



## **Course Syllabus: Piano Class 1 Fall 2025**

**Fain College of Fine Arts**

**MUSC 1111 Section 101**

**MW 9:00am – 9:50 pm Fain 124**

**MUSC 1111 Section 102**

**TR 2:00 pm – 2:50 pm Fain 124**

### **Contact Information**

Instructor: Dr. Susan Harvey

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Office hours: Posted Outside Office

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### **Course Description**

**From MSU Catalog:** Class instruction in piano for students with no previous background; emphasis on the development of fundamental skills. Majors/minors only.

### **Course Objectives**

Music majors and minors with little or no piano performance background learn fundamental piano performance skills. Students develop personal musicianship and keyboard skills necessary to pass keyboard proficiency requirements.

Students will:

- Learn keyboard technique including posture, hand position, and finger patterns
- Sight-read simple music using both hands (i.e. folk songs)
- Develop musicianship skills including ear training and rhythmic reading
- Learn major scales
- Harmonize and improvise accompaniment to simple songs
- Learn chord progressions
- Transpose simple melodies
- Perform simple pieces hands together
- Implement basic music theory into piano performance

### **Textbook & Instructional Materials**

- *Alfred's Group Piano for Adults, Book 1*, second edition; by E.L. Lancaster and Kenon D. Renfrow

- *Modern Band Method – Keyboard, Book 1 A Beginner’s Guide for Group or Private Instruction* (2020): by Burstein, Hale, Claxton, & Wish, Hal Leonard
- Personal headphones or earbuds

#### Additional Free Resources

- Music as a Second Language Modern Band and the Modern Band Movement (free online)
  - Jam Cards: <https://musicwill.org/resources/>
  - 2025 Back to School Songpack: <https://jamzone.musicwill.org/2025/08/15/2025-back-to-school-songpack/>

### **Student Handbook**

Refer to: [Student Handbook](#)

### **Core Values**

One of Midwestern State University’s stated core values is: “People-Centered: Engage others with respect, empathy, and joy”. The professor considers the classroom a safe place where students are treated with respect as human beings, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, political beliefs, age, or ability. Moreover, diversity of thought is appreciated and encouraged, provided the students can agree to disagree. The professor’s expectation is that ALL students consider the classroom a safe environment.

Refer to: [Student Handbook](#)

### **Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures**

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work, not the individual to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct.

[Office of Student Conduct](#)

### **Grading**

The instructor reserves the right to cancel or adjust assignments as the course progresses.

To pass Piano Class, students must pass assigned activities and piano proficiencies. A rubric for each proficiency is on the piano proficiency form.

Table 1: Points allocated to each assignment

Assignments	Percentage
Class Participation/Preparation	20

Assignments	Percentage
Assigned Competencies (weekly assignments) Competencies are individualized for each student.	60
Passing Assigned Proficiencies	20
Total Percentage	100

Table 2: Total points for final grade.

Grade	Percentage
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	Less than 60

### **Homework**

Students receive weekly in class assignments to complete from *Alfred's Group Piano Book*, *Modern Band Piano*, and/or supplemental materials. Practicing outside of class to complete them is expected to complete assigned activities and pass designated proficiencies. Assignments are individualized for each student.

Students will be assigned skills that prepare students for future proficiencies. For example, students will practice sight reading and transposition in preparation for Piano Class 2, 3, and 4.

### **Mid-Term-Final Exam**

Students will perform Piano Proficiencies at midterm (date TBA) and during the university final exam time for the class.

#### **Final Exam Section 101**

Monday, December 8, 2025

8:00am - 10:00am Final Exam Time

#### **Final Exam Section 102**

Thursday, December 11, 2025

1:00pm – 3:00pm Final Exam Time

MSU Final Exam Link:

<https://msutexas.edu/registrar/schedule/fallfinalexamschedule.php>

### **Piano Proficiencies by Semester**

- **Piano Class 1: group 1 major scales**

- Piano Class 2: group 2 major scales, selected minor scales, major broken chords
- Piano Class 3: group 3 major scales, major chord progressions, minor chord progressions, prepared piece
- Piano Class 4: prepared melody with accompaniment, sight reading, transposition, prepared piece

### **Important Dates**

Last day for term schedule changes: August 28, 2025

Deadline to file for graduation: September 22, 2025

Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" November 24, 2025

Refer to: [Drops, Withdrawals & Void](#)

[Academic Calendar](#)

### **Desire-to-Learn (D2L)**

Pertinent information such as the class syllabus will be available through the MSU D2L system. Students are expected to understand how to navigate D2L.

You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor.

### **Attendance**

Piano Class 1 is a performance class. Students participate daily in individual and group activities. Activities are cumulative in organization, building on previously learned concepts. Therefore, attendance is crucial to personal development. Students may miss class twice without a final grade reduction. Each absence above the allotted two absences will reduce the final grade by one letter grade. Tardies count toward absences. Students who arrive ten minutes late will be marked absent from class. Nonparticipation in class equals one absence for each occurrence. Class participation includes all classroom activities - singing, rhythmic reading, practicing assigned material, and performing individually and as an ensemble.

