

ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW  
THE SCHOOL OF MUSIC  
MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY OF NEWFOUNDLAND

Report of the Review Panel

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## 1) Introduction and the Review Process

Prior to arriving on site the members of the Academic Program Review panel were presented with a Self-Study Report prepared by the School of Music, as well as other documentation including Memorial's fact book and an overview of Memorial's strategic plan.

The Panel conducted a site visit April 27-30, 2008. The Panel met with members of senior administration of Memorial University on the evening of April 27, 2008. Present were the Associate Vice-President (Academic), Dr. Doreen Neville; the acting Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, Dr. Noreen Golfman; and Joan Bessey of the Centre for Institutional Planning and Analysis. The panel were presented with perspectives on the School of Music and outlines of the review process.

Over the period of April 28 to April 30, 2008 the panel met with a number of groups and individuals associated with the School of Music, following an itinerary that had been prepared prior to the site visit. Meetings included those with the following:

- the Director of the School of Music, Dr. Tom Gordon
- the Associate Director of the School of Music, Dr. Michelle Cheramy
- the Canada Research Chair in Ethnomusicology & Director of the MMAP Research Centre, Dr. Beverley Diamond
- faculty members in the School of Music, including those in ethnomusicology and music education, and sessional instructors
- undergraduate and graduate students
- staff of the School of Music, including the staff of the MMAP centre
- Director, Finance and Administration
- alumni of the School of Music
- donors to the School of Music, and a staff member of Alumni Affairs and Development
- community stakeholders, including representatives of the NL Government Department of Education, festival committees (e.g., Festival 500 and Tuckamore), CBC radio, the Gower Street band program, and the Newfoundland Symphony Orchestra
- Memorial University Chief Librarian, Lorraine Busby.

The Review Panel thanks all who participated in the Academic Review of the School of Music. We are impressed with the time, effort, and thoughtfulness of all who engaged in the process. We particularly are indebted to Joan Bessey for her expert coordination of the process and her very generous assistance to us during and after the site visit.

This report presents the panel's findings, and provides recommendations based on what it heard during the on-campus visit, its readings and studies, knowledge of music schools in Canada, and subsequent deliberations. The report is organized by the following sections: undergraduate programs, graduate programs, faculty research and scholarship, faculty and staff, community service, university citizenship, university support, and concludes with plans, goals, and research allocations. While we recognize overlap in these topics, and were sometimes challenged to categorize our discussions, we are confident that the report as a whole covers the main issues facing the School of Music as presented to the panel.

## **2) Undergraduate Programs**

As a result of very sound strategic planning and with substantial support from the University, the School of Music has gone through an impressive period of growth and expansion in recent years, particularly in graduate programs. The undergraduate program has benefited greatly from this growth. However, the situation creates challenges, some of which are addressed later in the report (physical plant, staff, etc.) and some of which impact the curriculum and programs of the School. These impacts will be considered first.

As a preface to a discussion of any music program it should be mentioned that the entire field of music — as an art form, a profession, and as a commodity — is in the midst of an unprecedented shift driven by two forces. One, the interests of both the public and musicians are expanding beyond the Eurocentric focus of the last century to reflect a multicultural world. Two, technology has already forever changed the means of delivery of music and the economic base that it has enjoyed during recent times, and its impact shows no sign of abating.

These recent shifts are reflected in the choices students make, and in music programs themselves. Certain instruments, such as bassoon, while never abundant, are no longer as appealing to young people either as personal instrument choices during high school or as career options. This is compounded in many parts of North America by the shift away from support for school music education and the high school bands that were so often the bulwark of that program. The few students who do take these instruments up seriously enough to pursue university training are being aggressively recruited by all schools. Many of these schools have very large scholarship budgets, and even they are having difficulty recruiting. The battle for new students has been vigorously engaged and this pressure will only get more intense during the next years.

