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INTRODUCTION TO MUSIC STUDENT TEACHING COURSES:

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A DISSERTATION APPROVED FOR THE
SCHOOL OF MUSIC

BY THE COMMITTEE CONSISTING OF

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“There are limits to what a solo player can do” - Kirito, SAO (Kawahara et al., 2012, 21:53).

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Definitions

1. Carnegie Classifications for Universities: "The Carnegie Classification® is the leading framework for recognizing and describing institutional diversity in U.S. higher education" (American Council on Education, 2025).
2. Introduction to Music Student Teaching: for this study, "introduction to music student teaching" (IMST) serves as an umbrella term describing the required courses immediately preceding student teaching. Individual institutions may use different titles (See Chapter 4: Transitional Capstone and Chapter 5: Practicum Seminar).
    a. References to IMSTs also include: Pre-student teaching course, introduction to student teaching, introduction to music student teaching.
3. Practicum Semester: The practicum semester, largely referenced in Chapter 5 (Case 2), is the term for the semester in which the IMST course takes place. It is often used interchangeably with IMST when quoted by Barbara.
4. Preservice Educator (PSE): Used when referencing (a) non-music preservice educators (i.e., general education), or (b) *all* preservice educators regardless of content area (e.g., mathematics, science, music, foreign language). I chose to combine these two possible populations because references to PSE in extant literature oftentimes reflects one or both.
5. Preservice Music Teacher (PSMT): Used when describing references to music preservice educators.
6. Singing School: "…refers to a tradition in which music teachers, or singing masters, held classes in communities where people desired to learn to sing by note" (Mark & Gary, 2007, p. 78).

7. Student Teaching Internship: Used to reference the student teaching semester and placement.

Abbreviations

1. AAQEP – Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation
2. ASPA – Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors
3. BA – Bachelor of Arts
4. BS – Bachelor of Science
5. CAEP – Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation
6. CBTE – Competency-Based Teacher Education
7. CHEA – Council for Higher Education Accreditation
8. CoP – Community of Practice
9. CT – Cooperating Teacher
10. EET – Evidence of Effective Teaching
11. EPP – Educator Preparation Program
12. ETS – Educational Testing Services
13. IMST – Introduction to Music Student Teaching
14. LMS – Learning Management System
15. MENC – Music Educators National Conference
16. MSNC – Music Supervisors National Conference
17. MT – Mentor Teacher
18. MTE – Music Teacher Educator
19. MTPP – Music Teacher Preparation Program
20. MUED – Music Education
21. NA*f*ME – National Association for Music Education
22. NASM – National Association of Schools of Music

23. NCATE - National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education

24. NEA – National Education Association

25. NHB – New Horizon Band

26. NIMAC – National Interscholastic Music Activities Association

27. OSRHE – Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education

28. PBTE – Performance-Based Teacher Education

29. PCK – Pedagogical Content Knowledge

30. PPAT – Praxis Performance Assessment for Teachers

31. PSE – Preservice Educator

32. PSMT – Preservice Music Teacher

33. TPA – Teacher Performance Assessment

34. TPP – Teacher Preparation Program

35. TWS – Teacher Work Sample

36. UDL – Universal Design for Learning

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to explore introduction to music student teaching(IMST) courses that preceded the student teaching semester within undergraduate music education degree programs. Research questions included: (1) What led to the development of the course?, (2) What are the purposes and goals of such courses?, and (3) What are the perceptions from the university facilitators or instructor(s) concerning the course? Participants were selected from institutions accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) that granted a bachelor of music education degree ($N = 479$). Invited participants ($N = 2$)for this multiple case study confirmed that: (a) a required "introduction to student teaching"-style course existed within the degree program, (b) they were a faculty member within the music education discipline, and (c) they possessed knowledge of the IMST course (e.g., instructor, facilitator, course creator/designer). Data from existing documentation/artifacts (e.g., syllabi, coursework assignments, degree sheets, course descriptions, rubrics) provided by the participants informed the protocol for individual research interviews. Case descriptions are presented in a narrative fashion, and a cross-case analysis was performed utilizing SWOC (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Challenges) analysis as a framework.

Emergent themes provided opportunities for discussion of benefits and concerns for incorporating an IMST course within music teacher preparation programs. Findings from this study suggest that opportunities for immersive authentic context learning (ACL) experiences and reflective practice within an IMST course may be impactful on preservice music teachers' (PSMTs') identity development, application of instructional techniques, and recognition of student specific needs prior to the student teaching semester. Continued collaboration with mentor teachers and university supervisors/IMST course instructors can provide increased

opportunities for feedback to PSMTs, as well as immediately applicable changes to their instructional strategies. Though integrating such a course may not be feasible in all music teacher preparation programs (MTPPs), music teacher educators (MTEs) may find meaningful ways to adapt the IMST practices and procedures uncovered in this study for possible incorporation into existing coursework or programs. Implications for promising practices concerning the preparation of future music educators in preparation for the student teaching semester are discussed.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Sally walked into the music student teaching seminar classroom with her head dangling in frustration and exhaustion. This was week 9 of her internship semester and she felt so behind. Not because she had any assignments past due, or lesson plans not done–she was a very good student and managed to stay on top or ahead of her coursework and planning. It was because this was week 9 of student teaching and her focus seemed to be more on the certification process (mainly the state-required teacher performance assessment) than on actually teaching kids. Sally couldn't help but try and relate what was happening to her and her students with her peers' experiences. Sure, the cohort met weekly and discussed or vented what had happened in the past week, but they were missing one crucial aspect of reflection: having time to relate their experiences to the last four years of coursework and actually improve upon their teaching. Sally wanted to complete the semester feeling prepared to begin her own teaching career, but something was missing.

As Professor Shepherd witnessed Sally and the other students enter, he couldn't help but feel the same frustrations. He knew there were so many more connections to be made, but time and actual focus for the student teachers were limited–no matter how impactful, creative, or meaningful he hoped the activities he designed for seminar meetings would be to their experiences. "If only there was a way to help prepare these preservice teachers better for student teaching, so they could focus on their actual experiences instead of the bureaucracy of certification requirements... A way for the students to connect knowledge content beyond the classroom." He contemplated a class prior to student teaching that could help the students focus on such concepts. What would be the context and structure of such a course? What goals would he want the students to achieve? Would this benefit the student teachers going forward and better

prepare them as educators? All these questions raced through Professor Shepherd's head as the interns settled in, sharing stories from their classrooms, which all seemed to circle back to their soon-due teacher performance assessment.

