

**REVIEW OF THE B.A., B.S. in Music (Liberal Arts)**

Classification of Instruction Programs (CIP) Code: 50.0901  
 Music, General

**OVERVIEW**

The **B.A., B.S., in Music** program at Illinois State University is housed in the School of Music within the Wonsook Kim School of Art. The School of Music houses four degree programs and a graduate certificate program: a B.A. or B.S. in Music (Liberal Arts), B.M. in Performance (Music), a B.M.E. in Music Education, and M.M in Music. In addition, the school offers a minor in Music. Students enrolling in the **B.A., B.S., in Music** select either the Liberal Arts sequence or the Music Business sequence.

**Enrollment, Fall Census Day, 2015-2022**  
**B.A., B.S., in Music, Illinois State University**  
 First Majors Only

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Liberal Arts sequence (formerly General)	5	17	18	19	16	19	21	33
Music Business sequence	25	23	24	26	26	15	14	18
Musical Theatre sequence	9	1						
No-subplan	14	1		1	1			
<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>51</b>

Music Theatre sequence was discontinued in 2016  
 The General Music default sequence became the Liberal Arts sequence in 2019

**Degrees Conferred, Graduating Fiscal Year, 2015-2022**  
**B.A., B.S., in Music, Illinois State University**  
 First Majors Only

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
<b>Total</b>	14	8	15	21	15	20	13	7

Table notes:  
 Graduating Fiscal Year consists of summer, fall, and spring terms, in that order. For example, Graduating Fiscal Year 2019 consists of the following terms: summer 2017, fall 2017, and spring 2018.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**  
**PROGRAM REVIEW SELF-STUDY REPORT**

**Self-Study Process**

The School of Music actively gathered faculty input on program goals and assessment methods between May 2022 – May 2023. These discussions took place in full faculty meetings (including two full-day retreats), in Advisory Committee meetings, and in Curriculum and Assessment Committee meetings. Additionally, the Director of the School of Music formed an ad hoc committee to work on Program Review, consisting of two faculty members and the Lead Academic Advisor. This committee met with many subgroups of faculty to dig into program goals and assessment methods, such as: theory faculty; musicology faculty; performance faculty; and ensemble directors. Also, an updated alumni survey was created and disseminated during this time. Collected discussion points and data were compiled during Summer 2023 for the presentation of program review material Fall 2023.

### **Program curriculum**

The core curriculum in the undergraduate degree sequences in the School of Music are generally similar to our comparator programs. This is likely due to standards and guidelines presented by the National Association of Schools of Music. An exploration of different cores for the professional degree (Bachelor of Music) and the liberal arts degree (Bachelor of Arts/Science in Music) needs to occur. Currently, the admission requirements and core musicianship courses (those in music theory, musicianship, piano, and music history) for the BA/BS sequences closely resemble those of the BM sequences, even though the National Association of Schools of Music standards for BA/BS and BM degrees are different in significant ways.

Additionally, the School of Music currently only offers two music courses that support the Music Business sequence: Music Industry I and Music Industry II. Following the completion of those courses, students have a variety of course options to take housed in the Schools of Marketing, Management, Creative Technologies, and Theater and Dance. While the flexibility of this degree is somewhat of an asset, there are several issues. Prospective students who compare our plan of study to other institutions' plans of study may quickly notice the lack of focus in our degree plan. As courses are developed and/or revised, the overall plan of study should align more with either a BS degree or a BM degree - although offering both degrees in Music Business is also worth considering.

### **Program or academic unit faculty**

This program is supported by 53 full-time faculty (36 TT and 17 NTT) as well as additional part-time faculty. Faculty are highly qualified music professionals (performers, practitioners, researchers, and teachers) who are committed to student success and who provide individualized attention from the audition process through graduation. TT and NTT are active in their specialized disciplines. Additional faculty expertise in areas such as music business, music technology, and popular music is needed in the School of Music.

### **Program goals and quality indices**

Program goals and related strategic action items have been revised. There are many levels of formal and informal assessment occurring within the School of Music. The School Director, Lead Academic Advisor, and key faculty committees such as the Curriculum and Assessment Committee and Advisory Committee are actively reviewing program goals and progress towards these goals. Various data points related to admission and progress towards degree are collected. Advisors conduct exit appointments and gather important information from students at the end of their studies. An updated alumni survey was recently created and disseminated.

### **Student learning outcomes assessment plan and process**

While many levels of formal and informal assessment occur within the School of Music, the process of reporting assessment outcomes can become more formalized. New processes and timelines are in progress.

### **Specialized accreditation**

The National Association of Schools of Music accredits the School of Music. The last reaccreditation review was conducted in 2013. At that time, the School maintained its accreditation status and received a positive report. The next self-study process will be undertaken during the 2023-24 academic year to prepare for a scheduled Fall 2024 site visit.

