

UW Colleges Assessment Planning and Reporting Form 2004-2005

Email your reports to SAC@uwc.edu

Department	Music
Assessment Coordinator(s)	Patricia Eby

NOTE: Please attach relevant supporting information used to complete the Report Summary Sheet.

PART 1: Assessment of General Education Outcomes

Section 1: Identify the Proficiencies and Performance Indicators Assessed

- at the Planning stage, mark the performance indicators to be assessed in the left hand column below
- at the Reporting stage, report the numbers of students who did not meet, met, or exceeded expectations

	Proficiency	Performance Indicators	# Do Not Meet	# Meet	# Exceed
	C. Communication Skills	2. Communicate clearly, precisely, and in a well-organized manner	153	263	115

Section 3: Use of Results

1. How did individual instructors report that they plan to use these results to improve the instructional process?

- I have my students performing some form of meaningful writing activity almost on a weekly basis. This has yielded satisfying results in the quality of their research papers and written CD Review Projects. It was not surprising to see the results of this Assessment to bear out that trend as well. It is another signal to me that written should continue to be a strong component in all of my History, Literature, and Appreciation classes.
- I continue to be distressed by the poor quality of writing that our students submit to us. When I read their responses I feel like they are randomly tossing out unrelated ideas in hopes of lucking out and obtaining a positive response for some thought regardless of whether it exhibits any knowledge or skill at all. In general, they seem unable to connect ideas in a logical manner in order to posit a point and support that notion with any related information, let alone use the vocabulary of the discipline in a clear and accurate fashion.
- I do not believe the solution to this problem is to lower the expectations. I continue to believe that sifting and winnowing is important regardless of the distress it may cause. I remain interested in coaxing better skills out of the students through inclusion of writing tasks along the way in my curriculum but I also remain convinced that these skills need to be addressed more effectively BEFORE the students embark on college level work. Is there any way that the information from our assessment exercises can be communicated to our high schools in some form to encourage proactive work in preparing students for the college experience so that they can meet the expectations appropriate for their level of education?

- Content specific to music taught in MUS 295 Jazz in Literature is primarily historical/background information to give students some cultural and historical context for the poetry and prose under study in the class. Assessment results may indicate that although music listening and guided listening experiences are NOT the focus of study in MUS 295 Jazz in Literature, the students surprisingly either pick up some listening skills from the peripheral listening that does occur in the course or are coming to the course with some music listening skills. Although a larger portion of the students met expectations than failed to meet expectations, it would again reinforce that students are typically not taught listening skills in MUS 295 Jazz in Literature, and should not be expected to have the same level of musical understanding as students in classes in which music listening skills are more greatly emphasized. It may be further surmised that language may be inadequate to fully describe the experience of listening to music, or that students in this class are ill equipped to express themselves via the written word to what they are listening
- I continue to use the assessment tools in my regular syllabus.
- It is helping me fine tune my teaching methods.
- Students have expressed better listening skills by practicing the tool with additional examples throughout the semester and writing paragraphs.
- I don't plan on using these results for anything. In some cases, these results do not reflect the quality of the work done consistently by the students (in 15 separate written assignments, a class presentation, and four tests) throughout the semester, nor do they necessarily reflect the student's ability to write descriptively. These results have shown me that some students might do much better if they had more time to think and better organize their ideas, and conversely, some students who didn't do much during the semester and generally scored low on tests and other writing assignments flukishly scored high. So what is there to learn from this exercise?
- Normally, at least for me, in a music theory class, historical and form issues are not stressed to the extent that they probably should be. Because of this exercise I have been pleasantly surprised that I have been aware of my need to talk about these issues as we discuss music theory concepts and devices. In specific, I find myself looking for ways to focus on theoretical examples which have particular relevance to the periods, composers, styles, or performance media we are discussing. Consequently, I have been somewhat pleased to notice some of the ideas that have been coming back to me via this assessment practice from both a musical and communicative perspective. It seems obvious to me that I will continue along the same path next year. In fact, I will probably increase the amount of historical and form, etc. information I include in MUS 171 and MUS 172 next year. Given the academic musical background of the larger percentage of my students relative to music history and form, etc., it seems to be the most logical thing to do.
- I will use the results to measure students perceptibly and to identify correct meter and understand rhythmic notation.
- After submitting data of this sort for several semesters now, and not receiving any truly substantial feedback (i.e. comparisons to other campuses in our system, national scores from similar exercises, or recommendation on how to use this material to implement changes or improvement,) I am left wondering what we are getting in return for spending considerable time and inconvenience with this exercise.
- I was surprised how many students did not meet expectations, and when we have a writing exercise in the future, I will, in more detail, speak to what we are looking for in good writing practices.
- I will make sure that I have a place in D2L for Glossary and will spend more time talking about the music elements. Many students could use more time with the basic elements.
- I have a better idea of the things students Don't understand (for instance, their ideas about meter were all over the map) and can adjust in my future classes.
- As a musician, I should know that "practice makes a difference". Why should it be any different when writing about music? I found that to give students chance to practice writing about music improved