These shifts also impact the ability to recruit faculty: Only a few very large schools have the budgets and the enrollment to hire dedicated specialists on specific but uncommon instruments. While every effort should be made to

recruit specialist faculty in a strategic way whenever possible, especially those with multiple skills that can serve several needs, this situation will force schools of music everywhere to re-evaluate their programs and question the model that is currently in place, one that was based on an American band/orchestra/opera model for instruction that is itself evolving. On the performance side, this historical model of curriculum creates the demand for a full complement of instruments, including those that are becoming harder to recruit and cannot be counted on in the future. All schools will have to adjust to this, with the smaller ones needing to adjust before the larger ones. As it stands now, Memorial's Bachelor of Music curriculum follows this solid, late 20<sup>th</sup> century North American university model. It is very heavy in highly specific courses, a number of which, because of staffing and space issues, are not regularly offered. Certain courses (pedagogy for specific instrumental groupings, for example) are so specific they are not offered due to small enrollment.

We suggest some areas for curriculum review. For one thing, content could be consolidated and become valid for offering to larger classes. Also, we support developments already taking place that the curriculum include study of non-European forms of musical expression and include genres such as ethno, pop, and folk, reflecting a multicultural student body with broad interests. While becoming more inclusive to reflect the multicultural and genre rich world, it is important to retain a solid core of traditional musicianship skills, expert training on instruments and voice, and academic offerings. This cannot be stressed strongly enough: we cannot undermine the need for students to learn basic skills whether they become performers, teachers or researchers. A curriculum review should also examine the fact that at present there is little room to offer upper level academic elective courses which are necessary to prepare students for graduate level work. The School should also explore offering popular music service courses for the broader university community, perhaps using graduate students in the Ethnomusicology program as a teaching resource.

**We recommend that a curriculum review be carried out to assess the program from the point of view of a school that has matured and is developing its own personality and presence both regionally and nationally.** Courses could be rationalized or replaced with more flexible descriptions and a greater focus on student needs, for delivery to larger numbers when possible, and to allow for tailoring to professors' research interests. An objective analysis of the capacity, limitations and creative potential of the School is necessary to find solutions that will work best. The collegiality so visible at Memorial's School of Music suggests that the School could rise above a rigid discipline-protective thinking that characterizes many institutions. The School of Music at Memorial could set the way, acting as a model for other schools in North America.

Recent hires are effectively balancing the string cohort, an area that was once a major concern for the program. However, as noted earlier, all schools are experiencing difficulty in recruiting certain instruments. Working towards a balanced cohort is desirable, in order to build the orchestra for example, but in the meantime there are strategies to offer exceptionally good teaching through imaginative programming of ensembles that include chamber orchestra, standard chamber music, and contemporary music. The techniques learned are the basis of all ensemble playing and the concerts presented can be of fascination equal to any. Major components for the performance stream are the many forms of chamber music, ranging from small brass and wind ensembles, string trios and quartets and ensembles with piano, to mixed ensembles (that can include voice, so often left out of the equation), to chamber orchestra and the entire range of contemporary music as it continues to evolve. The library will have its hands full acquiring new works. **We recommend that consideration be given to the development of the chamber music component of the curriculum as the centerpiece of the bachelor of music program.** Establishing the parameters for such offerings will require more collaboration between faculty members than is normally demanded in a standard curriculum. Once again, the results could be outstanding and lead the way for other institutions.

The composition stream of the program could and should become a stream of specialization in the Bachelor of Music program. Composition, especially if it is combined with skill in the field of music technology, has the potential to become an important component of the program in the future. It also has the possibility of bringing important new skill sets to the program. Along with composition and contemporary performance, the development and incorporation of technology into pedagogy and other aspects of the curriculum is important since much of the future is predicated on technology becoming a vehicle for creativity and expression for professional and amateur musicians as well as a teaching tool.

This area is underrepresented now. A focus on the creative use of technology, especially in any new composer hire could galvanize the School. As niche expertise develops, the recruitment net will cast farther. **We recommend that the opening created by the departing faculty member in theory/composition be filled with a composer who also possesses skills in 'technology and music.'** If a composer/technology specialist is engaged, a strategy will need to be developed to advance this important aspect of the School's future.

Another major component, especially given the culture of the province, is that of choral work. The choral community in Newfoundland & Labrador is vibrant and the choral aspect of the School is indeed healthy, with choirs winning

national recognition and the School generating a graduate offering that is a beacon to the future. This is to be both supported and used as a resource.