### **Responses to recommendations resulting from the previous program review**

Many recommendations from the previous program review have been or are currently being addressed. The current Fine Arts Rehabilitation Project is underway with construction bidding expected to begin soon. Faculty and students are actively studying and performing more diverse repertoire now compared to 8 years ago. Faculty have strengthened efforts to reach underserved prospective students. Programs such as the Peer Mentor Program and Music Student Wellness Day activities have been created to support student needs. A lack of funding for high-

achieving talent scholarships and for personnel to assist with admissions, marketing and publicity remains an area of need.

### **Changes in the academic discipline, field, societal need, and program demand**

Faculty are working to develop new teaching and mentorship strategies to support post-pandemic students and learning. The proliferation of social media has accentuated the need for marketing and publicity in order to stay present in the public eye. The looming enrollment cliff, a shift in attitude towards higher education, a decline in participation in high school music programs due to the pandemic, and the national decline of students enrolled in music liberal arts degree programs will make maintaining a steady enrollment challenging in upcoming years.

### **Major findings of this program review self-study**

The School of Music is functioning at a high level and is continuing to attract high-quality students. The School of Music's reputation as a strong teacher-training program with excellent faculty continues. Enrollment in BA/BS programs are declining nationally, and the same holds true at ISU. The School of Music has strong retention rates, higher than both the college and university averages. The individualized attention and mentorship that faculty provide positively impact enrollment and retention. School of Music students have many opportunities to expand their personal and professional growth, through guest artist collaborations, supported professional development, supported independent studies, RSOs, community outreach programs, and more. Alumni are generally very satisfied with the quality of education they received in the School of Music. Even if students ultimately choose a field outside of music or on the periphery of music, students are gaining useful transferable skills in critical thinking, creative thinking, creative expression, time management, and leadership. The School of Music should continue to improve data collection and review in support of measuring the success of program goals.

### **Initiatives and plans for the next program review cycle**

The core curriculums of the professional BM sequences and liberal arts BA/BS sequences do not need to align as much as they currently are, as National Association of Schools of Music standards indicate a different core emphasis between the professional degree and liberal arts degree. Additionally, a thorough review of the effectiveness and relevance of the core curriculum (particularly in music theory, aural skills, and piano musicianship) should occur at a more global level. Additionally, a new program goal was added to the BA/BS Assessment: "Students will develop necessary professional skills such as collaboration, networking, critical thinking and analysis." The School of Music needs to consider new courses or course revisions and assessment revisions that better support the revised BA/BS program goals.

## **PROGRAM REVIEW OUTCOME AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE ACADEMIC PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**Review Outcome.** The Academic Planning Committee, as a result of this review process, finds the B.A., B.S. in Music (Liberal Arts) to be in Good Standing.

The Academic Planning Committee congratulates the program for their efforts in completing a comprehensive self-study report. The self-study report provides a thorough review of the program that substantiates claims with insightful evidence. The program demonstrated a commendable level of inclusivity and participation in developing their self-study report. The Academic Planning Committee commended the program's efforts to use the study to revisit program goals and a commitment to incorporating diverse perspectives and feedback into the decision-making processes. The overall inclusive approach and development and utilization of various planning documents indicated a concerted effort to involve stakeholders in key programmatic decisions.

The committee recognizes the program's strong commitment to its mission and values, particularly in its approach to enrollment management and student diversity. The program's enrollment trends were analyzed with a thoughtful approach, often drilling down to the program level to identify specific areas for improvement. The program's recruitment efforts were also noteworthy, starting as early as the junior high level to engage with prospective students. The percentage of historically underrepresented students enrolled in the program increased from 21 percent in 2016 to 27.1 percent in 2022 which was recognized by the committee. The committee noted a clear link

between these efforts and the program's values of providing individualized attention and fostering a sense of community. The program's discussion of the impact of the pandemic on enrollment demonstrated a proactive approach to understanding and addressing challenges. The variety of recruitment activities and the inclusion of diverse panelists and speakers further underscored the program's commitment to student diversity and inclusivity. The committee also congratulates the program on maintaining its accreditation by the National Association of Schools of Music.

The committee noted the program's commitment to student success through a multifaceted approach that encompasses various aspects of academic and personal growth. The emphasis on close mentor-mentee relationships that last 4 to 8 semesters indicates a sustained investment in students' development, fostering a supportive environment for learning and growth. The committee also congratulates the program on the high retention rates, ranging from 77.8 percent to 87.1 percent during the past five years. The program tracks subsets of student data, such as audition results metrics, across several years, demonstrating a commitment to monitoring and improving outcomes over time. The emphasis on transparency and honest reflection was also recognized by the committee. Overall, the program's strategic initiatives, including the peer mentoring program and the String project, suggest a holistic approach to student development.

The committee commends the program's curricular efforts during the previous eight years. The program regularly updates its course offerings and academic requirements to ensure students have access to the most relevant and up-to-date information. Additionally, the committee applauds the program's work to infuse elements of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) into its curriculum, reflecting a commitment to providing a diverse and inclusive learning environment. The committee also noted the clear links between the program's strategic plan and curricular work. The committee praised the program's forward-thinking approach, demonstrating a commitment to meeting the evolving needs of its students.

