Additional Information about the Music Theory and Piano Placements

**Music Theory:**

All music majors, musical theatre majors, and music minors are required to take a musicianship assessment/music theory placement exam; this assessment determines at which level of written music theory and aural theory lab each student should begin their studies at Samford. Based on their results, students will be assigned to either Music Fundamentals or Theory I. **

The Musicianship Assessment portion consists of a pre-recorded prompt, and requires students respond to the questions by providing verbal responses to aural and written materials, matching pitch and echoing back short melodic and rhythmic patterns, and sight-reading short rhythmic and melodic excerpts. The written portion consists of a timed test that is to be completed in 30 minutes or less. This part of the exam is designed to gather a diagnostic overview of a student's musical literacy in areas of written theory.

Students who have completed courses in music theory prior to their enrollment at Samford should contact Cameron Barnes, Director of Student Services at cbarnes1@samford.edu. These students may be offered an opportunity to complete an additional theory placement exam and potentially earn placement into a higher theory level. Advanced theory placement tests are administered during Bulldog Days orientation sessions.

Advanced Placement scores or music theory courses taken at another institution do not automatically allow students to “skip” Theory I at Samford. Students with AP or transfer credit must take and successfully pass the advanced theory placement exam to receive transfer credit and/or earn their placement into a more advanced theory course.

**Assessment outcomes are not factored into recommendations for acceptance into the School of the Arts or possible scholarship awards.**

**Piano:**

All music majors with a concentration in vocal or instrumental performance areas and musical theatre majors must enroll in Class Piano to satisfy piano proficiency requirements for their respective degrees. Students without previous piano study may elect to begin in Class Piano I without completing the piano placement assessment**; if choosing this option, students should still meet with the Coordinator of Class Piano, Mrs. Barbara Shinn, bshinn@samford.edu during the audition and interview weekend to receive general information regarding piano proficiency requirements.

Students with previous piano study who can meet the following requirements may be eligible to begin their piano studies at Samford at a higher level and should complete the piano assessment**:

- All major scales and arpeggios, 2 octaves, hands separately
- At-sight harmonization of a melody with primary chords, using lead sheet notation and roman numerals
- Sight reading, hands together

**Assessment outcomes are not factored into recommendations for acceptance into the School of the Arts or possible scholarship awards.**