Conservatory of Music Program Review  
Executive Summary  
Spring 2015

I. A Brief History and Overview of the Department.

The Conservatory of Music was originally a department with a church music emphasis. When Biola moved to La Mirada, Crowell Hall was constructed to accommodate 60 keyboard and voice majors to provide musicians for the church.

The National Association of Schools of Music originally accredited the department in 1973. In the 1970s and 80s, the department developed an instrumental program that included a symphonic winds ensemble and chamber orchestra. Bachelor of Music programs were added in Performance, Composition, and Music Education. New programs included a short-lived graduate program in Church Music. With an ever-increasing level of artistry on the faculty and in ensemble performance, the department became a Conservatory of Music in 2003. In recent years, chamber music as well as solo performance has become a distinctive of the department. Recognizing the need in the evangelical church for well-trained musicians, a Bachelor of Science in Music in Worship was added in 2003. The artistry of the faculty continues to grow, drawing national and international attention to the program.

The Conservatory in many ways is a microcosm of the University as a whole. Without internal recruiting and marketing efforts - that is, without coordinated outreach, advertising, and detailed attention to the recruiting process from gathering names to seeing new students through registration - the music unit would be a mere shadow of what it is in size and quality. The Conservatory is involved in fundraising, recently adding two endowed music scholarships to a growing list of endowed music awards, and completing fundraising for a much needed $135,000 concert grand piano. In addition to raising money for its own needs, Conservatory students and faculty are regularly involved in fundraising activities and in various University constituency events. The Conservatory oversees two facilities, an annex, and space in a third building in the McNally complex, as well as all of the varied equipment found in these facilities.

In addition, the Conservatory has developed a process for internal evaluation that includes surveys of prospective students, new students, graduating students and alumni. The director and faculty then use data generated to assess programs and activities and more effectively plan for the future. Building on National Association of Schools of Music guidelines and best practice procedures, the Conservatory has developed a tight structure to monitor all policies and procedures that the above programs and activities require.
Since 2000 the Conservatory has nearly doubled enrollment (96–175), while the cost by major headcount has increased well below the rate of inflation over that same time period. This has been accomplished by relying more heavily on adjunct faculty. Presently there are 41 adjunct faculty and studio artists that work in the Conservatory. There were 11 full-time faculty in 2000. Presently there are 13 full-time faculty, accommodating twice the student body with only two additional full-time hires. *(The Wheaton Conservatory, a school of similar size and scope, has 20 full-time, ranked members of the music faculty.)*

II. Program Mission and Goals and Alignment with University Mission and Direction.

Statement of Mission

*The Conservatory of Music is a community of artist-teachers and young musicians striving for the highest artistic achievement for the glory of God.*

Summary of Goals

- Foster the development of community in Christ.
- Pursue the highest standard of artistic achievement for students in all programs, exemplified by faculty performance.
- Provide a foundation of the integration of faith and the arts for all graduates, regardless of their choice of career path.
- Serve as a professional school, preparing music specialists for teaching, graduate study, performance, and other careers in music.
- Prepare graduates for effective contribution to the musical life of their community and the evangelical church.
- Contribute to campus life through the presentation of a rich variety of concert music and contemporary worship music in a variety of venues.
- Provide opportunities for all students to study music as an essential part of a liberal education.

Alignment with University Mission, Vision and Direction

The Conservatory’s focus on outstanding education and integration is in alignment with the University mission. Our intent is to produce graduates who will impact the world in ministry, teaching, and performance. The Conservatory’s focus on
excellence of faculty and graduates is in alignment with the University vision statement. The quality of the faculty is on a par with many secular institutions and among the very finest in Christian higher education. The integrative notion of ‘shalom,’ which is at the center of the Conservatory’s philosophy, is in alignment with the University’s desire to be a redemptive voice in a changing world. The Conservatory’s efforts to be an international voice in the western art music tradition and its efforts to remain current in the evolving nature of church music are in alignment with the University’s vision of being relevant in a changing world. See University Vision and Mission statements below:

**University Vision**

The vision of Biola University is to be identified among the world’s foremost Christ-centered universities – a community abiding in truth, abounding with grace, and compelled by Christ’s love to be a relevant and redemptive voice in a changing world.

**University Mission Statement**

The mission of Biola University is biblically centered education, scholarship and service—equipping men and women in mind and character to impact the world for the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Conservatory is also in alignment with University goals in:

- The ever-increasing emphasis on integration
- The systematic approach to the development of knowledge and skills through academic and applied courses, plus the outstanding quality of the faculty
- The variety of ways that students are enabled to use their skills to serve not only the University constituency but beyond the confines of campus and beyond the borders of our country

**III. Program Issues and Concerns/Response from Last Self-Study**

The director of the Conservatory is not aware of the Conservatory’s last internal self-study. The Conservatory is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music, which requires a 10-year self-study process. That occurred in 2007. The exhaustive self-study report and commission responses may be found in the Conservatory self-study folder.

I would strongly recommend that in the future the NASM review, which includes information beyond what was required for the internal study, plus an on-campus visit by a trained NASM evaluation team, should be sufficient for University purposes.
Below are the issues that came out of the last NASM program evaluation and what has been done to address issues that were raised:

1. The question of foreign language for Bachelor of Music, Voice Performance majors was raised. In the past the department had argued that the four-semester diction sequence adequately addressed foreign language. After several correspondences with the commission, the commission agreed that the department’s approach to foreign language was sufficient. However, the voice area faculty has recently begun the process to reinstate the general education requirement for a foreign language and will retool the diction class sequence to reflect more common practice in teaching diction.

2. The question of ensemble experience for Music Education majors was raised. Following correspondences with the commission it was determined that ensembles were adequately being addressed in the curriculum.

