Graduate Program Review
Texas Tech University

Program Reviewed: School of Music

Onsite Review Dates: February 3 and 4, 2014

Name of Reviewers

Internal:
Please include name, title, and Department
Dr. Dorothy Durband, Professor, Community, Family, & Addiction Services
Ms. Andrea Bilkey, Associate Professor, Theatre and Dance
Dr. Akif Ibraguimov, Professor, Mathematics and Statistics

External:
Please include name, title, and Department
Dr. Marvin Lamb, Professor, University of Oklahoma
Dr. Daniel Sher, Professor, University of Colorado-Boulder

I. Academic Unit Description and Strategic Plan
Please evaluate the following:

Vision, Mission and Goals
☐ Excellent
☐ Very Good
☐ Appropriate
☐ Needs Improvement

Strategic Plan
☐ Excellent
☐ Very Good
☐ Appropriate
☐ Needs Improvement

Please elaborate if you have identified any items in this section as Excellent.
The School of Music vision, mission, and goals as presented on the website are clearly aligned with the TTU strategic priorities.
Please elaborate if you identified any items in this section as Needs Improvement. Provide recommendations in the area of Strategic Planning.

Other comments (optional)
The committee reviewed the strategic plan provided through a link on the School website. It contained data through 2011. As data become available, they should be updated on the website.

II. Program Curriculum
Please evaluate the following:

Alignment of program with stated program and institutional goals and purposes
☐ Excellent
☐ Very Good
☐ Appropriate
☐ Needs Improvement
☐ N/A

Curriculum development coordination and delivery
☐ Excellent
☐ Very Good
☐ Appropriate
☐ Needs Improvement
☐ N/A

Program learning outcomes assessment
☐ Excellent
☐ Very Good
☐ Appropriate
☐ Needs Improvement
Program curriculum compared to peer programs

- Excellent
- Very Good
- Appropriate
- Needs Improvement
- N/A

Please elaborate if you have identified any items in this section as Excellent.

To maintain continuance within the National Association of Schools of Music, the members of the Faculty as well as the review committee for the National Association of Schools of Music regularly scrutinize the curricula of the programs within the School. The latest review has resulted in the continuance of accreditation for the Texas Tech University School of Music.

Please elaborate if you identified any items in this section as Needs Improvement. Provide recommendations in the area of Program Curriculum.

Other comments (optional)

The graduate students took pride and joy in discussing the unique nature of the PhD program, and noted that the ability to tailor the program to meet their needs was a reason for choosing Texas Tech University. Students in other graduate programs quickly pointed out that the reputation of the faculty is what drew them to further their studies at Texas Tech. Graduate students reported not always knowing when to schedule comprehensive exams, and not knowing which courses are required to have been completed before taking exams, which could delay graduation.

During the course of the review, the members of the committee also took note that there is a curricular demand for the students to perform, but that there are not appropriate facilities in which to fulfill that demand. It is unfathomable to serve 350 students with only one performance hall, not just for the challenge of holding evening performances for every student and faculty who are required to perform, with a wide variety of acoustical needs, but also the logistics of scheduling rehearsals and holding classes. While they are succeeding at this moment, it is foreseeable that without additional acoustically appropriate performance venues, growth of programs may be inhibited.
III. Faculty Productivity

Please evaluate the following:

Qualifications
☐ Excellent
☐ Very Good
☐ Appropriate
☐ Needs Improvement
☐ N/A

Publications
☐ Excellent
☐ Very Good
☐ Appropriate
☐ Needs Improvement
☐ N/A

Teaching Load
☐ Excellent
☐ Very Good
☐ Appropriate
☐ Needs Improvement
☐ N/A

External Grants
☐ Excellent
☐ Very Good
☐ Appropriate
☐ Needs Improvement
☐ N/A
Teaching Evaluations
- Excellent
- Very Good
- Appropriate
- Needs Improvement
- N/A

Professional Service
- Excellent
- Very Good
- Appropriate
- Needs Improvement
- N/A

Community Service
- Excellent
- Very Good
- Appropriate
- Needs Improvement
- N/A

Please elaborate if you have identified any items in this section as Excellent.
The dedication of the Faculty to their students, their classes, their research and their service are to be commended. They have a “saddle up, dig in and get it done” demeanor and as a whole perform a remarkable amount of work at a high level of quality, despite the conditions of the facility and the overload of class responsibilities. The members of the Faculty are well regarded within their respected fields, and their continued excellence draws students to Texas Tech University.

Please elaborate if you identified any items in this section as Needs Improvement. Provide recommendations in the area of Faculty Productivity.
The teaching loads are over capacity, and care needs to be taken by those above the Faculty level to not create an environment where the course load is so high that meeting the expectations for creative work and service work becomes, in essence, a second job. Class sizes or course rotation may need to be adjusted to alleviate the overloading, until such time that the faculty base can be grown.
Other comments (optional)
A major goal of the School of Music is to become one of the premier comprehensive schools in the United States, and as such maintaining visibility in a National and International scope is an important step that the Faculty continue to do with limited travel budget funds. The committee recommends that the School, College, and University look at ways in which to provide more financial support for travel.