The conjoint bachelor of music/bachelor of music education program is a valuable offering in a province where the government actively encourages and is committed to the training of specialist teachers in music to support provincial cultural policy. This is very good news, and nearly unique in Canada. However, there is a sense that the program is not adequately advertised to students in a timely way for them to choose the conjoint degree option, and instead that students are being encouraged towards performance. **We recommend that structured information sessions be offered at an appropriate time each year to explain degree options to first and second year students.**

There was also a sense from the student body that career counselling is needed. The curriculum contains a course in Career Skills. It provides necessary information on careers in music and the teaching of skills related to the business of music and opens a discussion on many relevant topics. It was offered this last year but many students were not aware of it. This course is vitally important for students before they graduate, and therefore **we recommend that the Career Skills course should be offered every year if possible, and its availability be communicated to all students.**

The need for business and arts management skills was identified as important for some undergraduates as well as for continuing professional development of alumni. In that regard, **we recommend that a Diploma in Arts Management in collaboration with the Faculty of Business as an option for students, community growth and alumni development be studied.** This idea has merit within the larger context of the arts community in the Atlantic Provinces, and could be developed for delivery through distance.

Distance teaching technology is being used as a potential mode of instruction for instruments when teachers are not locally available. This technology is only part of an answer in training a highly skilled professional and not yet a suitable replacement for a live human being in the same room. At the same time, it is important to pursue this technology as a means of making contact with teachers, schools and high-school students in the province and at that level could become an important asset and a powerful recruitment tool. **We recommend that the use of the exceptional new facilities in PetroCanada Hall be studied for their potential in creating networks for contact and support for music teaching across the province.**

Based on a review of the data, retention levels at Memorial are comparable to other schools of music. It would have been useful to have had statistics on students transferring to other programs during their undergraduate Music

program; while these students were not “retained” in the School per se, they represent no failure by the School of Music and they remain ambassadors of the School.

Graduates of Memorial’s undergraduate Music programs are successful in gaining entry to major recognized graduate programs, here and elsewhere, and in both Music and other areas such as medicine and business. To obtain a clearer picture of the career tracks of students and graduates, **we recommend that transfer statistics be obtained and tracking of alumni be instituted.** A knowledge base of alumni, including their further studies and careers, has the potential to create a network of alumni for the school, improve already strong relationships with alumni, and informing the School on student needs and required program components. Capturing the Senior Secretary’s knowledge about individual alumni and students would contribute to this knowledge base.

Music at an undergraduate level, while drawing students from elsewhere, should be viewed foremost as a regional attractor for the Atlantic Provinces, where Memorial is viewed as the predominant school. The key focus for recruitment is the very personalized education students receive when they come to Memorial and the amount of attention they will get -- particularly the four full years of individual instruction they will receive, a rarity in the rest of Canada for all but performers. A review of recruitment materials identified a weakness in the School’s web site in that it did not reflect the creativity inherent in the Music school, nor did it include standard web tools such as those that support communication, multimedia, and dynamic content. **We recommend that tools for recruitment be enhanced, in particular through the development of a more dynamic web presence showing the school’s very fine performing spaces, showcasing alumni, and allowing for communication with potential students and others, such as alumni and community members.**

The vocal sector would benefit enormously from the presence of a collaborative pianist, a specialization that is sought after (and not always found) in most schools. Master classes – an important addition to any curriculum, a powerful recruitment tool for geographically isolated areas, and an opportunity to take advantage of visiting expertise for any instrumental group or voice – provide another way to offer value to programs at low cost. A formalized yearly budget to support them would enhance the program considerably. **We recommend that a Master class Series be formalized within the functions of the School.**

### **3) Graduate Programs**

Assessment of the effectiveness of current graduate teaching and supervision needs to be prefaced by emphasizing the relative newness of graduate programs in Music at Memorial. Graduate curricula are understandably in a state of development and flux. They nevertheless show appropriate rigour and

comprehensiveness for this stage of their evolution. The current graduate programs of the School of Music are consonant with its areas of research strength and are particularly innovative in the areas of ethnomusicology and certain performance streams.

The Master of Music (MMus) degree is available in Conducting (choral, instrumental, choral/instrumental), Performance (solo voice, instrument or chamber music), and Performance/Pedagogy (solo voice or instrument). The following performance media are claimed to be available: voice, piano, organ, flute, clarinet, saxophone, oboe, bassoon, trumpet, euphonium, trombone, tuba, percussion, guitar, violin, viola, cello, and double bass. The interdisciplinary degrees of Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy are available in the specialization of Ethnomusicology.