3. A question was raised regarding planning. The music unit responded with more detail regarding the current process but also added regular attention to planning in weekly faculty meetings and at least one all-day planning session per year. That session occurred this past academic year on the day before the fall faculty retreat. The chair is considering adding a second all-day planning session at either the beginning or end of second semester.

IV. Discuss program alignment with where the discipline is heading.

The music unit chair attends the annual national NASM (National Association of Schools of Music) meetings. In addition, the chair serves as an evaluator team leader for accreditation visits and as a consultant to NASM schools. This serves to give the department a sense of what changes, innovations, challenges, and opportunities are on the horizon in music higher education.

The size and scope of the program is in alignment with other music units of similar excellent size and program breadth. The most important challenge facing the Conservatory is facility. The inadequacy of current facilities was addressed in the last NASM 10-year accreditation self study and was also sited in the Commission’s report. Moreover, in music, facility is an important factor in attracting students and for providing a cutting-edge education.

Technology is becoming increasingly more important in music, as it is in other disciplines. The Conservatory is impacted by lack of space and equipment in the area of recording for the Composition degree, the Music in Worship degree, and to a lesser extent the Performance degrees. This is an issue of resources.

The area that is currently being discussed that is a ‘hot topic’ in the discipline is the need for entrepreneurial skills for those who enter the performance field. The
Conservatory is beginning to address this by participating in the University’s internship program and offering special sessions related to being self-employed. In the area of pedagogy – private teaching – issues related to running a studio are addressed in the pedagogy classes in the performer’s primary area, but more general attention needs to be given to being self-employed.

Perhaps this will require a course, but in a climate where the administration’s focus is on cutting classes, this may be difficult. This is, however, an important point of discussion within the faculty.

V. Program Learning Outcomes and Curriculum

A and B. Degrees and Concentrations and Number of Units

The Conservatory offers five degrees, with various concentrations

1. Bachelor of Arts Degree – 40 units
2. Bachelor of Performance: Emphases in Keyboard, Voice, Strings, Brass, Percussion and Woodwinds – 78 units
3. Bachelor of Music Education: Instrumental Emphasis – 81 units
4. Bachelor of Music Education: Vocal Emphasis – 80 units
5. Bachelor of Music Education: Piano Emphasis – 81 units
6. Bachelor of Music Composition – 80 units
7. Bachelor of Science in Music in Worship – 56 units

C. Examples from curricula that indicate relevance to graduate career aspirations.

The Performance degree requires a capstone solo recital. The requirements for presenting the recital include an 8-semester proficiency ladder that is based on quality of performance, not units. Each semester a committee of faculty evaluates the proficiency level of each student. There is no guarantee of continuing to the next proficiency level. Upon reaching the final proficiency, the student is then allowed to present her capstone recital.

In addition, courses that prepare a student to teach are required in Music Literature and Music Pedagogy.

The Composition degree has a similar proficiency ladder and senior recital experience that features the student’s compositions. Students interact with professional composers, have a variety of ways to present their compositions, and those interested in film music are involved in film production.

The Music Education degree has a similar proficiency ladder in the student’s primary applied area. In order to present the senior capstone recital that includes
applied performance and conducting, the student is evaluated on their success in music education and other education courses, and they must reach the top of their applied proficiency ladder. In addition, students are prepared through course work and preparation for a teaching career.

The **Music in Worship** degree requires two semesters of successful internship work, a senior portfolio that includes video of successfully led worship services, a faculty vetted resume, and audio recordings of original and covered songs.

The **Bachelor of Arts** includes an applied proficiency ladder that culminates in a final jury that is presented before a faculty panel. The Bachelor of Arts is a liberal arts degree with a core similar to that found in the other music degree programs. It is often taken in tandem with a degree in another field.

**D. What did you learn about your course sequencing and potential or realized gaps in curriculum?**

The Conservatory is always in a state of curriculum evaluation, and the self-study has not significantly contributed to any realization of gaps in the curriculum.

What has recently become an important focus is the need for two tracks of core study in history and theory. The Conservatory has used a common sequence of classes in Sight Singing, Music Theory, and Music History for the last eight years, but it has become apparent that we are teaching two distinct audiences that come from very different backgrounds of experience and have different future goals.

On the one hand, we have Music Education, Performance, and Composition students who have substantial experience studying music privately, in class or in ensembles, and intend to pursue graduate studies at some point.

Then we have Bachelor of Arts and Music in Worship students, who typically come from a more limited background and intend to go into a field that does not require the disciplined, specific study that graduate school will demand.

Our solution was to find the middle ground between the two groups, but that compromise has not served either group of students well. We are now pursuing a two-track approach in Sight Singing, Music Theory, and Music History that will provide accelerated study for those headed to graduate school and a more conservative pace of study for those in the Bachelor of Arts and Music in Worship programs.

The gap that is under discussion is the need for entrepreneurial training. At this point, we are addressing this issue in other ways than a dedicated course, but our thinking may change.

**E. What new Standards of Performance have been defined as a result of this self-study?**
There were a couple of standards of performance that were shifting, but the self-study was perhaps the final impetus for making changes.

First, in the past the only extensive term paper required in the Performance degree was at the conclusion of the music theory sequence. It seemed that a paper should also be incorporated at the end of the music history sequence. There had been much discussion about adding a capstone paper to the music history sequence over the last few years, but now the paper in music history serves as evidence for one of the four primary program-learning outcomes in all music degrees.

Second, the music chair had for several years been seeking a BBST 465 Integration Seminar in music that would address aesthetics and philosophy rather than church music. The course finally took shape along the lines of the chair’s intention in large measure because faculty in theology and philosophy with a shared vision for the course began to teach the course. However, the self-study provided a vehicle to include this approach to integration as a core program-learning outcome. In discussing this core outcome with students and faculty it became apparent that addressing integration through a course in the senior year was a good first step, but that it should be addressed throughout a student’s four-year program. The student refrain was, “I wish we had talked about this earlier in my time at Biola.” The faculty is now seeking to find ways to create a thread of integration, theologically and philosophically, that will begin in First Year Seminar and conclude with the Integration Seminar.

