

Performance Judges Meeting Notes

March 7, 2016

Registration for entering students and repertoire for performance exams has been extended to Monday, March 14, at midnight.

Remember to refer to the 2014 AIM syllabus rather than Karen Roger's AIM workbooks for the correct technical requirements as some workbooks may not have been updated or list complete requirements. Also, review the new Technique Sample Exam pages (distributed recently) and the Performance Sample Exam pages (Appendix) for point totals and requirements before judging.

Notes on Registering students:

1. First register your volunteer availability, and then confirm that you've done it at the top of each student enrollment.

Note: If you're available for more than one day for shorter shifts, please e-mail your coordinator (Jia-Yee or Jennifer)

2. Do not click the RETURN button to move between fields. Use the mouse.
3. There is only one day for 1A,B,C and 2 students: April 17, at Music Institute of Chicago, Winnetka location only.

Note: *We may be looking for a Coordinator for just that one day for next year.* It's very possible it will end earlier than 6:00 depending on number of students registered. It's possible that next year it may run in the morning if we have a Coordinator who is available.

4. If a student has taken the theory portion in a previous year and completing the rest of the performance requirements for that level, they need to pay \$10 re-enrollment fee again. Register as usual, and then let your coordinator know (Jennifer or Jia-Yee) and send an additional check.

REPERTOIRE

1. Please list repertoire now by March deadline in order for time to check for accuracy.
2. Level 1– you may list repertoire (it will show up on the judge's sheet), but are NOT required to do so.
3. Level 2 – List the first piece under A and the second piece under B (regardless of whether it is romantic or contemporary).
4. Level 4-12 – List the 3rd piece under C (even if it is contemporary.)
5. Use the Level D column only for levels 10, 11, 12.

Filling in Repertoire Information

- If you read the instructions on the web site this should be clear, but here are reminders..
- For Composer – enter just the last name, unless it's a composer like CPE Bach, or L. or K. Olson
- Pieces – Enter the title and key and “1st mvt.” rather than the tempo indication.
- SOURCE – should be the level and page number where you find it in the syllabus (i.e. 5-26) Use “consent” if you have obtained permission for the piece from Stephanie Myers.
- Contest lists for this CURRENT year may be used. Level is at the discretion of the teacher.
- If you are using pieces from the “Collections” page on the syllabus, list that page in the “Source” box (5-17) and then list the book in the Collection box. (Bastien, Piano Lit, 2)

Memory Points

Just circle Yes or No if the piece is memorized or not. If a student can get to the end without the music, with just a few stumbles, or needs to look at the score for a minute to regroup, then memory requirement is met. Circle “no” only if student is unable to complete the performance from memory.

Bonus points for memory or 3rd and/or 4th piece – do not deduct any points for memory slips. Again, full bonus memory points are awarded as long as students are able to finish the piece from memory, despite memory slips.

Judging Repertoire

- Make sure your comments back up any checks you have on the grid or point deductions. Even for exceptional performances, write specific comments on things that went well if possible.
- GREAT IDEA: Could make short notes (measure numbers, pedal, dynamics, etc.) in the margin during performance, then go back to write comments later.
- There will be a grading guideline page in the front of your judging packet that will give ideas on point scores.
- Sometimes really young students will play really difficult pieces. You can note that it is a really difficult piece and they have made a good effort. But, grade what you hear.
- As a teacher you can mark the score – taking out the pedal or dynamics that aren’t appropriate, or when a student is reducing the parts because of a small reach.

Level 12 Notes

- Level 12 students will only do the technique on one of the exam days.
- Repertoire approval must be obtained from Debbie Gillette, state Repertoire chair, approximately 5 months prior to the exam or recital.
- Sonata-Allegro movement is required at either Level 11 or 12. If a student skipped level 11 and did a Sonata-Allegro movement at an earlier level (10 or 9), student must do a Sonata-Allegro movement at level 12.
- Program notes are due to Jennifer Cohen at least one week prior to the exam.
- For recitals – try to set your dates early and stay away from holiday weekends.
- If you have a level 12 student enrolled, please be available to serve as judge for other level 12 exams or recitals.

