

# **NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS OF MUSIC**

## **Visitors' Report**

### **Columbus State University**

Columbus, Georgia

Ronald Wirt, Interim Director

Schwob School of Music

March 19-20, 2012

Sue Haug, Pennsylvania State University, team chair  
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#### **Programs or degrees for which renewal of Final Approval is sought.**

Bachelor of Arts in Music  
Bachelor of Music in Music Education (Choral, Instrumental)  
Bachelor of Music in Performance  
Master of Music in Music Education

#### **Programs or degrees for which Plan Approval and Final Approval for Listing are sought**

Artist Diploma  
Master of Music in Performance

#### **Program for which Basic Listing is sought.**

Music Conservatory

## DISCLAIMER

The following report and any statements therein regarding compliance with NASM accreditation Standards represent only the considered opinion of the visitors at the time of the visit. Definitive evaluation of compliance and the accreditation decision will be made by the appropriate Commission following a complete review of the application, including the *Self-Study*, the Visitors' Report, and any Optional Response to the Visitors' Report submitted by the institution.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The visitors wish to express their sincere thanks to the administration, faculty, and staff of the School of Music for their cooperation during the visit. In particular, the visitors wish to express their gratitude to Ron Wirt, Fred Cohen, and the staff of the Schwob School of Music for their helpfulness and their gracious and thoughtful hospitality.

## USE OF STANDARDS

Visitors must base their evaluations on NASM Standards, as published in the latest edition of the *Handbook* and any current addenda, associated with each section in the outline that follows. The annotations below provide a guide; however, they are not a substitute for the Standards themselves.

### A. Purposes

The Schwob School of Music is guided by its mission statement that emphasizes a commitment to high standards, a nurturing learning environment, professional focus, and strong connections to the community. The mission statement was developed by a faculty committee and approved by the faculty in 2008 (*Self-Study*, p. 2). It is published in various documents, including faculty and student handbooks, on its website, in recruitment materials, and on concert programs. The Schwob School is part of a vibrant downtown arts campus, a relatively new campus that is separated from the main campus, although connected by regular bus service. The arts campus, which includes music, theatre, art, and communications, has developed a variety of initiatives to enhance the connections with the community and with various community partners whereby the downtown is developed as an arts and entertainment destination. The Schwob School of Music is a valued partner in this enterprise, as was highlighted by the Dean of the College of the Arts in his description to the visitors of the various economic development initiatives being explored. The school's prominence in the community was also evident by their visibility in a tourism promotional video played continuously on hotel TVs.

As described in section III, the school is continuing to design strategies to guide its future as a comprehensive School of Music within a liberal arts university, strategies that reflect "its history as a conservatory-inspired unit in a community college" (*Self-Study*, p. 156). The school appears to have the strong support of the university's upper administration and the community in its academic and outreach missions.

### B. Size and Scope

The school has seen remarkable growth in the ten years since its last accreditation review, and now enrolls 225 undergraduate music majors, 13 master's students, and 17 artist diploma program students (*Self-Study*, p.4). The *Self-Study* demonstrates the faculty's careful attention to recruitment and retention, the latter at rates consistently above CSU averages. The growth of music graduate programs

coincides with university strategic initiatives to develop additional graduate programs across the university. The Schwob School enrolls more full-time graduate students and has a greater proportion of international students than is the norm at CSU (*Self-Study*, p. 9).

The School's 25 full-time faculty (plus the part-time faculty) appears to be sufficient to deliver its programs, although the balance of faculty among the various areas may not be optimal, as will be discussed later in this report. Because of recent budget cuts, the school lost two faculty positions, but both faculty lines were filled on a full-time basis – albeit with annual contributions and earnings. The school appears to offer on a rotational basis sufficient advanced courses and requisite ensemble experiences consistent with its programs. The course rotation is published in the *Student Handbook*, pp. 7-12 (MDP 1-D). The recent change to a summers-only music education graduate program will help to balance teaching loads for the two full-time music education faculty, who now will teach the required graduate courses over three summers and can focus on delivering the undergraduate curriculum during the academic year.

While the school appears to have sufficient faculty and courses for the programs it offers, its ensemble program has expanded to the point that the school appears to depend on many students performing in multiple ensembles every semester in order to sustain its offerings. The size of some applied studios and a culture that appears not to involve non-majors in ensembles to a great extent (perhaps because of the distance from the main campus) may have contributed to this situation.

## C. Finances

The *Self-Study* seems to give a clear picture of the budget and the school's reliance on fund-raising to cover its basic operations. One of the school's challenges seems to be to raise money for scholarships, in part, to make up for the reduction in HOPE scholarships, but also to raise funds required by the expanded Woodruff Award program where the school covers tuition, room, and board for select students who receive a stipend from this \$2 million endowment. The anxiety that the faculty expressed about this level of fund-raising activity seems clear from the detailed description of short- and long-term funding requirements for this award alone (*Self-Study*, pp. 22-23).

The school and university, however, have been very active in raising funds to support this and other financial priorities, including funding for positions, operations, and student financial aid. The visitors were assured by the CSU President that this support is ongoing and that the Schwob School will remain a priority for external support. There appears to be considerable institutional support for the needed fund-raising, including a director of major gifts who is a former music director, a Dean with a strong background in development, a loyal donor base, and a President who is very knowledgeable and supportive of the school. A new vice-president for advancement has been hired recently, a new capital campaign is under consideration, and donor engagement with the school remains strong. The college is reviewing the way development positions are allocated and overseen, with the open position mentioned in the *Self-Study* (p. 28) expected to report to the Dean in future years as a way to ensure greater accountability and success. Despite a 40% reduction in state support over the past three years, the President indicated that the university has seen an overall increase in the number of faculty positions.

