

Reed Ulery
Dr. Richerme
EDUC-M344
12 November 2019

Assessment Project

Part I: High School Band Class Assessment Plan

- 40% - In-Class Participation (5 points available/day)
 - Completion of the following expectations will result in full marks each day:
 - Brings required materials: instrument, instrument materials, pencil, music, any additional assignments
 - Arrives on time to class (in the band hall prior to tardy bell, in seat with instrument and other materials ready for rehearsal five minutes after tardy bell)
 - Well-behaved, nondisruptive, and engaged in course material
 - with point deductions for behavioral or preparedness infractions
- 30% - Playing Tests
 - 50% individual recordings (5/semester)
 - Playing tests will be assigned with two weeks to prepare, and will be individually recorded electronically during class time in the director's office on the due date
 - While they may not be assigned every two-week period, students should expect to prepare between 8 and 24 measures of concert music each two-week period
 - Playing tests that fall outside of a concert cycle will include scale variation technical assignments
 - 25% chair placement & peer reviews
 - Chair placement will occur at the beginning of each semester
 - Selections from the class literature will be performed individually, but blind, for the class
 - Listening students will fill out peer review rubrics formatted similarly to solo and ensemble guidelines for half of the performing students
 - Students will not be graded based on their comparison to the section, but the results will be used to determine chair order
 - Students will receive their grade based on completing the performance and their assigned peer review rubrics
 - 25% at home/before school recordings (5/semester)
 - Various excerpts from class literature that need specific attention will be assigned to specific sections as needed to total 5/semester
 - Students will have a two-week period to submit a recording for review done either at home or before school with a provided recording device

- Students may submit these assignments early to receive feedback from the director and resubmit once within the two-week assignment window
 - First recording must be submitted during the first week to receive director feedback
- 30% - Portfolio Project
 - 30% program notes and concert reviews
 - For each concert cycle, students must choose one piece to write concert notes for an audience of non-musicians and another piece to write a review of the provided recording
 - Program notes should be one-two paragraphs in length and include information about the composer, musical qualities considerations, and at least one aural cue for the audience to listen for
 - Concert reviews should be three-four paragraphs and should address technical performance, musicality, how the performance compared to the group's rehearsals, and overall impression
 - All writing should be professional and engaging in tone and largely free of spelling and grammatical errors
 - 30% - Listening Log
 - Students will be provided with a list of pieces to listen to over the course of the year; students may choose the order in which they approach the list
 - Weekly guided reflections on listening list pieces including researching historical/contextual information, short answer questions on more objective measures, and open-ended responses for subjective ideas/developments
 - 20% music theory assignments
 - Over the course of the year, students will complete six music theory assignments in the form of worksheets
 - Worksheets will accompany in-class music theory activities, and may be tiered to accommodate for variation in prior knowledge
 - The lowest music theory assignment grade will be dropped from the semester grade as long as that lowest grade is above a 0
 - 20% composition/arranging assignment
 - The theory worksheets will culminate in a final project in the form of a composition or arrangement
 - Students will have the option to either arrange 16-32 measures of an existing piece or compose an original 8-16 measures
 - Arrangements and compositions will be for a small chamber group (duet, trio, or quartet) and must include their instrument (other instruments optional)
 - This assignment will include a first draft, peer review within section, and a final draft
- Note: Course grade will be lowered by 10% in the event of absence from a concert

Part II: Philosophical Description

This assessment plan was designed to capture my personal philosophies on music education and the goals of the high school concert band experience. Two of the most fundamental aspects to the development of students in a concert band setting are instrument performance and musicianship development. Both of these processes have aspects that are inherently individual and also enhanced collectively. With this in mind, attendance and meaningful participation in class on a daily basis makes up the largest portion of a student's composite grade. Since there is considerable variation on instrumental performance development on the individual level, playing the same materials together on a regular, frequent basis helps to lift up not only those students who need support but also those students who technically excel. On the other hand, musicianship development is a much more amorphous and subjective experience. While these experiences are harder to objectively define, anecdotal evidence supports them as a result of regular and consistent participation in ensemble music over an extended period of time. While Feldman and Contzius include criticism of the use of attendance and experiential-based grading, specifically a reference to a former MENC president pointing out that these aspects are not directly indicative of musical skill development or competence, they also point out that attendance and "good behavior are necessary to achieve our actual objectives." While this can be true of other academic classes that do not include a grade for attendance, learning experiences, particularly performative ones, in large ensemble music classrooms are inherently tied to the group activity. Specifically, one student's learning experiences can be negatively impacted if their classmates do not attend class, and vice versa. Given this ingrained nature, I have chosen a demerit system to address attendance and participation issues. Students will receive full marks unless there is an infraction. This system supports my philosophies because it is inherently positive and is built to assume that students are doing the right thing. However, as Feldman and Contzius point out, the weighting of reductions must also match the relative importance to the teacher because the importance will speak to itself in the experiences of students. While I have not specifically defined individual point values in this plan, this exclusion is intentional. I do not currently have a strong inclination of which infractions would occur most often or have the biggest impact on a student's overall experience, and furthermore, how to address extenuating circumstances in a way that maintains equity and consistency in grading across a heterogeneous class. This is an area that I will continue to work on to develop in my own philosophy.