TECHNIQUE

- Fingering is only evaluated on scales, arpeggios, and 3-note triads and inversions.
- Fingering is not evaluated on Chord Progressions and 4-note chords.
- When there are Student choices of Keys, etc. send a paper along with them as they can blank out easily and might choose a difficult key or one they aren’t prepared for.
- You can bring your metronome with you to the exam and check it BEFORE THE STUDENT COMES IN THE ROOM, but not while they are in the room. Do not deduct points unless tempo is noticeably slower than required, not if it is only a little slow. Remember that faster tempo is always acceptable.
- Listed requirements are minimum requirement. Students can always do more than required (i.e. 2 octaves instead of 1; hands together instead of hands separate)

Some specific notes on Technique by level:

Level 3:

- The 5FP key is circled on the judging sheet (its not a student choice). If Eb Major is called, the student will also play the parallel minor key (eb minor).
- Scale – student's choice of 1 OR MORE 8ves. If the student plays HS, be sure to hear both hands. If there are fingering problems deduct a 1/2 point or so.
- Contrary motion scales are new. They can start on ANY key
- Arpeggios – they can still do 4 octave cross-hand at this level.

Level 4:

Triads – It's the STUDENT's choice of blocked or broken, not the judge's. It's OK if they don't repeat the top chord. No points off.

Level 5:

Triads – are blocked AND broken now.

Level 6:

HT scales now! A big milestone for some.

Chord progression is only after the Major scale, but if they play after minor its ok.

Level 7:

Scales MUST be 3 8ves in triplet eighth notes. Students are being tested on triplets.

Fingering is not evaluated for the 4-note broken chords.

Level 8:

Chord Progression – bottom RH note in parenthesis can be eliminated for small hands, or taken in LH 2 vs. 3 – remember that the LH triplets should begin 2 8ves apart.

Arpeggios now have a minimum tempi.

Level 9:

There are students choice now from the LISTED keys for some of the skills.

Level 10:

4-note chords – the S chooses 1 from each category.

Arpeggios – The student comes with a list of 2 in each category and then the judge choose one from each category to hear.

Level 11:

4-note HT chords can be a problem with reach for some students. They may play 3-note blocked chords and 4-note broken. OR LH blocked and RH broken if they can reach that.

NOTE: Send in a note with the Student about the reach problem.

Level 12:

Blocked octave scales – may be hard for some to reach. They can do broken.

Notes from the Past Performance Judges Meetings:

- Encourage students to take a “comfortable tempo” on technical skills that do not have tempo requirements.
- Do not tell student that they are “doing it wrong” or correct any errors during the exam. Instead, write suggestions on the score sheets.
- Be sensitive to terminology students are familiar with, and how a student was taught. Rephrase a question if student doesn’t seem to understand specific direction or term, especially for younger students. For instance, “steps and skips” instead of 2nd and 3rd, 5-Finger pattern, Pentachord pattern, Pentascale pattern, etc.
- Deduct ½ a point for minor slips rather than full points. Also, deduct only once for the same mistake that may be made in different keys. **No ¼ point deductions please!**
- Don’t take points off for false starts, but give student another chance to begin again.
- **Be sure to make written comments whenever possible**, i.e. why you took points off, or when something was done well. Always be as positive and encouraging as possible. The more comments you write, the more helpful it is to both the student and teacher.
- Be sure to check the fingering guide in the Syllabus (pp. A-11 through A-13) The fingerings in () are optional fingering and points should not be taken off if students use the optional fingering. For instance, in the C Major arpeggio, students may use finger 3 instead of finger 4 in the left hand. Optional fingerings are listed in order to accommodate students with smaller hands.
- If your student is playing with alternate fingerings for scales, arpeggios or tonic triad inversions, be sure to send in the alternate fingering in writing with your student. There is no longer an alternate fingering form to fill out.
- If a student plays with different fingering, but did not come with this alternate fingering on paper, deduct only ½ point if it is played securely and consistently.
- For triad and inversions, take ½ point off for minor incorrect fingering. Deduct only once for same mistakes made. (i.e. going up and down or in both major and minor)
- Fingering will not be evaluated for four-note chords or chord progressions.
- **Don’t deduct any points if student does more than the minimum.** For instance, student plays 3 octave scales when only 2 octaves are required, or student plays I-IV-I-V7-I chord progression when only I-V7-I chord progression is required. **Only exception is at Level 7 scales. This must be heard in 3 octaves with triplet eighth notes.**
- For upper level repertoire that is uncommon, especially 20th century repertoire, please consider sending a 2nd copy of the pieces that is not memorized for judges to follow along. It is OK to make Xerox copies for this purpose as long as the judge collects and discards the copies appropriately after the performance.
- Be sure students bring ALL their music with measures numbered for the judges. **No photocopies!**
- Do not take repeats except in cases of short pieces (at teacher’s discretion) or there is a 1st and 2nd ending. However, some pieces should be played with repeats, even if longer, such as Rondo alla Turca at teacher’s discretion

