

**Bachelor of Music Education (BME) 327, 328, 329**

**Division: Gallaspy College of Education and Human Development**

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**Date: June 2, 2026**

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**Date: June 9, 2026**

**Northwestern Mission.** Northwestern State University is a responsive, student-oriented institution committed to acquiring, creating, and disseminating knowledge through innovative teaching, research, and service. With its certificate, undergraduate, and graduate programs, Northwestern State University prepares its increasingly diverse student population to contribute to an inclusive global community with a steadfast dedication to improving our region, state, and nation.

**College of Arts and Sciences' Mission.** College of Arts and Sciences' Mission. The College of Arts & Sciences, the largest college at Northwestern State University, is a diverse community of scholars, teachers, and students, working collaboratively to acquire, create, and disseminate knowledge through transformational, high-impact experiential learning practices, research, and service. The College strives to produce graduates who are productive members of society equipped with the capability to promote economic and social development and improve the overall quality of life in the region. The College provides an unequaled undergraduate education in the social and behavioral sciences, English, communication, journalism, media arts, biological and physical sciences, and the creative and performing arts, and at the graduate level in the creative and performing arts, English, TESOL, and Homeland Security. Uniquely, the College houses the Louisiana Scholars' College (the State's designated Honors College), the Louisiana Folklife Center, and the Creole Center, demonstrating its commitment to community service, research, and preservation of Louisiana's precious resources.

**Department of Music Mission.** The Music Department is part of the **Dear School of Creative and Performing Arts** at Northwestern State University and is dedicated to the development of students for roles in academic, leadership, professional, performing, education and research careers in the challenging fields of music, music business, music performance, and music education. Utilizing transformational, high-impact experiential learning practices, courses in core musical fundamentals, performances, research and service, the department produces graduates equipped to be productive members of society and professionals in the Arts in which they will help develop and improve the overall quality of life locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally. The department delivers the Bachelor of Music degree with concentrations in Performance, Sacred Music, and Music Business, and works collaboratively with the Department of Teaching, Learning, and Counseling to offer the Bachelor of Music Education degree. The department also offers the Master of Music degree with concentrations in performance and music education.

**Gallaspy College of Education and Human Development Mission.** The Gallaspy Family College of Education and Human Development is committed to working collaboratively to acquire, create, and disseminate knowledge to Northwestern students through transformational, high-impact experiential learning practices, research, and service. Through the Schools of Education and Kinesiology, and Departments of Military Science, Psychology, and Social Work, the College produces knowledgeable, inspired, and innovative graduates ready for lifelong learning who contribute to the communities in which they reside and professions they serve. Additionally, the GCEHD is dedicated to the communities served by the Marie Shaw Dunn Child Development Center, NSU Elementary Laboratory School, NSU Middle Laboratory School, and the NSU Child and Family Network to assist children and their families related to learning and development.

**School of Education Mission.** The School of Education offers exemplary programs that prepare candidates for career success in a variety of professional roles and settings. As caring, competent, reflective practitioners, our graduates become positive models in their communities and organizations. This mission is fulfilled through academic programs based on theory, research, and best practice. Further, all graduates learn to value and work with diverse populations and to incorporate technologies that enrich learning and professional endeavors.

**Purpose:** The Bachelor's program will prepare students for their lives as artistic professionals and educators who are responsive to the artistic demands of the profession.

**Methodology:**

The assessment process for this program includes:

1. Data from assessments provide results on candidate knowledge, skills, and dispositions as appropriate for professional education programs.
2. Content and key assessments in each program/course are aligned with the respective professional preparation/application standards, and candidates apply the standards in all their coursework.
3. Data from assessment tools are collected and returned to the program coordinator.
4. The program coordinator analyzes the data to determine student learning and whether students have met measurable outcomes and discusses the results with program faculty.
5. Annually, program faculty and stakeholders review data to make data driven, curricular decisions.
6. The program coordinator, in consultation with program faculty and other relevant stakeholders, proposes needed changes to measurable outcomes, assessment tools for the next assessment period, and the curricula and overall program.

## Student Learning Outcomes:

**SLO 1. Students will be able to demonstrate excellence as solo and ensemble performers at a level to provide a basis for a professional career as a musician, conductor, and educator.**

Course Map: Tied to the Objectives:

Applied Study:

MUSIC 1710 – Major Study

MUSIC 3710 – Major Study

MUSIC 4720 – Recital

MUS 3100/3110 – Conducting II

MUS 1850/1870/1920/1930 – Instrumental Methods II courses

MUS 4150 – Vocal Pedagogy

MUED 4010 – Secondary Methods

Ensembles:

MUSIC 1310 – Band

MUSIC 1320 – Men's Chorus

MUSIC 1330 – Chamber Choir

MUSIC 1340 – Orchestra

MUSIC 1380 – Women's Chorus

### Measure 1.1. (Direct – knowledge):

**Details/Description:** Students will demonstrate excellence through performance before a jury of 2-5 faculty each semester; auditions for ensembles at least once a year; and qualifying juries to assess whether they are ready for upper-class applied study. For Performance Majors, a Senior Recital is required, for which a Preview hearing performance in front of the student's Recital Committee must be passed. For Music Education Majors, several assessments occur throughout the degree to assure that excellence is being achieved in conducting, pedagogy (group and individual), and classroom management: final project in Conducting II (MUSIC 3100/3110); teaching observations and practicum in Secondary Methods, Vocal Pedagogy, and Instrumental Methods courses.

**Acceptable Target: Rubric** for each of these juries is used to evaluate the student and is kept on file. Qualifying jury results are filed and noted in the CAPA offices. Acceptable target is 90% passing the Qualifying Jury and Senior Recital, 95% passing the Conducting II final project, and 95% passing all skill assessments in Methods/Pedagogy courses.

