SECTION III: EVALUATION, PLANNING, PROJECTIONS

MUSIC UNIT AND ITS STUDENTS

The overall concept for management and planning in the music unit is built on a leadership team model wherein faculty officers have ownership and responsibility (in part) for the whole unit. The School of Music Advisory Committee serves as a representative faculty body. This committee provides faculty-director and director-faculty communication and plays an important part in the decision-making process on behalf of the faculty as a whole and the division constituency in particular. The Advisory Committee develops goals and objectives for the School and advises and assists the Director in the process of assessment and evaluation. Student consultation is ongoing in both formal (i.e., student advisory committees, student course evaluations, student service organizations, ensemble/program student officers, scheduled meetings with faculty and leadership) and informal (i.e., individual and collective conversations with faculty, administration, and staff). The entire unit is involved in evaluation, planning, and projection, as are the standing and adhoc committees detailed in Section I.D. and MDP I.D.9.

Evaluation, planning, and projection are constantly interrelated and intertwined, which makes for a constant and on-going process.

This collaborative / leadership team approach runs into occasional difficulty at times due to the fact that not all of the University runs on a similar model, nor does it always supply an accurate and useful constant flow of information needed for this model to function smoothly. When these difficulties occur, the music executive must decide whether the leadership team/advisory committee can adequately act to plan and manage or to make an executive decision to keep things moving forward.

As indicated above, planning is constant and the leadership team model works; however, the School of Music has had three different directors over the past five years. Also during this time the University’s provost has changed four times along with a new president, and the College of Fine Arts received a new dean. This turnover has provided us with some challenges in this area as leadership-driven priorities, strategic-planning efforts, and evaluation mechanisms have been somewhat inconsistent. At the time of this writing the University has just recently rolled out a strategic plan for the current five-year period (see MDP III.A.2.), which due to its delay has created delays for both the College and School to plan strategically to align to the University’s goals for the future. Efforts are now underway to finalize a congruent College-level strategic plan with related evaluation metrics aligning to the University strategic plan.

In addition to the internal evaluation and planning processes in place within the department, the University has implemented an assessment system that attempts to evaluate the effectiveness of all degree programs across campus. The School of Music is actively involved in this annual program assessment process and has been able to use the results in identifying areas for growth and investigation. Detailed information on all program assessment plans, including reporting cycles and past reports, is available online at http://www.uky.edu/ie/content/college-fine-arts and in MDP III.A.1.

The Self-Study was prepared by a committee consisting of faculty representatives from all five divisions and members of the leadership team within the School of Music. Regular meetings took place beginning Spring 2015 term. Each member of the committee was assigned a portion of Section I and II to write and shepherd with faculty input along the way (see MDP III.A.3 and Acknowledgements, p. i-ii). Section III includes a number of items suggested by the working group with significant input from a wide range of stakeholders, including perceptions gleaned from the results of an extensive SWOTA (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats, Aspirations) analysis in early Fall 2015 (see MDP III.C.1.), student and alumni satisfaction surveys completed during Fall 2015 (see MDP III.C.2-4), faculty and staff Work-Life surveys completed in Spring 2015 (see MDP III.C.6-.8.), and numerous meetings with faculty, staff, students, administration, alumni, donors, patrons, and other members of the community.
Assessing our current reality is determined by a variety of means and the information collected is used to adjust as the School proceeds. On the global scale, we see this self-study as a key component. Indeed, as we began the shared vision effort we saw this report as complementary to that effort, again focusing on the upward pull and encouragement of clarifying our common direction as we take on the task of assessing the present situation.

**PROJECTED IMPROVEMENTS AND CHANGES**
In October 2015 the University of Kentucky Board of Trustees approved the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan to guide the institution over the next five years. The plan outlines the following five objectives:

- **Undergraduate Student Success** - To be the University of choice for aspiring undergraduate students, within the Commonwealth and beyond, seeking a transformational education that promotes self-discovery, experiential learning, and life-long achievement.