F. (1) Describe your alignment with co-curricular activities

The Conservatory has a long and deep tradition of co-curricular involvement. Below are ways in which the Conservatory enriches campus life.

Romanian Outreach – bi-annual summer ministry offered through the Symphonic Winds.

Dream Center Outreach – draws students from around the Conservatory for monthly on-campus ministry to inner-city children from the Dream Center in downtown Los Angeles.

Random Acts of Culture - provides informal arts experiences for members of the Biola community during the course of their day.

Miscellaneous Outreach – informal ensembles gather to minister at area senior citizen’s residences, churches, schools, and shelters for the poor.

Biola Symphony Orchestra – available to majors and non-music majors. Provides music for University activities such as Commencement, facility dedications, chapels, donor events, alumni events, parent events, and on-campus concerts, and represents the University through off-campus performances.
**Biola Symphonic Winds Ensemble** - available to majors and non-music majors. Provides music for University activities such as Commencement, facility dedications, chapels, donor events, alumni events, parent events, and on-campus concerts, and represents the University through off-campus performances. Of particular note are the bi-annual orphanage ministry trips to Romania.

**Biola Chorale** - available to majors and non-music majors. Provides music for University activities such as Commencement, facility dedications, chapels, donor events, alumni events, parent events, and on-campus concerts, and represents the University through off-campus performances. The Conservatory's unique place as a redemptive voice for the University was recently evidenced when in spring 2014 the Chorale performed at Paengmok-hong Harbor in South Korea and ministered to the families of those lost in the Sewol ferry accident.

**Biola Jazz Ensemble** – available to majors and non-majors. The ensemble performs on campus, providing a jazz outlet for Biola students and our concert audience.

**King’s Men** - available to majors and non-music majors. Provides music for University activities such as Commencement, facility dedications, chapels, donor events, alumni events, parent events, and on-campus concerts, and represents the University through off-campus performances and recordings.

**Opera Theater** - available to majors and non-music majors. Provides an art music distinctive for the Conservatory and the University.

**Women’s Chorus** - available to majors and non-music majors. Provides music for University activities such as chapels, donor events, alumni events, parent events, and on-campus concerts, and represents the University through off-campus performances.

**Men’s Chorus** - available to majors and non-music majors. Provides music for University activities such as chapels, donor events, alumni events, parent events, and on-campus concerts, and represents the University through off-campus performances.

**Conservatory Worship Ensembles** - available to majors and non-music majors. Provide music for University activities such chapels, donor events, alumni events, parent events, and on-campus concerts, and represent the University through off-campus performances. Worship ensembles play a major role in providing music for daytime and evening chapels and other campus worship activities.

**Biola Honor’s String Quartet** - available to majors and non-music majors. Provides music for University activities such as chapels, donor events, alumni events, parent events, and on-campus concerts, and represents the University through off-campus performances.
**Biola Saxophone Quartet** - available to majors and non-music majors. Provides music for University activities such as chapels, donor events, alumni events, parent events, and on-campus concerts, and represents the University through off-campus performances.

**Chamber Music** - available to majors and non-music majors. Provides music for University activities such as chapels, donor events, alumni events, parent events, and on-campus concerts, and represents the University through off-campus performances.

**Biola New Music Ensemble** - available to majors and non-music majors. Provides exposure to original, newly composed and recently composed music through on-campus concerts.

**Film Music Composer’s Guild** – gathers film students and Conservatory composers to make connections and work together on film projects.

**F. (2) Describe your alignment with Key Enterprises on Campus**

Students provide arts experience to those on campus through concerts, chapel music, performance at major University events, on-campus donor/parent/alumni events, and numerous off-campus events that serve the University president and development office.

**Notable recent activities:**

- Chorale involvement in *Under the Shadow*, an oratorio written by Robert Denham and performed by Carl St. Clair and the Pacific Symphony. (I have recently been in touch with the production director of the Pacific Symphony to discuss further joint events.)

- Chorale performed music from the movie *The Passion of the Christ* on the Tonight Show with Jay Leno.

- The King’s Men accompanied President Corey on a tour of Korea, which was followed last year with a second tour of Korea that involved the University Chorale.

- The Honors String Quartet has performed numerous events for donors and for on- and off-campus events.

- Music in Worship ensembles serve regularly in morning and evening chapels each semester and have participated in area churches including Saddleback, Mariners, and the Eagle Rock churches.

- The Orchestra and Symphonic Winds have participated in building dedications, convocations, chapel, and Commencements.
o The annual Christmas concert involves multiple Conservatory groups and is an important donor event, as well as providing ministry to the broader community, attracting an audience of over 1,500 last December. A Conservatory worship ensemble provided music for the University tree lighting, another well attended on-campus Christmas event.

o In addition to chapel services, donor events, alumni events, parent events, and commencement activities, the Conservatory has partnered with the Center for Christianity, Culture, and the Arts on several events, including the grand opening of the Center, which featured faculty performers and some of the top jazz musicians in Los Angeles.

VI. Student Learning, Assessment and Effectiveness

A. Some strategies and tactics for Assessment:

1. All students undergo a faculty review at the end of their freshman year to assess their ability to complete their degree program. Review includes evaluation of transcripts and expected completion of several core competencies. The process continues into the sophomore year for those whose work is deemed marginally acceptable.

