



Undergraduate (BM) Placement Examinations and Assessments Fall 2022

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 a 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-tone examples. An introductory section of the exam covers the fundamentals of music: intervals, key signatures, scales, and basic chords.

[Study guide and more info](#)

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

International Student English Assessment

Required for non-native English speakers only. This assessment will determine placement into HMS 111/112, the ESL version of HMS 101/102 (the yearlong writing course for all freshmen), or into HMS 101/102. 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.

Optional Placement Examinations

Music Theory Exam

Students who have taken collegiate-level Music Theory courses may receive credit by examination for one through four semesters of core-curriculum Music Theory MMT 112 through MMT 115.

The exam concentrates primarily on common-practice harmonic writing and harmonic analysis.

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).

Music History Exam

Transfer students from our [peer schools](#) who have earned a C grade or higher in a course equivalent to MHL 202-3-4 will have those credits transferred to their SFCM degree as part of the transfer audit process.

Any other student who has done extensive collegiate coursework in Music History may seek the permission of the Chair of Music History and Literature to discuss the possibility of testing out of the undergraduate music history sequence.

The core curriculum at SFCM includes a three-semester music history survey: MHL 202 (Introduction to Music and Culture: Music in California), MHL 203 (1750-1900), and MHL 204 (1900-present). Incoming, non-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 section(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 (Dr. Rachel Vandagriff, rvandagriff@sfc.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.

Please contact the instructor below at least 24-hours before the scheduled test day to sign-up for a placement exam spot during Orientation:

Italian Language Optional Placement Test

Thursday, August 25, 2022 from 12:30 PM to 1:30 PM in Classroom 507

Stefania Filigheddu (sfiligheddu@sfc.edu)

German Language Optional Placement Test

Thursday, August 25, 2022 from 12:30 PM to 1:30 PM in Office 510

Mirjam Jooss (mjooss@sfc.edu)

French Language Optional Placement Test

Thursday, August 25, 2022 from 4:30 PM to 5:30 PM in Classroom 507

Muriel Barton (mbarton@sfc.edu)

SFCM gives humanities (HMS) transfer credit for foreign languages completed at accredited American colleges, provided the student received a grade of C or better. Students do not need to take the foreign language placement examination if their college transcript indicates completion of foreign language studies.