

## Assessment Cycle 2024 – 2025

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

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

**Prepared by: Malena McLaren**

**Date: May 20, 2025**

**Approved by: Neeru Deep**

**Date: June 02, 2025**

**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 School of Education and Departments of Health and Human Performance, 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 the 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.

## Assessment Cycle 2024 – 2025

**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 2023-24 the target was **not met**. The passing rate for Fall Qualifying Juries was 75% (3 out of 4 total Qualifying Juries attempted) and the passing rate for Spring Qualifying Juries was 68% (17 out of 25). All recitals attempted were successfully passed (12 total). Of all Qualifying Juries and Senior Recitals attempted, 76% successfully passed. The passing rate for Conducting II final projects was 100% (12 student total). The passing rate for all pedagogy/skill assessments in Methods/Pedagogy courses was also 100% (41 students total). 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.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2023-24 results, the faculty made the following changes in AC 2024-25 to drive the cycle of improvement. Faculty served as advisors to their freshman and sophomore music education majors, which allowed for more in-depth discussion of any issues outside of applied lessons. Faculty also used campus resources (counseling, etc.) earlier for students that needed assistance. Faculty provided individualized practice plans for each student to address any weaknesses or deficiencies, which included potential reading and listening assignments to supplement in the areas of wellness and pedagogical analysis of fundamentals. In addition, faculty used upperclassmen and graduate students where appropriate to help mentor and assist younger students in technique and scale study. This allowed for a second possible mentor relationship for younger students (applied faculty/student and older student/younger student). The second year of the pilot course focusing on career preparedness for musicians also took place. The first year of data on the new SLOs showed that small class size and regular assessment and guidance are proving successful in developing teaching disposition, teaching skills, and pedagogical application.

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 ensemble participation which requires them to observe and reflect on their peers conducting and

## Assessment Cycle 2024 – 2025

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 to this SLO in order 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 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 will complete the recital in the Fall. For all Qualifying Juries and Recitals attempted, 87% successfully passed. This has been an increase from last year, but it is not at an ideal passing rate. The Qualifying Jury is attempted at the end of the music students' sophomore year. This sophomore class was in their 1<sup>st</sup> year of high school when the COVID pandemic caused shutdowns of schools. As we experienced and learned during the pandemic, virtual learning in music created a pause in student musician development in that the individual instruction on instruments and the ensemble experience of live music was completely stopped for nearly a year. This represents an important time in the development of young musicians. The drop in passing rate for the Qualifying Jury is likely reflective of these students entering college with deficiencies in their musical fundamentals due to this gap in their development. We are likely to still see some of the effects of these students being at an important developmental phase in their music education when COVID closed their schools. However, it is encouraging to see improvement, as this helps us to know that our approaches to remediating fundamentals where possible is likely to help these students. In addition, it is highly likely that music educators in high schools are effective in getting these students back on track. 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). 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 2024-2025, the target was **not met**.

Based on the information gathered from analysis of the AC 2024-25 results, the faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2025-26 to drive the cycle of improvement.

Faculty will assess students' individual needs for practice plans and performance suggestions to address individual weaknesses and areas for improvement. Faculty will suggest additional pedagogical resources through guest artists (virtual and live) and online resources. MUS 1500 will be 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 at 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 will be provided in master classes, studio classes, and a campus-wide full yoga class each semester.

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 2023-2024, the target was **met** for both the final project (97%) and the final exam (97%).

Based on the analysis of the AC 2023-24 results, the faculty implemented the following changes in AC 2024-25 to drive the cycle of improvement. Students at this level seemed to be reaching out earlier when they needed help, which allowed for theory faculty to assist students while there is time for improvement during the semester. The music department participated in the university-wide FLAME initiative to provide regular tutoring hours by faculty that accommodated students outside of the library. Tutoring by the music faculty in Music Theory was regularly offered. The Department Chair and Music Theory Coordinator assessed and further developed the lab course (previously online MUS 1700 X1N, this year in-person MUS 1700 45N or 46N) to be taken in conjunction with Music Theory I (MUS 1150) for those students who are at a developmental level in music theory and aural skills. This course was offered in person this year, rather than online. This allowed the professor of the MUS 1150 course to closely monitor the progress of and identify specific needs of, those developmental students.