In the MMus programs there are issues of strategic targeting to address. As noted in the discussion of the undergraduate program, not every graduate-level instrument specialization is likely to be sustainable. Indeed, high quality teaching and supervision for certain instruments already varies with the personnel available, some of this conditioned by part-time appointments. There is, however, strong potential for the strategic development of strengths in chamber music, choral music, and contemporary music (broadly construed), as well as applied academic training perhaps (with less of a traditional Eurocentric focus) in the areas of composition musicology/theory, and ethnomusicology, with clear strengths in the last. The School needs to determine which areas have best potential for graduate development, where particular leadership niches (with superior regional or even international impact) can be established, and how these might be nurtured and sustained. For instance, there is some concern from the review panel that the broad claim of available instrumental majors is quite variable in quality and depth of instruction. As in the undergraduate program, the School needs to review staffing and program capacities if it is to be able to deliver this claimed range of choice in graduate programs. Moreover, the traditional streams of solo versus chamber performance or choral versus instrumental conducting are dissolving these days in recognition of the need to develop specialized yet diversified professional musicians and music teachers. **We recommend that the School build to strength, and declare specializations only where ability to deliver warrants.**

The Centre for Music, Media and Place (MMaP) ethnomusicology initiative is logically positioned in Newfoundland and Labrador and is strategically important for Memorial. We suggest that the Centre capitalize on its location, and focus on areas which can offer a strategic niche focus, including aboriginal and indigenous music, regional traditional music, European folk music links, and selected world music exposures, while maintaining a meta-analytical and synoptic perspective on the overall discipline. **We recommend that the graduate**

research and teaching programs associated with the Centre affirm (or reaffirm) their directions of geographical and generic specialization. We also recommend clarifying the disciplinary affiliation of the centre by routinely using the name “MusicMaP” in preference to the obscure “MMaP” and adjusting all branding materials accordingly.

We will give MMAP some special discussion at this point. Although MMAP and the programs it supports are at early stages in their evolution, as they grow the centre will need to find governance structures that allow it to become less of a one-scholar operation, rely less on (so far, highly-successful) project-based funding, put mechanisms in place that will encourage involvement by other areas within and beyond the School of Music, seek out more formal and informal means of student interaction in the life of the Centre, and find sustaining resources for its strong support team so that new opportunities may be pursued from a stable operating platform. While solid graduate student support is developing across sub-disciplines, its external project-based nature in SSHRC-based disciplines (particularly in the MMAP Centre) can prove unstable, and should be addressed. **We recommend that the Vice-President (Research), the Vice-President (Academic) and the School work together to address these issues as they relate to the centre and its graduate programs.**

In addition, the ethnomusicology cohort of graduate students is physically isolated from the rest of the School and the rest of the music graduate student community. While this is currently useful in terms of space allocation and resources, **we recommend that a long-term objective should be to integrate the MMAP research centre and its staff and students within an expanded School of Music facility.**

Overall, the admissions criteria, recruitment, and yield are appropriate for graduate programs at this point in their evolution. The ethnomusicology initiative now attracts high quality graduate students regionally and nationally. The MMus programs are more regional in their draw and may see students continue directly from undergraduate studies in the School’s area of strength (not unusual for many performance programs), with some national recruitment potential in areas such as choral conducting due to the School’s admirable efforts at providing student conductors with ample podium time both inside and outside the School. It is also encouraging that the relatively new program in Choral Conducting has produced a national award-winner in its first graduate. (In fact, Memorial has the unique potential within the Atlantic region to develop a DMA [Doctor of Musical Arts]-type program in this area.) Solid graduate student support is developing across sub-disciplines, but its external project-based nature in SSHRC-based disciplines (particularly in the MMAP Centre) can prove unstable, and is at any rate more difficult to sustain than in other disciplines. We

suggest that there will need to be efforts to find additional support, including philanthropic support, to sustain top students in these programs.