**Ideal Target:** Ideal target is 100% passing Qualifying Jury and Senior Recital. Ideal target is 97% passing Conducting II final project and all skill assessments in Methods/Pedagogy courses.

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**Implementation Plan (timeline):** each semester

**Key/Responsible Personnel:** Music Faculty

**Supporting Materials:** Jury comment/grading form; Jury repertoire form; Qualifying Jury Assessment form; Recital checklist; Recital Grading Sheet; Recital Preview Hearing Form; Voice Jury Form; Voice Qualifying Jury Form; Voice Recital Preview Hearing Form; Conducting 3100 and 3110 final project form, Methods/Pedagogy assessment forms.

**Findings:** Target was **not met**.

### Analysis:

In AC 2024-25, the target was **not met**. The passing rate for all Qualifying Juries was 83% (25 out of 30 total Qualifying Juries attempted). All but one recital attempt was successfully passed (15 out of 16 total, 94%). The one recital that was not successfully passed was due to a student's extenuating circumstances. The student received an Incomplete and completed the recital in the Fall. For all Qualifying Juries and Recitals attempted, 87% successfully passed. The passing rate for Conducting II final projects was 95% (20 out of 21 total students). The passing rate for all pedagogy/skill assessments in Methods/Pedagogy courses was 100% (16 students total).

Based on the information gathered from analysis of the AC 2024-25 results, the faculty made the following changes in AC 2025-26 to drive the cycle of improvement. Faculty assessed students' individual needs for practice plans and performance suggestions to address individual weaknesses and areas for improvement. Faculty suggested additional pedagogical resources through guest artists (virtual and live) and online resources. MUS 1500 was restructured to include elements that help students prepare for all careers in music (writing a bio, having a headshot taken, critiquing performances of peers and professionals, providing constructive feedback in defined areas for critique, and speaking from the stage). Discussions of these skills and career-readiness elements took place in MUS 1500. With these discussions and preparedness exercises in the freshman through junior levels, those students who choose to take the Career Preparedness elective course (MUS 4740 Career Seminar for Musicians) in their senior year will be ready for more in-depth discussions and projects, further preparing these students for a career in music. In addition, discussions of physical and mental wellness were provided in master classes, studio classes, and a campus-wide full yoga class each semester.

Teaching disposition and skills were assessed through final teaching presentation or practicum in all Instrumental Methods II classes (MUS 1850, MUS 1870, MUS 1920, MUS 1930), Vocal Pedagogy (MUS 4150), and Secondary Methods (MUED 4010) classes. These courses are also specific to the students' area of specialty (instrumental, vocal) and include fundamental teaching skills, numerous observations and reflections of both conducting and classroom management, as well as bi-weekly lab

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ensemble participation which requires them to observe and reflect on their peers' conducting and rehearsal technique.

Additionally, while music educator knowledge, teaching skills, and disposition are embedded within each course in the degree program, the Department Chair added several assessments the previous year to this SLO to drive the cycle of improvement. Conducting skills were assessed throughout the Conducting courses (MUS 3090, 3100, and 3110) but were specifically measured in the final project for the MUS 3100 (Choral Conducting) and 3110 (Instrumental Conducting) courses. These courses are specific to the students' area of specialty (vocal, winds, strings) and are intensive in their study and expectations. The final project assessed the students' growth and ability in these areas.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-26, the target was **not met**. However, the passing rate for all Qualifying Juries attempted increased to 92% (24 out of 26 total, 92%). Several of these Qualifying Juries were second attempts, all of which passed. All Recitals were passed (17/17 total = 100%). This is also an increase in the number of Recitals attempted from the previous year (16 total attempted last academic year). For all Qualifying Juries and Recitals attempted, 95% successfully passed.

While this is not far from the ideal target of 100%, the faculty consistently work to individualize lesson plans and practice assignments for each student. If a student is struggling, the applied faculty address any issues that may be affecting student success through individualized progress plans. The focus on finding resources for physical and mental well-being is showing signs of helping students to succeed, as well. Faculty are making use of the campus resources (Counseling Services) and are also seeking out additional resources through music educator networks. The Qualifying Jury is attempted at the end of the music students' sophomore year. The fact that two of the Qualifying Juries that were successfully passed were 2<sup>nd</sup> attempts for the students is encouraging in that it demonstrates that these students and their applied teachers were able to address weaknesses using the techniques described above (a practice plan focused on the student's individual needs and resources to help students with physical and mental well-being), and that those techniques were successful. The passing rate for Conducting II final projects was 100% (11 out of 11 total students), and 73% of those who passed received an A on the project (11 out of 15). The passing rate for all pedagogy/skills assessments in Methods/Pedagogy classes was 95% (18 out of 19 students total). The Methods course passing rate was 100% and the MUED 4010 passing rate was 91% (10 out of 11 students). The one student in MUED 4010 who did not pass all pedagogy/skills assessments was passing until the final 3 assessments of the semester, which signifies a likely extenuating circumstance. The Conducting and Methods/Pedagogy classes include daily assessment of progress in conducting, pedagogy, and classroom management. The small class size and close monitoring by the professor has proven successful in these upper-level classes.

### Decision or Recommendation.

In AC 2025-2026, the target was **not met**.

Based on the information gathered from analysis of the AC 2025-2026 results, the faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2026-27 to drive the cycle of improvement. Several faculty members have applied for an Elevate U internal grant to do two things: collect data for retention from in the first two years of college, and present strategies/techniques for practice effectiveness. The focus is to teach freshman and sophomore music majors how to structure and execute an effective practice plan on their own. Many freshman and sophomore students struggle with understanding how to plan and execute their personal practice time. While this skill is addressed in private lessons throughout the department, the intent of this grant is to create a cohort that will be guided through specific practice skills and techniques as a cohort. With data collected in this project, it is our hope that in the process of this initiative, we can identify any at-risk students more quickly. In addition, faculty will create individual practice plans to best address each student's individual needs and weaknesses. Faculty will also seek and use resources to assist in guiding students for their physical and mental well-being. Small chamber music opportunities will also be provided and encouraged through performances in Studio Classes and MUS 1500.

