

WSU Five-Year Program Review: Music Area The Area's Response to the Self-Study Review Team Report

Standard A: Mission Statement

- The faculty acknowledges its mission statement is not aligned with those of the university and college. To address this issue, the mission statement for the music area will be revised during its annual retreat in August 2015. According to the results of a faculty survey¹ administered after the review team's self-study report was distributed, 70% of the respondents believe the music area's values and practices are in line with those of the university and college, even though its mission statement is not (see Question 1). In a faculty meeting discussion² about the report, numerous professors stressed that creativity is already (to varying degrees) built into their classes through improvisation and composition.
- Half the respondents to the faculty survey (Question 2) indicated the music area's curriculum should realign its values to be responsive to musical and cultural diversity. How exactly to address this issue will be discussed during Fall semester 2015.

Standard B: Curriculum

- How (and whether) the music curriculum will be revised to align with the new mission statement will be a topic of formal discussion in faculty meetings beginning Fall 2015.
- The faculty recognizes the desire expressed by students for "increased diversity, additional opportunities for creativity, and more overall program flexibility." In addition to affirming that it already does so, the faculty discussed and agreed upon ways to provide further creative opportunities, such as improvisation and composition, in select classes. As discussed below, increased diversity and overall flexibility are much thornier issues.

The College Music Society manifesto *Transforming Music Study from its Foundations*³ calls for just that — a reconsideration of the very foundations of what it means to be an educated musician, and a new curriculum built upon this fresh foundation. The CMS manifesto asserts it is no longer possible to keep adding elements of diversity and flexibility, for instance, onto a system never designed to be inclusive in the first place. The curriculum must be redesigned from the ground up.

While some of our faculty have embraced this idea, others are less convinced. At stake here is more than simply habit, more than tradition — rather, the larger issue is *what kind of music is worthy of study* at university. Further, a recurring reason given to justify the apparent impossibility of including more diversity, opportunities for creativity, and more flexibility is that there is already so much music students must know; how can one possibly fit *more* in? A

¹ Included as an appendix to this document.

² On April 20, 2015

³ Available at http://www.music.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1859

similar justification is given for the lack of flexibility in our area — what ought to be left out in order to provide flexibility, and who decides?

With regard to the call for greater diversity, how exactly is that term defined? Does it mean ensuring that the classical music of women composers and of composers outside the Pan-European diaspora gets studied and performed? Or does it mean diversifying our curriculum to include serious study of jazz, popular, and folk musics from both within and beyond the Pan-European diaspora?

There are very large, very contentious debates afoot nationwide⁴ about the future of music study, and this author is grateful to the review team for suggesting Weber State's music area enter the conversation.

- The results of the faculty survey (Question 4) are very clear that the majority of respondents feel the amount of focus music education majors give to performance is intentional and exactly as they wish it to be.
- The addition of a masters degree has been discussed several times, but not (to the author's knowledge) the possibility of offering select masters-level courses. The merits of either or both options will be discussed among the faculty.

Standard C: Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment

- The assessment of student learning outcomes has been an ongoing problem for the music area. We recently streamlined our student learning outcomes and will be assessing them (via applied lesson juries) for the first time in Spring 2015. Our plan is to assess the music theory courses next, followed systematically by other courses as we further refine our assessment instruments and strategies. The music faculty will continue to work with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness during this process, and will discuss how qualitative data and longitudinal comparisons might be useful, as suggested by the review team.

Standard D: Academic Advising

- Since they seemed to be working well, no changes to our advising procedures were suggested nor will be made.

Standard E: Faculty

- According to the faculty survey results (Question 5), the full-time music faculty are satisfied with how the role of adjuncts is defined. Funding for adjuncts is available through similar channels available to full-time faculty. A discussion of how to acknowledge and incentivize our adjunct faculty is appropriate, however.

⁴ And worldwide: see Philip Tagg's "Caught on the Back Foot: Epistemic Inertia and Invisible Music" (2011) <http://www.tagg.org/articles/xpdfs/IASPM1106.pdf>.

Standard F: Program Support

- The future of our technology lab with regard to transitioning to a lab/lounge arrangement was discussed by the faculty and well-received. Not all faculty members, however, were on board with greater use of technology in the classroom, especially for music theory.
- The results of the faculty survey (Question 6) reveal a lukewarm attitude toward the addition of an associate chair from a performing area different from the chair. How exactly the administration of three independent areas should operate remains an issue steeped in concerns of equity.
- No changes to the relationship between the Browning Center and the music area are anticipated, other than a discussion of scheduling equity among the areas of the department.

