Doctoral Programs in Music Education: A Continued Examination of Degrees, Curricula and Qualifying Examinations

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Background

- **CIC Conversations**
  - Doctoral Comprehensive/Exit Exams
  - Wide variety of approaches
  - How do other institutions approach these exams?

- **ASPA**
  - Recruitment of doctoral students
  - How do potential students -
    - Find information on programs
    - Determine what doctoral study entails
    - Learn what professors do
  - Develop a web site to link programs – one task
Rationale for our Study

- As a profession we do not know –
  - How many doctoral programs exist?
  - What degrees are offered?
  - What are entrance requirements?
  - What is the curriculum – is there a common core?
    - Courses
    - Experiences
  - How is progress monitored?
  - What examinations exist?

- Do we have some agreement about what comprises a doctorate in Music Education?
Purpose

- To determine nature of and processes of doctoral programs in music education in North America.
Methodology (Part 1)

- Compile list of doctoral programs in Music Education in the US and Canada
  - CMS listing
  - NASM listing
  - Our knowledge of programs that exist

- View websites
  - Establish data base for each institution
  - Jason – odd numbered
  - Peter – even numbered

- Presented at SMTE, 2011
Methodology (Part 2)

- Add additional programs as identified by SMTE attendees
- Recruit ASPA assistants for a calling campaign
- Refine nature of questions on the initial spreadsheet
- Collect the data from personal calls to representatives on campuses
- Refine cumulative information
- Presented at NAfME 2012
Thanks to the following ASPA data collection assistants!

- Dale Bazan, University of Nebraska-Lincoln
- Lisa Martin, University of Colorado (Ph.D. student)
- Martina Miranda, University of Colorado
- Sandra Schwartz, West Virginia University
- Cynthia Taggart, Michigan State University
- Molly Weaver, West Virginia University
Methodology (Part 3)

- Collect the data from personal calls to representatives on campuses
- Complete database
  - Course requirements?
  - Nature of monitoring or exit exams?
  - Time to completion?
- Refine cumulative information
- Present findings
Background

- Identified 74 degrees
  - Offered by 68 institutions

- For this report..
  - Data from 64 degrees at 60 institutions

- All but 6 schools are accredited by NASM
Degrees at a glance...

- 64 Degrees
  - 51 Ph.D (38 housed in music; 9 in C&I or Ed.)
  - 6 D.M.A. (All housed in music)
  - 5 Ed.D (1 housed in music; 4 in C&I or Ed.)
  - 1 D.M.E. (housed in music)
  - 2 D.A. (housed in music)
Time to completion is highly variable

Many institutions simply list maximum number of year to completion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree (Number)</th>
<th>Ph.D</th>
<th>D.M.A.</th>
<th>Ed.D</th>
<th>D.M.E.</th>
<th>D.A.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>6.85</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>10 (max)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean years allowed to complete</td>
<td>6.85</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>10 (max)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Admission Requirements

Bachelors

And

Masters

Education

Not in Education
Admission Requirements

Bachelors

Or

Masters

Education

Not in Education
Admission Requirements

Bachelors  Education

And

Masters  Not in Education
Admission Requirements

Bachelors  Education

Or

Masters  Not in Education
Admission Requirements

- 9 programs require Bachelors Degree
- 52 programs require Masters Degree
- 36 Require one degree in Music Education
- 3 Specify no Music Education Degree Needed
Admission Requirements

Teaching Experience
- 2-3 years on average
  - Range: 0 - 5
- Most programs had specific requirement (41)
- 5 had no requirements
- 8 had variable requirements

Other requirements
- Practically all had
  - Evidence of writing
  - Resume or CV
  - Letters of recommendation
- 58% require video of teaching
Admission Requirements

Standardized Test Requirements:
- 72% require a test
  - GRE or MAT
- 20% do not require a test
- 8% prefer a test, but do not require one

Music Entrance Exams
- 27% require an entrance exam
  - Most are Theory/History related
- 73% do not require
Admission Requirements

Music Diagnostic exams

- 70% institutions require diagnostic exams
  - Almost all in music history and music theory
  - “Very few pass, even those not in music ed.”

- Note: 1 institution accepts MME coursework in lieu of diagnostic exam

- 25% don’t require any diagnostic exams

- 6% require a music education exam
Curricular Issues

- Required curriculum
  - Many have a required curriculum of some sort
    - A range
      - Some are very prescribed
      - Some have requirements in music ed, research
      - Some have suggested courses
    - Almost all have electives as part of the program
  - In most programs, students typically choose an emphasis area, minor, or cognate
Credits Required

- Beyond masters degree - typical
  - 41-75 semester credits
  - Mode = 60

- Difficult to calculate for some institutions who have units, or just require so many courses a semester
Credits Required in Music Education

- “All” have a required core in music education
- Much variability
- Range is 12-48 semester credits
- Mean = 23.96
- Mode = 12
- 2 institutions include dissertation credits in the music education core (check!)
## Required Courses in Music Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Required</th>
<th>Elective</th>
<th>Combined - Required?</th>
<th>Combined - Elective?</th>
<th># (%) Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>41 (64)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>39 (61)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Theories</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>29 (45)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>51 (80)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology of Music</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>46 (72)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociology</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>26 (41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching in Higher Education</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>46 (72)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other Music Education Courses

