

Review of the Master of Music (M.M.)

Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) Code: 50.0901
Music, General

The Master of Music (M.M.) program is housed in the School of Music within the College of Fine Arts. At the graduate level the school also offers a Master of Music Education (M.M.Ed.). At the undergraduate level the school offers a B.A., B.S. in Music (liberal arts), a Bachelor of (Music) Performance (B.M.), a Bachelor of Music Education (B.M.E.), and minors in music and jazz performance. Reviews of the two music education programs are scheduled with reviews of the other teacher preparation programs at the University (scheduled for 2019-2020) rather than with other programs in the School of Music.

The Master of Music program provides advanced study in collaborative piano, composition, conducting, performance, and music therapy. Fall program enrollment has been steady in recent years, ranging from 58 in 2010 to 66 in 2015. The Master of Music program is one of eight master's-level programs at public universities in the state assigned CIP code 50.0901. The program at Illinois State is consistently the second largest of the eight in terms of enrollment, after the program at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and offers the most specialized areas of music study (five sequences) of all eight programs. Illinois State is the only public university in the state that offers master's-level study in music therapy.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY PROGRAM REVIEW SELF-STUDY REPORT

Self-study process. The School of Music Advisory Committee worked throughout the fall 2014 semester on extensive revisions to the school strategic plan that serves as the foundation for all programs in the school. The school also completed a comprehensive self-study in 2013 as part of the regularly-scheduled reaccreditation process with the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM). Portions of that self-study document were used in compiling the program review self-study report. In December 2014 a graduate program review coordinator was named to facilitate analysis of the Master of Music program. The coordinator contacted the music librarian to review and assess Milner Library holdings and contributions to the School of Music programs. All School of Music faculty members were given opportunities to contribute to program review, particularly in areas of strategic planning and alumni tracking.

Program curriculum. The Master of Music program provides advanced instruction in five sequences: collaborative piano (i.e., piano accompaniment), composition, conducting, performance, and music therapy. Students are required to complete between 34 and 36 credit hours depending on the sequence. Students in all sequences are required to participate in at least two semesters of ensemble in addition to completing coursework. Exit requirements vary by sequence, but all students complete a comprehensive exam. Students in the collaborative piano, conducting, and performance sequences perform a recital; students in the composition sequence complete a thesis, often in the form of a major composition; and students in the music therapy sequence complete either a thesis or a professional practice project in a clinical setting.

Program or academic unit faculty. The School of Music has 52 full-time faculty members including specialists in all applied areas of major band and orchestra instruments and multiple applied specialists in keyboard and voice. Thirty-eight faculty members are in tenure track positions. Consistent with university policies, a rigorous and comprehensive hiring process involving a national search is followed when hiring for tenure-line positions. All tenure track faculty members possess a doctorate in their field, are near completion of a doctorate, or have been granted an exception based on professional experience.

Program goals and quality indices. The strategic plan for the School of Music guides all decisions and processes of the school. Eleven core values are articulated in the strategic plan: musical excellence of the highest quality; a faculty that demonstrates professional excellence; students who are among the finest at the University and in the region; diversity and inclusion; personal integrity; artistic and academic collaboration; rigorous curricula that meet or exceed accreditation standards; a commitment to general education; university and community service; strong

alumni relations; and state-of-the-art facilities and equipment. The School of Music adheres to the goals and standards of quality measurement adopted by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM).

Student learning outcomes assessment plan and process. Learning outcomes for students in the collaborative piano, composition, conducting, and performance sequences of the program include demonstration of specialized skills at the highest possible levels; development of musical, theoretical, historical, and aesthetic perspectives relating to the discipline; pursuit of careers as performers, conductors, composers, and collaborative artists; and continuation of study at the doctoral level. Learning outcomes for students in the music therapy sequence include obtaining board certification in music therapy; demonstration of expanded knowledge and skills for therapists already holding board certification; development of musical, theoretical, historical, and aesthetic perspectives relating to the discipline; communication with professional colleagues through presentations and publications; achievement of supervisory or coordinator positions in music therapy or pursuit of collegiate teaching positions; and continuation of study at the doctoral level.