The inclusion of a portfolio of student work is also of high importance to me and my philosophy. Since it tracks a student's experiences with the class over the course of the year, it has the potential to be a strong indicator of growth and development over time in a more concrete way that can be both reflected upon by the student and used as evidence for the teacher and administrators. Feldman and Contzius include an example list of assignments that would make up a portfolio, and many of these items are also included in my portfolio with an emphasis on including authentic representations of the topics included (for instance, the student arrangement/composition is an authentic representation of the music theory knowledge gained over the course of the year and concert reviews are situated examples of critical listening).

This assessment plan also includes all aspects of the national core arts standards. Creating, performing, and responding are weaved throughout the plan; however, performing and

responding are weighted more heavily. While Feldman and Contzius address several critiques of these standards, including that they house the dangers of reducing musical skills to declarative knowledge, the authenticity of assessment throughout this plan seeks to fight that tendency and remain true to the spirit of the national standards. Because of the connections to the national standards, this assessment plan would likely be supported by a goal-oriented administration.

One aspect that largely does not have written representation is an ongoing formative assessment mode of listening used by the teacher in rehearsals to determine pacing and individual lesson material. This is both a practical consideration and a situated way to track student development through the authentic vehicle of large ensemble repertoire performance. Feldman and Contzius stress the importance of formative assessment, particularly through addressing specific common issues and student responses to typical prompting, and it was from the recommendation of telling students what they'll be tested on that the specific situation of the individual playing tests was born. The other inclusion of formative assessment is a detail of the at home/before school recordings. Students have the option to receive individual feedback in a "first draft" recording before turning in the final (summative) version.

On the other hand, this assessment plan is not without faults. Firstly, the weighting and assessment variety clearly place heavy emphasis on individual instrument performance. While this aligns with my philosophies and goals for large ensemble instrumental students, individual instrument performance is tied to several aspects of student life outside the classroom. This means that this assessment plan has the potential to be more challenging and potentially less indicative of musicianship for students who may not have the opportunities to practice and learn their instruments outside of class time. However, with the inclusion of student-submitted recordings, there are both opportunities to get director feedback and the chance to record an excerpt several times to pick the best representative sample. Additionally, there is a certain reality that students must be proficient instrumentalists to fully and effectively participate in instrumental ensembles.

Another area that this assessment plan may not be best representative of student success in a high school band classroom is in the written assignment requirements of program notes and concert reviews. While these two genres are products that are quite authentic to the field, and supported by Feldman and Contzius, the expectation for students to write with a professional air and with correct grammar is not reinforced by traditional activities in a band class. While I would make sure to include class time to address some of these issues, I know that, as a band director, I cannot effectively replace an English or writing teacher. However, I believe these assignments are still justified because of the relevance to the field of study and as an authentic vessel for incorporating contextual and critical information about class repertoire. I would also provide a rather extensive list of guiding questions to aid in structural development (also recommended in Feldman and Contzius' text). Additionally, while the writing skills may not be completely developed in my classroom, I would structure my grading rubrics to be consistent with the expectations of the English department at the school.

Part III: Rubric in Context - to be used with instrument-specific excerpts “The Lost Lady Found,” Percy Aldridge Grainger, arr. Michael Sweeney

	Emerging (2 Points)	Approaches Criterion (3 Points)	Meets Criterion (4 Points)	Exceeds Criterion (5 Points)
Rhythm and Pulse Accuracy	Some rhythms are performed accurately (5 or more errors, or error lacking effective recovery), pulse is unsteady and inconsistent	Most rhythms are performed accurately (3-5 errors permitted given pulse maintenance and effective recovery), pulse is mostly steady with few inconsistencies	All rhythms are performed accurately (1-2 errors permitted given pulse maintenance and effective recovery), pulse is steady throughout	All rhythms are performed accurately, pulse is steady throughout
Note and Pitch Accuracy	Some notes are performed accurately (5 or more errors or error lacking effective recovery) and rarely in tune	Most notes are performed accurately (3-5 errors permitted given effective recovery) and mostly in tune	All notes are performed accurately and in tune (1-2 errors permitted given effective recovery)	All notes are performed accurately and in tune with obvious consideration of relative intonation
Articulation	Some articulations are clear, few types are distinguishable, techniques may not be characteristic of the instrument (5 or more errors)	Most articulations are clear, some types are distinguishable, include some techniques characteristic of the instrument (3-5 errors permitted)	All articulations are clear, types are distinguishable and characteristically produced (1-2 errors permitted)	All articulations are clear, types are overwhelmingly distinguishable and characteristically produced
Dynamics and Style	No dynamic contrast, volume static throughout, not stylistically appropriate for the piece	Audible difference between written dynamics, somewhat stylistically appropriate for the piece	Obvious and accurate use of written dynamics, largely stylistically appropriate for the piece	Expressive interpretation of written dynamics, stylistically appropriate for the piece

