

June 2013

Dear Incoming Graduate Music Students,

Welcome to Music at Meadows! The purpose of this letter is to explain the Music History Diagnostic Exam testing and study procedures. The exam itself as well as a host of review materials are web-based, and can be accessed through SMU's online Blackboard course management portal (<http://courses.smu.edu/>). However, in order to be able to log into Blackboard, you must first activate your SMU account, then email Dr. Kupfer ([pkupfer@smu.edu](mailto:pkupfer@smu.edu)) your name and username (an eight-digit number) so you can be enrolled in the course. You can activate your SMU account once you are an enrolled and "active" student by visiting the website of the Office of Information Technology (<http://www.smu.edu/BusinessFinance/OIT>). *You will take the diagnostic exam on August 22nd through the Blackboard site and this is also where you will find all the study materials to help you prepare, so make sure you activate your account and email Dr. Kupfer your information as soon as possible!*

The diagnostic exam, which is open-book, is based on the 8th edition of *A History of Western Music (AHWM)*, by Donald Grout, Claude Palisca, and Peter Burkholder (W.W. Norton, 2010). If you do not already own a copy of this book, we suggest that you acquire one to help you prepare for the exam and to use during the exam itself (N.B., for the exam you will need only the textbook, not the accompanying CDs or score anthologies). While older editions of this text and other music history textbooks will contain much of the same information, our exam uses questions provided by the publisher (Norton), so we cannot vouch for the usefulness of earlier editions or other texts. The book is readily available online for purchase or rental as well as from the publisher directly. The exam consists of three sections of 100 multiple-choice questions each (more on this below). *Though the exam is open book, you will have only one hour to complete each section, so you will not have sufficient time to consult the book for each question. It is \*highly\* recommended that you study for the exam by making use of the review materials on the Blackboard site before August 22nd.*

To pass the exam you will need to score at least 70% *overall* on the exam's three sections. This means you could, for example, score below 70% on one or two section(s), but score high enough on the other one(s) to bring your overall average to 70% or higher. The sections are divided as follows:

- Section I: Middle Ages and Renaissance (based on Chs. 1-12 of *AHWM*)
- Section II: 17th and 18th Centuries (Chs. 13-23)
- Section III: 19th and 20th Centuries (Chs. 24-36)

The diagnostic process and its ramifications are as follows: all incoming graduate students will take the exam on Thursday, August 22nd, 6:30-9:30pm in OFAC 2020. If you score

at least 70% overall, you will be free to enroll in MUHI 6335 (Introduction to Graduate Studies) or equivalent, depending on your degree program. If you do not score 70% or higher you will have to enroll in MUHI 5100 (Music History Review) in the fall semester or, in certain degree programs, the spring semester. MUHI 5100 is an uninstructed online course: "taking" it entails studying, on your own time, the materials in the section(s) on which you did not score at least 70% and retesting on those sections until you pass them. There will be six opportunities over the course of the semester in which you enroll in MUHI 5100 to retake any necessary sections; the dates for these will be announced at the beginning of the semester. If you have questions about this process, please contact your area advisor or Dr. Kupfer.

*Note that MUHI 5100 comes at an extra cost to you and will delay your ability to enroll in MUHI 6335 (or equivalent, depending on degree program), which cannot be taken until the diagnostic exam has been passed. MUHI 6335 is itself a pre-requisite for all upper level MUHI courses, so there are serious ramifications for not passing the diagnostic exam before classes begin.*

In order to help you prepare for the diagnostic exam (and for continued review if you must enroll in MUHI 5100), there are a host of study tools on the Blackboard course website:

- Practice Quizzes: for each section of the exam there are practice quizzes that consist of 30 questions from the actual exam question pool. These quizzes have a 20-minute time limit per session in order to give you a sense of the time pressure in the actual exam. The quizzes are ungraded; they are solely for your own practice. *Note, however, that each one can only be taken three times, so plan your practice attempts wisely.* (This limit will be reset for students who must enroll in MUHI 5100.)
- Flash Cards: You can use these to practice your knowledge of important terms and concepts for each chapter.
- Chapter Outlines: These will help you get an overview of the content of each chapter.

Students will take the exam on their own personal laptop computers, which all Meadows students are required to own. For more information on this requirement, see <http://www.smu.edu/Meadows/About/Resources/EngineeringTechnology/LaptopRequirement>. Once on campus, please make sure you can access the Blackboard site wirelessly in the OFAC. If you have questions about technology or issues with accessing the wifi network, please visit the folks at TechEffect, the technology help desk at Meadows. Note that while students have had success taking the exam on iPads and other devices, we cannot be responsible for any technical difficulties that arise using such devices.

Finally, as mentioned, in order to access the study materials, you must activate your SMU account and send Dr. Kupfer your name and username; we recommend you do this as *soon as possible*. Please let us know if you have any questions. We look forward to meeting you in August!

Sincerely,

Dr. Peter Kupfer (pkupfer@smu.edu)

Dr. Jesus A. Ramos-Kittrell (jrk@smu.edu)