

THE DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC
A combined assessment report for
Bachelor of Arts in Music Program and
Master of Music Program

Beginning in November of 2002, the Department of Music began the process of conducting annual reviews dealing with assessment. At the conclusion of the first review, the Report of Assessment rated the undergraduate program at 2 and the graduate program at 2 for the then current level of implementation. The levels with implementation of proposed action plans were subsequently rated at 2 for the undergraduate program and at 3 for the graduate program. The review committee listed as strengths that the department's goals were well stated and appropriate; that the department demonstrated findings and actions based on comprehensive outcome measures; and that assessment had led to improvements. Subsequent reviews of our assessment reports suggested that the department should reword goals for the Master of Arts to make them more student focused and should continue to identify specific criteria for evaluation. The matter of rewording goals was addressed and apparently now meets appropriate criteria since this was not mentioned in the review of the 2005 assessment report. The most recent (2006) reports for both the Bachelor's degrees and the Master of Music Degree suggest that the Department include details about its data collection methods and findings.

The review team must understand that our primary undergraduate degree is the Bachelor of Music, not the Bachelor of Arts. Of our 108 declared undergraduate music majors, only 14 are pursuing a Bachelor of Arts. In the 2005-2006 academic year, the CSU awarded degrees to 19 undergraduates and 18 Master of Music candidates.

Each year the Department must file with the National Association of Schools of Music a report for Higher Education Arts Data Services. These HEADS Data Summaries in Music are compilations of data generated from the reports submitted by all member institutions. The data are generally separated by size (number of music majors) and type (public or private). They are further divided by the highest degree granted in music. The summaries include information on physical plant, faculty and administrative salaries, enrollment by major, credit hours per major, full and part-time instruction, administrative support, income sources, and expenses. While none of this information bears directly on our Annual Assessment Report, it must be pointed out that our accrediting agent holds us to fairly specific criteria in order to maintain good standing. Serious concerns have been expressed about the role of assessment and its impact on accreditation (position papers articulating these concerns can be read on NASM's website, www.arts-accredit.org). Our main objective is to satisfy the standards outlined in the NASM Handbook, which may or may not address the issues raised in our Annual Assessment Report.

The following narrative constitutes the 2007 Annual Assessment Report for the Department of Music in the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences at Cleveland State University.

1.Goals

The Department of Music offers the Bachelor of Music Degree with concentrations in Performance, Music Education, Composition and Music Therapy, and the Bachelor of Arts Degree in Music. Each of the concentrations has the same goals for its core courses, but different goals in each specialization. These goals are articulated according to those stated by the National Association of Schools of Music, the accrediting agent for the Department of Music. While the department faculty has discussed its program goals, it has done so keeping in mind the national standards.

For all degree tracks the following goals are desired:

1. Skill in at least one area of performance, developed to a level appropriate to the degree program and track selected.
2. Ability to function as an ensemble player in large and small ensembles.
3. Ability to demonstrate piano skills at a level of proficiency need by all professional musicians.

4. Ability to demonstrate functional knowledge of the language and grammar of music, recognize compositions in historical and stylistic perspective and recognize and execute common elements of music—rhythm, pitch, melody, harmony, timbre, dynamics, and form. In addition the student should display the ability to analyze and manipulate and write about these elements in a coherent manner.

For specific Bachelor of Music degree tracks the following additional goals have been developed.

Performance:

1. Knowledge of applicable solo and ensemble literature and orientation to and experience with fundamentals of pedagogy.
2. Solo and ensemble performance in a variety of formal and informal settings.

Music Education:

1. Ability and desire to teach music effectively in large and small group settings.
2. Command of current practices in music education.
3. Performance and teaching skills on typical classroom instruments.
4. Conducting skills that are clear and comprehensive.
5. Knowledge of available school materials, and the ability to generate original teaching materials.
6. Knowledge of current practices in general school curricula, particularly in reading, language arts, and math, and how to further these studies through musical activities.
7. Ability to perform musically on an instrument or vocally.
8. Ability to accompany at the piano.
9. Knowledge of the principles of learning theories and their implications for music education.
10. Ability to use alternative strategies to evaluate students.

Composition:

1. Ability to compose works in various media and forms that show the highest possible level of skill in the use of basic concepts, tools, techniques and procedures.
2. Presentation of original works in public forums and in seminars in which critical assessment of their music is given.