In AC 2024-25, the target was **met** for both the final project (93%) and the final exam (93%). The department participated in tutoring initiatives again this year. However, more effort was made to meet students at the places (common areas in the Music Building and Varnado Hall dorm) and hours that worked best for them (evenings). Students seem to be reaching out when they need help, for the most part. An effort is also being made by the Department Chair to involve graduate students in tutoring students in the undergraduate theory classes. The option for the Research/Analysis paper in place of the final composition project remained. While no students chose this

## Assessment Cycle 2024 – 2025

option this year, having the choice in place allows students to present their capstone project in the Music Theory courses in the manner that is most comfortable for them.

These changes impacted on the students' ability to demonstrate knowledge through ongoing assessment and cumulative final exams which required the student to demonstrate competence in these areas before continuing to the next level. These changes also provided flexibility and allowed the professor to assess students through varying styles of learning and communicating, providing a more student-oriented assessment process for this important professional skill.

### **Decision or Recommendation.**

In AC 2024-2025, the target was **met**.

Based on information gathered from analysis of the AC 2024-25 data, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2025-2026 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 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 will return to offering two courses in the fall: MUS 1000 (Introduction to Music Theory) and MUS 1150 (Music Theory I). Students will be placed in the appropriate class after they take a Music Theory Diagnostic exam (placement exam) at Freshman Connection or before beginning classes in August.

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

## Assessment Cycle 2024 – 2025

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% 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 2023 - 2024, the target was **met**. The passing rate for Music History II was 98% (an increase of 8%), while the passing rate of the Music History IV class was 96% (a drop of 2%).

Based on the analysis of the AC 2023-24 results, faculty made the following changes in AC 2024-25 to drive the cycle 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.

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%). While these drops are not alarming, the Music History professor will be monitoring the Music History II cohort in the Fall 2025 semester to assure they are improving.

These changes improved 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.

### **Decision or Recommendation.**

In AC 2024-2025, the target was **met**.

Based on information gathered from analysis of the AC 2024-2025 data, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2025-2026 to drive the cycle of improvement.

There was a disruption in the teaching continuity in the Spring 2024 semester, as the Musicology professor needed to take a medical leave of absence. While the replacement professor was well qualified and credentialed (and had previously taught Music History courses at NSU), the disruption of the regular teacher may have caused some students not to improve at the usual rate. The Musicology professor plans to test each class more often to more frequently assess the mastery and rate of improvement.

## Assessment Cycle 2024 – 2025

In addition, shorter research/writing assignments will be utilized, as these have proven to be successful in measuring student abilities to write and more frequently address any issues. The test format will be restructured to include more writing as an approach to incorporate assessment in testing situations.

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 each academic year.

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

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

**Analysis:** In AC 2023-24, the target was **not met**. An acceptable target of 91% of the

## Assessment Cycle 2024 – 2025

total students passed all levels of the proficiency exams. This is a decrease of 2% from the previous year. Of the total 31 students enrolled in the Piano IV class, only 3 did not pass all proficiency levels. One student received an incomplete due to extenuating circumstances. It is expected that 2 of the 3 students who did not pass will re-take the class and pass all proficiency levels next year.

