

Marshall University Department of Music Yearly Report: M.A. - Music Program Assessment

Submitted to the Dean of the College of Fine Arts, September 19

Dr. Stephen Lawson, Interim Chair

In January of 2006, Graduate Council approved the curriculum and courses of the Master of Arts in Music degree, with emphasis in music education, performance, history/literature or composition. Dr. Michael Stroehrer and Dr. Marshall Onofrio were the chief designers of these programs. Dr. Onofrio left Marshall University employment in June 2006. Dr. Stephen Lawson was appointed as Interim Chair for academic year 2006-2007.

I. ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES

A. PROGRAM GOALS

In its assessment plan, the Department of Music has articulated the following:

General Student Goals

Graduate music students should possess:

1. Advanced knowledge of theoretical, historical, and research techniques, as demonstrated through coursework, research papers and public presentations;
2. Enhanced, increased, and/or renewed skills in applied music, as appropriate to the area of emphasis, as demonstrated through ensemble participation and public performances;
3. Ability to identify and complete a research or creative project of depth, as demonstrated by completion of projects in MUS 621 (Research), MUS 640A (Theory), and other courses ; and
4. Ability to express musical ideas in written and oral media; as demonstrated through public presentations, performances, program notes, and writing assignments.

Curriculum Goals

Course work has been designed to:

1. Utilize of music research and content core that is common to each emphasis.
2. Offer specialized instruction for each emphasis as needed in rotation.
3. Offer thesis or non-thesis options to music education and history/literature emphasis.

At the meeting of September 22, 2005, music faculty approved an entire package of courses, programs, and revisions. These changes were approved by Graduate Council at the January 26, 2006 meeting. Changes included:

- Revision of several extant courses, including updates to course content and description;
- Creation of several new courses: including graduate level courses for ensembles and new courses that will be required in the new curricula;
- Creation of a new non-thesis option for Music History and Literature;
- Change from Theory/Composition to Composition: reflects the practice of the department and the fact that very few students in that area of emphasis will pursue theory in doctoral study;
- Identification of the need for comprehensive diagnostic examinations in theory and technology; and
- Preparation of thesis and non-thesis options for a Music Education area of emphasis, correcting a mistake of the Department of Music, which failed to secure approval for this area in the 1996 merger with the College of Graduate Studies.

The Department of Music continues to work with the Graduate College and the College of Education and Human Services to offer the M.A.T. – Music curriculum. We hope for more efficient communication with the South Charleston campus, which works with several teachers in that area.

Student Achievement Goals

The following goals pertain to the four areas of emphasis offered within the M.A.-Music program (education, history/literature, performance, theory/composition).

Applied Music Performance

1. Proficiency in the applied area.
2. Demonstrated knowledge of repertoire.

Music Education

1. Preparedness to meet contemporary demands upon public school music educators.
2. Knowledge and implementation of current concepts, trends, techniques, and strategies.

Music History and Literature

1. Thorough knowledge of at least four major periods of music history.
2. Demonstrated ability to independently research and write in depth.

Music Theory and Composition

1. Analytical and compositional knowledge of contemporary musical styles and techniques.
2. Demonstrated composition for various media.

B. LEARNING OUTCOMES/DATA COLLECTION

Please see the *Assessment of Student Outcomes* form for additional information.

A three-part assessment process (entrance, midway, graduation) provides regular and coherent data for evaluation of student progress. The entrance assessment requires a performance audition for all incoming students, regardless of intended area of emphasis. This audition

evaluates their performing skills and determines the incoming applied music level. In the Performance area of emphasis, Level 8 is the standard entry level, and anything below that results in probational entry. In addition, applicants to the Music History/Literature and Theory/Composition areas must submit one or more samples of research, writing, or original compositions. Applicants in Music Education may submit a videotape of teaching or conducting. All applicants complete an interview with the department chair and graduate coordinator to assess their potential for success in the program and their ability to provide service as a graduate assistant.