In the Instrumental Conducting course (MUS 3110), additional focus will be placed on reinforcement of understanding and demonstrating transposition of common band/orchestral instruments, as this is an area that needs improvement. Additionally, the Conducting faculty will look at establishing a conducting sequence that flows better through the Conducting I and Conducting II courses. In particular, there may be a more effective way to use Lab Ensembles to help with more consistent reinforcement of the conducting skills learned in class. In the MUED 4010 Secondary Methods course, faculty plans to have more teaching episodes that last for longer durations to help solidify and assess these skills. Additionally, faculty are planning to incorporate 10-15 of the required field experience hours by taking a class fieldtrip to a high school in the region to observe Band, Choir, and Orchestra classrooms for a full school day. This will help to reduce the number of field experience hours the students will need to get outside of class time, as this can sometimes be an obstacle for passing the MUED 4010 class. In the Level II Percussion Methods course (MUS 1930), the instructor plans to create lecture videos to be viewed outside of class time in lieu of in-class lectures so that class time can be used for more playing and teaching exercises.

These changes will improve the student's ability to demonstrate excellence as solo and ensemble performers at a level to provide a basis for a professional career as a musician, conductor, and educator, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

**SLO 2: Demonstrate specific knowledge in music theory and aural skills at a level to provide a basis for a professional career as a musician.**

**Course Map:** Tied to the Objectives:

Music Theory:

MUSIC 1150 – Music Theory I

MUSIC 1160 – Music Theory II

MUSIC 2150 – Music Theory III

MUSIC 2160 – Music Theory IV

Aural Skills:

MUSIC 1151 – Aural Skills I

MUSIC 1161 – Aural Skills II

MUSIC 2151 – Aural Skills III

MUSIC 2161 – Aural Skills IV

**Measure 2.1. (Direct – Skill / Ability):**

Students will demonstrate knowledge through ongoing assessment and cumulative final exams which require the student to demonstrate competence in these areas before continuing to the next level. Completion of all 4 levels satisfies the requirement.

**Acceptable Target:** These courses serve as pre-requisites for several upper level required courses. Having this knowledge and these skills is essential to progressing towards the completion of the degree. Acceptable target: 90% of students passing final exam and final composition project (in MUS 2160), working toward completion of the cycle of these courses.

**Ideal Target:** Ideal target is 93% passing final exam and final composition project (in MUS 2160).

**Implementation Plan (timeline):** each semester/ongoing

**Key/Responsible Personnel:** Music Faculty

**Findings:** The target was met.

**Analysis:**

In AC 2024-25, the target was **met** for both the final project (93%) and the final exam (93%).

Based on the analysis of the 2024-25 results, the faculty made the following changes in AC 2025-26 to drive the cycle of improvement. The Department Chair and Theory Coordinator assessed the outcomes and effectiveness of offering the MUS 1700 X1N lab course in conjunction with the MUS 1150 Music Theory class for those students who

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were at a developmental level in music theory. After the data was analyzed, the decision was made to no longer continue the MUS 1700 X1N lab course. The department returned to offering two courses in the fall: MUS 1000 (Introduction to Music Theory) and MUS 1150 (Music Theory I). Students were placed in the appropriate class after they took the Music Theory Diagnostic exam (placement exam) at Freshman Connection or before beginning classes in August.

In AC 2025-2026 the target was **met** in the average score for the final project and final exam (93%). The final project had a 91% passing rate, while the final exam had a 95% passing rate. The return to the previous system of having the MUS 1000 Introduction to Theory course (in lieu of the MUS 1700 X1N lab course) was successful. The Theory Professor was concerned that those students enrolled in the MUS 1000 class for the Fall semester would struggle to get back on track for the four-year degree plan. However, there are double the number of students enrolled in the summer MUS 1160 Theory II course this summer, indicating that these students are able to get on the four-year rotation.

### **Decision or Recommendation.**

In AC 2025-2026, the target was **met**.

Based on information gathered from the AC 2025-2026 data, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2026-2027 to drive the cycle of improvement. The Theory Professor is considering adding a textbook requirement for the aural skills courses which would supplement classroom work with dictation exercises to be done outside of class time. Additionally, the Theory Professor is planning to pilot several materials with the MUS 2151 classes for possible adoption by all courses. This initiative is in the early stages and will not affect any theory curriculum plans for the upcoming year.

These changes will improve the student's ability to demonstrate specific knowledge in music theory and aural skills at a level to provide a basis for a professional career as a musician, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

### **SLO 3: Demonstrate specific knowledge of music history and demonstrate the ability to write and speak effectively about the art of music.**

Course Map: Tied to the Objectives:

Music History:

MUSIC 2030 – Music History/Literature I

MUSIC 2040 – Music History/Literature II

MUSIC 3030 – Music History/Literature III

MUSIC 3040 – Music History/Literature IV

### Measure 3.1. (Direct – knowledge)

In each of the Music History courses, students are required to write research papers. In-class essay questions on exams require the student to demonstrate competence in these areas before continuing to the next level. Completion of all 4 levels satisfies the requirement.

**Acceptable Target:** Students choose subjects, submit proposed topics, submit rough drafts, and after receiving feedback submit final drafts. Some are chosen to make presentations at the University's Research Day. The acceptable target is 60% of students receiving a passing grade on the research portion of their grade in the course.