Music Therapy

1. Ability to accompany via the keyboard and guitar.
2. Knowledge of techniques and strategies that allow for intervention following diagnosis.
3. Ability to design and implement a treatment plan in various clinical settings.
4. Knowledge of appropriate musical materials and resources to function as a licensed music therapist.

The focus of the Bachelor of Arts Degree in Music has a more general liberal arts context and its goals, while sharing the same core goals as the Bachelor of Music, are the following:

1. To develop in those students who pursue the Bachelor of Arts the ability to draw the undergraduate experience into an integrated project of the student's choice in which the student places the topic in a broad liberal arts setting and shows the ability to document and express concepts coherently.
2. To require students to participate in a curriculum that includes a broader choice of electives.

The Department of Music offers the Master of Music Degree with concentrations in Performance, Music Education, and Composition. Each specialization requires a standard core plus coursework that is unique to the specialization. For all Master of Music Degree students, the program goals are as follows:

1. To provide a curriculum leading to the master's degree in music in preparation for advanced study at the doctoral level and/ or for more advanced activity in a professional setting.
2. To offer a curriculum of advanced study of the performance, historical performance practice, history and theory of Western art music and non-Western cultures for all students in the program.
3. To offer specializations in music performance, music education and composition in the development of advanced knowledge and practice of the art.

2. Outcomes

For the four goals pertaining to all Bachelor of Music degree tracks, the following outcome measures were developed by the entire music faculty.

To demonstrate skill in performance, students are evaluated at the end of each semester in a performance jury that is judged by a panel of faculty. Students are given comment sheets from each faculty panelist who rates the student's technique, attention to musical expression, growth from the previous semester and suggestions for improvement. In the past, we kept the completed forms in the main office. Having discovered that some students did not pick them up, we now return all of the comment sheets to the applied faculty member who then returns them to the student and discusses the comments from all faculty panelists with the student. A special jury, usually at the end of the sophomore year, is required for students to pass on to upper division applied music study. This is an assessment that assures appropriate progress is being made and that the student's skills have developed to be successful at more advanced stages of degree study.

All students are required to perform in major ensembles. The wind ensemble, chorus, chorale, and orchestra perform a variety of repertory in at least two concerts per semester. These concerts are capstone activities for each rehearsal cycle. Ensemble directors discuss these performances with the students. A comparison of the repertory performed with other schools show that we are fulfilling our mission to provide students the opportunity to learn a diverse repertory.

Our initial assessment report cited our desire to provide for more chamber music experience. Since that time, a full-time faculty member has been assigned to oversee chamber music activity. We are pleased that many more students have been assigned to chamber ensembles; a new chamber orchestra and a chamber wind ensemble have been created. The faculty also voted to require students to perform more frequently in our required Thursday Series, but allows them to perform in small chamber ensemble settings instead of just solo settings. There has also been an increase in the number of students involved in small jazz combos, a direct result of increased efforts to provide a more meaningful chamber music experience for our students. This year small jazz combos became a regular part of public performances by the jazz area. Students' ability to perform is based on assessment of their accomplishments in rehearsals.

We offered in the fall semester of 2006 a new course in collaborative piano and accompanying. This course trains pianists in the techniques and repertory of chamber music and partners them with other students to play chamber music.

Our students are required to complete two semesters of Keyboard Skills. In order to take the second semester, students must complete the first semester with a grade of C or better. The proficiency exam at the end of each semester of Keyboard Skills is the assessment mechanism to assure that we are meeting and exceeding the desired outcome.

Courses in music history, theory and ethnic music require students to demonstrate written and aural skills, knowledge of music literature and styles. The content of the required coursework meets NASM standards. Our students develop the appropriate base of knowledge and are required to show that they can write. We require a course of all freshmen, MUS 113 Writing About Music that is a substitute for English 102. In addition, we assess writing skills in program notes written by each student as part of their senior recital.

We are hoping to add a speaking component to our curriculum where students learn to present their work via accessible verbal communication to their audiences.

For the specific degree tracks, the following outcomes are assessed.

Performance:

1. Junior and senior recitals with works from different historical eras are evaluated by faculty panels. Comment sheets, modeled after professional reviews, are presented by each committee member to the student. Instructors include studio classes as part of applied instruction. This is a weekly meeting of all students in a particular studio in which students listen to each other's repertory, offer pedagogic suggestions, discuss the technical and musical challenges each work presents and ways to learn appropriate stylistic performance practices.
2. Students perform in a variety of settings—large ensemble concerts, chamber groups, solo performances in recitals and on Thursday Series.

