

Recommendations for Music Transfer Students

Select a community college carefully. Prospective music majors should enroll in a two-year basic music theory sequence in addition to completing courses which will apply toward Western's General University Requirements. (Students who complete an AA but who do not take music theory concurrently, will find that while they have Junior status at Western, they will be enrolled in freshman-level classes in music, taking the beginning courses of a four-year program which cannot be compressed.) In addition to theory study, private instruction on the major instrument or voice and performance in a large ensemble (choir, concert band, or orchestra) is recommended.

Transfer students entering with two full years of college-level theory will be required to take a theory advisory examination which will determine if theory skills are sufficient to ensure success in upper division courses for which theory is a prerequisite. Transfer students entering with less than two full years of music theory will be tested and placed in the most appropriate courses in Western's music theory sequence. All transfer students will also be required to meet with a theory instructor in order to determine appropriate placement in aural skills and keyboarding classes.

The transfer student Music Theory Advisory Exam is a two-hour exam which tests the readiness of students to enter upper-division music theory courses in analysis, counterpoint, and orchestration. The following areas are tested:

1. Knowledge of music fundamentals – intervals, scales, triads, key signatures, and rhythm notation.
2. Notation and analysis of seventh chords and chromatic chords such as secondary dominants and augmented sixth chords.
3. Harmonizing a melody and/or base line; part-writing.
4. Knowledge of early 20th Century techniques such as modes and other scales, non-tertian chords, etc.

In the exam the student may be asked to analyze passages of music which exemplify the areas listed above and to compose short examples demonstrating fluency with the concepts and material. Recommended review text: Kostka & Payne, Tonal Harmony.

All students entering the music program are required to perform an entrance audition on the major instrument or voice. Audition information can be found on our website at: <http://www.wvu.edu/music/shtml/audition.shtml>.

For additional information about the music program, contact Dennis Bonner at Dennis.Bonner@wvu.edu or (360) 650-4091.