

ASSESSMENT PRACTICES OF
APPLIED MUSIC STUDIO FACULTY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

BY

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Abstract

The purpose of this quantitative study was to understand the assessment practices of applied music studio faculty in higher education. Potential respondents ($N = 19,723$) were listed as applied music faculty in The College Music Society's *Directory of Music Faculties in Colleges and Universities, U.S. and Canada, 2012 – 2013* and were asked to participate in an online survey. Respondents who completed the survey comprised a response rate of 8.89% ($N = 1,754$), with 2,123 (10.76%) participants answering at least one question. While the response rate was low, comparisons between the proportion of respondents and potential respondents indicated a high degree of representativeness among the population categories. The findings of this study are grouped and discussed in two central themes: (a) assessment criteria and instruments actually used in the implementation, execution, recording, and reporting of the assessment practices of studio faculty, and (b) influences on assessment practices. Assessment criteria found to be used by respondents included both achievement and non-achievement criteria such as: (a) attendance and punctuality, (b) attitude (participation, effort, leadership, etc.), (c) written assessments, (d) performance assessments, (e) practice assessments (self-recorded). Results regarding how assessment policies are disseminated and applied are discussed. Results indicating the influences on assessment practices include: (a) Former teachers' influence on the development and implementation of ones assessment practice, (b) The demographics of the applied music student population itself including degree type and

level, (c) Adoption of a standards-based curriculum, (d) The education received by the applied music instructor, and (e) How upper administration and / or department heads monitor or guide assessment. In general, results indicate that in many instances there exists a definite need for further reflection, improvement, and development of assessment policy and implementation within the applied music studios of our colleges and universities.

Keywords: assessment practices, higher education, applied music studio, private lessons

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES	ix

CHAPTER

1. INTRODUCTION	1
Purpose of the Study	7
Research Questions	7
2. LITERATURE REVIEW	9
General Assessment Issues	9
Assessment Concepts	12
Summative Assessment	13
Formative Assessment	14
Marking and Grading of Assessment Criteria	16
Factors that Influence Assessment Approach and Design	20
Additional Assessment Literature in Higher Education	23
Chapter Summary	32
3. METHODOLOGY	34
Population Selection	34
Creation of Survey Instrument	43
Procedures	47
4. RESULTS	49
Influences on Assessment Practices	50
Administration, professional development, and departmental policy	54
Demographics of applied music students	55
Representative quotes	56
(a) Different curriculum requirements, (b) Different future professional expectations, (c) Different standards, and (d) Non-codeable.	

Representative quotes:	60
(a) Different curriculum & different standards,	
(b) Same curriculum & different standards,	
(c) Same standards & different curriculum,	
(d) Different curriculum,	
(e) Different standard,	
(d) Non-codeable	
Assessment Criteria & Instrument	63
Attendance and punctuality criteria	63
Representative quotes:	66
(a) Lowers overall grade by one letter grade or 10%,	
(b) Lowers overall grade by up to half of a letter grade or	
up to 5% or less,	
(c) Student receives a failing grade for that event,	
(d) Lowers overall grade, but amount is unspecified,	
(e) Not Applicable / No Attendance Problem,	
(f) Effect on grade varies depending on the situation,	
(g) “X” number of absences is allowed before the grade is	
lowered,	
(h) Lessons are rescheduled and made up,	
(i) There is a potential for students to be dropped from the	
studio and or failed,	
(j) No impact	
(k) Non-codeable.	
Attitudinal criteria	67
Written assessment criteria of musical knowledge and	
understanding	71
Performance assessment criteria of musical skill and	
musicianship	74
Practice assessment criteria	79
Weighting of assessment criteria	80
General comments and concerts about assessment	82
Communication of a formal grading policy	84
Summary	85
5. DISCUSSION	87
Summary	87
Assessment Criteria & Instruments	88
Attendance and punctuality	88
Attitude (participation, effort, leadership, etc.)	91
Written assessments	92
Performance assessments	94
Dissemination of policies	95
Practice assessments (self-recorded)	96
Weight of assessment criteria on a student’s applied	

lesson grade.....	97
Influences on Assessment Practices.....	99
Former teachers.....	99
Demographics of applied music student population.....	101
Adoption of standards-based curricula	104
Highest education received	105
Administration / department heads monitor or guide assessment.....	106
Limitations of Study	107
Access limitations	107
Sample size limitations	108
Survey instrument limitations	110
Further Research	111
Implications for Assessment Policy and Practice	112
Conclusion	116
REFERENCES:	118
APPENDIX A: Survey Instrument – Assessment Practices of Applied Music Studio Faculty in Higher Education	127
APPENDIX B: Recruitment email letter – September 13, 2013	135
APPENDIX C: Reminder to participate email – October 22, 2013	137
APPENDIX D: Final reminder to participate email – December 12, 2013	138
APPENDIX E: Example of weekly lesson rubric.....	139

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1: Participant demographic information regarding primary instrument taught	38
Table 2: Highest degree of education participants had completed	39
Table 3: Years of experience teaching applied music lessons	40
Table 4: Average percentages of students receiving “A’s”, “B’s”, “C’s”, “D’s”, or “F’s” grades in applied music lessons in higher education	41
Table 5: Number of students taught weekly by participants	42
Table 6: Respondent’s applied lesson students’ pursued degree type or focus area	42
Table 7: Descriptive statistics for the percentage of graduate and undergraduate students taught by respondents	43
Table 8: Extent studio teaching responsibilities reflected entire workload	43
Table 9: Organization of Assessment Practices of Studio Faculty Survey (APSFS)	47
Table 10: Influences Affecting the Development of the Assessment / Grading Policy	52
Table 11: Attendance criteria considered when grading students	64
Table 12: Respondent statements on how unexcused absences from lessons, rehearsals, concerts, recitals, etc..., impact student’s grades	67
Table 13: Attitudinal criteria considered when grading students	69
Table 14: Written assessment formats utilized when grading applied lesson students	72
Table 15: Written assessment objectives considered when grading applied lesson students	74
Table 16: Performance assessment formats utilized when grading applied lesson students	76

Table 17: Performance assessment objectives considered when grading applied lesson students	77
Table 18: Assessment tools used when administering performance assessments	79
Table 19: Practice Assessment formats utilized when grading applied lesson students.....	80
Table 20: Approximate weight of criteria used when determining applied lesson student's grades	81
Figure 1: Brass criteria specific performance rubric.....	114

Chapter 1: Introduction

Today's educational environment has, and is continually becoming more focused on holding teachers accountable for the educational opportunities they provide for their students. Specific standards of what students are expected to know and do in core subjects have been determined and implemented by state governments, and school educators in the elementary and secondary levels are chiefly held responsible for their students meeting those standards and benchmarks. This accountability movement has been primarily carried out by measuring students' scores on standardized tests at various grade levels throughout their elementary and secondary years attending public schools.

Results of the teacher accountability movement have been varied and mixed, and for the most part lie outside the scope of this study, however, it is important to note that when school districts continuously do not meet set standards or show signs of adequate improvement over the course of several years state governments have fired administration, re-arranged teaching positions, taken over the schools day-to-day operations, and in severe cases shut public schools down, consolidating them with more "successful" schools. While this accountability movement has generally impacted elementary and secondary schools, it appears that it will only be a matter of time before institutions that are responsible for accrediting, preparing, instructing and training new teachers may also be held accountable for their graduate's pedagogical shortcomings.

Almost all teachers measure and evaluate their students through both formative and summative assessment techniques to determine if they've met their instructional objectives or whether remedial work is necessary. Studying assessment practices and how they are implemented can inform whether or not a teacher's assessment methods have an

adverse or favorable effect on their students meeting or exceeding the standards in any given subject.

While national standards in music do exist for students in elementary and secondary schools, they do not exist for schools of music in higher education. The accrediting agency for schools of music called the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) does detail what curricular programs members should have in place for students pursuing music degrees in higher education, but it fails to give specific performance standards beyond general statements indicating that the “level of skill relevant to professional standards appropriate for the particular music concentration” should be met (National Association of Schools of Music, 2012, p. 99).

In the elementary and secondary schools realization and subsequent assessment of the implementation of those standards has proven to be difficult due to many factors such as on the job time constraints and lack of resources (Russell & Austin, 2010). In higher education, schools of music let the applied music studio faculty assess and determine to what extent each student taking private lessons meets those “professional standards” for their respective instrument. As there is an extreme paucity of such research to date specifically looking at this subject, and because standards and assessment methods can vary so greatly from one teacher to the next, there exists a need to identify the assessment practices of applied music studio faculty commonly used.

All teachers should be concerned with how effective their instruction is in actually helping their students learn what they are trying to teach. “Assessment information is invaluable to the teacher, student, parent, school, and community for determining the effectiveness of the music instruction in their schools” (Asmus, 1999, p. 22). This is true

of all music teachers regardless of what field they specialize in. Elementary, secondary, and higher education music teachers must be concerned with how effective their instruction actually is in helping their students master the substantive curriculum they've prepared for them.

Research regarding teacher effectiveness (Duke, 1999) has found a lack of empirical studies tying the measurement of teacher effectiveness with the accomplishment of instructional goals. The method of determining the accomplishment of those goals through various assessment practices in the applied studios of higher education has not been categorized, nor even thoroughly researched to identify exactly how private music teacher's instructional goals are being met.

For the professional, consummate musician and teacher, continual improvement in one's craft should be endlessly sought. Applied music studio faculty in higher education should be just as concerned with improving their performing and pedagogical skills, as elementary general music teachers and high school band directors are in improving their own unique set of teaching skills. Less effective pedagogical approaches, regardless of what field one is teaching in, once identified can and should be changed and improved if the teacher has an inclination to do so and becomes aware of the opportunity to advance their professional development.

The specifics of what studio faculty assess and how they go about evaluating their students can have a significant influence on students' professional development.

Assessment information based upon achievement criteria for example, instead of non-achievement criteria such as attendance and effort is particularly important for students because it gives them a better understanding of exactly how they are doing on any given

standard, skill, assignment, or measure. Unfortunately many music teachers have been found to use assessment methods that are more often than not “idiosyncratic, and not always well aligned with the recommendations of assessment experts” (Russell & Austin, 2010, p. 38). In fact one study found that many music teachers evaluation methods were “determined haphazardly, ritualistically, and/or with disregard for available objective information” (Boyle & Radocy, 1987, p. 2). While these and many other studies regarding assessment primarily have dealt with elementary and secondary school music classrooms, it remains to be seen if the above conditions are also present within the applied music studio environment in higher education. A couple of studies do suggest that this is the case (Frederickson, 2007; Oberlander, 2000) however, to what extent and degree those ineffective assessment practices described above are being utilized today still needs to be determined.

There is a considerable paucity of research within the field of music in higher education, and even less so addressing the applied music studio environment. Russell and Austin (2010) found “most of the research related to music assessment involves surveys of elementary and secondary music teachers’ assessment and grading practices” (p. 38). This study seeks to fill that gap by specifically identifying the assessment practices of applied music studio faculty in higher education. Jørgensen (2010) states “...research into higher music education has come of age and deserves to be regarded as an important research contribution, both from the research community and the students, teachers, and leaders in higher music education institutions” (p. 67).

High quality, valid, and reliable assessment information is vital to music students taking private lessons from applied music faculty in higher education because without the

formative and summative criteria-based feedback that should be provided, progress on their respective instruments can be stymied or slowed considerably. Because no research currently exists that specifically analyzes the assessment practices of many different applied music studios' faculty the opportunity to determine whether or not improvement can be made remains unrealized.

The current accountability movement has caused legislative elected officials, school administration, teachers, and the community as a whole to become more concerned with the quality and effectiveness of what is being taught in the class room. As continuing policy trends tend to be more and more focused on outcome measures that are becoming linked to financial resources in funding, the burden of proof that all teachers (including applied music studio faculty) are being effective in their instruction will fall on the schools as a whole and then trickle down so that each school, area head, and instructor must show that how they are assessing their students positively contributes to the successful education each individual student experiences. Research, experience, and common sense informs us that applied music studio faculty in higher education do employ various assessment methods in their course of instruction, however due to the lack of research there still exists a strong and definite need to document and de-mystify the process of how, to what extent, and when formative and summative assessment practices are employed, along with specifics on how applied instruction's final grades are determined.

Documenting the assessment practices of applied music faculty in higher education should lead to several potential benefits including identifying methods that are less effective in measuring positive change and growth, increasing a teacher's influence

and ability to affect their students' study and mastery of an instrument, and more professionally execute their responsibilities to give valid and reliable feedback to each of their individual students. When studio professors do not base their grades and assessment methods on measurable achievement criteria the students are cheated out of an education that they've paid thousands of dollars for, as they are more likely to be exposed to inconsistent, unfair and inequitable grading practices.

Another benefit of using achievement-based criteria to assess and grade music students lies in its ability to more accurately communicate the student's actual progress or lack thereof. Paul Lehman (1997) states:

It is dishonest and fraudulent to assign an A grade merely to indicate that a student has attended class, behaved acceptably, or given the appearance of trying hard. Using these criteria for grading is sharply at odds with the practices of teachers in other disciplines and is easily seen as evidence that music lacks curricular substance. (p. 58)

If students' grades have been based on attendance, behavior, or effort their entire undergraduate degree and received an "A" or passing grade all four years in their applied studio lessons they might think they are fully prepared and ready to win any audition they take. Such students are more than likely bound to be disappointed.

It is much more fair, honest, and professional to justify students' grades as an accurate reflection of achievement gains and progress made throughout the semester due to their hard work, rather than assigning them grades that are "idiosyncratic, ... do not follow [the] recommendations of assessment experts," (Russell & Austin, 2010, p. 38)

and that are “determined haphazardly, ritualistically, and/or with disregard for available objective information” (Radocy & Smith, 1988, p. 2).

Additional results of documenting assessment practices of applied music studio faculty include creating a foundational study from which further qualitative and quantitative research could be based upon. Results could also inspire assessment reform and perhaps clarify which assessment practices are more effective than others in the applied music studio environment.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to identify the assessment practices of applied music studio faculty in higher education.

Research Questions Guiding the Study

Primary research questions that have guided this study include: (a) What are the assessment practices of applied music studio faculty in higher education today? (b) To what extent are achievement and non-achievement criteria used to determine grades in private music lessons in higher education? and (c) To what extent and how are applied music studios in higher education using alternative forms of assessment, such as portfolios, audio recordings, and other self-evaluative techniques?

Secondary research questions that have guided this study include: a) To what extent are applied music studio faculty’s current assessment practices guided by educational training or following the tradition of how they themselves were assessed? b) How are assessment methods disseminated to the members of the studio?

Chapter 2: Literature Review

A search of the existing literature was conducted in areas related to assessment, music education, and applied music studios in higher education. The current chapter presents a description and review of literature in areas of assessment identified as central to the present study: general assessment issues, assessment concepts, summative assessment, formative assessment, marking and grading of assessment criteria, factors that influence the assessment approach and design, additional assessment literature in higher education. Recent studies regarding assessment in classrooms—both in general education and in elementary, secondary and higher education music classes—were reviewed as they related to the purpose of the present investigation. Studies pertaining to the topics of teacher assessment, the history of assessment, program assessment, curriculum design, and others were consulted, but were deemed tangential to the present literature review.

General Assessment Issues

“Achieving the aims of music education depends on assessment. The primary function of assessment in music education is not to determine grades but to provide accurate feedback to students about the quality of their growing musicianship” (Elliott, 1995, p. 264). Assessment is a significant and vital aspect of the educative process as it is essential for determining whether improvement and progress has taken place. A joint statement from the National Association of Schools of Music, National Association of Schools of Art and Design, National Association of Schools of Theatre, and National Association of Schools of Dance states:

Of course, evaluation of works of art, even by professionals is, highly subjective, especially with respect to contemporary work. Therefore, there is a built-in respect for individual points of view. At the same time, in all of the arts disciplines there is recognition that communication through works of art is impossible unless the artist possesses a significant technique in his or her chosen medium. Professional education in the arts disciplines must be grounded in the acquisition of just such a technique. (National Association of Schools of Music et al., 1997, p. 7)

As music educators teach their students how to improve their technique it becomes necessary to evaluate and assess the extent to which a student has improved. Many music educators believe that assessment is an important responsibility that teachers have in providing a quality education to their students (Hill, 1999). In the field of music education, assessment is particularly valuable for students seeking to improve their ability to create, express and share their music with others because it offers an opportunity for the student and teacher to evaluate progress achieved and address issues yet to be resolved. “Assessment information is invaluable to the teacher, student, parents, school, and community for determining the effectiveness of the music instruction in their schools” (Asmus, 1999, p. 22).

Unfortunately, assessment in music is often thought of as problematic because of personal beliefs that musical achievement is difficult to objectively quantify and assess. Asmus (1999) also suggests that a lack of knowledge about different kinds of assessment, a lack of understanding about assessable criteria, and a lack of know-how regarding the evaluative process can contribute to these beliefs as well. Barry (2009) states:

Evaluating music performance in the college music setting has always presented challenges with respect to balancing the subjective, personal nature of artistic performance with the need to maintain some degree of consistency and objectivity in order to grade students fairly. In today's political climate, and in the culture of student as consumer, music teachers more than ever need to utilize appropriate processes and tools for carrying out and documenting music performance evaluation. (p. 249)

While artistic performances can be considered subjective, the measurement of whether or not students have acquired skills and technique through the course of a specific class in higher education is certainly possible (Barry, 2009).

Many teachers fear that assessment information may lead to a misuse of data collected, have unintended consequences as a result of high stakes testing, and may be unfair for some students when standardized tests are used (Graham et al., 2002). Others believe that classroom conditions interfere with the teaching and assessment process.

Shuler (1996), for example, cites conditions within a class such as lack of training in assessment, limited student contact time, large class sizes, and lack of physical resources to aid in the collection, management, and storage of assessment data as influential circumstances that impede a teacher's capacity and ability to measure their student's achievements. Additional existing research in elementary and secondary music classrooms supports these findings (Hanzlik, 2001; Kancianic, 2006; Kotora, 2005; McCoy, 1991; Simanton, 2000).

Hanzlik (2001), McCoy (1991), and Simanton (2000), for example, cited school size as a factor that impeded their efforts to realize new and improved assessment

practices in music classes, while Kitora (2005), Nightingale-Abell (1994), and Tracy (2002) cite inadequate instructional time. Other factors such as lack of training and experience in assessment techniques by the teacher (Kitora, 2005; Nightingale-Abell, 1994) combined with parent and or student apathy regarding assessment (Kitora, 2005) easily compounds the challenges elementary and secondary music teachers face when they attempt to evaluate the achievements of their students. Russell and Austin (2010) do caution however “...findings related to how such situational factors impact assessment and grading decisions... are inconclusive” (p. 40).

While Shuler and others were primarily referring to conditions that exist in the elementary and secondary school music classrooms, many of the above conditions, such as the lack of training and experience in assessment, may also be descriptive of the applied music studio environment in higher education, and interfere with the teaching and evaluative process. Unfortunately, due to the lack of research conducted into higher music institutions themselves– especially in regards to assessment and the applied music lesson studio environment– much opportunity for further refinement and potential growth by the schools of music, faculty, and its students remains unrealized.

Assessment Concepts

Important assessment concepts commonly referred to in the field of education are: summative assessment, formative assessment, marking, and grading (Thorndike, 2010). While certainly other important concepts of assessment exist (ipsative, criterion-referenced, etc...), for the purposes of this study only a brief discussion of summative

assessment, formative assessment approaches and approaches to grading will be discussed along with the related findings from existing research.

Summative assessment refers to the systematic recording of overall achievement, such as end-of-semester jury performances or written final exams. Formative assessment refers to the process where information is elicited which will then be used by the pupil and teacher when deciding instructional steps to take in the future (Fautley, 2012).

Marking refers to the act of teachers commenting on and critiquing a student's work, whereas grading refers to the process of translating the student's work into an assignable grade that best represents the pupil's current level of achievement (Thorndike, 2010).

Summative Assessment

In a survey of applied clarinet studio teachers ($N = 154$) in the United States and Canada, Oberlander (2000) sought to study the grading practices that studio professors used with undergraduate level music students. Oberlander limited the study specifically to those that taught clarinet and woodwinds "to ensure that all clarinet teachers were included in the survey population, not just those who teach clarinet exclusively" (p. 10). No information was provided as to why a different population of applied studio teachers wasn't questioned, or why a greater number of participants were not originally sought. The financial decision to mail questionnaires rather than email them, so as not to bias computer-illiterate respondents, may have also been an influencing factor in limiting the sample size

Oberlander reported 94.2% ($n = 145$) of respondents required students to participate in an end of semester jury process that was adjudicated by other faculty

members. Oberlander remarks “Grading by jury is an excellent method of obtaining achievement-based [summative] assessment, since those faculty who are not familiar with the non-achievement factors of a student cannot use them in grading” (p. 23). Assessment by a panel of faculty members is also an effective way to increase the reliability of the summative evaluation because multiple judges have been shown to reduce biasness and potentially increase objectivity (Bergee, 1993, 2003; Draves, 2009; Smith, 2004; Papageorgi & Hallam, 2010; Wesolowski, 2012). Barry (2009) explains: “Statistically, reliability is a ratio of agreement divided by disagreement, thus, the higher rate of agreement among different judges, the higher reliability” (p. 250). While Oberlander reported a response rate of 51% ($n = 154$), the current study seeks to further contribute to the general knowledge base regarding grading practices in applied music studios by increasing the potential number of participants, and widening the diversity of musicians from which potential respondents are drawn from.

