

**Assessments Findings and Curricular Improvements  
Benjamin T. Rome School of Music  
Undergraduate Program**

**AY2008-09—AY2012-13**

**Assessment Measures**

The School of Music uses the following measures to assess learning outcomes, with the exception of the no-emphasis track and the music history and literature track of the Bachelor of Arts in Music program, which do not require a Senior Recital.

Direct: Senior Recital (MUS 499)  
Indirect: Grades/Course evaluations in key courses:  
MUS 23, 24, 121, 123, 222, 224 (125, 126 as appropriate)

**Assessment Findings**

**MUS 499 Senior Solo Recital—Attachment X**

Please note: Attachment X speaks of Comprehensive Exam. In the School of Music the capstone requirement is typically the Senior Recital (MUS 499).

School of Music analyzed course grade and enrollment data in MUS 499 for the period AY2008-09—AY2012-13. As the graph indicates, success/pass rate is close to 100%. These findings for the Senior Recital, populated by students who successively completed a recital hearing, indicate that enrollment and grades are very stable, with enrollment generally in the Spring semester (Fall Senior Recitals are rare) and grades in very high range (on a P/F grading basis). Instructor and course ratings: N/A.

**MUS 23/24 Fundamentals of Music Theory I and II—Attachment VII and VIII**

Fundamentals is a remedial theory course. The course is taken by students who test poorly on a Theory Evaluation Test, given as an online test during the month of June previous to their entering for the fall semester, and who are therefore placed into this two-semester course. They must pass both semesters before being allowed to proceed to the regular harmony and eartraining sequence. The AY2008-09—AY2012-13 period data reveals that the enrollment of MUS 23 followed the fluctuations of incoming students and the fluctuations of the results of the Theory Evaluation Test. The MUS 23 grades during the data period indicate a lowering of the overall grades due partially to the grades given in Fall 2012, which included a D and two Fs. However, the pie chart indicates that 97% of the students in MUS 23 earned a grade of C- or higher. The instructor and course rating during this time remained consistently high, with a lowering of ratings during the last two Fall semesters. In the second semester, MUS 24, the grades of a course gradually introducing more complex concepts reveal generally lower grades. There were Ds and Fs in all but one of the semesters during the data period. The pie chart indicates that 92% of the students in MUS 24 earned a grade of C- or higher. The instructor and course rating during this time remained fairly constant with the exception of Spring 2013 where they are significantly lower.

**MUS 121 Ear Training & Sight Singing I and MUS 123 Harmony I—Attachment I and II**

The findings for these Freshman level courses, populated by students who tested into them by a Theory Evaluation Test, indicate that enrollment and average grades have

remained fairly stable for the period AY2008-09—AY2012-13, with grades ranging from average to above average. Evaluations data for MUS 121 indicate that the instructor and course ratings ranged between 8.00 to 10.00 and 8.03 to 9.00 respectively. Evaluations data for MUS 123 indicate that the instructor and course ratings ranged between 9.07 to 9.80 and 8.29 to 9.50 respectively.

### **MUS 222 Ear Training & Sight Singing IV and MUS 224 Harmony IV—Attachment III and IV**

The findings for these upper level theory courses, populated by students who successfully completed the lower level theory courses, indicate that for the period AY2008-09—AY2012-13 enrollment and average grades for Ear Training and Sight Singing have remained fairly stable, with the exception of Spring 2013 which shows a significant dip in the evaluation results. The graph indicates that this was due to “a new evaluation form where instructor and course ratings were based on a 7-point scale.” The new form significantly affects the course evaluation results for Spring and Summer of 2013. The period AY2008-09—AY2012-13 nevertheless reveals that 78% of the grades range between B- and A. For Harmony IV, the enrollment has been stable, and 70% of the grades range between B- and A. Instructor and course ratings were similarly affected by the new 7-point scale.

### **Curricular Improvements**

In the last five years, review of data and discussions among division chairs, curriculum committee, and full faculty have led to substantial changes in the theory division, the most important group of core (academic, classroom) courses required of all undergraduates in music. Namely, these changes include the inauguration of a Theory Evaluation Test taken at Freshman Orientation, helping to place incoming students in either the two-semester Fundamentals of Music sequence, the traditional four-semester Harmony I-IV sequence, or the two-semester Accelerated Harmony sequence. All theory courses, with the exception of Accelerated Harmony, have lab sections, with small number so students in each lab section for additional drill and study. These changes have helped to place students in more appropriate levels of theory for the better development of their skills. Moreover, the Fundamentals of Music course moved in more recent years from a three-day-per-week to a five-day-per-week course, including drill/lab sections to bolster skills. Additionally, technological aids in the form of computer programs have been initiated to assist students to master the material.

### **ref: 2013 National Survey of Student Engagement Mean Comparisons: Selected Catholic University General Education Goals: Benjamin T. Rome School of Music: Seniors**

For the period AY2008-09—AY2012-13, School of Music Seniors rank fairly equally to the rest of the campus in the area of number of papers, reports, or other writing tasks up to 5 pages, and both these categories outrank Carnegie Peers and NSSE 2013 data. In the area of larger papers and reports, School of Music students rank lower than the rest of the campus, but are fairly equal to or exceed Carnegie Peers and NSSE. Non-music requirements—English, Philosophy, Theology, for example—all have significant writing requirements. However, the music school does not control the number or parameters of writing assignments in those courses. In the area of writing and speaking clearly and effectively, School of Music Seniors rank somewhat lower than CUA as a whole (writing: 2.2 as compared with 2.9, but fairly on par with the rest of the campus in

speaking, as well as when compared to Carnegie Peers and NSSE 2013. In the areas of critical thinking and reasoned analysis, here is the breakdown (numbers in green indicate a significantly higher mean vis-à-vis the other categories compared; numbers in red indicate a significantly lower mean vis-à-vis the other categories compared):

Memorization: SOM **3.8**; CUA 2.7; Peers 2.8; NSSE 2.7

Applying facts, theories: SOM 3.0; CUA 3.1; Peers 3.1; NSSE 3.2

Analyzing an idea, experience, line of reasoning: SOM 3.0; CUA 3.1; Peers 3.1; NSSE 3.1

Evaluating point of view, decision, information source: SOM **2.8**; CUA 3.0; Peers 2.9; NSSE 3.0

Forming new idea or understanding: SOM 3.0; CUA 2.9; Peers 2.9; NSSE 3.0

In addition, the data for the period AY2008-09—AY2012-13 shows as follows for the following categories:

Thinking critically/analytically: SOM 3.0; CUA 3.2; Peers 3.3; NSSE 3.3

Analyzing numeral/statistical information: SOM **1.6**; CUA 2.5; Peers 2.9; NSSE 2.8

Solving complex real-world problems: SOM 2.6; CUA 2.7; Peers 2.8; NSSE 2.8

Inclusion of diverse perspectives in class disc./assign.: SOM **3.4**; CUA 2.7; Peers 2.6; NSSE 2.7

Discus. w/people of race/ethnicity diff from own: SOM 3.2; CUA 3.0; Peers 3.1; NSSE 3.1

Discus. w/people of rel. beliefs diff from own: SOM **3.6**; CUA 2.7; Peers 3.0; NSSE 3.0

Attempt to understand other's perspective: SOM 3.0; CUA 3.0; Peers 2.9; NSSE 3.0

Encourage contact w/diff. soc/racial/ethnic/rel backgrounds: SOM 2.0; CUA 2.2; Peers 2.5; NSSE 2.6

Understand people of diff. race/ethnicity: SOM 2.0; CUA 2.7; Peers 2.7; NSSE 2.8