

**Connecticut College Department of Music**  
Academic Year 2024-2025

## Music Theory Self-Placement Guide

These descriptions should help you to select a course that's right for you. Please feel free to email Midge Thomas, theory coordinator, at [metho@conncoll.edu](mailto:metho@conncoll.edu) with general questions, or email the course instructor(s) directly. We look forward to seeing you in the music department!

If you'd like to brush up on your theory, [teoria.com](http://teoria.com) is a great website for review and practice.

Course	Description	Recommended Student Background
<p><b>MUS 123: Making Music at the Keyboard</b></p> <p><i>Offered fall '24 and spring '25</i> Contact: Sam Oram, <a href="mailto:soram@conncoll.edu">soram@conncoll.edu</a></p>	<p>An introduction to basic piano keyboard skills, fundamentals of music theory, and music notation. Topics include intervals, time signatures, key signatures, and chord construction. Weekly lab sessions involve hands-on learning at the keyboard, including creative applications.</p>	<p>Intended for students with little or no background in reading musical notation or playing a keyboard instrument.</p>
<p><b>MUS 130CC: Thinking Musically: Foundations of Music Theory</b></p> <p><i>Offered fall '24 and spring '25</i> Contact: Dale Wilson, <a href="mailto:jdwil@conncoll.edu">jdwil@conncoll.edu</a></p>	<p>An introduction to the field of music theory, considering the complex roles of theorist, performer, listener, composer, and historian. Coursework includes intensive review of the rudiments of music theory (clefs, notation, meter, key signatures, scales, intervals, triads, seventh chords), development of musicianship skills, and exercises in counterpoint and elementary composition. Course topics are applied to musics both within and outside of the traditional canon. As a ConnCourse, this class will make connections across the liberal arts.</p>	<p>Intended for students with some musical background who are able to read music fluently in at least one clef.</p>
<p><b>MUS 206: Theory I: Harmony, Melody, Rhythm</b></p> <p><i>Offered spring '25</i> Contact: Midge Thomas, <a href="mailto:metho@conncoll.edu">metho@conncoll.edu</a></p>	<p>An integrated approach to music theory and musicianship, focusing on how harmony, melody, and rhythm operate in a diverse repertoire of musical styles and traditions. Creative, analytical, and theoretical work provides a framework for exploring diatonic harmonic practices, rhythmic organization, and formal structures.</p>	<p>Intended for students who have completed MUS 123 or 130, or who have studied music theory in high school.</p>
<p><b>MUS 223 Theory II: Color and Chromaticism</b></p> <p><i>Offered fall '24</i> Contact: Midge Thomas, <a href="mailto:metho@conncoll.edu">metho@conncoll.edu</a></p>	<p>As a continuation of MUS 206, this course explores chromatic harmony and the rich rhythmic, textural, and formal organization that goes with it through an integrated approach to music theory and musicianship. Students will investigate a diverse array of musical practices through creative, analytical, and theoretical work.</p>	<p>Intended for students who have completed MUS 206 or who took AP music theory.</p>
<p><b>MUS 224 Jazz Language at the Keyboard</b></p> <p><i>Offered spring '25</i> Contact: Dale Wilson, <a href="mailto:jdwil@conncoll.edu">jdwil@conncoll.edu</a></p>	<p>A comprehensive study of jazz harmony for instrumentalists, vocalists, or composers wishing to perform or compose in the jazz idiom. Through keyboard exercises, students learn chord construction, voice leading, chord-scale relationships, nomenclature, and basic jazz arranging. Coursework also includes transcription exercises, and composing and arranging music in the jazz idiom. Individual meetings supplement class sessions. No prior keyboard experience required.</p>	<p>Intended for students who have completed MUS 123, 130, or 206, or who have prior music theory training.</p>