**Ideal Target:** Ideal target is 70% receiving a passing grade on the research paper portion of their grade.

**Implementation Plan (timeline):** each semester/ongoing

**Key/Responsible Personnel:** Music Faculty

**Findings:** The target was **met**.

**Analysis:** In AC 2024-2025, the target was **met**. The passing rate for Music History II was 93% (a drop of 5%), and the passing rate for Music History IV was 90% (a drop of 6%).

Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-25 results, faculty made the following changes in AC 2025-2026 to drive the cycle of improvement. The Musicology professor tested each class more often to more frequently assess the mastery and rate of improvement. In addition, shorter research/writing assignments were utilized, as these have proven to be successful in measuring student abilities to write and more frequently address any issues. The test format was restructured to include more writing as an approach to incorporate assessment in testing situations.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-2026 the target was **met**. However, the passing rates dropped significantly in one class. The passing rate for Music History II was 74% (a drop of 19%), while the passing rate for Music History IV was 94% (a drop of 2%). The drop of 19% in the Music History II course is a concern, and the Music History professor has indicated that this particular class of students had significant academic weaknesses (difficulty reading and retaining concepts, inability to form abstract concepts, did use tutoring service opportunities, were not adequately prepared for exams, poor study skills, larger number of students attempting to cheat using electronic devices). This is a cohort of students we will watch closely in the next level of Music History.

### Decision or Recommendation.

In AC 2025-2026, the target was **met**.

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Based on information gathered from analysis of the AC 2025-2026 data, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2026-2027 to drive the cycle of improvement. The Music History professor plans to add the use of a new textbook in Music History III (to specifically address the weaknesses in this year's Music History II course). This new textbook will offer a simplified outline of music history. She also plans to restructure the Music History III course to assist this cohort of students with comprehension and retention of the information. Writing assignments will be short and incorporated into exams to more frequently assess students' writing skills.

These changes will improve the student's ability to demonstrate specific knowledge of music history and demonstrate the ability to write and speak effectively about the art of music, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

**SLO 4: Gain keyboard proficiency sufficient to assist in their professional career as a musician.**

**Course Map:** Tied to the Objectives:

Class Piano:

MUSIC 1800 – Piano Class I

MUSIC 1810 – Piano Class II

MUSIC 1820 – Piano Class III

MUSIC 1830 – Piano Class IV

Applied Study in Piano:

MUSIC 1700A – Minor Study (piano)

MUSIC 1710A – Major Study (piano)

MUSIC 3710A – Major Study (piano)

**Measure 4.1. (Direct – knowledge)**

Proficiency is demonstrated at the conclusion of each semester of keyboard study (prescribed proficiencies for each level). Cumulative proficiency is administered and required at the completion of the 4th semester--MUS 1830. Skills achieved include playing accompaniments, score-reading, improvisation, transposition, scales major and minor, and melodic harmonization.

**Acceptable Target:** Students must complete keyboard proficiency exams in all these areas before they are granted a passing grade in the final course in the sequence. If they do not pass the proficiency exams, they simply re-take the course. Acceptable target is 90% of students passing each proficiency level.

**Ideal Target:** Ideal target is 95% of students passing each proficiency level.

**Implementation Plan (timeline):** each semester/ongoing. To be assessed at the end of

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each academic year.

**Key/Responsible Personnel:** Head of Keyboard Area/Music Faculty/Department Chair

**Findings:** The target was **met**.

**Analysis:** In AC 2024-25, the target was **met**. An ideal target of 100% of the total students passed all levels of the proficiency exams. This is an increase of 9% from the previous year. All 38 students enrolled successfully passed the proficiency exams.

Based on the analysis of the 2024-25 results, faculty made the following changes in AC 2025-26 to drive the cycle of improvement. The Piano faculty experimented with only requiring hands separate (instead of hands together) for scales. This is in-line with many of the top university pedagogy programs in the country. Our current Coordinator of the Group Piano/Piano Pedagogy area has now been teaching at NSU for several years, and he proposed that the scores for each area of the proficiency exam simply be calculated arithmetically. Students can, in theory, fail one or two elements of the entire proficiency exam series but still pass the overall exam. The exception would be the Final Proficiency Exam, in which students can fail no more than a single element. The reasoning for this proposed change is that students end up having to re-do a lot of elements to proceed. Since the categories are similar for every exam (Score Reading, solo repertoire, harmonization, etc.), their time is more well-served by looking forward to the material on the next exam to improve that area.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-2026 the target was **met**. 100% of students passed all proficiency exams. Classroom time was not used for students to re-do elements of the proficiency exams they did not previously pass, and this has proven to be effective. Students were able to move forward with material instead. Classroom time was limited and best used for active instruction as much as possible. The 3-Exam schedule was successful, as well, because it allowed for the ability to cover more material (more repertoire pieces, score reading examples, etc.). Students benefit from moving through material quickly both for motivation and improvement of skills, such as sight reading and keyboard technique, which improves primarily through practicing their repertoire pieces. Hands-separate scales have also been a success. For piano class they primarily reinforce concepts from music theory and help students to feel comfortable playing in a key (rather than scales being part of a technical exercise).

### Decision or Recommendation.

In AC 2025-2026, the target was **met**.

Based on information gathered from analysis of the AC 2025-2026 data, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2026-2027 to drive the cycle of improvement. Project-based learning will be implemented into the Class Piano sequence (and may become the Final Exam for Class Piano IV). One implementation of this type of learning style is the use of a Composition Project, which utilizes and reinforces concepts covered in class. For example, instead of simply playing their Primary Chord Patterns for the

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Exam, they will also implement these into a composition where they write out their composition with lead-sheet notation as well as fully realized notation. They would then be required to use accompanying patterns (e.g. waltz bass, Alberti bass, broken chords, etc.) and modulate from one key to the other, using their primary chord patterns in each key. Once completed, the students will perform their compositions for each other as part of the exam. The intention of this type of project is for students to connect the knowledge they are learning in class in an actionable way to see its relevance to a common skill in accompanying. A project like this is helpful in guiding students to use their knowledge in an actual self-directed (and teacher—guided) project.

