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Jill Wilson
Luther College

Emily McGinnis
University of Missouri

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A Comparison of Music Faculty and Music Education Faculty Beliefs Regarding Music Curricula for Pre-service Teachers

By

Jill Wilson
Luther College
Decorah, Iowa

Emily McGinnis
University of Missouri
Kansas City, Missouri

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to compare music education faculty (MEF) and music faculty (MF) beliefs regarding musical knowledge and skills needed by future music educators, to investigate whether music education curricula are adequately preparing students for current needs in the field, and to explore possibilities for curricular change. Through an online survey distributed to a nationwide sample of college and university MF and MEF, participants ranked what they believed to be the most important music-related courses in music education curricula, indicated courses they believed should receive more emphasis and those they believed should receive less emphasis, rated the importance of various musical skills and musical knowledge related to music teacher preparation, and described any curricular changes they believed would be beneficial in preparing future music educators. Results indicated both groups ranked ear training/aural skills courses as most important in music education preparation programs; however, differences of opinion emerged regarding applied lessons, conducting, elementary methods, performance ensembles, and secondary ensemble methods. Both MEF and MF agreed curricular change was necessary. Coding of qualitative responses revealed that consideration of “traditional” elements was not exclusive to MF.

Keywords: music teacher education, curriculum, curricular change

“The world into which our students will graduate is vastly different from the one around which the field has typically been conceived” (CMS Manifesto, 2014). Still, university music programs have changed very little since the call for transformation that followed the Tanglewood Symposium 50 years ago (Heuser, 2015; Palmer & deQuadros, 2012). Numerous researchers have lobbied for reform and action to address challenges that face today’s school music programs (Barrett, 2009; Heuser, 2015; Hickey & Rees, 2002; Webster, 2017). In order to engage “the other 80%” (students not served by secondary-level large ensembles), a re-examination of music teacher education curricula is required (Campbell, Myers, & Sarath, 2014; Kratus, 2014; Palmer & deQuadros, 2012). The idea of “music education for all” may need to begin with music teacher education for all—music teacher education programs may be where significant transformation of music education practice begins.

The mission of the Society for Music Teacher Education (SMTE)’s Critical Examination of Curricula Area of Strategic Planning and Action (ASPA) is to “critically examine curricular practices and explore innovative changes that lead to relevant music learning experiences for all” (SMTE, n.d.). Certification requirements, university requirements, National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) requirements, and long-standing traditions all inhibit innovation. A redesign of music education curricula may involve new subject matter, and will likely require more choices so as not to overwhelm already overcrowded curricula.

In this study, we compared music faculty and music education faculty beliefs regarding musical knowledge and skills needed by future music educators. We distributed an online survey to a nationwide sample of college and university music faculty and music education faculty. We asked participants to select their “primary role”; the choice “Music Faculty” referred to “not primarily involved in music education”. On the survey, we asked participants to rank what they

believed to be the five most important music education course requirements; rate the importance of several skills related to musicianship, performing, pedagogy, and content knowledge; indicate areas they believed needed more emphasis or deserved less emphasis; and share ideas for curricular change. We examined resulting data in the context of potential curricular change to provide more relevant training for preservice music teachers. The questions guiding our research were as follows:

1. How do music education and music faculty beliefs compare regarding important musical knowledge and skills needed by future music educators?
2. Do music and music education faculty believe their institution's preservice music education curriculum is adequately preparing their students for current needs in the field?
3. If not, in what areas do faculty envision curricular change for their institution's preservice music education program?

Literature Review

Research from as long ago as 1927 recommend a need for change in music teacher education curricula. Teachers were blamed for poor music reading ability and a lack of change in music listening habits (Kwalwasser, 1927). More recently, in 1970, MENC made formal recommendations for change, including reconfiguring "fragmented" courses in history, theory, literature, and ear training, eliminating constant ensemble participation requirements, and replacing senior recital requirements with research projects. MENC raised concerns regarding a lack of preparation of teachers in both content area and professional education expertise and suggested fostering more interaction between teacher education students and integration of professional experience in coursework. In the next decade, researchers recognized music educators had to rely on traditional music training as the critical component of music teacher

training (Colwell, 1985), and recommended that curriculum include a greater variety of musical traditions and unique programs consistent with resources (Leonard, 1985).