There has been increased involvement of graduate students as a teaching resource. This is commendable, as the professional skills of the graduate students will be enhanced while providing the School with a teaching resource. In order to achieve the highest level of outcomes for the students and the School, the School should adopt hiring practices that include advertising positions so that all qualified students may apply and be considered. Once hired, students will need guidance, resources and mentoring. For example, we note that the teaching experience is enhanced if TAs are mentored by experienced faculty members, and are provided with resources such as previous course outlines. Further, **we recommend that the School work with Graduate Studies to increase participation in the program of Teaching Opportunities for Graduate Students (TOGA) and the Graduate Program in Teaching (GPT).**

#### **4) Faculty Research and Scholarship**

From the curriculum vitae information provided and our knowledge of the established external reputations of the faculty in both scholarly and artistic communities, we find the research productivity of the School of Music to be strong. The focus on research and scholarly activity in the previous review has clearly been addressed with positive results, the CRC/CFI-driven MMAP ethnomusicology initiative being only the most prominent example of an overall trend. Concern expressed by some colleagues that recent emphasis on the development of music performance might erode the parallel and high-profile gains in music research since the last review should prove unfounded if overall strategic focus in those areas of performance and academic research where the School and the region have real leadership potential is maintained, enhanced, and, where possible, even integrated (i.e., choral conducting, chamber and contemporary music, music pedagogy, ethnomusicology).

The School is a Memorial model for interdisciplinary research in the SSHRC-funded disciplines through its CRC/CFI generated MMAP Research Centre initiative. Although efforts to move into the music technology area have so far stalled, the panel suggests that opportunities for NSERC-supported or regional arts-industry supported research exists. (Music composition and digital media production, including recording, may be the best music-centred areas to explore in the first instance, should an engineering link not readily materialize.) As well, opportunities for NSERC- and CIHR-funded interdisciplinary links with colleagues in the science/engineering and medical fields, particularly as they pertain to music, health, and society, may be timely and worth exploring. Links with other major university music research programs should continue to be developed regionally and nationally.

The faculty is well engaged in regional, national and international professional organizations. The faculty has links to and presence in the appropriate scholarly and professional societies for their various disciplines. External opportunities continue to grow thanks in part to their being complemented by strategic internal funding through the Office of the VP (Research) in such crucial areas as faculty touring and CD production. We trust that this internal support will be continued as long as it stimulates successful pursuit of external research funding and cultural-contract funding from the provincial government, the NLAC, and other sources. The latter sources should be available if the School continues to make a convincing case for the strong economic and cultural impact of its creative activities and research on the community, province, and region.

## **5) Faculty and Staff**

The panel examined the role of faculty and staff in supporting the mission of the School of Music. The panel was impressed with the commitment of the faculty and staff of the School's mission, their demonstrated passion for their work, and their participation in and contributions to the cultural community of the province.

The panel was heartened to observe that there had been a sense of renewal and recommitment amongst faculty members since the last APR. This was manifested in an increase of scholarly and creative activity. While the panel understands the impetus that supported the focus on research in the current self-study report and commends the growth of scholarly activity, we caution against a shift in focus that would negatively impact the quality of teaching and mentorship.

In fact, the panel was somewhat surprised that the self-study gave little attention to teaching. No doubt this is in part a rational response to the University's stress in recent years upon increasing research performance, in part an expression of confidence in instructional excellence. This confidence is borne out by the enthusiasm for their teachers of the several students who met with us. Confidence is also supported by Course Evaluation Questionnaires, which we requested and examined. The response rates were generally high and therefore representative of class populations. The aggregate averages generally exceed University norms, often by considerable amounts.

Without diminishing these achievements, two grounds exist for some reservations about overall teaching performances. CEQ data need to be interpreted carefully. The quality of instruction in the School is generally rated very good or excellent, but even so courses are occasionally judged as low as the 20<sup>th</sup> decile, or well below average. Further, in a small number of cases, most students would not recommend a "good" or "excellent" course to others. In such cases it is a reasonable presumption that corrective action should be explored.

Provision for such action might reasonably be incorporated in the review of the School's curriculum that is mentioned more than once in the self-study report. We make suggestions about the substance of this review elsewhere in our report, but it could also consider appropriate procedural devices as well. **We recommend that mechanisms be developed for assisting instructors whose teaching falls significantly below the School's high norms.** These mechanisms might well be paired with the definition of defined teaching outcomes, which are especially appropriate for performance courses.