Standard G:

- The future of the Office of Cultural Affairs is not clear at the moment, with its director recently stepping down. Nonetheless, the review team's call for partnership with other university departments is duly noted and will be explored.

Standard H: Program Summary

The music area is grateful to the review team for their evaluation, and specific responses to their recommendations are detailed above.

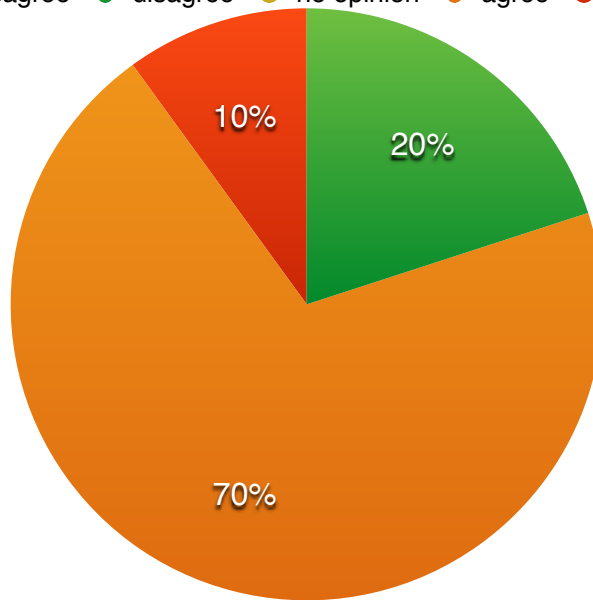
—Carey Campbell, Associate Professor of Music
April 29, 2015

Faculty Survey Results

Question 1

● strongly disagree ● disagree ● no opinion ● agree ● strongly agree

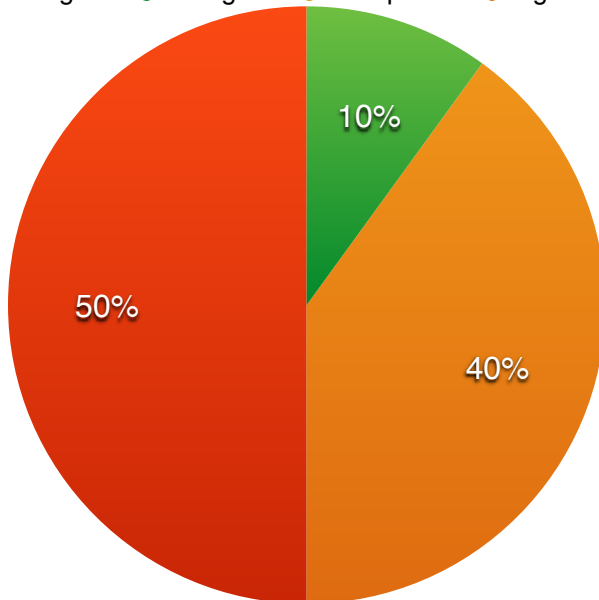
While not mentioned specifically in the music area's current mission statement, the WSU and CAH values of critical thinking, creativity, global citizenship, and freedom of expression are nonetheless reflected in the music area's practices.*