Based on the analysis of the 2023-24 results, faculty made the following changes in AC 2024-25 to drive the cycle of improvement. Piano faculty moved around the room more often in order to more frequently monitor students' hand placement/position/fingerings. This was a helpful solution to work around the issues with rearranging the classroom and the difficulty with the keyboards' pairing function, despite the target not being met at the ideal level. The Piano faculty also resubmitted a Board of Regents grant this year to replace keyboards in the Group Piano classroom. Students in the first year of Piano Classes transitioned to a new textbook—Alfred Group Piano for Adults (AGPA)—which is a widely used text nationally for group piano programs. There are many more resources/examples to choose from in this text (two books---Book 1 for MUS 1800 and MUS 1810 and Book 2 for MUS 1820 and 1830) including score reading examples which were supplemented with other resources previously. From the experience and expertise of our Piano Faculty teaching several different texts in Group Piano settings, the repertoire used in the AGPA is more appealing and motivating to students in the class piano setting. MUS 1800 and 1810 (Book 1) started using AGPA this year. MUS 1820 and 1830 used their current text and proficiency exams to remain the same so that students didn't have to switch mid-sequence. The change in text will mean that the proficiency exam content will change after this year. The categories/structure will likely remain the same, but different score reading and harmonization examples will be used. Piano faculty also reduced the required two-octave scales to include only major and harmonic minor scales (no longer requiring natural and melodic minor scales). This brought the scale requirement in line with most Class Piano textbooks.

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.

### Decision or Recommendation.

In AC 2024-2025, the target was **met**.

Based on information gathered from analysis of the AC 2024-25 data, faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2025-26 to drive the cycle of improvement. The Piano faculty will experiment 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. Now that our current Coordinator of the Group Piano/Piano Pedagogy area has been teaching at NSU for several years, he plans to propose that the scores for each area of the proficiency exam simply be calculated arithmetically. Students could, 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

## Assessment Cycle 2024 – 2025

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 in order to proceed. Since the categories are similar for every exam (Score Reading, solo repertoire, harmonization, etc.), their time would likely be served equally well or better by looking forward to the material on the next exam in order to improve that area.

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

Departmental Student Learning Goal	Program Student Learning Outcome
Demonstrate discipline-specific content knowledge. (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. (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.

**Finding.** AC 2024 – 2025 the target was met.

## Assessment Cycle 2024 – 2025

### Analysis.

In AC 2023 – 2024, the target was **met**. 100% 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.

Based on the information gathered from an analysis of the AC 2023 – 2024 data, program faculty made the following changes to drive the cycle of continuous improvement. The faculty offered additional support through a newly added educational lab, online resources to help prepare students for their Praxis exams in conjunction with PRAXIS seminars, the use of 240 Tutoring, and opportunities with the Natchitoches Parish Library to offer access to Learning Express, a source for PRAXIS test preparation to support candidate learning and their ability. These changes helped to improve candidates' ability to demonstrate knowledge of developmentally appropriate practices relating to music education, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward; thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

As a result of these changes, 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.

### Decision.

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

Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, the faculty will implement 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 will improve 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.

**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 Educator Rubric- NIET Evaluation Instrument)	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 Teacher Candidate Observation Form. The adopted, state-mandated form is the Louisiana Educators Rubric (LER), which was implemented in Fall 2024. Moving forward, the state of Louisiana has mandated that all EPPs implement the Louisiana Aspiring Educators Rubric (LAER).

Validity and Reliability was established for the Louisiana Educator Rubric (LER) 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 Educator Rubric (LER) brings a comprehensive focus on four key domains: instruction, planning, environment, and professionalism. Each domain is further broken down into indicators and descriptors that clearly define effective teaching. Performance definitions are provided at levels 5 (Exemplary), 3 (Proficient), and 1 (Unsatisfactory). Observers can score performance at levels 2 or 4 based on evidence and their professional judgment. Assessed indicators include: standards and objectives; motivating students; presenting instructional content; lesson structure and pacing; activities and materials; questioning; academic feedback; grouping students; teacher content knowledge; teacher knowledge of students; thinking; problem-solving; instructional plans; student work; assessment; expectations; engaging students and managing behavior; environment; respectful conditions;

## Assessment Cycle 2024 – 2025

growing and developing professionally; reflecting on teaching; school improvement; and school responsibilities.

