

## AY 2017 – 2018 Assessment

### Program – Master of Music (MM)

**College: Arts and Sciences**

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**Date: 5.14.2018**

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**Date: 6.19.2018**

**Northwestern Mission.** Northwestern State University is a responsive, Student-oriented institution that is committed to the creation, dissemination, and acquisition of knowledge through teaching, research, and service. The University maintains as its highest priority excellence in teaching in graduate and undergraduate programs. Northwestern State University prepares its Students to become productive members of society and promotes economic development and improvements in the quality of life of the citizens in its region.

**College of Arts and Sciences' Mission.** College of Arts and Sciences' Mission. The College of Arts & Sciences, the largest college at Northwestern State University, is a diverse community of scholars, teachers, and students, working collaboratively to acquire, create, and disseminate knowledge through transformational, high-impact experiential learning practices, research, and service. The College strives to produce graduates who are productive members of society equipped with the capability to promote economic and social development and improve the overall quality of life in the region. The College provides an unequalled undergraduate education in the social and behavioral sciences, English, communication, journalism, media arts, biological and physical sciences, and the creative and performing arts, and at the graduate level in the creative and performing arts, English, TESOL, and Homeland Security. Uniquely, the College houses the Louisiana Scholars' College (the State's designated Honors College), the Louisiana Folklife Center, and the Creole Center, demonstrating its commitment to community service, research, and preservation of Louisiana's precious resources.

**Department of Music.** The Music Department is part of the **Dear School of Creative and Performing Arts** at Northwestern State University and is dedicated to the development of students for roles in academic, leadership, professional, performing, education and research careers in the challenging fields of music, music business, music performance, and music education. Utilizing transformational, high-impact experiential learning practices, courses in core musical fundamentals, performances, research and service, the department produces graduates equipped to be productive members of society and professionals in the Arts in which they will help develop and improve the overall quality of life locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally. The department delivers the Bachelor of Music degree with concentrations in Performance, Sacred Music, and Music Business, and works collaboratively with the Department of Teaching, Learning, and Counseling to offer the Bachelor of Music Education degree. The department also offers the Master of Music degree with concentrations in performance and music education.

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**Purpose (optional):** The Master's program will prepare students for lives as artistic professionals and educators who are responsive to the artistic demands of the profession.

**Methodology:** The assessment process for the MM program is as follows:

- (1) Data from assessment tools (both direct – indirect, quantitative and qualitative) are collected and returned to the program coordinator;
- (2) The program coordinator (Graduate Program Coord.) will analyze the data to determine whether students have met measurable outcomes; coordinator communicates with Graduate Faculty in the program on a regular basis to discuss findings;
- (3) Results from the assessment will be discussed with the program faculty;
- (4) Individual meetings will be held with faculty teaching core Music courses if required (show cause);
- (5) The Program Coordinator, in consultation with the MM faculty and curriculum committee, will propose changes to measurable outcomes, assessment tools for the next assessment period and, where needed, curricula and program changes.

### Student Learning Outcomes:

**SLO 1. Students will be able to demonstrate the ability to conduct research, comprehend scholarly readings, and apply this knowledge in a scholarly document.**

Course Map: Assessed in:  
MUS/MUED 5900 Research Methods in Music  
MUS 5150 Pedagogy  
MUS/MUED 5400 Special Projects  
MUS 5970 Performance Document

### **Measure 1.1. (Direct – knowledge): Research Paper (Student Artifact)**

Completion of these courses demonstrates acquisition of these abilities. Completion of the scholarly document is the actual product resulting from this learning.

**Acceptable Target:** The final document must be approved by a committee of the Music Graduate Faculty of at least 3 members and then submitted to the Dean of the Graduate School. Acceptable Target is 93% of students receiving approval of their final document.