Specialized accreditation. Illinois State University is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM), which recognizes music programs at the University as meeting NASM quality standards. The University was most recently reaccredited by NASM in 2013, with the next accreditation study and site visit scheduled for 2022-2023. In addition, the music therapy sequence of the Master of Music program is approved by the American Music Therapy Association.

Responses to recommendations resulting from the previous program review. Five recommendations by the Academic Planning Committee resulted from the last program review, conducted in 2007-2008. The committee asked the program to consult with the University Assessment office to develop a new student learning outcomes assessment plan. Since then five learning outcomes have been established for the program, and outcomes measures and assessment methods have been developed for three of the five outcomes; additional work is needed to complete the plan. The committee asked the program to work with the Office of Enrollment Management and Academic Services to determine optimum enrollment for the program. Faculty has since adopted a goal of enrolling 25 new students in the program each year, and that goal has been met. The committee asked the program to identify benchmark programs at other institutions with levels of quality that the Master of Music program aspires to meet or exceed. Faculty has since named Florida State University and the University of Texas at Austin as aspirational institutions for the program. The committee asked the program to develop a plan to increase ethnic diversity of program faculty, and this also has been done. Finally, the committee asked the program to compile an inventory of efforts by program faculty to obtain grant funding for research, programs, and services. Such an inventory has been compiled and provided by the College of Fine Arts.

Changes in the academic discipline, field, societal need, and program demand. Demand for the Master of Music program at Illinois State has been consistently strong since the last program review. The program continues to meet its goal of enrolling 25 new students each academic year, and total fall enrollment has increased from 58 in 2010 to 66 in 2015. Enrollment in the music therapy sequence increased from 11 to 21 students during that period and is now operating at capacity. The program continues to receive inquiries and applications from all over the country and from Asia. Since the last program review the School of Music has established a collaborative piano sequence in the M.M. program in response to inquiries about training in piano accompaniment. This sequence is designed to lead to employment as an accompanist, chamber music player, or teacher of accompanying or chamber music. In 2013 the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM), which accredits music programs at Illinois State, added the collaborative piano sequence to the list of Illinois State music programs approved by NASM.

Major findings of this program review self-study. The School of Music possesses numerous strengths as it enters the second half of the 2010s. Faculty and students continue to collaborate through established ensembles and special projects. New faculty members bring fresh ideas and ambitious scholarly and creative agendas. A capable support staff enables increasingly professional operations. Strong enrollment creates a deeper pool of students for auditioned ensembles and joint productions, resulting in many mature, exciting performances. The biggest challenge the Master of Music program faces is funding. State support for the University continues to shrink, further straining operational and personnel budgets. As the State of Illinois attempts to address its substantial fiscal deficits, budget rescissions may occur. The School of Music will continue its conservative budgeting practices to mitigate the impacts of budget rescissions should they be necessary. However, due to enrollment growth in the music therapy sequence, an additional full-time faculty position in music therapy must be a primary goal. Other key faculty positions must be

replaced when resignations or retirements occur. Inadequate and geographically scattered facilities remain a primary concern since the last program review. While the Center for the Performing Arts provides an excellent large performance venue, many other spaces used by the school are in a state of disrepair and are poorly suited for postsecondary music study. The school has been working through this challenge by using larger rehearsal spaces for lecture classes and by using performance venues as rehearsal spaces. Facilities used by the school are scattered among several buildings on campus, so students, staff, and faculty travel regularly between buildings in all types of weather. Additional funds for graduate assistantships are needed. Because the value of graduate assistantship stipends has been stagnant, it is increasingly difficult for the school to compete with other universities for students. The school has been able to provide the minimum stipend required by the Graduate School, but any future increase in the required stipend will, in effect, be an unfunded mandate. The school would be able to increase the stipend but in doing so would have to compensate by reducing the number of assistantships the school can offer. While increasing the stipend may help recruit better students, it would lead to a reduction in the number of newly-enrolled students and, therefore, negatively impact enrollment targets.