Overview

Teacher education programs are important for the development and preparation of future educators (Livers et al., 2021; Rodríguez & Bulnes, 2024). At institutions of higher education, program curricula and standards are overseen by accreditation bodies (CAEP, 2018, 2021, 2022, 2023a, 2025; OEQA, 2025a, 2025b) to ensure that competent educators matriculate into the workforce. In the United States, most teacher preparation programs culminate in a student teaching internship that places soon-to-be educators in a school classroom under the mentorship of an experienced teacher who provides guidance and support (e.g., Bastian et al., 2022; CAEP, 2023b; NASM, 2025b). In music education, the student teaching semester reflects an experience where teacher candidates are afforded opportunities to apply of theory to practice (e.g., Baumgartner, 2014; Conway, 2002; Draves, 2013; Parkes, 2020). Preservice music teachers (PSMTs) combine content and pedagogical knowledge with real-world learning scenarios.

During the internship, many institutions require student participation in a seminar course focused on professional development, reflection, and support to combine knowledge bases with MSTs' experiences in the field (Baumgartner, 2014, 2020; Baumgartner & Councill, 2017; Berg & Miksza, 2010). Content within the student teaching seminar courses have derived from the goals of theory to practice and areas of learning communities, support, and application of content knowledge (Baumgartner & Councill, 2019; Goodman, 1983; Meyer & Sawyer, 2006). Still, investigations into perceptions of MSTs concerning their experience in student teaching seminar—including course content, activities, and reflective practice—revealed a need for more

instructional time in areas common to the student teaching practice (e.g., certification, demands of full-time teaching, classroom management, task concerns) as well as context-centered specifics (Baumgartner & Councill, 2019; Berg & Miksza, 2010; Campbell & Thompson, 2007; Conway, 2002, 2012; Draves, 2021; Koerner, 2018; Miksza & Berg, 2013a). Continued exploration of promising practices consisting of theory-to-practice transfer, identity development, and professional career transitions was necessary in order to best assist PSMTs in gaining the most from their internship experience and seemed imperative toward ensuring teacher education programs develop and prepare future music educators for real-world practices.

Preparation of Preservice Teachers

Those intent on becoming educators pursued teaching for various reasons. Preservice educator (PSE) backgrounds have included a drive for helping others, a legacy of prior family member educators, leadership through community group education (e.g., church youth groups, coaching community teams), or because their own teachers inspired the pursuit of a career in education (Marshall, 2009; Rutten & Badiali, 2020). Regardless of influence, PSEs have attended universities and enrolled in academic programs that prepared them for teacher certification—programs known to instill knowledge, experiences, and skills for PSEs to use in authentic settings (Livers et al., 2021; Rodríguez & Bulnes, 2024). In addition to these profession-necessary learning outcomes, active involvement in a teacher education program was shown to promote teacher identity development (Draves, 2018, 2021)—helping PSMTs to "make sense of and integrate prior experiences, personal conceptions, professional preparation, and current context…" (Draves, 2021) as part of teacher identity in order to truly understand what being a teacher meant.

Curricula for PSEs were typically developed by TPP faculty who conform to guidance and suggestions of accreditation bodies oversight, such as the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), whose purpose is to ensure quality, equity, and excellence in preparation programs for educators (CAEP, 2023c). Within CAEP's standards workbook (CAEP, 2021), outlines are found concerning content and pedagogical knowledge for licensure preparation alongside partnerships and practice. These standards for TPPs are aimed at preparing PSEs with the abilities necessary to be effective educators in diverse learning environments.

Preparation of Preservice Teachers in General Education

One of the cornerstones of teacher education practice is found in Fuller and Bown's (1975) discussion on becoming a teacher, involving stages of learning to teach which include survival, mastery, and pupil impact (pp. 36–37). Current research in music education commonly refers to these stages as self, task, and student centered (Miksza & Berg, 2013a; Raiber & Teachout, 2023). In survival, PSEs are concerned with "…survival as a teacher, about class control, about being liked by pupils, about supervisors' opinions, about being observed, evaluated, praised, and failed" (p. 37). The focus for the PSE is on the self in this stage, internalized at this point to making sure they are meeting personal standards and dealing with identity development. The mastery stage is performance based, where concerns of the situation and tasks in which PSEs teach are primary, including "…having to work with too many students or having too many non-instructional duties, about time pressures, about inflexible situations, [and] lack of instructional materials" (p. 37). The third area of pupil impact and concern shows PSEs focus and intent shift to needs of the students concerning "social and emotional needs of pupils, about the inappropriateness of some curriculum material for certain students, about being

fair to pupils, [and] about tailoring content to individual students…" (pp. 37–38). This trajectory of PSE growth is reinforced through the standards and oversight of TPPs.

TPPs build upon these understandings in conjunction with national oversight of accreditation agencies (e.g., CAEP), and state educator preparation approval agencies (e.g., Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE), Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs)) focusing on standards that provide demonstrable criteria and assessments as a portion of certification requirements (CAEP, 2018, 2022, 2023a; OEQA, 2025a; Jeannine Rainbolt College of Education, 2024). Standards are used as part of reinforcing a quality education for the PSEs and the TPPs, ensuring that educators emerge from TPPs with the knowledge, skills, and experiences necessary to develop student potential (CAEP, 2018). The state-level standards derived from those of CAEP become competencies utilized in the licensure and certification processes of PSEs (OEQA, 2025b), including those concerned with learners, content, instruction and assessment, and professional practices. State requirements placed on institutions housing TPPs oversee teacher preparation through additional requirements (e.g., Oklahoma adds an additional ten requirements for preparation including language proficiencies, subject area concentrations, understanding of student learning levels, management, discipline, instructional technology, and field experiences which include the student teaching process (OEQA, 2024).

Preparation of Preservice Teachers in Music Education

The process of developing preservice music teachers (PSMTs) has been a focus of national music organizations (e.g., NASM, NAfME) and researchers in music education (e.g., Ballantyne & Packer, 2004; Conway, 2002, 2012, 2022; Hourigan & Scheib, 2009; Sirek & Sefton, 2024) concerning subjects from musicianship to application and adaptation. Students within music teacher preparation programs (MTPPs) accredited by the National Association of

Schools of Music (NASM) are expected to demonstrate understanding and knowledge bases by meeting "threshold standards" (NASM, 2025e) within their institution's program curriculum. Threshold standards are described in NASM's handbook (2025b) as part of the association's aims and objectives, ensuring music curricula meet achievement expectations while still allowing schools and administrations to freely develop programs (p. 1). The handbook provides guidelines to accredited institutions, ensuring PSMTs within MTPPs should receive requisite preparatory content designed to build knowledge, skills, and competencies (p. 125) established through the curriculum.