Formative Assessment

Siebenaler (1997), in seeking to identify and describe effective teaching characteristics of applied piano faculty, videotaped piano teachers ($n = 13$) instructing an adult student for three consecutive lessons, and a child student for three consecutive lessons. A segment (8 – 12 minutes long) showing work on a piece in progress was extracted from each of the 78 lessons and analyzed for teacher behavior, student behavior, and lesson progress. From the 78 lesson segments, ten representative excerpts were further evaluated by five expert piano pedagogues who rated the teaching

effectiveness of each segment. While the pedagogues were more reliable in identifying ineffective teaching, they were less reliable in identifying effective teaching ($r = .57$).

Siebenaler, using correlational analysis, found that relatively active teachers were ranked higher, modeled more, and gave more feedback than inactive teachers. Teachers who were more active in providing formative assessment by means of verbal instructions, performance modeling, and descriptive feedback to their students were also more effective in their teaching pedagogy. The current study seeks to further document the assessment practices of a more diverse population of teachers than Siebenaler had, and describe in greater depth the common methods of formative assessment within the applied music lesson studio environment.

Duke and Simmons (2006) described several characteristics involving formative assessment when researching the nature of expertise among three nationally acclaimed musicians and applied music pedagogues. Approximately 25 hours of video recordings of private lessons taught by the three expert teachers were analyzed looking for common elements of instruction that elicited change in their students' performances. One characteristic common among the three exemplary teachers is their insistence on students producing only the best tone quality at all times and their immediate delivery of formative assessments.

Irrespective of the lesson target addressed at a given moment, the teachers' attention remains focused on the quality of students' sounds. When students use faulty technique and produce sounds that are below the expected level of quality, teachers immediately identify the problems and require students to repeat the passages until correct technique and beautiful tone are demonstrated in context. (p. 12)

The expert teachers are formatively assessing their students and giving feedback as the lesson is in progress, which then guides the students' growth and improvement.

Another common formative assessment method Duke and Simmons found among the three expert teachers is that they all "... clearly remember students' work in past lessons and frequently draw comparisons between present and past, pointing out both positive and negative differences" (p. 12). Remembering students past work, and using that information to influence a student's current work through immediate commentary and feedback within the lesson, also reflects formative assessment.

Duke and Simmons observed that while "negative feedback is clear, pointed, frequent, and directed at very specific aspects of student's performances... there are [also] infrequent, intermittent, and unexpected instances of positive feedback, ... [which] are most often of high magnitude and extended duration" (p. 15). This is especially poignant as "[the] considerable amount of time spent describing improvements in performance over weeks or months is notable for its contrast with negative feedback, which is generally pointed and brief" (p. 12).

Marking and Grading of Assessment Criteria

Grading participation and effort rather than student achievement is a common practice within the field of music and without (Barkley, 2006; Roger, 2011). For example, Rogers (2011) surveyed instructors from multiple disciplines ($N = 521$) at a large northeastern public university and found that the majority of teachers were more likely than not to have incorporated a participation factor into final grades for their course.

Although assessment experts often recommend that participation and other non-achievement criteria should not be combined with achievement criteria, these findings and recommendations are often ignored or it may be more likely that the majority of music teachers have not been exposed to formal training in assessment practices (Goolsby, 1999; Hale & Green, 2009; Lehman, 1997; McCoy, 1991; Papageorgi & Hallam, 2010; Parkes, 2010; Roorda, 2008; Russell & Austin, 2010; Scott, 2004; Simanton, 2000). For example, Boyle and Radocy (1987) suggest that many assessment methods created by teachers could be "...determined haphazardly, ritualistically, and/or with disregard for available objective information" (p. 2). As Russell and Austin (2010) have observed "The net effect is that there is [often] little professional consensus as to what teachers should assess, how they should assess, or when they should assess" (p. 38). Research suggests that grading criteria within music classes of elementary and secondary schools are rampant with such non-achievement constructs (Barkley, 2006; Brookhart, 2001; Hill, 1999; Kancianic, 2006; Kitora, 2005; McCoy, 1991; McPherson, 1997; Russell & Austin, 2010; Searby & Ewers, 1996).

Barkley (2006) investigated the attitudes and strategies that elementary general music teachers used regarding the assessment of the National Standards for Music Education and the factors that influenced teachers' frequency and practice of assessment. Six hundred nineteen surveys were mailed to elementary general music teachers, of which a 41% response rate ($n = 254$) was obtained. Results indicated that most elementary general music teachers seemed to believe that time, resources, and teacher training were important factors that affected their ability to assess students on the National Standards for Music Education. Barkley also found that most teachers believed

participation and effort to be the most important factors when assigning grades. “[O]ver half of the teachers surveyed believed that if a student tries hard he/she should still receive a good grade in music despite poor performance on the music objectives” (Barkley, 2006, p. 52).

In another study, McCoy (1991) examined how high school band and choral directors determined grades and then compared the teachers grading systems with those proposed by principals. McCoy mailed surveys to 98 randomly selected high schools in Illinois and obtained a 49% response rate from principals, a 59% response rate from band directors, and a 47% response rate from choral directors. Results indicated that directors relied most heavily on non-music criteria, such as attendance, promptness, behavior, and participation when determining grades. Non-achievement criteria were also often given more overall weight when computing student’s grades than achievement criteria. For example, McCoy reported that attendance (42%) was weighted heavier than performance skills (33%), and a student’s attitude (14%) had more influence on the final grade than a student’s musical knowledge (11%).

While directors’ single most heavily weighted criterion for grade determination was attendance at concerts, principals on the other hand believed the most weight should be given to basic performance technique. McCoy also found that principals gave more emphasis to cognitive and other criteria that measures actual student achievement rather than the non-achievement criteria of attendance and behavior than the high school choral and band directors. This disparity suggests a potential disconnect between the constructs of what administrators deem the purpose of music instruction to be with band and choral director’s constructs of the purpose and goals of their programs.

While scarce, the existing research in higher education applied music studios implies that similar circumstances regarding the use of non-achievement criteria in determining student's grades may also be rampant. Oberlander (2000), for example, found 72.1% of applied clarinet studio faculty ($n = 154$) used concert attendance as a factor in determining students grades, while only 46.8% of respondents required an adjudicated performance as a criterion for assessment and grading purposes. Results also indicated many respondents determined their students grades based upon student effort (94.2%; $n = 145$), student improvement (92.9%; $n = 143$), and student's attitude (64.3%; $n = 99$).

Unfortunately there were no options for respondents to choose from that were based upon achievement criteria. Oberlander did, however, allow for respondents to select options such as "Write comments and grade each lesson; average those grades", and "No written comments or grades; use only overall impression of term to assign a grade", although these options did not allow for respondents to specify how final grades were determined. If some participants did use specific achievement based criteria (recorded using rubrics, checklists, portfolios, or other instruments) to determine their student's grades as modern research suggests (Draves, 2009; Goolsby, 1995; Hill, 1999; Johnson, 1993; Mills, 2009; Swlslocki, 2011), Oberlander's study could not record that information. Future research, such as this study, can include a wider variety of criteria to select from when asking respondents how they determine final grades for their students. The questions can also be broken up into categories that include achievement criteria and others that include non-achievement criteria to avoid respondent error and gather more information.

Although limited, the current research suggests that the trends seen in elementary and secondary schools regarding the use of non-achievement criteria to determine final grades may also exist within the context of the applied music studio in higher education. One of the goals of the current study is to better understand the extent to which this circumstance may or may not prevail among a larger, more diverse population of applied music studio faculty then studied by Oberlander.

Factors that Influence Assessment Approach and Design

There are many factors that may or may not influence teachers' assessment approach and design. Barkley (2006), for example, found that the number of students, teaching schedule, years of teaching experience, and the different types of grading systems (such as five point scales [A, B, C, D, F], three point scales [Excellent, Good, Satisfactory], and two point dichotomous scales [pass/fail]), were the most influential factors that impacted elementary general music teachers assessment of the national standards for music education. Barkley also found that teachers who felt they received "adequate training in assessment are more likely to use types of assessment such as rubrics, concert performance, audiotapes, and videotapes to assess certain national standards than those who feel they did not receive adequate training" (Barkley, p. 45, 2006).

In a study of the assessment practices of secondary music teachers ($n = 352$), Russell and Austin (2010) found "music teachers seldom received administration guidance in assessment or changed their assessment approach in response to standards-based curriculum adoption" (p. 48). This was despite the fact that the teachers taught in

school districts where music grades were weighted equally with academic grades and influenced student grade point averages. Other existing researchers have found that the lack of guidance from school administrators is often cited as a reason why music teachers are not more skilled and effective in their assessment practices of students in the classroom (Kotora, 2001, 2005; McCoy, 1988). Other factors that have been reported as influencing teachers' development of their assessment practice include the teachers' specialization (choir versus band) (McCoy, 1988) and teaching philosophy (Kancianic, 2006).

Kancianic (2006) investigated the methods, purposes, and factors that influence classroom assessment in high school band programs. MENC: The National Association for Music Education (now the National Association for Music Education) supplied a membership list from which a postcard via mail was sent to 2,000 randomly selected U.S. high school band directors with a link to access an online survey. Kancianic obtained a 39.75% response rate ($n = 795$) from which "descriptive statistics illustrated the respondents' use of classroom assessment methods, the level of importance they attributed to purposes of assessment, and the level of influence they attributed to factors that affect assessment..." (Kancianic, p. 3, 2006).

When respondents were asked to attribute the level of influence of specific factors on the use of classroom assessment methods, results indicated internal factors, such as one's philosophy of education and class goals, held a greater level of influence than external factors, such as school requirements, and local, state, or national standards on implementing assessment methods within the classroom. Statements by respondents indicating how their personal philosophy of education influenced their use of assessment

were enlightening: “being consistent in the view of the student. I really take the time to adjudicate a form/text/method of evaluation before I implement it with the students. Kids today really need consistency from the adults in their lives” (Kancianic, 2006, p. 162).

Another one reads:

Community perception of what band class is. Many do not see this as an academic class in which grades should be given. They love the performance aspect and support the competitive marching but do not grasp the concept of band being a learning environment in which certain goals and objectives should be worked for and accomplished. (p. 163)

Statements such as these and others illustrate the types of teacher philosophies that directly influence the assessment methods used in their band classes. The current study seeks to detail and describe the factors that influence the assessment methods of applied music studio faculty in higher education. Determining whether or not applied music studio faculty in higher education have received training and/or have experience in different assessment methods is also a purpose of the present study.

When Oberlander (2000) questioned participants about specific influences that affected their assessment approach and design, results indicated that just fewer than half the respondents (46.8%) created their own system. Although 48.7% of participants indicated their institutional guidelines were influential in developing their assessment approach, 43.5% of respondents reported modeling their grading system based on a former teachers’. Only 21.1% indicated that formal training received in graduate school was influential and only 13.6% reported training received while serving as a graduate assistant was influential in the development of their assessment approach.

It is important to note however that the respondents in Oberlander's study were not able to indicate whether they've received training or were influenced by an in-service or professional development session provided by their institution on assessment, nor was there an option to indicate similar opportunities of receiving assessment / grading training made available at professional conference's that also might have influenced the teachers creation of their grading instrument. There was also no mention as to whether or not the participant's field of study, such as performance major versus non-performance music major (music education, music theory, music history, etc.) may have had some influence on the development of the teacher's assessment approach. This presents an opportunity for the current study to collect more data using open-ended sections for respondents to identify other possible influences on applied studio faculty members approach to grading and assessment.

Additional Assessment Literature in Higher Education

Learning outcomes assessed in music are ultimately dependent on and determined by the goals, objectives, and curriculum of teachers, administration, and ultimately the students themselves. Unfortunately much of the research regarding assessment and grading practices in music has been conducted in elementary and secondary music classrooms (Barlkey, 2006; Brookhart, 2001; Hewitt, 2001, 2002; Kancianic, 2006; Nierman, 1983; Price, 1992; Russell & Austin, 2010; Yarbrough & Price & Hendel, 1994) with only a few studies specifically looking at the applied studio in higher education.

Frederickson (2007), for example, investigated the attitudes, beliefs, and practices on implementing the National Standards for Music Education of low brass studio faculty in higher education. An email was sent to applied studio low brass faculty ($N = 520$) teaching at institutions accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM), inviting them to participate in an online survey using Likert-type, single- and multiple- answer, and open-ended response questions. Frederickson obtained a 19.23% response rate ($n = 100$) from participants that varied in teaching experience, education, teaching responsibilities, tenure at the institution, and institution type. Interestingly, 95% of respondents indicated they were male.

Frederickson's survey instrument addressed Eisner's (1994) five dimensions of schooling, applied within the studio environment: the intentional, the structural, the curricular, the pedagogical, and the evaluative. The evaluative dimension was addressed by the survey instrument asking: "To what extent are assessment procedures used to evaluate students in particular studios in consonance with the National Standards for Music Education?" and "To what extent have implementing learning objectives that align with the National Standards for Music Education changed the way that these instructors evaluate student learning?" (p. 41).

Results indicated that respondent's low brass students were assessed on all nine standards (singing, playing, improvising, composing, reading/notating, listening, evaluating, arts/disciplines, and history/culture) with varying degrees of frequency. "Singing", for example, was evaluated very frequently by 33% of respondents ($n = 25$) and not at all by 21% of respondents ($n = 16$). "Playing" was evaluated very frequently by 84% of participants ($n = 62$), whereas "composing" was evaluated very frequently by

only 11% of participants ($n = 8$). Respondents however did indicate difficulty in adequately assessing their low brass students due to limited resources and lack of instructional time.

While collecting data on whether or not the national standards were being evaluated is important, the lack of information collected regarding exactly how the survey participants actually went about assessing each standard is unfortunate. Such information would have been a significant addition to the general knowledge base regarding the assessment practices of low brass studio faculty. The current study addresses this issue by asking participants to indicate which type of assessment tools (rubrics, portfolios, juries, recordings, etc.) are used when evaluating their students achievement and determining their students final grades.

Frederickson, when asking respondents to indicate how involved their institution's administration was in the development, refinement, and assessment of the curriculum results found that 19% ($n = 15$) reported being "very involved", 29% ($n = 23$) reported being "sort of involved", 29% ($n = 23$) reported being "not very involved", while 23% ($n = 18$) indicated no involvement. While not directly stating these findings as such, Frederickson collected valuable information regarding whether or not administration has influence in the development and execution of curricular assessment procedures. As stated earlier, the current study seeks to gain additional knowledge about the administrative influence on the development and execution of the assessment procedures of applied studio faculty in higher education.

Parkes (2006) studied whether the use of a criterion-specific performance rubric used throughout a semester would change instrumental applied studio faculty members

and their student's attitude regarding the satisfaction of the overall grading process within the context of juried performances, preparation for juries, and the continuous assessment throughout a grading term. Participants in the study were solicited from three higher education music institutions in Florida and consisted of music performance undergraduates ($n = 44$) and instrumental applied music performance faculty ($n = 11$). Subjects were randomly assigned into two groups of faculty and students: a control group that did not use the rubric, and an experimental group that did use the rubric.

To create the rubric used in the study, Parkes first created a criteria specific performance rubric for each instrumental family of participants (brass and woodwind). Inter-judge reliability of each rubric was found to be acceptable (brass rubric: $r = .98$; woodwind rubric: $r = .92$). Participant's attitudes were pre-tested at the beginning of a semester, and post-tested after the conclusion of the semester using a researcher designed measurement instrument of 20 items called the Grading Attitude Survey, which was based on qualitative information garnered from an earlier pilot study. Questions were of the following nature: "1. I like being graded at the end of semester in a jury exam" and "7. It is made clear to me during the semester how I will be graded in my jury" (Parkes, 2006, p. 81). Student participants would then answer strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree.

Results from Parkes' survey found no significant difference between pre-test to post-test in attitudinal data collected. Low participation rates from among applied faculty was cited as a weakness of the study and suggested that this may be indicative of applied music performance faculty's hesitancy to participate in research that studies performance assessment practices. Parkes also pointed out that because the potential pool of faculty

subjects was personally known to her and not anonymously solicited for participation in the study, there may have been some resistance to participate. The current study avoids this situation by anonymously soliciting respondents from a large database of potential participants where no identifiable demographic information is collected beyond years of experience, instrument taught, and highest degree of education received. Parkes' investigation also influenced the current study by reminding the researcher to confirm topic and content relevancy and validity of the survey to the teaching and assessment practices of potential respondents.

While previously mentioned several times above, Oberlander's (2000) survey of applied clarinet teachers ($n = 154$) from the College Music Society's 1998 - 99 directory regarding the grading procedures in their studio has more relevant information that pertains to and influences the current study. Oberlander limited her study to collect data on the following topics: (a) specific requirements each teacher mandated for their students, (b) influences affecting the teacher's grading procedures, (c) specific requirements included on distributed course syllabi, (d) how the grades were recorded, (e) how and to what extent non-achievement factors influenced grading, and (f) how juries were graded and then ultimately influenced the final grade. The current study seeks to collect similar data from a larger and more diverse population base of participants.

Specific criteria that Oberlander asked respondents to identify as required for all students in their studios is as follows: (a) arpeggios, scales, and other patterns, (b) performance requirements (non-recital), (c) attendance at concerts, (d) participation in small chamber music ensembles, (e) preparing orchestral excerpts, (f) blind judged performances, (g) listening assignments, and (h) writing assignments. Of these

requirements, many could be assessed using achievement criteria, but no information regarding the specifics on how each criterion was assessed was reported. It is also interesting to note that wording of Oberlander's questions do not help differentiate between items that could be considered achievement criteria or non-achievement criteria. Surveys used in future research could go further to differentiate between items that could be considered achievement or non-achievement criteria.

Results of Oberlander's study indicated that 100% of participants required their students to play pattern exercises such as scales and arpeggios, but only 46.8% ($n = 72$) of participants required their students to take part in anonymous judged performances. There is some ambiguity in the questioning and reporting of results as to whether the anonymous judged performances indicated in question one of Oberlander's survey are the same as juried performances asked about in question five. Because Oberlander reports the results of question number five as 94.2% of participants indicate they require an end of semester jury, this indicates there is somehow a difference that is not easily understood and may reflect reporting errors by respondents. The current study seeks to overcome ambiguous survey questions and seeks to communicate the results in a clear and straightforward format. Determining assessment criteria of applied studio faculty is also a goal of the current study, as well as discovering how the criteria is assessed and what overall influence the criteria has on the final grade of each student.

Although not designated as such by Oberlander, items reflecting non-achievement criteria such as concert attendance or participation in chamber music were also included on the survey. 72.1% of respondents ($n = 111$) indicated concert attendance was required, while 48.1% ($n = 74$) of participants reported requiring students to participate in a

chamber music ensemble. Another positive aspect of the survey is that a section for open-ended responses was included, which allowed Oberlander to elicit different categories not listed that many teachers still mandated such as participation in and observation of master-classes. Future researchers can consider an even wider variety of selectable assessment criteria to include on surveys and gain a greater wealth of information for correlational descriptions to be calculated.

One important aspect of assessment that Oberlander studied was how expectations and grading procedures were disseminated to applied lesson students. Oberlander found that 22.9% of respondents did not give out a syllabus of any kind to their applied lesson students. Reasons for not handing out a syllabus were not explored by Oberlander, nor were there any attempts to discover how those professors did communicate information regarding assessment and grading practices to their students. Whether or not those respondents had a written syllabus or other grading procedure they kept strictly for their own use was also not explored. Future research can seek to clarify why and exactly how grading expectations are disseminated to students when no syllabus is distributed.

Oberlander did find though that of the participants who did give out syllabi, only 58.4% included a section on how the final grade is calculated, and 40.9% detailed criteria for grading each private lesson. It's interesting to note that 68.8% of participants who hand out syllabi include information on how to reach an instructor, while only 7.8% include criteria for written assignments. Presumably, the other clarinet teachers don't give written assignments, however this information is not known.

Why certain categories such as attendance policies and performance requirements, which could affect the assessment and grading practices of the instructor, were not

included in the original selection of categories for respondents to indicate they include on their syllabus is also unknown. Giving respondents more selections to choose from, as well as perhaps asking them to return along with their survey a copy of their syllabus might have been a more effective method for gathering data and creating primary source materials for future studies.

In an attempt to determine the most effective way to prepare the next generation of studio teachers, Wexler (2009) sought to first determine whether there were shared attitudes regarding goals and values, as well as common teaching and assessment strategies of studio teachers across different instrumental groups. College level studio teachers listed in the College Music Society Directory were interviewed and surveyed to “identify common values, beliefs, processes, and strategies that have positively affected students” (p. 9). Email invitations ($n = 855$) to participate in an online survey were sent to an even distribution of different instrumental group members listed in the directory. Email invitations to participate were sent out in the months of June and July, with reminder emails sent in September and October. Perhaps if the initial invitations were sent out during months when the studio teachers were more likely to be at school (September, October, and November) instead of in the summer months, the response rate may have been higher. Of the 855 invitations sent out Wexler received only 18% ($n = 154$) fully completed surveys for analysis. All respondents had at least two years of studio teaching experience, with 90% of respondents having five or more year’s experience.