Question 2

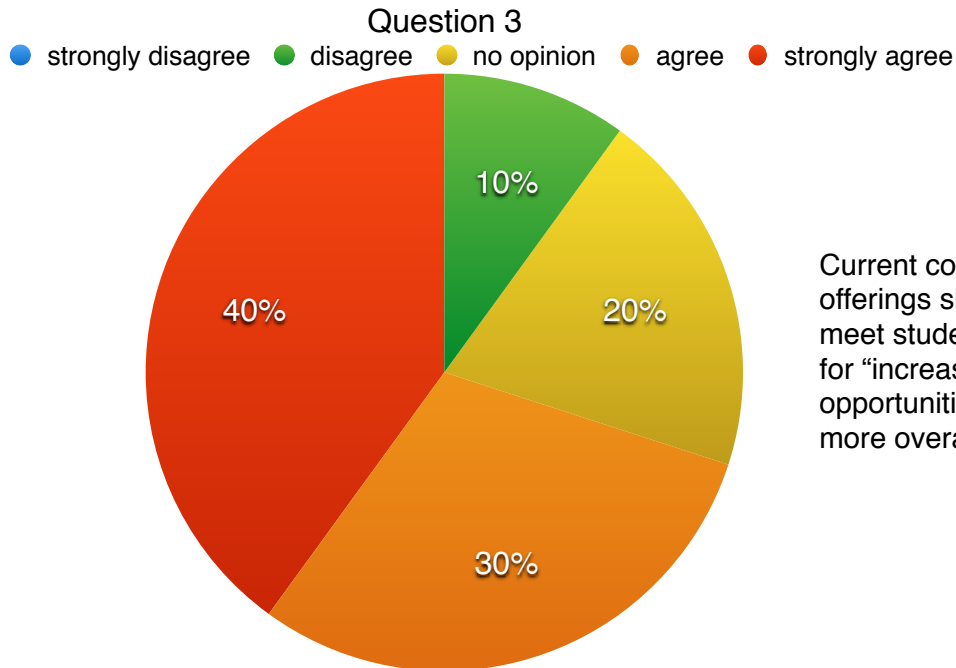
● strongly disagree ● disagree ● no opinion ● agree ● strongly agree

The music area at WSU should realign its values to be "responsive to musical and cultural diversity increasingly apparent within the surrounding communities and throughout the world."



*Q1 respondent comment: "I feel that we foster creative and critical thinking, but I'm not as sure about freedom of expression and global citizenship. We should include creative and critical thinking in our mission statement."

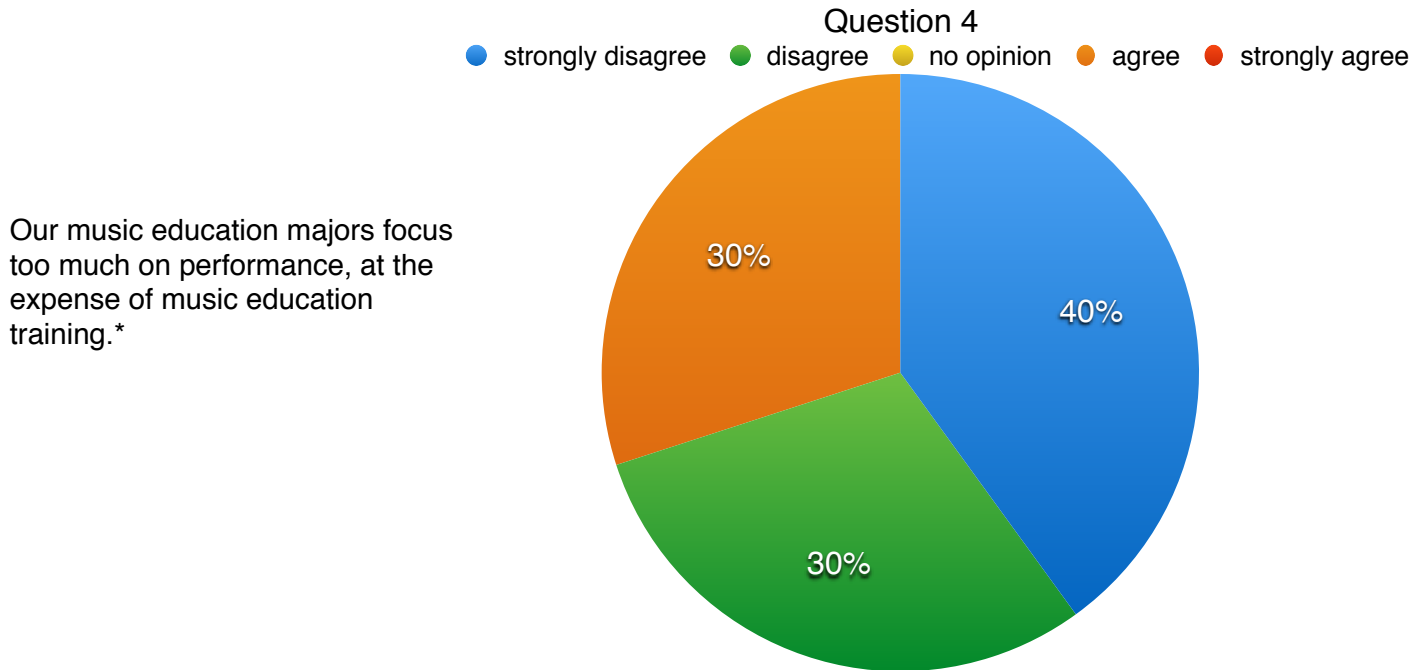
Faculty Survey Results



Current course and program offerings should be adapted to meet students' expressed desires for "increased diversity, additional opportunities for creativity, and more overall program flexibility." *

