



Department of Music

An equal opportunity university

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TO: National Association of Schools of Music
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FROM: Western Washington University
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Date: October 13, 2023

RE: Items for Response

1. "...The Commission requests as replay that documents progress made toward developing long-range planning practices so as to provide evidence that the institution meets that the music unit evaluate, plans, and makes projections ..."

As of the current Music Chair's tenure (commencing fall 2023), a strategic planning committee has been formed which will meet at least twice monthly throughout the 2023-24 academic year and thereafter as necessary. Strategic planning models from comparable sister institutions are being referenced to assist in establishing pathways for crafting our vision, reflecting upon our values, and revising our mission statement as needed to identify more accurately who we are as a unit. In the university's recent leadership meeting, WWU's President and Provost have made it clear that new funding, requests for tenure lines, and program revisions or proposals must be articulated though and justified by a clear and coherent strategic plan.

2. "...The institution is asked to provide a reply as to how the standards for delivery of distance education are met for these [ten music courses appropriate to the university's undergraduate General Education requirement] courses and any others in the department delivered by these means."

The Music Department and the university support construction of and vet the design and delivery of online or hybrid courses in a number of ways. One resource utilized by faculty who design such courses can be found in the university's Teaching Handbook:

https://www.wvu.edu/teachinghandbook/course_materials/blended_syllabus.shtml. During the 2023-24 school year, the Academic Curriculum Commission (ACC) established policy addressing online and hybrid course organization and instructional delivery (SEE: <https://facultysenate.wvu.edu/acc-policies-and-guidance>). Among

these principles is a commitment to substantive and regular interaction and contact among students as well as between students and the instructor. In addition, course proposals are expected to precisely delineate between class time, contact hours, and homework so that hours of instruction and assessment are clear to all participants. During the university curriculum review process, online courses are reviewed to ensure that they demonstrate rigor and equivalency to similar courses that are offered in- person. Care is taken in the curricular review process to make sure online courses establish clear expectations, meaningful assessments, and outcomes in their syllabi. All registered learners are required to use a secure university log-in to verify that the student enrolled in the course is the student that *participates* in the course. Students are given the opportunity to evaluate courses at end of each term and instructors are expected to demonstrate in their periodic reviews that appropriate revisions are made according to student feedback.

3. "... the institution does not presently appear to meet all provisions of the standard with regard to health and safety indicating that students enrolled in the music unit programs and faculty and staff with employment status in the music unit must be provided basic information about the maintenance of health and safety within the contexts of practice, performance, teaching, and listening."

Student, faculty, and staff wellness is of extreme value of the department, college, and university; discussion in our strategic planning will focus on providing content related to wellness in our syllabi, student professional organizations (CMWEA, and ACDA), as well as periodic presentations on the topic open to all in the music unit. Some recent examples include a presentation given Ian Cox (audiology doctoral candidate). See his presentation here: <https://cfpa.wvu.edu/news/wellness-and-musicians-introduction-hearing-and-body-health>.

Dance Professor, Susan Haines has also presented on body health and awareness through movement. The WWU Music Department website includes information on wellness as shown here: <https://cfpa.wvu.edu/music/musicians-health-wellness>.

WWU's President recently sent out the following message to all students, faculty, and staff at the request of WWU's Counseling, Health, and Wellness Services (see also enclosed **PDF 1**, faculty recommendations for a health promoting classroom/university):

Students may experience stressors that can impact both their academic experience and their personal well-being. These may include academic pressure and challenges associated with relationships, mental health, alcohol or other drugs, identities, finances, etc.

If you are experiencing concerns, seeking help is a courageous thing to do for yourself and those who care about you. If the source of your stressors is academic, please contact me so that we can find solutions together. For personal concerns, WWU offers many resources, some of which are listed at Resources for Student Well-being on the Counseling and Wellness Center website. You can also search for additional resources on the WWU Resources for Students website. At WWU, we recognize everybody has a role to play in promoting holistic wellbeing, and it is our goal to provide the necessary support for all students to belong and thrive throughout their journey.

Optional exercise to help faculty facilitate students' reflections on their personal wellbeing
<https://cwc.wvu.edu/wellness-worksheets>

WWU's Provost recently sent out the following message to all faculty and staff:

We are pleased to announce a free skill-building opportunity for faculty, staff, and student employees. Counseling, Health, and Wellness Services is bringing Mental Health First Aid Training to Western's campus this fall and winter, offering in-person and virtual training options for your convenience.