In addition to demographic data (i.e. performing instrument, primary teaching instrument, gender, and years teaching) respondents were asked to complete 42 Likert-

type items indicating whether they strongly disagreed, disagreed, neither agreed or disagreed, agreed, or strongly agreed with various questions. Survey items stemmed from the following categories: (a) common values and goals, (b) technique and artistry, (c) common attitudes towards independence vs. authority, (d) common assessment strategies, (e) common teaching strategies, and (f) practice expectations.

Wexler categorized only four items in the “common assessment strategies” (p. 67) category, and of the four none of them actually focused on grading practices used by the studio teachers. Instead the questions were much more focused on assessment objectives such as rhythmic accuracy, producing a beautiful sound regardless of instrument, and intonation, rather than on the actual assessment practices or strategies themselves. For example, respondents were asked to rate the following statement: “Rhythmic accuracy is not such an important part of a successful performance if artistry is evident” (p. 68). This doesn’t identify how or with what instrument a student rhythmic accuracy is, for example, actually measured, or determined to be rhythmically accurate.

While these items do help determine if the studio teacher’s attitudes regarding these assessment objectives are shared across different instrumental groups, it fails to identify specific common assessment strategies. There were no questions actually attempting to understand the assessment and grading practices and procedures of the studio professors. Despite the fact that most if not all of the teachers would have to give their students grades at the end of their term (quarter or semester). Nor were there questions regarding how they came up with each student’s final grade, how they kept track of progress, or how students were informed of assessment practices.

Results of Wexler's study indicated that studio professors across multiple instrumental groups tended to share the same values, goals, technique, artistry, attitude of independence versus authority, assessment and teaching strategies, and practice expectations. While the details of assessment practices lay outside of the primary focus of Wexler's study, more information regarding how studio teachers commonly assess and grade their students could have greatly contributed to the profession's general knowledge of the often mysterious grading practices of the applied music studio.

Chapter Summary

A search of the existing literature was conducted, reviewed, and synthesized in areas related to assessment, music education, and applied music studios in higher education. The literature suggests that while assessment as a principle is generally understood and accepted as necessary and valuable by music educators and administrators, the development and implementation of assessment practices within the music classroom has many challenges.

Factors include resistance to assessment due to the highly subjective nature of music itself, a lack of knowledge about different assessment methods and procedures, and fear that the evaluative measures are unfair and can have unintended consequences. Other factors such as lack of training, limited student contact time, and inadequate resources in implementing assessment methods have also been cited as challenges.

Assessment measures using summative (i.e., paneled end-of-semester juries) and formative techniques (i.e., immediate feedback within a private lesson) has been found to be used in elementary, secondary, and higher education music classrooms. However, the

extent to which a more diverse population of applied music studio faculty is actively using various summative and formative assessment methods remains unknown.

The current review of literature suggests that many music educators in elementary and secondary music positions use non-achievement criteria, such as effort, attitude, and attendance, when determining final grades for students. The extent to which similar constructs are being used by applied music faculty in higher education today remains largely unknown.

The review of literature found that there are many factors that may or may not influence teachers' assessment approach and design, including: teaching schedule, years of teaching experience, assessment training, highest degree received, administrative guidance, prior mentor's assessment method, teacher's specialization, and teaching philosophy. The extent to which these factors are applicable to applied music studio faculty in higher education is also largely unknown.

Unfortunately, due to the lack of research conducted into higher music institutions themselves— especially in regards to assessment and the applied music studio environment— much opportunity for further refinement and potential growth by the schools of music, faculty, and its students remains unrealized.

Chapter 3: Method

Population Selection

Primary research questions that have guided this study include: (a) What are the assessment practices of applied music studio faculty in higher education today? (b) To what extent are achievement and non-achievement criteria used to determine grades in private music lessons in higher education? and (c) To what extent and how are applied music studios in higher education using alternative forms of assessment, such as portfolios, audio recordings, and other self-evaluative techniques?

Secondary research questions that have guided this study include: a) To what extent are applied music studio faculty's current assessment practices guided by educational training or following the tradition of how they themselves were assessed? b) How are assessment methods disseminated to the members of the studio?

Based on the primary and secondary research questions that guided this study, it was determined that the optimal target population to survey would be applied music studio faculty members in higher education whose names were listed in The College Music Society's *Directory of Music Faculties in Colleges and Universities, U.S. and Canada, 2012 – 2013* (Directory of Music Faculties in Colleges and Universities, U.S. and Canada, 2012-2013, 2012). The directory lists 1,794 institutions, and 43,984 faculty members spread throughout the United States and Canada, organized by 163 teaching specialties and subspecialties in their database.

Faculty members listed under the directory's *Performance Instruction* category were initially selected to be potential participants in the study. Members that were excluded from potential participation were listed under the following subcategories that

were determined to be outside the candidacy limitations: conducting (both choral/vocal and instrumental conducting), piano pedagogy, piano technician, accompanying and collaborative piano, and group piano faculty instructors. The remaining potential faculty members that met the criteria of being listed in the database, as an applied music faculty member in higher education, was 19,774. After subtracting names of members that did not want to be included in any survey questionnaires, and/or had requested their names be removed from the list, the population of potential participants in the United States and Canada was determined ($N = 19,723$).

The decision to sample all potential participants rather than a representative sample was based off of several considerations. While the email addresses contained within The College Music Society's 2012 – 2013 directory is available via print copy, access to the email list database itself was restricted to The College Music Society's (CMS) personnel only, thus making random sample distribution lists, and or other desirable sampling methods unfeasible for the current project. Another rationale for sampling the entire population was to obtain a broad representation of subgroups without the ability to stratify and protect against oversampling. There were also minimal resources for following up, contacting and providing incentives for participation in the study. To minimize non-response of subjects due to the length of the study (37 questions), a greater number of potential participants was desired to garner a more acceptable response rate. Finally, there was no prior research found to inform a more targeted approach.

All potential participants were emailed a recruitment letter (see Appendix B) through the CMS's server on September 13, 2013 that included a link to the survey

instrument. The initial email yielded 1,078 surveys, with two additional reminder emails (see Appendix C, and Appendix D) on October 22, 2013, and December 12, 2013 yielding an additional 1,045 surveys. Data collection ended on December 31, 2013. Respondents who completed the survey comprised a response rate of 8.89% ($N = 1,754$), with 2,123 (10.76%) participants answering at least one question.

Online survey sites such as SurveyGizmo.com have stated that typical response rates for external Internet surveys have an average response rate between 10 – 15 % (SurveyGizmo, n.d.). Survey Monkey, however reports a 20 – 30% average response rate with a population of participants with no relationship to the researcher. Because typical response rates for online surveys can vary drastically (Cook, et. Al., 2000), it is important to remember that:

Response representativeness is more important than response rate in survey research... Election polls make clear that the *representativeness* of our samples is much more important than the response rate we obtain. A sample of fewer than 1% of the population can be more representative, indeed much more representative, than a sample of 50% or 60% of the population. (Cook, et al., p. 821)

Non-response bias is not necessarily an issue with response rates (Sax, et al, 2003). The issue comes with mismatched population characterization. For example, the number of participants that were identified as belonging to the string family (14.08%, $n = 247$) was under represented in the results in comparison to the number of potential subjects that were listed in The College Music Society's Directory of Music Faculties in Colleges and Universities, U.S. and Canada, 2012 – 2013 (24.54%, $N = 7,504$), before adjusting for

those who asked their names to be removed from the database. Whereas, voice faculty were over represented (23.55%, $n = 413$) in comparison to the number of potential subjects that were asked to participate (18.48%, $N = 5,649$) (see Table 1). Overall, because the proportion of participants that took part in the survey and the proportion of potential candidates initially listed in the CMS database are similar, results of the current project may indicate a high level of representativeness among the population categories.

Anonymous, non-identifiable, participant demographic information was collected regarding which instruments the participant taught, highest degree of education received, and years of experience teaching applied music lessons (see Tables 1 to 3). Other descriptive demographic information regarding the participants' working environment (workload, studio size, types of grades given, etc.) was also collected (see Tables 4 to 7).

Respondents indicating their primary instrument as voice ($n = 413$) were the dominant single population that participated (see Table 1). Approximately one quarter of the participants ($n = 464$, 26.53%) indicated that they teach at least one additional secondary instrument, with the euphonium ($n = 79$) as the most predominant additional instrument taught.

Table 1

Participant demographic information regarding primary instrument taught (n = 1,754)

Primary Instrument	<i>n</i>	% of <i>n</i> *	% of Potential <i>N</i> **	CMS Faculty***
All / Multiple Instruments	7	0.40%	N/A	N/A
All / Multiple WW	17	0.97%	1.21%	371
All / Multiple Brass	16	0.91%	1.12%	341
All / Multiple Keyboard	4	0.23%	1.46%	446
All / Multiple Strings	13	0.74%	0.99%	302
Woodwind Flute	97	5.53%	3.96%	1,210
Oboe	43	2.45%	2.51%	768
Clarinet	71	4.05%	3.64%	1,113
Bassoon	32	1.82%	2.28%	696
Saxophone	64	3.65%	3.82%	1,168
Brass Horn	55	3.14%	2.81%	858
Trumpet	101	5.76%	4.22%	1,290
Trombone	85	4.85%	3.16%	966
Tuba & Euphonium	53	3.02%	2.95%	902
Percussion	93	5.30%	5.75%	1,759
Keyboard Piano	311	17.73%	15.35%	4,694
Organ	45	2.57%	2.74%	839
Voice	413	23.55%	18.48%	5,649
Strings Violin	61	3.48%	5.45%	1,667
Viola	21	1.20%	3.16%	966
Cello	36	2.05%	3.21%	982
Bass	35	2.00%	3.52%	1,075
Harp	12	0.68%	1.16%	355
Guitar	69	3.93%	7.06%	2,157
Total	1,754	100.00%	100.00%	30,574
Primary Instrument Category	<i>n</i>	% of <i>n</i> *	% of Potential <i>N</i> **	CMS Faculty***
All / Multiple Instruments	7	0.40%	NA	NA
Woodwinds	324	18.47%	17.42%	5,326
Brass	310	17.67%	14.25%	4,357
Percussion	93	5.30%	5.75%	1,759
Keyboards	360	20.52%	19.56%	5,979
Voices	413	23.55%	18.48%	5,649
Strings	247	14.08%	24.54%	7,504
Total	1,754	100.00%	100.00%	30,574

Note: * = % of respondent *n* for each instrument category (*n* = 1,754). ** = % of potential *N* according to instrument category as listed in The College Music Society's *Directory of Music Faculties in Colleges and Universities, U.S. and Canada, 2012 – 2013* before adjusting for those who asked their names to be removed from the database (*N* = 30,574). *** = Represents total number of faculty listed in The College Music Society's *Directory of Music Faculties in Colleges and Universities, U.S. and Canada, 2012 – 2013* before adjusting for those who asked their names to be removed from the database.

Most survey participants reported receiving at least an undergraduate bachelor's degree or equivalent. The majority of respondents ($n = 865$) indicated the highest degree of education completed was a doctoral degree (49.25%). Participants reported a master's degree ($n = 679$), to be the next the highest degree completed (38.67%) (see Table 2). Some respondents ($n = 98$, 5.58%) indicated in an open-ended "Other" category that their highest degree of education received was one of the following: All But Dissertation (ABD), Artists Diploma, Prix d'Excellence, Prix de conservatoire, and playing in a symphony.

Table 2
Highest degree of education participants had completed ($n = 1,756$)

Degree of Education Completed	n	%
High School	9	0.51%
Bachelors	105	5.98%
Master's	679	38.67%
Doctorate	865	49.26%
Other	98	5.58%

Nearly half of the participants ($n = 831$, 47.30%) in the study indicated that they had been teaching applied music lessons in higher education for over 21 years, while the next most frequently reported level of years of experience ($n = 295$) had been teaching between 11 to 15 years (see Table 3). The least amount of teaching experience reported was 0 to 5 years and participants ($n = 151$) in this category made up 8.59% of the responses.

Table 3

Years of experience teaching applied music lessons (n = 1,757)

Years Teaching	<i>n</i>	%
0 to 5	151	8.59%
6 to 10	248	14.11%
11 to 15	295	16.79%
16 to 20	232	13.20%
21+	831	47.30%

A very large majority of participants ($n = 2,044$; 96.64%) reported the types of grades given at their institutions were “Letter or Percentage” based. A much smaller percentage of respondents ($n = 92$; 4.35%) indicated they gave “Pass / Fail” grades, and only 55 participants (2.60%) indicated their grading system was “Standards” based. Very few respondents ($n = 12$; 0.57%) reported no grades were assigned or required for applied lessons at their institution.

On average, participants ($n = 1,946$) reported 70% of their students received “A’s”, while very small percentages of students received a “D” ($n = 584$; 3%), or “F” ($n = 631$; 3%) letter grade (see Table 4). Letter grades received in applied lessons affected students’ overall grade point average, weighted equally with grades from other academic courses, in 91.5% of participants’ ($n = 2,023$) institutions. Relatively few respondents ($n = 172$, 8.51%) indicated that applied lesson grades were either not weighted equally ($n = 148$; 7.32%) with other academic courses, or did not affect their student’s grade point average ($n = 24$; 1.19%). However, the vast majority of participants did report that students enrolled in applied lessons did receive academic credit toward fulfillment of graduation requirements ($n = 1,998$; 98.96%).

Table 4

Average percentages of students receiving “A’s”, “B’s”, “C’s”, “D’s”, or “F’s” grades in applied music lessons in higher education (n = 1,946)

Type of Grade	M %	n
A’s	70%	1,942
B’s	23%	1,872
C’s	9%	1,275
D’s	3%	584
F’s	3%	631

Respondents ($n = 1,753$) indicated that on average the number of students taught weekly was 26.16 students. Some respondents ($n = 122$; 6.96%) indicated the number of students they taught varied from week to week. To quantify the results, the average number of students taught per week was calculated and reported below (see Table 5). For example, if a respondent indicated they teach 2 to 4 students weekly, they were categorized as teaching 3 students per week. Due to the high number of students taught weekly reported by participants, and because of possible ambiguity in the question itself, results from the survey regarding the number of students taught should be interpreted carefully. The survey instrument should have read: “How many [applied music] students do you teach weekly?” Without the word “applied”, respondents could have interpreted the question incorrectly and included non-applied music students or classroom/lecture students in the number reported. This is likely to have occurred when participants responded with numbers of students greater than the typical academic load for studio faculty in higher education (i.e., > 20).

Table 5
Number of students taught weekly by participants (n = 1,753)

Number of Students	<i>n</i>	%
1 – 5.5	287	16.37
6 – 10.5	471	26.87
11 – 15.5	465	26.53
16 – 20	323	18.43
21 – 25	116	6.62
26 – 30	49	2.80
31 – 35	16	0.91
36 – 40	10	0.57
41 – 45	3	0.17
46 – 50	7	0.40
51 – 55	1	0.06
56 – 60	2	0.11
61 – 65	2	0.11
66 – 70	1	0.06

Participants ($n = 1,958$) in the study indicated that on average 52% ($n = 1,739$) of their applied lesson students were pursuing non-performance music major degrees (see Table 6). While more respondents ($n = 1,765$) reported students pursuing music performance degrees, the average percentage of their students (40%) pursuing those degrees was still lower than non-performance music majors.

Table 6
Respondent's applied lesson students' pursued degree type or focus area (n = 1,958)

Degree	<i>M%</i>	<i>n</i>
Music Performance	40%	1,765
Non-performance Music	52%	1,739
Non-music	26%	1,370

In response to the question “What approximate percentage of Graduate versus Undergraduate students do you teach?” participants ($n = 1,727$) indicated that the mean

average percentage of undergraduates taught was approximately 89%. Respondents ($n = 1,142$) indicated that the mean average percentage of graduate students taught was 19% (see Table 7).

Table 7

Descriptive statistics for the percentage of graduate and undergraduate students taught by respondents ($n = 1,754$)

Degree Type	<i>M%</i>	<i>n</i>
Undergraduate	89%	1,727
Graduate	19%	1,142

Respondents ($n = 1,758$) indicated a variety of configurations in regard to the extent to which their studio teaching responsibilities reflected their entire workload (see Table 8). Just over one quarter of the respondents ($n = 468$, 26.62%) reported that their responsibilities teaching applied music lessons reflected 76% to 100% of their overall time, while only 388 participants reported their percentage of teaching applied lessons was 25% or less of their total workload.

Table 8

Extent studio teaching responsibilities reflected entire workload ($n = 1,758$)

% of Time	<i>n</i>	%
25% or less	388	22.07%
26% - 50%	445	25.31%
51% - 75%	457	26.00%
76 – 100%	468	26.62%

Creation of Survey Instrument

Based on the primary and secondary research questions that guided this study the Assessment Practices of Applied Studio Faculty Survey (APASFS) was created (see

Appendix A). The development of the instrument began after an extensive search and review of related literature regarding the assessment practices of applied studio faculty in higher education. The most similar research by Oberlander (2000) and Parkes (2008, 2009, 2010, 2011) influenced the contextual framework from which this study was based upon. Due to the lack of quantitative research on the subject it was necessary to reference and review research projects and their survey instruments used to document the assessment and grading practices of secondary and elementary school music educators (Alison & Beitler, 2007; Burrack, 2002; Ford, 2011; Goolsby, 1999; Hanzlik, 2001; Hill, 1999; Klingenstein, 2005; Kitora, 2001; Livingston, 2000; McClung, 1996; McCoy, 1988; Russell & Austin, 2010; Winter, 1993; Yarbrough, Price, & Handel, 1994). The topics and issues of performance assessment practices in secondary and elementary school music programs were deemed similar enough to the current study's questions to warrant inclusion of information and influence on the development of the APASFS instrument.

Russell and Austin's (2000) survey instrument, *The Secondary School Music Assessment Questionnaire* (SSMAQ), was very influential in the creation of the APASFS. Acting as an initial template for the current study's survey instrument, the SSMAQ's questions were modified to reflect a different target population. To maximize content validity, additional questions were then either added or adapted to more clearly fulfill the purpose of the study and be aligned with the primary and secondary research questions guiding the project more completely.

The survey items themselves consist of multiple choice, close-ended dichotomous (yes/no), Likert-style rating scales, checklists, and open-ended short answer questions.

Several questions were tiered so that if you answered a specific way, you would be directed to additional questions. For example, question #15 asks “Is ‘attitude’ (participation, effort, leadership, etc...) a criterion you use in determining a student’s applied lesson grade?” If a respondent answers ‘no’, they skip to question #18. If they answer ‘yes’, they are asked additional questions regarding attitudinal criteria and how they assess said criteria.

Through a piloting process involving three esteemed applied music studio faculty with many years of professional performing and collegiate applied lesson teaching experience, a draft version of the survey instrument was reviewed and refined. Wording was changed for clarification purposes, and the item order in which questions appeared was adjusted to better promote the goals of the study and improve the experience of the participants. Estimated completion time for the APASFS was five to ten minutes, dependent upon each respondent’s answers. In order to gain permission to use the database held by The College Music Society, additional review of the survey instrument was conducted by a panel of judges tasked with maintaining the integrity of the organization’s research mission. The panel recommended similar minor wording changes to two questions for clarification purposes, which were subsequently adapted and approved of by the original applied music studio faculty piloting team.

The instrument is organized into four main sections (see Table 9). The first section gathered information on the participants’ demographics such as working environment (type and percentages of grades given and their affect on student’s grade point average, studio size, and workload), primary and additional instruments taught, years of experience, and highest education received. The second section gathered

information regarding the influences on assessment practices of the respondents such as administrations guidance, applied music student's degree, highest education received, and other possible factors. The third section addressed the actual criteria (achievement based and non-achievement based) that the applied music faculty used when assessing their students such as attendance, effort, attitude, and performance achievement. Items in the fourth section gathered information on the actual assessment instrument used by applied music faculty to gather information regarding the dissemination of syllabi, performance assessment tools, and practice assessment tools (rubrics, rating scales, practice journals, recordings, etc.).