The 1986 Holmes Report prompted careful examination of teacher education programs. The document prompted Schmidt (1989) to ask university and public school teachers to list all topics they believed should be included in undergraduate music education programs. Without including core music and core education courses, participants identified 56 different topics. Among topics not included in many of the examined university programs were musical theater techniques, instrument repair, guitar technique, jazz band methods, and music in world cultures. Mantie, et. al, (2017) found additional topics relevant to music teachers, such as music production, were absent as well from undergraduate programs that are primarily performance-based

One of the most recent efforts to examine the relevance of music teacher training in undergraduate education was the creation of the CMS Task Force for the Undergraduate Music Major (TFUMM). Its charge was to reconceptualize how future music educators are prepared in light of “the realities of the musical worlds in which they will live and work” (Sarath, Myers, and Campbell, 2017, p. ix). Authors brought to light the focus on interpretation of historic works, ethnocentrism, and fragmentation found in the traditional curriculum. Members of the music profession often claim to teach creativity, but creativity may be confined to the podium while students focus on technical proficiency. Creativity, diversity, and integration are the core “pillars” of the transformed model (p. 5). These concepts are presented in earlier research by Palmer and deQuadros (2012). They suggested music education practices could become more democratic by employing more improvisation and composition, teaching students to make interpretive decisions about their own solo and ensemble performances. This, they claimed,

would remove barriers to broader musical participation in schools, and expand offerings to embrace more diverse musical practices.

Considering how music teacher educators might teach more in less time, Thornton, Murphy, and Hamilton (2004), suggested making “one small change” (p. 34). Theory and education faculty collaborated to create a project through which students would apply what they had learned in their theory coursework in a music methods course project. The authors cited fluctuating state licensure requirements, accrediting bodies, and national standards as challenges in implementing curricular changes, and hoped their model would lead to further innovation among faculty at their institution. Innovation and change could start at the institutional level, as demonstrated in Kimpton’s (2005) research, describing an overhaul to the undergraduate curriculum at the University of Minnesota. Rather than add new courses, faculty looked for ways to integrate existing knowledge and skill instruction. Integration required professors to team teach, promoting cross-curricular connections and application of theories and skills. This type of transformation is referred to by The College Music Society Manifesto (2014) as a “Self-Organizing Change Mechanism” (p. 30). In these examples, institutions restructure requirements and design coursework to allow more space for what Shively (2017) described as the need for music teacher educators to prepare their students for the jobs they *will* have while also considering how to prepare them for the jobs we *hope* they will have.

Researchers have examined music educators’ and preservice teachers’ beliefs regarding their professional preparation. Groulx (2015) asked music educators which courses were most valuable in their teacher education programs. Themes included a desire for technical skills (everything from fixing instruments to using recording equipment); a need for effective teaching (especially classroom management); a focus on administrative skills; a desire to spend more time

in schools; more support in area of specialization; and broader preparation. The latter may be attributed to the fact that 83% of participants reported teaching outside their specialty area. In a study exploring student perceptions of skills needed for student teaching (Hourigan & Scheib, 2009), participants mentioned administrative skills, classroom management skills, musicianship skills, and content and pedagogical knowledge, all of which form a “sort of bank of knowledge from which they withdraw information as needed” (p. 53). Some of the above-mentioned skills seem to be acquired from experiences outside of students’ academic requirements (Hourigan & Scheib, 2009; Mantie, et al, 2017).

Our study expands upon the existing music education curriculum research and responds to the call of the SMTE Critical Examination of Curricula ASPA. We examined whether there were substantial differences in beliefs between MF and MEF regarding important musical knowledge and musical skills needed by future music educators, whether each group believes the music education curriculum is adequately preparing students for current needs in the field, and each groups’ suggestions for curricular change.

Methodology

We chose a convergent parallel mixed methods design to explore music education faculty and music faculty views (Creswell, 2014). While we gathered qualitative and quantitative data simultaneously, we analyzed them separately. Quantitative data gathered from ratings and rankings were compared with open-ended responses. To confirm or disconfirm a relationship between findings,

Participants and Demographic Data

Participants ($N = 247$) in this study included MEF ($n = 187, 76\%$) and MF who were not primarily involved in music education ($n = 60, 24\%$). Participants self-selected into these groups with an option of “other”. Via email, we recruited music education faculty, using a nearly comprehensive list of music education faculty in the United States. Through snowball sampling via a forwarded email from a MEF colleague, we recruited MF. The response rate for MEF was approximately 20%, but the overall response rate and the response rate for MF is unknown. Participant’s number of years teaching at the collegiate level varied, though most participants were in their first ten years of teaching ($n = 99, 40\%$). Fewer participants fell into the 11 - 20 year ($n = 69, 28\%$) and 21 – 30-year categories ($n = 47, 19\%$), and only 9% of participants had taught for 31 years or more ($n = 22$). Geographically, most participants’ institutions were located in the North Central ($n = 69, 28\%$) and Southwestern ($n = 64, 26\%$) divisions, but the Southern ($n = 47, 19\%$), Eastern ($n = 37, 15\%$), Western ($n = 17, 7\%$), and Northwest ($n = 12, 5\%$) National Association for Music Education (NAfME) divisions were also represented.

