

Draft I: Proposed Revisions to the *Handbook 2022-23*

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS OF MUSIC

September 8, 2023

OFFICIAL NOTICE. This constitutes the official notice of proposed revisions to the *Handbook* forwarded in advance as required by the NASM Bylaws and Rules of Practice and Procedure, Part II.

Note: All proposed revisions are indicated in red.

Following the current comment period, a second proposal of these amendments will be presented to the NASM membership in October for further review and comment.

VOTE SCHEDULED. A final text of these proposed revisions will be presented to the NASM Commission on Accreditation, Commission on Community College Accreditation, and membership for a vote in November.

Rationales for these changes are provided at the end of the document on page 11.

COMMENT PERIOD I
September 8–October 8, 2023

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Rules of Practice and Procedure, Part II

— Action by the NASM Commission on Accreditation and
Commission on Community College Accreditation —

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Rules of Practice and Procedure, Part II

Article I., Institutional Membership

Section 6. Accreditation and Institutional Autonomy

Amend Article I., Section 6. as follows:

Section 6. Accreditation and Institutional Autonomy. The National Association of Schools of Music has established standards for accreditation that are applied only at the invitation of institutions. These standards are developed and approved by accredited member institutions acting autonomously. The standards provide benchmarks for reviewing the extent to which operational, curricular, and evaluative functions associated with particular degree programs and areas of study are being fulfilled.

As they evolve, NASM standards for accreditation are continuously designed to allow considerable variation within broad principles applicable to degree programs and areas of study. Failure to meet the exact provisions of a specific standard will not preclude accreditation if it can be shown that artistic, intellectual, educational, and developmental functions indicated by the standard are and can continue to be fulfilled by appropriate means.

NASM standards are applied with profound respect for the rights and responsibilities of institutions and programs to identify, designate, and control (a) their missions, goals, and objectives; (b) artistic, educational, and philosophical principles and methodologies used to pursue functions implicit in their various missions, goals, and objectives; (c) specific repertoires, texts, and other teaching materials utilized for study and presentation; (d) agendas and areas of study pursued through scholarship, research, criticism, and policy development; (e) specific personnel choices, staffing configurations, and other operational decisions; and (f) content and methodologies of tests, evaluations, and assessments.

Respect for institutional mission as required in the Rules of Practice and Procedure, Part II, Article I., Section 6., paragraph 3., and throughout the Association's published materials includes respect for religious mission. **NASM bases its decisions regarding accreditation on its published standards and shall not use as a negative factor the institution's religious mission-based policies, decisions, and practices in consideration of areas related to music such as curricula; faculty; facilities, equipment, and supplies; student support services; and recruiting and admissions practices, academic calendars, publications, grading, and advertising. NASM may require an institution to include in its curricular programs all core components as specified in applicable standards.**

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Rules of Practice and Procedure, Part II

Article X., Appeals of Adverse Decisions Concerning Accredited Institutional Membership

Section 10. Decision on an Appeal

Amend Article X., Section 10. as follows:

Section 10. Decision on an Appeal. After following requisite procedures, considering the appeal and responding to it only in terms of one or both of the grounds for appeal in the Rules of Practice and Procedure, Part II, Article X., Section 5., and making judgments based solely on NASM published standards and procedures and the documentation provided, the appeals committee's final decision shall be either to (a) deny the appeal and sustain the decision of the Commission, or (b) sustain the appeal and remand the decision to the Commission for reconsideration **explaining the basis for the decision to remand, including, but not limited to, any amendments to the original decision proposed by the appeals committee by identifying specific issues the Commission must address, including but not limited to the appeals committee's decision regarding amendments to or a reversal of the original decision.** In making its final decision, the Commission must act in a manner consistent with **published NASM standards and procedures, and with due consideration of all written findings and recommendations of the appeals committee accompanying its decision to remand the appeals panel's decisions or instructions.**

The final decision of the appeals committee shall be distributed to the music executive and the chief executive officer of the institution and to the Chair of the Commission whose decision is being appealed.

An institution's continuing disagreement with a final decision of the appeals committee to deny the appeal shall be settled by arbitration in accordance with the Rules of the American Arbitration Association. Arbitration considers only items (a) and (b) of the Grounds for Appeal outlined in the Rules of Practice and Procedure, Part II, Article X, Section 5.

