

## SENATE COMMITTEE ON UNIVERSITY PLANNING

### Academic Unit Review – Summary

**Department:** Music

<b>Site Visit</b>	8-9 March 2010
<b>Date of Report</b>	April 2010
<b>Informal Response to Planning</b>	June 2010
<b>Formal Response to Planning</b>	September 2010
<b>Implementation Update</b>	Expected Winter 2012
<b>Midterm Review</b>	Expected Fall 2015

### Summary of Departmental Self-Study

Music has been integral to Mount Allison since the first music certificate was granted in 1874. The Department offers four programs: the B. Mus., designed for training professional musicians, scholars, and educators; B.A., Honours in Music; B.A. Major in Music; and the Minor in Music. A two-year core curriculum provides a foundation for B. Mus. and B.A. students alike and upper-level courses provide for additional focus in selected areas. For B.Mus. students, applied music lessons are a fundamental part of the degree program. Specialized electives and courses for non-majors are also offered and non-Music students regularly take part in the Department's ensembles. There is an important outreach component to the Department's work, through regular concerts, tours, and talks. Considerable work has been done in recent years to increase student enrolments, with some success. The Department would like to implement a Foundation Year program to support students as well as to serve as a recruitment tool. Music is a resource-intensive program and the current complement is stretched; our geographical location makes hiring part-time performance faculty difficult. A number of upcoming retirements will need to be replaced to ensure the continued viability of the program; replacements in Brass, Band/Woodwind, and Composition will be required. There are a number of challenges with respect to current facilities (e.g., Brunton Auditorium) and technology. The Department's future aims include the maintenance of high academic and professional standards in all programs; an integration of academic, musical, and educational activities; the enhancement of the musical life of our community; and the enrichment of our musical and academic traditions through the creative and scholarly activities of faculty and students alike. In the future, the Department would like to develop more interdisciplinary courses with other Departments and increase its student recruitment and retention success.

## **Summary of External Reviewers' Report**

The External Reviewers endorsed strongly the Department's mission statement and noted the University's support for Music. They reported a high degree of student satisfaction with the program and indicated that the Department's decision to offer "general" (i.e., un-streamed) music degrees is appropriate. In their view, teaching assignments and service expectations are not out of line with other universities. There appears to be no plan in place to replace pianos and other instruments on a regular basis, and the University is advised to establish a capital fund to ensure this. The Music Library collection is exceptional and one of the strongest in Canada supporting an undergraduate program. The Reviewers do not support initiating an undergraduate program without a performance component. They do suggest the addition of courses in world music, popular music, film music, or jazz. Support for continuing and enhancing the strong commitment to Canadian music was expressed. A number of concerns were expressed about the integration of written theory and aural skills into a single course, the change in studio instructors experienced by some students during their degrees, and apparent inconsistencies in grading. Any new positions must recognize that the Department cannot be all things to all people.

The Reviewers made short-, medium-, and long-term recommendations. The most significant for the next year or two include the development of a strategic enrolment plan; a prioritization of which term positions will be filled first; removing the fourth year of applied lessons; and the development of separate courses for written theory and aural skills.

## **Summary of Departmental Response**

The Department appreciated the Reviewers' approach and modus operandi during their visit. In particular, they were glad that they took the time to meet individual faculty members and students and felt that they understood the Department's context, both within Mount Allison and regionally.

The response begins by correcting a number of errors in the External Reviewers' Report, several of which make a related recommendation moot. The Department does not support providing only three years of applied lessons. It plans to implement course changes that will result in an increased focus on musicianship, with a separate aural skills and keyboard component. It supports the development of new electives in world music, popular music, film music, and jazz (some existing courses already have a world music component), although current resources makes expansion in this area difficult. The Department strongly endorses an increased focus on Canadian Music and is pursuing a degree stream with Canadian Studies. It will continue and expand its involvement in Go Global summer camps. There is a challenge with respect to accompanists for voice lessons and other areas and the Department would support the creation of a staff position in accompaniment at some point in the future; at the present time, the budget does not exist. The

Department agrees that the refurbishment and maintenance of Brunton Auditorium should be a priority for the University. They would support the establishment of a shared position with the Université de Moncton and are proposing a Foundation Year program, as recommended by the Reviewers.

The Department then provides a strategic vision for the future as well as an implementation plan. The vision includes seven aims: interdisciplinary connection; partnership with Canadian Studies; diversity in elective offerings; ensembles-based curriculum; expanded outreach and recruitment strategies; increased musicianship; and meeting the needs of a new generation. Each aim has a connected action or series of actions, many of which are already underway. Preliminary proposals for the Canadian Studies stream, the Foundation Year, a summer recruitment camp program, and a revised B.Mus. curriculum with an increased focus on musicianship were attached.

Finally, the Department recommended that the University approve tenure-track positions in 1) Bands/Conducting/Single Reeds; 2) Brass, with specialization in jazz and/or musicianship; and a three-year term position in Canadian Music, with a disciplinary background of composition or theory.

### **Planning Committee and Provost Response**

The Planning Committee was very pleased with the Department's engagement with the external review process and is in full agreement with its response and its vision and aims for the upcoming years. In our informal meeting with the Head last spring, we expressed a strong conviction that the Department needs to make some choices in terms of its offerings and are therefore very supportive of its decision to discontinue instruction in strings. Likewise, our concern with anomalies in grading was dealt with immediately.

The issue of changing studio teachers during a student's time in the program is principally a result of retirements, resignations, or sabbatical leaves and is beyond the control of either the Department or the University. When sabbaticals have been granted, replacements have been provided.

With respect to the Foundation Year program, the Committee is supportive in principle although the resources required will need to be secured by reallocating existing resources or obtaining additional resources through the budget process. This will be required before the program can be approved.

We encourage the Department to continue to work on a longer-term retirement replacement plan as well as on a strategic enrolment plan that clearly identifies the current student capacity per instrument and sets recruitment targets.

When a retirement and a resignation led to two vacancies in the Department in 2007, the Planning Committee of the day recommended the creation of two, three-year term positions while the Department worked to rebuild its student enrolments

and experiment with a position dedicated to composition and music technology. The enrolments have rebounded and the dedicated composition position has been deemed a success. An unexpected retirement announcement this fall led the Planning Committee to request and consider a proposal from the Department with respect to filling this vacant position. In response, the Department proposed a reconfiguration of the three-year term position mentioned in their response into a tenure-track position with an emphasis on Canadian Music. The Planning Committee endorses this recommendation with the caveat that the Department must ensure that the selected candidate is able to cover the required composition courses in the program.

As a result, the Provost has authorized tenure-track searches in the following areas for 1 July 2011:

Brass (Assistant Professor)

Band/Woodwinds (Assistant Professor)

Canadian Music + Composition or Music Theory (Assistant Professor)

The issue of establishing an adequate fund for the regular replacement of pianos and other instruments has been flagged. The Department will be asked to develop a schedule for this that will be considered when the 2011-12 equipment funding is allocated in the spring.

A fundraising campaign for Brunton Auditorium is currently underway.