

COURSE OUTLINE **Piano Class I**

Course Description

MU 101. Piano Class I. 1 credit hour. This course will enable the student to read music from a grand staff and to play this music on a piano. No experience is required, but the classes must be taken in sequence. Each semester builds upon the last, so the skill level and musical sophistication of the student increases with each semester.

Course Relevance

This course helps the student begin to read written music and to transfer that knowledge through the fingers to a keyboard to make music. Playing music is a complex skill requiring the use of eyes, ears, muscles, and critical thinking skills all at the same time, and in real time. Consequently, though this course is primarily for hobbyists and for enjoyment, it has benefits far beyond these goals.

Required Materials

MU 101 Textbook & materials:

Option 1

Faber, N. & R. (2001). *Adult Piano Adventures, "All in One" Lesson Book 1*. Fort Lauderdale, Florida: The FJH Music Company.

Option 2

Faber, N. & R. (2001). *Adult Piano Adventures, "All in One" Lesson Book 2*. Fort Lauderdale, Florida: The FJH Music Company.

Since each student is likely to be at different ability levels, the teacher may assign materials outside of the textbook(s). These can be borrowed from BCC or purchased by the student at local music stores.

Learning Outcomes

The intention is for the student to be able to

1. Read notes from the grand staff and play them on the piano
2. Understand and be able to count and play rhythms correctly
3. Understand and use correct fingerings as directed in print music
4. Understand and use adequate tempo, dynamic, articulation, and other markings
5. Demonstrate increasing skill and musical sophistication with each additional semester of study

Primary Learning PACT Skills that will be DEVELOPED and/or documented in this course

Through the student's involvement in this course, he/she will develop his/her ability in the following primary PACT skill areas:

1. Critical Thinking

- Through a variety music pieces the student will learn how to take a piece of written music and turn it into a musical performance

Secondary skills (developed but not documented):

- Self-Concept
- Time Management
- Problem Solving
- Listening
- Nonverbal Communication

Major Summative Assessment Task(s)

These learning outcomes and the primary Learning PACT skills will be demonstrated by

1. Preparing a portfolio of pieces of music played competently on the piano, which demonstrates the critical thinking skills inherent in the complex skill of playing the piano
2. Performing a memorized piece on the piano in front of an audience

Course Content

- I. Themes – Key recurring concepts that run throughout this course:
 - A. Playing the piano can be enjoyable
 - B. Making music requires hard work, knowledge, and skill
 - C. Repetition through practice reaps positive results
- II. Issues – Key areas of conflict that must be understood in order to achieve the intended outcome:
 - A. Finger muscles have to have repetition in order to respond properly
 - B. Acquisition of knowledge is only the first step in making music
 - C. Practicing requires time management and discipline
- III. Concepts – Key concepts that must be understood to address the issues:
 - A. Repetition of difficult passages brings positive results
 - B. Proof of knowledge of the rudiments is the ability to play a piece
 - C. Practicing on a regular basis assures progress
- IV. Skills/Competencies – Actions that are essential to achieve the course outcomes:
 - A. Learning notes on the grand staff and piano keyboard
 - B. Learning rhythmic vocabulary
 - C. Learning finger numbers and applying to performance of pieces
 - D. Practicing until success is achieved

Learning Units

- I. Rudiments
 - A. Notes on the grand staff
 - B. Basic rhythms
 - C. Fingering
 - D. Notes on the piano keyboard
 - E. Dynamics
 - F. Tempo marks

- G. Articulations
 - H. Repeats
 - I. Pedaling
- II. Five-finger positions
 - A. Hands separately
 - B. Hands together
 - C. Melody/Accompaniment
 - D. Balance between hands/voices
- III. Intervals
 - A. Identification
 - B. Reading fluency
 - C. Accompaniment
- IV. Scales
 - A. Definition
 - B. Playing one octave, hands separately, then together
 - C. Major, then minor, then other scale forms
- V. Chords
 - A. Definition
 - B. Playing root position major, minor, diminished, and augmented triads
 - C. Inversions of triads
 - D. Dominant sevenths
 - E. Other seventh chord qualities
- VI. Styles
 - A. Baroque
 - B. Classical
 - C. Romantic
 - D. Contemporary
 - E. Jazz
 - F. Popular
- VII. Sophistication
 - A. Interpretation
 - B. Balance/voicing
 - C. Pedaling
 - D. Independence of hands and voices
 - E. Multiple articulative, rhythmic, and dynamic shadings

Learning Activities

Each class session the student will be required to practice pieces until they are able to competently play them. A broad range of pieces will be studied, with an ever-increasing level of complexity and skill level required to be successful.

Grade Determination

The student will be graded on class attendance, practice and preparation of pieces, progress on a portfolio of pieces for the semester, and the performance of a piece in front of an audience for the final exam.