



Undergraduate Placement Examinations and Assessments Fall 2018

Placement exams and assessments are only given during the orientation period of each semester.

Keyboard Skills Exam

Required for all instruments except Keyboard and Composition students. Individual appointments will be emailed as well as posted in shared Google document.

The examination covers sight reading of simple piano pieces, the performance of major and minor scales, and basic harmonic progressions at the piano. If supplementary work on the piano is indicated, one or two semesters of the keyboard skills class will be required.

Dictation, Sightsinging and Musicianship

Required for all instruments. Individual appointments will be emailed as well as posted in a shared Google document.

The Musicianship Placement Exam determines placement into the six semesters of undergraduate Musicianship as well as the appropriate track. There are two components to the exam.

The first component consists of sight-singing a number of musical compositions, both melodies and single-voice rhythms, ranging in difficulty from very simple to extremely complex. The musical selections may be in any of four clefs (treble, bass, tenor, and alto), major and minor modes as well as the standard Church modes, and at the more difficult level may be selected from the 12-tone or atonal literature. The instructor administering the examination will determine which selections to ask you to sing, depending upon your prior experience with solfège. You may sing the examples in any solmization system. Conduct while performing, if at all possible..

The second component is a progressive dictation exam beginning with simple rhythms and melodies, and progressing through increasingly difficult examples, including intervals, chords, advanced melodic dictation, harmonic dictation, and chorale dictation. At the most advanced level, you are asked to take down a Bach-style chorale with harmonic analysis on four hearings. The dictation component does not include any atonal or 12-tonal examples.

[Study guide and more info](#)

For further questions or information, email Scott Foglesong (scott.foglesong@sfc.edu)

International Student English Assessment

Required for non-native English speakers only. This assessment will determine placement into or exemption from MHL 607 (graduate-level writing). All non-native English speakers must take this exam.

Humanities and Writing Assessment

Required for all native English speakers. International students who have a primary language other than English will instead take the International Student English Assessment.

The assessment tests writing skills, grammar, and knowledge in the humanities. Students who will be taking language courses are advised to review their knowledge of English grammar. Otherwise students need not make any special preparations for the examination.

Music Theory Exam

Required for all incoming students.

Students who have taken collegiate-level Music Theory courses encompassing both Harmony and Structural (Formal) Analysis may receive credit by examination for one through four semesters of Music Theory.

The section of the exam covering the first two semesters of Music Theory concentrates primarily on common-practice harmonic writing and progressions, with only elementary structural analysis covered. This section also includes the fundamentals of music theory: writing scales, key signatures, intervals, and basic diatonic chords.

The section determining credit for the second two semesters concentrates predominantly on structural analysis, while including chromatic harmony as well. Credit for any given semester is contingent upon credit given for the previous semesters—for example, second-semester examination credit is awarded only if credit for the first semester is awarded as well.

[Study guide and more info](#)

For further questions or information, email Scott Foglesong (scott.foglesong@sfc.edu).

Optional Placement Examinations

Music History Exam

Optional for students who have done extensive collegiate coursework in Music History, and with permission of the Chair of Music History and Literature.

The core curriculum at SFCM includes a three-semester music history survey: MHL 202 (850-1700), MHL 203 (1700-1900), and MHL 204 (1900-present). Undergraduate transfer students who have done equivalent collegiate coursework may request to take a placement exam in one, two, or all three of these time periods, as appropriate, and will receive credit by examination for any exam sections(s) passed. The exam will test knowledge of repertoire, as well as general information about the history of music. For more information about the structure of the exam, consult the relevant section of the graduate placement exam information sheet.

The undergraduate placement exam includes sections that are structured like Sections I and II of the graduate exam.

To take this exam, you must receive permission from the Chair of Music History and Literature (2018-19: Dr. Rachel Vandagriff, rvandagriff@sfcu.edu). Your transcript will be reviewed to determine whether your previous coursework is extensive enough to warrant your taking the exam, and in which of the three historical periods listed above.

Foreign Languages

Optional for all students.

Students who may be proficient in French, Italian, and/or German may take the placement exam of those languages to receive advanced placement unless this is your native language. Credits earned will count towards elective credits.

Please contact the instructor to schedule a placement exam at a mutually agreed upon time during Orientation:

- Mirjam Jooss, German Instructor, mjooss@sfcu.edu
- Cathy Halter, French Instructor, chalter@sfcu.edu
- Lidia Mazza, Italian Instructor, lmazza@sfcu.edu

SFCU does give transfer credit for foreign languages completed at accredited American colleges provided the student received a grade of C or better. Students need not take the foreign language placement examination if their college transcript indicates completion of foreign language studies.

Basic Phonetics

Optional; Open to voice students who have previously studied phonetics.

Students with advanced language skills wishing to earn credit by examination for Basic Phonetics for Singers (APP 210) must take the Basic Phonetics Placement Test, which open book and covers the following material:

- The International Phonetic Alphabet - You will be asked to transcribe English words (real or invented) into IPA upon hearing them pronounced, and to identify simple English words written in IPA.
- Basic Articulatory Phonetics - You will be asked to answer multiple choice questions regarding the physical formation of vowels and consonants.
- English Lyric Diction - You will be asked to choose between various possible IPA transcriptions of simple English words, based specifically on suggestions contained in *The Singer's Guide to Languages* by Marcie Stapp. Copies available in the Conservatory Library.