

**Southeastern Louisiana University
Department of Music and Dramatic Arts**



**Handbook for
Applied Piano Students**

Revised. Fall 2004

GENERAL INFORMATION

This handbook is designed to provide information about the activities and policies of the piano division at Southeastern. It does not attempt to be comprehensive. Questions pertaining to degree requirements and curriculum should be addressed to the student's advisor.

OBJECTIVES FOR THE PIANO MAJOR

The piano major program aims to develop the student's abilities as a pianist and musician, and to prepare and qualify the student either for a career as an independent piano instructor, or for graduate study in music. Specific objectives are:

- Developing technique
 - Ability to consistently play correct notes and rhythms, and observe all other markings on the page (dynamics, staccato/legato, etc.), at a reasonable, steady tempo, in almost any piano piece, given enough practice time. This includes passage-work, octave passages, trills, and other pianistic "special effects."
 - Ability to play with a good tone at any dynamic level
 - Good pedaling
 - Ability to play simultaneous notes or lines at different dynamic levels or with different touches
- Increasing repertoire, in both quantity and scope
 - Pieces by many different composers, from different periods, and in different genres (sonatas, variations, fugues, etc.)
 - Concertos, chamber music, and accompanying.
- Developing interpretive abilities, in a wide variety of styles.
- Increasing familiarity with the literature of the piano.
- Providing opportunities to perform.
- Developing sight-reading and memorizing abilities, as well as "functional" piano skills, such as reading from instrumental or choral scores, harmonizing melodies, and transposing.

REQUIREMENTS

Lessons

Within the first two days of classes students will schedule a lesson time with their assigned teacher. Weekly lessons are either one-half hour or one hour, depending on the course number. 100-level courses are for freshmen and sophomores, 400-level courses are for juniors and seniors, 500- and 600-level courses are for graduate students.

Board (Jury) Exams

Each semester, each piano student enrolled in two-or-three-credit applied piano courses must take a board exam, scheduled during finals week. A sign-up list will be posted two weeks before the jury date. The student will provide the jury with a list of repertoire and technical studies worked on during the semester, indicating which materials are memorized and ready to play for the jury. These jury-ready materials must include a minimum of three pieces of at least ten minutes total duration and must

represent repertoire from at least two historical periods (technical studies may also be examined). The jury members will choose selections from these materials, but the first choice of presentation is the student's. The teacher may raise or lower the jury grade one letter grade from the average of the grades given by jury members. Students enrolled in one-credit lessons will have a final project that may include a board exam, at the discretion of either the student or the instructor.

Recital Hour

Each semester after the first one, each student must perform at least once on Recital Hour. A completed Student Recital Appearance Request Form must be submitted to the Music Office no later than noon of the Tuesday prior to the performance. These forms are available in the Music Office. The instructor's signature must be obtained, in part as a check on program information and format.

Upper-Division Performance Exam

Each student must take an upper-division entrance exam in place of the jury exam at the end of the fourth semester. Literature for the exam must be approved by the teacher in advance. There will also be a self-study piece given to the student one week before the exam. The student is to prepare this piece without outside help. The student may postpone the upper-division entrance exam for one semester, and may take it a second time if s/he does not pass it the first time. Failure to pass the exam the second time will result in removal from the degree program.

Recitals

Each student must play a junior recital (after having passed the upper-division entrance exam), consisting of 30-45 minutes of music, and a senior recital, consisting of 45-60 minutes of music. The material must be approved in advance by the teacher, show several representative historical styles, and be memorized. Recitals and dress rehearsals must be scheduled with the technical director and the teacher. Programs must be typed by the student and approved by the instructor at least two weeks before the performance. The appropriate program format of the Department of Music will be followed. The expense of program duplication is the student's. Recording is provided free of charge.

Recital Hearings

At least two weeks before the performance the student will perform a selection of pieces from the recital for the piano faculty. All selections must be performance-ready. Failure to meet the expectations of the faculty will result in rescheduling the hearing and recital.

MISSED LESSONS

If the teacher is unable to meet during the normally scheduled lesson time for any reason, the teacher is responsible for completing a lesson rescheduling agreement with the student (see appendix) in advance of the scheduled date and time, or within 24 hours after if there is a sudden emergency. If the student is unable to meet, s/he must notify the instructor in advance or the lesson will not be made up, and will be counted as an absence.