Mental Health First Aid is designed to help participants build their skills and confidence to assist someone experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis. In this course, you will learn risk factors and warning signs for mental health and addiction concerns, strategies to help someone in both crisis and non-crisis situations, and where to turn for help.

Each full-day training has limited enrollment, so I encourage you to register for one as soon as possible. In-person trainings will be held Oct. 26, Nov. 30, and Jan. 11; virtual trainings on Zoom will be held Nov. 3, Jan. 19, and Feb. 9. To learn more and register, please visit the Mental Health First Aid Training web page.

Mental Health First Aid Training is one of several resources available to support our community in navigating conversations about mental health and substance use. The Counseling and Wellness Center is proud to bring back the Red Folder Project as a companion resource to help faculty and staff recognize, respond effectively to, and refer students experiencing a mental health crisis. In the coming weeks, each department will receive a packet of Red Folders, with information on how to request a brief in-person Red Folder orientation from the Counseling and Wellness Center.

4. "... Music History and Literature Area faculty (Musicology) [intend to] revise the content of curricular offerings in this area to allow for enhanced topical exploration beyond Western European art music.... Additionally, [the Area] proposes to revise the three-part undergraduate music history series to integrate Western European art music, popular music styles, and global genres of music into one curriculum.... The Commission requests a reply that documents the changes envisioned for the described seminars and courses, as well as the approval of the faculty and other authorizing university bodies to implement these revisions."

The Musicology Area is in the process of submitting these changes. Please see enclosed **PDF 2** for an abbreviated timeline to completion of the proposed changes.

In Fall 2022, a soft proposal was delivered to the faculty including steps in Phase 1 (basic curricular and program revision and the addition of new permanent GUR courses and seminar topics) and Phase 2 (future curricular changes to the music history series). The faculty have been incredibly supportive of these changes.

Phase 1

We successfully proposed and received approval for all elements of Phase 1 in AY22-23. We also offered major-required seminars for graduate and undergraduate students, in addition to GURs that were open to all majors, which incorporated various music styles (including popular, global, and Western European classical genres) and

had concentrated conversations about the relationship between music and culture in all of these courses. The courses are listed below, and I will be glad to share syllabi as requested.

- MUS 301: Music & Sustainability
- MUS 302: Music & Social Justice
- MUS 442/551-3: Seminar in Musicology (topics vary - formerly Seminar in Music History, required for all undergraduate majors excluding Music Ed.; 2/3 seminars required for all graduate students; three seminars required for all undergraduate Musicology majors with optional replacement of one with MUS 301/302)
 - American Soundscapes
 - Decolonizing Musicology
 - Designing Musicology Curriculum
 - Intro to Musicology
 - Mistress Works
 - Music and Difference (forthcoming, Winter 2024)
 - Music, Gender, & Sexuality (forthcoming, Spring 2024; previously taught in WI22 & SP20)
- MUS397K: Deep Listening & Improv Ensemble (taught with justice-based principles and incorporates various approaches to music-making that are rooted in local, national, and global traditions.

We proposed the following courses as regular additions to the graduate curriculum and are teaching all three in AY 23-24:

- MUS 550: Seminar in Musicology (topics vary - WI24 is on Tarantism (a Southern Italian folk tradition and Dr. Youngblood's main research topic)
- MUS 551: Intro to Musicology
- MUS 552: Music, Gender, & Sexuality

Program revisions were also proposed and accepted. These edits have allowed for more inclusive curricular requirements for the undergraduate and graduate students studying musicology and, in some cases, simply better represented the majors and courses as they are currently taught.

- All MM Concentrations
 - Replaced MUS 541, 542, 543 (formerly Seminars in Music History, which were solely focused on chronological explorations of Western European "classical" music) with MUS 550-552 (see above)
- MM Concentration in Musicology
 - Removed collegium requirement (as collegium is no longer taught in our department) and replaced with 2-6 credits of approved ensembles.
 - Added foreign language reading knowledge exam.
 - Updated all terminology from music history and literature to musicology.
- BM in Musicology
 - Title change to Musicology from Music History and Literature
 - Student degree flexibility and further options in popular and global music: Majors can either take three seminars or they can replace one of these seminars with Music & Sustainability or Music & Social Justice (see above)
 - Foreign language reading knowledge exam added as official degree component.