The changes outlined will improve the student's ability to gain keyboard proficiency sufficient to assist in their professional career as a musician, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

### **SLO 5: Demonstrate Discipline-Specific Content Knowledge**

#### **Course Map: Portal II: Prior to Residency**

| <b>Departmental Student Learning Goal</b>                                                             | <b>Program Student Learning Outcome</b>                                                                                                      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Demonstrate discipline-specific content knowledge.<br>(Praxis PLT: Principles of Learning & Teaching) | 100% of candidates will meet proficiency [minimum score of 160 (K-6 or 5-9) or 157 (7-12)] on Praxis PLT: Principles of Learning & Teaching. |
| Demonstrate discipline-specific content knowledge.<br>(Praxis Content: Music)                         | 100% of candidates will meet proficiency (minimum score of 151) on Praxis Content: Music.                                                    |

#### **Measure 5.1. (Direct—Knowledge)**

SLO 5 is assessed through PRAXIS Principles of Learning & Teaching (PLT) and PRAXIS Content exams for the respective subject area(s) and grade bands. The PRAXIS assessments are published by ETS and are nationally normed. Proficiency is measured by scoring at least the minimum qualifying score set forth by the State of Louisiana for teacher certification requirements.

Quality of the assessment/evidence is assured because (1) the State of Louisiana requires the tests and (2) the tests are nationally normed.

Application to clinical experiences (residency or internship) requires a passing PRAXIS score; therefore, for candidates to be successful, they must achieve a minimum passing score as outlined by the state of Louisiana.

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**Finding.** AC 2025 – 2026 the target was met.

### Analysis.

In AC 2024 – 2025 the target was met. These changes had a direct impact on the student's ability to achieve proficiency [minimum score of 160 (K-6 or 5-9) or 157 (7-12)] on Praxis PLT: Principles of Learning & Teaching and (minimum score of 151) on Praxis Content: Music.

100% (n=11) of candidates achieved proficiency [minimum score of 160 (K-6 or 5-9) or 157 (7-12)] on Praxis PLT: Principles of Learning & Teaching and (minimum score of 151) on Praxis Content: Music in 2024-2025.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, the faculty implemented the following changes in AC 2025-2026 to drive the cycle of improvement. Based on their latest performance, candidates scored lowest on *theory and composition*. The Program faculty will implement in-class opportunities for candidates to understand and analyze music in aural form, as well as demonstrate aural skills through recognition of melody, harmony, and rhythm.

These changes improved candidates' ability to meet proficiency [minimum score of 160 (K-6 or 5-9) or 157 (7-12)] on Praxis PLT: Principles of Learning & Teaching and (minimum score of 151) on Praxis Content: Music, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

In 2025-2026, 100% (n=12) of candidates achieved proficiency [minimum score of 160 (K-6 or 5-9) or 157 (7-12)] on Praxis PLT: Principles of Learning & Teaching and (minimum score of 151) on Praxis Content: Music.

### Decision.

In AC 2025 – 2026, the target was Met.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2025-2026 results, the faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2026-2027 to drive the cycle of improvement. Faculty will implement more opportunities to ensure candidates know a variety of strategies for helping students develop self-motivation such as assigning valuable tasks; providing frequent positive feedback; including students in instructional decisions; and de-emphasizing grades. Faculty will also implement more opportunities to ensure candidates understand the history of major developments in musical style and the significant characteristics of important musical styles and historical periods including styles and historical periods and characteristics of music related to style and period.

These changes will improve candidates' ability to meet proficiency [minimum score

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of 160 (K-6 or 5-9) or 157 (7-12)] on Praxis PLT: Principles of Learning & Teaching and (minimum score of 151) on Praxis Content: Music, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

**SLO 6: Candidates will demonstrate knowledge of Appropriate Practices relating to music education, curriculum, instruction, assessment, and managing classroom procedures.**

| Departmental Student Learning Goal                                                                        | Program Student Learning Outcome                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Apply discipline-specific content knowledge in professional practice (Louisiana Aspiring Educator Rubric) | A minimum of 80% of candidates will demonstrate knowledge of developmentally appropriate practices relating to music education curriculum, instruction, assessment, and managing classroom procedures with a 3.0 or higher on the measure. |

**Course Map:** SLO 6 is assessed in EDUC 4932: Residency II—Teaching in K-12 Music Education Classrooms. This course is taken during the final year in the program.

### Measure 6.1. (Direct—Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions)

SLO 6 is assessed through the use of the Louisiana Aspiring Educators Rubric (LAER).

Validity and Reliability was established for the Louisiana Aspiring Educator Rubric (LAER) in 2025. A panel of 8 P-12 clinicians viewed a model teaching vignette and conducted independent evaluations of the teaching performance using this tool. The Content Validity Ratio (CVR) was calculated using the Lawshe (1975) method to assess content validity. The CVR mean = .956 with CVR(Critical), 8) = .75 and no single item below critical value of .75. The Intra-class Correlation Coefficient (ICC) by Fisher (1954) was used as a measure of inter-rater reliability with respect to the Lawshe method ratings. The ICC = .87. ICC of .75-1.00 reflects “excellent” inter-rater agreement.

The Louisiana Aspiring Educator Rubric (LER) brings a comprehensive focus on twelve key indicators: instructional plans, assessment, standards and objectives, presenting instructional content, activities and materials, questioning, academic feedback, teacher knowledge of students, thinking and problem-solving, environment, engaging students and managing behavior, and professionalism. Each indicator is further broken down into descriptors that clearly define effective teaching. Performance definitions are provided at levels 5 (Exemplary), 3 (Proficient), and 1

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(Unsatisfactory). Observers can score performance at levels 2 or 4 based on evidence and their professional judgment.

