

CLUSTER MINUTES
Friday, November 12, 2010
1:30 – 3:00 p.m.
&
Friday, December 10, 2010
Lake Worth Campus

ITEM 1. What specific measures has your faculty instituted to reduce the incidence of plagiarism? Has the faculty noticed that plagiarism is increasing among students?

Discussion: Faculty who teach Gordon rule courses (MUL 1010, MUH 2018, MUT 1001) were emailed to provide their feedback to this question. Responses included the following information:

- Do a short writing assignment early in the semester. This helps the instructor discover writing problems as well as get a “feel” for students’ writing styles for comparison for later larger assignments for plagiarism.
- Discuss concepts of plagiarism and give examples of what is considered plagiarism.
- Give writing assignments that do not involve research. Instead, the assignments focus on opinions and impressions/observations topics discussed in class, music listened to as part of class assignments, or concerts the students are required to attend.
- Plagiarism does not seem to be increasing. Faculty note an average of 2-5 students per class where plagiarism is a serious problem. However, plagiarism has extended to homework other than writing assignments. In MUT 1001, students have to turn in assignment from a textbook/workbook. Faculty for this class have had problems with students copying this homework from each other (even to the point of simply Xeroxing another student’s pages to hand in).
- Requiring students to submit written assignments digitally for face-to-face classes (this is done in online classes of necessity). This allows the instructor to use resources such as Turnitin.com or check for suspected plagiarism/sources via search engines such as Google, Bing, etc.
- Some faculty have noted an increase with students who use web-content without providing correct citation of the source.

Data/data source: email responses from faculty teaching MUL 1010 and other Gordon Rule music courses.

Action: None.

ITEM 2. Learning outcome based testing for MUT 1111 and MUT 1241.

Discussion: Music faculty have observed problems with students who pass these classes (even with a C) but are seriously lacking in the basic skills that they are supposed to have achieved according to the learning outcome. This is a problem with all the music theory and ear training courses, but the problems seems to be most severe with students who have not mastered the skills of the beginning level course sufficiently. Some of these basic skills where students are week include: identify key signatures/scales, recognize pitches according to their position in a scale, ability to sight sing pitches (at a simple level) according to notation, identify/sing a pitch according to its position in a chord, identify correct rhythmic duration of note values according to counting, perform basic rhythm patterns according to notation.

Two possible causes were identified. Because of the larger size of the classes, students in ear training classes are evaluated/tested more on dictation (notating music that they hear) than sight singing (performing pitches and/or rhythm according to notation). Dictation skill can be easily tested in a group setting, but performance skills require each student to be tested individually which is must more time consuming. Also, because scores are averaged over the semester, students who do very well in some areas (As on some tests) but very poorly (D/F in other tests) may end up with a C or better for the class grade, despite the fact that the students has not met minimum standards in all the learning outcomes.

Because these classes are sequential (each class build on the knowledge/skills learned in previous classes) and because they are foundational to music reading skills that the student music use in other classes (ensembles and applied lessons), music faculty feel that it is essential that students achieve a minimum satisfactory level of skill on ALL of the course learning outcomes before being along to progress to the next course in the sequence. As MUT 1111 and MUT 1241 are being taught by more than one instructor, it is important that the be consistency between what students learn under the different instructors.

It was decided that the testing of these skills should not be a one-time “all or nothing at all” test. Testing will be incorporated in regular classroom tests as possible. For ear training/performance testing, tests will center on a midterm and a final. All faculty will be involved in order to make this feasible for time (by dividing a large class into smaller groups among the 4-5 different faculty). Since most students are enrolled in MUS0010, that class time may also be used for this testing. If a student does not pass a certain skill, he/she will be given to opportunity to retake the test for that skill until he/she completes it. For the final performance test, that would be given shortly before finals week. Students who do not pass a certain skill would have the opportunity to retake the test during finals week (including “make up test” day) as well as during the two day prior to beginning of the next semester (in order to be approved for MUT 1112 and MUT 1242).

It was felt that this would be a good trial for when we will eventually need to incorporate course learning outcome assessment into ALL courses at Palm Beach State. Once this has been done successfully for these courses, we would develop similar assessment strategies for other MUT courses.

Data/data source: (where appropriate): Course learning outcomes for MUT 1111 and MUT 1241.

Action: The music cluster reviewed the course learning outcomes and developed a list of specific skills and minimum level that students must achieve for these courses (all sections). David

Bethea (who is teaching these courses in Spring 2011) will develop an assessment of the performance skills to be used as a “test” for this process.

Beginning Fall 2011 (20121), faculty teaching MUT 1111 and MUT 1241 will include information in their syllabi about the new grading policy. Students in these classes MUST successfully pass minimum skill level testing in ALL the courses learning outcomes in order to receive a C and progress to the next class in the sequence.

OTHER.

Attendance:	Michael J. MacMullen	David Gible	Robert Jones
	Allen Webber	David Bethea	

Submitted by:

Michael MacMullen, Scribe

c. Minutes Distribution List