**Finding.** The target was met.

### Analysis.

In AC 2023 – 2024, the target was **met**. Teacher candidates' mean observation score was 3.34, indicating candidates achieved proficiency (minimum of 3.0) on the Teacher Candidate Observation Form.

Based on the information gathered from an analysis of the AC 2023 – 2024 data, program faculty made the following changes to drive the cycle of continuous improvement. The faculty will provided targeted instruction in the area of assessments in relation to Questioning and Assessment to ensure that content mastery was being accurately measured. These changes helped to improve candidates' ability to use data to drive instruction; thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

As a result of these changes, 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.

### Decision.

In AC 2024 – 2025, the target was met.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, the faculty will implement 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 will implement 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.

**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. (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 2024 – 2025 the target was met.

**Analysis.** In AC 2023 – 2024, the target was **met**.

## Assessment Cycle 2024 – 2025

Teacher candidates' mean dispositional score was above 3.0, indicating that candidates achieved proficiency (minimum of 3.0) on the Dispositional Evaluation.

Based on the information gathered from an analysis of the AC 2023 – 2024 data, program faculty made the following changes to drive the cycle of continuous improvement. Faculty drove improvement by implementing added resources relating and additional instruction focused on clear verbal and written articulation to better improve student outcomes. Based on feedback from mentor teachers and school administrators, the current instrument was not relevant to attributes that are observable in the field. Therefore, faculty have determined to adopt the newly created Disposition instrument which has been developed by the Louisiana CAEP Consortium, pending current validity and reliability testing. These changes helped to improve candidates' ability to allow for critical dispositions to be accurately measured and improve the candidates' ability to model behaviors and characteristics that were professional and ethical; thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

As a result of these changes, 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 Dispositional Evaluation.

100% (n=11) of candidates achieved proficiency (minimum of 3.0) on the Dispositional Evaluation in 2024-2025.

### Decision.

In AC 2024 – 2025, the target was met.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, the faculty will implement 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 will implement 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 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 standards and objective domain on the intern's final 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 Standards and Objectives domain on the NIET Evaluation Rubric. 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 Standards and Objectives Domain of the NIET Evaluation Rubric.

**Finding.** Target was met.  
100% of students met the target.

**Finding.** AC 2024 – 2025 the target was met.

**Analysis.**

In AC 2023 – 2024, the target was **met**. Based on the information gathered from an analysis of the AC 2023 – 2024 data, program faculty made the following changes to drive the cycle of continuous improvement. Faculty increased instruction in the areas of Performance-based Lesson Planning. Candidates/Interns were scored on lesson planning with the use of the performance evaluation rubric. These changes helped to improve candidates' ability to effectively plan and execute lessons to ensure student mastery of standards and objectives; thereby continuing to push the cycle of

## Assessment Cycle 2024 – 2025

improvement forward.

As a result of these changes, 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 Standards and Objectives Domain of the Observation Instrument in 2024-2025.

### Decision.

In AC 2024 – 2025, the target was met.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, the faculty will implement 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 will implement 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 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

Departmental Student Learning Goal	Program Student Learning Outcome
Make responsible decisions and problem-solving, using data to inform actions when appropriate.	Candidates will assess the quality of instructional decision making using the P12 Student Learning Impact Assessment.

Course Map: SLO 9 is assessed in **EDUC 4932, Residency—Teaching in K-12 Music Education Classrooms** through the teaching portfolio which is assessed using the P12 Student Learning Impact Assessment during the last semester of the program.  
**Measure 9.1. (Direct—Knowledge and Skills)**

SLO 9 was assessed through the P12 Student Learning Impact Assessment, a component of the culminating portfolio, during Residency II. Residency II is taken during the last semester of the program. The assessment is evaluated using rubric, 80% of all students will score 3 out of 4 on the benchmark performance.

