



UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

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To: David Thorud
Acting Provost

From: Gail L. Dubrow
Associate Dean for Academic Programs

Re: School of Music Program Review

Summary and Recommended Action

At its meeting of May 20, 2004, the Graduate School Council met with members of the team reviewing the School of Music; with the Director and Associate Director of the School; and with the Divisional Dean for Arts and Humanities in the College of Arts and Sciences. The Council recommended continuation of the School of Music Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Music, Bachelor of Arts and Music, Master of Arts, Master of Music, Doctor of Musical Arts, and Doctor of Philosophy degree programs, with the next review in 10 years. The Council would like to commend the School for its many activities that greatly enrich both the University and the community as a whole. It also would like to praise the School's director, who has played a vital role in raising the School's visibility and reputation. In response to the review committee report, the School has already begun to make changes to its divisional structure and governance procedures. The Council endorses these changes, while in addition it recommends the development of an ongoing process of enrollment modeling for the purpose of informed decision making about the School's future.

I concur with the Council's recommendations and comments.

Background

The School of Music offers Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Music, Bachelor of Arts and Music, Master of Arts, Master of Music, Doctor of Musical Arts, and Doctor of Philosophy degrees. The "Conservatory of Music" was created at the University of Washington in 1888, while the Department of Music was established in 1911. The School currently maintains a structure, typical of schools of music, that combines the function of a conservatory with the research focus of an academic program. The School's diverse educational offerings are augmented by its service to the University and community through the many faculty and student performances it gives every year, as well as through its collaboration with other units on campus. The School currently

has 42 full-time faculty and 16 part-time faculty at various percentages (part-time faculty totaling approximately 6 FTE), with roughly 400 music majors divided evenly between undergraduate and graduate programs. Each year the School confers about 35 undergraduate degrees, 28 master's degrees, and 13 doctoral degrees.

Review Process

The review committee included five members, three internal and two from peer institutions. The committee was chaired by Barry Witham, Professor in the School of Drama, and included as the other internal members Charles Hirschman, Professor of Sociology, and Marianne Stecher-Hansen, Associate Professor of Scandinavian Studies. The external members of the committee were John Schaffer, Professor and Director of the UW-Madison School of Music, and James Scott, Professor and Dean of the College of Music at the University of North Texas. The review committee carried out the review during winter quarter 2004, including a review of the self-study and a two day site visit on January 12-13, when they met with faculty, students, and staff.

Review Findings

The review team found that the School of Music offers excellent degree programs, supports a first-rate faculty, and contributes valuable public service to the academy and the community. Although the review committee found general collegiality and a sense of common mission among faculty and staff, the large number of divisions, degrees, and offerings remain a significant obstacle for the School as it moves towards the future. With these 13 divisions, some faculty feel significant gaps exist in communication and that there is a lack of transparency in governance within the School. The School's administrative structure can lead to insular approaches within small subgroups, and an accompanying adversarial attitude, when managing scarce resources. The review team suggested that a major focus of the School as it moves forward should be to reduce the number of divisions by combining several of the exiting units that have shared intellectual and creative missions. Another tension within the School stems from conflicting attitudes towards its mission either as a preserver of the musical canon or as a promoter of current and future musical initiative. Focused discussion of these issues is probably needed to ensure that the faculty is engaged in meaningful conversations about the future of the School of Music.

Council Recommendations

The Council strongly recommends that the School develop and apply an ongoing enrollment management model to both its graduate and undergraduate programs. This should serve as a tool of analysis that informs decision making, not as a drive for bottom-line efficiency. Such a process may lead to the reallocation of resources within the School, such that not all divisions will benefit directly. Nevertheless, there is a need for strategic thinking about the direction of the School, which may require making difficult decisions about future investments. The Council concurs with the review committee's recommendation that the School change its "default" undergraduate degree from the five-year BA/BM program to a more standard four-year option. This may serve to increase undergraduate enrollment and make the program more competitive vis-à-vis those at peer institutions.

The Council discussion echoed the review committee's praise for the current director of the School. Because the School combines a conservatory with an academic unit, it inherently contains the potential for disharmony between the "academics" and the performers, between the conservatory and the university. Robin McCabe has effectively bridged these tensions and has provided positive leadership and vision. She has been a valuable spokeswoman for the School

within the community, and has effectively pursued development opportunities. The prospective 50% FTE staff appointment for development will allow the director to shift her focus towards the internal demands of the School. One challenge the director faces for the future will be to balance these growing external commitments with the internal demands of the directorship. A major aspect of this internal focus will be to examine leadership and governance issues with the goal of increasing communication between the divisions and developing more effective ways to include faculty in School governance. The Council applauds the steps the School has already taken to consolidate the structural divisions within the School and to create a more transparent model of governance and decision making.

cc: Lee Huntsman, President
Elizabeth L. Feetham, Acting Dean, Graduate School
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Michael R. Halleran, Divisional Dean for Arts and Humanities, College of Arts and Sciences
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Robin McCabe, Director, School of Music
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Members of the Review Committee
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David Canfield-Budde, Assistant to the Dean, Graduate School