Thus, despite the school's financial challenges, some of which will be described in greater detail in appropriate sections below, it appears that the School of Music through its substantial fundraising initiatives has a reasonably stable base of funding and that the institution is in compliance with NASM standards relative to purpose, size and scope, and finances.

## **D. Governance and Administration**

### **1. Overall Effectiveness**

The College of the Arts (COA) is a relatively new structure within Columbus State University. The school is one of four units in the college and its current Dean was recently appointed to this position.

The culture of Columbus State appears to value shared decision-making. As the *Self-Study* (p. 162) indicates, the faculty must “come to consensus on what issues are essential priorities and what issues are less central to the school’s mission.” The Dean confirmed that he counts on the four unit heads to help to shape college priorities and, likewise, there is a strong expectation of faculty involvement in setting unit priorities. Music faculty meet monthly, and six standing committees provide opportunities for faculty participation in the governance of the school. However, as the *Self-Study* mentions, “coming to consensus and living with the consensus of the group has not always been an easy task” (*Self-Study*, p. 162).

### **2. Policy-Making**

Faculty governance appears to be clearly understood and functioning appropriately and faculty participate in various levels of policy-making. If anything, faculty expressed concern that COA faculty (and especially music faculty) may be expected to represent the college on university committees more than is reasonable for its size. The Dean also mentioned having heard this concern expressed and assured the visitors that he would be attentive to this situation.

Within the Schwob School of Music (SSOM), there is a strong tradition of faculty involvement in decision-making, with faculty coordinators for the various areas, standing committees, and several administrative appointments. The standing committees of the school “provide structure to a dynamic administrative governance system” (*Self-Study*, p. 153). The committees meet throughout the academic year as needed to carry out their various responsibilities.

### **3. Music Executive’s Load and Responsibilities**

The current director is in an interim position; however, the expectation is that the school will engage in an external search for a permanent director in 2012-13 with the appointment to begin in July 2013. In the interim, the school has divided some administrative tasks among the areas or assigned some important administrative responsibilities to faculty, such as course scheduling and advising (*Self-Study* p. 25). The *Self-Study* was written by a team of faculty, including the previous director, current director, area coordinator of music education, and an assistant director (*Self-Study*, p. 154).

The director has significant responsibilities for financial matters, given the school’s heavy dependence on fund raising to cover basic operations and scholarships. While the director is expected to teach one course during the academic year and another course in the summer, in practice this has not always happened. The current interim director is responsible for the bassoon studio (according to the chart on page 7, five students). With the amount of administrative duties handled by other faculty and faculty committees, the director appears to have sufficient time and staff to execute the required administrative and/or teaching duties effectively. However, some of the faculty with administrative assignments and full teaching loads do not receive course releases (*Self-Study*, p. 25), and it is not clear whether this is a temporary situation until a new full-time director is appointed.

The visitors understand that funding for a permanent director has been identified and encourage the institution to move forward with this priority. The school has seen lack of stability in the director position (three directors and two interim appointments in the past decade (*Self-Study*, p. 156), and it appears that strong leadership would help the program with many challenges and new opportunities. Although the *Self-Study* questions whether the school might find a more efficient hierarchy “in which a dedicated director position is unnecessary,” the visitors did not hear any conversations about that option – rather were told that the line has been identified and funding will be held for an expected 2013 appointment.

#### **4. Communication**

Communication appears to be good, and music faculty have opportunities for participation at all levels of university governance. The president appears to have a good understanding of the music program, is highly visible at concerts (for example, he attended the NASM student recital) and knows music faculty by name. Likewise, the Dean maintains open lines of communication with faculty, and the director meets regularly with the Dean and other unit heads in the college.

A student government council was created in 2010-11 and functioned in fall 2010; however, that structure has been disbanded (*Self-Study*, p. 153). While this particular way of encouraging regular communication between the director and students may not have been effective, the school is encouraged to find ways for student concerns to be expressed and addressed. The student meeting with the visitors was well-attended and included many expressions of support for the school and its faculty, as well as ideas for improvements. Despite overwhelmingly positive support for the school and its faculty, students mentioned concerns about inconsistency in methods classes, uncertainty about whether it was possible to request different applied teacher (in areas where there were multiple faculty), and problems in the support provided for rehearsals and recitals in the primary concert hall (Legacy Hall). Therefore, it is not clear that that institution ensures that “student views and judgments are sought in those matters in which students have a direct and reasonable interest” (*NASM Handbook 2011-12*, II.D.1.a.(4)(d)).

Except for the concerns mentioned above, it appears that the institution is in compliance with NASM standards relative to governance and administration.

#### **E. Faculty and Staff**

The school is well served by a collection of full and part-time faculty who appear to be qualified by virtue of professional experience, academic credentials, and strong records of performance and service. The specialties of the various full-time and part-time performance faculty are distributed so that appropriate expertise and experience is available for the various instruments/voice studios. While the school aspires to have full-time faculty instructors in all applied studios, it has found creative ways to ensure that its applied teaching mission is covered.

