, d, g)

Week Thirteen Three octave minor chord progressions (a, d, g) – all inversions

Week Fourteen Recital with memorized solo

Week Fifteen Individual student evaluations/ Semester proficiency exam

- a. All major and white key minor scales (3 octaves, hands together)
- b. All major and minor 7th chord arpeggios (3 octaves, hands together)
- c. All major and minor 3 note blocked and broken chord inversions (3 octaves)
- d. I-IV-I-V7-I chord progression in all major and white key minor keys (in all inversions)
- e. Harmonization of melodies using secondary chords
- f. Reading vocal scores and two lines of a string quartet
- g. Reading parts for wind instruments requiring transposition
- h. Improvisation Harmonization of melodies using primary and secondary chords

 Melodic improvisation
- i. Sight-Reading
- j. Repertoire pieces to be performed in class

Class Piano III - Technique Curriculum by Week/Testing Schedule

Week One Assessment and review Week Two Black Key Major I-IV-I-V7-I chord progressions in all inversions Harmonic and natural minor scales, 3 octaves, hands together (a, c, f) Week Three Minor arpeggios and chord inversions, 3 octaves, hands together (a, c, f) Week Four Minor chord progressions in all inversions (a, c, f) Week Five Week Six Melodic, harmonic, and natural minor scales, 3 octaves, hands together (e, b) Minor arpeggios and chord inversion, 3 octaves, hands together (e, b) Week Seven Week Eight Minor chord progressions in all inversions (e, b) Week Nine Black key minor 3 octave arpeggios, hands together White key Major 7th chord arpeggios, 3 octaves, hands together Week Ten Black key Major 7th chord arpeggios, 3 octaves, hands together Week Eleven Week Twelve White key minor 7th chord arpeggios, 3 octaves, hands together Week Thirteen Black key minor 7th chord arpeggios, 3 octaves, hands together Week Fourteen Recital with memorized solo

Week Fifteen Individual student evaluations/ Semester proficiency exam

Class Piano IV – (MUSC 2150) Spring Semesters

*see piano proficiency requirements

Class Piano IV - Technique Curriculum by Week/Testing Schedule

Week One Assessment and Review

Week Two Review and Reading

Week Three All Major Scales, 3 octaves, hands together

Week Four All Major chord progressions in all inversions, hands together

Week Five All Major 3 octave arpeggios, hands together

Week Six White key fully diminished 7th chord arpeggios and chord inversions

Week Seven Review and Reading

Week Eight All minor white key natural and harmonic scales

Week Nine All minor white key chord progressions

Week Ten All minor 3 octave arpeggios

Week Eleven All Major white key diatonic chords

Week Twelve All Major black key diatonic chords

Week Thirteen Review

Week Fourteen Class recital with memorized solo and accompanying of student solos

Week Fifteen Final Proficiency Exam