

Piano Class (PA 3400)  
**GRADING POLICY & COURSE EXPECTATIONS**  
2016–2017

Dr. Michael Driscoll

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Piano Class is an *introductory* level class for anyone with or without previous keyboard experience. The goals of this course are to develop fundamental piano performance technique, to increase knowledge of musical terminology, style, and theory, and to strengthen the musical reading and listening skills of each individual. These goals will be met through ensemble and individual exploration of the piano keyboard, musical exercises, and piano literature, as well as through class ear training/music theory. This class encourages *individual growth*. Students will *not* be graded on how well they can perform in comparison to other students' ability.

**GENERAL RULES**

**Main expectations**

1. Be on time
2. Have necessary materials and be ready to work without being asked
3. Strive for improvement
4. Be respectful of others
5. No gum, food or drinks in the Piano Lab. It takes only one spill to ruin a keyboard!
6. Treat the instruments and headphones with care. This equipment is very expensive and easily broken if not properly cared for. Misuse of a keyboard may result in the loss of keyboard privileges for a determined amount of time or even removal from the class.
7. No cell phones or other electronic devices except when given explicit approval to use them

**Be ready every day to take on new challenges.**

Most of what you will learn in class will be because of your individual commitment to learning the work at hand and practicing. Testing and assignments will be given throughout the semester and you will be expected to complete each one on the designated completion date. New material is given in class almost daily. If you miss class, you are expected to learn all of the material missed, get the handouts given out, and check with Dr. Driscoll for important announcements that you may have missed.

Only one student at a time is allowed to go to the bathroom. If bathroom privileges are being abused or if a student asks too frequently to leave class to use the bathroom, Dr. Driscoll reserves the right to refuse.

**CLASS MATERIALS**

- PENCIL. We will use pen very rarely in this class.
- *Adult Piano Adventures Book 1* by Nancy and Randall Faber (provided)
- Additional handouts (provided)

**Music and textbooks** are the property of the school and should be returned in the best possible condition. Students will be charged to replace damaged or lost music/books.

## **GRADING & ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Grades for Piano Class will be based on attitude, preparation, participation, attendance, written work and quizzes/exams. Grades are based approximately on the following percentages:

<b>35</b>	<b>Participation/Effort/Practice Skills</b>
<b>25</b>	<b>Performance Exams</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Written Assignments</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Theory Exams</b>
<b>20</b>	<b>Attendance/Tardiness</b>

Letter grades are assigned according to the BHS handbook:

A	93-100	B	83-86	C	73-76	D	63-66
A-	90-92	B-	80-82	C-	70-72	D-	60-62
B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69	F	0-59

### **Participation/Effort/Practice Skills**

Because this is a performance-oriented class, your active participation will be essential. On fairly regular occasions throughout the semester, individual students will be asked to perform a prepared piece for Dr. Driscoll and sometimes for the class.

The attitude you bring to class affects not only your work, but the work of the whole class. A large percentage of your grade is based on attitude, participation and effort in class. This is a fairly subjective grade, so it is important that you make a consistent effort to participate in all class activities. Off-task behavior will adversely affect your attitude/effort grade. A rubric for participation will be handed out at a later date.

*Please:*

- No speaking or playing when Dr. Driscoll is speaking.
- No speaking or playing when another member is asking a question or addressing the class.

### **Attendance/Tardiness**

Tardiness and Absences will affect your grade. You are expected to arrive for class on time. The clock in the Piano Lab is the official clock! The following attendance policy will be strictly enforced.

- You are given **two “free” tardies** per quarter. Each tardy beyond the first two is a deduction of **2 points** from your quarter grade.
- You are given **four “free” absences** per quarter. Each absence beyond the first four absences (excused or unexcused) is a deduction of **5 points** from your quarter grade. You may make up absences beyond the 4 “free” absences - see Dr. Driscoll for ways to make up the missed time. It is your responsibility to keep track of the number of absences per quarter. If you are unsure of the number of absences, you should ask Dr. Driscoll.

### **Written work, exams, quizzes and projects**

- Quizzes and exams will be given throughout the semester. These evaluations will be both written and performance-based.

**Please Note:** Teachers are not obligated to provide work in advance for planned absences or to provide individual instruction upon the student’s return.

### **TEACHER/STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY**

Please do not hesitate to seek out help from the teacher if you are having difficulty. The teacher's responsibility is to help you learn and resolve issues that may arise. Your responsibility as a student is to take an active role in your education. Among other things, this means that you need to ask questions when you are having problems that you are unable to solve on your own. Don't wait for the teacher to come to you!

### **ADDITIONAL PRACTICE**

Although not required, practicing regularly outside of class in order to maximize progress is encouraged. If you do not own a keyboard at home, see if a friend or place of worship has one you could borrow or on which you could practice. Practice pianos are available in the BHS Whitebox, the Blackbox Theater, and in the Chorus Room (RM 324) when those rooms/pianos are available. Most of these pianos are locked; see Dr. Driscoll for access, but please do not interrupt him if he is teaching another class. The piano in the Auditorium is not for student use.



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<http://michaeldriscollconductor.com/courses/piano-class/>

I have read, understand and agree to abide by the BHS Piano Class Grading Policy and Course Expectations.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student signature

I have read and agree to the BHS Piano Class Grading Policy and Course Expectations for my child.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Due by FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 9**

PLEASE RETURN THIS PAGE ONLY. Keep the other pages for your records.