2. The performance of all students is evaluated at the conclusion of each semester by a panel of faculty. At that time student progress in academic coursework is also discussed. Students are assessed on a performance proficiency ladder that takes into account various aspects of performance. Capstone recitals and senior projects exist in all but the Bachelor of Arts degree.

3. In addition to course grades, faculty meet weekly and commonly talk about the progress, or lack thereof, of individual students. Area faculty also meet as a group and are also in regular communication evaluating the progress of individual students.

4. Students have recital opportunities to perform throughout the semester to provide additional opportunities for faculty feedback.

5. Faculty have developed rubrics in courses that develop four core departmental outcomes and 2-3 additional outcomes peculiar to each degree program. Progress toward the development of three of these outcomes (skills, performance and music theory as part of contextualizing compositions) are discussed in the underclassmen review.
6. An invigorated effort to help students develop a theological and philosophical understanding of their work in music is being developed and assessed.

7. In addition to assessment, strategic planning is an ongoing agenda item in weekly faculty meetings, and an annual strategic planning meeting is held at the beginning of each academic semester. Data reviewed in strategic meetings includes NASM HEADS data; department outcome assessments; student surveys, evaluations and notes from chair's senior student luncheons; input from the student advisory panel; and prospective student data generated through the department.

Peripheral Areas that Impact Learning Objectives

1. Through the concert music requirement students are expected to attend concerts on campus and off campus, partaking in the vast array of professional music performances in the Los Angeles metropolitan area. The Music at Noon series on campus presents art music and a variety of ethnic and contemporary music ensembles.

2. There is a rich culture of master classes in the department. Students can annually hear outstanding artists in both vocal and instrumental areas teach and share about their views on professional development.

3. Depending on the degree program, students are involved in internships; classroom observation and teaching opportunities; and private lesson observation and private teaching experiences. Composers have numerous opportunities to prepare and present works in public.

4. Students have multiple opportunities for service in diverse areas in the Los Angeles metropolitan area and beyond. Students perform and serve in area nursing homes, schools, and homeless facilities. Of note is the semi-annual Symphonic Winds trip to Romania. Recently, a graduate spent two years working in a frequently visited orphanage in Romania.

B. Explain how analysis was conducted to determine whether your students meet the expected Standards of Performance

Rubrics generated to assess senior capstone projects in the spring of 2014 were reviewed by area faculty with the Conservatory director. This process identified some minor adjustments in applied lesson content. What was recognized was the importance of on-stage appearance and poise. Although the primary focus of performance is aural, the visual is also important, particularly in a society that is more visually focused and less aurally sensitive.

One issue in reviewing data was the lack of substantial data in any given area because final projects included recitals in voice, piano, strings, and winds, and
projects in contemporary worship leading. Analyzing one or two rubrics each year does not seem worthwhile, so we will wait to get a more substantial folder of rubrics before meeting for assessment in the various areas associated with this learning outcome.

This spring we will assess data from two program learning outcomes: first, the rubrics from the capstone project in music history, a 20th century music term paper; and second, the rubrics assessing final presentations in the Integration Seminar.

We have not finalized rubrics for all of the courses that contribute to the music skills program-learning outcomes. Rubrics exist for capstone experiences in Keyboard and Sight Singing. Because of turnover in instruction, the Voice Class rubric does not yet exist. The Skills outcome will be reviewed Fall 2015.

C. What new insights have been learned from Students’ Opportunities to Introduce, Develop, and Master PLOs

Two changes have occurred, due in part to the PLO process:

One, the need for a capstone paper in music history has been added. It had been much discussed, but the PLO process spurred the faculty on to adding this important capstone requirement. When the faculty arrived upon the content of the first general PLO (Students will apply historical and theoretical understanding to the analysis of musical forms, processes, structures and masterpieces from the western art music tradition.) that called for the need to articulate compositional context, which included theoretical, stylistic and historical understanding, it became apparent that there needed to be some sort of capstone project that would synthesize the skills and understanding gained in the music theory sequence and music history courses. An extensive musicology research paper meets that need. Also, a carefully guided musicology term paper is an important experience for students who intend to go on to graduate school.

Two, the seventh outcome for the Bachelor of Music, Performance degree is: Students will demonstrate performance mastery on their instrument to the highest possible level given their talents and age. After developing rubrics for capstone recitals intended to address this outcome, it became apparent – through review of assessment data – that there needed to be more of an emphasis on poise in performance and consideration of the visible aspects of performance, particularly in the instrumental areas. This was an area that was overlooked in the past when assessing senior performances, however, it is an important aspect of presentation, especially in a society that is increasingly more visually oriented.
D. Graduation and Retention Trends

1. How long does it take students to graduate from the program?

First, we are seeing a greater and greater influx of transfer students, so the length of time it takes students to graduate is becoming less and less uniform. But as for those who come in as first semester freshmen without substantial college credit (which many carry):

Students in the Bachelor of Arts program tend to graduate in four years.

Students in the Music in Worship program tend to graduate in four years.

Students in the Composition program tend to graduate in 4.5 years.

Students in the Performance program tend to graduate in 4.5 years.

Students in the Music Education program tend to graduate in five years.

Many students will take advantage of summers and winter terms to take general education and/or Bible courses. Also, some students will take a full 18-unit load every, or almost every, semester. If a student consistently takes the above measures, all degrees can be accomplished in four years.

2. What concerns with graduation, retention, completion arise when examining the data provided?

The skills expectations in the discipline are so high and varied that programs that require more than four years for completion are common. The department’s concern is that the University will have a one-size-fits-all approach to the number of units in a program. Cutting units will make Biola music programs less competitive rather than more attractive to prospective students. Furthermore, we seek to engage students who are diligent and seeking rigor rather than finding the quickest route to a degree. That is a major concern.

