PIANO PROFICIENCY GUIDELINES AND POLICIES

All Bachelor of Music, Bachelor of Music Education and Bachelor of Arts degree students are required to take and pass Piano Proficiency. It is recommended that students place a high priority on passing this exam. Set aside regular practice time and meet with the Class Piano tutor at least once a week. Please do not ask for help or explanations during the exam. All technique must be performed from memory.

OVERVIEW

**Part One A:** Must be taken during the midterm of Class Piano III
**Part One B:** Must be taken at the conclusion of Class Piano III
**Part Two A:** Must be taken during the midterm of Class Piano IV
**Part Two B:** Must be taken at the conclusion of Class Piano IV

The e-text, *eNovative Piano*, the official text for the NKU Class Piano sequence, is used as the principal reference in the Piano Proficiency Guidelines; however, materials used for testing may be taken, as appropriate, from other sources similar in level and purpose.

**PART ONE A (Class Piano III Midterm)**
All technique must be performed from memory:

1. **Major scales**, two octaves, hands together, with proper fingering at a moderate tempo (at quarter note = 60-80, played in 8th notes.)

2. **Harmonic minor scales**, two octaves, hands together, with proper fingering at a moderate tempo (at quarter note = 60-80, played in 8th notes.)

3. **Chromatic scale** starting on any note (black and white), two octaves, hands together, legato, with proper fingering, at a moderate tempo (at quarter note = 60-80, played in 8th notes).

4. **Repertoire/ Chorale**
   **Instrumentalists:** Repertoire
   You may choose any repertoire piece on or above the level of those found in: Celebration Series, Perspectives, Grade 3 (early intermediate) or any piece on or above the level of those found in eNovativePiano Level 3, eNovation 10 and 11. Examples: “Pleasant Morning” by Jean Louis Streabbog (eNovation 10)

   **Vocalists:** Chorale
   “Wiegenlied” (eNovation 10)
   “Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow” (eNovation 11)
   “My Country ‘tis of Thee” (eNovation 11)
   “O Little Town of Bethlehem” (eNovation 11)

5. **Song for Assembly:** **Happy Birthday**
   Play “Happy Birthday” by ear in the key of F Major. L.H. plays block or broken chords.

**Any failed skills at the Midterm will be discussed with the student to determine if appropriate progress is made toward the completion of the course. A final recommendation will be made for Retesting at the Final or Dropping the Course with a grade of W.**
PART ONE B (Class Piano III Final)
1. **Major arpeggios**, two octaves, hands separately, with proper fingering at a moderate tempo.

2. **Minor arpeggios**, two octaves, hands separately, with proper fingering at a moderate tempo.

3. **All major triad inversions** (both black and white keys) in block form, hands separately, one octave, ascending and descending, with proper fingering.

4. **All minor triad inversions** (both black and white keys) in block form, hands separately, one octave, ascending and descending, with proper fingering.

5. **Accompaniment**: Your choices must be approved by instructor.
   Vocalists and Instrumentalists: Plan to ask a friend to play or sing the solo part with you.
   Your selection has to be above Level 2 eNovation 9. Some examples include “Happy Farmer”, “La Paloma”. You will prepare the accompaniment at a performance tempo.

***One failed skill from Part One results in an incomplete for Class Piano III. Two or more failed skills will result in an "F" for the course regardless of standing grade.

PART TWO A (Class Piano IV Midterm)
   Follow the pattern *exactly as shown in Dexterity Drill 11*: play by memory one octave, ascending and descending, in 6/8 meter with R. H. while using the L.H. to harmonize the scale with block secondary chords on beats one and four of each measure. 
   Play the scale, ascending and descending, with the L.H. while using the R.H. to harmonize the scale with block secondary chords on beats one and four of each measure.

2. **Minor Dexterity Drill**: Scales with secondary chords in a, e and d minor.
   Follow the pattern *exactly as shown in Dexterity Drill 11*: play by memory one octave, ascending and descending, in 6/8 meter with R. H. while using the L.H. to harmonize the scale with block secondary chords on beats one and four of each measure. 
   Play the scale, ascending and descending, with the L.H. while using the R.H. to harmonize the scale with block secondary chords on beats one and four of each measure.

