

Unit Assessment Report for Humanities and Music

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The incomparable work of our previous Humanities department liaisons produced a foundational assessment for Applied Music Instruction Private Lessons (MUSIC-AIS). Their studious refinement over several semesters has given invaluable insight into the skillset development of AFA students toward graduation and ultimately supports their success in the music industry beyond Harold Washington; while not intended to be perpetual, this well-established assessment is fully functional and I continue to manage data from AIS juries (student performance final) from the spring 21 semester through summer and into the fall.

Yet, to support our Music Business and Tech Certificates, we are shifting our assessment focus from AIS toward Individual Project (MUSIC 225) which is the capstone for the credit sequence; as the last class in the student pathway before graduation, this class gives our students the flexibility to demonstrate their developing skillset through real world applications like engineering sound for live events, internships with recording industry studios, arts management or marketing song catalogs to publishing houses to name a few; however, with the extraordinary circumstances of the pandemic and the current state of the performing arts/gig economy, there is mutual concern among the full time music faculty that a traditional assessment of student learning outcomes would be tone def; as music professionals, we are acutely aware of the dangers of having bad time and must improvise new ways to assess our students.

Over the semester my role as liaison was continually refreshed by the Assessment Committee's understanding and caring support for our unique situation; they repeatedly demonstrated their willingness to share experiences and ideas which formed a consensus that a pre-assessment would better serve our promising entrepreneurs as they adjust to this challenging landscape; charged with their invaluable support, I collaborated with MUSIC 225 instructors for their perspective as industry professionals to create a student survey; unfortunately the delivery method yielded inconclusive results and I look forward to refining our approach in the coming semester.

The pandemic continues to impact all of our lives, but for those whose livelihood is sustained by an audience, it has been especially devastating to be kept from the stage and it is imperative that we consider this as we adapt not only our assessments for learning outcomes but perhaps more importantly for student well-being; I cannot over-emphasize that if you are, or ever have been, interested in attending an assessment committee meeting, you will not be disappointed! Their warmth is only matched by their dedication to helping our students and instructors grow together through assessment. (also, they always end promptly at the hour and when held on campus, the snacks are plentiful;) Stop on by!