Measures

Participants completed an electronic researcher-designed survey developed on the Qualtrics platform and distributed via email. The survey consisted of five parts. First, participants answered three demographic questions. They indicated their primary role at their institution (Music Education Faculty, Music Faculty, or other), the number of years they have taught at the collegiate level, and the geographic region in which their university was located (according to NAfME divisions). Participants ranked what they believed to be the five most important music-related courses or requirements commonly found in music education degree programs. Given a list of 15 items drawn from the work of Duerksen (1991), Groulx (2015), and Hourigan & Scheib (2009), items on this list included applied study, arranging/composition,

conducting, ear training/aural skills, elementary methods, instrumental methods, music history, music technology, performing ensembles, piano proficiency, recital attendance, secondary ensemble methods, theory, vocal pedagogy, and world music. There was also an option available for participants to type up to two additional items. From this same list, participants then selected courses they felt should receive more emphasis and courses they felt should receive less emphasis at their particular institution. Next, participants rated the importance of 21 items describing music-related knowledge or skills needed to be a well-prepared music teacher in today's society. The rating occurred on a scale of 1 – 10, with anchors of not-important and essential. Examples of these items include conducts with good technique, hears chord changes, and possesses knowledge of world music. Figure 2 represents a complete list of these 21 items, determined through analysis of extant research (e.g., Edelman, 2016; Hourigan & Scheib, 2009; Kelly, 2010; MacLeod & Walter, 2011; McGinnis, 2017; Miksza, Roeder, & Biggs, 2010; Schmidt, 1989; Teachout, 1997) and feedback from pilot study participants. Finally, participants had the opportunity to describe any curricular changes they felt would be beneficial to equip preservice music teachers through an open-ended response better.

Procedure

We plotted a survey tool with a convenience sample of 21 MEF in order to identify potential flaws or points of confusion. Changes included small edits to verbiage to clarify intent. We compiled email addresses of MEF at NASM-accredited institutions through institutions' websites, and emailed an invitation to participate in the study to potential participants via Qualtrics. This request included a description of the study and an anonymous survey link. The MEF were asked to forward the survey link to MF at their institutions. The survey was open for

one month. We analyzed data using tools from the Qualtrics platform, data programs, and content analysis techniques.

Results

Results are organized according to research question. First, we reported MEF and MF beliefs regarding important musical knowledge and skills needed by future music educators. Next, we described whether faculty felt their institution's preservice music education curriculum was adequately preparing their students for current needs in the field. Finally, we shared faculty members' visions for curricular change in their preservice music education program.

Comparison of Music Faculty and Music Education Faculty Beliefs

Participants were provided a list of 15 items and asked to rank the five most important music-related courses or requirements commonly found in music education degree programs. Items on this list were applied study, arranging/composition, conducting, ear training/aural skills, elementary methods, instrumental methods, music history, music technology, performing ensembles, piano proficiency, recital attendance, secondary ensemble methods, theory, vocal pedagogy, and world music. An option was available for participants to include up to two additional courses or requirements other than those listed. In Figure 1, the complete bar shows the total percentage of participants in each group, MEF and MF, that ranked the course or requirement within the top five. The color within each bar indicates the level at which it was ranked (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, or 5th). Ear Training/Aural Skills was ranked most frequently by both groups, and also had the highest percentage of first place rankings. The categories with the greatest difference in ranking between MEF and MF included applied study, conducting, elementary methods, performance ensembles, secondary ensemble methods, and other (write-in responses). MEF ranked elementary methods and secondary ensemble methods higher, while MF

ranked applied lessons, conducting, and ensemble participation higher. Every course or requirement included in the survey question was ranked in the top five by at least one participant, yet 59 write-in responses were also entered. Write-in responses, mostly from MEF, included the following suggestions: providing of a variety of music methods courses, focusing on philosophical foundations of music education, preparing students for non-traditional music teaching experiences, devoting more time to music pedagogy and lesson planning, increasing the amount of information on child development and students with special needs, developing critical thinking and reflection skills, highlighting themes of social justice and diversity, addressing injury prevention, and providing more field experiences.