Thus, it appears that the institution meets NASM standards with regard to number and distribution of faculty with one reservation. While the department seems to be adequately supported in faculty positions in performance and ensembles, it relies almost entirely on the performance faculty for the delivery of its academic courses. Although the school’s faculty include some extraordinarily dedicated teachers, some of whom appear to be very successful teachers of music history and music theory classes, to the extent that the school does not have among its ranks full-time music theorists and musicologists, it will likely have a certain unevenness in the delivery of its academic courses. It relies on the applied faculty who do not have full studio teaching loads to teach many academic courses, and that inevitably means a greater need for coordination and evaluation to assure continuity

and success across all courses. Students reported great disparity in the effectiveness of aural skills classes, for example. The *Self-Study* indicates “formative evaluation had been practiced on an electively agreed-upon basis by all SSOM faculty from 2007-2011 (*Self-Study*, p. 32). The visitors understand that student course evaluation participation declined with the advent of online course evaluations, so it is not clear how much feedback theory faculty are receiving from students, peers, or the director about their teaching. Since these required courses develop essential skills among all students in the program, it appears that some greater attention to performance review of faculty teaching these courses may be needed. The school does not seem inattentive to this issue and mentions the need to “develop a more comprehensive approach to core musicianship skills” in its areas for improvement (*Self-Study*, p. 159). The visitors recommend that a thorough study of core theory courses be done as it considers new approaches to delivering this part of the curricula.

Among its mid-range priorities, the school indicates the need for a “re-consideration of the history curriculum and faculty” (*Self-Study*, p. 160). The visitors concur that one of the school’s most important considerations is how to prioritize the desire for full-time performance faculty in all areas with the recognized need for a full-time musicologist. The faculty appear to be doing an excellent job in teaching music history classes, but as the school develops upper level undergraduate capstone courses and graduate courses in support of its growing graduate population, it needs to consider the role of academic faculty in ensuring an appropriate balance of faculty expertise. The visitors understood that there were also faculty discussions about the role of the BA in the school (discussed further below), and since the BA often is an important degree for students with non-performance aspirations, having a strong voice (and greater numbers) to represent the academic faculty might lead to different conversations and decisions. Despite these challenges, students expressed gratitude for the supportive and hard-working faculty and described the atmosphere in the Schwob School as that of a family.

## **F. Facilities, Equipment, Technology, Health, and Safety**

One of the strengths of the Schwob School is its beautiful and highly functional facilities. The RiverCenter for the Performing Arts in the downtown campus (called “uptown” by the locals) serves the school extraordinarily well. The school controls the classrooms, faculty offices, library administrative suite, rehearsal and practice rooms, and two beautiful performance spaces, while a 503(c)3 organization controls the larger performance hall (Bill Heard Theatre), plus the lobby, box office and associated spaces. The arrangement appears to work very well for the school, since only occasional Schwob School performances occur in the 2,000-seat Heard Theatre. The two smaller theatres (Studio Theatre and Legacy Hall) are the real workhorses for the school, providing a home for the school’s 150 performances each year, plus rehearsals and special events. During the visit, Studio Theatre (a 150-seat black box theatre) was being used for a series of guitar masterclasses. The larger 450-seat hall, Legacy Hall, was used for rehearsals for upcoming concerts and the NASM student recital. Both function well and are beautiful spaces. The building was meticulously clean and looked much newer than a ten-year old space. The faculty concurred that the facility is beautifully conceived and serves the school well.

Classrooms are appointed with pianos, data projectors, and audio playback equipment. Teaching studios are large and equipped with Steinway pianos, computers and audio recording systems. The administrative suite is welcoming and spacious, with one of the offices re-purposed to serve its audio technology program. Rehearsal rooms seem a bit live for the larger instrumental ensembles, although acoustical curtains are generally completely open. Practice rooms appear adequate and well used during the day. The building also houses the university’s music library. Although the school has provided good practice room pianos, some appear to need more frequent tuning. Faculty and students

expressed concern that some of auxiliary concert instruments are in a desperate state of repair, but otherwise the facilities and equipment appear appropriate and well maintained.

The school is aware of recent changes in NASM standards regarding the obligation of institutions to ensure that music students “be fully apprised of health and safety issues, hazards, and procedures inherent in practice, performance, teaching and listening both in general and as applicable to their specific specializations” (NASM *Handbook 2011-12*, II.F.1.i.). The school is fortunate that teaching, performance, and rehearsal spaces appear to be accessible, safe, and secure and designed with excellent acoustics. While the visitors saw evidence of good teaching that was mindful of issues relative to hearing, vocal, and musculoskeletal health and injury prevention, few course syllabi mentioned health and safety issues and the *Self-Study* was silent in this regard. The visitors suggest that the institution submit in its Optional Response ways in which it may already be meeting this standard or any new procedures that it may choose to add.

Altogether, the RiverCenter for the Performing Arts is a gem and is truly appreciated by faculty and students. Performance, teaching, office, library, and rehearsal spaces appear to be serving the program well.

## **G. Library and Learning Resources**

Since the downtown campus is about six miles from the main campus library, the school is fortunate to have a satellite library in the RiverCenter for the Performing Arts. This library space is beautiful and convenient, resulting in a “high level of use by faculty and students” (*Self-Study*, p. 41). The Music Library is staffed and funded by the main library. The music librarian works closely with music faculty and presents lectures to music classes as requested by the faculty. Whereas there is an introductory library course (LIBR 1105) available to music students, it is not required and the visitors understood that instruction in the use of the music library wasn’t done in any systematic way; however, given the convenient location, the accessibility of the music librarian, the number of music courses which take occasional advantage of the music librarian, and her accessibility for individual tutoring, it appears that the standard requiring instruction in the use of the library is being met, at least minimally (NASM *Handbook 2011-12*, II.G.5.a.(4)).