Table 9

Organization of Assessment Practices of Studio Faculty Survey (APASFS)

Section Numbers	Question
1. Population Demographics	
Instruments taught (Primary, Secondary)	30
Highest education received	35
Experience teaching applied music lessons in higher education	34
Working environment	
Types & % of grades given	2, 3
Studio size	31
Workload	32
Effect of grades on GPA, graduation	4, 5
Demographics of applied music student population	8, 33
2. Influences on Assessment Practices	
Administration / department heads monitor or guide assessment	6, 36, 37
Adoption of standards-based curricula by department	7
Demographics of applied music student population	9, 10, 37
Highest education received	35, 37
Other influences on assessment practices	37
3. Assessment Criteria & Instrument	
Performance major vs. non-performance major	11
Attendance & punctuality	12, 13, 14
Attitude (participation, effort, leadership, etc...)	15, 16, 17
Written assessments	18, 19, 20
Performance assessments	21, 22, 23, 24
Dissemination of information	1
Practice assessments (self-recorded)	25, 26
Weight of assessment criteria on a students applied lesson grade	27, 28, 29

Procedures

After the survey instrument was created, reviewed, and refined, the project was submitted to the Indiana University Institutional Review Board, and was accepted on May 14, 2013 as meeting the criteria of exempt research as described in the Federal regulations at 45 CFR 46.101(b), paragraph(s) (2). Official approval from the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music Graduate Office was granted on May 22, 2013.

As mentioned above, all potential participants were emailed a recruitment letter (see Appendix A) through The College Music Society's (CMS) server on September 13, 2013 that included a link to the survey instrument hosted by an online survey creation and distribution service, Survey Monkey, Inc. The initial email yielded 1,078 surveys, with two additional reminder emails (see Appendix C, and Appendix D) on October 22, 2013, and December 12, 2013 yielding an additional 1,045 surveys. Data collection ended on December 31, 2013. Statistical analysis of data collected was performed using IBM's SPSS Predictive analytics software v. 20.

Chapter 4: Results

Primary research questions that have guided this study include: (a) What are the assessment practices of applied music studio faculty in higher education today? (b) To what extent are achievement and non-achievement criteria used to determine grades in private music lessons in higher education? and (c) To what extent and how are applied music studios in higher education using alternative forms of assessment, such as portfolios, audio recordings, and other self-evaluative techniques?

Secondary research questions that have guided this study include: a) To what extent are applied music studio faculty's current assessment practices guided by educational training or following the tradition of how they themselves were assessed? b) How are assessment methods disseminated to the members of the studio?

Results from this survey will be organized into the following sections: Influences on Assessment Practices, and Assessment Criteria & Instrument (see Table 9 for organization of survey instrument and corresponding survey questions). Both sections taken as a whole answer the primary research question detailing what the assessment practices of applied music studio faculty in higher education are today. The first section, "Influences on Assessment Practices", attempts to answer the secondary research question about the extent to which applied music faculty's current assessment practices are guided and or influenced by educational training, tradition, and other factors. The second section, "Assessment Criteria & Instrument", attempts to answer the primary research questions regarding the use of achievement and non-achievement criteria and other factors in determining the grades of applied lesson students in higher education. It also attempts to answer the research questions regarding how assessment methods and

expectations are disseminated to applied lesson students, and addresses the primary research question about performance assessment tools, practice assessment tools, and alternative forms of assessment.

The population of potential participants ($N = 19,723$) in the United States and Canada was determined by being listed as an applied music studio faculty member in The College Music Society's *Directory of Music Faculties in Colleges and Universities, U.S. and Canada, 2012 – 2013* (Directory of Music Faculties in Colleges and Universities, U.S. and Canada, 2012-2013, 2012). Respondents who completed the survey comprised a response rate of 8.89% ($N = 1,754$), with 2,123 (10.76%) participants answering at least one question. Additional information collected regarding population demographics was reported in chapter three and will not be duplicated in this chapter.

Influences on Assessment Practices

Respondents were asked to “Indicate the influences that have affected the development of [their] assessment / grading policy by selecting approximately how much influence each item had in the development of [their] assessment / grading policy on the following scale: Very little influence, A little, Some, Heavy, and Extremely heavy influence” (see Table 10) (see question 37 in Appendix A). Descriptive statistics (frequency, mean, standard deviation, and skew) were reported for the influences affecting the development of the assessment / grading policy. In-service training ($n = 1,272$) was the only variable to reveal an extremely skewed distribution ($Sk = 1.14$) with the mean of 1.79 ($SD = 1.07$). Participants ($n = 1,655$) indicated that employer's guidelines had varying degrees of influence on the development of their assessment /

grading policies. Four hundred respondents (24.17%) indicated that employer's guidelines had very little influence on the development of their assessment / grading policy, while only one hundred and nine participants (6.59%) reported an extremely heavy influence.

Out of all the variables that could influence the development of the assessment / grading policy, in-service training was reported as having the least influence ($n = 732$; 57.55%), followed by training received as a graduate assistant ($n = 516$; 41.41%). Of the variables that respondents reported as having an extremely heavy influence on the development of their assessment / grading policy, a former teacher's influence was the highest ($n = 329$; 27.90%), followed by a student's chosen field of study (performance major versus a non-performance major) ($n = 231$; 23.83%).

Table 10

Influences Affecting the Development of the Assessment / Grading Policy (n = 1,754)

Items	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Sk</i>	%NA
Employers guidelines	1,655	2.61	1.20	0.16	4.67%
In-service training	1,272	1.79	1.07	1.14*	25.13%
Former teacher	1,656	3.31	1.27	-0.41	4.17%
Peer's assessment policy	1,589	2.76	1.13	-0.07	7.51%
Training in graduate school	1,514	2.71	1.39	0.13	11.72%
Training as a graduate assistant	1,246	2.36	1.37	0.50	25.66%
Student's chosen field of study	1,544	3.01	1.34	-0.18	7.99%

Items	Very Little Influence	A Little Influence	Some Influence	Heavy Influence	Extremely Heavy Influence
Employers guidelines	24.17%	18.97%	34.68%	15.59%	6.59%
In-service training	57.55%	16.19%	18.40%	5.74%	2.12%
Former teacher	13.16%	9.96%	29.11%	27.90%	19.87%
Peer's assessment policy	18.63%	17.62%	38.14%	20.33%	5.29%
Training in graduate school	29.66%	13.87%	24.37%	19.95%	12.15%
Training as a graduate assistant	41.41%	13.64%	21.59%	14.37%	8.99%
Student's chosen field of study	21.05%	10.36%	29.79%	23.83%	14.96%

Note: * = Extremely skewed distribution.

Comments ($n = 240$) from the optional open ended response section of the question yielded a variety of additional influences not listed as possible selections in the survey. Some of the discrete categories that emerged from the responses regarding influences affecting the development of one's assessment policy were: undergraduate education courses about philosophy of education, a student's progress over the course of the semester, individual student's talent, the changing accountability climate regarding assessment in schools, various educational books such as Malcolm Gladwell's "Outliers" and "Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance: An Inquiry Into Values" by Robert Pirsig, the National Association of Schools of Music Guidelines, teaching experience, performance experience, experimentation, and students contesting grades after their jury performances.

Many commented on the influence that on-the-job experience had in the development of their assessment policy.

Experience has been my biggest influence. I am always aware of best practices and ideas that work well (or do not work well) when applied in reality. The overall philosophy is the same, but specifics of how best to apply the philosophy may need to be adapted.

Another comment in the same vein is also insightful:

[My] teachers didn't have codified grading policies, and the schools didn't get involved in dictating that. There have always been successful teachers whose students get jobs and those less so. Relatively few students eventually make it to a performance career, and those of us who have done it know what it takes (intimately) and can see it happening in our students or not happening. The most important factor is the individual student's drive, curiosity, perseverance, willingness to listen and respond, and sustained effort day to day, weeks, months, [and] years. Grades aren't so important when you look at this big picture. I usually use grades lower than A- or B+ only to send a strong message that something needs to change BIG TIME. I'm sure Yo-Yo Ma never gave a rip about his grade in applied lessons.

Others commented on how a student's progress and development influences their assessment policy as demonstrated by this comment:

I grade my students on a much more holistic perspective, based on their progress week-to-week, their development as musicians AND individuals, their personal growth and maturity development, and ultimately their performance ability based

on the work we have undertaken, not on "company policy" (i.e. employers guidelines), or the way in which I may have been graded as an undergraduate/graduate student.

One additional comment is worth noting in that it identifies several additional influences as well as articulates a common theme regarding frustration with assessment policies in general:

Recruitment, Retention, Student Evaluation are heavy factors in giving out better grades. As shown in research, teachers fall prey to giving better grades to receive a better evaluation... so when there is any kind of subjectivity (evaluating effort and performance) then the teacher tips the scale in favor of the student...

especially when the teacher doesn't place a lot of weight behind the meaning of grades. Promotion and Tenure are affected by student evaluation. How can there be any kind of [actual] truth in grading unless you can have extremely exact numerical representations of student performance and even then numbers can be subjective as well. I pretty much hate the whole thing.

Administration, professional development, and departmental policy. Respondents were asked: "To what extent do school administrators / department heads monitor or guide the way you assess and grade your applied lesson students?" Participants were given the choices "Not at all", "Somewhat", "Quite a bit", and "Extensively" (See question six in Appendix A). Of the respondents that answered the question ($n = 2,012$), 45.03% ($n = 906$) indicated "Not at all", while 45.83% ($n = 922$) responded "Somewhat". One hundred fifty participants (7.46%) indicated school administrators / department

heads monitor or guide the way they assess and grade their applied lessons students “Quite a bit”, while only 1.69% ($n = 34$) responded “Extensively”.

To discover whether or not professional development activities influenced participant’s assessment practices, respondents were asked, “Was assessment, evaluation, or grading a topic discussed in any of the professional development activities you participated in last year?” (See question 36 in Appendix A). Of the respondents that answered the question ($n = 1,755$), 44.9% ($n = 788$) indicated “Yes”, while 43.3% ($n = 760$) indicated “No”. Two hundred seven respondents (11.79%) indicated this question was “Not Applicable” to them.

Participants were asked “To what extent has the adoption of standards-based curricula by your department / institution affected your approach to assessing and grading applied lesson students?” (See question 7 in Appendix A). Of the respondents that answered the question ($n = 2,001$), 33.68% ($n = 674$) indicated “Not at all”, while 33.63% ($n = 673$) responded “Somewhat”. Two hundred forty five participants (12.24%) indicated “Quite a bit”, while only 2.8% ($n = 56$) responded “Extensively”. Three hundred fifty three respondents (17.64%) indicated “Not Applicable – No standards-based curricula”.

Demographics of applied music students. To determine how the varying demographics of applied music students influenced participant’s assessment practices, participants were asked the following question: “Are students that are primarily focused on pursuing a music performance degree assessed and graded differently than other non-performance oriented students?” (See question nine in Appendix A). Of the total

responses ($n = 1,955$), 51.15% ($n = 1,000$) indicated “No”, while 48.85% ($n = 955$) indicated, “Yes”. If respondents indicated “Yes”, that performance majors were assessed differently than non-performance majors, they were then asked why, and how in two separate questions.

Emergent coding of open-ended responses ($n = 965$) to the question “Why are performance majors assessed and graded differently than other non-performance majors?”, led to four categories: (a) Different curriculum requirements, (b) Different future professional expectations, (c) Different standards, and (d) Non-codeable. Individual statements were coded, rather than the entire response, allowing for each answer to potentially be categorized into all four categories (See question ten in Appendix A). Of the many responses to this question, 29.80% ($n = 427$) of the statements indicated they assess performance majors differently from non-performance majors because of different curricular requirements. Statements labeled “Different future professional expectations” made up 20.17% ($n = 289$) of responses, whereas 674 statements (47.03%) were coded into the “Different standards” category. Only 43 statements were labeled as non-codeable (3.00%).

Representative quotes under the categories: (a) Different curriculum requirements, (b) Different future professional expectations, (c) Different standards, and (d) Non-codeable. The following representative quotes coded under the category “Different Curriculum Requirements” provide insight as to why performance majors are assessed and graded differently than other non-performance majors:

Performance majors take for more credits (3) per semester; they also perform for a Full Faculty Jury at [the] end of [the] 200 level [lessons] before being allowed to register for 300 level study. They perform a full Senior Recital and an optional Junior Recital.

And:

I teach at a University where performance majors have more requirements- more juries and greater jury length, more "level change" exams, etc. so the "graded differently" doesn't really mean that my standards are lower for non-performance majors, it just means that the performance majors have more required of them by the music department.

Another quote is also representative of the statements found only in the “different curriculum requirements” category:

Performance major[’s] requirements are slightly different. Repertoire must be more advanced and in my area, vocal performance, languages other than [E]nglish and [I]talian must be presented. Finally vocal performance majors must present a longer graduation recital than non-performance majors and so they must study a greater amount of repertoire than non-performance majors. That being said, I personally try to train my students based on their ability. My music education students generally study at the level of vocal performance students, if they are up to the challenge.

The following representative quotes coded under the category “Different Future Professional Expectations” provide information regarding why performance majors are assessed and graded differently than other non-performance majors:

[In] my mind their performance after graduation in the real world or in graduate school depends on their excellence as a performer and teacher. And to defend my own ego...I do not want a graduate who studied with me to be viewed as less than adequate or ordinary! Physics major who study piano with me, on the other hand, I try to prepare for a lifetime of piano-playing for pleasure.

Another quote is also representative of the statements codified under “Different Future Professional Expectations”: “If they wish to pursue a career in music performance, they need to adhere to a higher standard which reflect the reality of what they will encounter once they are actively seeking a job.”

Statements codified as “Different Standards” reflect the participant assessing performance majors differently than non-performance majors:

My policy is that each student is assessed relative to his own declared aim in pursuing studio instruction. If they declare performance as their aim, their work is judged in a higher standard than someone who wants to be a band director (for example).

And,

They have chosen to focus their degree on their instrumental skill. To a large extent, their development in this particular area is what I am assessing. I am not evaluating the classroom manner of my education students, nor the pieces of my composition students. However, it is not unreasonable to ask students to show outstanding skill in their areas of concentration.

An example statement codified under multiple categories (Different

Curriculum Requirement & Different Future Professional Expectation) is: “Because the repertoire requirements and performance requirements have to be more demanding in order to realistically assess and advise the student in terms of career ambitions.”

One statement codified under “Different Curriculum Requirements” & “Different Standards” is:

The expectation of overall achievement for performance majors is higher than that for non-performance majors. Performance majors receive more credits for their lessons than non-performance majors. This means non-performance majors have more academic requirements and, therefore, less practice time than performance majors.

Emergent coding of open-ended responses ($n = 911$) to the question “How are performance majors assessed and graded differently than other non-performance majors?” (See question 11 in Appendix A), led to six categories: (a) Different curriculum & different standards, (b) Same curriculum & different standards, (c) Same standards & different curriculum, (d) Different curriculum, (e) Different standard, and (d) Non-codeable. The most frequent participant responses indicated that using a different curriculum and a different standard was how performance majors were assessed and graded differently (34.03%; $n = 310$), while the next largest category of responses indicated that only a different curriculum was used (29.75%; $n = 271$). One hundred ninety two participant responses (21.08%) were coded as using only a “different standard” to differentiate between assessment and grading methods of performance and non-performance applied lesson students. Twenty eight participant’s responses (3.07%) were coded as using the same standard but different curriculum, while less than one

percent ($n = 9$) indicated they use the same curriculum and different standard. Of the responses provided 11.20% ($n = 102$) were deemed non-codeable.

Representative quotes under the categories: (a) Different curriculum & different standards, (b) Same curriculum & different standards, (c) Same standards & different curriculum, (d) Different curriculum, (e) Different standard, and (d) Non-codeable.

Participant responses that indicated different repertoire, performance requirements, assessment methods (i.e. juries), and or syllabi were coded as having a “different curriculum”. For example: “Performance majors typically have different repertoire expectations, as well as requirements regarding memory and amount of material required each semester. In addition, their lessons are longer in duration at 50 minutes each week as opposed to non-performance majors who receive 30 minute lessons.” And:

We require a higher passing percentage on our technical exams for performance majors. We also require excerpts, two solos per jury rather than one solo per jury, increased technique and speed requirement for the junior technique test, a junior recital (half) and a full recital rather than a half recital for graduation.

Many responses however were much shorter such as “Different material”, or “Different curriculum and credit requirements.”

Participant responses indicating a different approach to assessing the quality of the musician’s performance were coded as having a “different standard”. For example: “Higher standard for level of performance.” And “In my studio, performance majors have a much greater emphasis on the product of their work, whereas the non-performance majors are assessed more heavily on their process and their progress throughout the

semester.” And “Expectations of growth are higher, as is [the] ability to demonstrate performance prowess. Grades are appropriately connected to expectations. Students, who are not planning to perform, are expected to learn, but not to become performers who excel.”

Examples of respondents indicating they use both different standards and a different curriculum can be seen as follows:

Performance majors are assessed on amount of literature, difficulty of literature and success in mastering the pieces as well as technique, history, and all that goes with the process. Non-performance majors tend to be assessed on ability to master basic skills such as sight-reading, harmonization, vocal warm-ups and other classroom based necessities.

And:

Repertoire requirements are higher, as well as practice and musical expectations. Performance majors beyond the freshman year take the course for 3 hours credit rather than 2 hours, but both performance majors and non-performance majors have a 50 minute lesson each week. The difference allows for the additional expectation of time dedicated to practice and research. Also, performance majors have assessments or recitals after every two semesters.

And:

Performance major need to play things well meeting objective standards like: rhythmic accuracy, cleanliness of articulation, intonation, ability to play at least four different dynamics (while continuing to do all the above in each dynamic), have repertoire knowledge for their applied instrument mastered, etc. Non-

performance majors need to work on all the objective parts of music making but the mastery level performance-wise doesn't need to make or break their GPA as long as they show improvement in these areas over a longer period of time.

Repertoire and etude work can be used more for non-majors than Majors who need to check-in constantly with scales, excerpts, long-tones, arpeggios etc. I like to use the analogy of professional verses avocational athletes = Major verses non-majors and what is the end goal?

Examples of shorter quotes are as follows: “More expectation on quantity and quality of their work” And “They have to comply with more requirements, more difficult materials/repertoire and overall higher performance standard.”

Example quotes of respondents indicating they use the same standards and a different curriculum can be seen as follows:

Although they are held to the same standard as other music majors, they are required to perform at least one more recital. The students with a performance focus often seek extra performing opportunities. They create their own challenges above and beyond what is required of the degree. If they do not, I advise them to find another vocation, as they will not thrive as a professional musician.

And: “Non-performance majors have the same component-weighting as the performance majors but the jury repertoire requirements are less with regard to number of memorized pieces and pieces in a foreign language.” And:

Fundamentally I treat all students the same. However, performance majors MUST develop technically to a higher degree if they expect to find work. A good sound, accurate rhythm, good intonation and a maturing sense of style are EXPECTED

OF ALL STUDENTS. But a performance major should be able to exhibit those on pieces of a decidedly professional technical level. A music ed' major does not have to be able to play the Jolivet, but should be able to play a Barat piece beautifully. (I came back to add this, by the way! One of the reason I do not like forms like this is that it becomes impossible to actually answer accurately. Not everything is black and white!!!!) In terms of your questions that follow, there is actually no difference in how I treat students, regardless of major. Again, the fundamental difference is how technically advanced are they expected to be. Also, I do not accept anyone as a performance major if I do not feel that they will be good enough to go to get accepted to a major grad school [and are] expected to advance...

Representative quotes for the category “same curriculum and different standard” are as follows: “Same grading system, but more rigorous weekly decision on what grade to give for each lesson and for jury” And “The grading system is the same, but because there are higher expectations for performance majors, it's more difficult to receive an 'A'”

Assessment Criteria & Instrument

Attendance and punctuality criteria. In response to the question “Is ‘attendance and punctuality’ a criterion you use in determining a student’s applied lesson grade?”, 93.49% ($n = 1,766$) of participants ($n = 1,889$) answered “Yes”, while 6.51% ($n = 123$) answered “No” (See question 12 in Appendix A). Participants that answered, “Yes” were asked to indicate from a list which specific attendance and punctuality criteria they considered when grading students.

Of the participants that answered “Yes” ($n = 1,766$) (See question 13 in Appendix A), Almost all ($n = 1,762$) respondents indicated at least one criterion from the following list: (a) attendance at weekly lessons, (b) attendance at major school concerts, (c) attendance at their studio professor’s performances, (d) punctuality or promptness to all lessons, (e) attendance at studio ensemble rehearsals (flute choir, horn choir, etc.), (f) attendance at fellow studio member’s recitals, (g) attendance at studio master-classes, (h) punctuality or promptness to all master-classes, and (i) other (please specify) (see Table 11). The three criteria respondents consider most often when grading their students is “Attendance at weekly lessons” (99.66%; $n = 1,756$), “Punctuality or promptness to all lessons” (80.42%; $n = 1,417$), and “Attendance at studio master-classes” (72.42%; $n = 1,276$). Criteria written in the “Other” category included a wide variety of items such as: non-attendance based criteria (i.e. “How prepared their ensemble music is...”, “weekly required listening”, etc.), attendance at a professional performing ensemble outside of school, and attendance at weekly reed making classes.

Table 11
Attendance criteria considered when grading students ($n = 1,762$)

Items*	%	<i>n</i>
Attendance at weekly lessons	99.66%	1,756
Attendance at major school concerts	45.35%	799
Attendance at their studio professor’s performances	44.89%	791
Punctuality or promptness to all lessons	80.42%	1,417
Attendance at studio ensemble rehearsals	40.07%	706
Attendance at fellow studio member’s recitals	49.89%	879
Attendance at studio master-classes	72.42%	1,276
Punctuality or promptness to all master-classes	44.27%	780
Other	20.09%	354

Note: * = Multiple selections were allowed.