The panel examined the teaching responsibilities of the faculty members, and concludes that faculty workloads and teaching loads are comparable with other Music schools in Canada, and are appropriate for Memorial's School of Music given its size, focus, and high quality. The teaching load of the faculty members was reduced by one course after the last APR and faculty indicated that their current teaching loads were now manageable and reasonable. We also note that teaching loads in Music differ from those in other areas of the university in virtue of the high degree of one-to-one interaction between professor and student in many classes.

The administrative support staff demonstrated a commitment to the school equal to that of the academic staff. However, the administrative staff is clearly stretched in their ability to meet the requirements of their positions and to support the mission and activities of the School. This matter is further addressed in section 8 (University Support) and the larger number of recommendations on staffing are included there. However, we include here the following observations on initiatives that will require administrative support in the future:

- The School has recently initiated a Technology Blueprint which will outline the technology needs of the School, including both Information & Communications Technologies to support teaching and learning, as well as music technology. The panel commends this activity while recognizing that it may generate the need for administrative staff to support those using the technology, an issue that the University as a whole will need to address.
- Data Collection and Integrity, Privacy, and Risk Management Issues: the demands for accountability in these areas of strategic and operational imperative create demands for administrative support across the University.

As noted elsewhere, the panel was struck by the strong relationship of alumni and the community with the School of Music. These strong and sustained relationships provide opportunities for development. The School recognized this,

and in 2005 was one of the first units on campus to hire a Development Officer, whom it shared with the Faculty of Arts on a 60 (arts):40 (music) basis. The panel heard of the successes of the Development Officer, reflected in increased giving and improved communications with alumni and friends of the School. However, the Development Officer position in Music is currently vacant, a situation that the panel hopes is remedied in the near future. Furthermore, the panel expects that the School is in a position to take advantage of a full time Development Officer position, based on the maturity of the relationships and the experience of similar schools nationally.

## **6) Community Service**

The School of Music is an influence and a leader in Newfoundland and Labrador culture and economic well-being, as well as a providing a resource for the community. The links that the School of Music has with the community benefit the School and the University. The self study report prepared by the School provides eloquent testament to the role and the obligation of the School in the unique and vibrant cultural milieu of our province. This was echoed by those members of the community with whom the panel met.

The School functions as a nexus of national significance for creative performance and research in choral music (Festival 500), percussion and new music (Sound Symposium), and chamber music (Tuckamore Festival). These areas of specialization should continue to be reflected in the School's strategic plans. In the case of Festival 500, the festival was conceived by a faculty member of the School, almost all faculty members of the School are involved in it, it is a recruiting tool, it provides experiential learning for current students, and it allows such documents as the President's Report (2007) to profile successful community events. In addition, economic spin-offs of such festivals are substantiated and have been documented elsewhere.

The School's outreach activities in schools and communities throughout Atlantic Canada attract students to a variety of programs at Memorial. A beneficial side effect of this constructive role within the University is a contribution to populating the province's ranks of physicians, lawyers and other professionals through graduates who find that Music provides a fine foundation for occupations that make good use of the critical skills the discipline provides. These activities are costly in terms of time and travel, but they clearly enhance the perception of Memorial University in Newfoundland and Labrador and beyond.

In the cultural sphere the School of Music compares with the Harris Centre of Regional Policy and Development in the economic sphere, connecting all parts of Newfoundland and Labrador with some of the best intellectual resources of the University. The perception of Memorial might be further enhanced through closer links with the Harris Centre. This natural association is already being

developed by the Centre for Music, Media and Place, but we mention it especially because it so clearly displays Memorial's mission of linking research and scholarship to public engagement and service. **We recommend that the School of Music explore further potential synergies with the Harris Centre.**

The panel was impressed with the level of involvement of the community and their high regard for, and almost a sense of "ownership" of, the School of Music. This presents an opportunity for stronger ties, and increased benefits. **We recommend that the School consider the creation of a community advisory council to act as a regular link with the community.** Its functions could include supporting the school financially and providing advice to the director.

### **7) University Citizenship**

Departments, schools and faculties of music can be islands within their universities. Performance programs are very demanding, leaving little time or energy for collaboration with other academic units. In spite of this inherent constraint, Music at Memorial is an effective partner of other units. Partners include the Faculty of Education through combined programs in Music and Music Education that are vital for instruction in the K-12 system. They also include the Faculty of Arts in a strong collaboration with the Department of Folklore through the Centre for Music, Media and Place. New joint Arts/Music graduate programs in Ethnomusicology display a commitment to interdisciplinary endeavours that are only welcomed by self-confident professional programs. The School has also collaborated with the Faculty of Engineering. Although their efforts to hire a CRC were frustrated when the private sector was better able to attract each of four superb candidates, the commitment to internal outreach remains strong.

