Ph.D. and DMA Programs in Music
Professional Development
Current Status and Recommendations

1. Professional Development Learning Goals

By the time they graduate, students should

- Have preparation for and experience in classroom teaching. Students should know how to prepare a syllabus and other class materials including exams. Students should know classroom management and how topics in their area can be most effectively taught.
- Be able to apply for and make a conference presentation (Ph.D. and DMA as appropriate). Students should know how to write an effective proposal or abstract and how to present a scholarly paper.
- Be prepared to submit articles for publication (Ph.D. and DMA as appropriate). Students should know the publication process, including how to write an article, how to submit it to an appropriate journal, and how to see it successfully into publication.
- Know how to apply for grants (Ph.D. and DMA). Students should know about funding sources and how to write proposals.
- Be prepared to enter the academic job market (Ph.D. and DMA). They should know how to write a cover letter and CV, how to solicit letters of recommendation, how to compile supplementary application materials (such as teaching philosophy), how to do well in an interview, and how to give an effective job talk and demonstration class.

In addition

Students in Composition should know

- How to submit work for professional performance
- How to promote their work through performance, recording and web resources
- How to work with performers to get the best representation of their work

Students in Performance should know

- How to program and perform chamber music and solo recitals at a professional level
- How to promote their work through recording and web resources
- How to work with composers on new material
- How to elicit collaboration with musical scholars on writing and performance projects
2. To conduct this assessment, we reviewed our current practices and surveyed students via e-mail and received the results of a students-only meeting on their satisfaction and for their suggestions. Our faculty recognizes its responsibility to mentor students into professional careers. Much of the guidance we offer is done individually and informally, and that will always necessarily be the case. However, we also have developed two formal programs oriented toward professional development:

1. **Teaching Proseminar.** Every spring semester, we offer a team-taught seminar on college-level teaching. The core of the course is a cluster of from two to four class meetings devoted to special pedagogical issues associated with each of our five areas—musicology, ethnomusicology, composition, theory, and performance—and students are given some degree of choice as to which class meetings they attend. As part of this class, students give brief demonstrations lessons. In addition, they are assigned to one of the four-year CUNY campuses to teach a class meeting under observation. The class is required for fellowship recipients, but open to all students.

2. **Professional Development Workshops.** Every fall semester, we offer a series of workshops in core topics in an academic career. The number and topics of the workshops have varied over the years. Here is the roster for Fall 2012:
   - **Jobs II.** (For all doctoral students). Making the short list. Phone interview. On-campus interview. Job talk. Sample class. Negotiating an offer.
   - **Research Fellowships and Dissertation Proposals.** (Especially for ethnomusicology students, but all are invited). Identifying and applying for fellowships for field research. Format for fellowship applications and dissertation proposals.
   - **Conference presentations I.** (Especially for musicology and theory students, but all are invited). Choosing a topic. Writing a proposal or abstract. Presenting a paper.
   - **Conference presentations II.** (Especially for ethnomusicology students, but all are invited). Choosing a topic. Identifying an appropriate conference. Writing a proposal or abstract. Presenting a paper. (Sugarman).
   - **Journal articles.** (For all doctoral students). Choosing a topic. Writing an article. The publication process.
   - **Dissertations.** (For all doctoral students). Choosing a topic. Choosing an advisor. Choosing a committee. Writing a proposal. Organizing the project and your time. Finishing the darn thing. The defense.

In addition, we routinely schedule **previews of conference papers.** Virtually all conference papers presented by our students are given a run-through first here. On an *ad hoc* basis, we also give **mock interviews** to students on the job market.
3. In general, students express a high level of satisfaction with our professional development offerings. However, both students and faculty have made a number of valuable suggestions for expanding our offerings, mostly by including additional workshops in our fall-semester series. For the most part, these proposed additional workshops would be tailored toward the needs of individual areas—the composers and the performers appear to be the least well served by our current menu of offerings. I should note that for Fall 2013, we are already planning to restructure our workshops so that the first hour will be a plenary session, open to all, and the second hour will involving breaking into small groups for tailored presentation and discussion by area. This will be especially valuable for the workshops on jobs and dissertations, where composers and performers in particular face special challenges.

Here are some of the workshops suggested by our students and faculty:

1. For performers, a workshop on the **business and legal aspects of a performing career**.
2. For composers, a workshop on the **business and legal aspects of a composing career**. Issues might include publication, copyright, royalties, recordings, grants, competitions, and commissions.
3. **A CV and cover letter bootcamp**. A panel of faculty could vet the cv’s and cover letters of current students. Our current Jobs Workshops cover the cv in a general way, but this proposed bootcamp would give tailored, individual guidance and feedback. This is an activity we have generally done privately, but we might consider formalizing the process.
4. A session with **recent alumni** who can talk about their experiences in both academic and non-academic careers post-Ph.D.
5. A session for first-year students to provide an **overview of graduate study**, especially with regard to work outside the classroom. This would be a forum for faculty to articulate expectations about conference attendance, conference presentations, publications, general activity within the field, and professional networking.
6. A workshop on **music notation and other software** for the preparation of music-analytical and pedagogical examples (classroom materials).
7. As part of or in addition to our jobs workshops, we could stage a **public mock interview** of a candidate. To put it another way, we could make one or more of our current, informal mock interviews open to the public.
8. A workshop on **book publication**, including especially the preparation of a proposal for a publisher. A few years ago, Suzanne Ryan (Oxford University Press) gave a workshop like this, and generously scheduled individual meetings with participants afterward.
9. A workshop on **field recordings** (mostly for ethno students).
10. A workshop on the preparation of **grant proposals**, targeted especially toward the Graduate Center’s Dissertation Fellowships.

We might consider formalizing our Professional Development Workshops into a 0-credit or credit-bearing class, with meeting times established well before the beginning of the
semester. In principle, the organizer of that course would receive teaching-load credit, as the organizer of the Teaching Proseminar does.

Beyond these suggestions for additional workshops, we should continue to tweak the organization of our Teaching Proseminar, again in the direction of responding to the specific needs and concerns of the different areas. I think it has been effective to create small modules of three or four classes oriented toward the principal undergraduate teaching areas: history, performance, world music, and theory. Students should have some latitude to choose the class meetings that accord most closely with their interests and likely teaching assignments. In addition, we might consider the following modifications:

1. More assigned readings in the pedagogical literature.
2. More opportunity (requirement) to observe “master teachers” at work in the classroom.

In addition, we should consider keeping better track of our students’ and graduates’ Professional Development Accomplishments such as a database of papers and performances given, positions offered and accepted, grants, awards and commissions received, etc. We could also consider integrating this information into the CUNY Commons site.

4. The next steps will be to discuss these suggestions further and implement them. Discussions will be held on how much of this to incorporate into an new course on Professional Development.

5. Follow-up on last year’s assessment of the First Examination. Based on the recommendations of the Assessment, the different areas of the program developed a new format for the First Examination, or in the case of DMA in Performance, created a First Examination to respond to the concerns and recommendations last year’s report. These proposals were accepted at the last meeting of the Graduate Council and will be implemented beginning in Fall 13.