Standards for Accreditation

— Action by the NASM Membership —

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Standards for Accreditation

II. Purposes and Operations

E. Faculty and Staff

6. Graduate Teaching Assistants

a. Standard

Amend II.E.6.a. as follows:

- a. **Standard.** The music unit must carefully select, train, supervise, and evaluate graduate teaching assistants whenever they are employed. **Guidelines pertaining to graduate teaching assistants should be informed by institutional policies and procedures. Responsibilities and expectations should be clearly articulated to graduate teaching assistants and included in institutional publications.**

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Standards for Accreditation

III. Music Program Components

H. Distance Learning

3. Standards Applications

Amend III.H.3. as follows:

3. Standards Applications

- a. Distance learning programs must meet all NASM operational and curricular standards for programs of their type and content. This means that the functions and competencies required by applicable standards are met even when distance learning mechanisms predominate in the total delivery system.
- b. **Institutions approved by NASM to offer music programs delivered either entirely or partially ~~Programs in which more than 40% of their requirements are fulfilled~~ through distance learning means will be designated as ~~such distance-learning programs~~ in NASM publications.**
- c. **Institutions approved by NASM to offer distance learning programs shall provide, in institutional publications as appropriate, a listing, or designation, or indication of all music programs offered either entirely or partially through distance learning means. Institutions shall designate in publications whether required courses are offered through distance learning and/or on ground means.**

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Standards for Accreditation

III. Music Program Components

Add III.Q. as follows:

Q. Proficiency Examinations

A proficiency exam may be administered at the prerogative of a specific institution to ascertain whether a student has successfully mastered specific subject matter content. Such examinations need not be administered should the student successfully complete specific course requirements as designated by that institution.

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Standards for Accreditation

VI. Two-Year Degree-Granting Programs

B. Standards for the Music Major Transfer Program

6. General Studies

Amend VI.B.6. as follows:

6. **General Studies.** The liberal arts component of a student’s program shall be selected according to the requirements of each state for the specific colleges to which students will transfer, taking into consideration the NASM guidelines and recommendations for general studies listed under the standards for the various baccalaureate degrees in music.

Studies in foreign languages **appropriate to the course of study** are essential for students majoring in voice performance or in music history and literature (see Standards for Accreditation IX.A.3.b. and D.3.c.).

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Standards for Accreditation

VII. The Liberal Arts Degree with a Major in Music

D. Essential Content and Competencies

1. General Education

b. Operational Guidelines

Amend VII.D.1.b. as follows:

- b. **Operational Guidelines.** These competencies are usually developed through studies in English composition and literature; foreign languages **appropriate to the course of study**; history, social studies, and philosophy; visual and performing arts; natural science and mathematics. Precollegiate study, regular testing and counseling, and flexibility in course requirements are elements in achieving these competencies.

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Standards for Accreditation

VIII. All Professional Baccalaureate Degrees in Music and All Undergraduate Degrees Leading to Teacher Certification

B. Common Body of Knowledge and Skills

1. Performance

Amend VIII.B.1.e. as follows:

- e. Keyboard **or an equivalent** competency **appropriate to the course of study**.

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Standards for Accreditation

VIII. All Professional Baccalaureate Degrees in Music and All Undergraduate Degrees Leading to Teacher Certification

B. Common Body of Knowledge and Skills

4. History and Repertory

Amend VIII.B.4. as follows:

4. **History and Culture Repertory.** As **appropriate to their major field of study**, **s**tudents must acquire basic **overview** knowledge of music history and **various music cultures repertoires** through the present time, including study and experience of musical language and achievements **that extend beyond those associated**

with in addition to that of the primary ~~culture encompassing the area of~~ specialization (see Standards for Accreditation III.L.; VIII.B.1.b.).

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Standards for Accreditation

IX. Specific Professional Baccalaureate Degrees in Music

A. Bachelor of Music in Performance

2. Specific Guidelines for General Studies

Amend IX.A.2. as follows:

2. **Specific Guidelines for General Studies.** Historical and analytical studies in the arts and studies in foreign languages **appropriate to the course of study** are recommended for all performers.

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Standards for Accreditation

IX. Specific Professional Baccalaureate Degrees in Music

D. Bachelor of Music in Music History and Literature

3. Essential Competencies, Experiences, and Opportunities

Amend IX.D.3.c. as follows:

- c. Ability to use effectively the tools of scholarship including keyboard skills, spoken and written language, research techniques, advanced musical analysis, and applicable technologies. Reading skill in foreign languages **appropriate to the course of study** is essential.