The midpoint assessment most generally is in the form of the Plan of Study, which provides a review of progress and organization. Procedures used to assess each outcome differ according to the activity. For instance, students in applied music are evaluated by a faculty jury every semester. The outcome of the jury is one of several criteria considered by faculty before students are permitted to register for applied lessons in the next semester, and, in the case of applied majors, to continue in the graduate program. At each juried performance, students are graded on performance elements, such as intonation, technique, interpretation, and literature. Simultaneously, the student's applied music level is reviewed. A level of 10 is required for graduation.

During 2005-2006, the Department of Music auditioned eight (8) potential graduate students. Six were accepted unconditionally, one was accepted on probation, and one was accepted pending completion of the ESL program. Of the seven accepted without the ESL restriction, five are currently enrolled, and one intends to begin in January 2006. One has chosen to take a job in the music industry. Data from these auditions and from course instructors indicate that the size and type of undergraduate institution plays a distinct role in the performing and writing proficiency of most students who audition and enroll at Marshall.

Review of the progress of M.A. graduates in the profession is the single most regular measure of the effectiveness of our programs. The three most recent graduates of the M.A.T. program are all employed in public school music positions. Of the three graduates of the education area of emphasis, two are continuing in positions held at the time of their entrance into the program and the third accepted a new position in Maryland. The single 2005 performance graduate has moved to New York City to pursue a singing career. The single 2005 history/literature graduate received her license in the Alexander Technique over the summer, and has begun a private practice in that methodology.

We conduct the methods of assessment listed in Table 1 in the following manner:

- Course assessment instruments are given and graded by faculty teaching the specific courses. These include a wide range of writing assignments, tests, and research activities.
- Jury exams of all students enrolled in applied music are conducted by a faculty panel. Students receive a grade from the jury panel, which counts for one-third of the semester grade in applied music.
- Forms for the applied level and Recital Hearing are completed by the appropriate faculty committee, filed in the department, and shared with the student. The entire recital must be approved by the faculty panel before the program will be presented. Approval is based upon demonstration of a high level of proficiency in technique, presentation, interpretation, and intonation.
- Faculty of the area of emphasis meet to discuss the progress of graduate students and at the completion of 18 hours of earned graduate credit, must recommend continued enrollment.
- Final projects (recital, thesis, etc.), comprehensive examinations, and oral examinations are reviewed and evaluated by committees of three or more faculty with graduate status.

All graduate students are required to complete both written and oral comprehensive examinations. In addition to the written questions supplied by the committee, students are asked to submit a current résumé, sample cover letter, and biographical statement. The department Music Education committee supplies questions to the College of Education and Human Services for the M.A.T. – Music students.

In recent semesters, the Department of Music has experienced an increasing incidence of academic honesty issues, ranging from failure to cite sources to outright plagiarism. At the graduate level, this problem manifests itself most often in the research and music history courses, which require extensive writing and documentation. While there have not been a high number of such incidents, there are enough to warrant tighter review of course syllabi and an expanded section in the Student Handbook, which is under revision at this time.

At jury exams, a faculty panel from the applied area (brass, woodwind, etc.) considers the body of work presented by individual students. Using a variety of measures, a faculty jury of at least three members evaluates entrance auditions, juries, recital hearings, and recitals. The evaluative measures include course descriptions; literature/technique/musicianship requirements given in the levels descriptions; and combined experience at a variety of institutions reflecting national norms

for graduate performance in our various degree options. Ensemble conductors are responsible for evaluating student progress in performance groups. This evaluation is based upon their performance skill and overall musical and professional contributions to the ensemble. In addition, external judges are used for various competitions sponsored by the Department of Music. These include the Jackson, Turley, Orchestra Concerto and Wind Symphony Soloist competitions.

Recognizing that many if not most of our graduate students will eventually seek collegiate positions, the department offered special topics seminars in Professional Practices (spring 2005) and Collegiate Teaching (fall 2005). Student evaluation responses indicated their appreciation of these courses, and the department will consider submitting them as permanent additions to the course roster.

Regarding the six graduates from 2004-05: three are in teaching positions (1 in Maryland, 2 in West Virginia), one has relocated to New York and is pursuing an independent singing career, one is seeking entry into a doctoral performance program, and one is self-employed as an Alexander Technique practitioner and church musician.