**Ideal Target:** Ideal target is 97% of students receiving approval of their final document.

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**Implementation Plan (timeline):** Every semester

**Key/Responsible Personnel:** Graduate Music Faculty/Major Professors for each student submitted a final document.

### Findings:

AY 2016-2017: 7 students were enrolled in performance document and 7 successfully completed their documents and submitted (with approval) to the Dean of the Graduate School. (100%)

AY 2017-2018: 6 students were enrolled in performance document and 6 successfully completed their documents and submitted (with approval) to the Dean of the Graduate School. (100%)

**Analysis:** In AY 2016-2017, the ideal target of 97% was met, as 100% of students received approval of their final document. This analysis gives evidence that students can demonstrate the ability to conduct research, comprehend scholarly readings, and apply this knowledge in a large-scale scholarly document. Student learning is taking place, and the pilot approach of having several graduate faculty members guiding the student through assignments and, ultimately, through drafts of their final research document is working well. The plan of action for 2017-2018 was to fully implement the use of graduate faculty and to meet with the graduate faculty each August to underscore the importance of the individual attention each graduate student gets from his major professor and committee. This model is working for student learning, so the faculty feel it is important that the standards aren't relaxed and that we continue to challenge students in this area.

This year's (AY 2017-2018) results are also 100% of students receiving approval of their final document. In meeting with the Graduate Faculty, the standards were made more appropriate, and the result followed with the same results as the previous year. The analysis reflects the consistency of the advising model for the Master of Music degree and gives evidence that student learning is occurring. In continuously striving to improve, the graduate faculty have discussed adding more graduate faculty members in the department to more evenly distribute committee assignments. This will ensure that faculty have adequate time to devote to the individual student. In addition, the Coordinator of Graduate Studies plans to give a Professional Development session for the graduate music faculty in August 2018 to strengthen the understanding of graduate committee responsibilities and expectations. It is important that the important work of guiding the music graduate students be divided between faculty.

**Decision:** Implementing the decision/plan of action from AY 2016-2017 provides sufficient evidence of consistency and excellence based on the analysis of this year's result. The analysis further reflects that 100% of graduate students submitting their final scholarly document to the Graduate School are consistently able to demonstrate the

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ability to conduct research, comprehend scholarly readings, and apply this knowledge in a large-scale scholarly document. Based on the analysis and clear evidence of student learning reflected in this year's result, the faculty will continue to add more Graduate Faculty members to more evenly distribute committee work. The Coordinator of Graduate Studies for Music will also provide Professional Development in August 2018 with the intent to strengthen the understanding of graduate committee responsibilities and expectations.

**Comprehensive summary of key evidence of improvements based on analysis of results.** The decisions made and implemented for this assessment cycle were to meet with the graduate faculty in August to underscore the importance of the individual attention each graduate student gets from his major professor and committee. The evidence shows the continued 100% rate of students receiving approval of their final document. This approach is working because it allows each student to receive highly individualized feedback and assignments for improvement. In addition, since the student has the same faculty member(s) guiding them through the research and writing components of the degree, progress is closely monitored, and the student is able to get individual help when needed. This allows for immediate reflection and improvement for each student.

**Plan of action moving forward.** Based on the analysis and clear evidence of student learning reflected in this year's result, the faculty will continue to add more Graduate Faculty members to more evenly distribute committee work. The Coordinator of Graduate Studies for Music will also provide Professional Development in August 2018 with the intent to strengthen the understanding of graduate committee responsibilities and expectations. The expectations are that this will allow the faculty to respond to individual student needs, allowing for further student learning and preparation for the professional field of music.

**SLO 2: Demonstrate professional competency in such disciplines as performance or music education.**

Course Map:

MUS 5700, 5710 Applied Study  
MUS 5230 Advanced Conducting  
MUED 5000 Seminar in Music Education  
MUS 5720 Recital

**Measure 2.1. (Direct – Skill / Ability): Capstone Experience**

Students will be evaluated on one significant capstone experience as it pertains to their chosen concentration. Examples include solo recital, conducting recital, or significant written projects.