Respondents were asked the open-ended question: “How do unexcused absences from lessons, rehearsals, concerts, recitals, etc..., impact your student’s grades?” (See question 14 in Appendix A). Emergent coding of open ended responses led to eleven categories: (a) Lowers overall grade by one letter grade or 10%, (b) Lowers overall grade by up to half of a letter grade or up to 5% or less, (c) Student receives a failing grade for that event, (d) Lowers overall grade, but amount is unspecified, (e) Not Applicable / No Attendance Problem, (f) Effect on grade varies depending on the situation, (g) “X” number of absences is allowed before the grade is lowered, (h) Lessons are rescheduled and made up, (i) There is a potential for students to be dropped from the studio and or failed, (j) No impact, and (k) Non-codeable. Individual statements ($n = 3,083$) were coded, rather than the entire response ($n = 1,749$), allowing for each answer to potentially be categorized into multiple categories. Participants’ responses indicated that the way unexcused absences impacted their students’ grades varied depending on the circumstances surrounding their absence (28.41%; $n = 876$) (see Table 12). Four hundred eighty six statements (15.76%) indicated that unexcused absences lowered students’ final grades, but the amount was not reported. Of the responses that indicated an amount lowering a student’s grade, 374 statements (12.13%) were coded as lowering the grade by up to 10% or one letter grade, while 244 statements (7.91%) reported lowering student’s grades by half a letter grade or up to 5% or less for each absence. Some statements (4.87%; $n = 150$) indicated that lessons could be made up, while a smaller percentage of statements indicated that either attendance problems were not a problem in their studios (2.37%; $n = 73$), or absences had no impact on a student’s grade (1.27%; $n = 39$).

Representative quotes under the categories: (a) Lowers overall grade by one letter grade or 10%, (b) Lowers overall grade by up to half of a letter grade or up to 5% or less, (c) Student receives a failing grade for that event, (d) Lowers overall grade, but amount is unspecified, (e) Not Applicable / No Attendance Problem, (f) Effect on grade varies depending on the situation, (g) “X” number of absences is allowed before the grade is lowered, (h) Lessons are rescheduled and made up, (i) There is a potential for students to be dropped from the studio and or failed, (j) No impact, and (k) Non-codeable. A representative quote under the category “Lowers overall grade by one letter grade or 10%” is: “For each unexcused absence, [their] letter grade drops one letter grade from the final grade”. Statements such as “no call/no show lesson = 1/2 letter grade reduction” were coded in the category “Lowers overall grade by up to half of a letter grade or up to 5% or less”. A statement such as “I usually have a grade for each lesson, such as out of 10 points, and they get zero for that day as a result.” was coded into the “Student receives a failing grade for that event” category. Statements such as “slightly if it is infrequent” and “Depends on circumstances” were assigned to the “Effect on grade varies depending on the situation” category. Whereas statements like “Students may have one unexcused absence before their grade is affected” were coded as belonging to the ““X” number of absences is allowed before the grade is lowered” category. The following response was codified under three different categories:

I try to make up all missed lessons...excused or not. I tell my students that unexcused absences will result in lowered grades, but I don't always follow through with my threats because many of my students have pressures from work,

home life, etc. which I can only imagine. In my school, we have to work hard to retain students, not penalize them for things they can't control.

This response and responses like this would have been categorized under the “Lessons are rescheduled and made up” category, “No impact” category, and “Effect on grade varies depending on the situation” category.

Statements such as “More than four result in a failing grade”, and “At the 3rd unexcused absence from any class in our university (including applied lessons), students are withdrawn from the class” were coded as belonging to the “Potential for students to be dropped from the studio and or failed” category.

Table 12

Respondent statements on how unexcused absences from lessons, rehearsals, concerts, recitals, etc..., impact student's grades (n = 3,083)

Items	%*	n
Varies depending on situation	28.41%	876
Lowers final grade – amount not specified	15.76%	486
Lowers grade by 10% or 1 letter grade	12.13%	374
Failing Grade for Event	10.74%	331
Allows X # of absences before grade lowers	9.99%	308
Lowers grade by up to 5% or 1/2 letter grade	7.91%	244
Potential to be dropped / fail	4.90%	151
Lessons rescheduled / made up	4.87%	150
No Attendance problem / NA	2.37%	73
Non-codeable	1.65%	51
No Impact	1.27%	39

Note: * = Percentage is based upon number of statements (n = 3,083), not number of respondents (n = 1,749).

Attitudinal criteria. In response to participants (n = 1,870) answering the question “Is ‘attitude’ (participation, effort, leadership, etc...) a criterion you use in determining a

student's applied lesson grade?" (See question 15 in Appendix A), 74.12% of respondents ($n = 1,386$) indicated, "Yes", while 25.88% ($n = 484$) reported "No".

Participants were asked to indicate which of the following attitudinal criteria they considered when grading students (multiple answers were allowed) (See question 16 in Appendix A): (a) Citizenship, courtesy, cooperative behavior, responsibility, (b) Effort, (c) In-class participation (Master-class), (d) Participation in support activities (clerical, fund raising), (e) Leadership, (f) Instrument care, (g) Participation in chamber ensembles, (h) Participation in concerto competitions, and (i) Other (please specify). A vast majority of respondents indicated that "Effort" was the single most attitudinal criterion considered when grading students (97%; $n = 1,357$), followed by "In-class participation" (68.68%; $n = 954$) and "Citizenship, courtesy, cooperative behavior, responsibility" (60.76%; $n = 844$) (see Table 13). "Participation in concerto competitions" (9.72%; $n = 135$), and "Participation in support activities (clerical, fundraising)" (6.19%, $n = 86$) were the least considered criteria when determining student's grades.

Open response comments (18.07%, $n = 251$) recorded under the "Other" category varied from: non-attitudinal criteria (i.e., practice logs, master-class participation, ensemble grade, etc.), to "professionalism", "positive attitude", "willingness to try different approaches", "enthusiasm...", and having a "cheerful attitude, ... being open, ... and being willing to change". Other comments such as the following are in stark contrast to the vast majority of respondents who indicated "Effort" was a legitimate criterion for consideration when determining student's grades: "Effort (and these other things) does not really mean squat. Do you want to be operated on by a doctor who "tried hard" or one that actually know what they are doing?" Other open-ended comments such

as the following, are vastly different, and seem to coincide with the majorities view regarding attitudinal criteria:

Attitude is everything. They must cultivate [a] positive attitude, take performance study seriously, [and] develop collegial skills in [an] ensemble. From my syllabus: The student is expected to assimilate the basic philosophies of the playing systems presented and display a progressively developing command of the systems in performance and instructional situations, and is also expected to cultivate and maintain a cooperative and positive attitude.

Table 13

Attitudinal criteria considered when grading students (n = 1,389)

Items*	%	n
Effort	97.70%	1,357
In-class participation (Master-class)	68.68%	954
Citizenship, courtesy, cooperative behavior, responsibility	60.76%	844
Participation in support activities (clerical, fund raising)	6.19%	86
Leadership	20.73%	288
Instrument care	21.60%	300
Participation in chamber ensembles	23.47%	326
Participation in concerto competitions	9.72%	135
Other	18.07%	251

Note: * = Multiple selections were allowed.

Emergent coding of the open-ended response question “How do you measure attitudinal criteria (participation, effort, leadership, etc...)?” (See question 17 in Appendix A) led to two major categories: (a) Subjective measurements, and (b) Objective measurements. Responses were difficult to code because they either (a) didn’t answer the question, and / or (b) described attitudinal criteria they used instead of answering how they actually went about measuring those criteria. Statements codified as “Subjective

measurements using observational skills and general impression of criteria exhibited by the student”, and “Objective measurements using specific actions of students to determine whether attitudinal criteria had been met” seemed to be measured dichotomously of either a student exhibiting the desired attitude or not. Of the respondents that answered the question ($n = 1,357$) 1,194 individual statements (82.80%) were coded as subjective measurements, while 248 statements (17.19%) were coded as objective measurements.

Subjective responses included statements such as: “Subjectively”, “You can tell. Have been during this for 25 years”, and “Professional attitude, cooperative, prepared”. Objective responses included statements such as: “Each student is required to play in studio class once a semester and in one of the all-department recitals each year”, and “...submission of required video of [student’s] practice sessions”.

Of the more interesting subcategories within the subjective measurements category on how applied teachers measured attitudinal criteria were the following: (a) Willingness to learn ($n = 101$), (b) Student’s progress or improvement ($n = 193$), (c) Preparation for lessons ($n = 286$), (d) Participation ($n = 180$), (e) Attitude within the lesson ($n = 304$), (f) Effort, ($n = 247$), (g) Desire to learn ($n = 111$), (h) Hard working ($n = 26$), and (i) Performance ability ($n = 146$). Subcategories under the objective measurements category included whether students: (a) Completed assignments ($n = 32$), (b) Attended lessons and were punctual ($n = 78$), and (c) Kept written documentation (practice journals, cards, etc...) ($n = 28$). A small percentage of participants reported that attitudinal criteria couldn’t be measured or quantified ($n = 30$), while others reported not knowing how or were unsure how criteria could be recorded ($n = 22$).

Written assessment criteria of musical knowledge and understanding. Of the participants ($n = 1,836$) that answered the question ($n = 1,836$) “Are written assessments of musical knowledge and understanding (journals, written quizzes, tests, essays, research papers, etc...) (See question 18 in Appendix A) criteria you use in determining a student’s applied lesson grade?” 32.19% ($n = 591$) answered “Yes”, while 67.81% ($n = 1,245$) answered “No”.

Respondents were asked to indicate which of the following written assessment formats were utilized when grading their applied lesson students: (a) practice journals, (b) homework assignments, (c) major projects / presentations, (d) portfolios, (e) worksheets, (f) quizzes, (g) major exams, and (h) other (please specify) (See question 19 in Appendix A). Participants indicated that 56.59% ($n = 335$) used practice journals, while the next largest written assessment format utilized was homework assignments (35.98%; $n = 213$). The least utilized formats of written assessments were quizzes (9.80%; $n = 58$) and major exams (7.09%; $n = 42$) (see Table 14).

A large proportion of respondents (51.18%; $n = 303$) wrote in open-ended responses under the “Other” category. Responses varied widely from concert reports, to analyzing different recordings. Many participants’ open-ended responses could have been included in the given categories; however, it appears many participants wanted to clarify their written assessment formats. Some responses such as “Written assessment by student of each week's lesson, based on listening to recording of lesson”, for example, could have been categorized as homework assignments, or portfolio. Other responses included book reviews, written reports based on recorded private lessons, and translations of texts in foreign languages.

Table 14

Written assessment formats utilized when grading applied lesson students (n = 592)

Items*	%	n
Practice Journals	56.59%	335
Homework Assignments	35.98%	213
Major Projects / Presentations	25.68%	152
Portfolio	24.32%	144
Worksheets	15.71%	93
Quizzes	9.80%	58
Major Exams	7.09%	42
Other (please specify)	51.18%	303

Note: * = Multiple selections were allowed.

Participants were asked to indicate which of the following written assessment objectives they considered when grading applied lesson students: (a) Knowledge of basic terminology, symbols or notation, (b) Knowledge of music theory principles (intervals, chords, voice leading, chord progressions), (c) Knowledge of music history (style periods, composers, forms, genres, musical instruments), (d) Knowledge of compositional techniques (variation, sequence, augmentation, diminution), (e) Knowledge of cultural contexts associated with pieces of music, (f) Knowledge of performance practices or pedagogical principles, (g) Ability to identify musical elements by ear or sight, (h) Ability to analyze and evaluate musical performances (self, section, ensemble, or other groups), (i) Ability to create small-scale original compositions or arrange existing compositions, and (j) Other (please specify) (See question 20 in Appendix A). Of the participants that answered this question ($n = 590$), 66.10% ($n = 390$) indicated that the ability to analyze and evaluate musical performances was considered as a written assessment objective when grading their applied lesson students (see Table 15). “Knowledge of performance practices or pedagogical principles” was the next objective most considered (65.76%; $n = 388$), followed closely by a student’s “Knowledge of basic

terminology, symbols or notation” (62.54%; $n = 369$). Students “Knowledge of compositional techniques” (31.86%; $n = 188$) and “Ability to create small-scale original compositions or arrange existing compositions” (11.53%; $n = 68$) were the least written assessment objectives considered when grading applied lesson students. Twenty percent of respondents ($n = 118$) selected the “Other” category and specified additional written assessment objectives.

Responses varied widely from comments about “good English composition”, to “Ability to research history of assigned songs”. Others clarified their selections by discussing the objectives and criteria which they considered when grading their students. For example:

All students are expected to do some basic formal analysis of their pieces and to speak about the construction of the piece in a relatively basic way. Music majors are expected to demonstrate a more extensive and specific knowledge of musical construction in their discussions. Students must also provide translations of their texts and background regarding the source of the text...poet information, librettist, and whether the text originates from a larger work, for example.

And:

The books we read are generally about performance/performance anxiety or education or leadership, sometimes also just life concepts; they are not always geared towards music, but rather to becoming better people, performers, and educators. The papers they have to write are graded on whether they can express their opinion using proper grammar, spelling, etc.

Still other responses highlight additional objectives such as knowledge of text, orchestration, and ability to organize their practice sessions in a “well-organized” manner.

Table 15

Written assessment objectives considered when grading applied lesson students (n = 590)

Items*	%	n
Ability to analyze and evaluate musical performances	66.10%	390
Knowledge of performance practices or pedagogical principles	65.76%	388
Knowledge of basic terminology, symbols or notation	62.54%	369
Knowledge of music history	59.32%	350
Knowledge of cultural contexts associated with pieces of music	56.27%	332
Knowledge of music theory principles	40.68%	240
Ability to identify musical elements by ear or sight	36.95%	218
Knowledge of compositional techniques	31.86%	188
Ability to compose or arrange	11.53%	68
Other (please specify)	20.00%	118

Note: * = Multiple selections were allowed.

Performance assessment criteria of musical skill and musicianship. Of the participants ($n = 1,831$) that answered the question “Are performance assessments of musical skill and musicianship (Juries, weekly lessons, recitals, etc.) criteria you use in determining a student’s applied lesson grade?” (See question 21 in Appendix A), 96.40% ($n = 1,765$) answered, “Yes”, while 3.60% ($n = 66$) answered “No”.

Respondents were asked to indicate which of the following types of performance assessment formats they utilized when grading their applied lesson students: (a) End of semester juries, (b) performances in weekly lessons, (c) recitals, (d) performances in master-class, (e) concerto competitions, (f) playing exams, audio recorded, (g) mock auditions, (h) ensemble auditions, (i) playing exams, videotaped, and (j) other (please specify) (See question 22 in Appendix A). Of the participants that answered the question

($n = 1,764$), 93.37% ($n = 1,647$) indicated they utilized end of semester juries, while 92.46% ($n = 1,631$) reported using student's performances in weekly lessons as performance assessment formats when determining applied lesson student's grades. Recitals (77.32%; $n = 1,364$) and performances in master-classes (59.30%; $n = 1,046$) were the next most utilized performance assessments. Performance assessment formats, such as concerto competitions (12.64%; $n = 223$), playing exams (11.62%; $n = 205$), mock auditions (11.62%; $n = 205$), and ensemble auditions (10.15%; $n = 179$), saw a dramatic decrease in the number of participants utilizing these methods when compared with the top four formats (see Table 16).

Two hundred eighteen (12.36%) participants entered open-ended responses in the "Other" category. The many responses, which could have been included in the suggested categories, and were not, suggests that terminology and use of various performance venues differ enough between participants to necessitate a need for further clarification. One participant, for example, indicated they use performances in weekly lessons and end of semester juries, while also indicating they use "performances in studio class" to determine applied lesson student's grades. Depending on one's use of the word "master-class" and "studio class" these two formats could be potentially considered to be one and the same. Other participants indicated they use mid-term, end of semester, and other various performances to help determine grades for their students.

Table 16

Performance assessment formats utilized when grading applied lesson students (n = 1,764)

Items*	%	n
End of semester juries	93.37%	1,647
Performances in weekly lessons	92.46%	1,631
Recitals	77.32%	1,364
Performances in Master-Class	59.30%	1,046
Concerto Competitions	12.64%	223
Playing exams, audio recorded	11.62%	205
Mock auditions	11.62%	205
Ensemble auditions	10.15%	179
Playing exams, videotaped	6.52%	115
Other (please specify)	12.36%	218

Note: * = Multiple selections were allowed.

Participants were asked to indicate which of the following performance assessment objectives they considered when grading their applied lesson students: (a) performance technique (scales, etudes, etc.), (b) student-prepared performance of other material or repertoire (tone, accuracy, & musicality), (c) memorized performance, (d) sight-reading performance, (e) student-prepared performance of orchestral excerpts (tone, accuracy, style, & musicality), (f) student-prepared performance of opera excerpts (tone, accuracy, style, & musicality), (g) student-prepared performance of wind-band excerpts (tone, accuracy, style, & musicality), (h) improvised performance, and (i) other (please specify) (See question 23 in Appendix A). Of the respondents that answered the question ($n = 1,757$), 89.58% ($n = 1,574$) reported considering “performance technique[s] (scales, etudes, etc.)” as an objective when grading applied lesson students, while 89.58% ($n = 1,449$) considered “student-prepared performance[s] of other material or repertoire” (see Table 17). The next highest category of performance assessment objectives was “memorized performance” (60.39%; $n = 1,061$), while the smallest category was

“improvised performance” (13.38%; $n = 235$). Two hundred and nine participants (11.90%) reported additional open-ended comments ranging widely from knowledge of repertoire and performance criteria, to ornamentation techniques, piano skills test for music education majors, and jazz performance pedagogy.

Table 17

Performance assessment objectives considered when grading applied lesson students ($n = 1,757$)

Items*	%	n
Performance technique (scales, etudes, etc.)	89.58%	1,574
Student-prepared performance of other material or repertoire	82.47%	1,449
Memorized performance	60.39%	1,061
Sight-reading performance	38.13%	670
Student-prepared performance of orchestral excerpts	34.83%	612
Student-prepared performance of opera excerpts	23.28%	409
Student-prepared performance of wind-band excerpts	14.80%	260
Improvised performance	13.38%	235
Other (please specify)	11.90%	209

Note: * = Multiple selections were allowed.

Participants were asked to indicate which of the following performance assessment tools they use when administering performance assessments: (a) scores based on overall impression, (b) rubrics, (c) rating scales, (d) checklists, and (e) other (please specify) (See question 24 in Appendix A). Of the respondents that answered the question ($n = 1,754$), 79.25% ($n = 1,390$) indicated that their scores were based on the overall impression of their students’ performance. Six hundred seventy three participants (38.73%) reported using rubrics, while 33.41% ($n = 586$) indicated using rating scales. The smallest category of assessment tools used besides “other” (9.81%; $n = 172$) was “checklists” (29.02%; $n = 509$) (see Table 18).

Open-ended responses recorded in the “other” category varied widely. Some respondents listed non-assessment tools (i.e., assessment and attitudinal criteria), while others listed items such as jury comment sheets, audio and video recordings, weekly notes taken during lessons, and comments about the assessment process in general (i.e. “not that dogmatic”, and “Common sense”). Other comments such as “Our jury assessment forms are broken down into separate areas: Preparation; Body and Breath Mechanisms; Vocal Production; Diction; Interpretation; Stage Presence and Communication, with a maximum number of points available in each area, for a maximum total of 100 points from each juror” describe how they assessed their students performances but failed to give information on what tool was specifically used to record their performance assessment. Still other comments were unsure, or indicated that they didn’t understand the question. One interesting comment by a participant discusses a self-grading approach that is unique:

I often use a "self-rating" of their performance immediately after, using a 0-10 rating system. The student will rate themselves and we will discuss the [accuracy] of their assessment. Many times, the student will rate themselves a 4 or 5 or 6, which is often lower than I would rate their performance. We then discuss what is needed to improve and how to do it effectively, often discussing practice [efficiency].

Table 18

Assessment tools used when administering performance assessments (n = 1,754)

Items*	%	n
Scores based on overall impression	79.25%	1,390
Rubrics	38.37%	673
Rating scales	33.41%	586
Checklists	29.02%	509
Other (please specify)	9.81%	172

Note: * = Multiple selections were allowed.

Practice assessment criteria. Of the participants ($n = 1,817$) that answered the question “Are practice assessments (practice cards, practice journals, audio / video recordings, etc.) criteria you use in determining a student’s applied lesson grade?” (See question 25 in Appendix A), 33.13% ($n = 602$) answered, “Yes”, while 66.87% ($n = 1,215$) answered “No”.

Participants were asked to indicate which of the following types of practice assessment formats they utilized when grading their applied lesson students: (a) practice cards, or other quantitative reports (documenting amount of time students practice), (b) practice journals, or other qualitative reports (describing what and how students practice), (c) audio recordings of student’s practice sessions, (d) visual recordings of student’s practice sessions, and (e) other (please specify) (See question 26 in Appendix A). Of the participants that answered the question ($n = 602$), 71.26% ($n = 429$) reported utilizing practice journals, or other qualitative reports describing what and how students practice, while 36.38% ($n = 219$) reported using practice cards, or other quantitative reports documenting the amount of time students practice (see Table 19). Visual recordings of student’s practice sessions were the least utilized practice assessment formats (11.79%; $n = 71$).

