2004-2005 Assessment of Learning Outcomes for the
Department of Music
University of Hawai‘i at Manoa

8/31/05

Undergraduate Programs

I. Department Objectives

The objectives of the University of Hawai‘i Music Department are: 1) to provide undergraduate and graduate instruction and co-curricular events that (a) are components within a broad liberal background (B.A.); (b) are a preparation for teaching music in elementary and secondary schools (B.Ed., M.A., in music education); (c) are a preparation for professional performing, composing, private teaching, or teaching music at the college level (B.M., M.A., M.M., Ph.D.); and 2) to provide opportunities for research and service that are consistent with the instructional program.

II. Learning Outcomes

The music faculty measures the objectives of the department by evaluating three principal learning outcomes:

1) **Performance Skills.** All students, no matter what their career plans, should grow in musicianship during their time at Manoa. The term encompasses technical skill on an instrument or voice, ability to perform in an ensemble, confidence and stage presence, and perhaps most importantly, aesthetic judgment. Recognizing that each student brings a unique background of preparation and aptitude to college-level music study, the department chooses to emphasize improvement and growth rather than the attainment of a uniform technical standard.

2) **Basic Musicianship.** The ability to hear, understand, read, and write music is essential to musical study and the music profession. These skills fall under the general category of music theory and aural skills.

3. **Knowledge of Literature.** Knowledge of music history is essential in connecting the music programs to the “broad liberal background” of the university as a whole.

III. Assessment Methods

The three principal learning outcomes described above are assessed according to these methods.

1) **Performance Skills.** Since an ongoing evaluation of performance skills is important to all of our undergraduate degree programs (B.A., B.Ed., B.M.), the music department has extensive testing that includes these components:
• An entrance audition in performance.
• Public performance(s) throughout the course of the student’s program. During each semester the student is enrolled in applied music, he/she must complete either (a) one or more performances on department recitals, with verbal evaluation by the student’s teacher after each performance; or (b) a board exam, in which the student performs for a faculty committee providing a written evaluation of the performance.
• Ensemble participation. All undergraduate students in the department are required to participate in ensembles of Western or non-Western music; their participation in and contributions to the ensembles are evaluated by the conductors and demonstrated through public performances.
• B.M. students are evaluated by a faculty committee at the end of the sophomore year to determine whether the student has the required professional potential to remain in the degree program.

2) **Basic Musicianship.** These skills are fundamental to all undergraduate degrees in the department of music and are assessed in this way:

• Entrance tests are administered by theory faculty upon matriculation to assess each student’s background and place him/her in classes appropriate for the student’s experience and skill level.
• The music theory sequence consists of four semesters of theory and four semesters of complementary aural training courses completed in tandem. A student may progress to a higher level only upon successful completion of each prior level. Because of the carefully graded sequential approach, students gradually acquire the musical literacy expected of professional musicians.
• Final exams at each level allow faculty to assess the extent to which each student has mastered the required skills.

3) **Knowledge of Literature.** All music majors are required to complete a two-semester survey of music history; B.M. students are required to complete one or more advanced music literature courses after completion of the two-semester survey. Progress in history courses is assessed by these means:

• Periodic mid-term exams allow instructors to assess each student’s developing knowledge of music history.
• Final exams in each class allow faculty to assess the extent to which students have mastered the required knowledge.
• Term papers and other writing assignments allow faculty to assess each student’s assimilation of the concepts of the course, creativity in synthesizing new ideas, and ability to communicate his/her ideas.
• Concert attendance. Each student is required to attend a minimum of six approved concerts of Western or non-Western music per semester for in at least four semesters. This activity is monitored through enrollment and successful completion of the non-credit course MUS 199 Recital Attendance.
The musicology area will prepare a short multiple-choice exam to be administered during freshman orientation and again after completion of the two-semester history sequence. Questions will be randomly chosen from a bank of questions drawn from exams in those classes and will be varied from semester to semester.

IV. Capstone Experiences

Each student who receives a bachelor’s degree in music from the University of Hawai‘i at Manoa is required to complete a culminating project. This requirement may be fulfilled in one of the following ways

- **Public recital.** For B.A. students this will normally consist of a 20-minute junior recital; for B.M. students, at least one recital as defined by each area. Audio recordings of all junior and senior recitals are archived in the music department for comparison with audition tapes.

