

Appendix 2a. Semester 4 Theory at CU–Boulder (Kris Shaffer) – Assessment guide for Unit I: Classical Form (pass/not pass grading scale, final grade determined by number of standards passed plus optional final project)

Concepts

Our coursework in this unit will be directed towards the goal of consistent, correct identification and interpretation of the following concepts or structural elements in the context of Classical-era pieces. Read as “I can identify and interpret ...”

Classical themes:

- sub-phrases (basic ideas, contrasting ideas)
- phrases (presentation, continuation, antecedent, consequent, compound basic idea)
- themes (sentences, periods, hybrid themes, compound themes)
- cadences (PAC, IAC, HC)

Sonata-form movements:

- Exposition and recapitulation types (continuous, two-part, two-part with multiple MCs)
- Modulations
- Structural points of arrival (medial caesura, essential expositional closure, essential sonata closure, crux)
- Theme-level modules (primary, transition, secondary, closing, TR=>FS, retransition)
- Movement-level modules (exposition, development, recapitulation, introduction, coda)
- correspondence, reference, and altered measures

Assessment

Beginning in Week 2, there will be weekly quizzes in which you will have an opportunity to demonstrate mastery of the above concepts by identifying them in pieces of music not covered in class. You will receive at least two quiz opportunities for each concept during the unit. Quiz concepts will be announced in advance. Upon taking the quiz, you will receive one of the following marks for each concept: **P** – **passing**, **A** – **attempted**, or **N** – **not attempted**.

Your unit grade will take into account only your mark for the *most recent quiz* that covered a given concept. If you do not take a quiz, your marks from the previous quiz will be taken. (So, for example, if you pass all categories before the last quiz, you can skip that quiz. Likewise, if you miss the first quiz for a set of concepts, you can “make it up” by taking the next quiz.)

Unit letter grades will be determined by the number of concepts you have passed by the final quiz:

- B: 9 or 10 concepts passing
- C: 7 or 8 concepts passing
- D: 5 or 6 concepts passing
- F: 4 or fewer concepts passing

If at the end of the unit you have a B, you will be eligible to attempt an A by doing the project below.

If at the end of the unit you have a C or lower, you may take advantage of the reassessment opportunity described below.

If at the end of the unit you are happy with your grade, you can do nothing and keep it.

End-of-unit project

Eligible students can submit a sonata project *one week after the final unit quiz* to attempt a unit grade of A. To obtain an A for the unit, a student must pass 9 or 10 concepts on the unit quizzes and do the following:

- Find a sonata-form movement with complex or ambiguous features.

- Produce a timeline (paper or digital) accurately labeling all 10 conceptual elements in that movement.
- Write a short paper (800 words maximum) or produce a short video (5 minutes maximum) explaining ambiguous elements in the movement—either the thought process that went into choosing the labels you selected on your timeline for ambiguous passages, or explaining the musical significance of complex elements that resisted clear timeline labels.

To accommodate end-of-unit projects and reassessments, the first week of Unit II will have minimal or no assigned out-of-class work.

Reassessment

In general, students will have multiple attempts to demonstrate mastery of a set of musical concepts throughout a unit of study. If a student is not satisfied with their level of mastery and their letter grade at the end of a unit, that student may reassess the relevant concepts *within two weeks* of the unit deadline. One reassessment opportunity is allowed automatically. However, if a student makes progress on that reassessment but some concepts still remain to be mastered, , another reassessment opportunity may be allowed at the instructor's discretion within another two-week window.

The reassessment must be *completed* within two weeks of the unit deadline. Students wishing to reassess one or more concepts should contact the instructor *immediately* to schedule a reassessment time and agree on an appropriate reassessment task.