

**COLUMBUS STATE UNIVERSITY  
SCHWOB SCHOOL OF MUSIC  
GRADUATE STUDY GUIDE THEORY EXAM**

The Graduate Theory Exam is in three short portions: part-writing, analysis, and definitions. The exam assumes mastery of the following concepts:

**Partwriting:**

- All standard part-writing procedures in 4 voices (18<sup>th</sup> century practice) including standard doubling solutions and voice-leading
- Realization of figured bass symbols in four voices

*To demonstrate this mastery, students will be asked to **realize** a figured bass progression in SATB.*

**Harmonic analysis** including:

- Roman numeral analysis
- Non-harmonic tones (passing, neighboring, appoggiatura, suspension, anticipation, nota cambiata)
- All modulation types (common chord, common tone, chromatic, enharmonic, phrase)
- Secondary dominant and leading tone chords
- Altered chord theory:
  - Neapolitan 6<sup>th</sup> (and its usual resolution)
  - Augmented 6<sup>th</sup> (German, French, Italian and their usual resolutions)
  - Chromatic mediant/submediant

*To demonstrate this mastery, students should be able to **label** music with appropriate Roman numeral labels, showing keys, inversions, and non-harmonic tones, as well as modulation.*

**Forms and terms:**

- Binary form (rounded and simple)
- Ternary form
- Sonata form
- Rondo (5- and 7-part)
- Theme and Variation
- Terms:
  - Exposition
  - Development
  - Retransition
  - Recapitulation
  - Refrain
  - Episode
  - Principal Theme
  - Second Theme

To demonstrate mastery of these concepts, students will be asked to write short **definitions** of the terms and **representations** of the forms. Form diagrams should show the major formal divisions and include key centers commonly associated with each division.

Suggested study resources: Benward, *Music in Theory and Practice* Vol. 1 (all) and Vol. 2 (Chs. 4-13). Kostka-Payne, *Tonal Harmony*.

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GRADUATE STUDY GUIDE FOR MUSIC HISTORY**

**Suggested Resources:**

Grout and Palisca *A History of Western Music*, 8<sup>th</sup> edition  
Poultney, David *Studying Music History*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition

**Exam Format:**

You will be asked to write two essays (approximately 500 words each) using terms from the list below.

Isorhythm	French overture	Program symphony
Color & Talea	Trio Sonata	Symphonic poem
Hocket	Sequence	<i>Sprechstimme</i>
Notre Dame Polyphony	Ritornello form	Absolute music
Aquitainian Polyphony	<i>Emfindsamer Stil</i>	Indeterminacy
Florid & Discant	Concerto	Leitmotif
Organum	Concerto Grosso	Nationalism
Coloration	<i>Sturm und Drang</i>	Pointillism
Motet	Sonata form	Modes of Limited
Roman de Fauvel	Da capò aria	Transposition
Cantus firmus	Mass	Non-retrogradable
<i>Musica reservata</i>	Atonality	rhythm
Doctrine of Affections	Second Viennese	<i>Gesamtkunstwerk</i>
Polyphony	School	Music Drama
Figured bass	Matrix	Octatonic scale
<i>Basso continuo</i>	Twelve tone system	
Ground Bass	Expressionism	

**Choose one from the following two essays.**

1. What is "new" about the *ars nova*? How does it compare to 13<sup>th</sup> century music? Be sure to use specific composers and musical examples.

2. Discuss the life and works of either: J.S. Bach, Antonio Vivaldi or F.J. Haydn.

Include the following details:

- biographical information
- major genres and examples of works
- innovative compositional techniques
- composers or styles that influenced their work

**Choose one from the following two essays.**

1. Describe the practices of twelve-tone technique and integral serialism in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries, with particular focus on the works of Schoenberg, Webern and Boulez.

2. Discuss the life and works of either: Richard Strauss, Richard Wagner or Johannes Brahms. Include the following details:

- biographical information
- major genres and examples of works
- innovative compositional techniques
- composers or styles that influenced their work

**COLUMBUS STATE UNIVERSITY  
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GRADUATE STUDY GUIDE FOR  
AURAL SKILLS**

This exam is intended to be equivalent to the skills developed in sophomore Music Skills classes.

PART ONE. SIGHT SINGING from Ottman, Music for Sight Singing, chapters 9-14 7<sup>th</sup> Edition. Solfege syllables are not required. Also, be able to sing any interval within an octave ascending and descending.

PART TWO. RHYTHMIC PERFORMANCE from Ottman, chapters 15,16,17,18. Only the one-voice exercises will be used; any format (sing/tap) is acceptable.

PART THREE. AURAL RECOGNITION

- All intervals within up to an octave, seventh chords in root position

- Four part harmonic dictation: writing out the soprano and bass lines and including a numeral analysis. Including all inversions of ii7, IV7, V7, viio7 (Benward, Chapters 11/12)
- Melodic dictation: incorporating all intervals within the octave, in treble and bass clefs.

EXPECTED PROFICIENCY: 75% in each of the four areas.

SUGGESTED PRACTICE MATERIALS:

- Part 1. Ottman, Music for Sight Singing, 7<sup>th</sup> edition as cited above.
- Part 2. Ottman, Music for Sight Singing, 7<sup>th</sup> edition as cited above.
- Part 3. Computer programs on hand in piano lab:
  - 1. MacGamut Music software
  - 2. Benward Ear Training, A Technique for Listening

Contact Dr. Paul Vaillancourt with any questions concerning this exam at [vaillancourt\\_paul@colstate.edu](mailto:vaillancourt_paul@colstate.edu).

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