Assessment Map for Doctor of Musical Arts

Terms Assessed: Fall 24 – Spring 26
Review Committee: Dr. Jeff Farmer, Dr. Sandy Vandercook, Dr. Jessica McMillan
July 31, 2026

H.1.1.1 (ATS) The purpose of these degrees is to equip persons for teaching, research, and leadership in church and sacred music.
XVI.A (NASM) Doctoral degrees in music are intended for those planning to engage and participate at the most advanced academic and professional levels of musical endeavor.

Student Learning Outcome 1: Master a body of knowledge related to required coursework.

ATS Goal 1: The mastery of various disciplines including the study of music, including the liturgical and historical repertory of church music.

NASM Doctoral Sacred Music Standard: Section XVI.D.4.f, "programs vary in their specific objectives and normally include studies to enhance musical and historical perspective, especially with regard to the development of religion and church music practices."

Measures (means of program assessment)	**Criteria for Success (benchmark set last cycle)**	**Results (report, summarize, reflect)—disaggregate by location and semester**	**Use of Results (make action plan to reach criteria, set new criteria if needed, AND discuss success of previous cycle's action plans)**
Direct Measure Comprehensive Written Exam III. 1. Sacred Choral Music	2.85	**Benchmark Met** 3.1 (total) July 2024 – 3.0 July 2025 – 3.25 ***Reflection on Results:*** For 2 cycles, the benchmark has been met at 3 or above. One reason for this might be fewer artifacts.	**Action Plan:** Because the increased scores have been consistent over two assessment cycles, the benchmark was raised to 2.9

Indirect Measure DMA Student Survey III. 1	3.9	**Benchmark Not Met** 3.5 ***Reflection on Results:*** Students indicated in written answers that they were concerned that some of their colleagues did not take the research and coursework seriously enough, which may indicate they did not understand the question. This may account for the low score.	**Action plan** is to clarify the question on the survey to include a parenthetical reminder to focus on curricular issues rather than personalities involved in the program. Because of the decrease in student responses to the survey (13 last cycle, 8 this cycle), the benchmark will remain at 3.9 to determine whether the score decrease is an actual trend.

Survey III. How much importance do you think the program assigns the following goals?

1. Mastery of the body of knowledge related to my field of study

Student Learning Outcome 2: Demonstrate a high level of skill development in a chosen performing and/or research area

ATS Goal 2: Competency and proficiency in a performance area

NASM Standard: XVI.D.2 "At the doctoral level, the basic orientation is the highest level of professional practice emphasizing the creation or performance of musical works and the application and transmission of knowledge about musical works, or pedagogy, or the practice of music education. Creation, performance, and teaching are highly disciplined efforts; inquiry and investigation, and often research and scholarship, are components of performance practice."

Measures (means of program assessment)	**Criteria for Success (benchmark set last cycle)**	**Results (report, summarize, reflect)—disaggregate by location and semester**	**Use of Results (make action plan to reach criteria, set new criteria if needed, AND discuss success of previous cycle's action plans)**
Direct Measures ***Research -*** Research paper grading rubrics from MUWM 9400 Adv. Studies in Historical Perspectives of Worship	3.2	**Benchmark Met** Spring 26 3.8 ***Reflection on Results:*** Numerical growth in the program, including multiple students who are strong researchers, is likely a reason for this score increase.	**Action Plan:** The score in Fall 23 was 3.7, and it has risen to 3.8 this cycle. Therefore, the benchmark has updated from 2.85 to 3.2.
Applied - Juried recital grade sheets	2.85	**Benchmark Met** 3.3 (total) Spring 25 3.0 Fall 25 3.6 ***Reflection on Results:*** Only 2 doctoral recitals were presented during this cycle.	**Action Plan:** Because the benchmark has been met with scores above 3 for the last two assessment cycles, the benchmark is raised to 3.
Indirect Measures DMA Student Survey III. 2 III. 3 III. 5	3.0	**Benchmark Met** 3.8 (total) 3.6 3.9 3.9 ***Reflection on Results:*** Last cycle, 13 students responded. This cycle, 8 responded. This may have contributed to the score increase.	**Action Plan:** Because the scores have increased consistently, the benchmark has been raised to 3.0

Survey III. How much importance do you think the program assigns the following goals?

2. Professional performance in my field of study
3. Ability to do research in my field
5. Preparation to teach at a college or seminary level

Student Learning Outcome 3: Demonstrate skill in written/oral communication for research and training

ATS Goal 3: Capacity to engage in research and training

NASM Standard: X.A.6.a: "The ability to speak and write cogently is critical for all professional musicians."