**Finding.** The target was met.

### Analysis.

In AC 2024 – 2025 the target was met. These changes had a direct impact on the student's ability to achieve proficiency (minimum of 3.0) on the Teacher Candidate Observation Form.

100% (n=11) of candidates achieved proficiency (minimum of 3.0) on the Teacher Candidate Observation Form in 2024-2025.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, the faculty implemented the following changes in AC 2025-2026 to drive the cycle of improvement. Based on their latest performance, candidates scored lowest on *lesson structure and pacing*. Program faculty implemented strategic processes and examples to ensure the lesson's structure is coherent, based on the content, and has a beginning, middle, and end, with time for reflection to ensure student understanding.

These changes will improve candidates' ability to meet proficiency (minimum of 3.0) on the Teacher Candidate Observation Form, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

In 2025-2026, 100% (n=11) of candidates achieved proficiency (minimum of 3.0) on the LAER.

### Decision.

In AC 2025 – 2026, the target was met.

Based on information gathered from analysis of the AC 2025-2026 data, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2026-2027 to drive the cycle of improvement. Faculty will provide more opportunities to ensure candidates regularly ask questions that are varied, high-quality, and increase rigor and student ownership. Faculty will also provide more opportunities to ensure candidates regularly ask questions that provide a balanced mix of authentic question types such as knowledge and comprehension, application and analysis, and creation and evaluation.

These changes will improve candidates' ability to meet proficiency (minimum of 3.0) on the Teacher Candidate Observation Form, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

**SLO 7: Candidates will model behaviors and characteristics that are professional and ethical.**

This outcome aligns with CAEP Standard R.1, Content and Pedagogical Knowledge, specifically standard R1.4, Professional Responsibility; CAEP Standard R3, Candidate Recruitment, Progression, and Support, specifically standard R3.2, Monitoring and Supporting Candidate Progression; and CAEP Standard R4, Program Impact, specifically standard R4.1, Completer Effectiveness (CAEP 2022).

**Course Map:** EDUC 4932: Residency II—Teaching in K-12 Music Education Classrooms

| Departmental Student Learning Goal                                              | Program Student Learning Outcome                                                                                                                                                   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Model professional behaviors and characteristics.<br>(Dispositional Evaluation) | Candidates will model behaviors and characteristics that are professional and ethical. [80% of candidates will meet proficiency (minimum of 3.0) on the Dispositional Evaluation.] |

**Measure 7.1. (Direct—Dispositions)**

SLO 7 is assessed through an electronic Professional Disposition Evaluation tool. The tool was implemented in the 2022-2023 AY and re-evaluated after first-year implementation. The Louisiana CAEP Consortium has drafted an updated dispositional evaluation tool to be piloted in the 2025-2026 AY.

Content Validity was re-established for the Dispositional Evaluation in 2025. A panel of EPP faculty members from initial and advanced programs, as well as programs not associated with CAEP accreditation conducted an independent critique using the 2021 CAEP workbook. Construct validity was established by 1) aligning items to constructs, 2) avoiding bias and ambiguous language, and 3) stating items in actionable terms. The Data Quality was determined to be sufficient, with all items being sufficient according to CAEP criteria for EPP-created surveys.

The Professional Disposition Scale informs candidates' professional responsibility, integrity, enthusiasm, communication, and reflection. Each domain entails three to six statements that confirm the degree to which candidates demonstrate each characteristic. Evaluators can rate candidates a 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (agree) or 4 (strongly agree).

**Finding.** AC 2025 – 2026 the target was met.

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**Analysis.** In AC 2024 – 2025 the target was met.

100% (n=11) of candidates achieved proficiency (minimum of 3.0) on the Dispositional Evaluation in 2024-2025. Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, the faculty implemented the following changes in AC 2025-2026 to drive the cycle of improvement. Based on their latest performance, candidates scored lowest on *connecting theory with practice* **and** *connecting prior knowledge and new information*. Program faculty implemented activities/discussions that incorporate **structured reflective teaching** that directly link educational theory to real classroom experiences **and** help candidates explicitly link what they already know (prior knowledge) to new theories, strategies, or pedagogical concepts they are learning in their teacher preparation program.

These changes improved candidates' ability to meet proficiency (minimum of 3.0) on the Dispositional Evaluation, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

In 2025-2026, 100% (n=11) candidates achieved proficiency (minimum of 3.0) on the Dispositional Evaluation.

### **Decision.**

In AC 2025 – 2026, the target was met.

Based on information gathered from analysis of the AC 2025-2026 data, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2026-2027 to drive the cycle of improvement. Faculty will implement more opportunities for candidates to increase and become comfortable with communication, ensuring candidates communicate with professionalism and transparency. These changes will improve candidates' ability to meet proficiency (minimum of 3.0) on the Dispositional Evaluation, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

### **SLO 8: Exhibit Creative Thinking that Yields Engaging Ideas, Processes, Materials, and Experiences Appropriate for the Discipline**

| Departmental Student Learning Goal                                                                                                                 | Program Student Learning Outcome                                                                                                                     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Exhibit creative thinking that yields engaging ideas, processes, materials, and experiences appropriate for the discipline (Lesson Plan execution) | Candidates will design and <b>implement</b> developmentally appropriate lesson plans that reflect research on the best practices in Music Education. |

**Course Map:** EDUC 4932: Residency II—Teaching in K-12 Music Education Classrooms

### **Measure 8.1: (Indirect—Knowledge, Skills)**

SLO 8 is assessed through the instructional planning indicator on the intern's final

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evaluation. The *Assessment for Lesson Plan Implementation* addresses the Louisiana State Standards and residents' ability to execute best teaching practices as reflected on the lesson plan. This assessment requires interns to successfully execute the planned elements of the lesson on which their performance evaluations are based as measured by the Instructional Plans indicator on the Louisiana Aspiring Educator Rubric (LAER). Residents demonstrate competency of written lesson plan design through course assignments prior to the residency. However, this lesson plan assessment measures the residents' ability to effectively execute the components as planned.

