

Chapter #10

A MODEL FOR MODIFIED MUSIC STANDARDS IN PROFESSIONAL MUSIC TRAINING: A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Music standards equip music educators with abilities to translate music education verbiage to administrators and policymakers so that the latter may more readily comprehend standard instructional vocabulary. One of the realities of music education is its teachers work as professional musicians whose administrators have little training in music education and knowledge of the 2014 National Coalition for Core Arts Standards' educational standards for fine arts disciplines, including music. The purpose of this paper is to use the National Association for Music Education's three artistic processes of creating, performing, and responding (CPR) guidelines for music teachers to analyze and explore evaluation measures and the process of giving students tools in instructional programs. The focus is the guidelines' areas and practices across a range of standards representative of the quality of learning outcomes and balanced music curriculum, including responding to and creating and performing music. Insight into some of the implications of students' results is gained through the Music Department in the Tainan University of Technology, Taiwan. The findings demonstrate that accurate assessment of music performance in authentic contexts is realized by raising the quality of practice, defined as meeting learning objectives in performance, that conform to academic and performance requirements' criteria.

Keywords: music standards, music assessment, taxonomy.

1. INTRODUCTION

Contemporary educational reforms have incentivized creating statewide educational standards (Mullen, 2019). Music education researchers have noted the impact of various policies, particularly those created within the music education profession, on music teachers. The 2014 Music Standards are all about music literacy. The standards emphasize conceptual understanding in areas that reflect the actual processes in which musicians engage. The standards cultivate a student's ability to carry out the three artistic processes of creating, performing, and responding. The National Coalition for Core Arts Standards (NCCAS, 2014) reflects authentic artistic processes or artistic literacy in music and provide teachers with sequential learning standards to improve arts instruction for all students in the United States (Mullen, 2019). Assessment and grading of student work is an activity that is of considerable interest in the higher education sector internationally (Gynnild, 2016). In Taiwan, the United Kingdom's Art Education Act, presented in 1997, provided a solid foundation in music education for all students and provided the legal basis for music and other arts curricula in schools (Schmidt & Colwell, 2017). Music education curriculum, as part of the Grade 1-12 curriculum guidelines and framework for arts education, were implemented in 2018. The Grade 1-12 curriculum guidelines drew on the experiences of other countries in creating the artistic achievement assessment, such as the U.S. 2014 Music Standards (NafME, 2014), the Australian Curriculum Achievement Standard-Music

(Queensland Government, 2015), and the music level descriptors of the Hong-Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA, 2014). These standards represent a stage in the evolution of music curriculum standards.

1.1. The new bloom's taxonomy

Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives was first published in 1956 and has been widely influential in education and assessment standards ever since (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). A revised taxonomy was published in 2001 and continues to play a central role in setting educational standards and objectives to overcome the misconception that student learning in music cannot be assessed in the same manner as other subjects, such as math and science (Hanna, 2007). In this study, the new taxonomy is first examined as applied to the national standards in music education as they relate to teaching undergraduate procedural skills. Thereafter, a series of lesson plans to demonstrate how the revised taxonomy is applied in music courses is presented.

1.2. The taxonomy in practice: music knowledge instruction aligns with assessment criteria

Assessment in higher education has been under scrutiny since 1990 (Rawlusk, 2018, p. 34), and music assessment is included in the areas "identified by those in the measurement community as prime examples of unreliable measurement" (Parkes, 2010, p. 98). Researchers from the National Association for Music Education, Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI), American Educational Research Association (AERA), American Psychological Association (APA), and National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME) conducted a study indicating that the education assessment process is designed to promote self-examination of program performance and quality by providing feedback to participants and stakeholders and those "who develop tests, who use tests, and who take tests" (Reynolds, Livingston, & Willson, 2009, p. 15). Professional educational assessment provides essential "information that is used for making decisions about students, curricula and programs, and educational policy" (Mazur & Laguna, 2017, p. 119) and provides information to assist policy makers "become competent in selecting and using assessments" (p. 115). Assessment helps improve the value of the decisions made and outcomes produced. Hanna (2007) noted that there are several reasons the revised taxonomy is particularly appropriate for music education. First, the addition of knowledge domains are important because procedural and metacognitive knowledge are integral to music learning (Taylor, 1993). Second, the new taxonomy elevates creativity as the most complex of the cognitive processes. These additions have made Bloom's taxonomy a tool worthy of further study in the field of music education.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1. Music education and practice in the Taiwan's context