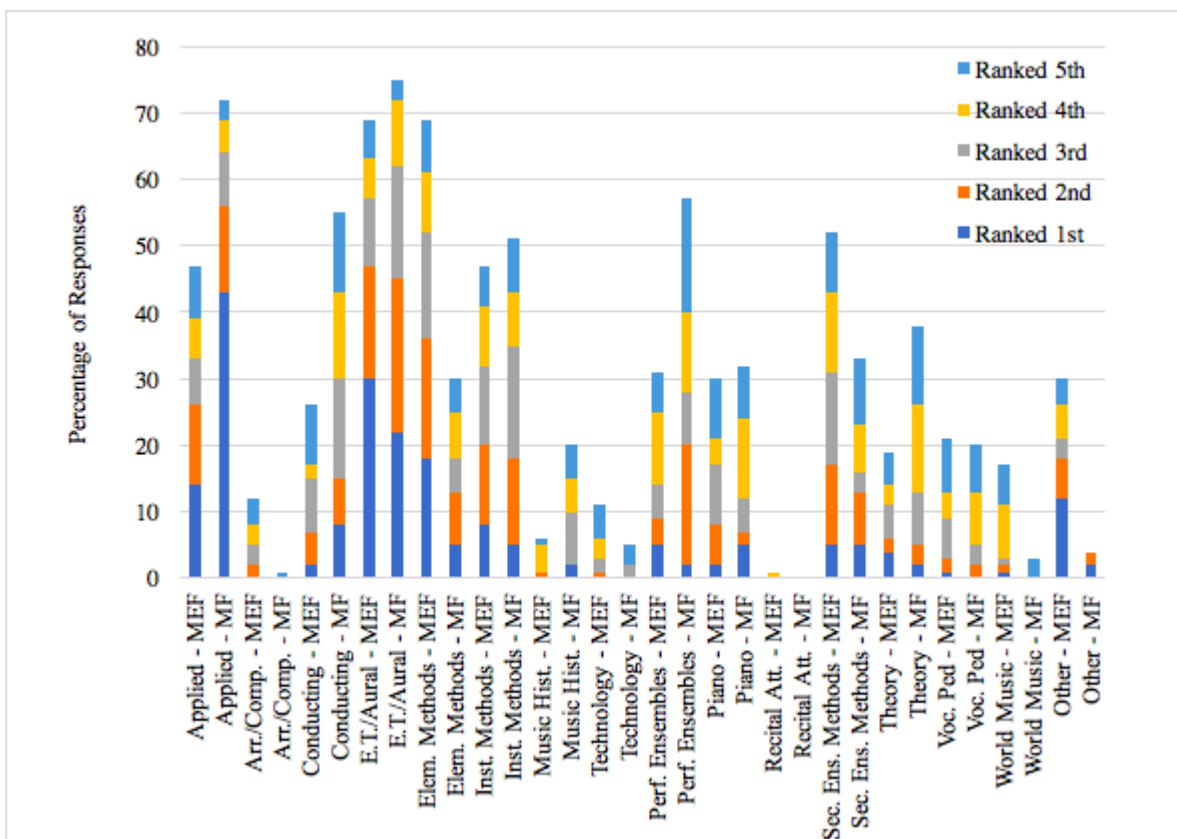


Figure 1. Ranking of music education courses by percentage of music education faculty (MEF) and music faculty (MF) responses.

Additionally, participants rated the importance of 21 items describing music-related knowledge or skills needed to be a well-prepared music teacher in today's society. The rating occurred on a scale of 1-10 with anchors of "not important" and "essential". The range of answers was 9.70 to 4.21; the mean of all answers was 7.36. Figure 2 shows all 21 items organized by skills related to musicianship, performance skills, pedagogical knowledge, and content knowledge. MEF and MF agreed on skills that could be categorized as performance skills: performs at a high level on a main instrument ($M_{mef} = 7.78$, $M_{mf} = 8.29$), sings/plays in large ensemble ($M_{mef} = 7.56$, $M_{mf} = 8.02$), and sings/plays in small ensemble ($M_{mef} = 6.96$, $M_{mf} = 7.01$). Four items (sequences instruction logically toward a musical goal, detects errors, models musical concepts with instrument or voice, and deconstructs musical concepts into manageable chunks) had the highest means in both groups, though in different rank order. The skill rated highest by MEF was "sequences instruction logically toward a musical goal" ($M = 9.70$), which could be categorized as a pedagogical skill, while the skill identified as most important by MF was "detects errors" ($M = 9.42$), which could be categorized as a musicianship skill. MEF and MF both rated "possesses ability to compose" lowest of all items.

	<i>MEF mean</i>	<i>MF mean</i>
Musicianship Skills		
Models musical concepts with instrument or voice	9.22	8.69
Detects errors	8.98	9.42
Hears chord changes	8.52	8.42
Reads music using rhythm systems	7.81	7.15
Reads music using solfege	7.50	6.69
Possesses ability to arrange	7.25	5.62
Plays warm-up patterns at the piano	6.66	6.32
Possesses ability to compose	5.68	4.21
Performance Skills		
Performs at a high level on a main instrument	7.78	8.29
Sings/plays in a large ensemble	7.56	8.02
Conducts with good technique	7.31	7.98
Sings/plays in a small ensemble	6.96	7.01
Knowledge		
Possesses knowledge of music education pedagogies	7.73	6.36
Possesses knowledge of non-Western/non-traditional styles	7.29	6.27
Possesses knowledge of world music	6.84	5.82
Possesses knowledge of Western music history	6.65	7.63
Pedagogy		
Sequences instruction logically toward a musical goal	9.70	9.05
Deconstructs musical concepts into manageable chunks	9.48	8.84
Uses improvisation in instruction	7.35	6.28
Possesses skills to apply technology in the creation of music	7.09	6.09
Possesses skills to apply technology in the performance of music	6.90	5.64

Figure 2. Rating of skills and knowledge by importance.

