

2022 ANNUAL ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT REPORT FORM
(Due October 15 to the dean)**PROGRAM SECTION (Due to the dean on October 15)**

After completing the Program Section, the program should email this form to the dean, with a copy to the appropriate community campus director(s) if the program is delivered on a community campus.

Submission date: October 17th, 2022

Submitted by: Dr. Armin Abdihodzic, Associate Professor of Music, aabdihodzic@alaska.edu

Program(s) covered in this report: Music BA/BM

College: College of Arts and Sciences

Campuses where the program(s) is delivered: ☒ Anchorage ☐ KOD ☐ KPC ☐ MSC ☐ PWSC

Specialized accrediting agency (if applicable): National Association of Schools of Music (NASM).

If explanation is necessary, such as only some of the certificates and degrees are covered by the specialized accreditation, briefly describe:

INSTITUTIONAL STUDENT LEARNING CORE COMPETENCIES

In 2020, UAA launched a consensus-based, deliberative process to identify the key skillsets that help students achieve academic and post-graduation success. After a year-long process that included students, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, and employers, the UAA community identified four core competencies at the heart of a quality UAA education. Students develop mastery of these competencies through curricular (e.g., courses), co-curricular (e.g., internships, conferences), and extra-curricular (e.g., student clubs) learning experiences.

After the stakeholder-based process in AY20, UAA is phasing in the integration of the core competencies into ongoing processes, including program student learning outcomes assessment. Personal, Professional, and Community Responsibility (PPCR) was integrated into the AY21 Annual Academic Assessment Report. The AY22 Annual Academic Assessment Report now also integrates Effective Communication.

Question #1 below is designed to engage program faculty in thinking about how they can or already do promote student learning in these two core competencies.

1. **A. *Personal, Professional, and Community Responsibility: The knowledge and skills necessary to promote personal flourishing, professional excellence, and community engagement.***

- **If last year you provided your program's current or planned example of an intentionally designed course, assignment, or activity that develops and showcases the student learning in this core competency, please discuss that implementation and any observations you have regarding how well it is working. (500 characters or less)**

One of the most exciting new opportunities that we have developed for our students is the establishment of a collaborative internship program with the Anchorage Youth Symphony. The AYS conductor also teaches our string methods course, as well as graduate courses for our students who go on to the MAT program for teacher certification. As mentioned in our last year's report, this project provides our students opportunities to work on their community engagement skills, and to practice the professional etiquette expected in larger ensembles.

We have also formalized a collaboration with the Anchorage Concert Chorus starting this semester (Fall 2022) that will allow students to engage with adult community singers in a professional setting with orchestra and soloists. Students will have the opportunity to perform outside of the university with three concerts held this year in the Atwood Concert Hall in front of an expected audience of 3000.

Additionally, last semester we had an FIF funded project between the UAA and UAF Voice Divisions. Music Theater excerpts on the theme of Unity and Equity were studied by voice majors from both campuses, directed by faculty members. Performances happened on both campuses, and at ASD and Fairbanks public schools.

Another activity that highlights this particular core competency is the NATS (National Association of Teachers of Singing) competition. The Voice Division takes part in two annual music competitions for singers: Music Theater and Classical competitions. These take place in the UAA Fine Arts Building, and are open to all voice students who study with a registered singing teacher. They are adjudicated by local and out-of-state teachers/artists. UAA voice majors participate, and frequently place in the top three and advance to the regional and national levels.

- **If last year you *did not* identify a current or planned example of an intentionally designed course, assignment, or activity that provides students the opportunity to develop and showcase this core competency, please identify one now. (500 characters or less)**

B. *Effective Communication: The knowledge and skills necessary to engage in effective communication in diverse contexts and formats.*

- **What would you hope a student would say if asked where in your program or support service they had the opportunity to develop proficiency in this core competency? (500 characters or less)**

In many of our courses (master classes, methods classes, history classes, and ensembles) team-based learning and development of effective communication skills is an essential component.

