University of Kentucky School of Music
Graduate Entrance Exam
Description of Exam Format

WRITTEN THEORY:

Fundamentals: (All questions are presented in a multiple-choice format.)

1) Voice-leading. Examinees are presented with a short musical example in four voices (SATB) containing a number of typical part-writing errors, with each individual chord clearly labeled. Examinees determine which chord/pair of chords contain/s the error. (For instance, a question might ask "which of the above chords contains an instance of an improperly doubled leading-tone?" for which the examinee should choose the chord that matches this description.)
2) Intervals. Examinees determine which note lies at a specific interval above or below a given note. (For instance, a question might ask "which note lies a major second above A-flat?" for which the examinee should choose "B-flat" from a list of pitches presented in multiple-choice format.)
3) Chords. Examinees are presented with a number of chords of varying quality (major, minor, etc.) and are asked to identify the chord that matches a requested chord quality. (For instance, a question might ask "which of the following is a fully-diminished seventh chord?" for which the examinee should choose the chord that matches this quality from those presented.)
4) Scales and Collections. Examinees are presented with an example containing a number of scales and are asked to identify the specific scale-type or collection. (For instance, a question might ask "which of the above is a harmonic minor scale?" for which the examinee should choose the scale that best matches this description.) Possible scales include the major scale, the three typical forms of the minor scale, the church modes, the whole-tone and octatonic collections, etc.
5) Rhythm and Meter.
    a. Examinees are presented with a measure of music that is incomplete, and are asked to identify the type of rest that best completes the measure.
    b. Examinees are presented with a measure of music and are asked to identify the meter (time signature) that best matches the notated music.
    c. Examinees are presented with a measure of music and are asked to identify the *beat and meter type* (such as "simple duple," "compound duple," "simple triple," or "compound triple").
6) Non-harmonic tones. Examinees are presented with a short musical example in four voices (SATB) that contains a number of typical non-chord tones clearly labeled. Examinees determine the appropriate non-chord tone type corresponding to specific pitches. (For instance, a question might ask "what type of non-chord tone occurs at #1?" for which the examinee should choose the correct type of non-chord tone from a list of possibilities presented in multiple-choice format.)

Analysis:

1) Key areas. Examinees are presented with a short passage from a piece of music and are asked to identify the local tonic key. (Note: the excerpt will be taken from the middle of a piece, and the key may not match the notated key signature.)
2) Cadences. Examinees are presented with a short passage from a piece of music and are asked to identify the cadence-type from a list of possibilities. Possible cadence-types include the perfect authentic cadence, imperfect authentic cadence, half cadence, Phrygian half cadence, plagal cadence, and deceptive cadence.
3) Harmonic analysis. Examinees are presented with a short passage from a piece of music and are asked to identify specific harmonies (clearly labeled/identified on the score) using Roman numerals and figured bass symbols as appropriate. Possible harmonies include diatonic triads or seventh chords, secondary dominant/applied chords, borrowed chords/modal mixture, Neapolitan sixth or augmented sixth chords (specify It^{+6}, Fr^{+6}, or Ger^{+6}), etc.
4) Atonal analysis / set theory. Examinees are presented with a short passage from a piece of music with a number of sets/atonal cells clearly labeled on the score. Examinees are asked a variety of questions pertaining to atonal analysis and set theory, including identifying a set's normal order, prime form, interval vector, etc. Other questions might involve identifying the relationship between two sets, such as transposition, inversion, etc.
5) Form. Examinees are presented with a longer excerpt and are asked to identify various structural phenomena, including local key areas, cadence points, motivic relationships, typical formal functions (transitional section, etc.).