

Critical Examination of the Curriculum SMTE ASPA  
September 12, 2009

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Four issues from Friday discussion

1. Peter Webster's idea of thinking broadly about curriculum tracks, for example composition. 21st century trends of curriculum.
2. Don Hodges' issue of states capping the
3. Online learning and related curriculum issues, perhaps collaborating among ASPAs with development, socialization, and other components of online learning—proposed for Anaheim.
4. Expand the critical examination of curriculum beyond secondary options to ensembles to also include elementary. Turn the elementary program that leads directly into high school ensembles to also consider movement, composition, improvisation, literacy, use of solfege. Especially the implications on music teacher education curriculum.

Added ideas.

1. Change mission to include more than the curriculum of education programs: "To examine the assumptions on which the music education and music teacher education curriculum is founded by analyzing..."
2. Collect music education courses syllabi and undergo a critical analysis for curriculum content.
3. Look at curriculum in light of who students are, who did go through an elementary program, with at least some ensembles, and now are at the university in music. Are they the same as the professors teaching it?
4. NASM curriculum review: too packed, lacks innovation, keeps curriculum development from occurring, not guiding students to be able to go out and be successful. History, theory, performance faculty have stake in this revision, while music education drives a lot of program's curriculum. Ideas from this ASPA could go to this NASM work committee. A position paper could be developed or a forum be organized by Anaheim. What bedrock competencies would we consider important (thinking from an NASM perspective)? What is possible? Do we want musicians to be proficient performers, conducting for all music teachers, etc. Example: ASTA string teacher's in the NASM appendix of what to know and be able to do. Possible online chat or discussion with ASPA members contributing ideas, on NING or iChat or other. Attributes and dispositions, NCATE language, are better ways to state this, who we want our students to be instead of what we want them to know and be able to do.
5. Review literature for thoughtful writings about skills and dispositions, as if starting on curriculum from scratch.
6. Review models and conclusions from other countries, curricula used in other industrialized countries. European Council just came out with a document that may come up in Webster/Campbell review.

Action Items

1. NASM curriculum review position papers and online conversations (#4): attributions, dispositions, skills, and knowledge. (Wiki set up by David Williams, Frank Abrahams submits a proposal to MENC executive board for one-hour session for Anaheim by October 15, and members are open to submitting position papers for SRIGs)
2. Lit review (#5) (Peter Webster and Mark Campbell volunteered)
3. International perspectives and programs (#6) (John Kratus, Betty Ann Younker, Frank Abrahams volunteered)

Other discussion

Gary McPherson's longitudinal research, 5% are playing instruments at all. We need to teach instruments as if teaching other things rather than teaching an instrument no longer used after graduation. Compare this to reading, a 5% rate of people who continue to read after high school. Programs have more remedial theory than other subjects, pointing out the K-12 schools are not preparing students adequately. Students then turn around and choose to teach a theoretical concept in their student lesson for school children. What's too much, what if we come up with the same things we already have?