- **Senior project.** B.A. students who elect not to do a junior recital are required to complete a capstone project, normally in the senior year. The senior project (MUS 495, 1—2 credits), which a student develops in consultation with the advisor and completes in the final year of study, may consist of an internship (e.g. with a school, arts organization, cultural association or music-related enterprise), a research paper, or some other suitable project determined in consultation with the student’s advisor. The advisor uses this project as a means of assessing the student’s overall progress since admission.

- **Student teaching.** B.Ed. students who are admitted to the education degree program complete a student teaching assignment through the college of education. Because members of our music education faculty evaluate the student teaching, it serves as a capstone experience in music as well as education.

V. Results of Assessment

The department’s assessment committee will evaluate the data in these areas and recommend ways in which the results can feed back into the department and be used to improve undergraduate programs.
Graduate Programs

The Music Department offers advanced degrees in performance, composition, music education, music theory, musicology, and ethnomusicology. These diverse programs have the following objectives in common with other graduate programs at the University of Hawai‘i:

The student who has successfully completed the degree requirements should:

1. Demonstrate a mastery of the methodology and techniques specific to the field of study.
2. Be able to conduct research or produce some other form of creative work.
3. Communicate both orally and in writing at a high level of proficiency and with a fluency for the language specific to the field of study.

These outcomes are assessed in the following manner:

1. Diagnostic and area exams.
   - All entering students are given diagnostic exams to assess their level of “mastery of the methodology and techniques” of music history and music theory. Those with deficiencies are required to take additional coursework or prepare to pass the exam through individual study.
   - Students in musicology and ethnomusicology take additional exams to assess their “mastery of the methodology and techniques specific to the field of study.”

2. Language requirements.
   - All students are required to take seminar courses in which their ability to “communicate orally at a high level of proficiency and with a fluency for the English language” is an essential component assessed by faculty members.
   - Each area has specific foreign-language requirements. Reading knowledge of required languages is assessed by the exams administered in the College of Languages, Linguistics, and Literature. For vocal performance majors, successful completion of coursework in German, French, and Italian is required.

3. Final project.
   - Students in theory, education, musicology, and ethnomusicology are required to write a thesis (M.A.) or dissertation (Ph.D.) to demonstrate their ability “to conduct research” appropriate to their field. These documents also attest to the student’s ability to “communicate in writing at a high level of proficiency and with a fluency for the language specific to the field of study.” Theses and dissertations are archived in the department and may be compared with the writing samples submitted at the time of application.
   - Students in composition are required to present a recital of original works composed during the residency here (30—40 minutes for M.M. students, 60—75 minutes for Ph.D. students).
· Master’s students in composition may elect to compose an original work in one of the larger forms, plus a detailed essay on the background and problems involved, or a detailed theoretical analysis in lieu of the recital.
· M.M. students in performance are required to present a public recital of works appropriate to their field. Recital tapes are archived in the music department and compared to the audition tapes to assess progress in the ability “to produce creative work.”

· PhD students are required to pass a rigorous comprehensive exam, consisting of a written exam followed by an oral defense of the exam. The exam is given after completion of course work and all other residency requirements. The exam serves not only to measure the student's readiness to begin significant research in the chosen field, but also to assess whether the student has achieved sufficient knowledge as per the goals of the program.

5. Oral examination.
· All graduate students are required to demonstrate their ability to “communicate orally at a high level of proficiency” in an oral examination. For doctoral students there is an oral defense of the comprehensive examination and another oral defense of the dissertation or thesis. For master’s students there is a thesis defense or an oral examination in connection with the recital.

In addition, all graduate programs in music follow the assessment guidelines established for graduate programs at UH-Manoa. For the master’s programs these guidelines include initial screening, approval of program structure, knowledge assessment, culminating experience, and graduation. On the doctoral level, the guidelines are initial screening, knowledge assessment, assessment of ability to plan scholarly activities, establishment of a strong relationship with the mentor, dissertation research, and final assessment.

To this point the music department has not correlated assessment results directly with curriculum making decisions. The department assessment committee will be addressing this question and looking for ways in which assessment can be used to strengthen curriculum.