

**WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY OF MUSIC**

**PIANO FACILITY WORKSHOPS**

**Instructor: Ms. Catherine Freitag-Hewson**

**Email: catherine\_hewson@yahoo.ca**

**Office Hours: by appointment**

All classes take place on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the following times in room 16C at Beckett School at Laurier, 190 Lester St.

Module 1: 9:00 am

Module 2: 10:00 am

Module 3: 11:00 am

Module 4: 1:00 pm

**Course Objective:**

The goal of this course is to assist students in attaining facility at the keyboard enabling them to pass the Equivalency Exam required of all music students at Laurier who have not already completed a Level 6 piano exam from a conservatory. This will be accomplished through various assignments designed to build technique and sight reading skills at the piano. Students learn a variety of repertoire (including solos and duets), gradually building up to level 6 which is required for the exam.

**Course Materials: available at the Laurier bookstore**

Piano Facility Course-pack MU001

Four Star Sight Reading, Books 3, 4, 5 & 6 as needed

RCM Celebration Series Piano Repertoire 6

**Attendance:**

Students are expected to attend all classes. Your active participation is essential for your success in this course. Please be on time for all sessions. It is expected that students will practice their assignments regularly, approximately 30 minutes per day.

**Equivalency Exam Procedures:**

**Although there is no official grade given for this course, students must receive an overall mark of 60 on the Equivalency Exam in order to fulfill the piano requirement at Laurier (similar to the Royal Conservatory requirement). This must happen by the end of the second year of the music program in order to proceed to third year.** Therefore, students can enroll continuously in the Piano Facility Course for up to 6 terms until they are ready to try the Equivalency Exam. However, this should not be necessary for most students as long as they put forth the effort to practice. Students with some previous piano experience will find that they need two terms of the course to adequately prepare for the

Equivalency Exam. Equivalency Exams are offered in the last week of classes at the end of each term. As long as students are enrolled in the course that term, there is no additional fee for the exam. There is no charge for Equivalency Exams during Orientation week either. If students need to re-try the Equivalency Exam OR are not currently enrolled in the course, the fee for the exam is \$50.

### **Grading Criteria:**

The performance of music is very subjective and so it is important to clarify how the instructor will grade your exam. Listed below are the basic criteria which we use to evaluate your playing. It goes without saying that we realize that playing the piano in front of others is a new experience for many of you, and so of course we allow for **minor** mistakes due to nerves, etc. However, it must be evident that you have practiced and prepared well for the exam.

- 80-100**      Playing is musical and confident, technically superb and fluent, no major stops or stumbles. It is clear that the student has prepared thoroughly for the exam, memorized the correct fingering for all technical items in all required keys, etc.
- 70-79**      Playing is mostly well-prepared with accurate rhythm, dynamics and style. Technical items are played fluently at the required speed. Although occasional stumbles occur, student recovers easily and demonstrates proficiency in all areas.
- 60-69**      Playing is at times disturbed by stumbles and occasional wrong notes, but the OVERALL effect is that the student has prepared adequately, and has paid attention to the musical details in the score. Although some technical items lack fluency, an attempt has been made to reach the required speed in ALL listed keys.
- FAIL:**      Anything below a 60 is considered a fail on this exam. A failing grade is given when there is a **clear lack of preparation by the student characterized by several re-starts, stumbles, stops, extremely SLOW playing, taking too long to find hand positions, awkward fingerings, not covering ALL required keys, etc. to the point where the piece or technical exercise is almost unrecognizable.**

Once a student has successfully passed the Equivalency Exam, the results of the exam will be sent to the Dean's Office and a note will be made on your file that you have completed the piano requirement.

### **Classroom Etiquette:**

**No texting in class please.** It is essential that you stop playing immediately when the instructor begins to explain something to the class. It is both rude and distracting to continue playing during explanations, not to mention you may miss hearing part of the assignment.

*Students with disabilities or special needs are advised to contact Laurier's Special Needs Office for information regarding its services and resources. Students requiring special considerations should contact the Special Needs Office as soon as possible. The office will advise the instructor of appropriate accommodations for the student.*