- **Graduate Education** - Strengthen the quality and distinctiveness of our graduate programs to transform our students into accomplished scholars and professionals who contribute to the Commonwealth, the nation, and the world through their research and discovery, creative endeavors, teaching, and service.

- **Diversity and Inclusivity** - Enhance the diversity and inclusivity of our University community through recruitment, promotion, and retention of an increasingly diverse population of faculty, administrators, staff, and students, and by implementing initiatives that provide rich diversity-related experiences for all, to help ensure their success in an interconnected world.

- **Research and Scholarship** - Expand our scholarship, creative endeavors, and research across the full range of disciplines to focus on the most important challenges of the Commonwealth, our nation, and the world.

- **Community Engagement** - Leverage leading-edge technology, scholarship, and research in innovative ways to advance the public good and to foster the development of citizen-scholars.

Further, College of Fine Arts leadership recently identified the following priorities (as communicated to the College Executive Committee during the same time period):

- The establishment and support of a Creative Arts Living Learning Program (LLP) in the new Limestone Park I residence hall, opening Fall 2016. Music-related assets in the new LLP-dedicated space will include four 60 sq. ft music practice rooms, one 100 sq. ft ensemble music practice room, and a 1600 sq. ft polymodal immersion performance space with large-scale visualization capability for dance, music, and theatre.

- Successful capital campaigns to raise sufficient funds to support the construction of a new band facility ($15-$18 M) and to enhance operating/production budgets for UK Opera Theatre and UK Symphony Orchestra programs ($7 M).

- Maintain and further develop 2+2 / 3+1 undergraduate international exchange/transfer student agreements with targeted institutions overseas.

- Continue to improve time-to-degree, retention, and overall graduation rates in the College.

In addition, over the past year the School of Music identified several areas for improvement/change and focused on completing (or recently completed) the following to help move the unit forward:
**Purposes, Size, and Scope**

Revised and updated School of Music mission statements as well as created additional statements pertaining specifically to each division within the unit (i.e., Music Education and Music Therapy; Music Theory and Composition; Musicology and Ethnomusicology; Music Performance).

Identified that student enrollment will likely not be able to increase unless there is an increase in space or facilities made available to the unit. Engaged in discussions centered on music student enrollment management based on instrumentation/studio/ensemble/program needs and “real-sizing” the School to better match with available resources.

Identified the desire to add or expand offerings in the following areas: collaborative piano, viola, bass, music technology/industry, electronic/digital music studio and composition, and music therapy (PhD program).

Engaged in discussions of reviewing and revising programs with an eye toward better preparing and meeting the needs of 21st century musicians/scholars/educators.

**Administration, Faculty, and Staff**

Created a comprehensive faculty/staff handbook outlining unit rules, procedures, policies, and guidelines.

Created a comprehensive new faculty/staff orientation handbook.

Revised faculty performance evaluation process to include peer review and clearer criteria.

Identified and prioritized additional full-time faculty position needs in applied piano, viola, bass; music therapy; electronic/digital music studio and composition; and music technology/industry.

Identified and prioritized additional full-time staff position needs in accompanying, technology/recording services, instrument inventory management, and administrative support personnel (notably for help with auditions, admissions, scholarships, and awards).

Engaged in an extensive audit of all full-time staff official Major Job Responsibilities. Updated (and in some cases created for the first time) these job descriptions to help clarify distribution of official duties, workflow, workload, and aid annual performance evaluations.

In process of auditing/updating/creating official job descriptions for all Special Title Series faculty in the School of Music (i.e., applied studio/ensemble faculty) to help aid performance and promotion/tenure evaluations.

Tagged and enhanced disproportionately low faculty/staff salaries to help address issues of equity, retention, and salary compression.

**Facilities, Equipment, Technology, Health, and Safety**

Provided a presentation on musician health and wellness at a new student orientation program.

