

DISCLAIMER: This list does not replace the representative competencies listed in the Graduate Supplement to the Division of Music Handbook, which is the official document of the Division. This list is not exhaustive. However, it is certainly a good start toward the level of achievement expected at the Comprehensive Exam. Review sheets for many of these topics are available at www.drfeezell.com/musictheory.

TONAL MUSIC:

- What is meant by “Common Practice Period” tonality? How about chromatic harmony?
- Diatonic harmony: standard progressions, circle-of-fifths, all other theory fundamentals
- You should be able to identify the key of any section in a tonal score – quickly and without a recording
- Tendency tones (LTs, chord 7ths, flat 2, +6 notes, V+, etc.) and usual resolutions
- Modulation (the 6 types: common chord, common tone, altered chord as common chord, sequential, monophonic, direct)
- Secondary functions (or applied functions)
- Neapolitan chords (including spelling, analysis, and understanding how they resolve)
- Augmented sixth chords (standard types, standard and non-standard resolutions)
- Enharmonic reinterpretation (esp. Ger+6/V7, fully-diminished seventh chords)
- Misc. chromatic harmonies (V+, Vsub6, $cr^{\circ}7$)
- Advanced chromatic harmony (weakened dominant functions, omnibus, etc.)
- Mediant relationships (diatonic, chromatic, doubly chromatic)
- Importance of motive – ability to analyze/discuss motivic relationships
- Basic linear analysis and associated terminology; what is “Schenkerian” analysis?

FORM:

- Cadences (know all types, be able to spot cadences in actual scores)
 - Basic formal units (phrase, period, phrase group/3-phrase period, double period, parallel/contrasting/seq.)
 - Simple part forms (rounded binary versus balanced or “regular” binary, ternary, five-part form, one-part form)
 - Compound ternary vs. Song and trio; Da Capo aria
 - Rondo (including usual key scheme and where retransitions occur)
 - Sonata form (key scheme, Classical version, innovations introduced by Beethoven, later sonata forms)
 - Fugue versus invention and associated terminology
 - Canon, passacaglia, chaconne
 - Theme and variation; Strophic form
 - Twentieth-century innovations: Minimalism, moment form, mobile form, arch form
 - Basic jazz/pop forms: Blues, thirty-two bar form (AABA), rhythm changes
 - Note: some form topics (esp. early music, the Mass, etc.) are covered primarily as musicological topics
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TWENTIETH-CENTURY MUSIC:

- Compare/contrast atonality, serialism, and twelve-tone technique
- Second Viennese School (vs. First Viennese School?)
- Set theory and basic applications
- Dodecaphonic terminology and basic applications
- Total serialism
- “Isms” and associated composers: Expressionism, Impressionism, Primitivism, Modernism, Experimentalism, Neoclassicism, Minimalism, Neoromanticism, Polystylism
- Non-traditional scales, including modal scales, octatonic/diminished, pentatonic
- Collage technique
- Basic jazz/pop symbol notation
- Bitonality/polytonality
- Polyrhythm, polymeter, mixed meter, asymmetric meter
- New complexity
- Music based on timbre: cluster music, spectral music
- Know composers that wrote treatises in the twentieth-century. Titles would be impressive, but composer names are a good start. A basic list is available on Blackboard.
- Composers that defy categorization: Ives, Messiaen, Bartók, Cage
- This list is by no means complete. Explore further in areas of interest to you.

OTHER:

- Basic acoustic principles, esp. the overtone series and applications
 - Basics of digital music (see summary sheet at drfeezell.com/musictheory under 20th Century)
 - What is species counterpoint?
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