Target for this assessment is that 80% of the residents score a 3.0 on the Instruction Plans (IP) indicator of the Louisiana Aspiring Educator Rubric (LAER).

**Finding.** AC 2025 – 2026 the target was met.

### Analysis.

In AC 2024 – 2025 the target was met. These changes had a direct impact on the candidates' ability to achieve proficiency (minimum of 3.0) on the Lesson Plan.

100% (n=11) of candidates achieved proficiency (minimum of 3.0) on the Instructional Plan (IP) indicator of the Observation Instrument in 2024-2025.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, the faculty implemented the following changes in AC 2025-2026 to drive the cycle of improvement. Based on their latest performance, candidates scored lowest on *understanding learner differences*. Program faculty implemented activities/discussions that teach candidates how to effectively execute the lesson plan, and assess for, determine, and support students' learning differences through accommodations and differentiation.

These changes improved candidates' ability to meet proficiency (minimum of 3.0) on the Instructional Plans Component which indicates effective execution of the lesson plan, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

In AC 2025-2026, 100% of candidates (n=11) achieved proficiency (minimum of 3.0) on the Instructional Plan (IP) indicator.

### Decision.

In AC 2025 – 2026, the target was Met.

Based on information gathered from analysis of the AC 2025-2026 data, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2026-2027 to drive the cycle of improvement.

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Faculty will implement opportunities for candidates to ensure that a well-planned lesson is centered around objectives that are measurable, explicit, and aligned to state content standard and high-quality curriculum, both in content and rigor.

These changes will improve candidates' ability to meet proficiency (minimum of 3.0) on the Standards and Objective Component which indicates effective execution of the lesson plan, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

### **SLO 9: Make Responsible Decisions and Problem-Solve, using Data to Inform Actions when Appropriate**

| <b>Departmental Student Learning Goal</b>                                                                  | <b>Program Student Learning Outcome</b>                                                                                               |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Make responsible decisions and problem-solving, using data to inform actions.<br>(Student Learning Impact) | 70% of P-12 students will master the daily objective (scoring 80% or greater on post-test) on candidates' formally evaluated lessons. |

Course Map: SLO 9 is assessed in **EDUC 4932, Residency—Teaching in K-12 Music Education Classrooms** via post-assessment data during Residency II. The candidates need to show they can effectively influence student learning and use data to make ongoing improvements. Therefore, the pre- and post-observation conference reflection questions and data analysis will continue to require residency II students to chart each student's pre- and post-assessment scores, show a change in mastery of the lesson objective using + to represent an increase, - to show a decrease, and = to show no change, and to analyze data to determine instructional next steps. Post-assessment scores will be reported and used to determine whether candidates were able to grow 80% of their students to the mastery level of the lesson objective.

**Finding.** AC 2025 – 2026 the target was met.

#### **Analysis.**

In AC 2024 – 2025 the target was met. These changes had a direct impact on the student's ability to achieve proficiency (minimum 3.0) on the Student Learning Impact.

100% (n=11) of candidates achieved proficiency (minimum 3.0) on Student Learning Impact in 2024-2025.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, the faculty made the following changes in AC 2025-2026 to drive the cycle of improvement. Program faculty implemented hands-on data analysis activities into coursework. This included the use of real or simulated student work samples to practice interpreting assessment results, identifying trends, and planning targeted instructional responses. Additionally, faculty provided structured templates and guided practice to help

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candidates effectively document learning gaps and implement data-driven interventions within their Student Learning Impact Assessments.

These changes shifted from portfolio-based evidence of what candidates know about learner development to student data that proves what candidates can do. Post-assessment mastery data becomes the true measure of a candidate's direct impact on student growth thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2025 – 2026 the target was met. These changes had a direct impact on the student's ability to achieve proficiency in the area of Student Learning Impact.

In AC 2025-2026, 100% (n=11) candidates achieved proficiency on student learning impact with 70% or more of P-12 students mastering the daily objective (scoring 80% or greater on post-test) on candidates' formally evaluated lessons.

### **Decision.**

In AC 2025 – 2026, the target was met.

Based on information gathered from analysis of the AC 2025-26 data, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2026-27 to drive the cycle of improvement. Faculty will implement more opportunities to ensure candidates can demonstrate the use of effective assessment strategies that support data-driven instruction.

These changes will improve candidates' ability to meet proficiency (minimum 3.0) on Student Learning Impact, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

### **Comprehensive Summary of Key Evidence of Improvements Based on Analysis of Results.**

The Program faculty made several decisions after examining results of data analysis from AC 2024-2025 which resulted in improved student learning and program improvement in AC 2025 - 2026.

#### **SLOs 1 – 4:**

- Faculty assessed students' individual needs for practice plans and performance suggestions to address individual weaknesses and areas for improvement.
- Faculty suggested additional pedagogical resources through guest artists (virtual and live) and online resources.

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- MUS 1500 was restructured to include elements that help students prepare for all careers in music (writing a bio, having a headshot taken, critiquing performances of peers and professionals, providing constructive feedback in defined areas for critique, and speaking from the stage). Discussions of these skills and career-readiness elements will also take place in MUS 1500.
- Discussions of physical and mental wellness were provided in master classes, studio classes, and a campus-wide full yoga class each semester.
- The decision was made to no longer continue the MUS 1700 X1N lab course. The department returned to offering two courses in the fall: MUS 1000 (Introduction to Music Theory) and MUS 1150 (Music Theory I). Students were placed in the appropriate class after they take a Music Theory Diagnostic exam (placement exam) at Freshman Connection or before beginning classes in August.
- The Musicology professor tested each class more often to more frequently assess the mastery and rate of improvement.
- Shorter research/writing assignments were utilized, as these have proven to be successful in measuring student abilities to write and more frequently address any issues.
- The test format was restructured to include more writing as an approach to incorporate assessment in testing situations.
- The Piano faculty experimented with only requiring hands separate (instead of hands together) for scales.
- Now that our current Coordinator of the Group Piano/Piano Pedagogy area has been teaching at NSU for several years, he proposed that the scores for each area of the proficiency exam simply be calculated arithmetically. The exception would be the Final Proficiency Exam, in which students can fail no more than a single element.