The framework for undergraduate music teacher education curricula is designed around a traditional 120-hour, 4-year program of study (Doerksen, 2020; Maas, et al., 2023; NASM, 2025b). In one of the most recent studies, Maas et al. (2023) describe "…tensions between accreditation requirements, credit hour reduction policies, and curricular aims of music teacher preparation programs" (p. 86), citing issues of increased course loads while credit reducing requirements are mandated. These issues lead to a need for "work[ing] with accreditation and licensure organizations as well as colleagues…to justify the curriculum based on the current and future needs of inservice teachers and students" (p. 99). Within the guidelines for the preparation of PSMTs, the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM, 2025b) suggests a curriculum structure for a total preparation program containing 50% studies in music (e.g., basic musicianship and performance areas, music education methods), 30–35% in general studies (e.g., general education courses), and 15–20% in professional education (e.g., education courses dealing in philosophy, psychology, special education, student teaching) (p.125). Music teacher educators (MTEs) working at NASM-accredited institutions must adhere to these ratios when designing/revising undergraduate music education coursework. Typically, students within music

teacher education study their instrument or voice within applied lesson structures, participate in various ensembles, develop an understanding of music theory and aural skills, combine music history with world music considerations, while also progressing in piano, conducting, rehearsing, and assessment skills (Conway & Hodgman, 2006). MTEs must consider both NASM guidelines and institutional/other requirements in their work to carefully balance undergraduate curricula.

In addition to national music accreditation guidelines, curricula designed to prepare PSMTs often are influenced by regional factors (e.g., regional accreditation bodies within state systems) an institution's unit of education (e.g., core requirements, professional education sequences, teacher preparation accreditation requirements), state departments of education (e.g., certification and licensure requirements, state content standards standards), and faculty preference (e.g., current trends in education, beliefs, values, philosophies). Additional curricular influence can come from recommendations and efforts of professional music education organizations with vested interests in music education (e.g., National Association for Music Education, Society for Music Teacher Education, College Music Society), commissions (e.g., Commission on Teacher Education, National Commission on Excellence in Education), and symposiums (e.g., Tanglewood, Vision 2020) (Doerksen, 2020). The influences of these various sources are synthesized into an informed curriculum, combining current educational trends with degree and state requirements in attempts to best prepare music educators.

General Education Student Teaching and Seminars

Teacher education institutions often utilize capstone components and accompanying seminar courses during the student teaching internship as reflective, assessment, and professional development practices (Cochran & Peters, 2023; Meyer & Sawyer, 2006; Rash & Weld, 2013). Within teacher education research, researchers have engaged in studies focusing on student

teaching as the pinnacle experience of TPPs (Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1987; Tigchelaar & Korthagen, 2004). While these authors reference coursework enabling emerging teachers to be highly qualified, Çakmak and Gündüz (2019) illustrate a lack in transferability of theory to practice when student teachers are faced with real-world situations. As Meyer and Sawyer (2006) noted, TPPs institute student teaching seminars with goals of supporting students in negotiating the real-world scenarios and their lives outside the classroom, which is consistent with additional studies (e.g., Baumgartner, 2014; Baumgartner & Councill, 2019; Conway & Hodgman, 2006; Rash & Weld, 2013). Common goals of capstone and accompanying seminar courses reflect assisting student teaching interns with connecting current practical experience to theories learned in the college/university classroom, thereby deepening understanding and facilitation application (Tigchelaar & Korthagen, 2004).

In order to help assist student teachers during their student teaching semester, a seminar is utilized with a focus on "aiding the change in socialization from university student to teaching professional…" (Baumgartner, 2012, p. 16) and assist them with classroom management and effectiveness concerns (Schelske & Deno, 1994). Past iterations of seminar courses—particularly those designed for elementary education (Goodman, 1983)—were found to lack structure and specified curricula. Additionally, numerous studies within teacher education research reference coursework enabling emerging teachers to be highly qualified, but lacking in transferability of theory to practice when student teachers are faced with real-world situations (Çakmak & Gündüz, 2019; Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1987; Tigchelaar & Korthagen, 2004). The goal of establishing a space for student teachers to reflect on their experiences and create cohesive links between learned theories and classroom practice has perpetuated throughout teacher education curricula, and is demonstrated in learning goals for an English education seminar. These were

stated as “to help student teachers negotiate the ‘two-worlds pitfall’ so that the worlds of the university and of their lives as classroom teachers would speak to each other” (Meyer & Sawyer, 2006, p. 52). Meyer and Sawyer put forth this goal for their English education student teaching seminar in response to discovering questions and concerns from the student teachers which were unanswered or resulted in “group therapy” after interns presented issues for discussion (pp. 52–53). Other seminar discussions included context specifics and foci designed to help student teachers understand their actions and decisions in the classroom, including content knowledge progression and when to teach content, knowledge of students in order to appropriately provide individualized educational concepts and allocate resources, and evaluation practices to best help student progress (Guyton & McIntyre, 1990). Seminars were further instructed to be concerned with the questions of how, what, and why when discussing the educational implications with student teachers as these reflective purposes would challenge and inform student teachers towards better performance. These outlooks reflect common goals withing education seminar courses of assisting student teaching interns with connecting current practical experience to theories learned in the college/university classroom, thereby deepening understanding and facilitating application (Tigchelaar & Korthagen, 2004). Helping student teachers form connections between university courses (i.e., theories) and real-world experiences (i.e., practice) is consistent with previous literature on the student teaching experience (e.g., Çakmak & Gündüz, 2019; Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1987; Tigchelaar & Korthagen, 2004) and the student teacher seminar (Meyer & Sawyer, 2006; Rash & Weld, 2013).