In process of developing an enhanced School-owned instrument check-out procedure that would incorporate student rental fees and/or require deposits. Setting up a service center with CFA Chief Financial Officer that would collect fees/deposits to help support instrument maintenance, repair, and staffing.
Engaged in an extensive audit/analysis of the School’s piano inventory with a local piano dealer (Gist Piano Center).

Planned and executed numerous improvements to the Fine Arts Building over past 12-18 months:

- Fire sprinkler system installed throughout the building
- Significant HVAC and lighting upgrade to 2/3 of the building (third and final phase yet to be completed)
- New paint, furniture, bulletin boards installed throughout building
- New signs/wayfinding installed throughout building
- Redesign of former Tuska Gallery (FA 107) into a multi-purpose instructional space primarily designated for World Music instruction
- Redesign of two former Art classrooms to create a unified costume shop for Opera Theatre program and Dept. of Theatre and Dance.
- Smart Classroom upgrades to several instructional spaces
- New Wenger instrument lockers on ground floor (perc/brass) and 2nd floor (strings)
- Installed new locks on all SoM classrooms
- New windows are planned to be installed throughout the entire facility Summer 2016

Recent renovations and upgrades to the Fine Arts Building have helped to ameliorate the problems of overcrowding and outdated/unsafe facilities. In 2014, renovations of the Schmidt Vocal Arts Center were finally completed, now housing much of the vocal music program with large rehearsal spaces on the first and second floor, practice rooms, storage space, and studio space for voice teachers, coaches, and graduate teaching assistants. Previously, the opera program rehearsed in several locations across campus including Memorial Hall, Singletary Center, the band room when available, and the Niles Gallery; this lack of a designated rehearsal space created particular problems with the transportation and storage of props, costumes, and set elements.

Plans are underway for the construction of a new 26,000-square-foot band building that will include a 6,500 square-foot rehearsal space; offices for 3 band directors, administrative personnel, and graduate assistants; 8 applied woodwind and brass faculty studios; 13 practice rooms; a conference/educational resource room; and space for instrument and uniform storage, the band library, and related workspaces. The projected cost for this building is $15-$18 million, the date for ground breaking yet to be determined. When complete, plans are for the percussion and jazz programs to remain in the Fine Arts Building and inherit the extra space that will be vacated by the band, woodwind, and brass footprint.

The Fine Arts Computer Lab, which is located in the ground floor of the Lucille Little Fine Arts Library adjacent to the Fine Arts Building, is scheduled to be removed from its current space sometime following Spring 2016 term. A new location for this computer lab has not yet been confirmed; however, tentative plans have been developed to create a new computer lab in a repurposed space within the Fine Arts Building pending financial support from the University for renovation and new equipment.

**Recruitment Procedures, Admission-Retention, Record Keeping, Advisement**

Developed and implemented tutoring programs for undergraduate students enrolled in Music Theory and Music History courses.

Developed and implemented a new music student orientation program for “K Week” (week prior to start of classes). Topics included preparation for and information on how to be successful in music theory coursework, musician health and wellness, and facilities/operations tour.
Developed and offered two sections of UK 101: Academic Orientation (1 cr.) specifically designed for new incoming music students.

Completed a substantive audit of all SoM scholarships resulting in newly-designed systems for awarding and management.

Restructured undergraduate scholarship guidelines, procedures, and associated policies.

Completed revisions to audition/transfer-related materials to be in compliance with NASM and institutional policies.

Restructured formal undergraduate music student academic advising system toward providing greater consistency and effectiveness. The College professional advising personnel are now charged with providing formal advising services from matriculation through graduation. Applied studio professors continue to provide professional mentoring/advising on a weekly basis.

