

INSTITUTIONAL PERSPECTIVES

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The overview that Douglass Seaton has provided tells us something important. It reminds us that music in American higher education represents an infrastructure for the serious pursuit of music study that is unequalled in the world. At no other time, and in no other nation, have resources of this magnitude been assembled at the higher education level. This is an accomplishment in which all of us can take great pride, since all sectors of the music community have contributed to this result. But obviously, producing a large, unparalleled infrastructure is only part of the picture. Beyond the facts of size, scope, and geographic distribution lies the work that institutions do. Beyond that are the underlying concepts of what the work should be, and behind those concepts is the very nature of music itself.

Music in American higher education is built upon the nature of music in its multiple dimensions. One way to illustrate this is to talk about the various realms of musical activity such as composition, performance, scholarship, teaching, and so forth as Professor Seaton has done. Another way is to think about higher education's role in doing work in music, doing work about music, doing work that connects music to other things, and doing work that protects and expands the contexts for music-making and music-teaching. Higher education is not only centered in doing this multi-dimensional work but is also deeply engaged in preparing professionals with the knowledge and skills to carry such work forward at increasingly higher levels.

Another way of looking at the nature of music involves the setting of aspirations, since high aspirations play a central role in sustaining commitment in the development of any music or music-related competence. For many years, those who work in music in higher education have generally maintained the highest aspirations. It is no secret, for instance, that many of our student ensembles perform at extremely high levels. We are world leaders in the presentation of music new and old; our scholars, researchers, and analysts are esteemed world-wide; and our system of preparing teachers to deliver instruction in elementary and secondary schools, private studios, and community music schools is the envy of the entire world.

It should be possible for us to be proud of these achievements while at the same time recognizing that we have by no means attained perfection and that there is much more to be done. For example, we want to work with all our major professional constituents to effectively expand the delivery of quality music instruction to every child. Each of us needs to listen attentively to what our respective organizations can do to achieve this end, realizing that collaboration will be more likely to achieve the desired ends far more effectively than individual efforts. There is an important caution to be inserted at this juncture, that being that our obligation to improve music teaching and learning at every level must always be from a fundamental basis of real strength. We must, for instance, never accept, much less promulgate, a crisis mentality that could undermine our achievements and goals, and that has the potential for sapping time and energy from primary pursuits.

The National Association of Schools of Music represents over 575 institutions [635 in 2012] with an historic commitment to the preparation of music professionals. Like all of music in higher education, our membership runs the gamut from small liberal arts colleges to doctoral degree-granting research universities. Each institution has its own articulated mission with regard to music. However, there are sufficient commonalities to produce agreement, at least within NASM, on basic competencies that are expected of graduates at certain levels in certain fields. These competencies are derived from the nature of music and from the practice of music in all of its various professional manifestations. Indeed, in many respects, music programs in American higher education constitute and represent in microcosm the issues and music-related fields that operate in society broadly. Our large comprehensive schools of music are the only place in American society, indeed, some of the only places in the world, where almost every aspect of professional music endeavor is addressed at the same location by the same people at the same time. This extraordinary

richness and interchange among composition, performance, theory, history, music education, music therapy, jazz, and many other subspecialties cause the nature of professional musical endeavor and the nature of music in higher education to reflect each other and evolve together, institution by institution. It is this interchange or synergy that creates the value and power of our service to music as a whole.

For all of these reasons, stated or implied, we were delighted and encouraged by the publication of the National Voluntary K-12 Standards for Music in 1994. The Standards reflect both the nature of music and the same content areas that we continuously attempt to address in higher education. They provide a solid foundation for having the future of music in higher education and the future of music in elementary and secondary education reflect one another and evolve together in partnership toward greater competence, capability, and service to society, not only through the work of professional musicians and teachers but also through the musical knowledges and skills developed in the lay public.

There is much to do in the future to make our enormous investment in infrastructure pay ever greater dividends to the evolution of our nation's musical culture. We in higher education must respond to change as well as to create it. But whatever the changes may be, several things must remain constant: our focus on music itself, our high aspirations for excellence, and our commitment to freedom of inquiry and diversity of mission and approach.

WILLIAM HIPPI served as Dean and Patricia L. Frost Professor of Music at the University of Miami 1983-2005. In 1997, he became President of the National Association of Schools of Music. His previous positions included Director of the School of Music at Illinois Wesleyan University and Chairman of the Division of Music, Meadows School of the Arts, and Southern Methodist University. Hipp was principal trumpet in the Corpus Christi, Austin, and Bloomington-Normal symphony orchestras for a cumulative period of over twenty years and was a frequent soloist, clinician, and adjudicator during his active years as a performer. His principal research interests have focused on music in higher education, with emphases on planning, curricula, fund-raising, and faculty evaluation. Additional special professional interests and activities include community outreach and international exchange programs.