The instructor may drop a student from the course for excessive absences (5 or more). A verbal or written warning will be given to a student prior to being dropped from the class.

### **Instructor Class Policies**

Students are required to participate in all class activities and practice assigned material in preparation for each class. Practicing daily outside of class is recommended.

Students are to conduct themselves in a professional manner so that all students may learn without distraction and disruption.

College students are adults and are expected to behave accordingly. Classroom behavior that interferes with either the instructor's ability to conduct class or the ability of the other students to benefit from instruction will result in the

instructor's removing the disruptive student(s) from class, either temporarily or permanently (instructor drop). Any disruptive student asked to leave class will receive an absence.

### **Weather Statement**

This course follows MSU Guidelines for inclement weather. Classes will not meet if campus is closed during the time of class. The class will NOT meet online if campus is closed. If assessment deadlines coincide with university closure, an extension will be stated the next class meeting.

### **Classroom Cleaning Protocols**

Students using the Piano Lab are encouraged to clean their piano and space before and after class. Time is allotted in the 50 minutes to clean your area. Instructions will be given how to clean pianos appropriately.

### **Cell Phones and Other Recording Devices**

The use of cell phones and other recording or electronic devices is strictly prohibited during class. The instructor may direct, from time to time, on the possible use of cell phones for legitimate class reasons. Recording the class is prohibited, unless it is part of a reasonable accommodation under ADA, or by obtaining written consent by the instructor.

### **Change of Schedule**

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the Schedule of Classes each semester.

### **Privacy Statement**

Federal privacy law prohibits the instructor from releasing information about students to certain parties outside of the university without the signed consent of the student. Thus, in almost all cases the professor will not discuss students' academic progress or other matters with their parents. Please do not have them call. Regardless of these important legal considerations, the professors' general policy is to communicate with the students, not their parents, even when a student has signed a consent form.

### **Refund and Repayment Policy**

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees, and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. However, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans, and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. As described below, two formulas (federal and state) exist in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).

## **Services for Students with Disabilities**

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Northwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make an application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#).

## **College Policies**

### *Campus Carry Rules/Policies*

Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

### *Smoking/Tobacco Policy*

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by WATC. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated smoking areas at each location.

### *Alcohol and Drug Policy*

To comply with the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Northwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibit the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state, and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

### *Campus Carry*

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes as prohibited. The new Constitutional Carry law does not change this process. Concealed carry still requires a License-to-carry permit, and openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit [Campus Carry](#).

### *Active Shooter*

The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by the MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit [MSUReady – Active Shooter](#). Students are encouraged to watch

the video entitled "*Run. Hide. Fight.*" which may be electronically accessed via the University police department's webpage: ["Run. Hide. Fight."](#)

### **Grade Appeal Process**

Update as needed. Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University [MSU Catalog](#)

**\*Notice:** Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

### **Course Schedule:**

All student assignments are individualized based on students need and required proficiencies.

Students are expected to complete material from the *Alfred Group Piano* Book up to Page 119.

Students will Perform a minimum of two song accompaniments from the *Modern Band Method*.

## Appendix A

### Standards/Competencies and Corresponding Activities

Competencies	Activities
<b>SBEC EC-12 Music Domain II Music Theory and Composition</b>	
<i>Competency 004: The teacher knows how to read, write, and interpret standard music notation.</i>	
A. Knows standard music terminology and identifies and interprets music symbols and terms from notation (e.g., dynamics, embellishments, articulation markings, tempo markings).	Students will utilize standard musical terminology as they progress through the fundamentals of playing piano.
B. Recognizes clefs, keys and meters; recognizes scales and pitch collections (e.g., modal, major, minor, pentatonic, whole-tone); identifies specific melodic and harmonic intervals; and identifies different rhythms and meters.	Students will learn major scales in all keys with appropriate fingering. They will harmonize and improvise accompaniments to simple songs and perform simple pieces with hands together.
C. Reads melodies in various modes and tonalities; interprets rhythmic and melodic phrases from notation; and reads music that incorporates complex rhythmic patterns in simple, compound and asymmetric meters.	Students will learn chord progressions, sight-read, transpose, and implement music theoretical skills and techniques into piano performance.
<b>SBEC EC-12 Music Domain IV Music Classroom Performance</b>	
<i>Competency 009: The teacher demonstrates knowledge of methods and techniques for playing musical instruments.</i>	
A. Understands performance skills and appropriate playing techniques (e.g., bowing, fingering, embouchure, rudiments) for a range of instruments (e.g., band, orchestral, classroom).	Student will learn keyboard technique including posture, hand position, and finger patterns.