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Standards for Accreditation

XIV. Specific Master's Degrees

B. Practice-Oriented Degrees

3. The Master's Degree in Conducting

Amend XIV.B.3.c. as follows:

- c. Choral conducting majors must be proficient in vocal pedagogy and in ~~English, German, French, Italian, and Latin~~ the diction of various languages (e.g., English, German, French, Italian, Latin, and other world languages as appropriate). They must have general phonetic knowledge and skills that can be related to the various ~~other~~ languages. They should have language competencies sufficient to understand texts in the repertory.

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Standards for Accreditation

XIV. Specific Master's Degrees

B. Practice-Oriented Degrees

6. The Master's Degree in Performance

Amend XIV.B.6.c. as follows:

- c. Voice majors are expected to be proficient in ~~English, German, French, and Italian~~ the diction of various languages (e.g., English, German, French, Italian, Latin, and other world languages as appropriate) and ~~to~~ have general phonetic knowledge and skills that can be applied to the various ~~other~~ languages. They should have language competencies sufficient to understand texts in the repertory.

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Standards for Accreditation

XIV. Specific Master's Degrees

B. Practice-Oriented Degrees

7. The Master's Degree in Opera Performance

Amend XIV.B.7.d. as follows:

- d. Students must develop advanced competence in ~~English, Italian, French, and German~~ the diction of various languages (e.g., English, German, French, Italian, Latin, and other world languages as appropriate), and general phonetic knowledge and skills that can be applied to the various ~~other~~ languages. They should have language competencies sufficient to understand texts in the repertory.

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Standards for Accreditation

XIV. Specific Master's Degrees

C. Research-Oriented Degrees

1. Master's Degrees in Music History and Literature, Musicology, or Ethnomusicology

Amend XIV.C.1.c. as follows:

- c. Students must have a reading ability in at least one foreign language in addition to English and as appropriate to the course of study.

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Standards for Accreditation

XVI. Doctoral Degrees in Music

D. Types of Degrees

4. Specializations

e. The Doctorate in Musicology or Ethnomusicology

Amend XVI.D.4.e. as follows:

- e. **The Doctorate in Musicology or Ethnomusicology.** The doctoral degree program in musicology or ethnomusicology emphasizes the scholarly study of music as informed by the specific major (musicology or ethnomusicology) and its relationship with other fields. Additional studies are recommended in areas relevant to the major such as aesthetics, anthropology, critical theory, humanities, and social sciences. Competencies include an understanding of the theories and methodologies of musicology or ethnomusicology; bibliography, research, and analytic techniques; reading ability in appropriate foreign languages in addition to English and as appropriate to the course of study; and writing skills.

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Standards for Accreditation

XXI. Specific Operational Standards for Free-Standing Music Institutions of Higher Education

Section 1. Standards for Accreditation

K. Teach-Out Plans and Agreements

2. Conditions of Applicability

Amend XXI., Section 1.K.2.b. as follows:

- b. NASM requires an accredited institution to which Standards for Accreditation XXI. apply to submit a teach-out plan and, if practicable, teach-out agreements requesting Commission review and action upon the occurrence of any of the following events:

1. The U.S. Secretary of Education notifies NASM that:
 - i. it has placed the institution on the reimbursement payment method under 34 CFR 668.162(c) or the heightened cash monitoring payment method requiring the Secretary’s review of the institution’s supporting documentation under 34 CFR 668.162(d)(2);
 - ii. the Secretary has initiated an emergency action against an institution, in accordance with section 487(c)(1)(G) of the Higher Education Act (HEA), or an action to limit, suspend, or terminate an institution participating in any Title IV, Higher Education Act (HEA) program, in accordance with section 487(c)(1)(F) of the Higher Education Act (HEA).
2. NASM acts to withdraw, revoke, or suspend the accreditation of the institution.

NOTE: Under such conditions, NASM may maintain the institution’s accreditation until the institution has had reasonable time to complete the activities in its teach-out plan or to fulfill the obligations of any teach-out agreement to assist students in transferring or completing their programs.

3. The institution notifies NASM that it intends to cease operations entirely or close a location that provides one hundred percent of at least one program.
4. A state licensing or authorizing agency notifies NASM that an institution’s license or legal authorization to provide an educational program has been or will be revoked.
5. The institution stops offering an educational program before all students enrolled in that program complete the program or transfer to another program.

