



SLO Assessment Cycle for MUSI 1A

Introduction to Music: Music in Western Cultures

Assessment Initiated by: [Dan Mitchell](#) (8511) in MUSI

Outcomes:

Outcome 1: Statement

The successful student will employ a basic vocabulary of common music terms to describe observations of recorded and live music.

Assessment Cycle Records:

Outcome 1: Assessment Planning Modified: [03/22/2011]

Assessment Strategy Used:

Quarter: Winter 2011

Assessors: Dan Mitchell, Ilan Glasman, Robert Farrington, Ronald Dunn

Assessment Tools: Exams • Performances/Demonstrations • Papers/Essays • Written Reports

Outcome 1: Reflect & Enhance Modified: [02/02/2012]

Number of people involved in Reflection and Enhancement: 4

Changes:

Methods:

A series of listening assignments primarily focuses on students describing observations of recorded music and applying basic music vocabulary to this task. Success on these assignments in terms of grade evaluation and percentage of completion will be assessed.

A concert report assignment primarily focuses on observing and describing live music performances and applying basic music vocabulary to this task. Success on these assignments in terms of grade evaluation and percentage of completion will be assessed.

Summary:

In general students successfully demonstrate overall success at describing observations of recorded music and applying basic music vocabulary to this task on a series of "listening assignments." It is sometimes apparent that not all students are necessarily listening carefully to the musical examples upon which the assignments are based. In some cases, it appears that students who are attempting to save money on text and materials are not acquiring the recordings that accompany the text. In a few cases some students who are not allocating sufficient time to these assignments or who may not have the recordings appear to be offering superficial answers or answers based entirely on reading but without listening.

The concert report can be a very challenging assignment for typical Music 1A students, who are usually not music majors and who have little or no experience writing about objective characteristics of music that they listen to in live performance. That said, most students perform adequately or better on this assignment. Those who don't may encounter one or more of the following issues: failure to understand assignment guidelines, inadequate writing skills, difficulty attending events due to transportation, scheduling, or cost issues, and the challenges of recording objective facts about a live musical performance as it takes place.

Enhancement (Part I):

Regarding listening assignments and attention to obtaining, using, and engaging the recorded music component of required course materials: Some checks on whether or not students have these materials during week one are useful and seem to have decreased the number of students without these materials. Allowing students to use the previous edition of the text and recordings has somewhat lowered cost barriers.

The allocation of sufficient time for completing the work - e.g. starting soon enough - is a challenge with students in almost all courses in my experience. Weekly quizzes based on reading assignments encourage early engagement with the text. Some questions on the listening itself may need to be added to the quizzes to encourage earlier and more

careful listening.

Regarding the issues that some students have with the concert report assignment: students are encouraged to bring drafts in well before the deadline for review and revision, to use on-campus resources providing basic help with writing skills, to schedule and attend concert attendance well before the deadline. To address practical issues low cost and more accessible events on the concert list are highlighted, a list of events is provided a week before the events take place. To address the challenges of recording objective facts about live performance, practice observations are incorporated into class activities during the weeks before the assignment is due, and students who need a second chance may complete an optional second report.

Enhancement (Part II):

Given that writing and comprehension skills are critical to success on this major written assignment in this class, strong basic writing skills classes and other related resources are critical.

Outcome 2: Statement

The successful student will recognize individual instruments and voices and the various ensembles in which they are used.

Outcome 2: Assessment Planning Modified: [03/22/2011]

Assessment Strategy Used:

Quarter: Winter 2011

Assessors: Dan Mitchell, Ilan Glasman, Robert Farrington, Ronald Dunn

Assessment Tools: Exams • Performances/Demonstrations • Papers/Essays • Written Reports

Outcome 2: Reflect & Enhance Modified: [02/02/2012]

Number of people involved in Reflection and Enhancement: 4

Changes:

Methods:

Exams will include questions evaluating students' recognition of and knowledge of instruments and voices and typical ensembles including both large and chamber music groupings.

A concert report assignment which has among its requirements the accurate description of a variety of vocal and instrumental music sound sources will also assess this outcome.

Summary:

Students respond to exam and assignment prompts by listing and categorizing instruments, voices, and the ensembles in which they appear and by describing the sound sources in musical examples presented on the assignments and tests. The concert report assignment is primarily based on narrative descriptions of objective features of music performed on live concerts, including description of the sound sources individually and collectively.

Students are largely successful at the basic levels expected in a course such as Music 1A.

Enhancement (Part I):

No plans at this time.

Enhancement (Part II):

Since learning about musical sound sources, individual and ensemble, often requires students to comprehend background information, the visual appearance, and the sounds of these resources, effective multi-media presentation tools are required in the classroom and must be kept up to date and include appropriate current enhancements. One difficulty with typical systems is that they only allow presentation of one medium (for example, print OR video OR photographs) at one time. Systems that present multiple media are available on campus, for example in some art history classrooms, and the availability of such systems in Music 1A (and B, C, D) classrooms would enhance student success.