Beliefs Regarding Adequacy of Preparation Programs

Again, we provided participants with the list of 15 music-related courses and requirements. We asked them to indicate all items they believed should receive more emphasis as part of their institution's preservice music education curriculum. Using the same list, participants selected all items they believed should receive less emphasis as part of their institution's preservice music education curriculum. Among music education faculty, world music, arranging/composition, and music technology were seen as courses that should be given more attention (Figure 3). MF agreed on the need for more instruction in world music, but aural skills and piano proficiency were also seen as areas of need, followed by music technology and applied study. Reports of which courses should receive less emphasis (Figure 3) were largely the inverse, with the exception of world music, which ranked in the top half.

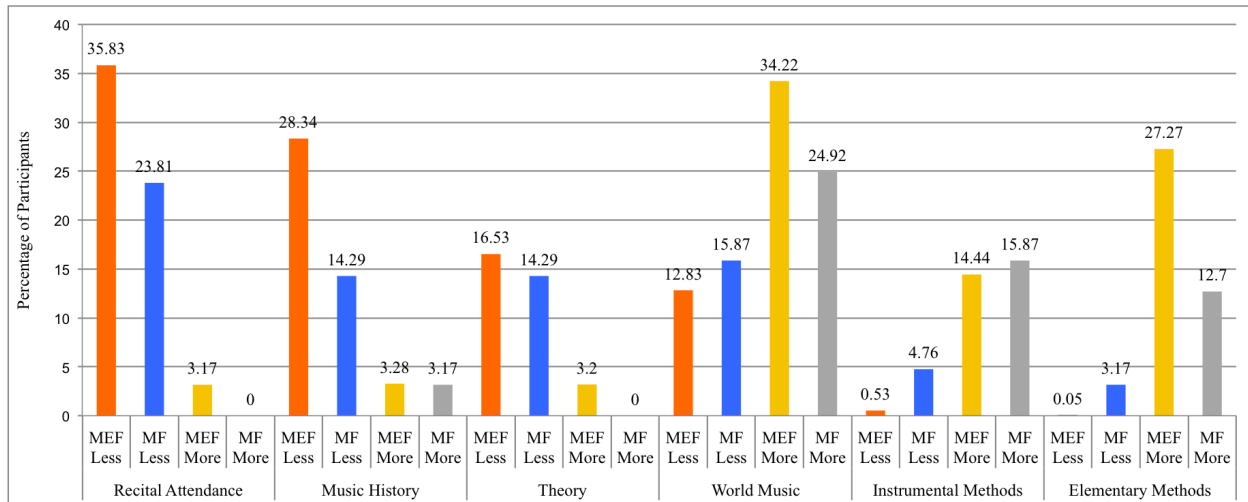


Figure 3. Current requirements related to acquiring knowledge that music education faculty (MEF) and music faculty (MF) believed should receive less emphasis and those they believed should receive more emphasis.