If there are trends toward reducing hours and reducing accreditation standards, then the Conservatory would need to look seriously at following those changes. However, it is a concern that the University might seek reductions that then might jeopardize accreditation and reputation.

In the area of retention, the music unit is accustomed to students dropping out of the major. Some students are counseled out of majors, others quickly discover that they do not have the talent to survive the program or find that it is more work than they anticipated and they drop the program. Most of those students then move to other majors, psychology being a favorite destination for exiting music majors.
Over the years it has become apparent that if the department errs in any direction it is in helping students who don’t belong in the program, stay in the program. The faculty has become more and more firm in counseling struggling students out of music majors. This change has happened, in part, because the faculty recognized that an inordinate amount of time is spent aiding poor students and that they would be better served by moving to another university degree program sooner rather than later.

3. **What on-going efforts are in place to retain students in the program and assist students in graduating in a timely fashion?**

Students are assigned to faculty advisors in their area (for example, a pianist with a member for the piano faculty). Students are expected to attend advising sessions every semester. Students also have close relationships with their applied teacher, with whom they work in a one-on-one setting; students are also advised by their applied teachers. Students are also able to seek advice from the area coordinator in their applied area. Often students will meet with area coordinators to discuss career goals and issues related to curriculum. In addition, the Conservatory director and the office records coordinator are available for questions; appointments can be made with either if a student is unable to get helpful information from their advisor, area coordinator, or from other university offices.

4. **What roadblocks exist in the program for students when it comes to graduating on time?**

The unit density of programs is the chief obstacle to graduating in four years, and equally problematic is the 30-unit Bible requirement. Many undergraduate degrees in the humanities are 30 units or so. In essence, Biola students graduate with the unit equivalent of two degrees.

Due to the many specializations available in degree programs, upper level courses attract small enrollment, so most are offered every other year. (There is a projected course-offering chart available to music students that projects course offerings four years into the future. This has proven to be a most helpful tool for both music students and advising faculty.)

The number of specialized upper-level courses requires careful planning on the part of incoming students. This is especially troublesome for transfer students. The Conservatory director advises all incoming students to plan their entire four-year sequence of courses in their first semester and review their plan with their faculty advisor or with the Conservatory director every semester thereafter.

Each year we graduate students on time, without major problems, who have created a four-year plan and consulted it each semester. Planning is essential to graduating on time.
D. How are students being prepared for their careers and graduate schoolwork?

Music Education: In this program students spend hours observing in the classroom in addition to taking classes that are aligned with CCTC teaching standards. The program enjoys a high rate of success in placing graduates in jobs.

Music in Worship: In addition to coursework that follows NASM worship degree standards, students are required to undertake two semesters of internships. Students are exposed to leaders in the worship field in off-campus field trips and on-campus seminars, and the faculty includes top recording artists and those active in church music. The program enjoys a high rate of placing students in jobs following graduations.

Composition: The primary goal of the composition program is to prepare students for graduate school, although some graduates have gone immediately into the field of freelance composition. Students are exposed to professionals in the field through seminars, competitions, and on-campus conferences. Students study with composition teachers who are professionals in the field, actively earning their livings as composers. Students are carefully guided through proficiency-based composition instruction that expects a level of achievement required for graduate school admission. Students take upper-level courses peculiar to their field in preparation for graduate school.

Performance: Students are carefully guided through proficiency-based applied instruction that expects a level of achievement required for graduate school admission. Students take upper-level courses peculiar to their area in preparation for graduate school and for a private teaching career. Students are further prepared for performance careers through master classes and seminars and by competing in competitions.

The Conservatory faculty is in conversation about how to address the need for entrepreneurial skills for those performance graduates who will ultimately be wearing a number of hats: performing as soloists, performing in chamber groups, writing, and teaching. The need to manage one’s career as a business has become an important topic in NASM, one the Conservatory faculty is taking seriously.

E. According to your students and alumni, describe the program’s strengths and weaknesses?

Program Strengths: A key departmental strength is the quality of the faculty. Faculty credentials, performance ability, and experience is on a par with many secular institutions, and superior to most Christian universities. The result is excellent applied study as well as chamber music coaching and large ensemble direction. Moreover, the abundance of performance opportunities for students in solo, chamber music, and large ensemble settings is not the norm for Biola-size departments.

Curricula are solid and provide comprehensive educations in all fields.
The office and staff are highly regarded, providing excellent procedures and record keeping that support both faculty and students. Although facilities and equipment are not up to par, the department is perceived to do an outstanding job of maintaining existing equipment and facilities, and judiciously uses budget to enhance the student learning experience.

The department has developed an excellent recruiting and marketing process, given meager resources, and regularly receives excellent reviews from prospective students and parents.

The website receives excellent reviews from prospective students and alumni. Through conversations with alumni, the suggestion was voiced several times that adding a streaming video feature for concerts – along with the current library of recordings available on the web – would be a wonderful way for alumni who live outside of the Southern California region to stay in touch with the Conservatory. The department stays in touch with alumni through an annual newsletter, email blasts announcing concerts, and surveys.

The Conservatory is involved with gathering data from alumni, prospective students, and current students to better understand what is needed to improve the quality of our student’s experience. Through online surveys, personal interviews, and senior exit luncheons, data is gathered regarding what works and what needs to be improved. This data is shared with faculty and used in future planning.

**Weaknesses:** Facility has been the primary weakness of the program for decades. The University’s inability to address this issue has led to poor morale among faculty. Inadequate performance spaces, rehearsal spaces, studio spaces, and classrooms result in tremendous tension when scheduling rooms. Students have justifiably complained that due to the lack of practice rooms, there are times when students are unable to adequately prepare for lessons, recitals or juries, ultimately this has a negative impact on their general progress which can hinder their efforts to prepare for graduate school auditions. Moreover, it is a severe detriment to recruiting when prospects – who have been impressed by the Conservatory website that touts a musically vibrant atmosphere (which is accurate), an outstanding faculty, and thorough curricula – are disappointed by facilities that are often identified as inferior to the high school facilities at their current school. The perception of the inadequacy of facilities is documented in prospective student surveys and in the continuing student focus group comments.