A good example of one of the courses that focuses on effective communication is the Strings, Winds, Brass, Guitar, and Percussion Master Class. Any student enrolled into juried lessons has to complete the Master Class as a co-requisite. An essential part of the Master Class course structure is providing students with an opportunity to sharpen their listening, analytical, and speaking skills. Students listen to instructors provide feedback for performances, practice preparation, and overall historic and social context of music being examined. Students are required to provide similar feedback to each other and thus get a regular opportunity to practice communicating effectively. And, since this course includes a variety of instruments, students get to practice adapting to diverse contexts and formats.

- **Provide your program's current or planned example(s) of an intentionally designed course, assignment, or activity that showcases the student learning in this core competency. (500 characters or less)**

A new activity was introduced this semester in our upper-level music theory courses, where students present analyses of compositions from a broad variety of genres, including works chosen from the website "Expanding the Music Theory Canon," which is designed to foster awareness of music by women, people of color and other underrepresented groups. Students produce diagrams of musical structures and written analyses, as well as leading in-class discussions of the works that they have chosen.

Our history courses and seminars are best examples of courses that emphasize team-based learning as an essential component. Students engage in partner or group projects, including interviews, debates and collaborative compositions/performances. Effective communication is an integral part of this process.

The East High School Choir visits Voice Masterclass (MUSA468) every semester to perform and receive feedback from the students. Voice majors are prepared by the instructor on how to give constructive feedback and work with the high school students on pedagogical concepts. This is a highly successful event that promotes effective communication.

The very nature of our musical ensembles demands that students must engage with one another, connect with the material they are performing and communicate with themselves and their audience. This happens in both the rehearsal process and in the final performance.

PROGRAM STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

- 2. Please list the Program Student Learning Outcomes your program assessed in AY22. For each outcome, indicate one of the following: Exceeded faculty expectations, Met faculty expectations, or Did not meet faculty expectations.**

Example: Communicate effectively in a variety of contexts and formats – Exceeded faculty expectations.

- Demonstrate technical proficiency on a chosen instrument appropriate to the degree with an attendant functional proficiency on piano - Met faculty expectations
- Demonstrate and analyze through musical literacy the basic technical principles used in the construction of music and its basic forms - Met faculty expectations
- Communicate a knowledge of the various musical periods and representative forms from those periods in the social, artistic and political context of each - Met faculty expectations

- 3. Describe your assessment process in AY22 for these Program Student Learning Outcomes, including the collection of data, analysis of data, and faculty (and other, e.g., advisory board) conversations around the findings. (750 characters or less)**

Junior and Senior Recitals serve as an effective assessment tool for our first PSLO. Selected faculty members meet with each student scheduled to perform a recital for the pre-recital jury, which occurs at least six weeks before the scheduled recital date. The faculty members help guide the students through the preparation process and provide valuable feedback. They also look at the proposed programs and assess if necessary changes need to be made to make sure that the quality level is appropriate to the degree level.

Students also have to complete a Functional Piano Exam to demonstrate their proficiency on the piano before they begin taking 300 and 400-level courses.

After examining student recitals and functional piano results, the faculty decided that no further changes need to be made for this particular PSLO.

We kept our previous assessment tools in place for our second PSLO. Every student completes a Theory Placement Exam as they enter our program. These findings give us an updated picture of the level of our incoming students and we use this information to plan and structure our Music Theory courses to best accommodate the level of our students. Our capstone course, Form and Analysis, captures the data as students complete their Music Theory courses and serves as a mid-degree “exit exam.” Faculty uses this data to further streamline our Music Theory courses and to make sure that any weak spots in students’ musical literacy are addressed in the other upper level courses appropriate to the area.

We have been looking into adding additional ways to assess our third PSLO. This assessment tool would not only better capture student learning for this area, but also give us adequate data and a reasonable time frame to strengthen students' weaknesses if necessary. We do offer an Honors Exam in the last semester for each graduating student.

4. What are the findings and what do they tell the faculty about student learning in your program? (750 characters or less)

Current findings from our different assessment tools tell us that our program has well established checkpoints throughout the degree program to capture the quality of student learning. We are content with the progress our students make throughout their degree process. Despite that, we are constantly looking for ways to improve student learning in their first year as they enter the program.