Measures (means of program assessment)	**Criteria for Success (benchmark set last cycle)**	**Results (report, summarize, reflect)—disaggregate by location and semester**	**Use of Results (make action plan to reach criteria, set new criteria if needed, AND discuss success of previous cycle's action plans)**
Direct Measures Faculty evaluations of dissertation defense	3.65	**Benchmark Met** 3.8 ***Reflection on Results:*** There were 4 dissertation defenses during this cycle, and 3 students used a slide presentation.	**Action Plan:** All students were given the option to use an accompanying slide presentation to help them prepare better and articulate their research more efficiently at the dissertation defense. Even though students scored higher this cycle, the benchmark remains at 3.65 in order to see if this increase is a trend or an anomaly.

Faculty evaluations of oral exams	3.5	**Benchmark Met** 3.5	**Action Plan:** This was an added measure since the last jury cycle. In order to determent a trend, the benchmark remains set at 3.5
Indirect Measures DMA Student Survey III. 4	3.8	**Benchmark Met** 3.9	
*VII. 1	3.0	**Benchmark Not Met** * 2.3 ***Reflection on Results*** While the number rose from 1.6 to 2.3 this cycle, student feedback continues to indicate that the material presented in the course does not prepare them sufficiently for the writing they are required to complete.	*VII. 1 Note: During the 2022-2024 cycle, we acknowledged a dramatic decrease and made curricular changes to better serve students. The course is now cross-listed, and DMA students take it with all other doctoral students as opposed to a previous "in-house" version of the course. **Action Plan:** 1) Because the benchmark has not been met for 2 cycles, it will remain at 3.0 as a reasonable score to represent a student's summative experience in the area of research and writing preparation. 2) Further, aggregate information will be gathered from course evaluations for MUDC9300 as another indirect measure. Specifically, questions 7, 8, 10, and 11 will be examined during the next assessment cycle. 3) The program

			coordinator will offer a writing workshop each semester to give students more opportunities for writing guidance.

Survey III. How much importance do you think the program assigns the following goals?

4. Ability to communicate results of research in written or other forms

Survey VII. Doctoral Research and Writing

1. How effective was the course MUDC9300/RDOC9300 Research and Writing in preparing you for the research and writing you have had to do in the DMA program?

Student Learning Outcome 4: Skill in planning and conducting ministry, classroom, or studio learning experiences.

ATS Goal 3: Capacity to engage in research and training

NASM Standard: Section X.A.4.a "Competency to practice in one or more fields of specialization includes the ability to conduct the types of creative work, inquiry, and investigation normally associated with the specialization(s) chosen."

Measures (means of program assessment)	**Criteria for Success (benchmark set last cycle)**	**Results (report, summarize, reflect)—disaggregate by location and semester**	**Use of Results (make action plan to reach criteria, set new criteria if needed, AND discuss success of previous cycle's action plans)**
Direct Measures **Research –** Research presentation rubrics from the following seminar: *MUHI9400 Adv. Studies Music History and Literature*	3.5	**Benchmark Met** Fall 24 3.7 ***Reflection on Results***	**Action Plan:** Because the implementation of the QQTP format seems to yield increase, the benchmark for this item will increase to 3.6.

Applied – Instructor evaluations of student teaching assigned in concentration pedagogy class *MUVO 9301 Advanced Studies in Performance Pedagogy*	3.0	QQTP format instituted since last jury has improved focus of student presentations over time. This is the second assessment cycle where the benchmark has been met. **Benchmark Not Met** Fall 25 - ***Reflection on Results*** No students needed this course during this assessment cycle.	**Action Plan:** Because no students needed this course for this assessment cycle, the benchmark remains at 3.0.
Indirect Measures DMA Student Survey I. 7	3.6	**Benchmark Met** 3.9	**Action Plan:** Because the benchmark was met for 2 consecutive cycles, the new benchmark has increased to 3.6.

Survey I. To what extent do you agree with the following statements about the DMA program at NOBTS?

7. The knowledge/training I am gaining meets my expectations.

Executive Summary:

Over the last two years, the DMA program has grown both in numbers and with the inclusion of some new adjunct seminar professors and mentor professors (formerly called committee chairs). Our DMA graduates consistently find employment in higher education. We have alumni currently serving as full-time professors at Ouachita Baptist University, Shorter University, William Carey University, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Most of our graduates (and many of our current students) maintain part-time teaching roles, as well.

While growth is exciting, there is always room for improvement. Results from this cycle indicate the following areas require attention:

1) SLO2 - Decrease in Applied Students. DMA students can choose between Worship/Hymnology and Applied (piano, organ, voice, conducting) concentrations. Three new applied students have joined our program since Fall 2024, but one has recently withdrawn from the program. Several students have chosen the Worship/Hymnology concentration and have taken applied coursework as electives in order to broaden their areas of expertise. While we did increase our number of applied students, we still need to explore ways of attracting more of them.

2) SLO3 - Music Research and Writing. We have made significant changs regarding the course offering and format (cross-listed with ReDoc, summer offering, breakout session with music faculty), and the changes have resulted in higher scores. However, those scores are still not meeting the benchmark, so we will continue to monitor this course each semester to see what other modifications might serve our students more efficiently. The jury committee discussed giving the program director a more prominent role in the Research and Writing course.