



**SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS**  
**ACADEMIC AFFAIRS FORMS**  
**Institutional Program Review**  
**Report to the Board of Regents**

<b>UNIVERSITY:</b>	<b>USD</b>
<b>DEPARTMENT OR SCHOOL:</b>	<b>College of Fine Arts</b>
<b>PROGRAM REVIEWED:</b>	<b>Music</b>
<b>DATE OF REVIEW:</b>	<b>12/20/2017</b>
<b>TYPE OF REVIEW:</b>	<b>Specialized Program Accreditation Review</b>

**University Approval**

*To the Board of Regents and the Executive Director: I certify that I have read this report, that I believe it to be accurate, and that it has been evaluated and approved as provided by university policy.*

*James N. Abbott*

1/12/2018

\_\_\_\_\_  
President of the University

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**1. Identify the program reviewers and any external accrediting body:**

The University of South Dakota Department of Music was reviewed by the Commission on Accreditation from the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM). As part of this accrediting process, Dr. Ernie Hills (California State University, Sacramento) and Dr. Theresa Bogard (University of Wyoming) visited campus in April 2017 to assess the program.

**2. Items A & B should address the following issues: mission centrality, program quality, cost, program productivity, plans for the future, and assessment of progress.**

**2(A). Describe the strengths and weaknesses identified by the reviewers**

**Strengths**

The NASM Evaluators noted several strengths of the USD Music Department during their site visit. They were impressed with well-credentialed and dedicated faculty who are student focused and had developed positive relationships between themselves and students as well as other faculty members. The evaluators stated that USD has devoted and articulate students who are engaged in the music learning process. They also noted that students were pleased with their educational quality and the quality of programs in which they participate. The NASM Evaluators commented on the strength of the choral and band areas, noting that USD's performance quality is at minimum competitive with other schools in the region. The evaluators also mentioned the positive relationship with the university library both in terms of staff and collection development. Finally, they were excited about the unique music instrument museum situated on the campus and encouraged with the faculty and students in the program. In general, the NASM On-Site Evaluators believed that the USD Music Department is appropriately focused on its educational mission and stands as a quality institution of music education in the region.

**Weaknesses**

NASM visitation team noted that the Warren M. Lee Center for the Fine Arts building facilities creates an environment that is challenging for students, faculty and staff. Several issues including sound isolation, the operation of; maintenance of; and storage of equipment and instruments, and

access to several libraries via steep ladders/stairs need to be addressed. Additionally, facilities do not provide enough storage space and practice rooms to support the mission of the Department of Music. In addition to the concerns about the Warren M. Lee Center for Fine Arts building, the NASM Site Evaluators noted that students in the Bachelor of Music in Performance are not all performing at a consistent and appropriate level throughout all areas of study. They encourage the Music Department to consider recruiting higher level performance majors and help those students not meeting performance standards to focus on non-performance music degrees.

## **2(B). Briefly summarize the review recommendations**

### **Recommendations**

The NASM Evaluators recommend that the USD Department of Music take the following steps moving forward. They suggest that a plan is developed to work with campus administration and facilities management to improve the building safety, storage, sound isolation, and practice room concerns. They also advocate for the development of a plan to obtain and maintain equipment appropriate to the needs of students and faculty. In terms of student growth and performance standards, the evaluators suggest that the department consider adopting a standards rubric to assure that students in the Bachelor of Music in Performance program are performing at a consistent and appropriate level. In the longer term, they suggest the music unit engage in thoughtful strategic planning to fully assess its long term goals and to develop specific methods for obtaining those goals, including a plan for the recruitment of students and the development of a base of donors to support student scholarships, student and faculty travel, equipment, and other needs the unit may experience. These goals were clearly articulated and noted in the Music Department self-study and have been commended by the USD assessment office. The Music Department Strategic Plan will be re-submitted to NASM.

## **2(C). Indicate the present and continuous actions to be taken by the college or department to address the issues raised by the review. What outcomes are anticipated as a result of these actions?**

The Music Department will explore and implement the following actions to address concerns raised by the NASM On Site Evaluators.

### **With Regards to Facilities**

The renovation of the Warren M. Lee Center for Fine Arts is a portion of the University of South Dakota's current fundraising campaign, "Onward." The Dean of the College of Fine Arts is working with the President of the University, the President of the USD Foundation, and the gift officers to raise funds for this project. Included in the renovation plan is an update to the Fine Arts Building that will address numerous facilities issues. Renovation has been included in the USD capital campaign and has been identified as a priority for seeking state support. Additionally, the following steps are being taken to address immediate concerns.

#### Sound Isolation

The Music Department Chair is working with the Dean and faculty to evaluate sound isolation issues, and determine what remedies are appropriate. One strategy has already been determined and the implementation of this will begin by the end of January 2018.

#### Storage

The faculty and students will be better educated on the use of storage space and ensure that equipment is stored in its proper locations. These discussions have taken place in faculty meetings and in Recital Lab.

#### Practice Rooms

Students have been and will continue to be encouraged to practice at different times throughout the day to better utilize the classrooms and rehearsal spaces. During the fall semester of 2017, a student

scheduling system has been instituted for student use of the piano practice rooms. A Recital Lab session was scheduled to address practice habits and educate the students on better utilizing the space available.

The Music Department has made choices to provide faculty studio space and storage at the expense of a very few practice rooms. The Department Chair will work with members of the faculty to better condense and weed out storage inventory. A simple cleaning and sorting of one of the two AV equipment storage rooms should yield another room for student practice.

#### Ladder/Staircase

Discussions have begun on a process to address the “steep ladder/staircases” to the recording studio and ensemble libraries. The project is in its beginning stages as funding will need to be approved. Discussion has taken place with the College of Fine Arts Dean to pursue all avenues to rectify this issue. Funding has been approved to have a company study how to address this concern via the University’s Maintenance and Repair process for FY19.

#### **With Regards to Student Recruitment and Performance**

The Department of Music Faculty is working to devise a new recruitment strategy that will work to increase enrollment and focus more specifically on high caliber performers across the majors. Recruitment efforts will focus on continuing to maintain strong relationships with teachers in South Dakota. Additionally, the Department will look to extend its reach further into Iowa taking advantage of the in-state tuition for Iowa students, and the newly approved in-state tuition for Nebraska, with a greater focus on the Omaha area. Both the Chair and Dean have set aside funding to support travel in the region for recruitment.

Discussions are ongoing within the Department to build up the Bachelor of Musical Arts Degree. Faculty determined that some students with the Performance Degree may be better suited for the BMA. The faculty will better educate current and future students on the merits of the BMA and expand recruitment in that area. This degree provides a more generalized education in music without specialization, preparing students for a variety of careers in music and related fields.

The Department will begin discussions on the possibility of adding a sophomore review to the curriculum. This would allow faculty to evaluate students as they move into the upper level courses. This is a common practice in Music Departments throughout the country.

#### **With Regards to Instruments**

Long term financial planning within the department will be worked on by the Chair, in consultation with and approval from the Dean, to prepare for larger purchases and the updating and repair of current instruments.