3. **Sight Reading**: You will be given a short piece to sight read, similar in level to the selections in *eNovativePiano, eNovation 11*, “Reading 11.1, Chord Substitutions” and *Four Star Sight Reading Series, Level 4*. The excerpt may be in a major/minor key, up to three sharps/flats.

4. **Three Part Score Reading**: You will be given a short score reading excerpt similar in level to those found in *eNovation 10 one week* before your scheduled piano proficiency exam date. The excerpt will include various combinations of treble, bass, alto and tenor clefs.

5. **Four Part Score Reading**: You will be given a short score reading excerpt similar in level to those found in *eNovation 10 one week* before your scheduled piano proficiency exam date. The excerpt will include various combinations of treble, bass, alto and tenor clefs.

6. **Transposition**:
   Instrumentalists: Instrumental transposition--Bb, Eb, A, and F instruments from *eNovation 12*. You will be given the transposition excerpts one week before your scheduled piano proficiency exam date.
Vocalists: Piano score/ easy accompaniment transposition: transpose up/down a Major second. (ex: eNovation 9, “Etude, Op.823, No. 16 by Carl Czerny”)
You will be given the transposition excerpt one week before your scheduled piano proficiency exam date.

**Any failed skills at the Midterm will be discussed with the student to determine if appropriate progress is made toward the completion of the course. A final recommendation will be made for Retesting at the Final or Dropping the Course with a grade of W.**

PART TWO B (Class Piano IV Final)
Lead Sheet and Supply Harmony: Harmonize pieces at sight (in the keys of C major, A minor, F major, D minor, G major, and E minor) with appropriate accompaniments using primary and secondary triads, V7, ii6, V7/IV, V7/V chords in root position and inversions in the following ways:

1. At sight, supply L.H. block chord accompaniment with melody in R.H. (harmonies not indicated). You will be given an opportunity to play the melody alone first.

2. Lead Sheet: Melody in R.H. with L. H. broken chord accompaniment (harmonies indicated).

3. Two-hand chordal accompaniment (melody is played by an adjudicator.)
   Pieces chosen for examination may be similar to “Sweet Betsy from Pike” (eNovation 11) and “Red River Valley” (eNovation 16). Writing out chord symbols under the melody is not permitted. Accuracy with chord choice, technical fluency and continuity, keeping a steady beat at an appropriate tempo, is required for passing this element.

4. Improvisation Major Key: Waltz and March
   Prepare eight measure improvisation in all Bb and D Major.
   See Progressions and Patterns for Styles Improvisation, eNovation 9 and eNovation 10
   Progression: Primary chords.
   Textures: You must use a stylistically appropriate keyboard texture.
   Melody: Melody must consist of two balanced phrases using both chord and non-chord tones.
   Sample Progressions:
   I - IV - V - I - I - IV - V - I or I - I - IV - IV - V - V - I – I

5. Improvisation Minor Key: Waltz and March
   Prepare eight measure improvisation in G and C minor.
   See Progressions and Patterns for Styles Improvisation, eNovation 9 and eNovation 10
   Progression: Primary chords.
   Textures: You must use a stylistically appropriate keyboard texture.
   Melody: Melody must consist of two balanced phrases and must use both chord and non-chord tones.
   Sample Progressions:

***One failed skill from Part Two results in an incomplete for Class Piano IV. Two or more failed skills will result in an "F" for the course regardless of standing grade.
# Northern Kentucky University Piano Proficiency Progress Chart

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<th>Date Passed</th>
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<td><strong>Part One A Passed</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Part One B</strong></td>
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<td>2. Lead Sheet: Broken Chords</td>
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<td>3. Lead Sheet: Two Hand Chordal Accomp</td>
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<td>4. Improvisation: Waltz Maj/Min, D, Bb, c or g</td>
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<td>5. Improvisation: March Maj/Min, D, Bb, c or g</td>
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