- Collegium removed as a chamber requirement (as collegium is no longer taught in our department).
- Updated all terminology from music history and literature to musicology.

Phase 2

Currently, syllabi are being drafted for the new music history series, which will be changed to the "Series in Musicology." This three-quarter series will replace our current three-quarter series, which focuses on History of Music to 1600, History of Music 1600-1830, and History of Music 1830-Present, respectively ("History of Music," in all three of these cases, is meant to refer solely to Western European "classical" music and its Mesopotamian and Greek roots in the first series). The new series will, instead, focus on Western European "classical" music in addition to popular and global modern and traditional music. These courses will continue to remain a requirement for all majors. I have included brief descriptions below and will be happy to share syllabi once they are completed and approved.

- MUS 341: Foundations in Musicology
 - This lecture and activities-based course will introduce students to the study of music history and culture from local, national, and global perspectives. Three weeks will be dedicated, each, to the studies of Western European "classical" music, global music cultures, and popular music. The first partial week of the term will serve as an introduction to musicology and the final week will be dedicated to comprehensive review in preparation for the following two courses.
- MUS 342: Case Studies in Musicology I
 - This course is dedicated to a topical exploration of music history and culture through lecture, activity, and discussion-based frameworks. Students will engage in five units of study that each feature various genres of music, including Western European "classical" music, global music cultures, and popular music. Class discussions will relate to concepts from various musicological publications, websites, and films that address the unit topic.
- MUS 343: Case Studies in Musicology II
 - Like MUS 342, this course is also dedicated to a topical exploration of music history and culture through lecture, activity, and discussion-based frameworks. Students will engage in five units of study that differ from the previous quarter, each featuring various genres of music, including Western European "classical" music, global music cultures, and popular music. Class discussions will relate to concepts from various musicological publications, websites, and films that address the unit topic. MUS 342 & 343 will be instrumental in helping students to develop the critical thinking and discussion skills that are necessary for upper-division musicology seminars.

Syllabi will be completed in mid-October; at which time, the departmental curriculum committee will review them. If approved by the committee, the courses will be up for a faculty vote before the end of the month. If approved at the departmental level, the curriculum will then be moved up the ladder to college and university-level approving bodies in November through January. In late October, Dr. Youngblood will also be applying for a Faculty Summer Teaching Grant to help fund the creation of lesson plans in Summer 2024.

5. "...the Composition area has proposed requirements in the Bachelor of Music in Composition that would change the undergraduate Orchestration class from an elective to a requirement in this degree.... The Commission request a reply from the institution that documents this change, as well as the approvals of the faculty and other authorizing university bodies."

AS of Academic year 2023-24, WWU's Bachelor of Music in Composition program now includes the undergraduate orchestration class as an upper-division theory requirement (rather than an elective). This change is reflected in the current catalog at this link: https://catalog.wvu.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=20&moid=9842.

At the time our unit was reviewed, the proposed revision had not completed its cycle through the university curricular process. See enclosed **PDF 3**, the Request for Revision of Program of Study, pg. 20, from WWU's University *Curriculog* that documents approval of Orchestration as a Composition requirement.

6. "... It is not clear that the institution presently meets the requirements to publish in one or more official documents concerning its music program the name, address, and telephone number of NASM. The Commission notes that the citation of NASM membership on the university's main accreditation page is presently incomplete.... Institutional membership appearing in catalogues and other publications should be factual and brief..."

The Music Department has been in contact with WWU's Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, Jack Herring, who oversees accreditation for the university. We are informed that WWU has a link on our university accreditation website for "Specialized Program Accreditation." The link accesses an official list of such accreditations in the WWU Catalog. Herring states that "it would be unusual if we listed NASM on the home page but not the other program accreditations." Is it possible that the Commission is referring to the specifics of the information in our catalog? Noted in Article XII, the NASM handbook directs institutions to list the name, address, and telephone number of NASM. We have not listed the telephone number, so we are, "incomplete" per the handbook. This would be an easy fix if it is truly the issue here.

7. "...the institution was unable to confirm the publication status of the definition of a credit hour and any related published policies. The Commission requests that the institution investigate this matter further and provide confirmation as to the publication status and location of this policy."

Please see the following information regarding *credit hour* as defined in WWU's Catalogue under University Academic Policies: https://catalog.wvu.edu/content.php?catoid=20&navoid=5653#Credits_and_Credit_Loads