Music Student Teaching and Seminars

The content and curriculum of music student teaching seminars has been explored from the perspectives of both instructor/facilitator (Baumgartner, 2014; Baumgartner & Councill,

2017, 2019; Conway 2002, 2012) and student teacher (Baumgartner & Councill, 2019; Campbell & Thompson, 2007; Conway 2002, 2012; Draves, 2021; Hourigan & Scheib, 2009; Koerner, 2018; McDowell, 2007; Miksza & Berg, 2013a). Findings revealed similarities across varied settings, with various professional and pedagogical topics common to music education seminar courses. When comparing the music student teaching seminar to general education student teaching seminar practices, the music student teaching seminar appeared consistent with the notions of reflective experiences and relating to "real-world" situations (Baumgartner, 2014; Baumgartner & Councill, 2017, 2019; Meyer & Sawyer, 2006) found in general teacher education settings—yet, centered around music-specific pedagogies, classrooms, and learning theories.

Student Teaching Perceptions from Music Student Teachers

The music student teaching internship has been overwhelmingly cited by music educators as the most valuable experience in their college/university education programs (Conway, 2002; Conway et al., 2010; Denis, 2017; Fallin & Royse, 2000). Important considerations for their preparation involved experiencing real-world fieldwork within schools under quality conditions and structured environments related to the current content where PSMTs' attention could be guided and focus drawn to implicit centers (Conway, 2002; 2012; 2022). MSTs have provided feedback concerning their student teaching experiences, citing areas which informed their teaching, and others which they felt underprepared within.

Concerns of under-preparedness by music student teachers included administrative instruction, length of student teaching for curricular content inclusion, and methods courses (i.e., secondary instruments) as they related to their student teaching instructional time. For example, participants in Conway's (2002) study responded to queries about the secondary instruments with

concerns for relating how to teach the instruments as opposed to only learning to play secondaries and that an understanding of instrumental connections was lost. Vocal students listed concerns that certification required instrumental instruction, but was not applicable to their situations (p. 29). Such findings are consistent with those by Conway et al. (2007) and Wagoner and Juchniewicz (2017) when participants indicated the need for greater instrument instructional pedagogy and content knowledge. When discussion was centered around administrative understanding, concern for lack of time to learn during student teaching emerged (Conway, 2002). Further reflection from longitudinal examinations (Conway, 2012; 2022) posited continued agreement when reflecting on the concerns for student teaching experiences and MTPPs. Continued concerns included fieldwork in content and context settings including urban, rural, and suburban (Conway, 2012; 2022) and the need for practical application through the student teaching semester (Conway, 2022).

Content and Curriculum

Curricular design of music student teaching seminar courses was found to be similar across educational institutions. In most cases, instructors chose content that could be categorized into professional or pedagogical topics (Baumgartner & Council, 2017; Conway et al., 2010). Content was often centered around instructional planning, classroom management, assessment and evaluation, certification processes, developing cover letters and resumes, job searches, interview preparation, and understanding policy and procedure within schools and states (Baumgartner, 2020; Baumgartner & Councill, 2017; Conway & Hodgman, 2006; Conway et al., 2010). Professional topics commonly selected were balanced against the pedagogical teaching topics and emotional discussions often found within music student teaching seminars (Conway et al., 2010). Some cases included discussion of specific learning situations and outcomes

(Abrahams, 2009), allowing for reflections by the music student teachers, and promoting critical thinking in situational preparedness.

Student Teaching Seminar Content Perceptions from Music Student Teachers

Music student teachers enrolled in seminar courses perceived the setting to consist of mainly three areas: a learning community, support group, and place to apply the knowledge gained (Baumgartner & Councill, 2019). While these areas appear consistent with findings by Goodman (1983) and Meyer and Sawyer (2006), music student teachers have cited a desire for guidance in more pedagogical areas such as assessment, lesson planning, instruction and feedback, administrative tasks, and special needs instruction (Baumgartner & Councill, 2019; Berg & Miksza, 2010; Campbell & Thompson, 2007; Conway, 2002, 2012; Draves, 2021; Miksza & Berg, 2013a). Although research findings highlight similarities in music student teachers' perceptions, not all student teachers will have the same concerns or ideals due to their varying levels of experiences and the setting with which they are familiar (Berg & Miksza, 2010). For example, Koerner (2018) found that participants were concerned about the emphasis on completion of the certification process in their seminar course and was echoed by Chiu (2014) when they described their student teaching seminar as "edTPA-focused…not as 'inspiring' or 'practical for our teaching,' but rather as 'painful'…" (p. 28). By centering around certification, these seminars removed the student teachers from the goal of relating theory to practice,

Student Teaching Seminar Content Perceptions from Music Instructors/Facilitators

Instructors shared their perceptions of the music student teaching seminar course, indicating a purpose of meeting the needs of student teachers (i.e., current issues, long-term needs) and providing communities of practice for guidance, feedback, and support for the application of learned skills and knowledge (Baumgartner et al., 2024). However, when cross-

referencing student teacher concerns with instructor/facilitator perceptions, areas of concerns for interns appeared to overlap with instructor-provided content. In a nationwide survey of seminar instructors, Baumgartner and Councill (2017) found that "…lesson planning, assessment, and feedback are topics that are routinely covered in [music] student teaching seminars across the country, whereas teaching students with special needs and handling administrative tasks are not" (p. 68). This finding indicates that some topics—those desired by interns, instructors, or both—may be lacking in current seminar curricula. Furthermore, participants in Conway's (2012) study lamented on what they felt was missing regarding administrative understandings (e.g., budgeting, organization, communication with students and parents), consistent with similar findings by Hourigan and Scheib (2009) and Koerner (2018). Koerner suggested seminar course leaders include strategies for professional and personal balance of varied commitments/responsibilities, including organization, evaluation, and certification. This corresponded to Meyer & Sawyer's (2006) two-world discussion and deemed it is necessary for an examination of music student teaching seminar content from real-world situations and job-specific requirements which were not yet met within undergraduate courseloads.

Student Teaching Seminar Instructional Time Issues

With student teachers concerned about the need for understanding more areas of content, the availability of time for instruction became a factor. In Baumgartner and Councill's (2019) study, student teachers remarked on not having enough time within the course/seminar meetings to discuss everything they felt needed attention (e.g., occurrences from their internship placements, course content). Examining the content necessary for developing preservice music educators, Berg and Miksza (2010) discussed the importance of time, recognizing "that one semester may not be an adequate amount of time to realize substantial shifts in concerns" (p. 53).

Still, other participants in Koerner's (2018) study expressed concerns about the content within the seminar course in regard to the amount of class time focused on completing certification requirements—which left little time to address issues of employment or other job-related topics. Recognizing that common structures of the music student teaching seminar course included numerous content areas and instructors and interns appeared to feel a limited amount of time in which to cover them, music teacher educators must consider how best to balance these important concepts. A question raised by Baumgartner and Councill (2017) seemed to require further examination: "Does the seminar course offer the most effective setting for student teachers to receive reinforcement in pedagogical areas, through discussion and other activities?" (p. 68).