assessment results. There are probably millions of brain synapses at work in the exercise formulated: 1) listen to music; 2) analyze the sounds; 3) find the vocabulary to describe the sounds; 4) create a coherent paragraph (bring in good writing skills from another class). Students need to be able to practice writing about music.

- The concept of rhythm was the hardest for students to articulate in writing. It is probably the hardest for me to discuss in class. I usually demonstrate rhythm. The concept of melody was the hardest to describe. Helping students to find descriptive vocabulary for sound is a definite goal in the class.

2. What recommendations would you and/or the department assessment committee make to your department for continued improvement of the assessment process, proficiencies, performance indicators, assessment activity, rubric, and/or student performance in the discipline?

Continue to have students write descriptions of their listening experiences.

Encourage good writing – rather than a listing of descriptive words.

Discuss the use of a topic sentence – a main point- and support the point with factual musical statements using musical vocabulary which specifically identifies aspects of musical elements.

Give students feedback on written work regarding use of good writing; correct grammar errors; may want to incorporate into the grading of the written work

Use discussion as the springboard for good writing; music is often hard to describe; discuss a piece of music helping with music vocabulary- then have students write about the discussion. Eventually, have the students write without classroom discussion. However, listening, applying terms and writing about music needs practice. More time should be spent all aspects.

Incorporate listening into music theory and aural skills classes.

Give students opportunities for writing about music

3. After discussion of the results by the department, what course of action will the department take to improve student performance with respect to the assessed proficiency?

Continue to practice listening, describing and writing about music

Give students feedback on writing in addition to content

Tell students what is expected in good writing; assign writing projects (research paper, concert reports etc.) and make good writing an expectation in the evaluation

PART 2: Assessment of Department-Specific Outcomes

Section 1: Identify department-specific outcomes/performance indicators.

Outcomes/Performance Indicators
1. Example: <i>After taking any course in the Psychology Department a student will be able to apply scientific and other appropriate methodologies</i>
2. <i>After taking any course in music, the student will be able to listen to music with comprehension and sensitivity</i>

Section 2: Attach the rubric/standards used to assess each outcome/performance indicator.

C2 Communication Skills

2. Write and speak clearly, precisely and in a well-organized manner

Section 3: Assessment Results

Departmental Outcome/Performance Indicator	# Do Not Meet	# Meet	# Exceed
2. Listen with comprehension and sensitivity	153	263	115

Section 5: Use of results

1. How did individual instructors report that they plan to use these results to improve the instructional process?

Faculty Comments:

How will you use/or have used the results:

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PART 3: Additional Assessment and Contributions

Please ask for and include in the report information from Department members about any other assessment activities they have conducted, particularly in conjunction with grant-funded innovations. Also ask for and describe briefly any additional contributions to assessment such as publications, presentations, qualitative classroom innovations (such as Scholarship of Teaching and Learning activities), and other items relating to assessment that the department wishes to note.

The Music Department has applied for and received money from SOTL for a workshop to be presented at the January meeting. The workshop topic is the learning sequence of aural skills material. After the workshop, members of the department will design a sequential curriculum for teaching of aural skills which will include an assessment component –still to be determined.

The assessment budget was not used in 2004 – 2005; after our workshop in January, it might be beneficial to use assessment budget money to bring a task

force together to work on designing and implementing sequential curriculum for aural skills.