

**Washington State University**  
**School of Music**  
Graduate Diagnostic Examination Study Guide  
**Theory and Ear Training**

This is a comprehensive list of the skills expected of a graduate student in music. *The diagnostic exam will not necessarily test every item on this list.*

**I. Fundamentals**

A. Aurally and visually identify, write out, and properly label any of the following in treble, bass, alto, and tenor clefs:

1. Key signatures.
2. Major and minor scales.
3. Modes.
4. Intervals.
5. Triads and seventh chords (using Roman numerals with figured bass).
6. Chromatic harmony (such as augmented sixth chords, secondary dominants, Neapolitan chords, enharmonic respelling, etc.)
7. Non-chord tones.
8. Types of meter.
9. Instrument transpositions

B. Notation. Be able to make corrections according to fundamental notational standards, including:

1. Proper presentation of rhythm and meter (beaming, rest placement, etc.)
2. Stem direction.
3. Note head placement in chords.

**II. Harmony**

A. Figured bass. Realize a figured bass in strict, 4-part chorale style.  
(Include a complete Roman numeral analysis.)

B. Harmonization. Harmonize a given melody in both strict, 4-part chorale style and in keyboard style with strict application of counterpoint and voice leading.  
(Include a complete Roman numeral analysis.)

**III. Twentieth Century Analytical Methods**

A. Recognize, label, and provide examples of whole tone, octatonic, hexatonic, pentatonic, and other “exotic” scales and modes.

B. Recognize, label, and provide examples of post-tonal harmonic structures, including but not limited to:

1. Extended tertian harmony (9<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> chords, etc.)
2. Quartal and quintal harmony.

C. Provide the prime form and interval vector of a pitch-class set.

D. Provide the proper label for relationships between pitch-class sets (Tn, TnI).

E. Be able to create and apply a twelve-tone matrix.

#### **IV. Analysis.**

- A. Tonal analysis. For a given musical example, be able to:
  - 1. Analyze the passage with a complete Roman numeral analysis, including proper labeling of non-chord tones and chromatic harmonies.
  - 2. Make detailed comments about phrase structure.
  - 3. Label modulations.
  - 4. Label cadences.
  - 5. Discuss compositional form.
- B. Post-tonal analysis. For a given musical example, be able to:
  - 1. Label pitch-class sets by prime form.
  - 2. Provide proper labels for relationships between sets (Tn, TnI).
  - 3. Label basic twelve-tone operations (if applicable).
  - 4. Identify important “exotic,” post-tonal referential collections (octatonic, hexatonic, pentatonic, and whole-tones scales, quartal and quintal harmonies, extended tertian harmony, etc.)
  - 5. Identify use of modes (including those transposed from the traditional church modes).
  - 6. Answer questions about compositional form.

#### **V. Advanced Topics**

- A. Form. Be able to describe and discuss elements of musical form including:
  - 1. Melodic phrase and period structure.
  - 2. Principles of larger musical structure such as binary, rounded binary, ternary, compound ternary, rondo, sonata, sonata-rondo, etc.
- B. Counterpoint. Be able to create examples of the following:
  - 1. Sixteenth century (modal). Write a florid (fifth species) line against a given cantus firmus.
  - 2. Eighteenth century (tonal). Complete the exposition of a three-voice from a provided subject.
  - 3. Twentieth century (post-tonal). To a provided melodic example, add a second, contrapuntal voice, and complete a phrase of music in a specified well-known Twentieth-century style (eg. Bartók, Stravinsky, Hindemith.)

#### **VI. Sight-singing and Dictation**

- A. Sight-singing. Any solfege system (or none) is acceptable. Be able to sing an unprepared melodic example:
  - 1. Simple diatonic, scalar.
  - 2. Complex diatonic, with leaps based on triadic harmony.
  - 3. Chromatic, tonal.
  - 4. Post-tonal.
  - 5. Purely rhythmic.
- B. Dictation. Be able to write down musical examples you hear:
  - 1. Melody (ranging from simple and scalar to complex and disjunct).
  - 2. Rhythm.
  - 3. Four-part chorale, with chromaticism and modulation.