Need for the Study

This study was an exploratory examination of introduction to student teaching courses, including the merits, purpose, goals, and achievements they presented. In order to provide the most complete picture of pre-existing introduction to student teaching courses, a qualitative model of inquiry was utilized to better understand the impetus, creation, process, and benefits of the introductory program module. Utilization of qualitative inquiry was selected due to an appropriate investigatory nature which allowed for exploration through emergent processes involving participant experiences and contextual elements (Miksza et al., 2023). Specifically, this approach allowed an investigation utilizing "…broad and open-ended questions, as well as for pursuing underexplored questions…" (p. 115). Given that introductory courses for music student teaching represented a topic yet to be explored, this baseline study seemed necessary to gather initial data in an effort to increase the understanding and knowledge base of the music teacher education profession.

Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to explore introduction to music student teaching courses that preceded the student teaching semester within undergraduate music education degree programs. Specifically, I was interested in how university instructors designed and implement the courses, as well as their perceived benefits and outcomes. Research questions included: (1) What led to the development of the course?, (2) What are the purposes and goals of such courses?, and (3) What are the perceptions from the university or instructor(s) concerning the course? I anticipated findings would lead to implications for music teacher preparation programs that wished to consider pairing a pre-internship course with their traditional student teaching seminar. I also anticipated uncovering possible avenues for continued development of preservice music educators' application of theory to practice (including authentic-context learning (ACL) opportunities) and their benefits, prior to their transition into the student teaching semester.

This exploratory examination targeted National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) accredited institutions that offered bachelor's degrees in music education. Further delimitation specified course instructor(s) of functioning introductory to student teaching settings (a) that occurred prior to the student teaching semester, and (b) were not classified as "student teaching seminar." The universities, instructor(s), and course(s) were identified from a pilot survey sent to prospective institutions.

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

Understanding the importance of teacher education programs at higher education institutions involved a detailed review specific to the history and purpose of the programs, along with the development of student teachers and the connections culminated during the student teaching semester. In this chapter, I provided a historical overview of teacher preparation programs and student teaching development in the United States, while also examining student teaching seminars and the perceptions from student teachers. This chapter provided insight into the courses that precede the student teaching semester, the research questions posed, and culminated with literary research concerning themes which emerged from the findings.

History of Education and Teacher Preparation Programs

Teacher preparation programs (TPPs) are the basis for establishing knowledge and skills of the teaching profession needed by future educators to emerge as consummate professionals, but according to Rodríguez and Bulnes (2024), the responsibilities of these TPPs extends beyond this foundational basis. A broad delve into the history of education and TPPs presents a much larger scope than would be necessary for the brief overview and establishment of need directed by this review of literature. With that in mind, I selected a smaller timeline and locale to establish development of teacher preparation programs within the United States. According to Ediger (2018), the evolution of teacher education curriculum is important for understanding its development and a necessary part of understanding both American and world history. He believed the changes in society influenced and affected the educational situation, which "…brings us up to the present school and classroom with its innovative curriculum" (p. 355). Ediger examined the introduction of kindergarten within the teaching methods of the "educational ladder" (p. 354) and teachings occurring in the home, including the development of

school masters and school buildings as part of the changes necessary to understand as we prepared future educators. With the increase in classroom technology available since 1992 when Ediger noticed "…a computer for each single room was truly a marvel" (p. 354) to having one-to-one devices in present day classrooms, the landscape of information and instruction has continued to change.

Teacher Preparation Programs – Accreditation and Legitimacy

In their current iteration, a large amount of TPPs are accredited through the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). According to the CAEP (2023e) website on why it matters, they state "educator accreditation is a seal of approval that assures quality in educator preparation. Accreditation makes sure that educator programs prepare new teachers to know their subjects, their students, and have the clinical training that allows them to enter the classroom ready to teach effectively" (CAEP, 2023e). As part of accreditation, TPPs are provided with continual support in areas of assessment and analysis towards improvement allowing for future educators to emerge as consummate professionals.

CAEP is important for maintaining the standards for educator preparation and ensuring that while individual TPPs may differ in design of the teacher program, the holistic picture of TPPs will provide the necessary quality training. Utilizing peer reviews every seven to ten years, CAEP examines programs to confirm they meet organizational standards reflective of stakeholders in the academic community and academic professionals (CAEP, 2023d). The basis of CAEP accreditation for departments, colleges, and schools within higher education is a professional setting due to the profession type being examined (e.g., nursing, teaching, engineering, architecture, physical therapy) (ASPA, 2019). While accredited institutions adhere to the standards and rigors of organizations like CAEP, NASM, and CHEA, individuals seeking

TPPs are encouraged to avoid "dubious providers" (CAEP, 2023d) which might not conform to the standards and qualities found within accredited programs. According to CHEA (2009), degree mills

> …offer credentials based on little study or engagement in higher education activity…students are often misled by what is offered by degree mills, but others knowingly pay a significant fee in order to claim (falsely) that they have completed a legitimate course of study leading to reliable certification. (p. 1)

Due to a lack of a shared definition internationally for organizations considered to be "degree mills," regulations and enforcement of standards are a challenge. CHEA (2009) continues to maintain that these non-accredited units harm students and society when areas of health and safety are risked due to sub-standard or fraudulent credentials (pp. 1–2).

Those institutions accredited by CAEP for TPPs share standards of excellence and ensure proper instruction of future educators. The CAEP standards are also reviewed and updated every seven years, consistent with their bylaws (CAEP, 2023b). There are currently seven standards which are necessary for accreditation: (1) content and pedagogical knowledge; (2) clinical partnerships and practice; (3) candidate recruitment, progression, and support; (4) program impact; (5) quality assurance system and continuous improvement; (6) fiscal and administrative capacity; and (7) record of compliance with Title IV of the Higher Education Act (CAEP, 2023b). In examining literature items for this dissertation, I focused mainly on standards one through five.