Initiatives and plans for the next program review cycle. With regard to enrollment, the program will strive to enroll 58-60 students in the Master of Music program each year. Efforts to recruit and retain outstanding students will continue, with a goal of improving the overall quality of students through an increasingly selective admission/audition process. The school will also continue to advocate for additional financial support to aid its recruitment efforts. With regard to instruction in the Master of Music program, the school will strive to maintain instructional capacity and will continue to explore options for delivering quality instruction, such as offering additional online or blended courses. The school will seek to improve instructional technologies used to deliver the program and to improve the instrument and equipment inventories that support students in the program. To meet the need for more instructional capacity in music therapy, the program will seek an additional full-time faculty position for that sequence.

PROGRAM REVIEW OUTCOME AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE ACADEMIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Academic Planning Committee, as a result of this review process, finds the Master of Music (M.M.) to be in Good Standing.

The Academic Planning Committee congratulates the program and school for reaccreditation of School of Music programs by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) through 2022-2023 and for approval of the music therapy sequence of the Master of Music program by the American Music Therapy Association. Factors contributing to program reaccreditation and approval include a rigorous curriculum taught by outstanding faculty members who provide individualized attention to students. To graduate from the program all students are required to complete two capstone experiences, including a comprehensive exam and a second experience appropriate to their sequence (i.e., a recital, composition, professional practice, or thesis). Faculty members are known regionally and nationally by their peers, are active performers at the University and in the community, and balance practice with research and creative endeavors. Success of the program in preparing students for their careers is evidenced by acceptance of graduates into prestigious doctoral programs (e.g., Indiana University and Eastman School of Music), employment of alumni by orchestras and military bands, and service by alumni as professors at other institutions (e.g., Louisiana State University and the University of Indianapolis).

The committee recognizes the school for the many performance and professional practice opportunities it offers students in the program and for enrichment of the University and community through the many public performances sponsored by the school each year. The committee also recognizes the program and school for their service to youth of the region and state through private instruction, music clinics, and competitions.

The committee commends the program for efforts to increase enrollment (up 17 percent from fall 2014 to fall 2015) and for its willingness and efforts to accommodate additional students. Much of the increase is attributed to the increase in music therapy enrollment (up 109 percent from fall 2010 to fall 2015). The music therapy sequence in the program is the only such plan of study on the master's level in Illinois. The committee also commends the program for contributions to internationalizing the campus through its enrollment of non-native students. In fall 2014, 28 percent of students in the program were citizens of other countries. The committee commends the program

for its collaboration with the English Language Institute at the University to ease the transition of international students to the program, institution, and community.

The School of Music and Milner Library have a long history of collaboration in developing and maintaining library resources, including scores and sound recordings, which support coursework, performances, and research. School and library faculty also collaborate in teaching information fluency concepts and skills. School and library faculty are currently working together to develop a plan for graduated information fluency instruction integrated with the curriculum. The committee commends this effort.

The 2007-2008 program review recommended that faculty consult with University Assessment to develop a student learning outcomes assessment plan for the Master of Music program. Since then some work on the plan has been completed but some work remains, such as developing effective methods for assessing mastery of music theory and music history. The self-study report submitted by the program in fall 2015 reports minimal progress in meeting that recommendation. Accordingly, the committee asks faculty to further develop its assessment plan and then to submit the revised plan to the Office of the Provost by May 15, 2017. The committee further asks the program to implement its revised plan in 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 and to report its assessment findings in a follow-up report submitted to the Office of the Provost by May 15, 2019.

Rapid changes are occurring across higher education, both reflecting and driving change in associated fields and the populations they serve. Recognition of those changes and informed responses to them are important to ensuring the relevance and vitality of higher education programs. The committee asks faculty to enter into discussions regarding ongoing and anticipated changes in music, including changes in the academic discipline, related fields, societal need, and demand for master's level education in music performance, composition, and therapy. The committee asks the program to discuss implications of those changes for the program and its curriculum for the next eight-year program review cycle and beyond. Among the trends to consider are increasing diversity of the college-ready population in the United States and internationalization of music curricula. The committee asks the program to summarize its discussions and findings in a report submitted by the school to the Office of the Provost by October 31, 2016.