Music Education:

1. Students are interviewed by music education faculty before being allowed into the program. These interviews determine the students desire to teach, the ability to communicate verbally, and the likelihood that the student will be able to complete the degree. Once admitted to the music education track, logs, videos and critiques of 300 hours of field experience by CSU faculty and field supervisors are discussed with each student.
2. A weekly seminar with all student teachers, and a curriculum designed to emphasize materials and methods currently being used in music education which students must pass, achieve the outcome of demonstrating command of current practices in music education.
3. Students must pass methods courses in all instrumental families and in vocal/ choral techniques. The emphasis is not only on learning to play, but also in learning to teach voice and instruments.
4. Students must pass a required course, Conducting School Ensembles, in which they demonstrate techniques appropriate to a diverse repertory from all historical eras.
5. Instructors review assignments that demand creative application of knowledge of available school materials. Students are required to design original material and present it to their classmates to determine effectiveness, clarity, and pedagogic validity.
6. Students demonstrate knowledge of current practices in field experiences, observation reports and student teaching. Reports of CSU faculty observers, field experience supervisors, and student teacher supervisors criticize the comprehensive performance of our students as teachers.
7. Music education students must pass an entrance audition, complete performance juries, perform in Thursday Series, and play a senior recital. All of these are evaluated by a faculty panel.
8. In addition to the required Keyboard Skills coursework, music education students must pass a Preprofessional Competency Exam before we allow them to student teach. This exam includes special keyboard skills that should be expected of the general music educator. We do not allow them to student teach until the desired outcome is achieved.
9. Class meeting that discuss field experiences and current theories subject to normal course evaluation procedures attest to the appropriate acquisition of knowledge of the principles of learning theories.
10. Students take required coursework in evaluation in which they learn different methods of evaluation.

Music Education students must pass the PRAXIS II examination before they can complete the degree.

Composition

1. Students have weekly tutorials with composition faculty to evaluate work in progress. In this way, faculty continually tracks the development of skills and techniques to guide the student toward the outcome of becoming a self-sufficient and accomplished composer.
2. Original student compositions are performed in special recitals in both acoustic and digital media throughout the academic year. Students must participate in a weekly seminar in which their original work is discussed, aesthetic issues are presented, guest composers present their work, and analysis of diverse repertory is undertaken.
3. Students in composition are assigned to write works that will be performed by guest artists who come to campus as part of the Cleveland Contemporary Composers series. Our students' works are selected by the composition faculty based on assessments of their quality. This provides the opportunity for our students to get constructive criticism from professional performers and to get professional produced compact disc recordings of their original work.

Music Therapy

1. Students must pass required courses in keyboard skills and guitar.
2. Students take three practicum courses that deal with various patient populations. Coursework deals specifically with issues of diagnosis and treatment.
3. A six month internship is required before being allowed to take the examination to become a registered music therapist. This examination is administered by the American Music Therapy Association.
4. Early in the required coursework, students must demonstrate that they have developed the requisite musical skills to complete the degree. These students have the same performance and ensemble experiences as all other music majors. They learn appropriate repertory and materials since so much of the required coursework is the same as that for music education.
5. A new Guitar Class was begun in the Spring of 2007 to meet one of the skills required by the American Music Therapy Association. Student competence is determined throughout the semester through performance exams and at the end of the semester by written and performance assessments.

Bachelor of Arts in Music

1. Students submit a proposal for a comprehensive project that shows the ability to integrate music into a larger context. Students work closely with a faculty advisor of the capstone project. At the completion of the project, students present their work in a public lecture, demonstration and/ or recital.
2. B.A. students are required to take applied lessons and participate in some large ensembles. Fewer of these requirements allow them to take more general electives to provide a broader liberal arts curriculum than that for the Bachelor of Music degree.

Master of Music Degree

The first goal listed for the M.M. degree is to provide a curriculum that prepares students for advanced study at the doctoral level and/ or for more advanced activity in a professional setting. Our program provides a core curriculum that exposes students to the breadth of research in analytical techniques, music

history and ethnomusicology. In addition, most of the required curriculum for each specialization allows students to explore in depth those subjects especially appropriate for their discipline. Performers spend more time performing and learning repertory and pedagogy; composers spend more time composing both acoustic and digital music; music historians take specialized coursework in research musicology and period courses; music education majors focus on research appropriate for the analysis of student behavior, the assessment of student work, and comparison with statistical norms based on national standards in music education.