History of Education

The ability to learn is stated by Hodges (2017) to be '…a particular hallmark of humanity…" (p. 29), one that is unique to us as human beings as a shaping tool. His

philosophical interpretation of education and the purpose/focus ask questions centered around the curriculum and outcome. He posited questions pertaining to foci on general knowledge base creation, career development, individualized specializations, or social and ethical concentrations. Colonial Americans understood educational imperatives, establishing school laws as early as 1642 in Massachusetts (Keene, 1982). The first law for schools "…required town officials to compel parents to provide their children with an elementary education" (Mark, 1996, p. 3), and a second law following in 1647 requiring the appointment of teachers for townships of 50 families or more. The 1647 law in Massachusetts also required "grammer schoole" [*sic*] (p. 4) for areas with 100 or more families to ensure university training at Harvard College (Keene, 1982; Mark 1996). Post American-revolution, a general education system was not publicly enticing, as "…many people associated the term "public school" with "pauper school" (Mark & Gary, 2007, p. 117), though by the 1820s, free public schools began to become of interest to the citizens of the United States helped by the Workingmen's Association (Mark & Gary, 2007). Funding began to improve for the public schools as taxes began to infuse districts with operational abilities, including school length increases and teacher salaries. Through these productivity advancements, the education system and public or free schools became a part of American lives (Mark & Gary, 2007).

Massachusetts continued its affirmation for the need for education and passed another law in 1824 which would place a secondary school (still part of the free public school system) in every community of 500 or more families. An important part of the law was also the inclusion of subjects necessary for preparation of adulthood, including history, mathematics, accounting, and surveying. Additional subjects were applied to the requirements of schools with populations over 4,000 families and included the languages of Greek and Latin, as well as logic and the art of

persuasion (Mark & Gary, 2007, p. 120). As the public-school movements and laws enacted a development of students and a prosperous future, there was still a gap in the complete education. It was missing the arts, but more specifically, music.

History of Education – Music Education

While general education in the early colonies focused on reading, writing, and training in a craft, formal music training was not part of the education system. Oral transmission of musical traditions was commonplace due to the lack of musical training, and the quality of musical interpretation began to wane. This was especially true in the churches (Mark & Gary, 2007) whose commentors remarked on the "mournful monotony…[and]…horrible manner" musical tunes were performed (Mark, 1996, p. 4). To combat the growing concern, singing schools were developed which initiated the rise of music education. Singing schools were established in a variety of locations including churches, schools, and societal gathering spaces (Keene, 1982; Mark, 1996; Mark & Gary, 2007). The basics of notation and note recognition were taught to children and sometimes entire families and the communities came to understand the practical necessity for music as both enjoyment and social purpose (Keene, 1982; Mark, 1996).

As the importance of music grew in the communities and townships, people began to see it's function in both church and recreation and was deemed as a subject of importance. A cornerstone of importance to the development of music education was the inclusion of music into the school curriculum. Music's inclusion started as an experiment within the Boston schools in 1837, but due to a lack of funding approval, required the promoter to work in one school at their own expense and time. The individual was Lowell Mason (Keene, 1982; Mark & Gary, 2007). By the start of the following school year (1838), the success of Mason's work convinced the Boston School Committee to officially endorse the music education curricular inclusion (Keene,

1982; Mark, 1996; Mark & Gary, 2007). The Boston School Committee supported their decision with statements of "music, unlike other school subjects, had to meet the criteria of being intellectually, morally, and physically beneficial to children" (Mark, 1996, p. 6) and offering justifications for music's inclusion in the school curriculum because "it also offered improved recreation, worship, and discipline" (Mark, 1996, p. 6). While the Boston School Committee did allow for the inclusion of music education, limitations were established for hours per week and when classes would be held (Keene, 1982) which can still be seen to carry into the modern dictation of regulations for the arts within schools today.

Music education then expanded into the American public school system post-civil war, albeit slowly. There appeared to be two key factors which preceded the inclusion of music as a subject in any school: (1) a support group for a local community music teacher, and (2) a tax supported school system that did not limit the spending of tax dollars on expanded curriculum (Keene, 1982).

With its inclusion, music education continued to develop and pedagogical stances became instances of debate, including the approaches of rote-versus-note and sight-before-sound (Keene, 1982; Mark, 1996). Through the methods of Sterrie Weaver and Ralph Baldwin, there was an advocation for the necessity of reading the music language in addition to the rote methods of singing (Gerber, 2021). Weaver produced a method whereby the students would read music through the use of scale relation, imitation, movable *do,* and rhythmic patterns and it was subsequently tested at the 1903 Department of Music Education meeting during the NEA's (National Education Association) annual meeting (Spurgeon & Gerber, 2013). The method was then brought to classroom teachers and music supervisors during summer school at the Sterrie Weaver Summer School, which Baldwin assumed leadership of after Weaver's death in 1904.

During the turn of the century, there were not established teacher education programs within universities nor official music degrees, and thus, the summer school, which later became the Institute of Music Pedagogy in 1907, provided a way to enable the classroom teachers, who were not music educators, and music supervisors to instruct music in the public schools (Spurgeon & Gerber, 2013).

Yet more attention was dedicated to societal and pedagogical changes in the twentieth century with child-centered movements and concerns for the true purpose of music education emerged (Mark, 1996). An emphasis for performances by school music groups became the determining factor for music education proficiency. National school band contests emerged in Chicago in 1923 with the help of instrument manufacturers and dealers (Wilson et al., 1988). Continued modification to the competition purpose directed the focus towards ratings and comments instead of the business model of placements with awarded trophies. These restructured contests came under the purview of the National School Band, Orchestra, and Vocal Association (later known as NIMAC or the National Interscholastic Music Activities Commission) which ceased to exist after 1967 (Wilson et al., 1988).

While the landscape of education and music's purpose within the curriculum evolved, large world impacts emerged (e.g., World War One, World War Two, the Cold War, the Korean War). Societal demands in the 1950s influenced industrial, military, and educational decision makers who implied anti-intellectualism within the education system itself (Mark, 1996). Due to scientific advances and a rush to interstellar placement, a shift occurred in American education to a science-centered approach spurred on by then Vice Admiral Hyman G. Rickover. Rickover viewed much of the educational system as wasteful, including music education and encouraged the elimination of activities from curricular consideration (Mark, 1996). As the changes began to

occur in considerations for important educational subjects, groups like the National Education Association began projects which did support arts education; however, the music education area was continually seen as a non-academic subject even after reports and backing from national organizations (Mark, 1996).