Two main channels of higher education exist in Taiwan: Academic and vocational technology. Tainan, Taiwan, hosts 11 universities: four are academic, and the other seven are vocational technology institutions (Ministry of Education, Taiwan, 2008). Only three of the universities have music departments: Two are academic universities, the National University of Tainan (NUTN) and Tainan National University of the Arts (TNNUA), and one is vocational technology university, namely, Tainan University of Technology (TUT). NUTN, located in the southern metropolitan area of Taiwan, is an historic university with a

distinguished academic legacy (National University of Tainan, 2007). TNNUA is the only professional school of the arts located outside of the Taipei metropolitan area. TUT, founded in August 1964, places its emphasis on home economics and arts and is located in Yongkang City, Tainan County's geographic center. There are 30 fulltime faculty in the music department of TUT; 19 faculty are piano majors, which is 63% of the staff in the music department.



2.2. Creating, performing, and responding model as a possible response

Demands for accreditation standards in music have already been expressed in the Western countries (Branscome, & Robinson, 2017; Jank, 2009). Possible solutions are provided by the creating, performing, and responding (CPR) model and approach to professional music training practice, through which individuals can discover and exert their own musical potential through meaningful learning (Marlowe, 2018). Issues related to creating, performing, and responding provide access to music standards of three artistic processes, namely, procedural knowledge, metacognition and performance strategies, and complexity of cognitive processes, which have become increasingly important in order to dismantle implicit intuitions (Hanna, 2007). Because music standards are becoming an increasingly articulate and holistic, yet objective, set of assessment criteria, it is crucial for music educators to face these challenges (Branscome, & Robinson, 2017; Hanna, 2007). Appropriate teaching strategies for music educators and for professional development in higher music education are being reconsidered.

In this situation, the CPR model can offer guidelines for music teachers and the process of giving students tools in instructional programs to connect with objective assessments, and it may provide a foundation for those assessments to engage accountability matters (Asmus, 1999).

The CPR model is the National Music Content Standards model created under the leadership of the National Association for Music Education (NAfME); the standards emphasize conceptual understanding in areas that reflect the actual processes in which musicians engage (NAMM Foundation, 2019). The NAfME of 2014 initially introduced the CPR model in order to reflect the actual processes in which musicians engage, and its application cultivates a student's ability to carry out the three artistic processes of creating, performing, and responding. The model is very broad in its assessment of competencies; it applies across the processes that musicians have followed for generations, even as they connect through music to their selves and their contemporary societies. Overall, it employs a number of new standards, provided in "strands," that represent the principle ways music instruction is delivered in the United States. In the case of the TUT, this model was adapted to the Taiwanese educational setting and augmented with several consequences influenced by the Music National Standards Comparison: 1994 versus 2014 (as cited in Shuler, Norgaard, & Blakeslee, 2014; see Table 1).

Table 1.
 Music National Standards Comparison: 1994 versus 2014.

	1994 Standards		2014 NCCAS Standards				
Focus	Skills and knowledge		Understanding/independence music literacy				
Overarching structure	9 content standards		Three artistic processes				
	Process components		Enduring understandings		Essential questions		
Outcomes	Achievement standards 25-34 per level		Performance standards 13-19 per level				
Elementary/ middle	Kindergarten-Grade 8 Two grade clusters (K4 and 5-8)		Prekindergarten-Grade 8 Grade-by-grade (i.e. 10 levels)				
High school	One set to cover all course types		Customized sets for four strands				
	Two Levels advanced proficient			En- semble	Guitar/ Key- board	Comp/ Theory	Music Tech
			Advanced	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
			Accom- plished	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
			Proficient	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
			Inter- mediate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(Level grade 8)	
		Novice	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(Level grade 5)		
Connections	To the other arts	Content Standards 8	11 Common anchors				
	To other content	Content Standards 9	Embedded within 3 artistic processes				
Assessment tools	Separate publications		Model cornerstone assessments benchmark student work				
Format	Hard copy		Online and customizable				
	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> Educator-developed Method-neutral Voluntary <u>What is similar</u> Philosophical foundations Goals Assessable outcomes Opportunity-to-learn expectations Glossary </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> </div>						