The program has made commendable progress in developing a quality assessment plan. The committee congratulates the program on the progress that has been made and encourages continued work in this area. The committee noted the program's transparency in the work being done in this area and a commitment to improvement by acknowledging that the previous assessment plan was not effective, and the efforts being done to improve the plan. The committee recognized the program's willingness to adapt and improve as a positive sign of the program's commitment to ensuring quality education for its students.

The committee applauded the breadth and scope of scholarship and creative activity being done by the program's faculty. The program has made noteworthy strides in tracking faculty engagement in scholarship and professional development, especially considering its relatively recent adoption of digital measures. The committee also noted the faculty's professional development efforts across a variety of classroom management and discipline specific topics.

Several individual faculty-led alumni engagement and tracking experiences were identified by the committee. Additionally, several informal methods of connecting with program alumni were also noted by the committee, including Facebook, Instagram, invitations to campus, and networking through professional associations. The committee congratulates the program on reintroducing the alumni survey that was completed in the spring of 2023.

#### **Follow-Up Report.**

**Assessment plan.** The Academic Planning Committee recognizes the program's work to improve and update their previous assessment plan. The committee recommends the program submit a follow-up report to update the committee on the continued progress made with the assessment plan. The committee recommends the program continue working University Assessment Services in the implementation and ongoing refinement of the plan that will provide the program with useful information that can guide future planning efforts. This follow-up report also serves as an opportunity for the program to celebrate achievements and showcase the improvements and provide updates to initiatives outlined in the self-study report. Providing updates on the implementation of these new initiatives, such as the music history survey, is recommended by the committee. The committee asks the program to submit a revised assessment plan to the Office of the Provost by August 15, 2026.

#### **Recommendations.**

The Academic Planning Committee appreciates the work of the B.A., B.S. in Music (Liberal Arts) faculty and staff in developing this self-study report. Overall, the report was well-written, thorough, and provided insightful information about the program's current initiatives and future plans. The committee congratulates the B.A., B.S. in Music's (Liberal Arts) program on a successful eight years.

In addition to the program's noteworthy efforts and accomplishments, the Academic Planning Committee provided recommendations for consideration. The committee's recommendations outlined below are to be addressed within the next regularly scheduled review cycle. Details describing the actions and outcomes associated with each of the committee's recommendations should be included in the next program review self-study report that is tentatively due October 1, 2031.

**Encourage additional student engagement in self-study process.** The committee recommends the program consider further engaging students in the planning processes. While the program has demonstrated inclusivity in various aspects, involving students more actively in program review efforts could further enhance the program's overall participatory culture and provide valuable insights and perspectives that may not otherwise be considered.

**Formalize enrollment management, recruitment, and retention efforts.** The committee recommends the program consider how to efficiently and effectively support recruitment and manage enrollment and retention efforts. Consistent and regularly scheduled monitoring of enrollment, recruitment, and retention data at the program-level is encouraged. The committee noted several faculty-led recruitment and retention efforts being done within the program. Given the time and energy required to these recruitment and retention activities, the committee suggests the program consider the development of a recruitment and retention plan. A formal recruitment and retention plan could help the program maximize efficiency and effectiveness of the work currently being done in these important areas.

**Continued review of curriculum.** The committee applauds the program's ongoing commitment to its curriculum. The committee recommends the program continue to review the curriculum and make revisions when needed. The committee noted a few areas within the curriculum that the program might want to consider. First, the committee recommends the program continue working on the Music Business sequence. As noted in the self-study, the substantial growth in Creative Technologies and its impact on the Music Business curriculum should be carefully monitored. Next, the committee recommends the impact of six semesters of Recital Attendance (0 credit hours) in MUS 110 should also be considered. The impact of this requirement at both the student and program levels is encouraged.

**Continue alumni engagement efforts.** Several informal and formal alumni engagement activities that were led by various faculty were highlighted in the self-study report. The committee applauds the program's faculty for their work in supporting these high-impact experiences. The committee suggests the program may want to increase efficiency and possible resource sharing in this area by establishing a working group/committee to organize and promote these experiences.

**Continue monitoring of aspirational programs.** The committee appreciates the program's review of aspirational programs within the self-study report. The committee encourages the program to continue working on the actions identified in its review of the aspirational programs as well as the continued monitoring of these aspirational programs for insight into possible future needs or initiatives. In reviewing these aspirational programs, the committee also recommends the program closely monitor any discipline-specific changes such as composer diversity (lack of), shifts in the field, etc.

**Continue the collaborative work with Milner Library.** The committee recommends that the program work with the subject liaison librarian to examine and evaluate the library's journals and monograph collection to aid in both the selection and deselection process of these sources. Given recent journal cancellations and expected increases in distance and hybrid courses, we encourage the department and library to further collaborate to increase awareness of alternative access to resources, such as Interlibrary Loan and I-Share lending, among faculty and students. We also recommend that the program work with the subject liaison librarian to develop a tiered approach for information fluency learning outcomes for the department, align those outcomes to the curricula, and integrate those outcomes into the student learning outcomes assessment plan for the program.