Second, requiring all students to take a single sequence of music history, sight singing, and theory has drawn criticism from various programs. Grouping students according to their professional aims – Composition, Performance and Education in one group, and Liberal Arts and Worship in another group – will allow one sequence for the first group to move at an accelerated rate with graduate study in mind, while the second track will be slower paced, focusing on securely attaining fundamental concepts. In addition to accelerating and increasing information shared in music
history, music theory, and aural skills, a graduate preparation class is under consideration for those students who intend to attend graduate programs.

The third weakness is addressing the needs of Performance and Composition students who will become freelance musicians. The need to address the entrepreneurial nature of the freelance career may require a course. We are currently looking into what is offered through the Business School or what else could be offered to address the unique challenges of sustaining a career as a freelance musician.

VII. Faculty

A. Qualification and Achievements

The full-time faculty has an excellent mix of teaching and performance experience. Faculty, like Li-shan Hung, Richard Zeller, and Elizabeth Larson are active professional performers, performing around the country and internationally. They are also involved in national summer music programs that attract the finest Christian teachers and professional musicians to the faculty. Shawna Stewart and Robert Feller are highly sought after clinicians and guest conductors on the West Coast. Cliff Hulling is a leading professional percussionist in the Los Angeles area, performing in first-run Broadway musicals and as a member of the Pacific Symphony. Jeanne Robison is recognized in NATS (National Association of Teachers of Singing) as a leading voice teacher in the Los Angeles area. Marlin Owen is sought after as a guest conductor and adjudicator, serving on some of the highest profile performance competitions in the region. Faculty members also hold degrees from 'Ivy Leagues' schools of music, including the Eastman School of Music, the New England Conservatory, the Peabody Conservatory of Music, and Cincinnati Conservatory of Music. The full-time faculty have the credentials that could easily meet NASM requirements for doctoral education in music.

The adjunct faculty include some of Los Angeles’ finest freelance musicians, who perform internationally, with area ensembles, and for film and television. The quality of the adjunct faculty is only possible because of the location of Biola in the heart of the television and film industry and one of the largest cultural markets in the United States.

It is unfortunate that such a highly qualified faculty is forced to work in a facility that was initially designed for 50-60 church music voice and keyboard students.

Detailed information regarding faculty qualifications can be found in the 2007 NASM self study and on the Conservatory website: biola.edu/music.

B. Describe how faculty workload is determined and distributed
Faculty workload is distributed according to areas of expertise and load is awarded according to NASM best practice.

VIII. Program Sustainability and Support

A. Program Demand

The Conservatory could grow if facilities improved. For example, the Music in Worship program is housed in an old one-floor office building that was formerly used by facility services. The program could double in size if a facility with state-of-the-art acoustical considerations and digital equipment were available. A commercial music program could then be considered and would most likely attract many students.

The Conservatory grew from an average of 90-plus students to 175 students through the addition of the contemporary Music in Worship program and increased in-house efforts to recruit effectively. Without in-house recruitment the program would disappear. We appreciate the Admissions department’s efforts on our behalf, but faculty are the most important recruiters in a competitive music market.

The traditional programs are healthy and could also expand if facilities were enhanced. First, more students would be attracted to the program if the facilities were what one would expect at a university. Second, we are currently maxed out in use of practice rooms, studios, rehearsal spaces and classrooms. We are running at full capacity.

B. How does the program compare with similar programs in the discipline?

The Conservatory is among the finest music programs nationally among evangelical universities. It is recognized locally as an excellent private school music program. We are often the first choice of students who ultimately attend a secular institution because of cost. The faculty is comparable to many good secular schools. The curricula are comparable to those found at quality music schools. The facilities are very subpar.

C. Explain projected trends in student enrollment.

Our expectation is that enrollment will remain strong in Music Education, Music in Worship, Composition, Vocal Performance and Piano Performance. The concern is for Instrumental Performance, which includes strings, brass, and woodwinds. Enrollment has not been strong in these areas. At present it has been recognized that the strong areas all have distinctives that set them apart from their Christian university counterparts. We are seeking to define distinctives for the instrumental areas.
There may be a winnowing of traditional music programs in the Christian college market. Biola continues to be one of the strongest programs nationally, and as others fall away the options for students will diminish. Also, those who are truly committed to the musical arts will be drawn to the best programs. That is our niche in the performance area.

Along the lines of being truly outstanding in performance, and given the quality of faculty, we continue to seek ways to ramp up the quality of the music-making on campus. The faculty regularly travels to Europe and the Pacific Rim and have developed connections with a variety of musical organizations, artists, and schools abroad. An Artist Diploma that could attract outstanding Christians from around the world for abbreviated study at Biola has been proposed. The vision is for a program that would bring together the finest Christian teachers and young artists from around the world to study and perform, and to be exposed to ideas about the integration of faith and the arts that would be uniquely found at Biola.

In addition to developing the artistic quality of the program, a commercial music program would be considered if facilities were provided.

D. If student enrollment is not at an optimal level, describe ways in which resources will be redirected within the department or academic unit.

At this point department resources are judiciously allocated to serve programs. It appears that more scholarship resources will be needed to remain competitive in recruiting string, brass, and woodwind students. The Conservatory is similar to a department that would combine Science and Athletics. There is a very public aspect to the program that requires excellent performance before the public. There are also very complex academic programs that need to be operated at the same time. At this point, given the resources available, the allocation of resources seems to be working.