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**Acceptable Target:** Because these are Capstone experiences, they are evaluated and approved under the supervision of the Major Professor with the approval of the student's graduate committee. Acceptable target is 93% of students passing the final recital, as this is the capstone event for the courses listed.

**Ideal Target:** Ideal target is 97% of students passing the final recital.

**Implementation Plan (timeline):** Each semester

**Key/Responsible Personnel:** Graduate Music Faculty and Major Professor for each student giving a final recital.

### Findings:

AY 2016-2017: 7 students were enrolled in performance document and 7 successfully completed their final lecture recital/performance/conducting recital. (100%)

AY 2017-2018: 6 students were enrolled in performance document and 6 successfully completed their final lecture recital/performance/conducting recital. (100%)

**Analysis:** In AY 2016-2017, the ideal target of 97% of student passing the final recital was met and exceeded. 100% of students who attempted their capstone experience (recital) passed. This is evidence that students can demonstrate professional competency in performing/conducting. These are crucial elements to a Master of Music degree, and the successful completion of the capstone experience of a final recital is an expectation in the field. The analysis of 100% of students successfully completing the capstone project is evidence that student learning is taking place, and it is important that this standard is not relaxed as results show such a high passing rate. The plan of action was to have the applied faculty discuss strategies to maintain the high standards of the capstone recital and ways to challenge students at the capstone experience to demand even higher standards of themselves.

In comparison, this year's (AY 2017-2018) results show an identical success rate. (100%) The analysis reflects that having applied faculty continue to challenge students to maintain, and push, standards is further enabling student learning in this professional area. In continuously striving to improve, the faculty discussed the possibility of adding more opportunities for reflection after the capstone recital has occurred.

**Decision:** Implementing the decision/plan of action from AY 2016-2017 provides sufficient evidence of improvement in challenging students and maintaining the standard of excellence expected of the graduate level student in music. The analysis further reflects that, by providing the individual attention and guidance for each student from their major professor, student success rates are at 100% passing for the final recital. Students are continuing to be challenged to meet and exceed the standards expected in the field for the recital experience. Based on the analysis and clear

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evidence of student learning reflected in this year's results, the faculty will discuss ways to further challenge students in this professional skill.

**Comprehensive summary of key evidence of improvements based on analysis of results.** The decision made and implemented for AY 2017-2018 was for the major applied professor to ensure that they are providing individual attention and guidance to each student during all applied lessons, recital preparations, and special problems courses related to all elements of the capstone recital experience. Each graduate student is assigned a committee with a major professor. This approach has proven successful because it allows for frequent critique, reflection, and trial and error experiences for the student. It also provides several opportunities for performances in front of a smaller audience (studio classes, master classes, and Student Recital hours).

**Plan of action moving forward.** The plan of action for the next assessment cycle is for the faculty to discuss how to create further opportunities for critique and reflection as the student prepares his or her final recital. The Music Graduate Faculty meet in August to discuss all items pertaining to graduate music students for the upcoming year. This allows us to maintain the focus on student learning and implementing any refinements or changes in our program.

### **SLO 3: Demonstrate the potential to solve current problems in various aspects of music or music education. (Classroom Assessment)**

Course Map:

MUED 5010 Foundations of Music Education

MUED 5020 Current Issues and Trends in Music Education

MUS 5150 Pedagogy

MUS 5390 Performance Literature

#### **Measure 3.1. (Direct – knowledge)**

Students make presentations in class, research, write papers, lead discussions, and facilitate dialogue on a variety of pertinent issues.

**Acceptable Target:** Students will be assigned culminating or final projects which ask them to research and offer solutions to a specific problem. Acceptable target is 90% of students receiving a passing grade of B or better of the final presentation and/or project for the above courses, as the presentation and/or project are culminating assignments that apply the knowledge gained throughout the above courses. The implementation of the knowledge gained is paramount, and the presentation and/or final project allows the student to showcase and implement this knowledge.