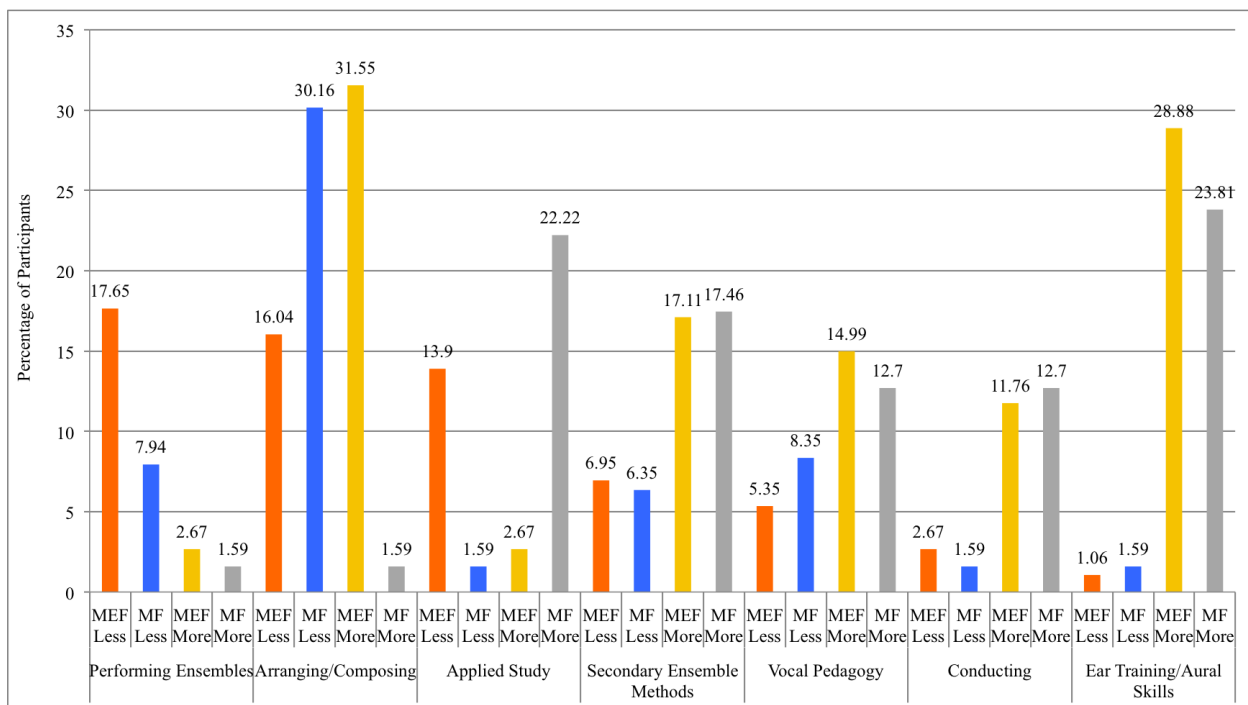


Figure 4. Current requirements related to acquiring skills that music education faculty (MEF) and music faculty (MF) believed should receive less emphasis and those they believed should receive more emphasis.

Visions for Curricular Change

Participants had the option to describe, in open-ended responses, any curricular changes they felt would be beneficial to better equip preservice music teachers. Using a conventional content analysis resulting in emergent themes (Creswell, 2014), we analyzed these comments. The three most common themes that surfaced from qualitative responses included a need to focus on non-Western music, provide more practical experiences, and increase attention to composing, improvising, and arranging. Participants also felt more time should be devoted to learning strategies for working with students with special needs and on basic musical skills. Inclusion of fewer core education courses was desired; several specified those remaining should be integrated to aid in transfer of knowledge and skills:

For several hundred years, the definition of a “musician” in academia has been controlled by music history and music theory faculty. This definition is completely outdated for today’s world, and many music educators use very little music history or theory to provide a quality, successful music education to K-12 public/private school students... Completely unrealistic. A music educator is a special kind of musician. (Music Education Faculty)

Participants’ comments regarding non-Western music included a need to embrace contemporary music, vernacular music-making, and small group collaboration. One stated, “New cultural realities need to be matched with new approaches.” Sub-themes or important suggestions centered on social justice and culturally responsive pedagogy in order to better serve a growing and diverse population of students. Another participant explained, “Pre-service teachers need a broader background if they are to reach K-12 students not presently served by music education.” In addition to preparing future music educators to teach students who are different from them

culturally and musically, recruitment of a more diverse student population in music education could eventually better serve diverse communities:

Viewing music in a broader context—globally, culturally, and with diversity in mind of students and music itself. Ensembles, repertoire and teaching methods should reflect this inclusiveness and deemphasize elitism and exclusivity. Creativity should be nourished from general classroom music to large performing ensembles. Students and teachers should improvise, compose, and arrange at various levels. (Music Education Faculty)

Teaching pedagogy related to composing/improvising/arranging and addressing non-Western music may require adding something that is not currently part of curricula. Some participants suggested integrating courses to aid in the transfer of knowledge and skills. One respondent advised that, fundamentally, *how* something is taught is more crucial than *what* is taught.

Practical experience is required in all programs, but may need to occur earlier in programs and more frequently. Additionally, participants desired more experiences and coursework directed toward working with students with special needs (including socio-emotional, physical disabilities, and cognitive needs):

The ‘best’ singers and instrumentalists do not necessarily make the best teachers. I wish that we could put a strong emphasis on ability to teach, respond to students’ needs, be engaging, etc. The real teacher stuff. (Music Education Faculty)

Several respondents used the term “basic skills.” Some mentioned aural skills specifically, others mentioned piano:

I believe there needs to be a greater focus on personal musicianship... All music teachers, even secondary instrumental ensemble directors, must be able to audiate and sightsing.

