Dear New Willamette Student:

This letter is being sent to you as a prospective music major, music minor, or student who may be interested in studying music theory in college. Music majors and minors are required to take music theory; others may wish to take music theory and use it as an elective in their B.A. curriculum.

All prospective music students will be required to take the Music Theory Assessment, which will be administered at 4:30 p.m. on Friday, August 25 in the Rogers Music Center, Rogers Rehearsal Hall. The assessment gives us information that will help to place you in the course appropriate for your skill and knowledge level. If your knowledge and skills are particularly advanced, you may be able to test out of a semester or more of the theory requirement.

We have attached a sample assessment to help you prepare. To qualify for entrance into Musicianship 1, you should be able to complete the assessment with ease. If you cannot do so on the first try with this sample, work through one of the Fundamentals of Music textbooks or web-based programs (recommended below) and you will substantially improve your skills. Sight singing melodies using solfeggio and taking dictation with the help of a friend can also assist you with your preparation. Finally, you may wish to consult with your band, orchestra, or choir director, or your private teacher for extra coaching. If you do not place into the Musicianship course sequence, you will take Fundamentals of Music Literacy, a more concentrated course covering the fundamentals of music, music theory and aural skills in a single semester.

In addition, to prepare yourself for the theory assessment, we suggest that you practice the following skills:

1. Identification of clefs
2. Identification of scales: major and minor (natural, harmonic, and melodic)
3. Identification of key signatures
4. Identification of intervals aurally and visually
5. Determining the key at any point in a piece
6. Identify chords and chord roots (practice by analyzing hymns)
7. Recognize duple, triple, and quadruple meters, aurally and visually
8. Clap back (echo) 2 measures of rhythm
9. Sing back (echo) 2 measures of melody
10. Identification of major and minor chords, aurally and visually
11. Playing the piano, at whatever level is appropriate for you

If you have any questions, please feel free to email (mduerksen@willamette.edu) or call me at (503) 370-6034.

Sincerely,

Dr. Marva G. Duerksen
Department of Music

Recommended textbooks and materials:
* teoria.com
* musictheory.net