We track student placement into doctoral programs, confirm that music education majors return to teaching positions, receive reports that performance majors win auditions for professional ensemble placements. We have improved the tracking of those students who have completed the Master of Music degree by obtaining information at exit interviews following the completion of each oral Comprehensive Examination. We host a reception at the annual Ohio Music Educators Association conference for alumni, where we ask those in attendance to complete updated forms where we learn about their professional activities and current musical activities. We also ask if they can help identify the whereabouts of alumni who have not stayed in touch.

The second goal states that we offer a curriculum of advanced study of the performance, historical performance practice, history and theory of Western art music and non-Western cultures for all students in the program. The successful completion of the three core courses for all Master of Music concentrations accomplishes this goal.

We offer special courses in pedagogy and repertory for performance majors, advanced tutorial sessions for composition majors, research and curriculum development courses for music education majors and musicology research courses for music history majors. Each concentration has a capstone project, either a recital, thesis or three-paper research requirement that is evaluated by a faculty committee to assure that students have developed advanced knowledge and practice of the art of music.

In addition, all Master of Music students must pass a comprehensive examination. A written part is based on the core coursework in theory, history and ethnomusicology. An oral examination following the written examination allows the entire music faculty to witness the ability of the student to apply advanced knowledge to their own concentration. Performance majors present material relevant to their final recitals; music history and composition majors also have a defense of their theses; music education majors present a lecture about the findings of their research as written about in either a thesis or series of three papers.

3. Research

Music degree programs are highly competency based. From the time a student first applies, a number of assessment procedures are used to track students throughout the program. We administer placement tests at the time of audition to assure that appropriate preparation for college music study has been met. There are remedial courses for students whose background does not guarantee a fair chance at success in the usual core curriculum. Students are evaluated at the end of each semester in terms of performance skills, ensemble achievement, development of musicianship skills, and writing skills. Major assessments are built into the core music program. Students cannot take upper division courses without successfully completing the core curriculum in music theory, in keyboard skills, in applied music study. The assessment includes standard course examinations, juries before faculty panels, public performances. Students show in various compositional assignments, the writing of program notes for their recitals, and passing a required music technology course that they have attained a level of comprehensive understanding of the history and literature of music and its techniques and practices. Since all students are required to give some public presentation of their work at the end of their degree study, all of their programs along with accompanying program notes are kept on file in the music office.

Many of our graduates in music education hold teaching positions and now serve as supervising teachers for our current students. This is a kind of assessment—that our graduates are, in fact, engaged in the profession.

Applied teachers report when their students win auditions. A number of our students hold positions in professional orchestras, and this information is readily available looking at rosters on specific web sites and in programs of these organizations. In the past year, two students auditioned for high-level military bands and were accepted. Three percussion majors won auditions for jobs in professional ensembles.

At exit interviews with each graduate student, we learn about their plans for either continuing their education or for entering a job.

4. Findings

Based on past assessment reports, our findings show that we have made significant progress in implementing changes that correct weaknesses revealed in these earlier reports.

In the performance track, we needed to make our training in pedagogy less passive and more active. Studio classes require students to observe each others' playing and to comment on the technical and musical aspects of the repertory being performed. The distribution of jury comment sheets directly to students make the students reflect on the technical aspects that were being taught and to consider which aspects of their lessons produced the desired result.

The large number of competency based assessments in music education along with the extensive field experiences and student teaching observations make sure that those students are well prepared to enter the teaching profession. In addition, the music education faculty now routinely creates video discs of each of our aspiring teachers so that they can self-assess their classroom behaviors and discuss them with the instructors.

We needed to improve our means of obtaining information about alumni. The required exit interview allows us to update our records to be as current as possible. We routinely mail our concert schedule to all alumni. When those that are undeliverable are returned to us, we try to obtain current information as to the whereabouts of those who have not notified us of changes in their jobs or addresses. We have been in contact with music education alumni who teach in the Cleveland area to recommend some of their students to our new Community Music Program and to our Music in the Valley summer camp.

All of our degree programs were reaccredited following our self-study in 2000. External reviewers evaluate transcripts, alumni records, sample assignments and examinations, sample recital programs, masters theses on deposit in the CSU library, various recordings in our departmental archives. Our next review is in 2009.

5. Review

The faculty are required to serve on jury panels, recital committees, thesis committees, senior project committees, comprehensive examination committees and audition committees. Most of our faculty attends each others public presentations so that we hear our ensembles, our students' solo and chamber music performances, and their original compositions. We publish two handbooks, one for undergraduate students and one for graduate students, in which all of our curricula and departmental policies are carefully spelled out. Each year the entire faculty discusses proposed changes at faculty meetings at which these topics are specifically addressed.