...true music literacy, I think, is audiating and singing a musical excerpt before playing it on an instrument. That's the skill all music teachers need. (Music Education Faculty)

I think some of these skills are learned on their own—or can be—after their musicianship is developed. If they are a good musician, they should be able to pick up a guitar and teach themselves to hear chord changes, play the piano, teach themselves what they need to know about folk music or rock or Mozart for that matter. SO, get them started on path to hearing/singing/performing and being a great musician – then give them the skills to learn on their own. (Music Faculty)

Discussion

Limitations

The primary limitation in this study was the unequal distribution of participants in the two groups, with MEF accounting for 76% of participants. The invitation to complete the survey was emailed to MEF, as this contact information was more readily available, with the request that they forward the information to MF at their institution. Unfortunately, snowball sampling was not as effective as we had hoped. The response rate may also have been impacted by MEF having more interest and investment in this topic. The unequal distribution of participants made comparing absolute values less meaningful.

Demographic data regarding geographic location of participants was collected by region, rather than by state. This collection method prevented the researchers from analyzing the responses' relationship to certification requirements and licensure type. However, such requirements may not have had an effect; as of 2016, 40 states certified music teachers to teach

K (or PK)-12 vocal/instrumental music, while the other 10 offer K - 12 vocal/general or K - 12 instrumental/general music certification (Tuttle, 2017).

We wanted to examine one aspect of curricula for future music educators—that of musical skills and knowledge. Although this was the focus within the survey, many participants felt compelled to share information and opinions about the importance of pedagogical or other non-musical skills, as well as other aspects of degree programs. It may be difficult for faculty to compartmentalize skill sets within the music education degree program as they are so closely intertwined. In some ways, we received less detailed information in answer to our questions about music-specific aspects of the degree program, but overall we felt participants provided a deeper understanding of their beliefs about degree programs by including information beyond our prompts.

Comparison of Music Faculty and Music Education Faculty Beliefs

Both groups believed aural skills to be very important. Besides the importance of the skill itself, this item may have been ranked first because it is a broad category compared to some of the other options provided, and this skill set can be applied in many areas. While MEF and MF agreed on the importance of aural skills, we noted large differences were noted in other areas. MF ranked performance-related musical courses and skills higher than MEF, while MEF ranked pedagogy-related courses and skills higher than MF. This is perhaps not surprising given the nature of the courses and topics taught by these faculty. MEF also included far more write-in responses in their ranking list than MF, which could be in part because of a greater awareness of the current needs in music teacher education research. Every music-related course or requirement included in the survey question was ranked in the top five by at least one participant, yet 59 write-in responses were also entered. Similar to Schmidt (1989), whose participants identified 56

different topics they believed should be addressed in music teacher education, faculty reported that *everything* is important. It may be that items included in the survey are typical and valued in undergraduate music education programs, but the list may be far from comprehensive in regards to what faculty believe to be important. Most write-in responses did not reflect music-specific skill sets, but rather emphasized pedagogical, social justice, and self-management skills and knowledge. We were led to believe that these faculty are focused on the holistic development of music education majors. This may be further evidence of the difficulty of compartmentalizing skills required of music education majors.

Participants also rated the importance of music-related knowledge and skills. All but one of the items had a mean rating of at least five on the 10-point scale, which suggests participants believed these items are *all* important for music education majors to possess. Four items had the highest means in both groups (sequences instruction logically toward a musical goal, detects errors, models musical concepts with instrument or voice, and deconstructs musical concepts into manageable chunks), though in different rank order, suggesting at least some agreement. MEF and MF agreed most on those items that could be categorized as performance skills: “performs at a high level on a main instrument”, “sings/plays in large ensemble”, and “sings/plays in small ensemble”. This result seemed inconsistent given that MEF and MF ranked performance-focused elements of programs (i.e., applied study and performance ensembles) drastically differently in their lists of top five courses or requirements.

Beliefs Regarding Adequacy of Preparation Programs

As requirements for pre-service music educators seem to be in a continual state of change, one of the most critical concerns is alignment of university music education curricula that will best serve music educators once they enter the profession. Participants rated courses and

requirements, allowing us to examine areas where faculty felt more attention was needed, and also suggesting some areas that could be minimized in order to balance curricular content. There was general agreement between our participants and extant literature that music educators should be prepared to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student population. While there was some agreement that change might include the incorporation of non-Western traditions, a focus on relevancy for all students, additional practical experiences, and more attention to creating, improvising and arranging, it is difficult to add more to already crowded programs of study.

Quantitative and qualitative data were incongruous regarding the importance of composition skills and pedagogy. The skill MEF and MF deemed least important in quantitative responses was the ability to compose; however, being able to teach students to compose was one of the three most common themes drawn from qualitative data. Creating is one of four artistic processes on which the National Core Arts Standards are organized. Perhaps the term “composition” brings to mind formal study of music theory. Composition may be viewed as an undertaking only those with training should attempt rather than, simply, one of the artistic processes.