### **8) University Support**

The School of Music is exemplary in its contribution to the three main supporting pillars of the University's Strategic Plan: students' success, research growth and provincial needs. It reasonably calls upon Pillar 4: "an institutional commitment must be made to strengthen the conditions necessary for success." The University has in fact supported Music generously. The University's *Fact Book* shows that the School's expenditures per student and per faculty member are high relative to the arts and sciences. Growth of these expenditures between 2001-02 and 2005-06 in comparison to the Faculties of Arts and Science reflects this longer-standing pattern.

Such operating support is in part a simple implication of a discipline in which the need for individual instruction is high, but it also reflects an institutional judgment about the need to recognize and support the contribution of Music to the goals of the University. Budgetary investments have permitted the growth of programs since the last review, especially at the graduate level. However, a consequence

of their success is a new set of challenges upon resources designed for considerably smaller cohorts. Those resources were established to support undergraduate programs alone. Now that graduate programs and the research they encourage have grown beyond infancy, the demands they create may have outpaced the current level of provision. We will briefly illustrate the implications of these demands for operating and capital budgets.

On the operating side, the most salient fact is the burden of growth upon a static support-staff complement. Concerts are vital to a school of music. The Music at Memorial Concert Series tallied 21 events in 2000/01, 27 in 2003/04 and 36 in 2007/08. In Fall 2008 graduate program applications stood at 130% of the Fall 2006 level. In March, 2002, research funding required the management of approximately 17 accounts for a total of \$103,244 (average \$6073); in March, 2008, 93 fund lines produced \$1,855,520 (average \$19,952). The increased activity entails increased work for flesh-and-blood individuals. On the assumption that staffing of the School of Music was historically adequate, such changes indicate that a more in-depth review of present staffing levels should be conducted than can be accomplished by reviewers who have only a short period to examine many dimensions of activity. **We recommend that the Office of the Vice-President (Academic) conduct an independent review of administrative staffing levels in the School.**

We note a perception that existing staff complements throughout the University have been expected to absorb new responsibilities for risk management, privacy protection and financial accountability, calling for new skills in academic units. The decentralization and growth of responsibilities at the local level clearly need to be matched by band levels as well as administrative complements. We find little evidence that the University has addressed the implied challenges to Financial and Administrative Services and Human Resources alike. We cannot fully assess, much less resolve, this general problem, but in the case of the School of Music **we recommend that the Senior Executive group instruct Human Resources to review the professional levels assigned to the School's senior support staff.** A reasonable but limited time frame should be attached.

In addition to matters of administrative staffing, we call attention to technical needs that are peculiar to the discipline of music. Music requires instruments, which are often too expensive for students to afford, especially in the music education stream that requires competence on a variety of instruments. It is therefore important to have a schedule for instrument renewal and upkeep. This requirement is acute in the case of pianos, the single most important instrument supporting all programs. The School appears to have no dedicated piano technician, a decided oddity and disservice to its academic programs. These unmet needs entail expenditures, but we are not convinced that they should be

borne by the Memorial student body at large through the academic budget. **We recommend that the University seriously explore establishing an ancillary fee for instrument maintenance.** We recognize that this would run contrary to normal practice but are impressed by the fact that the value of instrumental instruction alone provided by the School exceeds the cost of tuition!

On the capital side, we observe that among the universal needs of the University is the demand for academic space. Here, too, we cannot offer a general solution, but the evidence convinces us that the existing M. O. Morgan building is no longer adequate to house the programs that the University has asked the School of Music to mount. The School's building was designed for a student population of 150. The current population is 185 – a number that we project to grow to 200 as graduate programs mature.

The School is heavily dependant on part time and sessional faculty. This is neither unexpected nor unimportant in a professional school. However, it does contribute to problems of space. Part-time faculty members do not have the opportunity to interact with each other or with full time faculty members; there is no faculty/staff lounge; and, because there are a large number of part time instructors sharing an office, there is no place to meet with students. This dilemma is compounded for part time instructors whose offices are in MMAP. They have no place in the School to meet students, and students are unlikely (based on past experience of instructors) to venture over to the Arts and Culture Centre.