2.3. Review of the Literature

2.3.1. Balancing student goals, employer expectations, and higher education performance standards

Professional music training is a complex learning setting and assessing student outcomes according to reliable and valid standards has presented challenges (Parkes, 2010). Well-defined systems of grading are rare in higher education (given the variance in instructors' assessment practices), but to the extent that common practices exist, they have been conducted to date without a meaningful body of research to support them (Buckmiller, Peters, & Kruse, 2017). As Swart, Duncan, and Hall (2013) noted, a recent study of American college and university grading practices from 1940-2009 found that, on average, across a wide range of schools, the letter grade "A" represented 43% of all grades, an increase of 28% since 1960, and 12% since 1988. The authors concluded that GPAs are so saturated with high-end grades that they have little use as a motivator for students or evaluation tool for graduate and professional schools and employers. The American Library Association (2000) noted that in 2000, the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) also issued the legacy of national guidelines, the *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education*. The Standards represented the organisation's first attempt at national information literacy standards and were approved by the ACRL Board in 2000. Conor (2017) noted that the Music Library Association (MLA) released its own response to the Standards, the *Information Literacy Objectives for Undergraduate Music Students*, in 2005. The MLA's standards are identical in content to the ACRL Standards but include additional, discipline-specific outcomes (Conor, 2017).

Music literacy is the ability to convey one's own musical ideas and understand how others convey their ideas through music (Shuler et al., 2014). Duke and Simmons (2006) revealed that musical goals and expectations are prominent elements in lessons given by internationally renowned artist-teachers. The expectation of the artist-teacher is that the student play in a lesson as if he/she is performing on stage in order to achieve "a high standard" (p. 12). Gande and Kruse-Weber (2017) noted that instrumental music teachers and universities or conservatoires for higher music education have to deal with the sociocultural and educational landscapes' new challenges, for example more flexible and less secure employment compared to permanent positions in the past, changes in the cultural sector, and the popularity of music styles other than classical. As Jank (2009) suggested, it is necessary to design a set of activities that will enable successful cooperation between hard policies (such as decisions concerning cultural and education policies) and soft policies (such as university admissions criteria and curricula). Institutions of higher learning that are being scrutinized for retention and graduation rates may have their numbers affected by the behaviors of the less than serious student. Conflicting forces in society and in the education system are responsible for the seeming irrelevance of music education content and methods to students. Questions raised are the following: Do stakeholders see a future where students go to college to learn specific jobs that lead directly to employment in industry or music? Has the broad based general studies value of college waned, especially in light of the immediacy of knowledge via the internet?

2.3.2. The use of standards-based assessment in creating deeper learning

Continuously assessing the assessment process also provides opportunities for commercial test publishers, professionals, and researchers to exchange views on "guidelines for the ethical and responsible use of tests" (Reynolds et al., 2009, p. 14). Lyotard (1988, p. 13), Reynolds et al. (2009, p. 14), Bradley (2011, p. 79), and Richerme (2016, p. 284) noted the process of assessing assessment draws on information gleaned

from the revised 2014 National Core Music Standards, like the 1994 predecessors, namely, *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* (AERA, 1999), accredited by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI); *The Student Evaluation Standards* (Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation [JCSEE], 2003); the *Code of Professional Responsibilities in Educational Measurement* (NCME, 1995); and the *Code of Fair Testing Practices in Education* (Joint Committee on Testing Practices [JCTP], 1998), among others. While assessments are focused primarily on the people involved, the whole assessment process is used to examine whether the participants and instruments have achieved their stated objectives (Richerme, 2016).

2.4. Purpose of study

The purpose of this paper is to provide a review of noteworthy developments with the Tainan University of Technology (TUT), Taiwan, Music Department's seven-year program from high school directly to a bachelor's degree in vocational education. A performance assessment process at the TUT has been selected to discuss criteria and guidelines for measuring the effectiveness of both student assessment and the ongoing process of program evaluation. Selected areas for consideration are the following:

- Selection and/or development of instruments,
- Alignment to existing programs,
- Student rights and responsibilities,
- Prevention of bias,
- Instructor and administrator responsibilities,
- Student achievement,
- Accommodations, and
- Issues in developing, selecting, scoring, and interpreting students' results.