Comments from the open-ended “other” category varied widely from non-practice assessment formats, to “video practice blog[s] on Blackboard”, to “weekly self-evaluation”. Some comments reflect a more qualitative approach to assessing student’s practicing such as:

Nothing quite so formal, but I do spend a great deal of time in lessons assessing how a student practices simply by asking "How did you practice..." this or that. That can be the basis for a discussion of alternative ways of practicing something. Each student has different needs, and I try to let them explain in words or by demonstration what they do, and I in turn show them some alternative methods to consider, whether that be a fingering, or a relaxation technique, or simply a more natural approach to playing a particular passage. I encourage students to try different techniques and explore what will work best for them.

Table 19
Practice Assessment formats utilized when grading applied lesson students (n = 602)

Items*	%	n
Practice journals, or other qualitative reports	71.26%	429
Practice cards, or other quantitative reports	36.38%	219
Audio recordings of student’s practice sessions	20.43%	123
Visual Recordings of student’s practice sessions	11.79%	71
Other (please specify)	11.63%	70

Note: * = Multiple selections were allowed.

Weighting of assessment criteria. Participants were asked to indicate the approximate weight that each of the following types of criteria received when determining a student’s applied lesson grade by writing the appropriate percentage: (a) performance assessment of musical skills and musicianship (Juries, weekly lessons,

recitals, etc.), (b) attendance and punctuality, (c) attitude (participation, effort, leadership, etc.), (d) written assessments of musical knowledge and understanding (journals, written quizzes & tests, essays, research papers, etc.), (e) practice assessments (Practice cards, student narratives), and (f) other criteria (please describe in next question) (See question 27 in Appendix A). Of the participants that answered the question ($n = 1,737$), 1,685 indicated an average weight of 57.69% ($SD = 24.69$) for the category performance assessment of musical skills and musicianship (see Table 20). The next highest mean percentage reported by participants was within the “Attendance and Punctuality” category (18.40%; $n = 1,545$; $SD = 15.00$). All criteria besides “Performance Assessment” had a positive skew and leptokurtic distribution (sharper than normal distribution), indicating the probability for extreme low values was high.

Table 20

*Approximate weight of criteria used when determining applied lesson student’s grades ($n = 1,737$)**

Criteria	<i>M%</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Sk</i>	<i>K</i>	<i>n</i>
Performance Assessment	57.69%	24.69	-0.29**	-0.87***	1,685
Attendance and Punctuality	18.40%	15.00	1.66	3.20	1,545
Attitude	17.52%	15.43	1.79	4.33	1,417
Written Assessments	7.29%	9.67	2.50	10.93	997
Practice Assessments	9.40%	12.69	2.30	7.60	844
Other criteria	15.43%	23.01	2.06	4.09	521

Note: * = Approximate weight was recorded using percentages. ** = Represents the only criteria with a normal skew; all other criteria reported an extremely skewed number. *** = Represents the only criteria with a platykurtic distribution.

Participants were asked to write other criteria, in an open-ended format, not listed in the previous question that they used in determining a student’s grade (See question 28 in Appendix A). Emergent coding of participants’ statements led to a wide variety of categories. The most prominent themes include: (a) Assessment of improvement ($n = 98$),

(b) Lesson assessment ($n = 128$), (c) Self-evaluation ($n = 10$), and (d) potential for improvement ($n = 12$).

General comments and concerns about assessment. In response to the open-ended free-response question: “What other comments or concerns do you have about assessing and grading your applied lessons students?” (See question 29 in Appendix A), 760 participants wrote a wide variety of comments. No discernable categories could be identified. Responses varied drastically from assessment policy to critique of current survey instrument to specific grading practices.

The following are interesting quotes that represent the wide spread of different topics commented on:

Given the "standards based" mania in education in recent years, grading in college level applied lessons is the "last frontier" when it comes to professors' independence. I feel strongly that if music schools go through all the trouble of having a nationwide search for highly qualified candidates to teach applied lessons, then Deans and Department Chairs should trust their professional expertise by completely staying out of the grading process. Unfortunately, a new breed of musical "leader" is out there; people who feel that they have a vested interest in dictating how we assess our students. This arrogant and misinformed attitude should be firmly resisted by applied teachers everywhere.

And:

Many of my students have experienced great success with my practice journals, only because it forces them to follow a form of the self-regulation cycle. Students

must write out the problem they are attempting to fix, what technique they used to work on it, whether or not it worked, and what they need to do next for each segment of practice. This is especially important for students who have been told to follow the list of instructions for most of their academic career, because they often are not good problem-solvers. For these students, I usually ask them to identify multiple ways to fix the same problem, and then select the best option - another common process for "good practicers." They start by only coming up with one or two options, but by the end of a few weeks of this process, they have at least 5 solutions to every problem.

And:

Grading progress is a difficult matter. Who is to say a student didn't practice much this week vs. is just hitting a natural road block in their development? This is where the idea of grading "effort" takes over. Also, students are graded on their progress, energy, effort, preparedness, overall accuracy and musicality, and not necessarily on the perfection of the particular piece. The idea is to teach them skill sets, not pieces.

And:

As educators, we have a dual responsibility: (1) to pass on to the next generation what believe important; and (2) to develop the talents and abilities and creativity of each student. Both of those responsibilities are important. The first of these responsibilities can often be assessed through objective measures. The second responsibility cannot. Too much of contemporary education is devoted to the first

of these responsibilities, even though the second responsibility is more important now than ever before.

And:

Students really don't want to practice these days, and they don't understand the reality of the marketplace. Students have more distractions than ever, having to work extra jobs at levels never seen before. They come to college less prepared, and if we failed all the students who really needed failing, we've have no students to teach.

Communication of a formal grading policy. Participants were asked, “Do you provide each student with a formal grading policy?” (See question 1 in Appendix A). Response options included: “Yes, in writing (syllabus)”, “Yes, verbally”, or “No”. Of the respondents that answered the question ($n = 2,123$), 82.10% ($n = 1,743$) indicated “Yes, in writing (syllabus)”, while 10.41% ($n = 221$) reported “Yes, verbally”. One hundred fifty nine respondents (7.49%) responded “No”.

Open-ended free response comments to the question varied widely in content. Some clarified their position with comments like: “There are too many subjective factors to warrant ‘promising’ a specific grade”, and “I do provide a list of expectations and requirements as they are piano majors, but do not delineate exactly what an A, B, or C will require”. While others gave a more thorough explanation of their grading policies:

Grading criteria is based mostly on accountability in my studio, i.e. if they do the recommendations, practice techniques, and problem solving as suggested by me, follow their assignments, and put in the necessary time. I seem always to have

very conscientious students. If they compromise themselves in any way, their grade would reflect that and at that time, I would verbally tell them why they got a low grade. Students typically will get a 3.5 A/B from me if they successfully comply with the criteria above. It is important to me that they progress. Progression and maturity as a player is very individual and I can't put a standardized grading system in place for that reason.

And:

Good question! No applied lesson teacher of mine has ever given me a grading policy, and I've never thought about giving one to any of my students. For private lessons, it's assumed they are there to work and get better and this mutual understanding transcends any consideration of a conventional "classroom" model of setting a formal grading policy. If they are not working hard enough, I have a chat with them and tell them to do better.

Summary

In answering both the primary and secondary research questions results of the survey were organized and presented in two sections: "Influences on assessment practices," and "Assessment criteria & instrument." Influences on assessment practice included: employers guidelines, in-service training, former teachers, peer's assessment policy, training received in undergraduate and graduate higher education programs, training as a graduate assistant, student's chosen field of study, a student's progress over the course of the semester, individual student's talent, the changing accountability climate regarding assessment in schools, various educational books, National Association

of Schools of Music Guidelines, teaching experience, performance experience, experimentation, and students contesting grades after their jury performances. Results regarding assessment criteria and how it was formally communicated to students included: attendance and punctuality criteria, attitudinal criteria, written assessment criteria of musical knowledge and understanding, performance assessment criteria of musical skill and musicianship, practice assessment criteria, weighting of assessment criteria, general comments and concerts about assessment, and the use of syllabi in communicating a formal grading policy. A discussion of the results will take place in the chapter five.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Summary

The purpose of this study was to investigate the assessment practices of applied music studio faculty in higher education. Potential participants were identified through The College Music Society's 2012 – 2013 directory and invited via email to complete an online survey. Respondents who completed the survey comprised a response rate of 8.89% (N = 1,754), with 2,127 (10.78%) participants answering at least one question. Respondents were generally well educated, with over 87% indicating they had received a graduate degree of some kind in music (performers certificate / diploma, masters, or doctoral degree), and over 90% of participants indicating they had been teaching applied lessons for six or more years. Participants in the study reported their applied lesson students were primarily undergraduates (89%) with around 40% of all students seeking a music-performance degree.

The primary purposes of this research was to determine: (a) The assessment practices of applied music studio faculty in higher education today, (b) To determine the extent that achievement and non-achievement criteria are used to determine grades in private music lessons in higher education, and (c) To determine the extent that applied music teachers in higher education are using alternative forms of assessment, such as portfolios, audio recordings, and other self-evaluative techniques. Secondary research questions included: (a) To what extent are applied music studio faculty's current assessment practices guided by educational training or following the tradition of how they themselves were assessed? and (b) How are assessment methods disseminated to the members of the studio?

The findings of this study can be grouped and discussed according to two central categories: (a) assessment criteria and instruments actually used in the implementation, execution, recording, and reporting of the assessment practices of studio faculty, and (b) influences on assessment practices. In attempting to identify the instruments and assessment criteria used by applied music faculty, the following categories emerged as important factors for discussion: (a) attendance and punctuality, (b) attitude (participation, effort, leadership, etc.), (c) written assessments, (d) performance assessments, (e) dissemination of policies, (f) practice assessments (self-recorded), and (g) the various weight of different assessment criteria on student's applied lesson grade. Important factors for discussion regarding the influences on assessment practices include: (a) former teachers' influence on the development and implementation of ones assessment practice, (b) the demographics of the applied music student population itself including degree type and level, (c) adoption of a standards-based curriculum, (d) the education received by the applied music instructor, and (e) how upper administration and / or department heads monitor or guide assessment.

Assessment Criteria & Instruments

Attendance and punctuality. Results of the survey found that a majority of participants use attendance and punctuality as criteria in assessing and grading their students. The most frequent factors considered as reported by participants included "attendance at weekly lessons", "being punctual to weekly lessons", and "attendance at master classes". These findings correspond with existing research suggesting that using non-achievement criteria of attendance and punctuality is a common practice among

music teachers in all areas from elementary to higher education (McCoy, 1991; Oberlander, 2000; Russell & Austin, 2010).

At first glance the decision to use attendance and punctuality in determining students' progress and final grade seems antiquated, ineffective, and not representative of modern assessment methods, which typically emphasize achievement-based criteria as the primary indicator of success. However, while this may be true, it does not denigrate the axiom that including attendance as part of the final grade is of benefit or value to the applied music student, the teacher, or to the music profession as a whole.

Of course merely attending applied lessons does not guarantee progress on one's instrument. However, as many employers, teachers, parents, and responsible citizens of the world everywhere can attest, merely showing up is the beginning of success and progress as a full-fledged contributing adult in the modern world. Any opportunity a peer, teacher, or otherwise concerned party has in influencing the next generation should be used to develop responsibility and successful life skills needed in today's job market.

Including attendance and punctuality as a factor in the final grade helps applied music faculty gauge the level of dedication and professionalism exhibited, which can then be used to advise, counsel, or inform the student of whether or not their chosen profession (in the case of music majors) is a valid and sustainable career path. While this criterion does not indicate summative growth or achievement, it can be used formatively to help guide each student's future personal progress and development on their instrument and professional life skills.

One interesting theme that arose regarding the use of attendance and punctuality dealt with the trepidation that some teachers felt in using achievement-based criteria

instead of only non-achievement based criteria such as attendance and attitude. This possibly stemmed from their fear that because their student population was primarily non-performance music majors, if they assessed and graded their applied music students solely on achievement criteria it might drive their students away and end up costing them their job.

Ideally however, the fear of losing one's job should not dictate or influence the quality of the education applied music students receive. The *professional* applied music faculty member should assess a student's development based on their achievement of identifiable, recordable, and reportable criteria that indicates a student's progress and growth on their instrument. It is the job of the applied music faculty member to help them improve by assessing their current level of technique and fundamental musicianship, and then formatively using that information with the student to determine how best to proceed. The fear of losing one's job, or other external concern while relevant and understandable to the teacher should not influence the quality of education an applied music student should receive.

Another trend that appeared in the comments regarding the use of attendance and punctuality criteria on assessment practices pertained to the way in which it is administered. Regardless of whether or not attendance and punctuality should be used in assessment practices, many participants in the study commented on how it was their department and / or university's policy that dictated attendance as a partial factor in determining final grades. In adhering to attendance policy, either self-created or dictated from upper administration, many applied music faculty used attendance and punctuality as adverse factors affecting a student's grade only when such behaviors became a

problem (i.e., missing more than one or two lessons). Otherwise attendance and punctuality criteria had no positive influence on a student's grade. One benefit to this approach is that it creates an atmosphere in which showing up and being early is expected professional acceptable behavior. Of course ensuring that all students know the conditions of the attendance and punctuality policy before the start of term is essential in using this approach.

Attitude (participation, effort, leadership, etc.). A majority of participants included attitude (participation, effort, leadership, etc.) as a criterion for assessment and grading. Music faculty most frequently reported the following attitudinal criteria when grading: effort, in-class participation, and citizenship / courtesy. The observation and general impression of attitudinal criteria by applied music faculty in higher education seemed to be the primary method of measuring attitudinal criteria by participants. These findings correspond with existing research suggesting that the practice of using non-achievement criteria, such as attitude, is a common practice among music teachers (McCoy, 1991; Oberlander, 2000; Russell & Austin, 2010).

While there are many benefits that stem from applied music faculty being aware of students' attitudinal dispositions, using them as criteria in the actual assessment process of determining final grades does not seem plausible because of the inherent difficulty in measuring the many various attitudinal criteria different teachers feel are important in an accurate and unbiased manner. While teachers may take a student's effort into consideration when a grade is borderline passing or failing, basing their applied music lesson grade entirely off of whether a student tried hard or not is not fair nor

reconcilable with modern assessment methods and ultimately does little to inform students of their actual achievement and or potential for future growth on their instrument.

Instead of using attitudinal criteria as part of the assessment and grading procedure, which are difficult to measure, there are many other achievement-based assessment methods that can be employed that will better inform, instruct, and encourage actual student growth and development. Such methods include, for example, having students create an audio portfolio of their playing from the beginning to the end of term, which can include practice sessions, performances, and even recordings of private lessons throughout the grading period. Another method may be to use practice journals in conjunction with self-recordings that detail the amount of time a student performs a certain technique or etude, which can then be assessed formatively week-to-week or as a summative measure at the end of the grading period. Regardless of the many achievement-based criteria that are available, using attitudinal criteria is of little value in accurately describing the skills, technique, and achievement that applied music students should be seeking to improve.

Written assessments. Most applied studio faculty did not report using written assessments (journals, written quizzes, tests, essays, research papers, etc...) of musical knowledge or understanding of any kind in determining a student's applied lesson grade. Of those that did, the most common forms of written media used for assessments were practice journals, concert or recital reports, and repertoire-based informational homework. It was reported in open-ended responses that while some teachers required

students to record their lessons, listen to them again during the week, and then write a report about what they heard, this assessment protocol seemed to be rarely used. Of the applied faculty that used written assessments, the top three objectives that were most strongly endorsed were: (a) ability to analyze and evaluate musical performances (self, section, ensemble, or other groups), (b) knowledge of performance practices or pedagogical principles, and (c) knowledge of basic terminology, symbols, and notation.

Because applied music lessons should primarily be focused on increasing student's achievement on their instrument, it is understandable why written assessments are so rarely used. One benefit of using more written assessments however is that these assignments, considered as knowledge achievement criteria, can show improvement over time. Weekly private lesson reports, concert reviews, and even practice records can enhance the lesson experience and contribute to a student's progress and success on their instrument. Weekly lesson reports can show to what extent students are retaining information after they leave the lesson, and help reinforce and remind them of what they need to work on, and how they were taught to do so. Concert reviews can give insight to what students are listening for, which can then be a wonderful opportunity to "school their ears" and guide their listening to a more in depth analysis of what is actually taking place on stage. Practice records, over the course of a term or even years, can also show how a student's practice habits have changed and evolved over time.

Regardless of what written assessments teachers' use, remembering that applied music students are first and foremost taking lessons to sound better and become better musicians is vital. It is paramount to the overall synthesis of the lesson experience that all assignments, whether they are etudes, soli, or written evaluations of practice sessions,

should be designed with the end goal of contributing to each student's individual growth as a musician, person, and scholar.

Performance assessments. Participants were asked specifically about whether or not, to what extent, and how performance assessments are graded as a part of an applied music studio's assessment policy. Results of the survey indicated that the vast majority of applied music faculty in higher education employed performance assessments of musical skill and musicianship as criteria in determining a student's applied lesson grade. The most frequent performance assessment formats were: end of term juries, performances in weekly lessons, lessons recitals, and performances in master classes. While the current study corroborates existing research into commonly used performance assessment formats (Bergee, 2003; Parkes, 2006; Oberlander, 2000), it also highlights some seldom used methods including concerto competitions, audio recorded playing exams, mock auditions, ensemble auditions, and video-recorded playing exams.

Results also suggested that the most frequent performance assessment objectives participants considered when grading applied lesson students were: performance technique (scales, etudes, etc.), student-prepared performances of other material or repertoire (tone, accuracy, & musicality), memorized performance, sight-reading performance, orchestral excerpts, opera excerpts, wind-band excerpts, and improvised performances. While research by Oberlander (2000) found many of the same assessment objectives in her research, the current project went further in identifying the tools actually used to administer performance assessments. Results indicated that most applied studio faculty based performance assessment grades overwhelmingly on their subjective

impression of how well their student did on their performance, while a much smaller percentage of participants indicated they used rubrics, rating scales, and or checklists.

Ideally, performance assessment grades should be based off of specific identifiable criteria the student knows about beforehand and that are descriptive, quantifiable, and understandable in design so that the assessor is able to effectively communicate the current level of accomplishment at the time of performance. Basing students' performance assessment grade solely on the assessor's subjective overall impression without having a fair and quantifiable method of articulating the reasons behind why they received a certain grade can be unreliable from student to student, and can invalidate a teacher's assessment protocol.

In this day and age of education and assessment reform, it is far better for applied music faculty to be able to justify performance assessment grades through the use of detailed instrument-specific grading rubrics, rating scales, and or checklists. The alternative is to further perpetuate a mysterious grading voodoo culture (Brand, 1992) that seems to exist in many applied music studios throughout the United States and Canada.

Dissemination of policies. Participants were asked whether they provided each student with a formal grading policy. The response options that were provided were: "No", "Yes, verbally", and "Yes, in writing". Results of the survey found that while 82.1% of participants provided their students with a formal grading policy in writing, there still remained 17.9% that didn't. Furthermore over 10% responded they verbally provide a formal grading policy. Unfortunately, unless a policy is written and distributed

it is not considered formal by most academic institutions. Research by Oberlander (2000) indicated that close to 23% of participants in her survey did not hand out a syllabus, which could imply that improvement has been made across the intervening years since that study. However due to the vastly different population demographics and a number of other considerations, such conclusions should be made with caution.

In a perfect world, all grading procedures, policies, and instruments (rubrics, checklists, etc.) would be disseminated in written and electronic form to each applied lesson student through their studio's website and in-person. Expectations of achievement criteria in weekly lessons and master classes, including performances, written assignments and jury procedures, could be articulated and explained. If applied music teachers choose to use non-achievement criteria such as attendance and attitudinal criteria to inform their assessment methods then dissemination and transparency can help clarify, validate, and make grading decisions more reliable and uniformly applicable to all. Without a written syllabus or other formal communicative means, an opportunity to more effectively have a positive influence on one's students is certainly curtailed.

Practice assessments (self-recorded). In questioning participants regarding their use and implementation of student self-recorded practice assessments, results indicated that assessment tools such as practice cards, practice journals, and audio / video recordings of personal practice sessions are generally not used as criteria in determining a student's applied lesson grade.

However, results from the current survey also indicated that when self-recorded practice assessment tools were used the primary format employed was practice journals.

While there is not a lot of existing research about the use of self-recorded practice assessments as part of an official assessment policy, Parkes (2011) found recent research by Gaunt (2008) that indicated only a small number of applied studio teachers surveyed from the UK "...mentioned an interest in teaching with technology... [and] no teacher indicated that they used audio or video recording equipment as part of their teaching practice" (Parkes, 2011, p. 2). The potential for practicing musicians to improve based on self-recorded practice sessions seems to be logical (whether or not future research can show this remains to be seen). Unfortunately, results from this survey show that only a small number of people utilize audio and visual recordings of student's practice sessions as criteria for assessment.