Records are kept in graduate student files in the department office. The Department of Music has corrected some of the record keeping errors that have occurred in previous years, and maintains ongoing communication with both the Huntington and the South Charleston Graduate College offices.

C. RESULTS

The program revision described above is the most tangible result of our review of student progress. The majority of our graduate students are in music education and performance. With the recent hiring of a full-time musicologist (the first since 1995), we anticipate increased enrollment in that area of emphasis. To that end, we have created a non-thesis option, intending for students whose future plans do not include doctoral study in musicology, but rather co- or interdisciplinary work involving music or music writing.

Students in the M.A. program display a wide variety of skills, depending in large measure on the quality of their undergraduate program. International students require substantial assistance with writing requirements and with preparations for teaching. To that end, the musicology position included the assignment to oversee MUS 142 (Music Appreciation), a course taught by

several graduate assistants each semester. Current activities include more frequent observation, bi-weekly meetings with the cohort of teaching assistants, and individual meetings as needed.

To assist students with the Comprehensive Examination, the chair meets with all students in the semester prior to the exam semester to review the process and discuss the committee that will conduct the examination. This process will be under the Graduate Coordinator's purview in the future. The Department of Music Student Handbook currently is under revision, and the section devoted to Graduate Study is being expanded to include more information about the Comprehensive Examination, application for graduation, thesis/recital details and the like.

We anticipate continued contributions from graduate teaching assistants, and are proud of our ability to provide substantial experience in collegiate teaching. We look forward to the implementation of the items listed above, and to monitoring the success of these individuals.

II. BOT INITIATIVE 3 COMPLIANCE

N/A

N.B. In spring 2004, the Department of Music submitted the 5-year Program Review of the M.A. program. We were unanimously endorsed by the various levels of the review process, and were recommended for "further development" by the Board of Governors, who recognized both the high level of our program and the potential for significant growth if given added resources.

III. PLANS FOR THE CURRENT YEAR

In light of the revised curricula, and pending their approval, a new course rotation and list of teaching assignments must be developed for the entire graduate program. Because we do not have any faculty whose entire load is graduate courses, we depend upon several faculty to offer our curricula. This is particularly necessary in the Music Education area of emphasis.

Applying the levels system, faculty have been more stringent during the incoming audition process. We have made greater use of probationary acceptances, and of performance auditions regardless of the area of emphasis. Students are more aware of the levels system, and are beginning to understand its implications for applied study.

With the assignment of new and additional faculty to the graduate advising process, we must train those faculty to complete timely and efficient advising of students.

We continue to visit undergraduate institutions whose graduates should be ideal candidates for our M.A. programs, but we need to increase the number of these visits. We place several print advertisements each year, and visit professional conferences. The success of our applied ensembles (e.g., Trumpet Ensemble invited to participate in the National Trumpet Conference competition for the first time in spring 2005) and the visibility of our faculty (e.g., Dr. David Castleberry is President of the Southern Division of the American Choral Directors Association) assists in our recruiting process. In March 2007, we will again host the state convention of the WV Music Educators Association, an event that will bring hundreds of students and teachers to our campus.

Through a conversion of Dr. Balshaw's line, the Department of Music in late spring 2005 was granted two tenure-track positions, and a third position was converted from temporary to tenure-track. Due to the date of the approval, the department hired three individual on one-year contracts, and currently is conducting tenure-track searches.

We continue to work with the International Programs office on behalf of students in our program, who currently hail from Germany, Japan, and Turkey. While we welcome this constituency and their contributions to our program and university, their participation in our department brings with it the challenge of working with students who are not native English speakers, and who, in some cases, have not yet met university requirements for ESL or TOEFL.

IV. ASSISTANCE NEEDED

We would like to work with UAC members to construct instruments to survey our graduates and their employers with regard to the suitability of our degrees for various careers and jobs. We also need to determine the needs of our students regarding their experience and capability in music technology.

Similarly, we would appreciate assistance in determining the type and level of quantification needed by the Assessment Committee, particularly with regard to applied music.

V. WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED

Students come to us with a great variety of backgrounds. Those with previous teaching experience are stronger students and more effective teaching assistants. Music theory remains the major stumbling block for most students not majoring in theory or composition. Students from smaller undergraduate programs lack background in specialized areas, such as analysis, or twentieth century music. We have designed and are offering in fall 2005 for the first time, MUS 540, a developmental course in music theory that addresses background deficiencies in the theory area. This will permit MUS 640A, the required graduate theory course, to be conducted as a truly graduate theory course rather than part review and part graduate level.

International students with minimal English skills are not able to progress at the typical rate. We are working with the Office of International Programs to determine the appropriate course of action in these situations. Typically, these students are excellent musicians who must be assisted in their efforts to adapt to our culture and our language.

In order to better prepare students for the professional world, courses such as a teaching seminar and professional practices are needed as supplements to the content of required research and pedagogy courses. In exit interviews conducted with graduating students, they tell us that the breadth of experience they receive as graduate assistants is welcome and crucial to their career. We have revised MUS 614 (The Teaching of Music Appreciation) to become a regular offering that will require all graduate teaching assistants to participate in meetings and observation discussions.

The goal of 35 – 50 active graduate students (as stated in our 1999 Self-Study) is increasingly dependent upon the number and amount of GA stipends. Currently we are woefully under the national average in music, and has not been raised since fall 2001.

Feedback Loop

Problem/Concern Action	Difficulty in MUS 640A (Theory) Created MUS 540 (Theory Review) (offered for 1 st time in F05)
Problem/Concern Action	Curriculum Outdated Revised all four areas of emphasis; created/revised courses as needed Approved by Graduate Council in January 2006
Problem/Concern Action	Preparation of MUS 142 Graduate Teaching Assistants Regular observations by Drs. Stroehler and Department Chair; meetings with students to discuss common issues (classroom management, course content and presentation, etc.) (implemented)
Problem/Concern Action	Plan of Study not completed in timely fashion Appointed new Graduate Coordinator (Dr. Michael Stroehler, as of 8/17/05) Plan to increase information included in Student Handbook (in progress)
Problem/Concern Action	Student Confusion over Levels System Plan to revise all studio descriptors (to be done)
Problem/Concern Action	Grave concern over academic honesty Presentations in classes and in MUS 100 (Applied Music Convocation) (implemented) Plan to enhance section on this topic in a revised Student Handbook (in progress)
Problem/Concern Action	Recruiting more students Increase visits to undergraduate-only institutions; (in progress) Revise curriculum to make it more contemporary (completed, approval in process) Revise/update web site (in process) and print materials (to be done)

Chart I Assessment Summary
Marshall University
Assessment of Student Outcomes: Component/Course/Program Level

Component/Area/Program/Discipline: **Department of Music**

N. B. These items apply to all areas of emphasis within the **M.A. degree**: general music studies (education concentration), history/literature, performance, and theory/composition