Revised Student Travel and Excused Absences policy to include the following:
- Excused Absences - Student absences for official School of Music-sanctioned events require formal approval by the SOM Advisory Committee.
- Academic Probation – Students on academic probation are not eligible to participate in SoM-sanctioned travel that would prevent them from attending regularly scheduled classes during the Fall or Spring terms. See [http://www.uky.edu/US/rules.html](http://www.uky.edu/US/rules.html) for more information regarding Academic Probation criteria.
- 80% Attendance Rule – Students should not miss more than 20% of any given class meetings due to excused absences; however, Senate Rule 5.2.4.1 (Attendance and Completion of Assignments) directs each instructor to “determine his/her policy regarding completion of assigned work, attendance in class, absences at announced or unannounced examinations, and excused absences in excess of one-fifth of class contact hours.”

Revised admissions process to require all new student auditions be held on scheduled audition days, with candidates heard/reviewed by more than one faculty member (i.e., a panel) in order to provide a more holistic/comprehensive/professional experience for the prospective student (and family). Addition benefits include providing an opportunity for them to meet with other faculty, administration, and current students; receive information on all programs and offerings; engage in a tour of the music campus; receive orientation; and to provide the audition/review process with an appropriate additional informed perspective. Deviation from this policy is allowed if an extenuating circumstance prevents a student from being able to attend on one of the audition days; however, more than one faculty member must still hear/review the audition.

**Published Materials and Web Sites**

Developed a new CFA/SoM web site (scheduled for late spring 2016 implementation).

Developed a cohesive SoM-wide marketing/branding scheme, updated all materials.

Revised and updated the SoM Undergraduate Student Handbook to capture all policies and procedures applicable to undergraduate students in the School.

Revised and updated the SoM Graduate Student Handbook to capture all policies and procedures applicable to graduate students in the School.
Community Involvement
Identified the desire to develop a Guest Artist and a Faculty Artist annual concert series.

Developed and delivered a weekly chamber music concert series located at UK Chandler Hospital in collaboration with UK HealthCare.

Designed and implemented a unified School of Music annual development campaign.

Redeveloping and re-engaging the Friends of the UK School of Music (a.k.a., Friends of Music) support organization.

Evaluation, Planning, and Projections
Created new student learning outcome assessment plans for all undergraduate and graduate degrees and certificate programs.

Formed a task force charged with evaluating all School operations and curricula to help complete the Self-Study.

Engaged in and completed a SWOTA (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats, Aspirations) analysis of School of Music operations and curricula with all faculty and staff.

Engaged in and completed an investigation into the perceptions of the music unit through numerous meetings with various stakeholders (e.g., alumni, donors, patrons, community members, College/University leadership).

Engaged in and completed an investigation into the beliefs and practices of School faculty, staff, and students.

Created, distributed, and analyzed completed satisfaction surveys returned by students and alumni.

Analyzed and developed action plan recommendations from the results of Work-Life surveys completed by faculty and staff.

Completed an audit of graduate assistantships and developed a plan and process to better meet graduate student recruitment/retention goals as well as the undergraduate curriculum delivery support needs of the School.

In process of completing an audit of all music programs, course offerings, and enrollment trends to assess full-time faculty, part-time instructor, and teaching assistantship demands and allocations.

In process of completing an assessment of administrative time and workload demand in order to provide a comprehensive staffing needs analysis.

Curricular Offerings
Developed new 12-credit graduate certificate in Eurhythmics.

Developed new 12-credit undergraduate and graduate certificates in Baroque Trumpet.

Developed a business proposal/needs analysis relating to the development and delivery of a new commercial music undergraduate degree program (see MDP III.A.5.).
Revised PhD in Music Education (see Self-Study Section II, Instructional Programs Portfolio).

Identified a desire to develop a PhD in Music Therapy program, pending the allocation of an additional full-time faculty line in the domain (not yet funded).

Identified a desire to make curricular revisions to the Bachelor of Music in Music Education program to better prepare 21st Century K-12 music educators.

Identified a desire to develop and propose a graduate-level professional education program for initial certification at Rank II (master’s degree level) that will incorporate the MM in Music Education degree as a component.

Identified a desire to offer a contemporary music ensemble.

Identified a desire to offer an Artist Diploma.