While the music collection is young “as a separate entity and its materials budget is evolving to support it” (*Self-Study*, p. 44), the university has been generous in its support to help the library grow – with substantial funding for journal subscriptions, *Gesamtausgaben* titles, books, scores and recordings. The collection is reported to have gaps, but faculty are encouraged to submit requests for materials and the music librarian considers all requests in conjunction with the collection development policy. The CSU libraries participate in a consortial statewide virtual library collection (GALILEO) that provides access to hundreds of databases and full text resources. And there are opportunities to borrow materials through interlibrary loan arrangements. Given the relatively modest budget for new acquisitions, the Collection Development Policy emphasizes accessing materials versus owning physical copies (*Self-Study*, p. 45).

The visitors understood that an aggressive plan for expanding the downtown arts campus library is likely to be announced soon, and the school is encouraged to provide an update in its Optional Response. It was not clear to the visitors whether additional resources for acquisitions might be part of this library expansion. As the school’s graduate programs grow, additional resources to expand the collection will be needed; however, it appears that library resources meet threshold NASM standards.

## **H. Recruitment, Admission-Retention, Record Keeping, and Advisement**

### **1. Recruitment, Admission, Retention**

Recruitment materials, including both published and on-line materials, seem clear and appropriate to the purpose of the institution. Admission procedures and requirements, in print and on-line appear to be clear and consistent. The undergraduate admission procedure, as described in the *Self-Study* (p. 55), appears to be selective and admission decisions, made by panels of two to four applied faculty members, appear to be both rigorous and fair. Retention policies and processes, including sophomore “barrier” requirements and minimum grade requirements, are clearly outlined in the *Student Handbook* (p. 5) and appear to be rigorous (MDP 1-D).

The admission procedure for graduate students is outlined on the web site. Applicants for all graduate degrees must apply to the Schwob School of Music and to the CSU Graduate School. Applicants for the MM in Music Education degree are not required to audition, but must schedule an interview with the music education faculty. They must hold an undergraduate degree in music with a minimum GPA of 2.5 to be admitted. The Graduate Record Exam is required of students who do not hold a renewable teaching certificate from any U.S. state. Applicants for the MM in Performance must hold a degree in music with a minimum 2.75 GPA. Auditions are required and the criteria are outlined on the web site. The GRE is not required for applicants to the MM in Performance. The application requirements for the Artist Diploma are similar to the MM in performance.

### **2. Record Keeping**

Student records are kept in files located in the main office. Materials contained in the file include: admission records, jury records, recital jury and program information, and any academic warnings. Academic records are accessible through the Banner system. Therefore, it appears that the school maintains accurate and up-to-date records of each student’s educational progress.

### **3. Advisement**

Procedures for advisement are outlined both on the web site and in the *Student Handbook* (pg. 4). Advising begins with diagnostic exams administered at the audition. Students are required to meet with assigned advisers at least twice a year. The school employs a Six-Week Alert form to report low performing students. This process has been used by the institution as an example of best practice for improved retention (*Self-Study*, p. 51).

## **I. Published Materials and Web Sites**

Published materials as presented in the *Self-Study* (MPD-7-I) and on the web site appear to be clear, well written, and comprehensive. These materials contain information on requirements for admissions, scholarships, and advising. The school’s on-line student handbook contains information pertaining to the mission statement, retention, and the schedule of course offerings. The university’s on-line catalog contains information regarding purpose, size and scope, curricula, faculty, financial aid, administration, costs and refund policy, rules of conduct, academic calendar, grievance and appeals procedure, and accreditation status.

The visitors noted some discrepancies regarding course identification, such as MUSC rather than MUSP 7070, 7080, and 7090 listed in the University catalog (MME). It is the visitor’s understanding that corrections have been submitted, but there have been delays in getting such updates entered into the university’s catalog. Since there are several curricular changes that are not yet reflected in the



catalog that was included in the *Self-Study*, the visitors recommend that copies of the appropriate portions of the updated catalog be forwarded as part of the Optional Response. Other than some minor errors and curricular changes that have been approved since the catalog was published, the institution appears to meet NASM standards relative to publications.

**J. Branch Campuses, External Programs, Use of the Institution's Name for Educational Activities Operated Apart from the Main Campus or the Primary Educational Program (not applicable)**

**K. Community Involvement; Articulation With Other Schools**

As is demonstrated in promotional materials, media advertising, and donor support, it appears that the Schwob School of Music is considered an important cultural resource for Columbus and the surrounding area. The school has partnered with the RiverCenter to share the use of the 2,000-seat Heard Auditorium.

The *Self Study* (MPD I-J/K) contains a copy of an articulation agreement between Columbus State University and Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College in which "students who earn the Associate of Fine Arts Degree from Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College...will be eligible for seamless transfer admission into the Bachelor of Music, Bachelor of Music Education, or Bachelor of Arts with a major in Music at Columbus State University." However, this information does not appear to be in any of the CSU publications that the visitors could find (*NASM Handbook 2011-12*, II.K.1.).

**L. Non-Degree-Granting Programs for the Community**

The Music Preparatory Division has a clearly defined purpose to act as a bridge from high school to university level music study; to raise awareness of the importance of early music education; and to serve as a cultural and educational link to the community (*Self-Study* p. 54). The program is served by a director who holds a dual appointment in the Preparatory Division and in the Schwob School of Music as a Visiting Associate Professor of Music, Viola. The program also has an Administrative Coordinator who is responsible for marketing and publicity in the Schwob School (*Self-Study*, p. 55).