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Standards for Accreditation

XXI. Specific Operational Standards for Free-Standing Music Institutions of Higher Education

Section 2. Procedural Requirements

E. Starting a Branch Campus or Similar Entity

Amend XXI., Section 2.E.2. as follows:

2. Within six months of the opening of a branch campus or similar entity, the branch/similar entity must schedule a **site** visit and host a team of NASM visiting evaluators, **and the team must conduct and complete the visit.**

Appendix I.A.

— Action by the NASM Membership —

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Appendix I.A., Standards and Guidelines Pertaining to Branch Campuses and Other Entities

Section 2. Guidelines

Amend Section 2.B. as follows:

- B. A branch campus, **or similarly functioning entity**, is **typically considered** an additional location of an institution that is geographically apart and independent of the main campus of the institution and **typically:**
 1. is permanent in nature;
 2. offers courses in educational programs leading to a degree, certificate, or other recognized educational credential;

3. has its own faculty and administrative or supervisory organization; and
4. has its own budgetary and hiring authority.

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**Appendix I.A., Standards and Guidelines Pertaining to Branch Campuses and Other Entities
Section 2. Guidelines**

Amend Section 2.C. as follows:

- C. An additional location, **or similarly functioning entity**, is ~~typically considered~~ a facility geographically apart from the main campus of the institution at which the institution offers at least 50 percent of a program and may qualify as a branch campus.

Appendix I.B.

— Action by the NASM Membership —

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**Appendix I.B., Standards and Guidelines for Opera and Musical Theatre Programs
Section 1. The Common Body of Knowledge and Skills for Career Entry
A. Performance Skills**

Amend Section 1.A.5.a. as follows:

- a. For Opera: **As appropriate to the course of study, including, but not limited to**, diction/pronunciation skills in English, Italian, German, and French; reading/speaking proficiency in Italian; and working knowledge of French and German.

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**Appendix I.B., Standards and Guidelines for Opera and Musical Theatre Programs
Section 4. Standards for the Professional Baccalaureate Degree in Voice with an Emphasis in Pre-Professional Studies in Opera
C. Essential Competencies, Experiences, and Opportunities**

Amend Section 4.C.5. as follows:

5. The study and use of foreign languages and diction **appropriate to the course of study** are essential.

Appendix I.D.

— Action by the NASM Membership —

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**Appendix I.D., Standards and Guidelines for the Education and Training of Conductors: Choral, Orchestral, Wind
Section 1. The Common Body of Knowledge and Skills for Career Entry
C. Background Knowledge**

Amend Section 1.C.2. as follows:

2. For choral and orchestral conductors, language and diction skills, **and general phonetic knowledge** sufficient to coach singers in **various languages including as appropriate, but not limited to**, French, German, Italian, English, and Latin, ~~as well as general phonetic knowledge that can be related to~~ and other **world** languages,

are essential. For orchestral conductors, skills sufficient to conduct rehearsals in ~~various world modern-European~~ languages are desirable.

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**Appendix I.D., Standards and Guidelines for the Education and Training of Conductors: Choral, Orchestral, Wind
Section 3. Baccalaureate Preparation**

C. Degrees with a Designated Conducting Emphasis

Amend Section 3.C.1. as follows:

1. The curricular structure for such programs is the same as that required for the degree, Bachelor of Music in Performance, or Composition, or Theory; the general studies component must include the study and use of foreign languages **appropriate to the course of study**.

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**Appendix I.D., Standards and Guidelines for the Education and Training of Conductors: Choral, Orchestral, Wind
Section 4. Initial Graduate Degrees in Conducting**

E. Practice-Oriented Degrees

1. The Master's Degree in Conducting

Amend Section 4.E.1.c. as follows:

- c. Choral conducting majors must be proficient in vocal pedagogy and in ~~English, German, French, Italian, and Latin~~ the diction of various languages (e.g., English, German, French, Italian, Latin, and other world languages as appropriate). They must have general phonetic knowledge and skills that can be related to the various ~~other~~ languages. They should have language competencies sufficient to understand texts in the repertory.

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**Appendix I.D., Standards and Guidelines for the Education and Training of Conductors: Choral, Orchestral, Wind
Section 5. Advanced Graduate Degrees in Conducting**

C. Curricular Requirements

3. Guidelines for Curricular Studies

Amend Section 5.C.3. as follows:

3. **Guidelines for Curricular Studies.** Advanced studies in analysis and musicianship are required, and advanced studies in music history and literature are strongly recommended.

Continued study in ~~various world modern-European~~ languages is encouraged.

Coursework and experience that develop understanding and competence in business and professional techniques are strongly recommended.