Identified the benefits to offering a Master in Teacher Leadership in Fine Arts for K-12 teachers who already hold Rank III initial certification in Art, Theatre, or Music. With completion of this master’s degree the candidate would receive Rank II certification.

In process of developing an ensemble participation policy for all students.

**FUTURES ISSUES**
Based again on areas covered previously in this document and including data gleaned from surveys of students, alumni, staff, and faculty, the following overall strengths of the School of Music were identified (not priority ranked):

- Diverse, hard working, talented, and well-established faculty with strong credentials in all areas, creative and highly productive (even with limited resources)
- Significant faculty scholarly and creative activity
- Internationally recognized faculty and alumni
- Low faculty turnover
- Faculty/student ratio
- Broad and deep curriculum
- Nationally recognized programs
- Wide variety and large number of ensemble offerings
- High quality “award winning” ensemble programs
- Opportunities for students and faculty to perform on the international/national stage
- Student scholarships
- Holistically supportive and friendly environment centered on developing comprehensive musicianship
- High degree of cooperation and collegiality among individual and program areas
- Flagship university status with research institution resources
- Music library
- Professional development opportunities for K-12 teachers
- Relationship with UK HealthCare through Music Therapy program
- Thriving performance calendar
- Reasonable and manageable class sizes
- Professional placement and preparation of graduates
- Talented and hard working students
• Strong relationships with area music educators
• Strong relationships with local community
• Strong student advising services

As well, the following also emerged as among the more significant challenges and opportunities facing the unit in the next five to ten years:

Facilities
The Fine Arts Building is 66 years old (completed in 1949). While recent renovations have been welcome improvements our outdated facilities, particularly in comparison with benchmark institutions, make recruiting difficult and is a constant source of faculty, staff, and student frustration.

Main concerns:
• Perhaps the most difficult challenge facing the School continues to be finding adequate space to conduct its business. The Fine Arts Building historically offers the School of Music four main classrooms for academic classes and chamber/small ensemble instruction (rooms 2, 4, 6, 17), making scheduling courses quite difficult to avoid double-booking with other required courses/ensembles. In the past, the unofficial protocol was that academic courses would be offered in the mornings and ensemble rehearsals would be in the afternoons; that boundary has become blurred as faculty scramble for available rooms in which to host their courses or ensembles. Ensemble rehearsal space in the Fine Arts Building is woefully inadequate, forcing larger ensembles to negotiate available times to use spaces in the Singletary Center and elsewhere. The recent addition of FA107 (former Tuska Gallery) as an available music classroom (and potential rehearsal space) has improved the situation this year with hopes of alleviating some of the scheduling difficulty in the future.

• There is little to no office space available for part-time faculty and teaching assistants, nor does any additional office/studio spaces exist to add faculty or staff.

• The Fine Arts Building has 37 small music practice rooms, of which 12 are instrument-specific and 4 have needed to be repurposed for teaching assistant office/studios, leaving only 21 practice rooms (plus 3 additional practice rooms in the Schmidt Vocal Arts Center) for general music student use. The addition of five more music practice rooms (and a 1600 sq. ft classroom) in the new Limestone Park I residence hall, opening Fall 2016, will hopefully help this situation (as well as a planned new band facility that would hold an additional 13 practice rooms upon completion).

• Historically there have only been two designated ensemble rehearsal rooms available in the Fine Arts Building (originally conceived for a music student population of around 100 – not the 400 majors and 160 minors currently enrolled in the School). All ensemble programs have grown substantially over the years resulting in outgrowing these spaces (both in ensemble size as well as ensemble offerings). In addition, these rooms are now also needed for larger academic classes throughout the day. A third potential rehearsal space (FA 107 with a capacity 45-50) has recently been made available and is used primarily for world music ensembles and offerings in the Dept. of Theatre/Dance. There is no indoor rehearsal space for the marching band as the available spaces are simply too small to accommodate them.

