

Transfer Student Keyboard Placement

Overview

All transfer students should attempt to place out of Keyboard Skills I (MUCC 111). Placement exams occur the Sunday before classes begin each semester. Students with significant piano experience or those wanting to move further into the keyboard sequence may also attempt to place out of Keyboard Skills II (MUCC 112).

Preparing for your placement exam (Keyboard Skills I, MUCC 111)

To place out of Keyboard Skills I, prepare the following three items.

1. Five-Finger Patterns

Tempo	♩ = 76
Keys	1. Play all 12 major keys from C major through B major hands together without stopping
Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper fingering required (same fingering as C major for all keys) • Memorization required

2. Chord Progression

Tempo	♩ = 66
Keys	1. Play all 12 major keys from C major through B major without stopping
Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper fingering required (same fingering as C major for all keys) • Memorization required

3. Solo—Students prepare a solo of their choice; memorization is not required. Perform 30-60 seconds of an excerpt from a solo that showcases your technical and artistic skills.

Students will also sight-read a piano solo and a harmonization as part of the placement exam.

Preparing for your placement exam (Keyboard Skills II, MUCC 112)

Students with significant piano experience or those wanting to move further into the keyboard sequence may also attempt to place out of Keyboard Skills II (MUCC 112) during their placement exam on the Sunday before the semester begins. If you wish to place out of both MUCC 111 AND MUCC 112 at the same time, prepare the following two items in addition to all of the MUCC 111 items.

1. Left Hand Chord Progression

Tempo	♩ = 100
Keys	1. Play all 12 major keys from C major through B major without stopping
Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proper fingering required (same fingering as C major for all keys)• Memorization required

Major Keys

5 1 5 1 5 1 1
3 3 3 3 3 3 2

I IV V7 I I IV V7 I

Continue through B major

2. Solo—Students prepare a solo of their choice; memorization is not required. Perform 30-60 seconds of an excerpt from a solo that showcases your technical and artistic skills. The same solo may be used for MUCC 111 and MUCC 112 as long as the difficulty level matches the minimum for MUCC 112 (late elementary level).

Students will also sight-read piano solos with and without pedal, sight-read a harmonization, and sight-read an open score as part of the placement exam.

Understanding grading and assessment for MUCC 111 and MUCC 112

Assessment Checklist for Five-Finger Patterns and Chord Progressions

Accuracy—Are you playing the correct notes in all 12 keys?

Tempo—Can you play continuously at the tempo marked above?

Fingering—Are you using the correct fingering in each of the 12 keys?

Continuity—Can you play through all 12 keys without stopping?

Performances that do not meet all four assessment checklist items will not pass.

Assessment Checklist for Solo

Continuity and Accuracy—Can you play the correct notes and rhythms and play without stopping?

Musicality—Can you hear phrasing? Are you using dynamics, articulations, and (if appropriate) pedal?

Placing Out of Additional Classes—Functional Keyboard I, MUCC 201 (choral/general music) or MUCC 203 (band/orchestra)

Students who wish to place out of the third semester of keyboard will be asked to sight-read a piano solo, classroom song, and harmonization at the original placement exam. Choral or general music track students will also sight-read an open choral score, and band or orchestra track students will sight-read an open instrumental score.

Students who pass the sight-reading portion of the placement exam for MUCC 201 or MUCC 203 must also perform and pass three prepared items, either at the initial placement exam or at the completion exam, which will take place in the first half of the first semester on campus.

1. Sing and Play Vocalise—Lead a vocal warm-up for a choir using the piano

Tempo	♩ = 144
Keys and Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare all 12 major keys ascending and descending chromatically, beginning in any key • Play from memory • Stand and sing while you play
Exam Logistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructor will announce your beginning key, direction (ascending or descending), ending key, and any direction changes before you play. Faculty may elect to hear only a portion of an octave range. (e.g. “Begin in A, ascend to D, and descend back to A.”) • Play vocalise and sing on a neutral syllable with the choir

The musical score is divided into two systems. The first system is labeled 'Voice' and 'Piano'. The second system is labeled 'Pno.'. Both systems feature a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The key signature changes chromatically from A major to D major, then to G major, and finally to C major. The time signature changes from 4/4 to 2/4 and back to 4/4. The piano accompaniment consists of chords and arpeggiated patterns that support the vocal line. The vocal line is a simple melody of eighth and quarter notes.

2. Chord Progression

Tempo	♩ = 66
Keys	1. Play from A major up through D major without stopping (A, B ^b , B, C, D ^b , D)
Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper fingering required (same fingering as A major for all keys) • Memorization required

The musical score shows a chord progression in 4/4 time. The key signature changes from A major (two sharps) to D major (two sharps). The progression consists of 12 measures. Above the treble clef, fingering numbers (1-5) are provided for each note of the chords. The bass clef part consists of a simple eighth-note bass line.

3. Solo—Students prepare a solo of their choice; memorization is not required. Perform 30-60 seconds of an excerpt from a solo that showcases your technical and artistic skills. The same solo may be used for MUCC 111, MUCC 112, and MUCC 201/203 as long as the difficulty level matches the minimum for MUCC 201/203 (early intermediate level).