It was during the 1960s that a new voice in music education emerged with a bold claim. The Music Educators National Conference (MENC) held their biennial meeting in 1962 with a theme of music as an academic discipline (Mark, 1996). As outside influences continued to affect ideas on education in general, a report was released by the National Commission on Excellence in Education entitled: *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform*. The commission was formed in 1981 by then Secretary of Education T. H. Bell and was directed to report findings concerning the educational quality of American schools and children within two years (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). The commission stated their goal was not to find scapegoats, but rather to help the education system in America through identifying problems and providing solutions. As the commission examined risks, they acknowledged deficiencies in areas of new fields and skills required of workers. With the rapid growth and advancement of technology since the 1960s space race, computer technology, robotics, and their involvement in industrial, medical, military, and educational fields brought forth concerns. The commission illustrated the concern for rudimentary subjects being over-emphasized, leaving behind "…other essential skills such as comprehension, analysis, solving problems, and drawing conclusions" (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983, p. 12). When considering the effect of these subjects on human beings, they concluded:

> [An] over-emphasis on technical and occupational skills will leave little time for studying the arts and humanities that so enrich daily life, help maintain civility, and develop a

> sense of community. Knowledge of the humanities, they maintain, must be harnessed to science and technology if the latter are to remain creative and humane, just as the humanities need to be informed by science and technology if they are to remain relevant to the human condition. (p. 12)

History of Education – Music Teacher Preparation Programs

During the 1800s in the United States, reformations were being made towards education and specifically towards the teacher training systems. Proponents of teacher education (e.g., Ralph Waldo Emerson, Lowell Mason, and William Woodbridge) would use a community level movement known as Lyceum (i.e., adult education) to help the public recognize the importance of music in the schools as part of a valuable curriculum (Mark & Gary, 2007; Sunderman, 1956), though it was still at that time taught by current classroom teachers. By 1865, normal schools (i.e., academies providing teacher training through courses of school management and the common subjects of the day) were recognized as necessary and across ten states, 15 schools were available (Keene, 1982). Over the course of the next few years, normal schools would expand from one to four years of instruction which more closely resembles the current practices. For music education's advancement, one normal school in Massachusetts would circulate advertisements for an inclusion of full year vocal music among a few other non-common subjects. By the end of the nineteenth century, courses of music in normal schools grew to include music history, harmonic practices, and lessons of instrumental music (Keene, 1982).

Even with the inclusion of more time and course, the various institutions which instructed these courses did not have a consistent or standard practice for developing the future educators, and most were focused on the classroom teacher, not music supervisors (Keene, 1982). This began to change in 1871 when a normal school in Mansfield, Pennsylvania created a specific

department for the specialization in music instruction and listed four areas covered: (1) Vocal; (2) Theory; (3) Aesthetics; and (4) Instrumental (Keene, 1982, p. 207). Three areas in music were necessary to graduate, alongside a teacher's class course and required at least theory, an instrument, and voice. The vocal area covered vocal music and voice development in solo and chorus works, including sacred classics to current secular popular music. Theory provided study for notation and harmony, alongside compositional techniques. Aesthetics were concerned with the beauty of music (i.e., similar to Reimer's (1970) views on aesthetic musical education) and the development of perception which would lead to understanding the effects of music. The instrumental studies centered around general instrument use, whether that was in the church (e.g., organ, piano) or other social areas, as well as orchestras and brass bands (Keene, 1982).

Progression of music teacher preparation programs can also be seen in Figure 2.1, a four-year program development curriculum plan at Michigan State Normal School for the 1882-1883 school year. The curriculum becomes more heavily music oriented past the first year. In the second year, more common courses are present while in the third and fourth year, musical concentrations become paramount (Keene, 1982). The early twentieth century saw more schools and curriculum versions appear, including the Iowa State Teachers College who in 1910 showcased a two-year comprehensive program (see figure 2.2) in which music education courses were the primary focus (Kenne, 1982) and the Oberlin Conservatory's four-year program in 1920 (Mark & Gary, 2007).

Music teacher education also became the subject of discussion among national level departments, including the NEA (National Education Association) Department of Music Education. During their 1902 meeting, a committee was formed to present a plan for school

Figure 2.1

Last three years of a four-year curriculum at Michigan State Normal School 1882–1883

SECOND YEAR

First Term	*Second Term*
1. Elements of vocal music with methods of instruction	1. Advanced vocal music and voice culture
2. Algebra	2. Elementary Physics
3. Rhetoric	3. English Literature
4. German, French or Latin, Essays	4. German, French or Latin, Essays
Instrumental music may be substituted for either 2, 3, or 4.	Instrumental music may be substituted for 4.

THIRD YEAR

1. Harmony	1. Harmony
2. Voice Culture	2. Voice Culture
3. Principles of Teaching	3. Principles of Teaching
4. German, French or Latin, Essays	4. German, French or Latin, Essays
Instrumental music may be substituted for 4.	Instrumental music may be substituted for 4.

FOURTH YEAR

1. Musical Composition and Literature of Music	1. Solo Singing
2. Solo Singing	2. Literature
3. Language or Literature	3. Professional training in Arithmetic, 10 wks. in Grammar, 10 wks.
4. Practice teaching. Essays.	4. Practice Teaching. Essays
Instrumental music may be substituted for 3.	Instrumental music may be substituted for 2.

Note. This figure shows years two through four and omits year one. Year one courses were selected in conjunction with the principal of the school and only during the last three years did the specializations become prominent. From “A History of Music Education,” by James A. Keene, 1982. Copyright 1982 by University Press of New England.

teacher education in music which published their report in 1905 (Mark & Gary, 2007). The report outlined key concepts that are present in teacher preparation programs including:

Figure 2.2

Two-year curriculum from Iowa State Teachers College 1910–1911.

FIRST YEAR

First Term	*Second Term*	*Third Term*
Psychology	English Literature	Nature Study
Rhetoric	Psychology	Voice
3rd Term Music	4th Term Music	6th Term Music
Sight Singing	Sight Singing and Methods	Methods
Elementary Harmony	History of Music	Harmony
Voice	5th Term Music	History of Music
	Harmony	5th Term Music
	Voice	Ear Training
	Physical Training	Advanced Sight Singing
	Literary Society Work	Piano

SECOND YEAR

First Term	*Second Term*	*Third Term*
Sound	History	History of Education
Elocution	School Management	Voice
7th Term Music	8th Term Music	9th Term Music
History of Music	Appreciation	Supervision
Harmony	Harmony	Harmony
Conducting	Child Voice	Theory
Observation	Practice Teaching	Practice Teaching
	Physical Training	
	Literary Society Work	

Piano and voice taught privately.
Term–12 weeks of daily recitation (1 hour).
Not all classes met five days per week.

