

National Association of Schools of Music

An Advisory for Music Faculty and Administrators: NASM Standards – Title/Content Consistency for Professional Undergraduate Degree Programs that Prepare Pre-K-12 Music Teachers

Comprehensive Meanings

The phrases *Music Teaching*, *Music Education*, *Music Pedagogy* can be defined and used to encompass music instruction of any or all types. The same is true of their reciprocals, *Teaching Music*, *Education in Music*, *Pedagogy of Music*. When referring to music instruction and learning comprehensively, such terms can be interchangeable.

Specific Meanings

Such comprehensiveness may communicate accurately in general references and contexts. However, additional definitions also apply. The music profession, educational institutions, employers, and associated educational bureaucracies have and normally use additional, more specific definitions for various purposes.

Music Teaching, the most generic umbrella term, also connotes individually led instruction at all levels and leadership in music study. Such instruction and leadership occurs in many settings.

Music Education refers to music teaching and learning in or associated with public elementary and secondary schools, postsecondary preparation for teachers in such schools, and associated teacher certification, research, and support efforts (see *NASM Handbook*, Standards for Accreditation IX.O.).

Music Pedagogy refers to individual or small group instruction in private or institutional settings. It connotes preparation for and the practice of private instruction on specific instruments. At the postsecondary level, music pedagogy is an academic discipline with its own mechanisms for research and support (see *NASM Handbook*, Standards for Accreditation IX.E.).

Specific Applications

Undergraduate preparation for music teaching occurs in a rich variety of circumstances. This advisory focuses on a critical integrity element: title/content consistency. The *content* – knowledge, skills, experiences, competencies – that an institution requires, and that students are expected to acquire to graduate with a degree, must be *consistent* with the meaning of the degree title on its face, in academe, and in the profession (see *NASM Handbook*, Standards for Accreditation II.I.1.g.). Without such consistency, degree titles become meaningless, thus losing national portability, and fail to align with and support the system of academic currency that allows degrees to be broadly understood and widely accepted both within the field of music itself and beyond, by state and federal agencies, employers, and the general public (see *NASM Handbook*, Standards for Accreditation II.I.2.c.).

NASM standards provide frameworks for creating and maintaining title/content consistency for both traditional and innovative curricular programs. These include music education programs that prepare students for public school teacher certification and those that do not, or those that concentrate on music teaching in other settings, such as, for example, music teaching in private and community arts settings.

With regard to the professional degree in music which prepares music educators to seek state certification, NASM standards 1) speak to the rigor of such programs including expectations as they pertain to content in music, music education specializations, and music teaching competencies to be achieved by students, 2) guide, and in general, align with the expectations of national, state, and local educational agencies and institutions, and 3) adhere to long-standing traditions and approaches in music teaching established through national consensus by the field to protect the integrity of music education degrees.

Standards for Specific Professional Undergraduate Degrees with Majors in Music Education and Pedagogy– NASM Handbook

Standards pertaining to *Music Education* address content – knowledge, skills, experiences, competencies (see *NASM Handbook*, Standards for Accreditation VIII. and IX.O.) – consistent with the titles: Bachelor of Music in Music Education, Bachelor of Music Education, Bachelor of Arts in Music Education, and Bachelor of Science in Music Education, all of which are oriented toward qualifying for certification as a public school music teacher upon graduation.

Programs that require only partial completion of this content for graduation are not eligible to use these titles, specifically, they are not able to designate “music education” as either a major or an area of emphasis, track, or concentration. Other title/content consistency options are available for such programs (see *NASM Handbook*, Standards for Accreditation, in particular, the Note at the end of IX.O. regarding Music Education Content and Competencies in Other Degrees) such as Bachelor of Arts (Pre-Certification, or Pre-Licensure, or Pre-Teaching, or Pre-Teacher Certification, or Music Teacher Preparation), Bachelor of Science (Pre-Certification, or Pre-Licensure, or Pre-Teaching, or Pre-Teacher Certification, or Music Teacher Preparation), Bachelor of Music (Pre-Certification, or Pre-Licensure, or Pre-Teaching, or Pre-Teacher Certification, or Music Teacher Preparation), where the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees in all other respects align with professional degree standards. With regard to degrees that do not align with all music education requirements articulated in IX.O., should music teacher certification be desired, the degree may be aligned with a post-baccalaureate program of study that includes remaining requirements.

The texts cited above address variations in content completion sequences, linkages with degrees and programs intended to enable completion of certification requirements – such as the Master of Arts in Teaching and the Single Subject Credential – and use of certain music education content in music degrees not intended to prepare for state teacher certification. Title/content consistency is addressed for each such case.

Standards pertaining to *Pedagogy* address content – knowledge, skills, experiences, competencies – consistent with the title: Bachelor of Music in Pedagogy (see *NASM Handbook*, Standards VIII. and IX.E.).

The standards address basic requirements as well as various orientations and emphases for undergraduate pedagogy programs. Such programs are intended to prepare students for roles as professional music teachers, but not for state certification as a public school music teacher (see *NASM Handbook*, Standards for Accreditation, the Note at the end of IX.E. regarding Professional Pedagogy degrees and Community Education Schools and Programs.)

Misrepresentation of Degree Title and/or Content

Institutions are cautioned to note that an inconsistency between title and content which results in the misrepresentation of a degree program may jeopardize an institution’s eligibility to participate in federal loan and grant programs in numerous categories. NASM strongly recommends that institutions participating in federal financial aid programs 1) review the NASM document titled *An Advisory by the Arts Accrediting Associations on Misrepresentation* found in the Publications section of the NASM website, and 2) remain cognizant of the complete text of the regulations referenced therein, found within the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Title 34, Part 668, Subpart F. Institutions are asked to exercise appropriate care and attention when referring to curricular programs, particularly to the ways these degrees and programs are presented and promoted in institutional publications and policies, and to the ways institutions prepare faculty and others to represent such programs.

Creativity and Innovation

The entire set of NASM standards for undergraduate degrees provides myriad opportunities for creativity and innovation in the development of curricular programs. Specific standards for Bachelor of Music degrees address the most typical programs by name of the major field (i.e. Performance, Composition, Theory, Music Education, Pedagogy, etc.). However, creative or innovative programs may not fit within the purposes or standards for one of the listed major programs or other traditional designations. This should not be interpreted as an intended barrier to innovation, rather, an invitation to create new and innovative programs that will serve students and advance the work of the field. Institutions are encouraged to continue long-standing traditions in this regard, and to recall that

creativity and innovation often appear as unique approaches with unique names within large scale frameworks such as those for liberal arts or professional baccalaureate degrees.

Institutions wishing to explore and work with new curricular ideas, purposes, and structures must still attend to title/content consistency requirements and other NASM standards that apply to all programs, whatever their purposes and content (see NASM *Handbook*, Standards for Accreditation II. Purposes and Operations; and especially, III.M. Flexibility and Innovation; III.N. Quality Policies; IV. Undergraduate Programs in Music; and VIII. All Professional Baccalaureate Degrees in Music and All Undergraduate Degrees Leading to Teacher Certification).

The NASM staff is an important resource when considering creative or innovative curricular programs and remains poised to offer assistance as may be requested.