MEF and MF, alike, believed that change is needed. Participants agreed with tenets put forth in the CMS Manifesto (2014), that music education in the future should be more inclusive and focus less on musical elites. A broader definition of music literacy used in National Core Arts Standards may be providing the stimulus for the response. It would seem as though the experts behind the Manifesto, National Core Arts Standards, and SMTE’s Critical Examination of Curricula ASPA are providing education and a step toward change.

Visions for Curricular Change

Participants' visions for curricular change often addressed areas which they believed needed more emphasis in their programs. These responses also connect closely with write-in responses included in ranking of courses and requirements. One recurring theme was to design curricula that prepare teachers to truly celebrate inclusiveness, rather than elitism, in K–12 music programs. These responses took different forms, but generally emphasized expanding beyond traditional large ensemble, performance-based instruction to include multiple meaningful opportunities for active musical participation and learning for students with a variety of interests and abilities. At the collegiate level, this would require training with more instruction in non-Western music and music outside the traditional canon, opportunities for inclusion of students with special needs, alternative ensembles and varied general music opportunities, and a deeper understanding of culturally relevant pedagogy.

Music education degree requirements are already extensive, but some participants offered comments that may help balance curricula while providing desired content and preparation described above. In the spirit of Kimpton (2005), who recommended integrating existing courses, one suggestion was to require fewer core education courses and instead incorporate this information in music education courses. Doing so would allow material to be learned and experienced in a music setting, which avoids redundancy and provides more relevancy. Another suggestion was to train students solidly in basic musicianship and help them develop skills to teach themselves content that cannot fit in curricula. Music teacher educators could then emphasize transfer of skills within music education courses. Thornton, et al. (2004) advocated for a similar proposition through faculty collaboration. Finally, providing more practical experiences (i.e., field experiences) in which students observe and participate in modern and

relevant music classrooms could provide learning opportunities that otherwise would not be available in music teacher education curricula.

Future Research

Change should begin with music teacher education programs. In examining research over time, we did not see as much change as we had hoped. There are certainly many obstacles on the path to curricular change. First, state-level teacher certification requirements are often uncertain and are not the only accrediting body to which schools or departments must answer. Striking a balance of coursework between the Schools of Music and Schools of Education can also be challenging; both answer to multiple accrediting bodies. It is often difficult to schedule courses due to space, faculty, and course enrollment constraints. Next, music education majors often find themselves in credit overload due to increased general education requirements, omnipresent discussions of depth vs. breadth, and integration of concepts across courses taught by different faculty. Finally, music education faculty may be fighting against “tradition” in both collegiate settings and with veteran teachers serving as cooperating teachers. Based on our data, some disagreement exists among faculty and/or departments about what is most important in current curricula.

Many MEF and MF believe their institution’s curriculum is adequately preparing music education students for the field, yet also believe that improvements to curricula would better serve preservice music teachers and their future students. While faculty shared important justifications for curricular change, these were sometimes at odds, or seemed limited by institutional, licensing, or accreditation factors. Further research is needed to examine the motivations of curricular change and obstacles encountered when attempting curricular reform.

Conclusions

Solidifying priorities as a profession is an essential step toward understanding the needs of music education curricula. Our study suggests there are some differing opinions between MEF and MF on important aspects of music education programs. While there is no curriculum that works in all times and places, our research provides data that can inform curricular changes we may be considering at our respective institutions, and can inform necessary future research on this topic.

There was general agreement between our participants and previous literature concerning music educators' preparation to meet the needs of diverse student populations. As requirements for pre-service music educators are in a continual state of change, one of the most critical concerns is the alignment of university music education curricula that will best serve future music educators once they enter the profession. The CMS Manifesto, National Core Arts Standards, and SMTE's Critical Examination of Curricula ASPA are providing education and a step toward change. Change requires inclusion of non-Western traditions as well as a focus on relevancy for all students. In a training environment where everything is seen as important, decisions must be made to create feasible curricula. Even if there is agreement toward building more modern curricula, finding faculty who possess the experience, training, qualifications, and availability to implement such curricula may prove to be challenging.

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Jill Wilson (wilsji01@luther.edu) is Assistant Professor and Coordinator of Music Education at Luther College in Decorah, IA, where she teaches a music education introduction and methods courses, supervises practicum experiences, directs a treble clef choral ensemble, and supervises senior research projects.

Emily McGinnis (mcginnisej@umkc.edu) is a Teaching Fellow and Provost Fellow at the University of Missouri - Kansas City where she teaches undergraduate music education courses, oversees music education fieldwork, and works with the School of Graduate Studies' Interdisciplinary PhD Program. She also directs the Roeland Park New Horizons Band.
