1. **Student Learning Goals Addressed**

   The student learning goals for the 2014-2015 school year are derived from our accrediting agency, the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM). They are as follows:

   Students who successfully complete the BA in Music will be able to:

   1. Hear, identify, and work conceptually with the elements of music, such as harmony, texture, melody, rhythm, timbre, and structure (Aesthetic Experience)
   2. Demonstrate understanding of and the ability to read and realize musical notation (Aesthetic Experience)
   3. Demonstrate understanding of compositional processes, aesthetic properties of style, and the ways these shape and are shaped by artistic and cultural forces; (Aesthetic Experience, Critical Thinking, Verbal Literacy, Historical Consciousness, Social/Cultural Awareness, International Awareness)
   4. Demonstrate an acquaintance with a wide selection of musical literature; the principal eras, genres, and cultural sources (Aesthetic Experience, Historical Consciousness, Social/Cultural Awareness, International Awareness)
   5. Develop and defend musical judgments (Aesthetic Experience, Critical Thinking)
   6. Achieve ability in performing areas at levels consistent with the goals and objectives of the specific program being followed (Aesthetic Experience)
   7. Utilize procedures for realizing a variety of musical styles (Aesthetic Experience)
   8. Demonstrate knowledge and/or skills in one or more areas of music beyond basic musicianship appropriate to the individual's needs and interests, and consistent with the purposes of the specific program being followed (Aesthetic Experience)

   The Goals as a whole address distinct aspects of the department's mission ("...to cultivate an appreciation and understanding of diverse genres of music...to ensure each music major is able to perform, read, notate, analyze, and contextualize music"...), as revised in the department's 2006 strategic plan.

2. **Learning Outcomes/Objectives Addressed**

   1. **Technique:** By means of performance on juries, students will display technical command of the instrument or voice commensurate with that expected of a B.A. (The particulars of "technical command" vary from area to area; they often entail performing correctly scales, chords, arpeggios, melodic and harmonic patterns.) (Derives from Goals 1, 2, 6, 8)
   2. **Interpretation:** By means of performance on juries, students will display originality in rendering repertoire. For some instruments, especially jazz guitar, this entails skills in improvisation. (Goals 1, 5, 6, 8)
   3. **Preparation and memorization:** By means of performance on juries, students will display the ability to prepare and memorize music at the level one would expect for the BA degree (in many cases, about 15 to 20 minutes of music per semester). (Goals 1, 2, 6, 8)
   4. **Competence within a variety of styles:** By means of performance on juries, students will display the ability to interpret music in a variety of styles, such as historical periods
from Renaissance to 20th c. classical, and/or genres such as blues, swing, modal jazz, Latin music, straight ahead jazz, and other styles. (Goal 7)

5. **Historical/cultural awareness:** By means of essay questions from a selection of upper level music major music history courses, students will display knowledge about musical style, historical development, and social/cultural context in a variety of musical traditions and periods. (Goals 3, 4)

6. **Critical Thinking:** By means of essay questions from a selection of upper level music major music history courses, students will demonstrate that they have interpreted the above knowledge to answer holistic broad ranging questions, often which go beyond the scope of any one set of data presented in a given class. (Goals 3, 5)

7. **Elements of Music:** By means of selected assignments from a variety of advanced required music theory courses (Music Theory 3, e.g.), students will display the ability to identify and work conceptually with elements of music, such as rhythm, melody, harmony, structure, timbre, and texture. (Goal 1)

8. **Music Literacy:** By means of the sight singing assignments from upper level Aural Skills classes and selected assignments from Piano Class IV (the most advanced required class in the Group Piano sequence), students will display the ability to read and realize musical notation. (Goal 2)

**Assessment Cycle:**
- 2012 report (for year 2011): LOs 5 and 6 only
- 2013 report (for year 2012): LOs 1-6
- 2014 report (for year 2013): LOs 1-8
- All reports thereafter: All LOs

We are currently in the fourth year of implementing a revised assessment strategy. During the initial phase, the faculty agreed upon eight learning outcomes drawn from the NASM guidelines, and they identified courses and activities related to each of the learning outcomes. It was determined that LOs 1-4 were most closely associated with performance courses and that the corresponding faculty would work to develop an assessment plan for these four learning outcomes. LOs 5 and 6 were most closely associated with music history and the corresponding faculty assumed responsibility for this section of the assessment plan. LOs 7 and 8 were linked to the work in music theory, aural skills, and piano classes; a subcommittee drawn from the appropriate faculty was assigned to begin work on this part of the assessment plan.