E. If the program enrollment exceeds expected levels, explain how the program plans to accommodate growth.

Program growth during the traditional fall and spring semesters is not possible. Therefore, non-traditional programs are being considered: for example, an online research-oriented graduate degree in music education that would be offered completely online; and a graduate degree in worship, partnering with Talbot School of Theology, designed for the contemporary church. This program would include online instruction as well as summer instruction. The artist diploma would take place mostly in the summer, with students participating in existing musical activities during the school year.
**F. What is occurring in the profession, field, culture, and society that points to an anticipated need for this program to continue?**

Music continues to be an integral part of society and culture. The Music in Worship program will provide trained musicians who can navigate the current contemporary worship scene but also have the breadth to participate in the changes that are sure to come. Music Education, although cut in some schools, is being recognized more and more, as brain research becomes more exact and revealing, as important to the development of the individual. As the world becomes more digitized and day-to-day lives are legislated by computers, people will seek ways to escape the incessant clamor of technology and information. Like nature, I believe music will become a more treasured safe harbor from the noise of modern life, particularly in the natural resonances of acoustically generated music.

**IX. Resource Allocation**

**A. Attention to Academic Structure.**

The Division of Fine Arts and Communication is a vestige of Biola College and can no longer adequately serve the diverse needs of the departments in the division. Philosophically, unrelated disciplines with little in common have been lumped together. Practically, the current structure is overburdened by the multiple needs of the various departments. The University needs to recognize the important role that administrative structure plays in the development of academic units.

**B. Describe whether the current level of faculty support is sufficient to maintain the program quality.**

If the University is willing to view the Conservatory as being on an upward trajectory, improving and growing, then there are areas of concern regarding faculty as we head into the future.

First, the Conservatory is growing out of ‘Biola College’ staffing; that is, the small college model of one faculty member who wears a variety of hats. At this point, the orchestra conductor is also the primary music history instructor. At some point, the Conservatory will need to hire a musicologist who is not a performer. That will bolster the academic quality of all programs. Ideally, this position would also carry some responsibility in music theory. Most music graduates with doctorates are able to teach some level of music theory and/or aural skills.

The voice area is growing quickly, so an additional faculty member in voice may be needed very soon. Again, in the practice of a small school, the opera program has been carried on the back of one faculty member who serves as director, producer, marketer, designer, etc. If the program is to grow and improve, those responsibilities need to be shared with someone.
Currently, there is no specialist in **woodwinds** on the full-time faculty. Most university programs have several full-time woodwind specialists. Adding one to the faculty would give the woodwind students someone to rally around – someone who could plan studio classes, master classes, field trips, bring in guest artists, and do a host of other activities that are specifically geared toward woodwind players. This position could be combined with a position in music education. The department is considering a graduate degree in **music education** that would require additional faculty involvement. Perhaps a hire that would combine music education and woodwinds would serve two purposes. This kind of pairing is not uncommon in the profession.

The Music in Worship area has a tremendous potential for growth; currently there are over fifty students in the program. If the program were to grow, it would require the hiring of an additional full-time person in **worship**, perhaps with a specialty in philosophy and theology.

**C. Explain whether the current support systems that are in place are adequate to assist students in achieving their academic goals**

With an outstanding office that is helpful and highly organized, NASM accreditation expectations, and the constant review of standards and discussion about the field, I think students are receiving a cohesive educational experience in the Conservatory. Students have access to faculty advisors and are also counseled in their applied study and their ensemble work. Students are continuously involved in joint performance ventures with faculty; working together provides a connection between students and faculty that may not occur in the traditional classroom setting.

Separating those not intending to attend graduate school in the discipline and those who intend to pursue music through graduate studies in the core academic areas of music history, music theory, and sight singing should help students achieve their academic goals.

**D. Discuss the program’s current facilities, space, and equipment and whether they are adequate for sustaining the quality of the program.**

*Practice Rooms* – Students have never experienced adequate practice space, given the size and complexity of degree program. There is always a need for more practice rooms of various size for single instrument practice, practice with a grand piano, small ensemble practice, and sectional rehearsal. We will continue to seek space on campus as it becomes available.

*Classrooms* – Current classrooms double as rehearsal rooms and classrooms. Most institutions have rooms dedicated to instrumental and choral rehearsal and rooms dedicated for classroom instruction. We do not have the luxury of such spaces.
Rehearsal Rooms – Prospective students often comment on the fact that their high school music facilities are far better than Conservatory rehearsal facilities. This is an embarrassment to the faculty and our students. Alumni often comment how the facilities are as inadequate as they were years ago.

Music in Worship Facility - A cheaply renovated office building, the space has woefully inadequate sound absorption, and there are regular invasions of insects and flooding during the rainy season. The facility is generally an embarrassment when showing it to perspective students.

New Music Facility - In addition to what has been mentioned above, the recital hall was intended for organ and choir recitals. It has been inadequate for 20 years. In addition to the actual stage, the backstage facilities are virtually non-existent.

E. Discuss whether current staffing is sufficient to support a quality program and adequate for faculty/student load.

The current staffing is adequate in support of all programs. However, given the competitiveness of the field, additional hours for the recruitment coordinator would be very helpful. *One should not miss the fact that when the Conservatory sends ensembles to high schools, or hosts visits (750 high school students will visit the Conservatory in 14-15) we interact with young people who may become interested in Biola in general, and may not be interested specifically in music. We are serving the wider-university whenever we offer presentations in school assemblies or other gatherings.*

Staff are very busy and rarely experience down time, but the workload is not overwhelming anyone or creating a situation where mistakes are made.

