



2015-16 End-of-Year Report Academic Department Success Plan

Department: School of Music

Department Chair: Dr. Paul Bro

Person Primarily Responsible for Preparing this Report:
Dr. Scott Buchanan

Please answer the following questions in two or three pages and submit to your Dean by October 3. Your Dean will review and advance to Academic Affairs by October 10¹ and will offer you feedback by Oct. 17. This report will help inform your 2016-2019 Student Success Plan update that will be due to your Dean by Nov. 4.

1. Specific accomplishments/achievements this past year (briefly explain using bullet points, noting any changed/adapted):

Freshman (1st year) Retention Goal Results

According to figures submitted by the Office of Academic Affairs, the (1st year) Retention rate for the School of Music Fall 2015 cohort is 71.43%. This is an increase of 4.04% from the previous year.

(Responses to specific Student Success Plan's Action Steps)

B. The School of Music continues to provide tutoring in both Music History and Music Theory. In the last year, the School has received grant monies from the College of Arts & Sciences and additional funding for student wages. Thus, we have been able to nearly double the opportunities for mentoring in these critical areas.

C. The School of Music faculty continue to closely monitor the academic progress of freshmen, in an effort to identify, as early as possible, students who are struggling. Efforts are made to identify those students, and get them to make an appointment with their academic advisor as soon as possible.

Department Persistence to Completion Goal Results

C. The School of Music continues to provide tutoring in both Music History and Music Theory. In the last year, the School has received grant monies from the College of Arts & Sciences and additional funding for student wages. Thus, we have been able to nearly double the opportunities for mentoring in these critical areas.

D. In an effort to increase the retention of high achieving students, as well as those with significant financial needs, nearly all of the Foundation Scholarships within the School of Music were awarded to returning students. The only scholarships awarded to incoming students were those designated for that purpose. This is a significant change from how Foundation scholarships were distributed in the past.

¹ Note that the Dean will request a refinement to the report if it is not suitably addressing the questions.

E. A thorough examination of our curriculum, as it relates to pre-requisites, concluded that students were, indeed, completing them as required by the catalog. However, it was found that some pre-requisites may actually be creating curricular barriers. Further examination is ongoing.

2. Objective/Actions Not Achieved (briefly explain using bullet points):
Freshman (1st year) Retention Goal Results

A. A faculty committee spent a great deal of time during the Spring 2016 semester examining the core theory curriculum. It was decided that Fundamentals (MUS 101) should be eliminated as a barrier to 4-year graduation. The exact way to accomplish has yet been determined. The committee will continue in work in this area.

D. This is part of the theory reconstruction. Scheduling multiple sections of “off-sequence” theory and skills courses is becoming nearly impossible with the mandated FTE model of course offering. Lack of “off-sequence” offerings is definitely a curricular barrier to degree completion.

Department Persistence to Completion Goal Results

A. Class size was studied for the large MUS 150 class. Under the current FTE model of staffing, it is not possible to offer this class every semester and thus could not be addressed. Sequencing is being reexamined this semester. Prerequisites may be creating barriers to completion. We are looking to eliminate them if it is reasonable to do so.

B. School of Music has created a short questionnaire to ask students why they drop out or change majors. It needs to be approved by the faculty and can be put to use this academic year.

3. Looking ahead, briefly describe changes, additions, or subtractions that need to be made to your goals and/or action steps, including with respect to their linkage to student learning outcomes.

We will continue to look for curricular barriers that slow the progress of our students. This includes studying how music theory, music history and class piano interact in our curriculum.

Foundation Scholarships will continue to be used mainly for current student retention so this action item may be taken out of the plan.

4. Do you see opportunity for this project to work more closely with another department, college, or unit such that greater impact might be possible (briefly explain)?

No. Our current recruitment and retention plans are for use only within the School of Music. The vast majority of our majors come to us directly from high school. It is rare for a student to change their major to music after taking time off from their instrument or from singing.

5. Is there anything else about your initiative you feel important to detail?

The School of Music is planning to revise its mission statement to shorten it and to respond to the new mission statement recently approved by the University.