## Assessment Cycle 2024 – 2025

The Student Learning Impact evaluates candidates on the following criteria: setting measurable assessment criteria; setting appropriate assessment format criteria; preparing instructional assignments or activities; disaggregation and analysis of formative data; concluding analysis of formative data; student learning targets (outcomes); student learning targets (analysis); student learning targets (interventions); and reflective practice. Candidates can score 4 (exemplary), 3 (proficient), 2 (needs improvement), or 1 (unsatisfactory) on each component.

**Finding.** AC 2024 – 2025 the target was met.

**Analysis.** In AC 2023 – 2024, the target was **met**.

100% (n=14) of candidates achieved proficiency (minimum of 3.0) on the student impact assessment, with a mean score of 3.54.

Based on the information gathered from an analysis of the AC 2023 – 2024 data, program faculty made the following changes to drive the cycle of continuous improvement. Opportunities to analyze formative data were provided to enhance candidates' proficiency in assessment planning and data analysis. These changes helped to improve candidates' ability to analyze formative data to inform actions; thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

As a result of these changes, 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.

**Decision.**

In AC 2024 – 2025, the target was met.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, the faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2025-2026 to drive the cycle of improvement. Based on their latest performance, candidates scored lowest on *setting assessment criteria format*. Program faculty will implement activities/discussions that build candidates' knowledge and understanding of various forms of assessment, ensuring they can sufficiently and appropriately determine and implement various appropriate assessment formats.

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 2023-2024 which resulted in improved student learning and program improvement in AC 2024 - 2025.

#### SLOs 1 – 4:

- Faculty served as advisors to their freshman and sophomore music education majors, which allowed for more in-depth discussion of any issues outside of applied lessons.
- Faculty also used campus resources (counseling, etc.) earlier for students that needed assistance.
- Faculty provided individualized practice plans for each student to address any weaknesses or deficiencies, which included potential reading and listening assignments to supplement the areas of wellness and pedagogical analysis of fundamentals.
- Faculty used upperclassmen and graduate students where appropriate to help mentor and assist younger students in technique and scale study. This allowed for a second possible mentor relationship for younger students (applied faculty/student and older student/younger student).
- The second year of the pilot course focusing on career preparation for musicians also took place.
- The Department Chair monitored class size during registration to assure that class sizes were kept small (no more than 12-15 students per section), as the data on the SLOs showed that small class size and regular assessment and guidance are proved successful in developing teaching disposition, teaching skills, and pedagogical application.
- Faculty in these classes updated any materials where applicable to ensure that assessment measures are responsive to the current educational trends in K-12.
- 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.
- Discussions of musicians' physical and mental wellness were increased in master classes and applied lessons—including a department-wide workshop in Alexander Technique and a full yoga class during Studio Class time.

## Assessment Cycle 2024 – 2025

- Small live performance opportunities (master classes, studio class, elective recitals, MUS 1500 performances) were encouraged for all levels (freshman through senior).
- Faculty provided highly personalized practice plans for each student who did not pass the Qualifying Jury in the 1<sup>st</sup> attempt and included more discussion of musicians' physical and mental wellness.
- The music department participated in the university-wide FLAME initiative to provide regular tutoring hours by faculty that accommodated students outside of the library. Tutoring by the music faculty in Music Theory was regularly offered.
- The Department Chair and Music Theory Coordinator assessed the second year of a lab course (MUS 1700 X1N) to be taken in conjunction with Music Theory I (MUS 1150) for those students who are at a developmental level in music theory and aural skills.
- Shorter research/writing assignments were utilized.
- The test format was restructured to include more writing as an approach to incorporate assessment in testing situations.
- Piano faculty moved around the room more often in order to more frequently monitor students' hand placement/position/fingerings.
- The Piano faculty resubmitted a Board of Regents grant this year to replace keyboards in the Group Piano classroom.
- Students in the first year of Piano Classes transitioned to a new textbook—Alfred Group Piano for Adults (AGPA)—which is a widely used text nationally for group piano programs.
- The change in text meant that the proficiency exam content will change after next year. The categories/structure will likely remain the same, but different score reading, and harmonization examples will be used.
- Piano faculty also reduced the required two-octave scales to include only major and harmonic minor scales (no longer requiring natural and melodic minor scales). This brought the scale requirement in line with most Class Piano textbooks.