Practice rooms are the equivalent of laboratory bench space and music students spend more time than science students in their labs. Increasing numbers of undergraduates from beyond St. John's place pressure on these facilities because the majority of students can no longer practice at home. The problem is exacerbated by contests between classroom and performance space, which mean that required musical ensembles have to be evicted from lecture rooms and practice late into the evening. The ratio of practice rooms to student population as defined by Canadian University Music Society is no longer adequate. These deficiencies and others, including the absence of appropriate percussion space, cannot be solved short of an addition to the physical plant.

As well as enabling the School to cope with the demands placed upon it, an expansion should enable Music to deal with long-standing problems of housing for teaching materials. Our discussion with the University Librarian suggests willingness to enhance the teaching resource centre in the Morgan Building and to centralize the cataloguing of music materials, but there can be no completion of the music library or rational decisions about professional library services until there is a building that can house them adequately.

The School has documented its physical needs in information provided to the reviewers and destined for input into the forthcoming capital campaign for Memorial. **We recommend that Music's capital plans have high priority within the campaign, depending of course upon the identification of interested donors.**

In saying this we do not necessarily subscribe to all the details of the ideal proposal. It is not necessary that all music offerings be provided within a single precinct. Notwithstanding contrary suggestions made to us by members of faculty, we believe that high-enrollment service courses for non-music students can be satisfactorily provided outside the Music Building. We also believe that it is important for the School to recognize that any new large classroom facility within the building will be a resource for the University as a whole.

### **9) Plans, Goals, and Research Allocation**

The School is efficiently and effectively managed. Highly transparent reporting structures and the collaborative approaches evident in the self-study help to sustain an *esprit de corps* within the faculty and staff alike, enabling them to cope with a level of activity beyond their long term carrying capacity. Basic principles of human resources imply that a situation of this kind cannot endure endlessly. We have therefore suggested that managerial staff designations should be upgraded and staffing levels carefully assessed. For example, the information officer identified in the previous review, and referenced above, or a skilled receptionist is evidently needed to keep open the two-way street between the School and the broader provincial community it is expected to serve.

In so far as this two-way street pertains to outreach rather than research and teaching it is not clear that the academic budget alone should be responsible for maintaining it. The School provides a good example of Memorial's capacity to deploy its academic resources in the service of its community's broader needs, suggesting that University budgets should find a clear place for this kind of knowledge mobilization. Although this observation extends beyond an academic program review of Music, such reviews sometimes have more general implications. We take this to be an important one.

In commenting above on students' success, research growth, and conformity to the needs of the province, the reviewers agree that Music's contributions call for the University to identify adequate support for the conditions required for future success as well. All units of the University can credibly make this claim upon limited resources, but the special role of Music in the culture of Newfoundland and Labrador makes relatively modest enhancements to the operating environment of the School difficult to deny. With continuing sound internal leadership, they should ensure the transformation of the School from an

emerging force in Atlantic Canada to a unit recognized for its excellence throughout Canada.

The matter of internal leadership is not to be neglected. The timing of this review reflects the fact that the current director's second term has only two years to run. The matter of succession must be a high priority, and with it clarity about the directions the School has taken and its future goals. Claims upon the University's support presuppose that Music's response to this report displays such clarity.

## **10) Concluding Remarks**

The message from all constituents with whom the panel met was consistent and vigorous: the School of Music is an influence and a leader in Newfoundland and Labrador culture and economic well-being, as well as a resource for the community. The panel heard that the roots of music-making, understanding music and its role in culture, and music appreciation are inextricably embedded in the people and the culture of the province. The panel recognizes that the links that the School of Music forges with the community have benefits to the school as well as to the university as a whole. In addition, the relationship benefits the province.

In conclusion, the panel suggests Memorial's School of Music may be unique in Canada for its fit with the province's cultural priorities and command of community support. The external examiners were impressed by the spontaneous remarks of taxi drivers concerning traffic to entrance of the Morgan Building and the School's evident activity level in the community. Combined with the high quality of its programs, the School is exemplary in its contribution to the supporting pillars of the Strategic Plan for Memorial. We trust that it will maintain this distinction.