



THE RIVERS SCHOOL CONSERVATORY

Piano Curriculum Guide (Classical)

The Curriculum Guide is intended for reference.

Each teacher designs a curriculum that is appropriate for the individual student based on the student's skills, learning style, and commitment. Each level represents the general difficulty of repertoire, age of the student, and number of years studying piano. A student may spend one to several years within a level.

LEVEL ONE

Skills & Goals:

- Introduction and development of note reading, fingering, articulations, time value recognition
- Introduction to scales and key signatures. Beginners may start with Pentascales.
- Forming Triads in block or broken and introduction to arpeggio figures.
- Basic musicianship - phrasing, balance, voicing, and interpretation
- Beginning memorization skills.

Repertoire:

- Method books to pieces appropriate for the student's skills and learning style.
- Teacher will determine the appropriate choice of repertoire for the student.

End of Year Evaluation:

- Minimum of 4 keys. 2 Major/2 minor.
- One to two octave scales, hands alone or together. Young beginners may play Pentascales.
- Arpeggios hands alone or together, 2 octaves. Young beginners may play hand over hand arpeggios. Adjudicators will choose from among those prepared.
- Two pieces of contrasting character, possibly from memory.

Additional Requirements for Young Artist Diploma

- Please refer to Young Artist Diploma Program Requirements



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LEVEL TWO

Skills & Goals:

- Introduction to polyphony and skills related to voicing
- Continued work on interpretive elements and use of pedal
- Recognition of harmonies in the music
- Continued memory work

Repertoire:

- Pieces appropriate for the student's musicianship skills and learning style.
- Teacher will determine the appropriate choice of repertoire for the student.

**End of Year
Evaluation:**

- Minimum of 6 keys. 3 Major/3 minor. Adjudicators will choose from among those prepared.
- Scales and arpeggios, hands together, 2-3 octaves.
- 2-3 contrasting pieces from memory (unless Contemporary), one may be an Etude.

**Additional
Requirements
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Diploma**

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LEVEL THREE

Skills & Goals:

- Introduction to playing 3rds, 6ths, and octave passages
- Broken chord exercises and arpeggios/inversions.
- More complex polyphonic works
- Detailed work on appropriate interpretive elements for larger, more substantial repertoire selections
- Introduction to more complex etudes and larger sonatas
- Memorization

Repertoire:

- Pieces appropriate for the student's musicianship skills and learning style.
- Teacher will determine the appropriate choice of repertoire for the student.

**End of Year
Evaluation:**

- Minimum of 8 keys - 4 major/minor. Adjudicators will choose from among those prepared.
- 4 octaves, hands together in parallel motion, chords and inversions, arpeggios.
- 2-3 contrasting pieces from memory (unless Contemporary), one may be an Etude.

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This level represents an ongoing commitment to the highest level of artistic achievement that will continue throughout college and post collegiate years.

LEVEL FOUR

Skills & Goals:

- High level of technical achievement
- Contemporary Seminar participation
- Development of more refined and sophisticated musicianship skills.
- Higher level of Etudes
- Interpretation and performance skills to support large scale keyboard works.
- Ability to play all major and minor scales and arpeggios.

Repertoire:

- Pieces appropriate for the student's musicianship skills and learning style.
- Teacher will determine the appropriate choice of repertoire for the student.

End of Year Evaluation:

- Grab bag choice of any major or minor scale and V7 arpeggios
- 2 contrasting pieces
- 1 Etude of appropriate difficulty

Additional Requirements for Young Artist Diploma

- Please refer to Young Artist Diploma Program Requirements