• The primary performance and large ensemble rehearsal space is located in Singletary Center for the Arts, which provides a 375-seat Recital Hall and a 1,450-seat Concert Hall. Neither space is acoustically ideal for the School’s purposes nor is the Concert Hall appropriate for staging our Opera Theatre productions (resulting in us needing to rent the Lexington Opera House for these
productions, adding over $100,000 in additional production costs). As well, the demand for Singletary facilities has increased exponentially over the past few years, given the increased enrollment, activity of faculty and students, and the community in general. This has created considerably less accessibility for School of Music activities with all events not directly tied to delivery of the School’s curricula being charged space rental and labor fees (including many guest artist, community outreach, student recruiting, and all ticketed events), creating further drain on the School’s very limited budget.

- Available storage space in the Fine Arts Building is virtually nonexistent. There is one room in the Fine Arts Building (the “cage”) that houses the choral library, Steel Band, band uniforms and school-owned instruments. This area is not controlled for temperature or humidity. There is also no proper climate-controlled storage area for archival records and materials or classroom equipment that needs secured storage.

- Climate and humidity control in the Fine Arts Building continues to be problematic to the detriment of our instrument inventory (making tuning and adjustments unstable). It is hoped that recent and future planned HVAC upgrades to the Fine Arts Building will eventually improve the situation; however, after installing the new HVAC system in part of the building this past year conditions actually worsened, resulting in several cracked instruments (including a harpsichord and several clarinets and oboes) last winter.

- Security continues to be a concern in the Fine Arts Building. As is common, students often practice and have rehearsals that occur outside customary daytime work hours. Outside doors to the building have been reported propped open, thefts have occurred, and even homeless people have been found in the Fine Arts Building after hours (especially during the summer months), but we are told University Police have refused to provide regular patrols of our facilities and UK Facilities Management does not view this as a responsibility within their domain. To many, the organizational culture appears to be one of collective avoidance of responsibility.

- As mentioned earlier, the Fine Arts Computer Lab, located in the ground floor of the Lucille Little Fine Arts Library adjacent to the Fine Arts Building, is scheduled to be removed from its current space sometime during Spring 2016 semester. A new location for this computer lab has not yet been confirmed; however, tentative plans have been developed to create a new computer lab in a repurposed space within the Fine Arts Building pending financial support from the University for renovation and new equipment. It is critically important that this lab be maintained for our students.

- Also mentioned earlier, the University of Kentucky still lacks an electronic music studio. As a result, we are unable to offer any courses in electronic music composition or significant offerings in contemporary music technology. Additional space, equipment, and personnel (i.e., funding) is needed to rectify this shortcoming.

It is clear from listening not only to ourselves as faculty but also to our students and alumni that our facilities are the single most crying need. In fact it continues to be reported as the number one weakness of the School (and a significant one at that). The school has grown to the extent that we simply cannot attract and retain top quality faculty and students, satisfy those who are here, nor better serve our interconnected communities without a dramatic improvement to our music campus. A new band facility is being planned for the School of Music; however, finding funding continues to be a significant barrier. In addition to the building itself, serious needs in terms of music student, faculty, and staff space are waiting to be met.
Human Capital
The Oxford Dictionary defines human capital as “the skills, knowledge, and experience possessed by an individual or population, viewed in terms of their value or cost to an organization…”. As mentioned throughout this Self-Study, there is a need to add faculty and staff in the School of Music with specific skill sets and credentials in order to not only move the unit forward, but to also shore up its existing presence. While certain strategies can be employed to shift resources from one domain to another within a unit, this approach is only successful when the area from which the resources are being pulled is over-resourced (or is being discontinued/eliminated). The School has no area that is over-resourced with faculty or staff, nor should any programs/areas be eliminated. The only option left to is to acquire additional recurring funding from outside the unit.