Our students evaluate each course. They are asked to comment on whether or not objectives have been met. This year, for the first time, we have asked students to evaluate their applied lessons as well. This forces them to assess their own progress and whether or not they are developing at a pace that is recommended for successful completion of the degree.

The Chair of the Department holds two meetings per year at Thursday Series which are open forums for students to discuss any and all aspects of the program.

6.Actions

Changes made to the curriculum include:

1. Redesigning the composition curriculum to allow for more classroom and less individual tutorial instruction. The composition faculty has also linked composition instruction to the Cleveland Contemporary Players series to afford our students the opportunity to write music for accomplished professionals and to get to hear their new works played by these experts.
2. A Composers' Resource Center has been established in Room 340 of the Music Building. This center has equipment for students to use notational software, make copies of their works, binding machines for their printed scores, a compact-disc duplicator to create multiple copies of their recordings for professional use, applications for grants and to graduate programs.
3. A new course in collaborative piano.
4. A new guitar class.

Improved services:

1. We now require all students registered for MUS 231: Harmony and Form I to pass a test on music fundamentals at the end of the fifth week. This is to encourage them to learn basic information about scales, key signatures, metric organization, intervals and triad spellings to better assure success in the entire Harmony and Form four-course sequence. Those who do not pass must drop the course and register instead for MUS 122: Materials of Music in order to improve their basic skills.
2. At the 2006 Ohio Music Educators Association meeting, we began to form a Friends of the Department of Music organization to help with tracking alumni, suggest fund-raising activities and encourage audience growth. This group was augmented following the 2007 meeting in Columbus.
3. The Graduate Committee in the department began a project to standardize the comprehensive examination for all Master of Music candidates. While each track has its own unique aspects, we must expect all students to demonstrate a breadth of knowledge in music theory and music history in addition to the content of their individual disciplines. We think that this will improve the quality of the experience itself and provide a more even-handed assessment of all graduate students. Nineteen students completed comprehensive examinations. In performance, eleven students presented degree recitals, which were assessed by three faculty members. Following the recital, each student presented a report on the repertory that was performed and responded to questions from their faculty committee. These students pass the comprehensive exam after the faculty has determined that the breadth of their knowledge and their ability to write and speak about music merits the awarding of the degree. After successful completion of the comprehensive examination, we discuss each student's future plans, their reactions to their experiences at Cleveland State.

Five students completed master's degrees in music education. Each of these students gave a public lecture about their research. Both the research projects and the lecture were observed by a three-member faculty panel, who asked questions of the candidate following the lecture. The same exit interviews were conducted with these students as for the performance majors.

One composition student earned a Master of Music degree after presenting a recital of original compositions and preparing an analysis of an assigned piece of music that was presented to the composition faculty. A period of questioning followed the presentation. The same exit interview was conducted as for other master's candidates.

One student completed a master's degree in ethnomusicology. Her thesis was the basis of a comprehensive examination that was a defense of thesis. Questions about music in general, the thesis in particular, and related subjects were asked by a panel of three faculty members.

In short, the procedure for the 18 students receiving master's degrees was standardized, and the exit interviews allowed us to discover and record student evaluations of our program, employment status or plans for doctoral study.

4. A new Enrollment Administrator has helped to distribute information to potential applicants to CSU. She has also set up auditions, scheduled placement exams and appointments with departmental advisors. We had 65 auditions for next year, which is up from 43 in 2005-2006. It is clear that the personal contact from our faculty and staff have helped. The Enrollment Administrator's efforts have made it easier for students to complete the admission process. Each student was asked to complete a questionnaire that asks him/ her to rate their application/ audition experience.
5. We complied with a request from the Provost's Office to contact students who were admitted to CSU but who were not enrolled as of July 2006. Phone discussions with these students provided the opportunity to assess why these students were not enrolling in our program. In most cases, they had either been accepted at other institutions that provided a residential campus experience, or they were offered more scholarship money.

Conclusion

Music students are assessed in many ways throughout their degree study. They must demonstrate competence in performance, in academic coursework, and in original creative work and research appropriate to their track. We feel that we use appropriate direct methods to measure student success. These include tests, quizzes, papers and oral presentations. They also include performances, critiqued creative work, oral examinations and portfolios (for music education students). Further we have developed indirect methods of questionnaires, organizing a group of alumni, meeting regularly with faculty to discuss curricular matters, and completing our annual HEADS data survey.