The Music Preparatory Division runs several programs including: private lessons, Kindermusik, Suzuki Violin Lessons, Group Piano Lessons for Young Beginners, Voices of the Valley Youth Choral Program, and the Young Artist Program. Many of the teachers in the Preparatory Division are SSOM students recommended by their teachers and selected by the director for the Preparatory Division. There is also a pedagogy program that pairs Schwob students registered for undergraduate pedagogy courses with interested students from the community.

The Preparatory Division appears to be self-sustaining in that tuition covers the cost of instruction and administration. Institutional support from the School of Music includes technology, facilities, marketing, publicity, and supplies (*Self-Study* pp. 55-58).

**M. Review of Specific Operational Standards for (1) All Institutions of Higher Education for which NASM is the Designated Institutional Accreditor and/or (2) Proprietary Institutions (not applicable)**

## **N. Programs, Degrees, and Curricula**

### **1. Credit Hours**

#### **a. Definitions and Procedures**

##### **(1) Definition of Credit and Methods of Assigning Credit**

The *Self-Study* describes the way in which credit hours and lecture/lab hours are noted in the university catalog. For example, 3-0-3 indicates a lecture class that meets three hours/week and receives 3 credits. 0-2-1 indicates a lab class with no lecture and two hours of lab meetings/week and which received 1 credit (MDPI-J/K). To aid reviewers in locating such items, the visitors suggest that the school develop a table of contents for the *Self-Study*, particularly for the Management Documents Portfolio and include in its Optional Response.

##### **(2) Procedures Used to Make Credit Hour Assignments**

The school appears to follow the general practices as outlined in the NASM *Handbook* for determining credit hour assignments, although for applied music at the freshman and sophomore levels (1000- and 2000-levels), the School “under-credits” lessons because of the institution’s cap on hours.

##### **(3) Means Employed to Ensure Accurate and Reliable Application**

The Director of the Schwob School of Music monitors the accuracy of course time requirements, plus there is a second check at the Dean’s Office during data entry (MDPI-J/K).

#### **b. Evaluation of Compliance**

While the institution’s catalog clarifies program lengths and credits earned for each course, according to the *Self-Study*, “there is no documentation in CSU publications regarding credit hour policies” (MDPI-J/K). However, in practice, it appears that credit and time requirements in the School of Music follow national standards.

### **2. Specific Curricula**

#### **a. General Content and Competency Standards**

All professional undergraduate curricula appear to meet general NASM standards related to the “Common Body of Knowledge and Skills” with one exception. It is not clear how students “acquire basic knowledge of music history and repertoires through the present time, including study and experience of musical language and achievements in addition to that of the primary culture” (NASM *Handbook 2011-12*, VIII.B.4.). The faculty acknowledged that the current music history classes (MUSC 1100, 3328 and 3229) are focused primarily on the art music of Western civilization. Performance majors elect two additional literature courses (*Self-Study*, p. 70), however, none of those courses appear to include musical language and achievements that would address this standard.

Applied music involves a one-hour lesson, plus studio classes, for all music majors, so even though these courses receive only one credit at the freshman and sophomore levels, instructional time is comparable to a 2-3 credit applied music course. Syllabi indicated varying performance expectations for applied lessons, with several applied syllabi listing a requirement of three hours per day of practice required for these one-credit lessons. NASM recommends that “one credit hour be given for each three hours per week of practice, plus the necessary individual instruction,

with a maximum of six credits per term allowed for the major subject in music performance” (NASM *Handbook 2011-12*, III.A.2.c.). The faculty seem to be aware of the under-crediting of lessons, and periodically discuss what options might exist to remedy this situation and still keep the program at a reasonable overall credit level.

Visitors were able to attend music history and theory classes, representative ensembles, lessons in most instrumental areas, and various music education classes. Many classes were highly interactive, with engaged students and frequent student comments and questions. Students did report inconsistency in aural skills classes, which left them feeling disadvantaged when moving through the curriculum because of different standards and grading procedures across these classes. The meeting with the students happened near the end of the visit so the visitors did not have an opportunity to discuss this with the faculty. Other than these concerns, the undergraduate curriculum and courses appear to satisfy standards expected in the Common Body of Knowledge and Skills.

## **b. Individual Curricula**

### **Baccalaureate Programs**

#### **Bachelor of Arts in Music**

This degree is submitted for renewal of Final Approval for Listing. The program is described as a liberal arts degree program with a broad curriculum that encourages diversification through many electives within and outside music. The title, Bachelor of Arts in Music, appears to be appropriate for the content of this degree and seems represented consistently in all related publications. Student work conducted by enrollees appears consistent with NASM expectations. It appears, from reviewing the syllabi and assessment documents, and from observing classes, rehearsals, and the student recital that students are developing competencies as appropriate to a liberal arts music degree.

The program appears to be meeting the needs of students effectively. The visitors concur that having a strong capstone experience (*Self-Study*, p. 86) is an essential part of this degree and encourage faculty to proceed with plans to assure consistency in the expected outcomes. Students are encouraged to pursue a minor and there are an interesting variety in minors currently being pursued. Graduates of this degree have gone on to pursue work as a library assistant, law school, graduate study in early music (*Self-Study*, p. 85). Music faculty are considering whether development of additional options would strengthen the program, but if options are developed, the visitors encourage the SSOM, in the spirit of the liberal arts, to preserve the flexibility that seems to be a strength of this program.

