

TO: Mike Mahon
President and Vice Chancellor

DATE: April 10, 2013

FROM: Robert A. Boudreau
Chair, University Review Committee

RE: Department of Music, Academic Quality Assurance Review

In accordance with the U of L *Academic Quality Assurance Policy and Process*, the University Review Committee approved the review of the Department of Music at its December 18, 2012 meeting.

The Program Review Committee for this review was comprised of Thomas Staples (co-Coordinator), Deanna Oye (co-Coordinator) and Heidi MacDonald. The review produced four documents:¹

1. *Department of Music, Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Lethbridge, Academic Quality Assurance: Program Review 2011/2012, Self-Study Report* (March 31, 2012) – self-study report developed by the Department of Music Program Review Committee.
2. *Community Matters: Academic Quality Assurance, Program Review 2012, External Assessors' Report, Prepared For: Department of Music, Faculty of Fine Arts, University Of Lethbridge* (May 25, 2012) – prepared by external reviewers Tom Gordon (Memorial University) and Leonard Ratzlaff (UAlberta).
3. *Program Response* (November 27, 2012) – response of the Program Review Committee to the external review.
4. *Deans Response to the Departmental External Review* (December 14, 2012) – response to the review, written by Desmond Rochfort, Dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts.

Self Study

The Self Study Report noted that, over the past three years, the Department of Music has seen considerable growth in course offerings, credit hours, and numbers of students and faculty members. Interviews with students, staff, and faculty from the department revealed four main future directions for the Department of Music:

1. Review and revise the entire music curriculum.
2. Solidify the Digital Audio Arts Major, and improve its integration into the Bachelor of Music program.
3. Get a stable base of instruction for all areas of the Music program.
4. Consider the optimum size of the undergraduate and graduate program.

¹ All documents are available upon request.

External Review

In their report, the External Reviewers stated that the quality of the undergraduate programs in Music is excellent and meets or exceeds national standards. The curriculum is rigorous, class sizes are appropriate, and faculty are skilled and committed.

The strengths of the Department of Music include:

- Faculty members are active as scholars and performers and meet national norms for the excellence of their work.
- The life cycle replacement program for equipment ensures a very high standard of musical instruments and technology.
- The Digital Audio Arts studios meet an exceptional standard of excellence.
- The Library's music collection provides good support to the undergraduate curriculum.
- Employment rates for music education graduates are high.
- Graduates are well prepared for advanced study.

Challenges include:

- Faculty who hold Academic Assistant appointments need more recognition and support.
- There are serious space issues, including insufficient space for instrument storage, faculty offices that double as teaching studios, and a lack of good practice rooms.
- Student demographics are changing. There is now a Digital Audio Arts cohort and a large proportion of students pursue the music education program. The present curriculum may not serve these students well.
- As it moves through a period of growth and change, the Department of Music needs to develop a statement of its mission and values and a strategic plan.

The External Reviewers offered a comprehensive set of 25 recommendations for improving the quality of the Department of Music. These recommendations are listed in the left column of the table in the next section.

Program Response

In the Program Response, the Program Review Committee responded to the specific recommendations from the External Review Report:

External Review Recommendations:	Program Response:
<i>Do a comprehensive curriculum review</i>	A series of subcommittees have been formed to look at curriculum in various subject areas. They will report their findings to the Department.
<i>Negotiate more flexibility in the GLER so music students with specific skills requirements (like languages for vocalists) can satisfy them</i>	GLER is a University-wide issue, so the Department will help students in this regard by more hands-on advising.

External Review Recommendations:	Program Response:
<i>Review ensemble offerings to ensure they have appropriate activities and a critical mass of participants</i>	The curriculum subcommittees will address this recommendation. The Department is also increasing advertising for ensembles at the start of each semester.
<i>Review the Digital Audio Arts program to ensure optimal balance of theory and practice and course sequencing</i>	The Digital Audio Arts Steering Committee, which began work in spring 2012, has started this review process.
<i>Explore online delivery of music literacy remediation</i>	The curriculum subcommittees will investigate online resources and will also recommend testing processes for identifying deficiencies in music skills.
<i>Develop a range of curricular options that would assure all Digital Audio Arts students include performance experience in their degree programs</i>	The Music Department will continue to examine ensemble requirements, among other possibilities.
<i>Modify the Digital Audio Arts curriculum so that it integrates with Music courses in composition and with areas of study in New Media</i>	The Music Department already does this, and will continue to do so.
<i>Develop opportunities for internships, capstone projects, or thesis projects in Digital Audio Arts</i>	The Digital Audio Arts Steering Committee is looking for internship opportunities. In summer 2012, a Digital Audio Arts student did an internship in museum audio at the Royal Tyrrell museum.
<i>Develop an administrative structure dedicated to the stewardship of the Digital Audio Arts program</i>	The Digital Audio Arts Steering Committee is fulfilling this role.
<i>Develop a credit course in career skills for musicians</i>	A Music Industry and Portfolio Course is already offered to Digital Audio Arts students, and this course may be opened up to all music students.
<i>Revisit the Department's position on including keyboard skills in the basic music curriculum</i>	A curriculum subcommittee is examining this and will report to the Department.
<i>Develop initiatives that encourage B.Mus. and Digital Audio Arts students to work together on projects</i>	Digital Audio Arts students are involved in recording projects with Studio students and ensembles. The Department will encourage more projects like this.
<i>Move the faculty complement to an optimal ratio of 70:30 between tenured and teaching-only positions</i>	The Music Budget Committee and senior administration will address this.
<i>Work with senior administration and ULFA to replace the title of "Academic Assistant" with a title that better reflects the level of responsibility these individuals hold</i>	The Music Budget Committee will address this recommendation, and will consult with the Dean of Fine Arts and senior administration.
<i>Prioritize the appointment of a wind ensemble conductor</i>	A conductor has been hired on a contract for 2012-13 and the possibility of a permanent director will be examined.