Appendix III.D.

— Action by the NASM Membership —

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Appendix III.D., Policies Concerning Regard for Decisions of States and Other Accrediting Organizations in the NASM Accreditation Process

Section 1. Institutions Offering Music Curricular Programs Only

Amend Section 1. as follows:

Section 1. Institutions Offering Music Curricular Programs Only

- A. NASM accredits only those free-standing postsecondary institutions offering degree- or non-degree-granting curricular programs in music that are legally authorized under applicable state law to provide a program of education beyond the secondary level.
- B. NASM does not renew the accreditation of a free-standing postsecondary institution during a period in which the institution:
 - 1. Is the subject of an interim action by a recognized institutional accrediting agency potentially leading to the suspension, revocation, or termination of accreditation or preaccreditation.
 - 2. Is the subject of an interim action by a state agency potentially leading to the suspension, revocation, or termination of the institution’s legal authority to provide postsecondary education.
 - 3. Has been notified of a threatened loss of accreditation, and the due process procedures required by the action have not been completed.
 - 4. Has been notified of a threatened suspension, revocation, or termination by the state of the institution’s legal authority to provide postsecondary education, and the due process procedures required by the action have not been completed.
- C. In considering whether to grant initial accreditation to a free-standing postsecondary institution, NASM takes into account actions by:
 - 1. Recognized institutional accrediting agencies that have denied accreditation or preaccreditation to the institution, placed the institution on public probationary status, or revoked the accreditation or preaccreditation of the institution.
 - 2. A state agency that has suspended or revoked the institution’s legal authority to provide postsecondary education.
- D. If the Commission grants accreditation to a free-standing postsecondary institution notwithstanding the actions described in Section 1.B. or C., NASM provides the U.S. Secretary of Education, not later than thirty days after the date of Commission action, a thorough explanation, consistent with its accreditation standards, why the previous action by a recognized institutional accrediting agency or the state does not preclude a grant of accreditation status.
- E. NASM will promptly review its accreditation of a free-standing postsecondary institution to determine if it should also take adverse action against the institution if:
 - 1. A recognized institutional accrediting agency takes an adverse action with respect to a dually accredited institution.
 - 2. ~~A recognized institutional accrediting agency places the institution on public probationary status, or~~

2. ~~3.~~ A recognized programmatic accrediting agency takes an adverse action, for reasons associated with the overall institution rather than the specific program ~~or~~, against a program offered by an institution ~~or~~ places the program on public probation.
- F. NASM will promptly review its accreditation of a free-standing postsecondary institution to determine if it should place the institution on probation or show cause if:
1. A recognized institutional accrediting agency places the institution on public probationary or an equivalent status.
 2. A recognized programmatic agency places the program on public probation or an equivalent status.

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Appendix III.D., Policies Concerning Regard for Decisions of States and Other Accrediting Organizations in the NASM Accreditation Process

Section 2. Multipurpose Institutions Offering Music Curricular Programs

Amend Section 2.D. as follows:

- D. NASM will promptly review its accreditation of a multipurpose institution offering one or more music curricular programs to determine if it should also take ~~adverse~~ action against the program if a recognized institutional accrediting agency:
1. Takes an adverse action with respect to the institution offering the program, ~~or~~, or
 2. Places the institution on public probationary status.

NOTE: Rationale for Changes

1. *Rules of Practice and Procedure, Part II, Article I., Section 6. and Article X., Section 10.; Standards for Accreditation, III.H.3.; XXI., Section 1.K.2.b. and XXI., Section 2.E.2.; Appendix I.A., Section 2.B. and Section 2.C.; and Appendix III.D., Section 1. and Section 2.D.:* To align with federal regulations and guidelines.
2. *Standards for Accreditation, II.E.6.a.:* To clarify information expected to be provided to graduate teaching assistants.
3. *Standards for Accreditation, III.Q.:* To clarify the role of and necessity to administer proficiency exams.
4. *Standards for Accreditation, VI.B.6., VII.D.1.b., VIII.B.1.e., VIII.B.4., IX.A.2., IX.D.3.c., XIV.B.3.c., XIV.B.6.c., XIV.B.7.d., XIV.C.1.c., and XVI.D.4.e.; Appendix I.B., Section 1.A.5.a. and Section 4.C.5.; and Appendix I.D., Section 1.C.2., Section 3.C.1., Section 4.E.1.c., and Section 5.C.3.:* To offer further clarity as it pertains to the breadth of the requirement.