- Take off your “Teacher Hat” at the door. Do not verbally make comments or “teach” any part of the repertoire you heard. Instead, make all comments on the score sheets.
- DO NOT suggest that a student should be at a higher/lower level as these comments could undermine their teacher. You have no background information on the student or the teacher’s reasons for putting a student at a certain level. Always be sensitive and respectful of other teaching styles, methods, and reasons.
- Make up exams are strictly for students that missed the exam due to illness. No make up exams will be given for any other conflicts, including not being prepared in time.
- For missed performance exam that will not qualify for a make up exam, students can take the performance exam in the same level next year without having to take the theory exam again. Or at the teacher’s discretion, student can move up to the next level the following year.
- Finally, remember that we want to be as encouraging to these students as possible. When in doubt, it’s always better to deduct less than more!

Additional Notes for Specific Levels:

Level 1A, 1B, 1C: Do not take points off if rhythm is not exact, i.e. the student doesn’t hold the last note of the 5 finger pattern for the full 4 counts, etc.

Level 2: Do not take points off if whole notes and chords are not held exactly as indicated.

For 2-note slurs, do not take points off if rhythm is not exact, as long as the lifts between slurs are heard. Also, do not take off points if the last tonic note is missing before the chords.

Do not evaluate on wrist movement or hand position as long as the breaks between slurs are heard.

Level 3: Chord Progression: Do not deduct any points if student plays I-IV-I-V7-I chord progression instead of I-V7-I, as long as the notes are accurate.

For arpeggio thumb under fingering, 5-4-2-1 or 5-3-2-1 fingering is both correct. Deduct ½ point if fingering is inconsistent but arpeggio is otherwise secure.

Arpeggios: Students can play **EITHER** 4 octave Cross-Hand or 2 octave with thumb under.

From Level 6 and up: Minimum metronome tempo is indicated. Please have a general idea of these tempo markings but do not use a metronome in front of the student to establish tempo! As long as the scale is secure and fluent, do not deduct any points if the scale is played a little under tempo. Deduct ½ point for obviously slower tempo than indicated.

From Level 6 and up: All technical skills are played hands together.

Metronome marking is a minimum requirement. Students may play faster than the metronome marking at each level without being penalized.

Octave range is also a minimum requirement. If only 2 octaves are required but if students play 3 or 4 octaves, do not deduct any points.

Do not deduct any points for poor hand position or awkward playing as long as the skill is demonstrated well with correct fingering. Feel free to make written suggestions on the score sheet, but no deductions.

Level 7: Students must play scales 3 octaves in triplet eighth notes. This is the only level where triplets are evaluated. If students play 2 or 4 octaves, deduct 1 point and explain the reason on the score sheet.

Level 8: Be sure students play the Two against Three scales both ways. Correct fingering is evaluated here. Students choose from ANY key.

When students have choice of keys, at levels 8 and higher, (Two against Three scales, Octave scales, Four-note Chord Inversions) please have students write these keys down prior to the exam so that they don't blank out at the exam.

Levels 1-8: If exam is missed, it must be made up within 2 weeks of the final exam date, otherwise it will be considered incomplete. No certificate will be given.

Levels 9-12: Extensions may be requested, case by case.

Level 12:

If doing a recital, do the technique on one of the exam dates.

Please try to avoid scheduling recitals on a holiday weekend as it is hard to find judges.

Be sure all requirements as outlined in the syllabus are fulfilled, including program notes .

NSMTA AIM Award for Levels 10 and 11:

Monetary \$100 AIM Award is given to the top combined theory and performance scoring student at Level 10 and 11. Student must have successfully completed all requirements as outlined in the syllabus and also have fulfilled the following additional requirements.

- Student must have a combined average theory and performance score of 89 or higher
- Student must have studied with a North Shore teacher for at least 3 years (does not have to be three consecutive years).

Students eligible for these awards must have completed the exam within 2 weeks of the last exam date.

NSMTA AIM Award for Level 12:

Monetary \$100 AIM Award is given to all Level 12 students upon successful completion of all requirements as outlined in the syllabus and also the following additional requirements:

- Student must have a combined average theory and performance score of 89 or higher
- Student must have studied with a North Shore teacher for at least 3 years (does not have to be three consecutive years).

Students must complete all requirements within 1 year of the final performance exam date.