

July 17, 2019

PROFESSOR DAVID BORGIO, Chair
Department of Music

PROFESSOR MILLER PUCKETTE
Department of Music

SUBJECT: Undergraduate Program Review for Music

Dear Professors Borgo and Puckette,

At its June 14, 2019 meeting, the Undergraduate Council (UGC) discussed the Department of Music's 2019 Undergraduate Program Review. The Council supports the findings and recommendations of the review subcommittee and appreciates the thoughtful and proactive response from the Department. The Council's comments centered on the following:

Website update

The Council looks forward to the Department's plans to update their website to include documentation of undergraduate student work. It is the Council's hope that with the new website, incoming Music students will be more aware of what experience they are going to be getting out of their degree, in order to eliminate confusion or expectation of a more conservatory-type of educational practice, or more targeted vocational training in the case of the ICAM degree.

Graduate student instructors

UGC understands that the Department will be making improvements to the process by which the Department selects graduate student instructors, as well as evaluating the splitting of the first-year graduate-level research and teaching methods course. We hope to learn more about the success of these proposed changes and practices and any other efforts taken to better support graduate student instructors.

Faculty engagement

The Council finds it encouraging that there is an undergraduate curriculum committee, and we would like to emphasize the need for that committee to lead efforts to improve broader faculty engagement with undergraduate students. UGC opined that faculty interacting with undergraduate students directly and advising them on areas such as potential career paths is invaluable.

The Council will conduct its follow-up review of the Department in Spring Quarter 2020. At that time, our goal is to learn about the Department's progress in implementing the recommendations of the program review subcommittee and the Undergraduate Council. The Council extends its thanks to the Department for their engagement in this process and we look forward to the continued discussion.

Sincerely,

Anthony Burr, Chair
Undergraduate Council

Attachment

(1) Undergraduate Program Review Report and Response for Music

cc: M. Corr
C. Della Coletta
R. Horwitz
J. Moore
R. Rodriguez
M. Sidney
J. Teranes

March 2019

Report of the Undergraduate Review Committee for the Department of Music

Committee Members:

Amy C. Beal (Music, UC Santa Cruz)

Michael Trigilio (Visual Arts, UC San Diego)

Marc Garellek (Linguistics, UC San Diego), Chair

A) Current Operation of Program

On February 25 and 26, 2019, the Committee met to review the undergraduate program in the Department of Music. We met in person with the Acting Department Chair (Anthony Burr) and Chair of the Education Committee (Miller Puckette), as well as with nine other faculty (Erik Carlson, Amy Crimini, Charles Curtis, Scloomo Dubnov, Tom Erbe, Aleck Karis, Katharina Rosenberger, Tamara Smyth, Rand Steiger). We also met with a lecturer, several graduate students who have served as TAs or instructors of record in undergraduate courses, several undergraduate Music majors, the CAO and undergraduate staff advisor, the Deans of Academic Advising for Marshall and Revelle Colleges (Clare Harrington and Shannon O'Brien), as well as the Deans of Undergraduate Education (John Moore) and Arts and Humanities (Cristina Della Coletta). In addition to the information provided by these individuals, the Committee also reviewed the Music Department's self-study report, and a variety of data supplied mainly by the office of the Dean of Undergraduate Education (John Moore).

The Music Department has a current enrollment of approximately 150 majors— a jump of 14% since Spring 2018, with the number of declared majors increasing steadily since 2015. It also has a large number of minors: as of Spring 2018, there were 207 students minoring in Music, a jump of more than 35% since 2015. The department has 27 faculty members, a slight increase since the last undergraduate program review in 2012; it also has two current searches and there are plans to hire two additional lecturers with potential for security of employment (LPSOEs) in 2019-2020. The expected workload for regular faculty is 4-5 courses per year (typically including 2 undergraduate courses), but due to the large number of courses offered, many courses are taught by graduate student instructors. In a given quarter, there are about ten courses taught by graduate students, an increase from ten years ago. Approximately 46 courses (including different sections) are taught each quarter, at least half of which tend to be lower-division classes.

The department offers majors in Music (with five areas of emphasis), Music Humanities, and

Interdisciplinary Computing in the Arts (ICAM). Most students majoring in Music choose the Music or ICAM majors, which have about an equal number of students; roughly 5% of Music students are majoring in Music Humanities.

B) Strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum

Overall, we are impressed with the quality of the faculty and the breadth of the undergraduate music programs. Since the Music majors (in particular, the Music and ICAM majors) have different purposes and challenges, some issues will be discussed separately. With regards to the evaluation criteria, the undergraduate program appears to be in good health. From the CAPE student responses, students are generally quite satisfied with the quality of their education. During the 2017-2019, approximately 90% of students recommended the courses (with a standard deviation of about 13%). In a January 2019 undergraduate survey of Music majors administered by the Council of Deans of Advising, at least three quarters of respondents were satisfied with faculty availability and departmental advising.