#### **Bachelor of Music in Music Education (Choral, Instrumental)**

Submitted for renewal of Final Approval for Listing. There are two areas of emphasis within this degree program:

- (a) Instrumental Emphasis (String or Woodwind/Brass/Percussion/Keyboard/Harp/Guitar)
- (b) Choral Emphasis

Curricular content for both instrumental and choral emphases appears consistent with NASM expectations with the following exceptions. As mentioned above, it is not clear how students in professional baccalaureate programs “acquire basic knowledge of music history and repertoires through the present time, including study and experience of musical language and achievements in addition to that of the primary culture” (NASM *Handbook 2011-12*, VIII.B.4.).

While many students elect to participate in small ensembles, it does not appear that the program requires small ensemble experiences for all students. Some instrumental studios use the studio class to break into small ensembles for several weeks of each semester. The visitors observed vocal octets performing for each other in choral ensemble rehearsals. Some studios offer like-instrument ensembles. Opera Workshop involves small vocal ensembles. Students reported performing in many small and large ensembles every semester, in some cases well beyond curricular requirements, but expected as a result of scholarship requirements. Because of the size of the school, it appears that some students may be performing in more ensembles than was in their own best interests, and the program might benefit by a review of this situation. That said, it is not clear how the institution monitors the standard relative to both large and small ensemble participation to ensure that all students have the requisite experiences (NASM *Handbook 2011-12*, IX.L.3.c(2)(c) and (3)(c)). The *Self-Study* (p. 63) describes some of the obstacles to students registering for additional ensembles; however, since it appears that most students do have such experience, there may be an advising procedure that the SSOM could adopt that would ensure that every student has this essential experience.

According to the *Self-Study* arranging is covered through assignments in music theory (*Self-Study*, p. 116). In reviewing syllabi for music theory classes, however, it did not appear that these courses required projects that would prepare students to “be able to arrange and adapt music from a variety of sources to meet the needs and ability levels of individuals, school performing groups, and in classroom situations” (NASM *Handbook 2011-12*, IX.L.3.b.(2)). A new course (Technology in Music Education) is being developed and will be offered in fall 2012 to include major arranging assignments (*Self-Study*, p. 116). Since a syllabus for that course was not available at the time of the visit nor was it clear that this course would be required in the curriculum, the institution is encouraged to provide additional information in its Optional Response addressing its plans regarding this standard.

For music education instrumental emphasis students, it is not clear how “functional performance abilities in the voice” are being developed (NASM *Handbook 2011-12*, IX.L.3.b.(3)). Students select one credit in MUSA 1301 (class voice), secondary applied music, or vocal ensembles, thus, courses are available that might serve this purpose, however, the requirement is not such as to ensure that the course chosen would address the standard of functional performance in voice.

The title, Bachelor of Music in Music Education, appears to be appropriate for the content of this degree and is represented consistently in all related publications. The curricular content and design falls within NASM standards. Student work conducted by enrollees appears consistent with NASM expectations, the program appears to be meeting the needs of students effectively, and processes are in place for evaluating student competencies consistent with NASM standards.

### **Bachelor of Music in Performance**

Submitted for renewal of Final Approval for Listing. Other than the standard mentioned above related to the “study and experience of musical language and achievements in addition to that of the primary culture” (NASM *Handbook 2011-12*, VIII.B.4.), the institution appears to meet NASM standards. The title, Bachelor of Music in Performance, appears to be appropriate for the content of this degree and is represented consistently in all related publications. Student work conducted by enrollees appears consistent with NASM expectations, the program appears to be meeting the needs of students, and processes are in place for evaluating student competencies consistent with NASM standards.

As described above, applied music involves a one-hour lesson plus studio classes, for all music majors, so even though these courses receive only one credit at the freshman and sophomore levels, instructional time is comparable to a 2-3 credit applied music course. The *Self-Study* (p. 97) indicates that an advisory jury in the second semester and a barrier jury in the fourth semester ensure that students reach the necessary performance levels. In addition, students are required to perform junior and senior solo recitals (and an additional credit is assigned for each of these recitals). Thus, performance expectations appear consistent with NASM standards. As the *Self-Study* indicates (p. 98), “the challenge is to keep each student balanced with his/her academic work, solo preparation, and ensemble participation to insure maximum growth without overwhelming demands on time and effort.” This challenge would appear to be exacerbated by the under-crediting of lessons. Faculty are encouraged to continue discussions about how to remedy this situation.

### Graduate Programs

#### **Master of Music in Music Education**

Submitted for renewal of Final Approval for Listing. Although materials relative to the MME were inadvertently omitted from the *Self-Study*, a draft of these materials was provided to the visitors on site. The MME has been revised recently, and the new program will be a summers-only 32-credit program. Given that there are only two full-time music education faculty who have heavy teaching loads delivering the undergraduate curriculum, a summer program will allow faculty to offer the required graduate music education courses over a three-year cycle in the summer.

The draft materials provided to the visitors indicated a pre-certification option for students who hold an undergraduate music degree other than music education. Those students would enroll during the regular academic year to complete an additional 31 credits of course work at the undergraduate level. The school will submit a curricular table and other materials describing these programs in its Optional Response.

The visitors also encourage the school to clarify in its Optional Response if a comprehensive review is required of all MME students (NASM *Handbook 2011-12*, XII.A.6.). The format is the prerogative of the institution (NASM *Handbook 2011-12*, X.C.7.a.), but at the master’s level, successful completion of such a review should be a requirement for graduation.” The draft materials provided to the visitors indicated that students in this program may select a thesis option or a comprehensive option (which includes two written tests plus an oral defense); however, the thesis option did not have a comprehensive exam.

