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<th>Program Name(s)</th>
<th>FACT Faculty Fellow</th>
<th>Department Chair</th>
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<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>Peter Marsh</td>
<td>John Eros</td>
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[NOTE: Items A, B, C, and D are identical to your Page 2 on your Annual Report for CAPR. Please simply cut and paste from there. Item E is unique to the CLASS FACT Project.]

A. Program Student Learning Outcomes

1. Quickly identify rhythms and pitches and maintain pitch accuracy for application in performance or composition.
2. Bring an enriched tone production with improved technical skills to the performance of their primary instrument.
3. Apply critical and creative thinking and analytical reasoning to address complex challenges in music theory and history.
4. Demonstrate the ability to work collaboratively and respectfully with other musicians in a performance context.
5. Integrate musical ideas, theory, and practice, and communicate them to others clearly and persuasively in classroom and performance settings.

B. Program Student Learning Outcome(s) Assessed

This year we selected SLO #3: Apply critical and creative thinking and analytical reasoning to address complex challenges in music theory and history.

C. Summary of Assessment Process

The undergraduate program in music at Cal State East Bay is designed to help students develop and practice the complex set of skills musicians and music educators need to perform and teach music in professional contexts. Our program divides this skill set into six different areas, namely skills in:

- basic musicianship (SLO 1);
- performance on one’s primary instrument (SLO 2);
- creative and critical thinking (SLO 3);
- analytical reasoning (SLO 3);
- collaboration (SLO 4); and
communication (SLO 5).

Our CLASS FACT project for AY2014-15 sought to assess SLO #3. Assessment activities were focused on work undertaken in my year-long upper-division capstone history course for music majors, Music Literature & Analysis I-III (MUS3155-57). Creative thinking was assessed with a group project, the results of which were presented at the end of Fall Quarter; critical thinking (along with analytical reasoning) was assessed with individual assignments in Winter and Spring Quarters.

Creative Thinking: As their final project for the Fall Quarter students were required to perform a piece of music from either the Medieval or Renaissance period of western music history on a departmental student recital. This assignment required students to form small groups and collaborate on selecting a suitable composition (one specifically not examined in class) and determining how they would present it to their audience. The requirement that each performance be historically-informed and accompanied by program notes meant that each group had to undertake historical research to better understand their composition, including when, where, and how it would have been performed, what function it would have served, how it would have been perceived, and so on. At every step in the process of preparing their performance, students had to make creative decisions based upon or influenced by their historical research. The degree to which each group communicated an historical understanding of the composition through its musical performance and written texts formed the basis of my assessment of each student in the Fall Quarter.

Critical Thinking: I assessed critical thinking skills through two parallel assignments, one in the Winter Quarter and one in the Spring. Each assignment asked students to analyze two musical scores (neither of which we examined in class) and identify important musical similarities and differences. The analytical and critical thinking skills needed to compare and contrast musical scores are important tools musicologists use to tell the history of western music. I assigned both assignments as Pass/Fail, meaning that each student had to do the assignment as many times as necessary to answer the questions asked. Given that most students from the Winter Quarter continued into the Spring Quarter, I was able to assess (if in a limited way) the degree to which their critical thinking skills had improved over this period.

D. Summary of Assessment Results

The results of both projects undertaken this year were mixed. For the creative thinking part of
this project in the Fall Quarter, my students divided themselves into four groups. Three of these groups did quite good work. One performed a musical transcription and arrangement of a famous work of medieval sacred music and the other two performed secular compositions from the Renaissance. In each case, the performances were historically informed and accompanying texts well researched. The fourth group, consisting almost entirely of international students from southern China, fared far worse, however. Their performance and accompanying texts showed a clear lack of collaboration and little historical understanding.

Similar problems beset our attempts to assess critical thinking in the following two quarters. My original goal was to assign group research projects that would culminate in class presentations and group websites at the end of the Spring Quarter. My goal was to use this research project as the basis of an annual assessment of critical thinking skills. It quickly became apparent to me, however, that many of the students in this course, particularly the international students (who make up two-thirds of the students in this course), lacked the practical skills and cultural understanding needed to engage in a large-scale project involving musical analysis and historical research. I decided, thus, to rework my CLASS FACT project goals by limiting my assessment to comparing results of two parallel assignments given over two quarters.

As illustrated in the tables below, a majority of students in each quarter (59%/60%) were able to demonstrate an acceptable level of detailed analytical reasoning and critical thinking to pass each assignment. But a sizeable percentage failed the assignment the first time through (41%/30%) and had to submit the assignment again, and for some a second time.

Critical Thinking Assignment for Winter Quarter 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of students</th>
<th>29</th>
<th>100%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total passed on first try</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total failed on first try</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total failed on second try</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17%</td>
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Critical Thinking Assignment for Spring Quarter 2015

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Total number of students</th>
<th>27</th>
<th>100%</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total passed on first try</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total failed on first try</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total failed on second try</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11%</td>
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The positive result is that a total number of failures did fall by the following quarter, and overall the answers did become more detailed, showing clear improvement in students’ ability to answer
these types of questions. But the rates are still too high and they demonstrate to me the need to begin teaching these skills at an earlier stage in my course, if not also at an earlier stage of each student’s time in our department.

E. Suggestions and Recommendations for the CLASS FACT Project in the Future

Our department’s third SLO needs to be properly assessed. Comparing parallel assignments over two or three quarters provides some useful data, but establishing a formal research and analysis project on an annual basis will provide a better basis, and better data, to assess creative and critical thinking skills. The year-long upper-division music history course for music majors is a good place to do this assessment.

Next academic year, I intend to begin laying the groundwork for the research project right at the beginning of the Fall Quarter. I will create a series of progressively more difficult assignments that step-by-step will help students develop the analytical and critical thinking needed to undertake this research project in either the Winter or Spring Quarter. I will still also assign a creative thinking project in the Fall Quarter on an annual basis.

In addition, I think we could also incorporate a critical thinking-analytical reasoning assessment into a music theory course. The problem, however, is that all required theory courses end in each major’s second year in the program. There are no required upper-division theory courses that could serve to assess all music majors. But I will still look into the possibility for next year.

Thank you for your hard work for the past year, and have a Great Summer!