**SLO 5:** Based on their latest performance, candidates scored lowest on *theory and composition*. The Program faculty will implement in-class opportunities for candidates to understand and analyze music in aural form, as well as demonstrate aural skills through recognition of melody, harmony, and rhythm.

**SLO 6:** Based on their latest performance, candidates scored lowest on *lesson structure and pacing*. Program faculty implemented strategic processes and examples to ensure the lesson's structure is coherent, based on the content, and has a beginning,

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middle, and end, with time for reflection to ensure student understanding.

**SLO 7:** Program faculty implemented activities/discussions that incorporated structured reflective teaching that directly links educational theory to real classroom experiences and helped candidates explicitly link what they already know (prior knowledge) to new theories, strategies, or pedagogical concepts they are learning in their teacher preparation program.

**SLO 8:** Program faculty implemented activities/discussions that taught candidates how to effectively execute lesson plans, and assess for, determine, and support students' learning differences through accommodations and differentiation.

**SLO 9:** Based on their latest performance, program faculty implemented hands-on data analysis activities into coursework. This included the use of real or simulated student work samples to practice interpreting assessment results, identifying trends, and planning targeted instructional responses. Additionally, faculty provided structured templates and guided practice to help candidates effectively document learning gaps and implement data-driven interventions within their Student Learning Impact Assessments. These changes shifted from portfolio-based evidence of what candidates know about learner development to student data that proves what candidates can do. Post-assessment mastery data becomes the true measure of a candidate's direct impact on student growth thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

### Plan of Action for Moving Forward:

The Program faculty examined the evidence and results of data analysis from AC 2025-2026 and will take steps to improve student learning in AC 2026-2027:

#### SLOs 1 – 4:

- Several faculty have applied for an Elevate U internal grant to do two things: collect data for retention from in the first two years of college, and present strategies/techniques for practice effectiveness. With data collected in this project, it is our hope that in the process of this initiative, we can identify any at-risk students more quickly.
- Faculty will create individual practice plans to best address each student's individual needs and weaknesses.
- Faculty will also seek and use resources to assist in guiding students for their physical and mental well-being.
- Small chamber music opportunities will also be provided and encouraged through performances in Studio Classes and MUS 1500.

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- In the Instrumental Conducting course (MUS 3110), additional focus will be placed on reinforcement of understanding and demonstrating transposition of common band/orchestral instruments, as this is an area that needs improvement.
- Additionally, the Conducting faculty will look at establishing a conducting sequence that flows better through the Conducting I and Conducting II courses. In particular, there may be a more effective way to use the Lab Ensembles to help with more consistent reinforcement of the conducting skills learned in class.
- In the MUED 4010 Secondary Methods course, faculty plan to have more teaching episodes that last for longer durations to help solidify and assess these skills.
- In the Level II Percussion Methods course (MUS 1930), the instructor plans to create lecture videos to be viewed outside of class time in lieu of in-class lectures so that class time can be used for more playing and teaching exercises.
- The Theory Professor is considering adding a textbook requirement for the aural skills courses which would supplement classroom work with dictation exercises to be done outside of class time.
- The Theory Professor is planning to pilot several materials with the MUS 2151 classes for possible adoption by all courses. This initiative is in the early stages and will not affect any theory curriculum plans for the upcoming year.
- The Music History professor plans to add the use of a new textbook in Music History III (to specifically address the weaknesses in this year's Music History II course). This new textbook will offer a simplified outline of music history.
- She also plans to restructure the Music History III course to assist this cohort of students with comprehension and retention of the information.
- Writing assignments will be short and incorporated into exams to more frequently assess students' writing skills.
- Project-based learning will be implemented into the Class Piano sequence (and may become the Final Exam for Class Piano IV). The intention of this type of project is for students to connect the knowledge they are learning in class in an actionable way to see its relevance to a common skill in accompanying. A project like this is helpful in guiding students to use their knowledge in an actual self-directed (and teacher—guided) project.

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**SLO 5:** Faculty will implement more opportunities to ensure candidates know a variety of strategies for helping students develop self-motivation such as assigning valuable tasks; providing frequent positive feedback; including students in instructional decisions; and de-emphasizing grades. Faculty will also implement more opportunities to ensure candidates understand the history of major developments in musical style and the significant characteristics of important musical styles and historical periods including styles and historical periods and characteristics of music related to style and period.

**SLO 6:** Faculty will provide more opportunities to ensure candidates regularly ask questions that are varied, high-quality, and increase rigor and student ownership. Faculty will also provide more opportunities to ensure candidates regularly ask questions that provide a balanced mix of authentic question types such as knowledge and comprehension, application and analysis, and creation and evaluation.

**SLO 7:** Faculty will implement more opportunities for candidates to increase and become comfortable with communication, ensuring candidates communicate with professionalism and transparency.

**SLO 8:** Faculty will implement opportunities for candidates to ensure that a well-planned lesson is centered around objectives that are measurable, explicit, and aligned to state content standard and high-quality curriculum, both in content and rigor.

**SLO 9:** Faculty will implement more opportunities to ensure candidates can demonstrate the use of effective assessment strategies that support data-driven instruction.