5. Based on the findings, did the faculty make any recommendations for changes to improve student achievement of the Program Student Learning Outcomes? Please describe the recommended action, what improvement in student learning the program hopes to see with this change, the proposed timeline, and how the program will know if the change has worked. If no recommendations for changes were made, please explain that decision. (750 Characters or less)

After a few years of monitoring incoming students' music theory skills, the faculty decided to consolidate two courses: The Fundamentals of Music and Music Theory I. This is a major change in our curriculum. Before, students that do not pass the Theory Placement Exam would have to wait for the Spring semester to take the Fundamentals of Music to get ready for the next fall semester. This was very burdensome for the students because it would put them a year behind as they enter the program. We consolidated these two courses, which caused some restructuring throughout four semesters of Music Theory sequence, but now students enter this sequence right away and we hope that this will improve our transitions to the second year. We still administer the Theory Placement Exam to keep track of the student learning in the first semester of Music Theory.

Another big assessment tool that we are working on is an Exit Exam. We are actively looking into possible formats and timelines of such an exam and we hope that we can incorporate it in this academic year. We hope that this tool would give us even better insight into student learning that occurs for our third PSLO.

PROGRAM IMPROVEMENTS AND ASSESSING IMPACT ON STUDENT LEARNING

- 6. In the past academic year, how did your program use the results of previous assessment cycles to make changes intended to improve student achievement of the Program Student Learning Outcomes? Please check all that apply.**

- ☒ Course curriculum changes
- ☒ Course prerequisite changes
- ☒ Changes in teaching methods
- ☐ Changes in advising
- ☒ Degree requirement changes being done
- ☒ Degree course sequencing
- ☒ Course enrollment changes (e.g., course capacity, grading structure [pass/fail, A-F])
- ☒ Changes in program policies/procedures
- ☐ Changes to Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs)
- ☒ College-wide initiatives (e.g., High-Impact Practices)
- ☒ Faculty, staff, student development
- ☐ Other
- ☐ No changes were implemented in AY22.

If you checked “Other” above, please describe. (100 characters or less)

- 7. Do you have any information about how well these or other past improvements are working? Are they achieving their intended goals? Please include any data or assessment results that help you demonstrate this. (750 characters or less)**

Many changes that our program incorporated last year are hard to access so early on so we do not have any data that can be examined. We do see small improvements in certain areas. For example, since we revised Music Theory I and opened it to all incoming freshmen, our enrollments have doubled this semester in comparison to last year's numbers.

We hope that other changes will show even better results throughout this academic year.

- 8. PROGRAMS ARE NOT REQUIRED TO RESPOND TO QUESTION #8 FOR THEIR REPORT DUE ON OCTOBER 15, 2022. IT IS HERE JUST FOR THEIR REFERENCE.**

- 9. Do you have any examples of post-graduate success you want to highlight? For example, major scholarships, the percent of students who pass licensure examinations, the percent of students accepted to graduate programs, the percent in post-graduation employment in the field or a related field. (750 characters or less)**

DEAN SECTION (Due to the program on January 15)

- 1. Based on the program's responses above, what guidance and support do you have for the program moving forward? (750 characters or less)**

The program is undergoing a visit from its national accrediting body in Spring 2023, and this will no doubt result in further reflection of degree programs and curriculum in general. The program is encouraged to continue with some of the self identified curriculum changes (as described in question 3) as well as better tracking of post-graduate successes to better communicate to students what career options are available.

- 2. What is the program doing particularly well in terms of its processes for the assessment and improvement of student learning, for example, the achievement of the Program Student Learning Outcomes, the closing of equity gaps, or addressing the core competencies? (750 characters or less)**

The program through its collaborations with community partners provides many excellent opportunities for students to develop professional excellence. The department is also to be commended for its curricular adjustments, changes, and realignments to its degree programs.

Dean's signature:

Jenny McNulty

Date: January 9, 2023