- Other courses offered include
  - Curriculum
  - Community music, music in older adulthood
  - Teaching strategies, pedagogy, special learners, early childhood
  - Music supervision, leadership
  - Cultural perspectives in music, ethno
  - Social justice
  - Creative thinking
  - Music teaching and learning
  - Current issues, technology
  - Alternative models in music education
  - Pedagogical writing and media in music education
  - Music teacher education
  - Seminar series (ethics, professional preparation, etc.)
  - Research in music education
Other Comments about Music Education Courses

- Ph.D. students design and teach (with faculty oversight) the masters level “Philosophical Foundations” course (that includes Music Ed history)

- Students are required to take 2 of 4 music education courses

- Seminar topics reflect faculty interests and expertise
# Required Courses in Research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Required</th>
<th>Elective</th>
<th>Combined - Required</th>
<th>Combined - Elective</th>
<th># (%) Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Statistics</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>43 (67)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantitative Design</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>48 (75)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualitative Design</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>43 (67)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychometric Theory</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12 (19)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other Comments about Research Courses

- Some programs – research courses are required but students select a quantitative or qualitative focus

- One program – 18 credits required in College of Education

- Sometimes courses are in Music Education sometimes in another department – appears to be a mix
## Required Courses in Music

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Required</th>
<th>Elective</th>
<th># (%) Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Music Theory</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>49 (77)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music History</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>50 (78)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied or Conducting</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>41 (64)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensembles</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>36 (56)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other Comments about Music Requirements

- Often a cognate, or minor, option
- Sometimes a requirement for music history or theory courses
- Sometimes a requirement of so many credits in music, but students can select courses
- Ensemble participation is sometimes required if students enroll in applied lessons
- One degree requires a recital (Ed.D.)
Additional Curricular Comments

- A few programs are exam driven – courses selected based on exams
- Many have a required cognate or minor area; for some this is in conducting
- Faculty and student collaboration on research
Residency Requirements

- One-year residency is typical
- Six programs do not require a residency
- Longer residency is often seen as desirable
Monitoring Progress

- Few programs have a formal means of monitoring progress during course work
- Most rely on advising
- Some have exams to monitor progress
Exams in the Program

• Some have an early candidacy or preliminary exam
• Others only have an exam at the end of coursework
• Some programs have both
• Very little consistency for what these exams are labeled
Nature of “Exit” Exams

- Much specific information not in data
- Most have a written component followed by an oral exam
- Quite a few are “take home”; some are “sit and write”
- For some the dissertation proposal is part of exam
- A few have a “music” component
Other Requirements

- A few programs require publishable project or professional presentation in addition to dissertation.

- 5 degree programs requirement foreign language:
  - A few consider statistics and/or research writing as the “foreign language”

- 1 degree program from the 5 noted above requires 2 foreign languages but 1 can be a statistics minor.

- Teaching demonstration or portfolio.

- Additional projects.
Dissertation Required/Proposal/Panel

- All programs require some sort of dissertation and proposal

- 1 program indicated that a major body of work might be substituted such as a set of compositions – no one has done this as yet

- Number of professors on committee varied from 2-5 with 3 and 4 being the most frequent

- Members represented either just music ed, music ed and other music faculty, or a combination of music faculty and faculty outside of the music unit -- very little consistency
Other Requirements Related to Dissertation

- Oral defense of dissertation almost always required
- In some programs the dissertation defense is a public event
Data gathered from web sites and personal calls, but much information is still missing
- Websites often difficult to navigate
- Most helpful sites have downloadable handbooks
- What is the experience of potential doctoral applicants?

Faculty often not clear about what is in their own programs
- Needed to check their website, published materials, or ask other colleagues
- Our questions prompted comments such as, “We should really know that”, “We should really think about that”

We were often told that programs are being revised (new faculty members)
OBSERVATIONS-DISCUSSION

- Teaching and writing appear important criteria for admission decisions

- A common music education core seems to exist
  - Primarily history, philosophy, psychology of music
  - But assessment and teaching in higher ed receiving more emphasis

- Surprising lack of reported research design courses – included in only about 75% of programs

- Exam structure still typically written and oral
  - A few models of other approaches
  - More take-home exams

- Dissertation typically one large project; a few programs accepting a collection of projects
Innovative aspects of some programs might be worth profiling as best practices, but difficult to assess

Few programs provide information on past students and their research

Advancement of teaching ability, especially for college teaching beyond course work, quite difficult to determine

Clear need for national conversation on the topic of music education professor preparation which would seem essential for teacher education reform at the K-12 level
Positive Reflections

- Exams that involve student engagement in design (student-generated questions, projects, portfolios of achievements)

- Internships in college teaching (not only TA work)

- “Secondary” areas of study within music (music technology, ethno, music history) as a fundamental part of degree

- Cognate area outside the field of music (learning sciences, psychology, sociology, theatre, etc.)

- Center/colloquium/seminar idea – engaging students each week or regularly in important topics/projects

- Encouragement and even requirement of submitted works for publication/presentation

- Colleagues were very willing to share; no defensiveness; eager for results; find own way to approach degree
Possible Next Steps

- Complete data collection by member-checks
- Organized mechanism at conferences (NAfME?) to discuss doctoral programs – perhaps through the ASPA
- Explore the kinds of experiences doctoral students have as part of their assistantship duties
- Delve more into how research is taught and by whom
- Conduct studies targeting a specific aspect of doctoral study
  - Course structure
  - Exams
- Publish the results!
Listening for Your Ideas
For Where to Go Next