External Review Recommendations:	Program Response:
<i>Address the space inadequacies, including the lack of instrument storage, teaching studios, offices, and practice facilities</i>	New storage cabinets for instruments were installed in summer 2012. The Music Conservatory's move to its new downtown facility in spring 2013 will free up teaching studios and practice facilities. The Department will consider moving to practice time bookings to ensure efficient student use of practice rooms.
<i>Work with the Conservatory to optimize the Music Department's access to the downtown community arts centre</i>	The Department and the Conservatory are continuing their strong relationship and are discussing how the Department can run some of its activities in the downtown facility while the Conservatory can hold some of its programs on campus.
<i>Continue efforts to develop Lethbridge performing arts infrastructure, toward the goal of a major concert hall</i>	The Music Department and the Conservatory will continue to join efforts with other community groups to lobby for a concert hall.
<i>Develop targeted recruitment strategies, based on a profile for a balanced undergraduate student complement</i>	The Department has begun discussions on target numbers and capacity. This will need further study. The Department will eventually develop a five-year plan for recruitment and special events.
<i>Develop a plan for stabilizing the graduate program, including a minimum student cohort, fellowship support, and at least one graduate seminar</i>	The Music - School of Graduate Studies subcommittee is examining this issue and will bring recommendations to the Music Department.
<i>Consider developing a Master's program in Digital Audio Arts</i>	The Department is ready to do this. The Master of Music program can accommodate a Digital Audio Arts student immediately.
<i>Work with the School of Graduate Studies to expand opportunities for graduate teaching assistants in Music</i>	The Music - School of Graduate Studies subcommittee will discuss this and bring recommendations to the Dean of Fine Arts.
<i>Enhance the relationship with the Conservatory</i>	The Department is discussing with the Conservatory potential outreach activities in the new community arts centre.
<i>Help the Conservatory in its fundraising activities</i>	The Department supports this.
<i>Work with University Advancement to develop a communications plan for Music Department alumni</i>	The Department of Music agrees, but more discussion is needed on the best way to do this.

Dean's Response

In his response, the Dean of Fine Arts noted that the External Review was very positive and many of its recommendations aligned with the Self Study. But there were several differences between the External Review and what the Music Department found in its Self Study:

- The review team said that classrooms were well equipped, but classrooms are actually uneven in the level to which they are equipped.
- The external reviewers expressed concern over the loss of the Conservatory's close relationship with the Music department. But this relationship should be strengthened, along with the Department's profile in the community.
- The external reviewers were concerned at the low numbers of graduate students. However, the reality is that the graduate program growth is limited by lack of Government of Alberta funding.
- The external review team did not understand the importance of liberal education components in the Music program.

The Department's staffing plan to bring the staffing complement to 70:30 (tenure/tenure track: teaching only appointments) can only be implemented as financial conditions allow.

In summary, the action plan for the Department of Music comprises three main elements:

1. In 2013, complete an assessment of the facilities and equipment in all classrooms and teaching spaces and identify what is required to bring these spaces to the same level.
2. Complete a curriculum review and a plan for curriculum changes by December 2013. Implement recommended curriculum changes in 2014-15.
3. Develop a five-year academic plan, which covers financial, academic, and strategic aspects, by December 2013.

The University Review Committee is satisfied that the Department of Music academic quality assurance review has followed the U of L's academic quality assurance process appropriately, and acknowledges the successful completion of the review.

Sincerely,



Robert A. Boudreau

Chair, University Review Committee

Cc: Andrew Hakin, Provost and Vice President (Academic)