In this paper, the above processes are explored with reference to the TUT's various goals and strengths and the opportunity used to make recommendations for improvement. Alignment with these processes could offer important criteria for defining and communicating measures for evaluating questions about and objectives for curriculum. Ensuring schools have access to recent and multiple forms of assessment has contributed to "emphasizing the intra-active nature of measurement and empower[ing] themselves to critique and reimagine existing measurement apparatuses and their measurement and assessment practices" (Richerme, 2016, p. 174). Additional creative measures are required for schools to rise to the challenge of "assessment criteria, such as the overall impression of the performance, technical ability, expressive components, and the basic parameters of the quality of the performance" (Mazur & Laguna, 2017, p. 115). Equally important is ensuring students are competent in creating, performing, and responding to enhance results and conclusions.

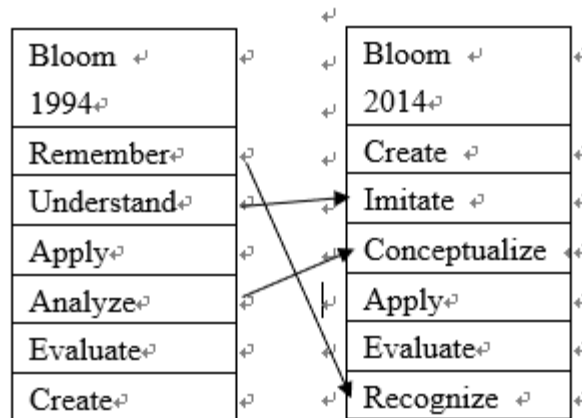
3. METHODS

3.1. A revised taxonomy for assessing performance requirements

As a general overview of TUT's process, the assessment of performance requirements from each Content and Achievement Standard of the 1994 music standards and from each Anchor Standard and sub-Standard of National Coalition for Core Arts Standards (NCCAS, 2014) were applied. Even assuming that everyone enters the assessment event with a sound shared understanding, there is still the question of whether the way a student performs on a given day is truly representative of his or her wider abilities. Whenever assessment of performance requirements seemed to lose meaning out of the context of the standard,

external function (literary criticism by listeners) rather than judgement were applied. How the taxonomy functions in the assessment of performance requirements was then demonstrated. Through this process, two tables presenting the assessment of performance requirements in the format of Bloom's Taxonomy were generated. The 1994 Standards and the 2014 National Coalition for Core Arts Standards in Bloom's Taxonomy are summarized in Figure 1. The processes are arranged in ascending order, where the lowest row reflects the simplest cognitive process and progresses to the highest row, which reflects the most complex process in the taxonomy. Arrows indicate where each subsequent study has reordered various stages of the process.

Figure 1.
Comparison of learning taxonomies.



The revised taxonomy put forth by the 2014 National Coalition for Core Arts Standards suggests that the most meaningful learning results when progressing from knowledge retention (remember), a past-based process, to knowledge transfer (create), a future-based process, in which students are able to apply learned material to new situations. The 2014 Core Arts Standards, with substantive support from findings in music cognition studies, recommended renaming and reordering certain processes to reflect the learning experience in an aural skills setting more accurately.

3.2. Formulating an assessment task

The hope is that everyone—students, students' teachers, examiners, and the outside world/profession—will share the same understanding of what is being assessed and how it is being assessed and against which benchmarks. The greatest strengths of the seven-year program at the TUT Music Department are that its instructional programs use multiple measurement/assessment tools in the assessment of performance requirements (see Table 2). For example, a critical listening audience, not only a professional panel, assesses music students in public. Performance assessment at the TUT has continued to expand beyond only learning outcomes to include learning processes. After five years, staff at the TUT's Music Department want to know in what areas students have developed to meet learning goals (skills and knowledge). After seven years, staff in the Music Department want to know 'how' students have grown in their professional development. Students need to perform as singers and as instrumentalists as well as in their lives and careers.

4. RESULTS OF THE CPR MODEL ANALYSIS

The CPR model analysis tasks focused on two skills: (a) understanding/independence and (b) music literacy. All factors were culturally determined systems of knowledge in music and are applied to musical abilities. The assessment of such a complex phenomenon requires diverse approaches with respect to what and how to assess (a) factual knowledge and musical abilities as defined by experts in the field, (b) knowledge components determined by societal needs, and (c) the constraints imposed by the methodology of assessment (Csíkos & Dohány, 2016).

4.1. Understanding/independence

In the first task, subjects had to identify understanding between those doing the assessing and those being assessed about the following basic questions:

1. What is the assessor seeking to look for and measure?
2. What evidence has been chosen to show that the assessor has found what he or she is looking for?
3. Once found, how will that evidence be measured or calibrated in the assessment to decide whether what has been found is of a sufficient quality for the student to be passed?

