PREPARING FOR CERTIFICATE OF MERIT

A Teacher’s Life After Registration (and Even During Registration*)
Certificate of Merit Council
2006 - 2007

Goals of Certificate of Merit
➢ To provide a systematic and comprehensive plan to develop performance skill, technique, ear-training and sight-reading skills, and understanding of music theory;
➢ To provide practical goals to help students maintain a steady and focused appreciation of their musical studies
➢ To encourage students to strive for musical excellence
➢ To create opportunities in which students may share their music with others.

CM is for the average student, but allows the very gifted and talented student many opportunities. Convention is for the exceptional student.

* Registration opens September 15 and closes November 15 at 11:59 p.m. There is no late registration!
Please use Normal Capitalization for student names, not ALL CAPITALS!

Syllabi: Piano, Strings (Violin/Viola, Cello), Winds, Voice
➢ Primary resource for CM
➢ Other resources: CM Policy is vital; it updates the syllabi. It is available online at MTAC.org.
➢ Also available online: Frequently Asked Questions for computer beginners; Letter for parents; CM Encyclopedia; Theme Recital and Panel information; Help files at various levels; and back issues of the CM News.
➢ Before you call your branch chair or a member of the CM Council, please read this material. Follow the Line of Communication as set forth in CM Policy IV. 4. Only email or call the State Office or Council as a last resort. You must contact the Branch Chair first.
➢ Developing your computer skills to the same level that you can drive a car will help you immeasurably. You don’t have to be a mechanic—or a computer programmer.
➢ New syllabi for winds and violin/viola are available now through the State Office, and will be used for 2006-2007 CM. Work is proceeding on cello, voice, and piano syllabi, to be available at the 2007 Convention.
➢ Notes:

Teacher Participation:
➢ Teachers must participate in the work of CM days or other days before or after. Branches can determine requirements and impose penalties. See Policy V
➢ Help out your Branch Chair, by offering to help train new CM Teachers enter their repertoire and carpool requests etc, into the CM Database.

Theory Preparation
➢ Resources—published theory books, old theory tests, your own knowledge that can relate theory to repertoire.
➢ Students are responsible for cumulative knowledge, not just what is listed in their level of the syllabus.
➢ As of 2005, students must get 80% to be eligible for Convention performance.
➢ Passing is 70%; Advanced exemption is 90% in 9th grade and above.
➢ Ear Training: 3 sets of disks so it changes annually, but the elements do not change. Look at the old tests and practice ear training with your students. Disks are not available for teacher use.
➢ Notes:
Sight Reading Preparation

- Sight reading is an important part of evaluations. As of 2005, students must earn a “good” or “excellent” in sight reading to be eligible for convention performance. Practice this important skill with your students by using your own library or available published materials.
- Sight reading books published by Dr. Eugene Kuo are available through the state office.
- Notes:

Technique Preparation

- Resources--some published materials available commercially, Keyboard Technique Guide available through the State Office.
- Teacher tools: self-produced achievement charts, diligent teaching of requirements.
- Be sure student can play straight through the technique from an official chart without being prompted for each element. Photocopy the chart from an old sight reading test booklet.
- Keyboard students may no longer substitute an Improvisation for one of the multi-key elements. All Technical elements must be played. A 5 – 45 second improvisation may follow the technique, but the time of the Evaluation will not be adjusted.
- See Technique Guidelines (attached). Be sure to work with your students during their lessons for Technique mastery.
- “Time” your students. Let them know they are being timed (builds tension); work with them on relaxing through the tension, not rushing, moving forward, etc.
- Notes:

Repertoire Preparation

- Do not assign pieces that are beyond the student’s ability.
- Now is the time to be sure that all repertoire requirements are met, in terms of period distribution, memorization requirements, time the complete program, etc. (refer to period clarification, attached)
- Piano teachers should consider entering ensembles. Students will be appropriately scheduled so that both will be heard by the same evaluator. The ensemble piece need not be memorized.
- Only one movement of a sonata or Sonatina can be performed.
- No double dot repeats. D.C. or D.S. al fine is acceptable. Think about overall length of repertoire. Number the first measure of each line of music.
- Be certain of your branch’s deadlines for entering the repertoire online.
- Panel repertoire: a piece by a composer who lived in the most recent 50 years is required; Bartok & Prokofiev are also accepted.
- NO PHOTOCOPIES ARE ALLOWED IN EVALUATIONS except under established policy for out-of-print material or to facilitate a page turn. Students may be disqualified for the use of photocopies! See CM Policy IV #6 Music downloaded from the internet must include the URL. Original scores are required for all pieces!
- If the title of the piece and composer are not in English, a translation must be attached.
- Coach the student on CM procedures, proper dress, and courtesy to the evaluator.
- Notes:

Clarification of Repertoire Periods: When three or four pieces are required, one piece must be from three or four of these listed categories. These rules apply to all keyboard students. For the disciplines, please see the individual syllabi for details.

Category 1. The Baroque composers are clearly listed in the Syllabus.
Clarification of Repertoire Periods (continued):

Category 2. The Classical composers are clearly listed. CPE Bach is only Classical except for the Anna Magdalena pieces which are Baroque.