**Ideal Target:** Ideal target is 95% of students receiving a grade of B or better on the final presentation/project.

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**Implementation Plan (timeline):** Each semester/ongoing

**Key/Responsible Personnel:** Graduate Music Faculty

**Supporting Document:** MUED 5010 Syllabus

### Findings:

AY 2016-2017: Acceptable and Ideal targets reached of 100% of graduate students enrolled in classes with culminating final projects.

AY 2017-2018: Acceptable and Ideal targets reached of 100% of graduate students enrolled in classes with culminating final projects.

**Analysis:** In AY 2016-2017, the target of 95% of students receiving a passing grade of B or better for the final presentation and/or project was exceeded (100%). This is an important measure because it represents the culminating assignments that apply the knowledge of the courses listed in the Course Map. The implementation and presentation of the knowledge and understanding gained of how to solve current problems in music/music education is an expectation in the profession. The amount of guidance due to the smaller class sizes in these courses is an important factor in the high success rate of this SLO. The close personal relationship between faculty and graduate students has proven to be highly beneficial because they are mentored and guided through each project and expectation. Students regularly meet with their major professors, which allows for faculty to challenge each student in their individual weaknesses and strengths. The analysis of 100% student achievement for this SLO is evident that student learning is taking place. However, it is important that the standards and expectations be maintained, while issues and trends in music/music education addressed in these classes remain current. This requires that faculty music graduate faculty stay active in their professional organizations and field, so that they can assure the classes address pertinent information.

In comparison, this year's (AY 2017-2018) having implemented the plan of action from AY 2016-2017 to remain current in the field, continue to offer individualized guidance, and maintain standards and expectations was successful, as the success rate remained the same (100%). The analysis reflects the continued quality of student growth and learning is a direct result of the smaller class sizes and individual attention afforded to each student. In continuously striving to improve, the faculty will discuss ways to include further reflection and discussion in these courses. They will also discuss the possibility of bringing in more guest speakers to discuss first-hand knowledge and understanding of current issues and trends in the music/music education field.

**Decision:** Implementing the decision/plan of action from AY 2016-2017 provides sufficient evidence of improvement based on the analysis of this year's result. The analysis further reflects that by maintaining small class sizes, providing individual guidance and feedback, and by faculty remaining current in their field, 100% of student

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are receiving a passing grade of B or better for the final presentation and/or project. Students are successfully demonstrating the ability to solve current problems in music/music education. Based on the analysis and clear evidence of student learning reflected in this year's results, the faculty will build on the students' learning success by remaining current in their field, continuing to offer individualized guidance and small class sizes, and maintaining high standards and expectations.

**Comprehensive summary of key evidence of improvements based on analysis of results.** The decisions made and implemented for this assessment cycle were to continue to maintain small class sizes in these courses--which allows for more individual attention, feedback, and guidance—as well as maintaining high standards and expectations for the final projects. It was also decided and implemented that graduate music faculty will be sure to remain active in their field as to be best prepared for these courses addressing current issues in music/music education. The evidence shows that these approaches were successful, with the target of 95% met and exceeded. Being able to closely monitor students' growth and development as they learn to apply the knowledge learned in these courses has proven to be highly effective. Professors can more responsively, and more often, provide feedback and guidance throughout each section of the courses. This leads to a higher success rate for the final project, as they have been able to have several opportunities for trial and error with guidance and critique along the way.

**Plan of action moving forward.** In the next assessment cycle, the faculty will discuss ways to include further reflection and discussion in these courses. They will also discuss the possibility of bringing in more guest speakers to discuss first-hand knowledge and understanding of current issues and trends in the music/music education field. This will allow the focus to remain on student learning and implementation of the knowledge base gained in these courses. It will also allow for more discussion with professionals in the field, as well as further reflection with these experiences.