Faculty. As stated earlier, the School has identified and prioritized additional full-time faculty position needs in applied (collaborative) piano, viola, bass; music therapy; electronic/digital music studio and composition; and music technology/industry. Currently there is only one full-time applied piano performance studio professor and no full-time viola nor bass instructors, making stability within and recruitment for these studios challenging – a particularly difficult enterprise as the School maintains sizeable strengths and large footprints in voice, opera, and orchestra. Additional tenure-track positions in each of these studio areas would profoundly help recruit and retain more advanced students, including those at the master’s and doctoral level, to match profiles within other studios where tenure-track faculty currently exist.

We have identified a need for PhD-granting programs in Music Therapy across the nation and found it would be a logical expansion of our current noted graduate program in Music Therapy to develop and offer a doctoral program in the future; however, AMTA guidelines inform that we would need an additional full-time faculty member in the domain to deliver such a program.

We would also like to expand our offerings to include more music technology into our curricula. With a noted void in expertise among our faculty in this area, adding faculty with backgrounds in technology-related fields would allow us to create and offer more courses/programs/experiences in domains such as electronic composition, computer music, and sound engineering.

Staff. With a somewhat recent redesign and centralization of staff within the College of Fine Arts over the past few years, staffing in the School of Music has been reduced. At present, the School of Music has only seven full-time staff positions, three of which are dedicated to the Opera Theatre program (program coordinator, production manager, costume designer), another support associate is dedicated to the band program, and one piano technician oversees an inventory of around ninety pianos. This leaves only two full-time staff positions to oversee and assist with all other aspects of and domains within the School.

In addition to areas mentioned above relating to additional faculty needs, technical and support staff positions are quite limited – particularly in the areas of accompanying, technology/recording services, instrument inventory management, and administrative support personnel. At present we cannot afford to employ a full-time staff accompanist(s), our recording services are supplied via an independent contractor and paid by the contracting individual student/faculty member, we have no staffing available to manage our instrument inventory, and we also are in great need for an additional full-time staff member who would be primarily responsible for new student auditions, undergraduate admissions, scholarships, marketing/recruiting/outreach initiatives, and facilitating/coordinating needs relating to tracking music teacher licensure requirements for preservice music education students (e.g., tracking observation hours, student teaching and practicum field placements, admittance to Teacher Education Program).
Students. Recent changes to the University of Kentucky’s scholarship criteria relating to students who have completed the Kentucky Governor’s Scholars Program has created some concern with our program’s ability to secure and retain high achieving students from the Commonwealth. Kentucky colleges and universities offer full-tuition scholarships to new students who have completed this program. In the past, the University of Kentucky’s minimum threshold ACT score was in alignment with most if not all other institutions in the state; however, for Fall 2016 and beyond UK increased the minimum ACT score from 26 to 31, resulting in a substantially higher mark for students to receive this full-tuition scholarship at UK.

Clarinet and flute studio faculty indicate they have noticed a possible trend in recent years of fewer female students matriculating into and pursuing instrumental music education degrees.

Faculty and members of the undergraduate advising staff have also expressed concerns about students overextending themselves through participating in too many ensembles each semester, resulting in students failing to satisfactorily complete academic coursework required for their degrees, thereby delaying graduation beyond the 8-semester target for most programs (or dropping major, not graduating altogether).

Funding
Grave concerns remain regarding the inadequacy and uncertainty of funding for the School of Music. Repeated cuts to state-supported recurring funds have greatly contributed to the School running deficits for several years and has resulted in a general operating budget based primarily on non-recurring funds (i.e., revenue generated from Summer School tuition [30-45% return], applied music fees [$106 per course registration], ticket sales, patronage, endowment earnings, and development activity) with only undergraduate scholarships, full-time employee and GA/TA salaries and benefits, and a few select programs remaining to be supported with state recurring funding. No other source of recurring state funding exists to support any other program, purpose, nor general operations within the School. The quite limited faculty and student travel support (as well as guest artist/special event funding) is almost entirely based on annual yields from gift/development activities in the School and College. Instructional equipment and instrument purchase/repair can really only be addressed through end-of-year fund balances. No recurring state funding is available for part-time instructor (PTI) compensation – all is provided through non-recurring sources.