**SLO 5:** The faculty offered additional support through a newly added educational lab, online resources to help prepare students for their Praxis exams in conjunction with PRAXIS seminars, the use of 240 Tutoring, and opportunities with the Natchitoches Parish Library to offer access to Learning Express, a source for PRAXIS test preparation to support candidate learning and their ability.

## Assessment Cycle 2024 – 2025

**SLO 6:** The faculty provided targeted instruction in the area of assessments in relation to Questioning and Assessment to ensure that content mastery is being accurately measured.

**SLO 7:** The faculty drove improvement by implementing added resources relating and additional instruction focused on clear verbal and written articulation to better improve student outcomes. Based on feedback from mentor teachers and school administrators, the current instrument is not relevant to attributes that are observable in the field. Therefore, faculty have determined to adopt the newly created Disposition instrument which was developed by the Louisiana CAEP Consortium, pending current validity and reliability testing.

**SLO 8:** Faculty increased instruction in the areas of Performance-based Lesson Planning. Candidates/Interns were scored on lesson planning with the use of the performance evaluation rubric.

**SLO 9:** Opportunities to analyze formative data were provided to enhance candidates' proficiency in assessment planning and data analysis.

### Plan of Action for Moving Forward:

The Program faculty examined the evidence and results of data analysis from AC 2023-2024 and will take steps to improve student learning in AC 2024-2025:

#### SLOs 1 – 4:

- Faculty will assess students' individual needs for practice plans and performance suggestions to address individual weaknesses and areas for improvement.
- Faculty will suggest additional pedagogical resources through guest artists (virtual and live) and online resources.
- MUS 1500 will be 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 will be 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 will return to offering two courses in the fall: MUS 1000 (Introduction to Music Theory) and MUS 1150 (Music Theory I). Students will be placed in the appropriate class after they take a Music Theory Diagnostic exam (placement exam) at Freshman Connection or before beginning classes

## Assessment Cycle 2024 – 2025

in August.

- The Musicology professor plans to test each class more often to more frequently assess the mastery and rate of improvement.
- Shorter research/writing assignments will be utilized, as these have proven to be successful in measuring student abilities to write and more frequently address any issues.
- The test format will be restructured to include more writing as an approach to incorporate assessment in testing situations.
- The Piano faculty will experiment 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 plans to propose 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.
- The Department Chair will monitor class size in the Conducting, Pedagogy, and Methods courses as registration takes place to ensure classes do not exceed 12-15 students per section.
- Faculty in the Conducting, Pedagogy, and Methods classes will update materials where applicable to ensure that assessment measures are responsive to the current educational trends in K-12.

**SLO 5:** Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, the faculty will implement 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.

**SLO 6:** Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, the faculty will implement 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 will implement 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.

**SLO 7:** Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, the faculty will

## Assessment Cycle 2024 – 2025

implement the following changes in AC 2025-2026 to drive the cycle of improvement. Program faculty will implement activities/discussions that incorporate structured reflective teaching that directly links 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.

**SLO 8:** Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, the faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2025-2026 to drive the cycle of improvement. Program faculty will implement activities/discussions that teach candidates how to effectively execute lesson plans, and assess for, determine, and support students' learning differences through accommodations and differentiation.

**SLO 9:** Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, the faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2025-2026 to drive the cycle of improvement. Based on their latest performance, candidates scored lowest on *setting assessment criteria format*. Program faculty will implement activities/discussions that build candidates' knowledge and understanding of various forms of assessment, ensuring they can sufficiently and appropriately determine and implement various appropriate assessment formats.