Learning Outcomes Data Report

Master of Music
Composition Concentration

Department of Music

Fall, 2011 enrollment - 3
Report completed by Ernie M. Hills and Robin Fisher
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1. Learning-outcomes trajectory
In recent years, we have moved away from focusing our assessment reports on individual classes and toward a focus on the learning outcomes for the entire program. This shift became most noticeable about a year ago when we wrote our first draft of learning outcomes for the Bachelor of Arts in Music program. Those were contained in our Assessment Report submitted in June 2011. Since then, learning outcomes have been revised and expanded to address the needs of all of our undergraduate degree programs. The department has not yet expanded its learning outcomes to the graduate program in a comprehensive manner. This document will discuss those areas in which assessment is well established.

2. Learning Outcomes
The department has not yet expanded its learning outcomes to the graduate program in a formal way, therefore, no specific learning outcomes exist at this time.

However, it is clear that the focus of this program is on the development of composition and expansion of academic knowledge that forms the underpinnings of original musical composition. In this way, we know that the learning goals would be quite similar to those for the Bachelor of Music in Composition only at a higher, more focused level. Students complete courses in research, theory, and history as well as composition and orchestration studies.

3. Alignment with the Baccalaureate Learning Goals
Not applicable.

4. Monitoring Learning Outcomes
Composition outcomes are monitored through weekly lessons. All M.M. Compositions students give performances of their works and present them in juried competitions. A major, final composition project with written analysis is submitted for the culminating project; scores of those projects are housed in the University Library.

The department believes that this system provides a great deal of quality control over the acquisition of advanced composition skills for these students.
5. Outcomes used to address the curriculum
The department has not made formal curricular change to this program due to assessment data.

6. Data from alumni
Alumni surveys have focused on graduates of the bachelor degree programs. The department has not made formal curricular change to this program due to alumni data.

7. Learning outcomes and accreditation
As a fully accredited member of the National Association of Schools of Music, each program must adhere to “standards” and “competencies” as published in the NASM Handbook. For this program, the Handbook states:

a. Students demonstrate advanced competencies in composition. Studies in this area comprise as much as two-thirds or at least one-third of the total curriculum.

b. Students gain knowledge and skills in one or more fields of music outside the major such as history and literature, theory and analysis, musicology and ethnomusicology, performance, and pedagogy. Such supportive studies in music that broaden and deepen musical competence comprise at least one-third of the total curriculum.

c. Students must be afforded regular opportunities to hear their works performed.

d. As a culminating demonstration of professional capability in the major field, the student must submit at least one original composition appropriate as a final project.

NASM Handbook, XIV, B, 2 (page 124)

As the department develops learning outcomes for this program, this set of competencies will be carefully considered for alignment with our local goals.

8. A final word
We appreciate your interest in this program and desire to understand the unique educational goals associated with programs in music. If there are aspects of this document that are unclear, please contact us for clarification.