Interpreting the results of these questions to mean that applied studio professors don't ever encourage their students to use audio and video recordings of their practicing and performances would be erroneous as I only inquired as to whether or not such student self-assessment tools were part of the participant's applied lesson assessment practice. However, unless students are given the opportunity to be held responsible for assignments such as recording their practice sessions and other self-recorded practice assessment tools, the likelihood of continued and sustained usage of any practice technique could be diminished.

Weight of assessment criteria on a student's applied lesson grade. Results of the survey found that the most heavily weighted criteria when determining a student's applied lesson grade was performance assessment of musical skill and musicianship worth at least 58% of a student's grade on average. Results of the current survey also

show that non-achievement criteria such as attendance, punctuality, and attitude (participation, effort, leadership, etc.) were heavily weighted with averages of at least 36% of a student's grade. As mentioned earlier, these findings corroborate existing research suggesting that the use of non-achievement criteria such as attendance, punctuality, and attitude is a common practice among music teachers of all levels (McCoy, 1991; Oberlander, 2000; Russell & Austin, 2010).

Because applied music lessons entail learning how to improve on one's instrument, student's applied lesson grades should be based off of the current level of achievement and progress accomplished as indicated by a student's performance on their instrument. Even if a student tries hard, and has exceptional marks for effort, the fact remains that if they fail to achieve competency and progress on their instrument repeatedly, and bluntly, "just sounds bad," there remains the distinct possibility that taking applied music lessons on the collegiate level may not be what is in the best interest of the student.

This doesn't mean that applied music faculty should just give up on every freshman taking applied lesson's for the first time, it does however mean that the content of what is assigned within the lessons may need to be modified so that each student can find success, accomplishment, and achieve competency based on their current levels of musical prowess. This can be accomplished by assigning material that is within the individual's zone of proximal development (ZPD), an element of a developmental learning theory created by the Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky (Vygotsky, 1935), which describes tasks that are accomplishable by the student unaided. As students are assigned music within their ZPD and achieve success their zone widens and enlarges to

encompass more complicated tasks that they are then able to work on, study, and find further accomplishment and progress without the aid of others. Because the pedagogy behind applied music faculty member's assessment practices greatly influences the success or failure of each applied music student, there exists a great responsibility for the applied music teacher to continuously strive to learn new techniques and improve their own pedagogical skills.

Influences on Assessment Practices

Former teachers. Results suggest that former teachers had the most influence on the development of the studio teachers' assessment policies. These findings correspond with existing research by Oberlander (2000) that suggested former teacher's grading policies were influential on the development of applied teacher's grading practices.

Many respondents stated that the policies of their former teachers were a driving influence on assessment policy in their open-ended comments as well. Former teachers who had a particularly negative influence seemed to inspire many of the comments. "Since my former bassoon teachers were not very good at assessment, it made me design a procedure that more effectively communicated [my student's] achievement."

And:

Most of what I do is a reaction to the complete inadequacy of my former teachers' grading policies. As a woodwind doubler, I have studied in 15 higher education studios, almost all of which suffered from the "mystery grade" syndrome. I hated it and vowed never to subject my students to the same situation. I have received straight A's with one C+ in all of my years of study, whether I deserved the grade

or not. My students and I work together to generate clearly stated weekly and long term goals and then join together in the assessment of achievement. This produces an absolutely transparent grading situation that can be utilized in a nurturing environment with.....no surprises.....no hard feelings....and they get exactly what they earn.

These comments are interesting because they show that negative influences can at times inspire and motivate the next generation of applied teachers to seek out alternative methods of assessment while still highlighting the influence that former teachers can have. Whether or not a former teacher's pedagogical and assessment skills are considered to be among the "best practices" of teaching music lessons they are perhaps still likely to have a heavy influence on one's own teaching.

A comment such as "99.99% of my teaching skills/policies comes from the influence of my former teachers on my instruments. I strive to teach the way they did", while seeming to be positive in nature and showing the respect that the respondent has towards their former teachers does not necessarily indicate whether or not those exemplified "teaching skills/policies" are effective, pedagogically sound, or actually contribute to the progression and growth in applied lesson students that all teachers strive to inspire. There is the possibility that one's former teachers were using the most effective teaching techniques and practices that modern research has held up to be pedagogically sound, however that is not an axiom that can universally be applied to describe all applied music teachers.

There seems to be a disconnect between the academically minded music educators, whom often reside within a "music education department" of a college or

university, and the applied music teachers which are often categorized as “music performance faculty.” When applied music faculty may rely solely on former teacher’s pedagogical influence to shape their own teaching and assessment practices, they perhaps don’t often utilize the work and progress that modern research in curricular design and assessment practices has achieved within the last 50 years.

Collaboration between music education faculty and applied music faculty might result in a constituency of music teachers more informed about the practice and practicality of implementing improved pedagogical and assessment techniques. Ideally applied music faculty and music education researchers would have a much more open two-way dialogue about what pedagogical techniques recent research has indicated to be effective, tempered with the practical feedback, experience, and expertise of professional musicians, which so richly contributes and informs the developmental progress of each applied music student.

Demographics of applied music student population. Participants were questioned about how, why, and whether or not the demographics of their applied music student population influenced their assessment and grading practices. Respondents were split almost dichotomously on the issue of whether a private music student’s chosen field of study should influence how they are assessed and graded, with 51% of the teachers reporting they do not treat their students differently depending on their degree, while 49% of respondents report they do. Expectation for levels of performance ability after graduation was the primary justification for treating performance majors differently than non-performance students.

Participants had much to say on this issue as evidenced by the amount of data collected in the open-ended responses. Non-performance applied lesson students whose teacher assessed and graded them differently from performance majors were typically assessed and graded with lower standards and different curricular requirements due to their perceptions of different future professional expectations.

Teaching students according to their future expected profession, while understandable, can possibly taint or skew a teacher's philosophy and pedagogy and "short-change" a student's education in a number of ways. If applied faculty expect their students to not sound good or only achieve a certain level of prowess because of future professional careers, it is possible that their students will live up to their expectations. By not insisting that students achieve a greater level of musicianship because of future career possibilities in which their own personal playing ability might not be used, applied faculty may be missing an opportunity to deepen a student's love and appreciation for the beautiful music they could possibly be able to create under their tutelage. If future music teachers do not need to become the very best musicians on their own instruments as they can, how can they then be expected to inspire, teach, and encourage a new generation of music lovers beyond their own level of musicianship? How can they hope to inspire and help students appreciate the beauty music has to offer without having gone through the experience themselves of gaining a high level of musicianship and technique through patience and consistent hard work?

On the other hand, teaching applied music students with their possible future career in mind could help give clarity, purpose, and focus to private lessons. For example, while teaching choral music education majors, applied faculty could use the lines,

phrases, and subtle textural gestures of the music itself as a discussion point to address how to best effectively communicate these ideas from a pedagogical perspective to a choir class. Where a performance major might receive similar instruction about how to achieve the desired affect in the same passage, an applied faculty teacher might not review with them the pedagogical steps that would lead a public school ensemble to achieve similar success.

Perhaps an ideal situation would be if applied music faculty would teach all their students with the same standard but use a different curriculum for each student depending on their level of skill and musicianship as well as their future professional expectations. If applied music teachers held each one of their students to the same professional expectations and high standards as performance majors, all students taking private lessons would have a greater chance at raising their own levels of musicianship. Practically speaking it is usually not feasible for non-performance students to be able to spend the same amount of time on their instrument as performance majors do. However, varying the level of difficulty and amount of repertoire (i.e., curriculum) per each student's individual zone of proximal development and future career expectation while holding everyone to the highest standard of excellence can encourage success, growth, and progress for all regardless of degree type, future profession, and demographic.

Research regarding the influence of demographic bias on the assessment practices of applied music faculty, while not the primary focus of this project seems to be sparse at best and should definitely be looked into in the future. Because private students are taking lessons to improve their technique on their instrument it is the responsibility of the

applied music teacher to help each student achieve the highest level of musicianship they are able to accomplish regardless of demographics.

Adoption of standards-based curricula. Participants were also asked to what extent the adoption of a standards-based curriculum affected their approach in assessing and grading applied lesson students. Results from this survey indicated that the adoption of standards-based curricula had not, or only somewhat affected teachers approach to assessment and grading of their applied lesson students. While existing research is sparse regarding standards-based curriculum adoption in higher education applied music studios, in a study of the assessment practices of secondary music teachers, Russell and Austin (2010) found “music teachers seldom received administration guidance in assessment or changed their assessment approach in response to standards-based curriculum adoption” (p. 48). Because there is not a lot of data on the adoption of standards-based curricula by applied lesson studios in higher education, more research with those teachers who were heavily influenced by the addition of a standards-based curriculum would be beneficial. Furthermore, because the terminology “standards-based curriculum” might be idiosyncratic to the grade-school music education realm, determining applied faculty member’s understanding of the concept and application might need to be clarified in future research.

Highest education received. Participants were asked about their educational background and to what extent it may or may not have influenced the development or implementation of their assessment practices in the applied music studio. Results

indicated that while 87.93% of respondents had received an advanced graduate degree in music (masters or doctorate), 59.94% ($n = 1,028$) indicated that the training they received in graduate school had only some to very little influence on the development and execution of their assessment policy. This suggests that higher education institutions that offer masters and doctoral programs in performance degrees might need to reevaluate the extent to which courses dealing with assessment and grading topics are offered and/or required.

More than likely, performance majors pursuing a doctoral degree seek to teach in higher education institutions and as such will be expected to assess their private lesson students on a regular basis within the context of assigning grades at the end of specific grading terms. Ideally, such students would be required to take a course in which they would be exposed to different evaluation methods, procedures, philosophies, and research dealing with foundational issues of measurement, evaluation, and guidance as related to current educational policy/legislation and basic issues of curricular design. This course could also serve as a tool to introduce fundamental approaches to interpreting quantitative data that are typical of educational measurements and traditional conceptions of reliability and validity, while discussing students' musical learning, assessing teacher accountability, and linking teaching effectiveness to student outcomes (Miksza, 2012).

Administration / department heads monitor or guide assessment. Participants were asked about the extent to which school administration and or department heads monitored, guided, or influenced the assessment practices of applied music faculty in higher education. Based on the findings of this survey, there seemed to be strong

evidence to support the idea that administrators / department heads in higher education do not play a strong influence in the development or implementation of assessment practices in applied music studios. These findings correspond with research regarding the lack of influence administration tends to have on the assessment practices of other music teachers in elementary and secondary schools (Russell & Austin, 2010). Data from the current survey also supports Oberlander's (2000) findings in which less than half of her participants reported their institutional guidelines being influential in the development of their assessment approach. Other researchers have found that the lack of guidance from school administrators is often cited as a reason why music teachers are not more skilled and effective in their assessment practices of students in the classroom (Kotora, 2001, 2005; McCoy, 1988).

One way in which administration and or department heads can possibly influence the assessment practices of their applied music faculty is by discussing it at required professional development activities. While many participants of the current study reported assessment, evaluation, or grading as a topic discussed in a professional development activity (44.9%), 43.08% of all participants also reported in-service training holding "very little influence" on the development and execution of their assessment / grading policy. This suggests that there may be room for improvement on how assessment policy and practice is discussed, understood, implemented, and received by all parties.

Upper administration and or department heads could invite their music education colleagues who usually have more exposure, training, and experience on modern assessment practices, to host a seminar or talk during professional development activities.

Departmental leaders in conjunction with applied music faculty and music education colleagues could also develop more accurate achievement-based criteria assessment methods and then implement, practice, and refine their tools and methods after performance juries are finished for the grading period. Regardless of how upper administration and department heads decide to influence the assessment policies of applied music faculty, it would be a mistake to do so without input, feedback, and collaboration with the applied music faculty themselves. It would be a worse mistake however, to make changes just for the sake of change, without having the input and guidance of colleagues that are trained, adept, and well-versed in aspects of assessment and education reform.

Limitations of Study

Several methodological issues have resulted in limitations of this study and the generalizability of results. This includes issues related to participants' ability to access the questionnaire, size of the sample, and the survey instrument itself.

Access limitations. The decision to use an online survey versus a paper copy that had to be mailed to recipients and returned back to the researcher was made for several reasons: cost, ease of use, anonymity, and analysis considerations. The cost of sending out surveys with return postage included would have limited the number of potential participants due to financial constraints. Because the survey was accessed through an internet link, participants in the survey were able to access the survey online the entire duration the survey was open, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, from September 13th,

2013 through December 31st, 2013. Anonymous data was able to be collected with no identifying information other than basic demographics being reported to the researcher. However due to the inherent nature of using an Internet survey not all potential participants may have had access to participate in the survey online nor felt comfortable enough to navigate an online survey, which could then have influenced the respondent population. Furthermore, because the initial invitation to participate originated from the College Music Society rather than a private user the possibility exists that potential respondent's computers and / or email software may have considered the communication as spam, thereby preventing potential participants from even seeing the invitation.

Sample size limitations. The decision to sample all relevant members of the College of Music Society list serve rather than a smaller representative sample was based off of several considerations. While the email addresses contained within The College Music Society's 2012 – 2013 directory is available via print copy, access to the email list database itself was restricted to The College Music Society's (CMS) personnel only, thus making random sample distribution lists and or other desirable sampling methods unfeasible for the current project. Without the ability to stratify, another rationale for sampling the entire population was the desire to obtain a broad representation of subgroups. There were also minimal resources for following up, contacting and providing incentives for participation in the study. To minimize non-response of subjects due to the length of the survey (37 questions), a greater number of potential participants was necessary to garner a more acceptable response rate. Finally, there was no prior research

found to inform the design of a more targeted approach aimed at particular segments of the population.

All potential participants were emailed a recruitment letter (see Appendix A) through the CMS's listserve on three separate occasions that included a link to the survey instrument. Respondents who completed the survey comprised a response rate of 8.89% ($N = 1,754$), with 2,127 (10.78%) participants answering at least one question. Online survey sites such as SurveyGizmo.com have stated that typical response rates for external Internet surveys have an average response rate between 10 and 15 % (SurveyGizmo, n.d.). Survey Monkey, however reports a 20 and 30% average response rate with a population of participants with no relationship to the researcher. Because typical response rates for online surveys can vary drastically (Cook, et. Al., 2000), it is important to remember that:

Response representativeness is more important than response rate in survey research... Election polls make clear that the *representativeness* of our samples is much more important than the response rate we obtain. A sample of fewer than 1% of the population can be more representative, indeed much more representative, than a sample of 50% or 60% of the population. (Cook, et al., p. 821)

Non-response bias is not necessarily a fatal issue with low response rates (Sax, et al, 2003). The issue comes with mismatched population characterization. For example, the number of participants that were identified as belonging to the string family (14.08%, $n = 247$) was under represented in the results in comparison to the number of potential subjects that were listed in The College Music Society's Directory of Music Faculties in

Colleges and Universities, U.S. and Canada, 2012 – 2013 (24.54%, N = 7,504), before adjusting for those who asked their names to be removed from the database. Whereas, voice faculty were over represented (23.55%, n = 413) in comparison to the number of potential subjects that were asked to participate (18.48%, N = 5,649) (see Table 1). Overall, because the proportion of participants that took part in the survey and the proportion of potential candidates initially listed in the CMS database are similar, results of the current project indicate a high level of representativeness among the population categories. In the future, it would be valuable for researchers to use more random sampling methods to corroborate the results of this survey and rule out other sources of potential non-response bias.

Survey instrument limitations. Due to the high number of students the participants reported teaching per week and because of possible ambiguity in the question itself, results from the survey regarding the number of students taught should be interpreted carefully. The survey instrument should have read: “How many [applied music] students do you teach weekly?” Without the word “applied”, respondents could have interpreted the question incorrectly and included non-applied music students or classroom/lecture students in the number reported. This is likely to have occurred when participants responded with numbers of students greater than the typical academic load for studio faculty in higher education (i.e., > 20).

Another limitation of the study that may have affected survey results was the length of the survey itself. The 37 survey items consisted of multiple choice, close-ended dichotomous (yes/no), Likert-style rating scales, checklists, and open-ended short answer

questions. Several questions were tiered so that if you answered a specific way, you would be directed to additional questions. It was estimated to take between 5 to 10 minutes to complete the survey, however only 34% of participants ($n = 715$) were able to complete the survey in that amount of time. Most participants were able to complete the survey between 15 to 20 minutes. Attrition in finishing the survey due to the actual amount of time it took to complete may also have been a factor in the survey response rate.

The survey instrument was created by an online survey creation and distribution service called Survey Monkey, Inc. One small issue raised by a few participants while using Survey Monkey dealt with the functionality on questions that were asking for participants to enter percentages that would add up to 100%. Some participants reported that the addition function in calculating percentages wasn't working properly and wouldn't let them proceed beyond that question because their answers didn't add up to 100%. These problems were reported to Survey Monkey but their technicians could not duplicate the errors. To avoid additional participants running into similar problems the settings requiring percentages to add up to 100% were changed, allowing people to advance to the next question. The total number of people that emailed the researcher with this problem was very small ($n = 4$).

Further Research

Many topics for additional research have emerged throughout the current study. Researchers could look at upper administrators' beliefs and perspectives regarding the

pedagogical and assessment practices of their applied music faculty members. Also, an in depth determinative and causal analysis of the effectiveness of various pedagogical techniques that applied faculty members use would also be very helpful in informing and improving current and future applied music teachers' pedagogy. Furthermore, a content analysis and comparison of the various written tools used by applied music studio faculty such as syllabi, studio handbooks, practice records and jury rubric formats could also be very helpful in improving the general knowledge and understanding of what is actually being used, and to what extent such tools are effective in influencing their applied lesson students. From a pedagogical perspective, researchers could analyze the effectiveness of different approaches to how goals and objectives of applied studio faculty are determined and then implemented. Additionally researchers could study whether or not there is a relationship between how skilled a musician is and their ability to then teach music in the public or private schools (i.e., "Does taking horn lessons make me a better band director?" or "Does taking vocal lessons make me a better choir director?").

Implications for Assessment Policy and Practice

In order to dispel the mists of mystery around the assessment practices of applied studio faculty in higher education policies and practices of universities, music schools, departments and teachers may need to be adjusted and clarified. The practice of using non-achievement criteria such as attendance, punctuality, attitude, participation, and effort, while common, often only adds to the confusion of how applied music students are assessed and graded. Applied music faculty who have the privilege of students who want

to study with them need to use achievement-based criteria more fully to enhance the transparency of what applied music students are actually assessed on.

Rather than basing a grade off of whether or not a student tried hard, it is far more beneficial to both student and teacher to base a student's evaluation on what they've been able to achieve throughout the course of the term as shown by tangible or audible results of academic and musical achievement. Students can take greater responsibility for their actions and have a more solid understanding that their grade, or more importantly, their current level of musicianship and prowess on their instrument is a direct result of their own hard work, attitude, participation, and effort. Teachers could benefit from using achievement-based criteria because their judgment and assessment of a student's progress as a musician and academic scholar could be measured empirically with much less subjectivity and inconsistency between students.

A simple example assessment plan containing achievement based criteria could contain the following elements and help determine final grades for applied lesson students: jury performances, quality of weekly preparation, and a student's portfolio assignment.

The jury performance (worth 50% of the final grade for example) could be assessed using an instrument-specific performance rubric such as the one Parkes (2010) designed for brass instruments (see Figure 1). This lets adjudicators provide accurate feedback quickly and with some detailed description on how well the performer is doing on any given assessment category. Scoring a performance using rubrics rather than assigning an arbitrary number, or basing one's assessment on an overall impression, is

more effective because it can better communicate exactly what a performer lacked or excelled at.

Assessment Categories	Acceptable 14-15	Proficient 16-18	Exceptional 19-20	
Interpretation / Expression (Includes dynamics)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has acceptable stylistic qualities Makes some attempts to play with stylistic appropriateness Plays with a reasonable musical effect Make regular attempts at pleasing phrasing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has proficient stylistic qualities Usually plays with stylistic appropriateness Plays with proficient musical effect Consistently uses pleasing phrasing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exceptionally stylistic Always plays with stylistic appropriateness Plays with exceptional musical effect Always uses the most pleasing phrasing 	20
Tone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tone, in general is acceptable Tone is mainly consistent across registers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tone, in general, is clear Tone is maintained proficiently across registers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tone, in general, is extremely clear Tone is exceptional across all registers 	20
Intonation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intonation is adequate but is inconsistent some of the time within the player and / or accompaniment Demonstrates some understanding of tonality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intonation is proficient and only small inconsistencies appear within the player and / or with accompaniment Demonstrates proficient understanding of tonality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intonation is exceptional and no inconsistencies appear within the player / and or accompaniment Demonstrates exceptional understanding of tonality 	20
Technique	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows acceptable posture Holds instrument with competence Plays correct notes (fingering and / or pitching) Has acceptable specific technical skills – transposition, clefs, mute changes, hand-stopping Shows minimal problems with embouchure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows good posture Holds instrument with confidence Plays correct notes with confidence (fingering and / or pitching) Has proficient specific technical skills – transposition, clefs, mute changes, hand-stopping Shows no problems with embouchure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows great posture Holds instrument with bravura Plays correct notes all the time with exceptional confidence Has exceptional specific technical skills – transposition, clefs, mute changes, hand-stopping Shows strong embouchure 	20
Rhythm / Tempo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short periods of consistent tempo Melodic rhythm approximately correct Tempo changes sometimes observed from music Sometimes rushing/dragging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent tempo most of the time Melodic rhythm consistently correct Tempo changes always observed from music No disruptive rushing/dragging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tempo was consistent all the time Melodic rhythm precise all of the time Tempo changes always observed with exceptional skill Never rushing/dragging 	20
TOTAL				

Figure 1. Brass criteria specific performance rubric. This figure demonstrates an instrument specific performance rubric that can be used in adjudicating jury performances designed by Parkes (p. 103, 2010).