The answers to these questions formed the raw materials for a set of criteria applicable to the assessment.

4.2. Music literacy

In the second task, students had to cover a wide variety of knowledge components and musical abilities with laboratory-based methods and individual data collection. Since measuring music literacy as a psychological construct requires achieving high reliability, and test length directly correlates with reliability (Spearman-Brown formula), TUT's music department assessment demanded a relatively large number of test items and the use of item formats that permit objective scoring.

Table 2.
Strengths Guidelines in the TUT.

The assessment regime	Teacher assessment	Performance examinations	Accountability	Penalties	Failure of performance examinations	Appeals
1. Teacher assessment, jury examinations, and recitals. 2. The fifth year is a barrier exam; a student must pass to be admitted to the upper classes 3. Semester assessment	1. Holistic judgments capture the overall quality (Thompson & Williamon, 2003, p. 26)	1. Preparation 2. Scheduling 3. Exam structure for B.Mus. performance principal study 4. Repertoire requirements 5. The provision of scores to examiners 6. Marking guidelines for performance examinations 7. Membership of examination and recital panels 8. Conduct during performance examinations 9. Marking procedures 10. Procedures for resolving conflict 11. The report	Staff are Accountable for all grading decisions.	1. Penalties may be applied if performances fall short of or exceed the allowed time limit. 2. Changes in the program incur a penalty.	If student failure occurs in the semester jury, the student can retake the class during the following year along with his/her current credits, or delay his/her graduation one year to complete the requirement.	Under the TUT policy students have right to appeal on the basis of procedural fairness or final result.

Note. Modelled on the Brass Criteria Specific Performance Rubric in “Performance Assessment: Lessons from Performers” by Kelly Parkes in *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 22(1), p.102. Copyright 2010.

5. DISCUSSION

In the following discussion, the taxonomy terms outlined by 2014 National Coalition for Core Arts Standards are included in parentheses. Using terms universally applied across disciplines will prove helpful for instructors needing to explain how performance requirements align with assessment criteria endorsed by their respective institutions.

5.1. Recognize (remember)

The initial stage of the taxonomy requires that students be able first to define and then to recognize music performance (singing or playing instruments) in a real musical texture. To accomplish this task, they must remember the student's overall profile of achievement and identify symptoms of weakness in his or her performance. The most logical starting point is a student's 'performance' or his or her achievement as a musical performer.

5.2. Imitate (understand)

The 2014 National Coalition for Core Arts Standards explain that the repertoire of skills students must perform must be a "representative repertoire of the area of musical study," or *imitate* a variety of appropriate styles. For repertoire skills, a varied program will usually offer a representative repertoire of the instrument to cover interpretation (the creation of artistic concepts), technique (their realization), and presentation (their expression).

5.3. Conceptualize (Analyze)

In "Music Performance Assessment: Exploring Three Approaches for Quality Rubric Construction," DeLuca and Bolden (2014) wrote about "how criteria can be constructed that both encourage achievement of curriculum expectations and technical proficiency and leave room for students' expressive intentions" (Abstract). The 2014 National Coalition for Core Arts Standards explain that in the repertoire skills, students must first develop a "performer's ability to perform" before applying skills in artistic expression. The same is true in performance requirements, and an added benefit of renaming this category *conceptualize* is that it cannot be confused with the task of music analysis. Rather, the focus of this stage of the taxonomy is to explore the relationship between assessment and learning in greater detail.

6. CONCLUSION

Branscome and Robinson (2017) noted that the 2014 Core Arts standards aligned with verbs in Bloom's 1956 taxonomy focus and examined the positive and negative implications of applying Bloom's taxonomy (cognitive domain) to music instruction. Through this process, music educators may discover that arts assessment and the alignment of instructional vocabulary are necessary to a strong advocacy platform. As Parkes (2010) noted, the features of assessment, as explained by Shepard (2000), can be seen in the higher education literature across several countries, and more importantly, the research of music performance literature. The increasing demand for "standard-setting process primarily involves consideration of qualitative, evaluative criteria, only then to be followed with the support of the quantitative measurement data" (Wesolowski et al. 2018, p. 226), and this has heightened the need for music performance evaluation. In this paper, an attempt was made to explain the performance assessment process at the TUT to show what reliability means in a contemporary music education context.

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