### 3. Courses Used for Assessment Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Courses and Activities where LO is addressed</th>
<th>How assessed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tbody>
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4. Assessment Methods

L0s 1-4: The department utilizes a standard rubric form developed through continued collaboration with three applied instructors (F. Allen, L. Holzer, M. Underwood); this form was completed and adopted by the faculty to be used to assess performance across all music disciplines in 2013.

L0s 5-6: Two music history professors (T. Richeson, R. Groesbeck) select ten sample essay questions (one essay from each of ten students) from history exams for evaluation. The questions are in essay format and are randomly chosen from the final exams written by music majors enrolled in six upper-level music history courses.

L0s 7-8: The department uses a pre/post test model to assess L0s 7-8. All incoming students take a placement exam for music theory before their first semester of study. Music Theory professor Michael Underwood administers the same exam to students during their third or fourth semester of study and average and mean scores are used to assess L0s 7 and 8.

5. What are the assessment findings? How did you analyze them? What conclusions were drawn?

L0s 1-4: Applied faculty used a standardized assessment form to assess all applied music students at the end of the Fall 2013 semester. The assessment tool consisted of a five-point rubric across four categories of performance (technique, interpretation, preparation and memorization, and stylistic competence). The form was slightly modified to include information regarding repertoire for the 2012/2013 year. Results of both qualitative and quantitative analyses of the comments written on the jury sheets indicated juries are a valid assessment of the four learning outcomes. The assessments continue to provide clear distinction among the four categories, and the results of coring and commenting on the unique details of a student’s performance appear to be consistent as well.

L0s 5-6: As has been the case across the last few years, evaluators’ increasing familiarity with the
rubrics and with the evaluation process seems to be consistent and the rubric is proving to be a useful tool.

LOs 7-8: Results seem to indicate that students are showing growth, particularly in relationship to LO 8 (students will display the ability to read and realize musical notation). This is a particularly important aspect for us, as many students come to our program with musical ability but are not able to read printed music.

6. What decisions were made as a result of the above? How were stakeholder groups involved?

The 2014 year was a trying one for our department in many ways and affected significantly the assessment procedures the department has used the past few years. An interim chair led the department in the spring, followed by the hire of a full-time replacement in July 2014. The internal administration changes were accompanied by the shift into a new college and beginning operations under a new dean and new university administration structure. The department also underwent a major program review and site visit from our accreditation agency, the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM). This site visit included comprehensive reviews of existing programs, as well as approval to offer two new degrees, the Bachelor of Music Education and the Bachelor of Music (both with instrumental and vocal tracks).

In addition, the department (as was similar with the university as a whole) experienced significant drops in enrollment and retention. The department reported approximately 100 majors two years ago; the current number stands at 55. Reviews and analysis of data and departmental records showed potential flaws in recording and maintenance of data, and significant problems in admission and awarding of financial aid. Finally, new curricular mandates/changes on the university level (including a new Core Curriculum, elimination of the required minor, and option to eliminate the foreign language requirement) forced the issue of large-scale curricular reviews that occupied a majority of the faculty’s assessment efforts this past year. For this reason, the department chair suspended data collection on the learning outcomes described above for one year; the chair felt this was a prudent action given the recent NASM review and all the administrative changes, new programs, and so on. Rather than focusing on assessment of individual student outcomes during this time, the chair and faculty agreed to initiate reviews of larger scale curricular issues, admission procedures and policies, and so on.

The result of this process has been of great benefit to the department. As a faculty, we have worked together and accomplished the following:

- Revision and implementation of new policy for enrollment and admission to music degrees. The new policy will help us better identify and place individual students into appropriate programs;
- Revision and implementation of new policy related to financial aid and awards for music students. The new policy eliminates a 'pay-per-ensemble' model that had been shown to be detrimental to retention and progress to degree completion. The old model has been replaced by a standardized system of awards and provides incentives for students to make timely progress towards degree completion. In addition, the new policy provides options for financial assistance for summer study;
- A complete reorganization of student records and initial steps to develop systems to better track individual student progress across the curriculum;
- Identification of the theory course sequence as potential target for addressing enrollment and retention. Results of analysis of records since 2010 indicate a strong correlation between success in theory coursework and retention/graduation rates. To help facilitate this, this April the department will be bringing in an outside consultant (Dr. Danny Jenkins from the University of South Carolina) to assist us in a revision of the coursework and assessments used in the music theory sequence.