The student's quality of weekly preparation (worth 25% of the final grade, for example) could be assessed using weekly lesson rubrics (see Appendix E). They could be used to indicate whether students were prompt, list material assigned the previous week, provide a smaller scale instrument-specific performance rubric to indicate preparedness

on various achievement criteria, and also indicate whether evidence of improvement was made from the last lesson.

Portfolio assignments (worth 25% of a student's final grade, for example) could consist of preparing a three-ring binder or web page of audio and physical representations of the student's work over the course of the semester. This could include a set of self-audio or video recordings taken over the course of the semester (1st week, 5th week, 12th week, and jury performance) to show progress and development on specific techniques, excerpts or solo works. The portfolio could also contain concert programs, post-lesson write-ups, and other possible assignments.

Applied music faculty will have more work to do in the beginning as they analyze and adjust their assessment practices. Given today's educational accountability movement, schools of music and the students who attend and fund those schools need to be held responsible for their actions related to the academic study of music. Applied music faculty have the potential to make their teaching become more poignant and more reflective of actual progress as they base their assessment and pedagogy on identifiable, measureable, recordable, and reportable criteria indicative of a student's advancing musical proficiency.

Upper administration, performance, and music education faculty can contribute to enacting a paradigm shift in which assessment policy is influenced by research, tempered by experience, and continually improved through strong leadership and accountability from the deans of each school down to the adjunct part time faculty member. Instead of having a variable assessment measurement dependent upon one's supposed future career path, all students should be held to the exact same, or equivalent high standard of

professional musicianship that each of us strive to achieve. A more comprehensive policy of curriculum development in applied music lessons should involve taking into considerations each student's current academic major and expected career path, however not at the expense of lowering music performance expectations. Non-performance majors should be held to the same high musical standard as each performance major. However, the curriculum (the quantity, difficulty level, and breadth of exposure to the music literature) must accurately reflect sensitivity to the time constraints and demands of students in non-performance degrees enrolled in applied music lessons. As upper administration and performance department chairs in conjunction with assessment experts and applied music studio faculty address and improve the assessment policies of their programs, students and faculty alike will reap the benefits of a more profound, accurate, and enabling assessment policy.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the purpose of this study was to identify the assessment practices of applied music studio faculty in higher education. Results indicated that in many instances there exists a definite need for further reflection, improvement, and development of assessment policy and implementation within the applied music studios of our colleges and universities. Students will benefit from an increased use of achievement criteria, such as progress records, rubrics, time-lapsed individual recording examples, and performance portfolios in the assessment practices of the applied music teacher. Upper administration, faculty members, and students all have a stake in seeking and striving for improvement of the studio lesson environment.

Elliott said it best: “Achieving the aims of music education depends on assessment. The primary function of assessment in music education is not to determine grades but to provide accurate feedback to students about the quality of their growing musicianship” (Elliott, 1995, p. 264). As applied music faculty provide more accurate feedback to students, the quality of their student’s growing musicianship will continue to increase. Only by acknowledging what is, can there exist a hope to change what will be, to what could be.

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APPENDIX A

Assessment Practices of Applied Music Studio Faculty in Higher Education

Introduction

Thank you for participating in my study! My name is Jeff Dunford, and I am a doctoral student in horn performance and brass literature at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music in Bloomington, IN.

As part of the final requirements for my degree I am conducting research into the assessment practices of applied music studio faculty in higher education, and am grateful that you are willing to participate in this short 5-10 minute online survey.

The purpose of this project is to investigate the assessment practices of applied music studio faculty in higher education. Through this survey we hope to learn your thoughts on grading policies in general, to better understand how student learning and progress is documented across the semester in private lessons, and to determine what influences affect applied music professor's choices on how to assess and grade their students.

By clicking "Next" you consent to voluntarily participate in the study, and acknowledge that you are at least 18 years of age or older.

Directions

In this questionnaire, you will be asked to describe how you assess and grade your students taking applied music lessons with you.

Please restrict your responses to assessment and grading practices used with your private students enrolled in applied lessons with you during the current academic year.

This information will be kept completely confidential and will be used for research purposes only.

Thank you for your participation in this survey!

1. Do you provide each student with a formal grading policy?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes, verbally
- ☐ Yes, in writing (syllabus)

If "No", indicate in your own words why you do not provide each student with a formal grading policy?

2. What type of grades do your applied lesson students receive?

- ☐ Letter or percentage grades
- ☐ Pass/fail or satisfactory grades
- ☐ Standards-based grade reports
- ☐ No grades are assigned or required for applied lessons
- ☐ Other (please specify)

3. Approximately what percentage of your students receive each type of grade?

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> % A's | <input type="checkbox"/> % D's |
| <input type="checkbox"/> % B's | <input type="checkbox"/> % F's |
| <input type="checkbox"/> % C's | |

4. Do applied lesson grades affect students' overall grade point averages at your institution?

- ☐ Yes, weighted equally with academic subjects
- ☐ Yes, but not weighted equally
- ☐ No

5. Do students enrolled in applied lessons receive academic credit toward fulfillment of graduation requirements?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

6. To what extent do school administrators / department heads monitor or guide the way you assess and grade your applied lesson students?

- ☐ Not at all
- ☐ Somewhat
- ☐ Quite a bit
- ☐ Extensively

7. To what extent has the adoption of standards-based curricula by your department / institution affected your approach to assessing and grading applied lesson students?

- ☐ Not at all
- ☐ Somewhat
- ☐ Quite a bit
- ☐ Extensively
- ☐ Not Applicable - No standards-based curricula

8. Indicate your applied lesson students' degree type or focus area by writing the appropriate percentage in each blank.

- _____ % Music Performance degree / certificate / diploma
_____ % Non-Performance Music degree (Music Education, Music History, Music Theory, etc...)
_____ % Non-Music degree (Business, Law, Accounting, etc...)

9. Are students that are primarily focused on pursuing a music performance degree assessed and graded differently than other non- performance oriented students?

- _____ No
_____ Yes

10. Why are performance majors assessed and graded differently than other non-performance majors?

11. How are performance majors assessed and graded differently than other non-performance majors?

If you grade your performance majors differently than non-performance majors consider your answers for questions 12 – 22 as they apply to your typical approach in assessing your performance major.

If you do not grade your non-performance majors differently than performance majors consider your answers for questions 12 – 22 as they apply to your typical applied lesson student.

12. Is 'attendance and punctuality' a criterion you use in determining a student's applied lesson grade?

- _____ Yes
_____ No

13. Indicate which of the following attendance criteria you consider when grading students by selecting the appropriate box(es). Please check ALL that apply.

- _____ Attendance at weekly lessons
_____ Attendance at major school concerts
_____ Attendance at their studio professor's performances
_____ Punctuality or promptness to all lessons
_____ Attendance at studio ensemble rehearsals (Flute choir, Horn choir, etc.)
_____ Attendance at fellow studio member's recitals
_____ Attendance at studio master-classes
_____ Punctuality or promptness to all master-classes
_____ Other (please specify)

14. How do unexcused absences from lessons, rehearsals, concerts, recitals, etc..., impact your student's grades?

15. Is 'attitude' (participation, effort, leadership, etc...) a criterion you use in determining a student's applied lesson grade?

☐ No
☐ Yes

16. Indicate which of the following attitudinal criteria you consider when grading students by selecting the appropriate boxes. Please check ALL that apply.

☐ Citizenship / Courtesy / Cooperative Behavior / Responsibility
☐ Effort
☐ In-class participation (Master-class)
☐ Participation in support activities (clerical, fund raising)
☐ Leadership
☐ Instrument care
☐ Participation in chamber ensembles
☐ Participation in concerto competitions
☐ Other (please specify)

17. How do you measure attitudinal criteria (participation, effort, leadership, etc...)?

18. Are written assessments of musical knowledge and understanding (journals, written quizzes, tests, essays, research papers, etc...) criteria you use in determining a student's applied lesson grade?

☐ Yes
☐ No

19. Indicate which of the following "Written Assessment" formats you utilize when grading your applied lesson students by placing selecting the appropriate box(es). Please check ALL that apply.

☐ Portfolio
☐ Worksheets
☐ Practice Journals
☐ Quizzes
☐ Major Projects / Presentations
☐ Major Exams
☐ Homework Assignments
☐ Other (please specify)

20. Indicate which of the following “Written Assessment” objectives you consider when grading applied lesson students by selecting the appropriate boxes.

- ☐ Knowledge of basic terminology, symbols or notation
- ☐ Knowledge of music theory principles (intervals, chords, voice leading, chord progressions)
- ☐ Knowledge of music history (style periods, composers, forms, genres, musical instruments)
- ☐ Knowledge of compositional techniques (variation, sequence, augmentation, diminution)
- ☐ Knowledge of cultural contexts associated with pieces of music
- ☐ Knowledge of performance practices or pedagogical principles
- ☐ Ability to identify musical elements by ear or sight
- ☐ Ability to analyze and evaluate musical performances (self, section, ensemble, or other groups)
- ☐ Ability to create small-scale original compositions or arrange existing compositions
- ☐ Other (please specify)

21. Are performance assessments of musical skill and musicianship (Juries, weekly lessons, recitals, etc...) criteria you use in determining a student’s applied lesson grade?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

22. Indicate which of the following type of “Performance Assessment” formats you utilize when grading your applied lesson students by selecting the appropriate box(es). Please check ALL that apply.

- ☐ Performances in weekly lessons
- ☐ Playing exams, audio recorded
- ☐ Playing exams, videotaped
- ☐ Ensemble auditions
- ☐ End of semester juries
- ☐ Mock auditions
- ☐ Performances in Master-Class
- ☐ Recitals
- ☐ Concerto Competitions
- ☐ Other (please specify)

23. Indicate which of the following “Performance Assessment” objectives you consider when grading applied lesson students by selecting the appropriate box(es). Please check ALL that apply.

- ☐ Performance technique (scales, etudes, etc.)
- ☐ Student-prepared performance of orchestral excerpts (tone, accuracy, style, & musicality)
- ☐ Student-prepared performance of opera excerpts (tone, accuracy, style, & musicality)
- ☐ Student-prepared performance of wind-band excerpts (tone, accuracy, style, & musicality)
- ☐ Student-prepared performance of other material or repertoire (tone, accuracy, & musicality)
- ☐ Sight-reading performance Improvised performance Memorized performance
- ☐ Other (please specify)

24. Which of the following tools do you use when administering performance assessments? Select ALL that apply.

- ☐ Scores based on overall impression
- ☐ Rating Scales
- ☐ Checklists
- ☐ Rubrics
- ☐ Other (please specify)

25. Are practice assessments (practice cards, practice journals, audio / video recordings, etc...) criteria you use in determining a student’s applied lesson grade?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

26. Indicate which of the following type of “Practice Assessment” formats you utilize when grading applied lesson students by selecting the appropriate box. Please check ALL that apply.

- ☐ Practice Cards, or other Quantitative Reports (documenting amount of time students practice)
- ☐ Practice Journals, or other Qualitative Repots (describing what and how students practice)
- ☐ Audio Recordings of student’s practice sessions
- ☐ Visual Recordings of student’s practice sessions
- ☐ Other (please specify)

27. Indicate the approximate weight that each of the following types of criteria receives in determining a student's applied lesson grade by writing the appropriate percentage in each blank. Note: Percentages should add up to 100. Please enter only whole number values without decimals or percentage signs (IE: enter 25, instead of 25%)

- _____ Attendance and Punctuality
- _____ Attitude (Participation, effort, leadership, etc.)
- _____ Written Assessments of Musical Knowledge and Understanding (Journals, written quizzes & tests, essays, research papers, etc...)
- _____ Performance Assessment of Musical Skill and Musicianship (Juries, weekly lessons, recitals, etc...)
- _____ Practice Assessments (Practice cards, student narratives)
- _____ Other criteria (please describe in next question)

28. Please write other criteria (if any) not listed in the previous question that you use in determining a student's applied lesson grade along with the criteria's approximate percentage weight (out of 100%) of influence you give it.

29. What other comments or concerns do you have about assessing and grading your applied lessons students? (Please write your response in the box below!)

Almost finished!

30. What instrument(s) do you teach applied lessons to?

- _____ Primary Instrument
- _____ Other instruments you teach

31. How many students do you teach weekly?

32. To what extent does your studio teaching responsibilities reflect your workload?

- _____ 25% or less of my time is spent teaching applied lessons
- _____ 26% - 50% of my time is spent teaching applied lessons
- _____ 51% - 75% of my time is spent teaching applied lessons
- _____ 76% - 100% of my time is spent teaching applied lessons

33. What approximate percentage of Graduate versus Undergraduate students do you teach?

- _____ % Graduate students
- _____ % Undergraduate students

34. How many years have you taught applied music lessons in the higher education field?

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| _____ 0 - 5 years | _____ 16 - 20 years |
| _____ 6 - 10 years | _____ 20+ years |
| _____ 11 - 15 years | |

35. Indicate the highest degree of education you have completed

- ☐ High School
☐ Bachelors
☐ Masters
☐ Doctorate
☐ Other (please specify)

36. Was assessment, evaluation, or grading a topic discussed in any of the professional development activities you participated in last year?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Not Applicable

37. Indicate the influences that have affected the development of your assessment / grading policy by selecting approximately how much influence each item had in the development of your assessment / grading policy on the following scale: Very little influence, A little, Some, Heavy, and Extremely heavy influence.

	Very Little Infl.	A Little Infl.	Some	Heavy	Extr. Heavy Infl.	N/A
Employers guidelines / policies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
In-service training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Former teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Peer's assessment policy / instrument	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Training received in Graduate school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Training received as a graduate assistant	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My students chosen field of study (Performance major versus a non-performance major)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other (please specify) _____

You're Finished!

Thank you so much for your time and effort! I sincerely appreciate you for filling out this survey and contributing to the further advancement of applied music lessons in higher education.

Thank you again!

38. Would you like to see a summary of the responses so far?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

APPENDIX B

Recruitment Email Letter – September 13, 2013

Assessment Practices of Studio Faculty Survey

My name is Jeff Dunford, a doctoral student in horn performance and brass literature at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music in Bloomington, IN. As part of the final requirements for my degree I am conducting research into the assessment practices of applied music studio faculty in higher education, and hope that you are willing to participate in a short, 5-10 minute online survey.

The purpose of this project is to investigate the assessment practices of applied music studio faculty in higher education. Through this survey we hope to learn your thoughts on grading policies in general, to better understand how student learning and progress is documented across the semester in private lessons, and to determine what influences affect applied music professor's choices on how to assess and grade their students.

You were selected to participate in this project based on the criteria of being listed as teaching applied music lessons in the College Music Society's: Directory of Music Faculties in Colleges and Universities, U.S. and Canada, 2012-2013 Edition.

All data collected from this survey will be strictly confidential, non-identifiable, and used for research purposes only.

A benefit of participating in this study includes knowing that you've helped contribute your knowledge and experience in an anonymous way to influencing the general understanding of assessment methods in the applied music studio environment. You will also greatly contribute to the overall knowledge and understanding of one of the most important influences in developing young musician's talents, skills, and knowledge. By participating in the survey you would also benefit by being able to anonymously see the results of the project once all data has been collected and analyzed, and learn how other applied music faculty are addressing assessment and grading opportunities. I offer my heartfelt and sincere gratitude for your participation.

By clicking on the link below you consent to voluntarily participate in the study, and acknowledge that you are at least 18 years of age or older.

[Click here to participate in the Assessment Practices of Studio Faculty Survey](#)

We anticipate collecting data from September 2013 through December 2013, after which this link will no longer be active.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration!

Sincerely,

Jeff Dunford
Doctoral Student
Indiana University Jacobs School of Music
jdunford@indiana.edu

APPENDIX C

Reminder to Participate Email – October 22, 2013

October, 2013

In September you were contacted to participate in the "Assessment Practices of Studio Faculty Survey". If you have already completed the survey we thank you for your time and participation. If you have not yet completed the online survey and would like to participate in the study, you are still able to do so by clicking on the link below.

[Click here to participate in the study](#)

The purpose of this project is to investigate the assessment practices of applied music studio faculty in higher education. Through this survey we hope to learn your thoughts on grading policies in general, to better understand how student learning and progress is documented across the semester in private lessons, and to determine what influences affect applied music professor's choices on how to assess and grade their students.

We anticipate collecting data from September 2013 through December 2013, after which this link will no longer be active.

Thank you very much for you time and consideration!

Sincerely,

Jeff Dunford
Doctoral Student
Indiana University Jacobs School of Music

APPENDIX D

Final Reminder to Participate Email – December 12, 2013

December, 2013

Thank you for your participation in the Applied Lesson Assessment Survey. This survey closes on December 31, 2013. If you have not yet completed the online survey and would like to participate in the study, you are still able to do so by clicking on the link below.

[Click here to participate in the study](#)

The purpose of this project is to investigate the assessment practices of applied music studio faculty in higher education. Through this survey we hope to learn your thoughts on grading policies in general, to better understand how student learning and progress is documented across the semester in private lessons, and to determine what influences affect applied music professor's choices on how to assess and grade their students.

We anticipate collecting data from September 2013 through December 2013, after which this link will no longer be active.

Thank you very much for you time and consideration!

Sincerely,

Jeff Dunford
Doctoral Candidate
Indiana University Jacobs School of Music

APPENDIX E

Weekly Lesson Rubric

Student Name: _____ Date: _____ Points

Was student prompt, and prepared with all materials? Yes No _____
(Circle one: Yes = 10 pt., No = 0 pt.)

Material assigned previous week: _____

Performance Rubric for music assigned the previous week: _____
(Total points up for performance score: 20 pt. per category)

Table 1
Brass Criteria Specific Performance Rubric

Assessment Categories	Acceptable 14-15	Proficient 16-18	Exceptional 19-20	
Interpretation / Expression (Includes dynamics)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has acceptable stylistic qualities Makes some attempts to play with stylistic appropriateness Plays with a reasonable musical effect Make regular attempts at pleasing phrasing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has proficient stylistic qualities Usually plays with stylistic appropriateness Plays with proficient musical effect Consistently uses pleasing phrasing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exceptionally stylistic Always plays with stylistic appropriateness Plays with exceptional musical effect Always uses the most pleasing phrasing 	20
Tone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tone, in general is acceptable Tone is mainly consistent across registers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tone, in general, is clear Tone is maintained proficiently across registers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tone, in general, is extremely clear Tone is exceptional across all registers 	20
Intonation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intonation is adequate but is inconsistent some of the time within the player and / or accompaniment Demonstrates some understanding of tonality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intonation is proficient and only small inconsistencies appear within the player and / or with accompaniment Demonstrates proficient understanding of tonality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intonation is exceptional and no inconsistencies appear within the player / and or accompaniment Demonstrates exceptional understanding of tonality 	20
Technique	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows acceptable posture Holds instrument with competence Plays correct notes (fingering and / or pitching) Has acceptable specific technical skills – transposition, clefs, mute changes, hand-stopping Shows minimal problems with embouchure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows good posture Holds instrument with confidence Plays correct notes with confidence (fingering and / or pitching) Has proficient specific technical skills – transposition, clefs, mute changes, hand-stopping Shows no problems with embouchure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows great posture Holds instrument with bravura Plays correct notes all the time with exceptional confidence Has exceptional specific technical skills – transposition, clefs, mute changes, hand-stopping Shows strong embouchure 	20
Rhythm / Tempo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short periods of consistent tempo Melodic rhythm approximately correct Tempo changes sometimes observed from music Sometimes rushing/dragging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent tempo most of the time Melodic rhythm consistently correct Tempo changes always observed from music No disruptive rushing/dragging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tempo was consistent all the time Melodic rhythm precise all of the time Tempo changes always observed with exceptional skill Never rushing/dragging 	20
TOTAL				

Was evidence of improvement apparent? (Circle one: Yes = 10 pts., No = 0 pts.)

Interpretation / Expression	Yes	No	_____
Tone	Yes	No	_____
Intonation	Yes	No	_____
Technique	Yes	No	_____
Rhythm / Tempo	Yes	No	_____

Was lesson recorded? (20 pts) Yes No _____
Was previous lesson write up turned in? (20 pts) Yes No _____

Notes about lesson: _____ Total: _____
(out of 200)

Material to work on for next week: _____