Category 3. The Romantic composers are clearly listed. The Impressionist / Early 20th Century composers are listed and are to be combined with the Romantic composers. Claude Debussy’s birthdate is 1862 rather than 1826. Granados, Paderewski, Rachmaninoff, Scriabin (1872-1915) should be in Category 3 rather than Category 4.

Category 4. The Contemporary composers are to include the Twentieth Century composers and the Contemporary Pedagogical Composers. Some of the pieces of the Pedagogical Composers are actually 21st century, hence the combination and the new more comprehensive name.

When composers are listed in two categories, a piece may be played to represent either category. The other category must also be represented. When three or four pieces are played, there must be a representation of one piece from each of the three or four categories listed above.

Convention Performance:

- This opportunity is for the student who wants a challenge, an accolade for both the student and the teacher.
- You must enter your student for a single convention performance. Evaluator will give a rating.
- If the rating is 5- or higher and all other requirements are met, you can submit the student for convention performance. This must be done online. See “Convention Recitals and Panel/YAG.”
- There are no guarantees of any student playing at Convention. There are many “program factors” the Convention Chair must consider. There is a limited number of convention performers.
- Read the “Help” file for correct form of repertoire listing. The convention programs will be constructed from the information that you submit! (“Help” file is attached.)
- A Parent Agreement Form is available online for the parents to sign. Do not submit the application until you have this signed form.
- A student who is a “no-shows” for convention may be ineligible to play in subsequent years and numerous no-shows from a single studio may render a teacher ineligible to submit future students. Cancellations well in advance are often unavoidable and are acceptable.
- The Theme Festival, all disciplines, for 2007-2008 is “Music of the USA”. For a listing of eligible composers, go to the state website, CM, theme recital list. Other composers may be eligible.
- The deadline for Convention Performance application is April 15. No exceptions.
- Notes:

Correct form for entering repertoire for convention performance:

Please time pieces accurately. DON'T GUESS!
Use a capital letter for all keys -- even minor ones -- but write out the word "major" or "minor".

Some examples of correct format for different types of titles are as follows:

| Title: Sonatina in G major, Op. 36, No. 2 | Title: Circus Suite |
| Movement: Allegro | Movement: Clowns |
| Composer: Clementi | Composer: Turina |
| Title: French Suite No. 3 in B minor | Title: Waltz in C# minor, Op. 64, No. 2 |
| Movement: Allemande, Gigue | Movement: |
| Composer: J. S. Bach | Composer: Chopin |
**Piano Technique Rating Guidelines**

**Excellent** – Musically executing the elements with even tone, accurate rhythm & notes, good hand position, correct pedaling, consistent fingering, well within the time.

**Good** – Within the time limit, one or two errors with fingering and/or notes, good hand position, competent pedal, overall well prepared.

**Average** – Within the time limit, several errors with fingering and/or notes, unsteady tempo, not much attention to hand position.

**Weak** – All of the elements inadequately prepared, poorly executed.

**Incomplete** – Unable to execute one or more of the elements.

Inability to play within the time limit will reduce the rating one score level.

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**Sight Reading Rating Guidelines**

**Excellent:**
Maintain 100% rhythmic note value accuracy.
Keep a very steady beat. No stopping or correction. Slight hesitation to rhythmic flow.
One or two wrong notes. Observe key signatures and accidentals.
Observe Articulation -- Legato, staccato, phrasing.
Accurate Dynamics.
Use pedal accurately if indicated.

**Good:**
Maintain rhythmic note value accuracy – one or two errors
Steady beat. Some hesitations to rhythmic flow.
A few wrong notes; less than excellent observance of key signature.
Articulation generally observed.
Dynamics generally observed, some nuances missed.
Pedal observed but slightly blurred.

**Average:**
Semi recognition of note values
Unsteady beat with frequent hesitations.
Many wrong notes, did not observe key signature. *Start on the wrong octave.* Does not apply to Levels Prep, 1, 2.
Very little articulation.
Unconvincing dynamics.
Pedal signs blurred or not observed.

**Weak:**
Struggle to recognize rhythmic and melodic patterns.
Few correct notes.
No Dynamics.

**Incomplete:**
If a student doesn’t play all the way through, stops, or doesn’t play it at all.

During the 30-second study, student may silently tap or shadow play. NO PRACTICING!
**Counting out loud is fine before and during performance.**
Overall Evaluation Ratings: “All Pieces well prepared....circle Yes or No”
Repertoire for all Disciplines:
Yes: All pieces are 4- or above. All pieces must be “yes” to be in convention.
Passing: Not all pieces are 4- or above but none are unacceptable
No: One or more pieces are unacceptable: The “no” does not mean that the student must remain at level. It just means that all pieces are not well performed.

Rules to Live By
- Deadlines are meaningful.
- Learn to use the internet. Visit www.mtac.org often.
- Read before you call or email! Read everything!
- Follow the “line of communication” explained in CM Policy IV #1.
- Don’t even THINK about using photocopies! Not even for evaluators or accompanists!
- Be very, very nice to your Branch Chair. It’s a tough job!

AND ONE MORE THING:
Consider applying to be an evaluator! For lots of information, see the CM News (online) for August 2006.