*Q3 respondent comment: "I believe that there are essential foundational training that would be required for all music students. Requiring students to have all the core training as well as the additional core classes do not mean the curriculum is lacking if flexibility. I believe that it is the general education requirement portion of their degree requirement that needs to be decreased to allow for more flexibility in the music students' schedule and course requirement. WSU has quite a bit higher Gen Ed credits required for the music students than other universities in Utah. Decreasing some of these requirements and provide more elective hours in their degree requirement would be helpful to the music students to have room for other desired classes or directed readings and projects."

Faculty Survey Results



*Q4 respondent comments:

(respondent a) "Disagreed. In fact there are so many general education credits required for music degrees our music majors can hardly have enough music courses."

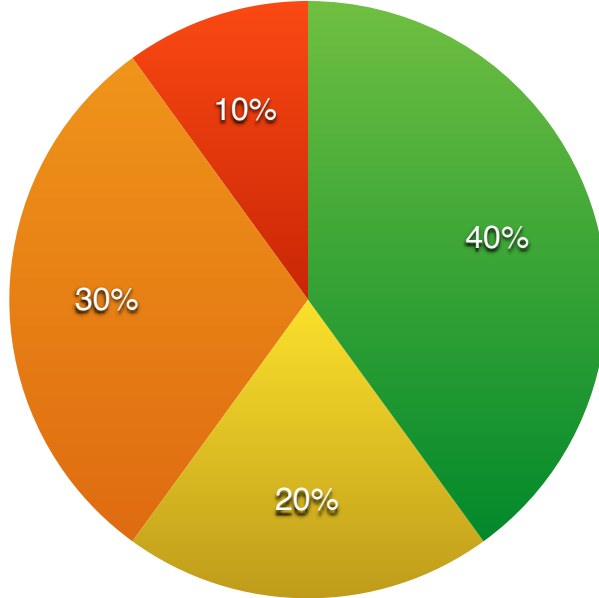
(respondent b) "I firmly believe that being able to perform at one's highest level is necessary in the training of a good music educator. A good music educator needs to be a good musician and be able to hear, model, and assess his/her own playing at the highest possible level before he/she can assess and guide his/her students after finishing the Music Ed degree."

(respondent c) "If education students are provided opportunities to lead in performance situations, then this is helping them to be successful as teachers. If, however, they do not have opportunities to lead and/or direct we should seek out opportunities for them to have those experiences."

Faculty Survey Results

Question 5

● strongly disagree ● disagree ● no opinion ● agree ● strongly agree

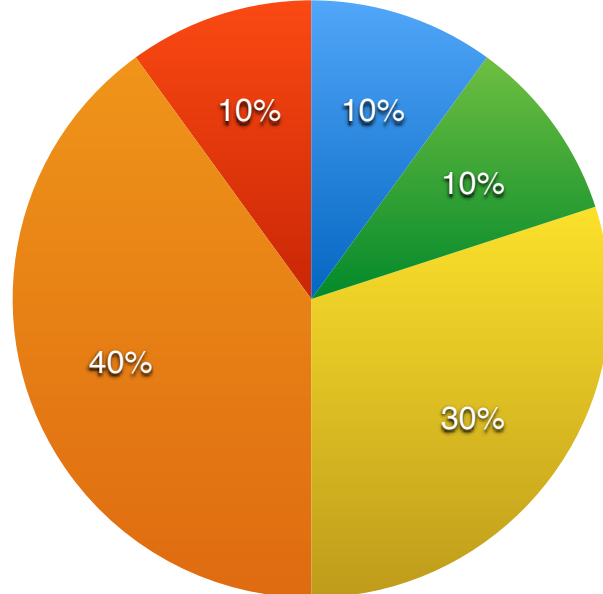


The role and responsibilities of adjuncts is clearly defined within our area.

Question 6

● strongly disagree ● disagree ● no opinion ● agree ● strongly agree

An associate chair should be added to the administrative team, from an area different than that of the chair (dance, music, theatre).*



*Q6 respondent comment: "If any, a full time chair should be appointed rather than having one of the full time faculty to chair the department."