The orchestra program has been able to grow substantially over the past decade on earnings from an endowment as well as additional nonrecurring funding from the University ($50k+), and College and School ($15k-$30k); however, in recent years the University commitment was discontinued, leaving a $50,000 cut to the program’s annual operating budget. At the same time further cuts to revenue once available has made it even more difficult to provide previous levels of funding provided by the School to the program. Securing an additional $50k-$80k of recurring funding for this program is of critical importance to sustain the program into the future.

While development efforts are arguably at an all-time high in the College with a well-designed strategic capital campaign on the horizon that includes unit goals of $15-18 M for construction of a new band facility and $7 M to seed endowments for operational/production budget support for the Opera Theatre and Orchestra programs, meeting this lofty goal of raising $22+ M will certainly prove to be a difficult task that may likely take many years if not a decade or more to complete. Even with achieving this development goal the School would remain on unstable footing without an infusion of recurring funds to add personnel, effectively plan for and fund capitalized equipment purchases, and improve/maintain existing facilities.
As stated earlier, a main source of operating funds for the unit comes from student fees; however, the University has denied our requests to increase our current low $106 per course applied music fee to a more appropriate but still quite modest $250 per course fee. The yield from this fee increase would go a long way toward helping the School acquire some greatly needed resources. Unfortunately, we continue to be limited to an annual total increase of no more than 3% for all student fees assigned to the unit.

Graduate student enrollment has also grown substantially over the past decade with little increased financial support. Currently, $358,610 in recurring state funds is available to the unit to award graduate/teaching assistantships stipends (including benefits), with the Graduate School providing each accompanying tuition waiver. This equates to roughly 32-33 full assistantships for a graduate music program annually enrolling around 150 students. We are able to award an additional 22 or so assistantships through other means; however, most of these funds could be used instead to help other areas within the unit for basic operational expenses, faculty/student/staff travel, equipment purchasing/repair, etc.

Further complicating factors in the budget process at the University of Kentucky is that funding (including summer tuition return and student fee revenue) is not allocated for the fiscal year until no earlier than late in the Fall term – making it even more difficult to effectively plan/budget using these non-recurring and inconsistent sources of funding for general operations.

In spite of the concerns over funding the School, it is evident that the unit has shown an outstanding return on investment, effectively and efficiently using all available resources. Unfortunately, the financial infrastructure has not grown with the program, causing less reliable, stable, and consistent sources of funding to fill the void as the School expanded in size, scope, and activity. Undoubtedly a contributing factor to the lack of fiscal (and facility) infrastructure to meet this growth was the equally as unstable/inconsistent state economy over the past decade that resulted in three consecutive biennia of budget cuts to and within the University of Kentucky. It is apparent that our fiscal future will rely heavily on our ability to generate revenue rather than receive funding from the state or institution at-large.

One way the School can generate revenue is through delivering courses and programs during the summer as a portion of the tuition revenue comes back to the unit (30-45%, typically). Increasing these offerings, especially those delivered online, would also increase revenue to the unit (at least potentially). One barrier toward this solution to the revenue gap lies with some faculty not interested in either teaching during the summer or creating online courses/programs. Perhaps with future hiring strategies the unit may be able to acquire faculty with particular interests in this domain.

In sum, the school stands at an important crossroads. We remain severely constrained in our growth by resource limitations. Our community senses that we have grown as far as we can without a significant infusion of resources in terms of facilities, operational and capital budgets, and human resources. In fact, it is imperative that this occurs to maintain the rise in faculty and student quality we have come to expect. We also must address long-standing issues among ourselves in order to build on our recent efforts, to revive a strong sense of common direction, to resolve persistent and growing scheduling and prioritization issues, and to leverage our efforts productively toward the desired future we have envisioned for our students, the communities we serve, and our own productive community.