<u>STUDENT OUTCOME</u>	<u>PERSON/OFFICE RESPONSIBLE</u>	<u>ASSESSMENT TOOL/APPROACH</u>	<u>STANDARDS/BENCHMARK</u>	<u>RESULTS/ANALYSIS</u>	<u>ACTION TAKEN</u>
Use of theoretical and historical materials and research techniques	theory, history, research, conducting and applied teachers	Course assessment instruments: tests, performances, computer drills; Research papers; Juried performances; Written Comprehensive Examination	Literature and proficiency required at each applied level of study; Correct use of language, Nationally accepted norms for doctoral study; Faculty experience; Student success in doctoral work	Writing skills are quite variable; there is a need for a remedial theory course; Music education students need specialized research skills/applications	Student passed/not passed on to next course; Plan of Study approved/not approved; MUS 540 (Theory Review) developed and offered; MUS 621 offers a module for music education specific issues/topics
Effective Applied Music Performance	Individual applied teacher; faculty of applied area; ensemble conductors	Entrance audition/interview; Juried performances; Level system evaluations, Student recitals, Ensemble programs, Graduate Recitals	Applied course syllabi; Levels descriptions; Nationally accepted norms for Masters level; Faculty experience	Nature of undergraduate preparation is a predictor of success and indicator of need for remediation	Accepted/not accepted/probationally accepted; Student passed/not passed on to next level of study; Entrance audition required for all areas of emphasis; probational acceptance used more often
Completion of research or creative project	Individual applied teacher; theory, history, style, and analysis teachers; thesis/recital director	Course assessment instruments, (tests and performances); progress review at 12-18 hours; Recital hearing or review of thesis Proposal; Course research assignments	Applied Levels requirements; Examples of correct use of language and research techniques; Nationally accepted norms; use of standard sources	Nature of undergraduate experience is a predictor of skill; Students are increasingly unaware of academic honesty policies and practices	Student passed/not passed on to next course; Plan of Study approved/not approved; student approved/not approved to begin thesis or recital preparation; beginning expansion of Student Handbook to include more policy statements
Communication of musical ideas and information in written and oral media	Individual applied teacher; thesis/recital director; MUS 621 and music history instructors	Course assessment instruments, faculty review of written and oral comprehensive examination	Examples from the literature; Faculty experience	Point basis	Student passed/not passed in course; student approved/not approved to begin thesis or recital preparation; student approved/not approved for graduation

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Marshall University

Assessment of Student Outcomes: Component/Course/Program Level

Component/Area/Program/Discipline: **Department of Music**

Explanation of Standards/Benchmarks and Results/Analysis

STUDENT OUTCOME	STANDARDS/BENCHMARK	RESULTS/ANALYSIS
Use of theoretical materials of music	Requirement for next level of study; preparation for thesis or final recital projects; completion of MUS 640A; correct use of musical terms in all analyses and projects; National exams (Praxis II/MAT students); ability to analyze repertoire used in applied Music; entrance standards of doctoral programs in music	Highest percentage of student failure occurs in the first year – <i>we should provide more individual advising for new students; we hope to develop an electronic “course pack” for MUS 540</i> Amount of music theory study in undergraduate institution directly affects preparation for MUS 640A – <i>This first offering of MUS 540 should assist us in preparing better and earlier incoming diagnostic tools</i>
Effective Applied Music Performance	Individual course descriptions provide required literature and performance expectations by the semester; Levels descriptions provide the overall program goals, and require students to achieve a certain level for each year of study; Nationally accepted norms; current level of students in studio and ensembles; entrance standards of doctoral programs in music	Levels system remains confusing to new faculty and to some students – <i>we must standardize the terms used to describe each level and ensure that students understand the requirement for progress</i> Size and scope of undergraduate music program directly affects chance of success – <i>our entrance audition uses the probationary rating more often; expectations for performance vs. education majors are now more unified;</i> Satisfactory progress is achieved by most students – <i>we are better at identifying at-risk students at the first jury exam</i>
Knowledge of musical repertoire and relationship between repertoire and musical developments	Requirement for next level of study; correct use of terms in courses, papers, and lab situations (ensembles, clinical experiences); presentation of standard literature on recitals; ability to use this literature in theory, analysis, and history courses; Nationally accepted norms; entrance standards of doctoral programs in music; faculty experience	Current history degree and sequence is less effective than desired – <i>examination of the total area of emphasis is in now complete, we will move on to standardize style manuals and documents</i> students struggle to transfer knowledge from classes to applied and conducting activities - <i>greater unity in the program is needed, as is enhanced discussion among faculty of these areas; Coordination of the literature required in the levels descriptors and by graduate programs is needed</i>
Communication of musical ideas and information in written and oral media	Examples from the literature; ability to apply this information in courses, papers, and lab situations; faculty experience	The more frequently we ask for oral or written analysis the stronger the product – <i>the revision of the history/research/capstone sequence should strengthen this process</i> Confusion over the multiplicity of styles for producing research papers – <i>with fall 2005, we have selected the Turabian for MUS 304, 401, 423, 425 and 621. Discussion scheduled as part of the history revision regarding MUS 121 and 423.</i>