Recommendations

The Academic Planning Committee makes the following recommendations to be addressed within the next regularly scheduled review cycle. In the next program review self-study, tentatively due October 1, 2023, the committee asks the program to describe actions taken and results achieved for each recommendation.

- The committee recognizes the many facilities challenges faced by faculty and students in the Master of Music program and in all other programs of the school. The planned reconstruction of the fine arts complex, awaiting release of state funding, should address many of those challenges. The School of Music, on behalf of its academic programs, has expressed concern whether the project will be comprehensive in its reconstruction of the complex, including all facilities in the complex used by the school. The committee recommends that the school continue its discussions with the college, Facilities Planning, and the Capital Planning and Budget Team regarding strategies for meeting as many music facilities needs through the reconstruction project as possible given the project budget. The committee further recommends that the school and college work with University Advancement to explore soliciting private contributions, including contributions from college alumni, to make up for shortfalls in project funding that may prevent full reconstruction of the complex. Meanwhile, until the reconstruction project commences, short-term patches to life-safety systems in the fine arts complex will continue to be needed. The committee recommends that the school continue working with the college and Facilities Management to address life-safety problems requiring immediate attention, as well as that can be done given the level of university resources available to address the numerous deferred maintenance issues campus-wide.
- The committee concurs with the school strategic plan objective of reviewing the curriculum to reflect best practices and current trends. The committee encourages faculty to consider the appropriate mix of required and elective courses, instruction in genres other than classical, and, as distance education technologies evolve, exploration of options to face-to-face program delivery. As curricular changes are made, the committee urges faculty to carefully monitor compliance with the Higher Learning Commission requirement that at least half of the credit hours required for graduation be earned through graduate-level courses (i.e., 400-level).

- To help maintain program enrollment and expand the pool of talented applicants, the committee recommends that the program develop and implement a written recruitment plan. The plan should set forth enrollment targets for each sequence based on current and anticipated resources, including faculty lines, graduate assistantships, and scholarships. The plan should set forth strategies for achieving enrollment targets. Funds to help implement the recruitment plan may be available through the Graduate School.
- A key element of the recruitment plan is a plan for recruiting a diverse student population. The program has done a commendable job enrolling students from other counties. The committee encourages the program to continue these efforts and to expand them beyond Asia. The committee also encourages efforts to increase the number of students who are U.S. citizens self-identifying with traditionally underrepresented racial/ethnic groups. The committee suggests looking to undergraduate music program recruitment initiatives for potential graduate recruitment strategies.
- For the benefit of prospective and current students, the committee encourages the program to maintain a graduate catalog entry that accurately and clearly describes available plans of study and graduation requirements.
- In fall 2014, approximately 12 percent of full-time faculty members in the School of Music self-identified with racial/ethnic groups traditionally underrepresented among faculty at the University. The committee recommends that the school develop and implement a written plan for expanding applicant pools to include candidates from those groups when faculty positions are filled, particularly tenure-line faculty positions. One element of the plan might be use of the Recruitment Assistance Program sponsored by the Office of the Provost. The committee recommends looking to aspirational institutions for guidance with faculty diversity.
- The school has elements of a robust alumni relations program in place, including personal contacts between faculty and alumni and use of social media. The committee recommends integrating those and additional elements into a systematic plan for tracking alumni and documenting their professional successes. With such a plan in place, efforts of Alumni Relations at the university-level would supplement alumni relations efforts of the school, rather than the opposite. Information gathered through implementation of the plan could inform recruitment and fundraising efforts.
- The committee recognizes the program for its efforts to obtain external grant funds since the last program review. The committee encourages the program to continue these efforts and to involve more faculty members in them.
- Beyond the work requested by the committee to revise the student learning outcomes assessment plan for the program, the committee urges the program to continue to utilize information collected through student learning outcomes assessments over the next eight years to make program improvements and to document how that has been done.