The title, Master of Music in Music Education, seems appropriate for this program. As part of this restructuring, the school plans to phase out its MME pedagogy track as soon as the last student has graduated, since students who are interested in performance and pedagogy can now enroll in the Master of Music in Performance. Courses are being offered to allow remaining students in the current MME (pedagogy track) to complete the program. One graduate seminar was offered during the visit (enrolling one student). The visitors had no opportunity to observe work by students in the new summers-only MME, since courses are no longer offered during the regular academic year except for those needed as part of the phase-out period.

The curricular table provided to the visitors indicated that the current semester’s enrollment in the MME was three students. The school is encouraged to clarify in its Optional Response enrollments in the new and former MME. If the school decides to deliver some of the graduate music education courses online as a way to increase enrollments (as was mentioned in the draft

materials), the school is reminded to review NASM distance learning standards (NASM *Handbook 2011-12*, III.H.).

Although transcripts of students from the former MME options were available onsite, because of the confusion regarding inclusion of MME materials in the *Self-Study* and rather than explaining all the anomalies that would have existed between these transcripts and the materials provided to the visitors regarding the revised MME program, the institution decided to submit transcripts for graduates with its Optional Response.

### **Master of Music in Performance**

Submitted for Plan Approval and Final Approval for Listing. The MM in Performance was added in fall 2010 and will graduate its first class of students in May 2012. Current enrollment is 11. The program was envisioned as a natural expansion of performance programs at CSU, building on the success of the undergraduate performance degree and the Artist Diploma, and on the institution's desire for expansion of graduate programs generally. Although the *Self-Study* indicates that this program will provide a larger community of graduate students, thus, improving the experience of the MME students (*Self-Study*, p. 139), since MME students will only be enrolled during summers, it is not clear that these two population will, in fact, intersect. The addition of this program, however, will "allow the MM in Music Education to truly function as a degree for teachers interested in further developing their skills" (*Self-Study*, p. 139). As mentioned previously, the MM in Music Education (pedagogy track) had been used by students who were more interested in graduate performance studies, and this new degree will more effectively meet their needs. While the reasons for adding the program are understandable, the school is reminded that institutions planning to offer new programs or offer a program for the first time, are expected to receive Plan Approval before the matriculation of students.

The title, Master of Music in Performance, appears appropriate for this degree. The curricular content and design appears to fall within NASM standards. Students must enroll in a graduate theory seminar, a graduate music history course, a bibliography course, and an elective (from a long list of courses that includes theory, history, literature, pedagogy and music education courses), thus, fulfilling the NASM standard that one-third of the total curriculum be outside the major. Student work conducted by enrollees appears consistent with NASM expectations and the program appears to meet the needs of students. The visitors were able to observe several lessons of graduate students, and the NASM recital included three performances with MM students (percussion and trombone quartets, each including one MM student, and a solo trumpet performance). Students complete an oral comprehensive exam and a graduate recital. A faculty committee has been formed "to codify all processes and standards applicable to this degree" and to assure that appropriate competencies and levels of achievement are reached (*Self-Study*, p. 137), and these committee members serve on graduate recital juries. Thus, processes appear to be in place for evaluating student competencies consistent with NASM standards. The school expects to submit transcripts with its Optional Response since the first class of students will graduate under this curriculum in May 2012.

### **Artist Diploma (Graduate)**

Submitted for Plan Approval and Final Approval for Listing. The Artist Diploma is a 24-credit program designed to develop "artistry and professionalism of gifted young musicians" (*Self-Study*, p. 140). It currently enrolls 18 students. Students are required to enroll in performance courses (applied music and ensembles) for a total of 6-credits per semester for two years. Students who are on a graduate assistantship and international students must carry 9 credits per semester by university policy, so these students have an additional 12-credit requirement (3 credits/semester). They may select any course (graduate or undergraduate course) offered in the

School of Music to fulfill this expectation. The curriculum appears to be consistent with the program purpose and content, and the title, Artist Diploma, seems appropriate for this non-degree program.

Admission standards appear appropriate and the students enrolled in this program, based on observations in lessons, rehearsals, and the NASM recital, appeared to be performing at a very high level. Transcripts available onsite followed the expected requirements of the program without exception. As the *Self-Study* (p. 143) indicates, the presence of these highly qualified performers adds to the cohort of experienced performers enrolled in the school, which has impacted all programs positively. The institution is encouraged to submit three properly coded transcripts with its Optional Response.

It appears that this program meets NASM standards.

### **3. Study of the Transcripts of Recent Graduates and Comparison with Catalog Statements**

The onsite review of undergraduate transcripts did not reveal any anomalies that could be not explained.

The MME transcripts that the visitors were provided were for a program that has been significantly revised and rather than explaining all the anomalies, the school plans to submit with its Optional Response transcripts that correspond to current graduate curricula offered.

The visitors reviewed unofficial transcripts of students enrolled in these graduate programs, although neither program (the new MM in performance and the revised MME) have graduated students as yet. A review of these degree audits showed that students were registered for appropriate courses and would likely complete the program at the end of the current semester. Thus, the institution expects to be able to submit transcripts from graduates of these two programs to the Commission on Accreditation with its Optional Response.

### **4. Performance**

Performance appears to be an important and visible component of all curricula as was evidenced by the student recital as well as by meetings and observations during the visit. Despite the under-crediting of applied music in the freshman and sophomore years, the faculty's expectation of student performance appears to be high. Students have the opportunity of performing through juries, recitals, small and large ensembles.

### **5. Music Studies for the General Public**

Based on promotional materials, media advertising, and the clear level of donor support, it appears that the Schwob School of Music is considered an important cultural resource for Columbus and the surrounding area. It appears that there are sufficient non-major course offerings to meet the needs of the university community.