Still, it was clear from our meetings with faculty and students alike that there is a fairly large disconnect between faculty and the undergraduate culture. The undergraduate students, particularly those majoring in Music (with a performance emphasis) or ICAM, often have expectations for their musical education that are not met, and for reasonable reasons cannot be met, by the undergraduate program in Music at UC San Diego. The program is designed to offer a general liberal arts education in music, and not a conservatory experience or technical training in particular computer technologies and software. Students majoring in Music with an emphasis on performance clearly want more music training and lessons, but the faculty already teach a large variety of courses that are required for the majors, such that there is no clear mechanism for offering more one-on-one lessons with faculty. Many ICAM students on the other hand seem to want, or expect, a different program than the one offered, despite the fact that program's goals and requirements are laid out on the department webpage; these students speak to wanting more hands-on training in particular tools (such as sound mixing), more access to internships, and clearer pathways to specific jobs upon graduation, whereas the faculty want ICAM students (and all Music majors) to gain a broad theoretical understanding of the musical arts, an education that will not age with the times.

We believe that this cultural disconnect between faculty and undergraduate students can be improved with better faculty advising, through the instituting of undergraduate *faculty* advisors (in addition to the staff advisor) for each major, as well as faculty advising that is built in to the undergraduate seminar MUS 43, which is required every quarter in which a student is declared a Music major. The Arts portfolio admissions process, which has been successful at recruiting

students and increasing the visibility of UC San Diego as a world-class institution for the Arts, poses further challenges with respect to the student culture; these are discussed in Section C, and a summary of recommendations regarding student advising are listed in Section D.

As highlighted by faculty, students, and staff members alike, students majoring in ICAM specifically have certain challenges with the calculus and programming courses offered through the Math and Computer Science and Engineering (CSE) Departments. These lower-division courses are difficult to enroll in, and their content is often challenging and perceived to be of little practical importance to students. Moreover, transfer students and students who switch majors into ICAM in later undergraduate years may struggle with completion of this requirement. We hope that increased faculty and staff advising will help students who struggle with these courses. In the following sections of the report, we also recommend other ways of helping these students complete their math and programming prerequisites in advance.

Another issue with the undergraduate Music curriculum is the large number of courses taught by graduate student instructors of record. An increasing number of courses, especially the large lower-division ones, are taught by Associate-In student instructors. As in any department, these graduate student instructors require faculty help and oversight, as well as training in TA management. Structural issues with regards to these instructors, such as inconsistencies across sequence courses, inadequate preparation before starting instruction, and issues with TA management, were brought up by faculty and graduate students. In previous years, graduate-student instructors were advised and supervised largely by their advisors or the department chair. This year, the department instituted a required course (with help from the Teaching + Learning Commons or TLC) for all incoming graduate students that focuses on research and teaching methods. This is a welcome development, and many graduate students we met with spoke of the course's utility. However, some students mentioned that the course's coverage, with its focus on both research and teaching strategies, was too broad. We therefore recommend requiring two graduate-level courses for all incoming students: one focused on research, the other on teaching and TA training. We highly recommend continued review and consultation with the TLC to improve outcomes of the training courses. Additional recommendations with regards to graduate-student instructors are provided in Section D.

C) An analysis of strengths and weaknesses of the department in the context of campus and University policies

We were pleased with the quality of the student advisor and the administrative staff. Students appreciate the individualized attention they receive. Having five courses (two lower-division,

three upper-division) that satisfy the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion requirement is a strength for the department, because these courses attract high student enrollment, particularly of non-majors.

The undergraduate program could benefit from reviewing its learning outcomes for each of its majors (and for the Music concentration, for each of its areas of emphasis), and to include both general and measurable outcomes that students should expect to see. These outcomes are relevant for the ongoing WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) reaffirmation cycle at UC San Diego, as well as for improving the disconnect, mentioned in the previous section, between the faculty and undergraduate students. Instructors and student advisors should also aim to reinforce the measurable outcomes that are obtained in Music classes and from earning a Music degree, which could help with managing student expectations about the program.

Another issue that was brought up by faculty and staff involves the use of an Arts portfolio in freshman and transfer students' admissions. First, we would like to highlight that faculty and staff are in support of the portfolio: it may help with recruiting students and with increasing the visibility of UC San Diego as a world-class institution for the Arts; it also helps home in on promising applicants with musical talent, and provides an additional source of information on which to base admissions. However, the use of portfolios also leads to certain issues: first, Music faculty now review hundreds of portfolios during the admissions period, yet the results of their reviewing and scoring remain opaque; it remains unclear how many students whose portfolios were highly rated end up being admitted or coming to UC San Diego, and how many such students end up majoring in Music. We recommend that the Dean of Admissions work with the department (indeed, with all departments that review such portfolios) to provide data on how these portfolios factor in to the admissions process, and on the number of students with highly-rated portfolios who are currently enrolled on campus and majoring in Music. The Dean of Admissions could also consider providing a presentation to the department about how portfolios are used in the admissions process.