F. Explain program budget trends and how increasing or decreasing revenue impact program sustainability.

The Conservatory is currently at maximum enrollment, given facility constraints. As mentioned previously, enrollment has doubled in the past fifteen years and the university failed to increase budgets accordingly as enrollment grew. Now we are faced with stretched resources and the university looking at the status quo as the new normal without considering periods of growth that were inadequately supported by budget increases. *We expect to maintain the current level of enrollment in the future. However, the department could grow substantially if an investment in facilities was made. New, non-traditional programs are being proposed. These programs would not put additional pressure on current facilities during the traditional academic calendar, but would generate additional revenue.*
X. Program Goals and Planning for Improvement

A. What are the program’s primary goals for the next five years?

1. Develop an integrative distinctive that will set the Conservatory apart from other Christian music departments by providing the impetus for students to develop a deeply considered personal Christian philosophy of music.

Although in the vision of the department for some time, the PLO process brought heightened attention to integration. Raising integration to the level of being one of four core outcomes, has given the department new impetus for addressing it throughout a students four years at Biola. Through faculty and student conversations, it has become clear that making integration a key element of a Conservatory education will require more than an outstanding capstone course. As mentioned before, integration is currently addressed through a carefully crafted senior capstone integration seminar and introduced in the music first-year seminar.

An effort is being made to promote integration in Conservatory instruction through intentional faculty gatherings that explore aesthetics and theology under the guidance of philosophy and theology faculty.

The goal is to develop a stronger thread of integration between First Year Seminar and Senior Integration Seminar. The director is working with Rick Langer to implement regular faculty gatherings focused on integration.

We are seeking new outlets for service and performance where students can apply integrative concepts in the field.

2. Find new ways to include technology in sound production, music pedagogy and performance.

Through focus group responses and conversations with graduating seniors, it is clear that students do not sense that they have access to the most up to date technology and sound production equipment. With current budgeting, small upgrades are made and current equipment is kept in working order. The problem, however, is funding is not available to make significant purchases of new technology. A new sound studio for use by Music in Worship majors could open doors to more advanced studies in sound production, which would be a natural draw for new students, as well.

Develop a ‘virtual studio’ where applied lessons and auditions could occur for young musicians around the country and abroad. We already have faculty who have dabbled in this technology and we have students around the world who are desirous of studying with our faculty. This will expand our reach around the world.
Refine our ability to stream concerts, lectures, and discussions for international access.

Seek to provide cutting edge technology for student composers and music ministry students.

Add online components for general education offerings, music courses, and eventually courses for a music ministry certificate.

3. **Continue to raise the level of excellence within the faculty, programs, and student body.**

*Develop graduate programs in music.*
The first program for consideration is a master’s in music education that could be offered online and during summers and interterm. That program is currently being developed. Additional graduate programs in composition and conducting are possible, given the competency level of faculty.

*Initiate an Artist Diploma program.*
The program would draw the most talented graduate-level Christian musicians from around the world for intensive musical training and classes that would focus on the integration of faith and the arts.

*Expand Opera program.*
Enrollment in the vocal area has exploded in part because of our commitment to opera, with students in lead roles. It is clear that this is a distinctive that sets us apart from other Christian universities.

*Encourage faculty performance locally and abroad.*
The faculty is already growing in national prominence through performance and teaching. This has occurred in part through the recruitment over the last 10 years of new faculty who have received national recognition for their work. In addition, the faculty is increasingly being invited to perform and teach abroad. Resources must be made available so that the reputation of Biola in the arts might become increasingly global.

*Expand opportunities to bring guest artists to campus.*
With the rise of the Conservatory’s profile as a music unit of excellence, outstanding artists are showing greater interest in visiting campus, interacting with students and faculty. This needs to be encouraged.

*Facility.*
*Provide the students and faculty with the kinds of performance and learning environments that will compliment the highest level of artistry.*

4. **Continue to seek ways to serve the Church by providing training for future music ministers**
We are currently developing a subscription certificate program that would provide training for amateur musicians in the church.

Expand our network of influence among churches locally, regionally, and nationally.

**B. How will the program address any weaknesses while building on existing strengths?**

Curriculum weaknesses will be addressed as they are recognized using assessment tools as well as student evaluations and the regular surveying of current students, prospective students, and alumni regarding various aspects of curricula and perceived changes within the discipline.

The faculty will continue to regularly discuss programs in general faculty meetings, area meetings, and in one-on-one meetings with area coordinators and the director.

**C. How will the program make improvements with existing resources while continuing to collaborate and innovate?**

An example of making improvements within existing resources would be the changes in the core curriculum in music history, sight singing, and music theory mentioned throughout this document. These changes are being made without adding courses and with a keen eye on creating additional load, although some additional faculty load will be required. The expectations are that these changes will have a major impact on the quality of the core in addressing needs of students according to their chosen field within the discipline.

Resources are hard to come by at Biola particularly when the music unit does not have the luxury of being in a school for the arts.

The department has recently collaborated with Talbot School of Theology in developing a graduate program in worship. There are conversations about a joint composition degree with the film department in film composition. The Conservatory is more than willing to discuss collaboration where intersections occur.

**D. What additional resources will be needed to sustain the quality of the program?**

First and foremost, facility must be addressed. The Music in Worship program could accommodate more students if facilities were upgraded. A commercial music degree could be considered, but not given current facilities. Beyond contemporary music, the vision of the Conservatory is to provide excellent art music education that will impact the Christian arts community around the world. The faculty has been gathered; it is now a matter of the University providing the facility and the additional resources to make that vision a reality.
Beyond facility, support of an Artist Diploma and support for faculty international travel would promote the vision for an international Biola presence among Christians in the art music world. Central to this vision is a rich music-making environment on campus, which would have a major influence upon students in the Conservatory.

The Conservatory could be an international hub for Christian art-music artists and a place where integration and artistry come together as on no other Christian university campus. So many of the components are in place. But this will only occur if the leaders of the University invest in the vision.