IV. Students and Graduates

Please evaluate the following:

Time to degree
- Excellent
- Very Good
- Appropriate
- Needs Improvement
- N/A

Retention
- Excellent
- Very Good
- Appropriate
- Needs Improvement
- N/A

Graduate rates
- Excellent
- Very Good
- Appropriate
- Needs Improvement
- N/A

Enrollment
- Excellent
Very Good
Appropriate
Needs Improvement
N/A

Demographics
Excellent
Very Good
Appropriate
Needs Improvement
N/A

Number of degrees conferred annually
Excellent
Very Good
Appropriate
Needs Improvement
N/A

Support Services
Excellent
Very Good
Appropriate
Needs Improvement
N/A

Job Placement
Excellent
Very Good
Appropriate
Please elaborate if you have identified any items in this section as Excellent.
The School attracts a large range of students from different backgrounds and does an excellent job of retaining them.

Please elaborate if you identified any items in this section as Needs Improvement. Provide recommendations in the area of Students and Graduates.
Graduate teaching assistants lack offices and appropriate rooms for both teaching and practice. Some faculty share their office keys with their graduate assistants to provide them a place to meet with students, which has made some graduate students feel uneasy. Higher teaching assistant stipends and more travel grants would make the School more competitive in recruiting and retaining graduate students.

Other comments (optional)
Job placement is robust, and students are getting adequate jobs in different sectors of the job market. Student/faculty ratios are within a standard range for our university. Graduate student enrollment and time to degree completion are within an acceptable range.

V. Facilities and Resources
Please evaluate the following:

Facilities
☐ Excellent
☐ Very Good
☐ Appropriate
☐ Needs Improvement
☐ N/A
Facility Support Resources
- Excellent
- Very Good
- Appropriate
- Needs Improvement
- N/A

Financial Resources
- Excellent
- Very Good
- Appropriate
- Needs Improvement
- N/A

Staff Resources
- Excellent
- Very Good
- Appropriate
- Needs Improvement
- N/A

Please elaborate if you have identified any items in this section as Excellent.
Click here to enter text.

Please elaborate if you identified any items in this section as Needs Improvement. Provide recommendations in the area of Facilities and Resources.
In addition to the notes above regarding the single performance venue, the facilities and rooms in which music students perform and practice do not satisfy regular requirements not only for music departments and are of danger of negatively impacting the health of students and faculty. During the course of the tour, the committee was exposed to classrooms and practice rooms without proper sound isolation in the base construction of the building, uneven humidity and temperature control (detrimental to string and wood instruments), a room that had flooded (which still contained mold spore, enough that triggered a mild asthma reaction in one reviewer), and a building where the floors from previous additions do not align with each other. The women's restroom on the main floor no
longer has running hot water. The noise issue is detrimental to the learning process when students are working on ear training, and not having proper sound isolation from room to room to prohibit sound trespass from one class into another is but one issue: the sound of the HVAC system in faculty studios, classrooms, practice rooms, and the recital hall creates a white noise sound bed, which over time can hurt the auditory system.

Similar to the comment above regarding faculty travel, students are traveling to many conferences and locations to present and/or perform their work. Students however are often allocated only a couple hundred dollars for support of this travel and are required to fund the rest on their own. Because the School of Music graduate assistant stipends are the lowest at the University, attendance at conferences becomes a source of stress. Assisting students in finding alternate sources of funding may be helpful in keeping their students visible in the national and international arenas, and also in recruitment and retention.

**Other comments (optional)**

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VI. Overall Ranking

**Overall Ranking**

- Excellent
- Very Good
- Appropriate
- Needs Improvement

Please provide summative conclusions based on the overall review.

The summative themes in the Graduate Program Review Survey document provided by faculty and graduate students were consistent with the reviewers' on-site interviews with each group. The facilities are being utilized to their fullest potential. The Faculty report frequently working at overloads to accomplish supervision of student theses and dissertations, for publication and performance work, and for service work. The Graduate Program Review resulted in observing a School who is dedicated and committed to its students. Although the university expects graduate enrollment growth as a strategic priority, the current space limitations will prevent this. The School of Music programs have continued to build a strong reputation, in part by the national reputations of the faculty, strong programming, student recruiting, and graduating quality committed students from its diverse graduate programs.

Please provide summative recommendations based on the overall review.
Students reported needing guidance and clarity on formalizing their degree plans as well as the guidelines and timing of School of Music graduate qualifying exams. The review committee recommends that the School of Music policies and procedures be explicitly communicated to students as well as faculty as resources that will help them to plan and be successful in their pursuits.

There are significant environmental concerns due to facilities being utilized to their fullest capacity. Students often rehearse in the hallways, which could make egress from the facility in an emergency situation become hazardous. Lack of space, facility conditions, noise from other rooms, and rushing around to set up and restore a multi-functional room influences both student learning and faculty productivity and teaching.

Students noted in the survey results and interviews with the review committee that graduate assistantship financial support is extremely low. Assistantship stipends should be addressed, at a minimum level, for cost of living adjustments. These should also be considered from the perspective of comparison to other assistantship stipends on campus and at peer institutions, as increasing them would ultimately contribute to enhancing morale, productivity, recruitment, and retention efforts.