The second issue that we have identified with regards to the portfolios relates back to those involving students with a Performance emphasis: if applicants submit a portfolio, are admitted to UC San Diego, and declare themselves to be Music majors with an emphasis in Performance, they should know what to expect in that major— a liberal arts education in music, but one that likely involves little one-on-one performance training (relative to a conservatory-style education). The Music Department should therefore make clear to prospective students (for example, at Triton Day and Transfer Triton Day events) and to incoming students what is possible for their musical education in UC San Diego's Music program if they were admitted

with a portfolio.

D. Recommendations for alleviating any shortcomings suggested by the description and analysis

The recommendations of the committee address two main structural and cultural issues: difficulties with graduate-student instruction, and the disconnect between what Music faculty do and teach on the one hand, and what undergraduate students expect from a degree in music on the other.

To improve teaching by graduate-student instructors, we suggest:

- Splitting in two the first-year graduate-level course on research and teaching methods. A course focused entirely on effective instruction is especially useful in a department in which so many graduate students teach large service courses. The training, especially for large lower-division classes, should reinforce TA management.
- Provide structured syllabi for the classes taught by graduate-student instructors, but also allow room (for instance, by letting them create their own problem sets) for the instructors to innovate and hone their own teaching methods and philosophy.
- Ensure consistency with the sequence courses, particularly those taught by graduate students.
- Since the teaching training is still in its early stages, we recommend sustained collaboration with the TLC to improve outcomes.

To improve the culture between faculty and undergraduate students, we suggest:

- Increased faculty advising of undergraduates in the department seminar.
- Improvements to the department undergraduate program webpage. The webpage should include links to advising, internship possibilities (e.g. on the REAL portal: <http://real.ucsd.edu> and the Academic Internship Program portal: <https://aip.ucsd.edu/>), and career possibilities (e.g. on the Career Center portal: <https://career.ucsd.edu/>). The undergraduate staff advisor could keep a log of where students have found summer jobs or internships, and post them to the webpage as a reference for students. The webpage could also have improved tracking and publicizing of undergraduate alumni.
- Naming faculty who serve as undergraduate advisors in the major areas of undergraduate studies (the three majors, but perhaps also by Music emphasis). Ideally these faculty members will serve as advisors for more than one year, and would meet quarterly with undergraduate Music student organizations and groups to foster closer ties between

faculty and students.

- Creating a faculty committee to review the learning outcomes for the majors, and revise general learning outcomes so that they are clearer and more measurable. For individual courses, faculty should stress the learning outcomes during lectures and in course syllabi, as well as reinforce them periodically over the quarter.
- Creating additional venues for undergraduate students to present their work (e.g. at concerts, showcases, and student panels at Triton Day and Transfer Triton Day) to help with misperceptions of what the department does.
- Overseeing a system of mentored peer advising among undergraduates, especially between more senior students and newly-enrolled ones.

For the ICAM major, we have additional recommendations:

- The creation of a committee to devise specific articulation agreements with local community colleges, in order for students to fulfill the math and programming prerequisites before their arrival at UC San Diego.
- The same committee could look into math and programming courses being offered outside of the Math and CSE Departments, such as in Social Sciences, as well as through summer and on-line programs, to increase the ways in which students can fulfill these requirements and help improve time-to-degree.

For the Music majors with a performance emphasis, we have additional recommendations:

- As mentioned in Section B, performance majors often expect more one-on-one lessons with faculty. Currently there is only MUS 132 (with MUS 32 as a prerequisite), which is a three-quarter curricular requirement. Some faculty apparently require that students take more than three courses in performance.
- We hope that improved faculty advising for Music majors will help with student expectations regarding performance and instruction.
- It may also be worthwhile to form a committee to review and standardize the Performance emphasis, especially with regard to the access to studio lessons. The committee could also review the gatekeeping procedure for incoming performance majors, so that all incoming students know better what to expect.
- Concerning the use of portfolios in the admissions process, we recommend (as stated above in Section C) that the Dean of Admissions provide data on how the portfolios factor in to the admissions process, and on the number of students with highly-rated portfolios who are currently enrolled on campus and majoring in Music.

The committee enjoyed our discussions with the Music Department, including its world-class faculty, highly committed staff, and a fabulous group of engaged graduate and undergraduate students. We appreciate the opportunity to comment on its undergraduate program.