## **O. Music Unit Evaluation, Planning, and Projections**

### **1. Evaluation, Planning, and Projections Development**

Section III of the *Self-Study* (pp. 154-5) summarizes the ways in which the school evaluates student success. The *Self-Study* committee wrote, “an important element to the future success of the unit will be how the SSOM identifies ways to articulate the unique position of music within the vision and goals of the University as a whole” (*Self-Study*, p. 161). The Schwob School of Music received the University of Georgia’s Regent’s Excellence in Teaching Award to Units and Departments in 2008, the only CSU unit in its 51-year history to be given this designation. The institution clearly understands and appreciates the program’s focus on students. It also appears to offer its department’s considerable autonomy (working within available resources).

The upcoming challenge for the SSOM, as described in the *Self-Study* (p. 162), will be to come to consensus about priorities, while taking advantage of opportunities that the current environment might provide. The areas for improvement, as listed in Section III of the *Self-Study*, are divided into those that have a low cost and/or short time scale, those with a moderate cost and/or moderate time scale, and those with a high cost and/or long time scale. It appears that “the educational and artistic development of students is first among all evaluative considerations” for the School. It also appears that strong leadership would help the program as it weighs challenges and new opportunities. Although the decision about hiring a permanent director of the SSOM was included in the category of high cost and/or long time scale, the visitors understood that funding had been identified and that this was likely to be accomplished by fall 2013. Given the complex personnel and funding decisions facing the school, this seems like an important issue to address in the near future.

### **2. Completeness and Effectiveness of Self-Study**

Except for the curricular materials that were inadvertently omitted, the *Self-Study* was thorough and effective. Additional materials, including promotional materials, student work, syllabi, and recordings, were available on site. The school and its faculty used the *Self-Study* to reflect on strengths and opportunities for growth and as a primary tool for strategic planning. The institution is commended for its comprehensive and thorough review.

## **P. Standards Summary**

1. It is not clear how the institution ensures that music students are “fully apprised of health and safety issues, hazards, and procedures inherent in practice, performance, teaching and listening both in general and as applicable to their specific specializations” (NASM *Handbook 2011-12*, II.F.1.i.).
2. It is not clear how students in professional undergraduate degrees “acquire basic knowledge of music history and repertoires through the present time, including study and experience of musical language and achievements in addition to that of the primary culture” (NASM *Handbook 2011-12*, VIII.B.4.).
3. It is not clear how the institution meets the standard relative to both large and small ensemble participation for students in the Bachelor of Music Education (Choral, Instrumental) (NASM *Handbook 2011-12*, IX.L.3.c(2)(c) and (3)(c)).
4. Regarding the Bachelor of Music Education (Choral, Instrumental), it is not clear how the institution ensures students are “able to arrange and adapt music from a variety of sources to meet the needs and



ability levels of individuals, school performing groups, and in classroom situations” (NASM *Handbook 2011-12*, IX.L.3.b(2)).

5. Regarding the Bachelor of Music Education (Instrumental), it is not clear how “functional performance abilities in the voice” are being developed (NASM *Handbook 2011-12*, IX.L.3.b(3)).
6. It is not clear that a comprehensive review is required of all MME students (NASM *Handbook 2011-12*, XII.A.6.).

## **Q. Overview, Summary Assessment, and Recommendations for the Program**

### **1. Strengths**

- Beautiful music facilities that function extraordinarily well
- A well-qualified faculty who are devoted teachers
- Good students who are extremely satisfied with the individualized attention provided by the department
- An atmosphere of engagement and inquiry
- Considerable music scholarship support (albeit provided through fundraising by the unit)
- Curricula that appears to serve its students well
- A thorough and well-organized *Self-Study*
- Exceptional community support by generous donors
- Creative approaches to funding its programs, despite serious budget cuts, that have allowed the program to continue to thrive

### **2. Recommendations for Short-term Improvement**

- The department recognizes the need for a full-time musicologist to coordinate and enhance music history course offerings. The institution is encouraged to explore this option.
- It seems important that the school move forward to hire a permanent Director for the School, particularly given the degree to which the school is dependent on fundraising for basic operations.
- The school is encouraged to explore options whereby student suggestions and concerns can be expressed and addressed.
- The school is encouraged to conduct a thorough review of core theory courses as it considers ideas for a more comprehensive approach to core musicianship skills.
- The faculty are encouraged to consider a more systematic way for students to be introduced to the library and to the collection.

### **3. Primary Futures Issues**

The visitors agree that one of the school’s most important considerations is balancing the desire for additional full-time applied music faculty with the need for full-time academic faculty to support of its growing graduate population. An important futures issue will be to make decisions about how to use limited resources to ensure that the program continues to have a faculty where the number and ratio of full-and part-time faculty positions, and their distribution among the specializations continues to be (a) sufficient to achieve the music unit’s purposes; (b) appropriate to the size and scope of the music unit’s programs; and (c) consistent with the nature and

requirements of specific programs offered” (NASM *Handbook 2011-12*, II.E.2.a.(1)).

#### **4. Suggestions for Long-term Development**

The school is dependent on external fund-raising to an extent that could limit the program’s ability to set its own priorities. When asked if this dependence on external support might create a situation where the “tail wags the dog,” the interim director assured the visitors that this was not the case and that the school will remain in charge of its own destiny. It does appear, however, that reducing the need for annual fund raising and developing a reliable operating budget (for recurring and on-going expenses – not the least of which is salary support for tenured and tenure-track faculty) is a critical issue for the school.