GRADES

Grades are based on attendance, progress, and meeting the specific goals outlined below, as demonstrated in lessons, performances, and jury exams. At the beginning of each semester, the teacher may give the student an additional written elaboration of grading procedures.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

All students will be assigned at least one etude each semester, at the discretion of the teacher. In addition, the student should be able to play:

By the end of the first year:

1. All major and harmonic minor scales, and chromatic scale, two to four octaves ascending and descending, hands separately (or one octave hands together), at a minimum tempo of four 16th notes = 60, evenly, and with specified fingerings.
2. All major and minor arpeggios, root position, two to four octaves hands together, two 8th notes = 60, evenly, and with specified fingerings.
3. Cadences (I-IV-V-I, I-IV-V7-I, or I-IV-I-V7-I) in all major and minor keys.

By the end of the second year:

1. All major and harmonic minor scales, and chromatic scale, four octaves hands together, four 16ths = 80-100.
2. All major, minor, and dominant seventh arpeggios, in root position and inversions, four octaves hands together, four 16ths = 60-80.
3. All major, minor, and dominant seventh chords with inversions.

By the end of the third and fourth years:

Maintain accomplishments of first two years, increasing tempo to four 16ths = 144-168. At the teacher's discretion, scales in thirds, sixths, tenths, contrary motion, or double thirds may be introduced. Specific exercises in forearm rotation, wrist motions, wrist staccato, and similar technical objectives may be included throughout the course of study.

REPERTOIRE

Each semester the student will learn at least three pieces, at least two of them memorized, from at least three different historical periods, and comprising at least ten to fifteen minutes of music. Some examples of minimal but appropriate repertoire are:

First year (MUSA 162)--Easier movements from Bach Suites or Short Preludes, Clementi Sonatinas, selections from Schumann's and Tchaikovsky's Albums for the Young, selections by Heller and Burgmueller, Sonatinas by Kabalevsky or Khachaturian.

Second year (or first year MUSA 163)--Bach Two-Part Inventions, easier Haydn Sonatas, Chopin Waltzes, Brahms Waltzes, Mendelssohn Songs Without Words, Field Nocturnes, Tcherepnin Bagatelles.

Third year--A complete Bach Suite, Mozart Sonatas, Chopin Nocturnes, Moszkowski Etudes, early advanced selections by Debussy, Bartók, Scriabin

Fourth year--Chopin Etudes, Bach Well-Tempered Clavier, Beethoven Sonatas, selections by Liszt, Ravel, Rachmaninoff, and Prokofiev.

Graduate--Graduate student repertoire will be more extensive, and students should expect to play at least 15 minutes at their exams.

MISCELLANEOUS POLICIES

1. Attendance is required of two- and three-credit hour students at the studio masterclasses (this requirement is optional for one-credit hour students). A class cut counts the same as a lesson cut.
2. All students enrolled in a two- or three-hour class must accompany in a studio or class for a minimum of one hour per week. Recipients of a piano performance scholarship must accompany for two hours per week. Whereas accompanying is considered to be a vital part of a pianist's education, all piano students are expected to participate to the level of their ability.
3. All students are expected to: a) read and study the prefaces in their performing editions; b) study the playing of the great pianists in recordings, books, and public live or broadcast concerts; c) study multiple recordings of their assigned repertoire (if available); d) attend without fail the recitals of colleagues and faculty (NOTE: your final grade may also be lowered for failure in this regard); e) most important of all, practice a minimum of three hours a day for a three-hour course, two hours a day for a two-hour course, and one hour a day for a one-hour course; and finally f) practice with a quartz metronome at many different tempos.
4. Other: Students who wish to drop the course are responsible for filing the necessary paperwork. Students with disabilities must self-identify with the campus ADA officer.

POLICY ON STUDIO TRANSFERS

The department discourages the practice of studio transfers, encouraging instead the honest attempt on the part of the student and the applied faculty member to work out differences that may be affecting the student's progress. However, if a student believes that problems are of sufficient magnitude that they have no hope of remedy, a reassignment may be requested using the guidelines below:

1. The student must initiate the process by discussing any perceived problems with the current applied instructor. The instructor then has the option of inviting a colleague, if available, to accept the student into his or her applied studio.
2. If differences are irreconcilable and are an impediment to student progress, the student should

then seek redress from the department head. The student may petition the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences directly only if the instructor happens to be the department head.

3. Transfers during a semester are not allowed except under extreme circumstances, and can only be authorized by the department head.

Appendix follows:

- Board Examination Form
- Recital Hour Request Form
- Applied Lesson Make-up Form