Note. From "A History of Music Education," by James A. Keene, 1982. Copyright 1982 by University Press of New England.

(1) literary qualification at least equal to those of high school graduates (suggesting possibly that many professional musicians who had tired of touring with opera companies or circuses sought school supervisory positions); (2) musical qualification to include proficiency on an instrument or as a singer, knowledge of theory, music history, and

conducting; and (3) familiarity with school music textbooks and courses of study (p. 321).

As programs were created, a lack of oversight or cohesion between schools was apparent. To combat this, it became necessary for a supervising body to be established. Thus, in Keokuk, Iowa in 1907, the creation of the Music Supervisors National Conference (MSNC) occurred which worked towards a uniform curriculum (Birge, 1932; Keene, 1982). The MSNC was formed officially as an organization with a constitution in 1910 (Birge, 1932), and committees were charged with reporting curricular issues. These committee reports would lead to the establishment of MSNC's Research Council (originally appointed as the Education Council) in 1918 (Birge, 1932) who provided a report in 1921 with a music specialist training program curriculum designed over a four-year span and helped to align music teacher preparation programs in relation to their current design (Keene, 1982; Mark & Gary, 2007).

Curricular designs of the MTPP in the early 1900's were focused on multiple areas of study in order to comprise a degree standard. Keene (1982) lists the curriculum—where upon completion, a bachelor of "music" or "music education" degree would be awarded—as broken into two main sections: 25% consisting of general studies and 75% music and professional coursework. For the music portion, considerable hours were dedicated to piano, voice, ear training and music theory, history of music, music appreciation, instrumentation, and electives. While similar, Mark & Gary (2007) provides a curriculum divided into three areas (i.e., general education, professional education, and music studies) with 25% of the coursework applying to each of the first two areas and 50% in musical theories and applications. The two designs, while differing in percentages, are essentially the same overall. This is due to MSNC's supervision of

the process while leaving institutions to decide the percentages and specifics for the general studies and musical considerations. These curricular designs and allowances for institutions has become the standard operating procedure, with slight modifications to the present (Keene, 1982; Mark & Gary, 2007).

Soon after the Research Council's report of 1921, another association was formed with the goal of national standards in music-related disciplines. The National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) was formed in 1924 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, by members of sixteen institutions for higher education (NASM, 2025c) and with a purpose of accrediting music degree programs (Mark & Gary, 2007). Originally meeting in Cincinnati, Ohio, to discuss credit transfer issues, it became apparent to the gathered representatives that a standard should be set alongside uniform regulations which led to the establishment of the organization in Pittsburgh. NASM continued to work towards a standardized bachelor degree and completed their work in 1928 (NASM, 2025c).

From the 1920s until the 1960s, the look and design of music teacher education observed very little alteration (Mark, 1996). One area of interest during this time was the rise of the instrumental music educator preparation, pioneered by William Revelli in 1941 at the University of Michigan (Mark & Gary, 2007) While keeping with the major requirements and designs from previous years, additional concentrations were made for students to major on primary instruments while obtaining teaching abilities on woodwind and brass instruments. Revelli's goal was to prepare school instrumental music instructors to teach in secondary schools or as instrumental faculty at collegiate levels.

By the 1960s and into the 1970s, education became a rising concern for the public which led to changes in teacher preparation through performance- and competency-based teacher

education (PBTE and CBTE, respectively) (Mark, 1996; Mark & Gary, 2007). Reforms in music education practiced were focus on lack of performance technique, reading skill deficiencies, and world cultural music. These areas were targeted due to school areas, such as urban school districts, where teachers were perceived to have a lack of preparedness from their institutions to teach in those environments or meet urban student needs (Mark, 1996; Mark & Gary, 2007).

To combat deficiencies, competencies for music teachers were recommended by the Music Educators National Conference (MENC – formerly the MSNC) Commission on Teacher Education as part of the certification qualifications (MENC Commission on Teacher Education, 1970). Their commission believed educators need competent preparedness as "…most of today's graduates are finding major areas of their preparation neither sufficient or relevant to the problems they face in their first jobs" (p. 38). To that end, the commission recommended musical competencies in: (1) performing with musical understanding and technical proficiency; (2) playing accompaniments; (3) singing; (4) conducting; (5) supervising and evaluating the performance of others; (6) organizing sounds for personal expression; (7) demonstrating an understanding of the elements of music through original composition and improvisation in a variety of styles; (8) demonstrating the ability to identify and explain compositional choices of satisfactory and less satisfactory nature; (9) notate and arrange sounds for performance in school situations; (10) identify and explicate compositional devices as they are employed in all music; (11) discuss the affective results of compositional devices; and (12) describe the means by which the sounds used in music are created (Mark, 1996; MENC Commission on Teacher Education, 1970, pp. 39–41). The MENC Commission report, alongside NASM's standards for accreditation led to a higher mandate on undergraduate music education majors credit requirements, and was

even more stringent than those required of National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) (Mark & Gary, 2007).

MENC continued to focus on MTPP during the 1980s and 1990s, appointing another task force to study programs across the nation with input from music educators and other individuals concerned with the state of music education. The task force returned findings with recommendations for changes in: (1) recruitment; (2) program selection; (3) program retention; (4) teacher certification; (5) programs for professional development of music teachers; and (6) a need for partnerships between MTPPs, cooperating teachers, and higher education instructors (Mark & Gary, 2007, p. 329). MTPPs have implemented many of the recommendations and updated their practices to better suit the needs of the future educators. They continue to develop best practices in order to best prepare future music educators including understanding and changing student teaching practices and seminars.

History and Development of Student Teaching

Apprenticeships ("Apprenticeship", 2025) were established from a very early era as the method in which skills and crafts were to be passed onward. One of the earliest representations of this is the Code of Hammurabi requiring the instruction of future craft workers. This would later develop into the idea of guilds and trades under the supervision of a master who took workers who had served as apprentices for approximately seven years in which to learn their craft. Colleges and Universities also incorporated the idea of apprentice to master with the development of master's degree programs. American apprenticeships began to change around the 1920s with employment of non-apprenticed workers in the crafts or unions. The U.S. Department of Labor was established in 1937 which oversaw apprentice training and established age requirements to enter into any working area. Training for incoming workers, especially for the

trades or vocational industries, takes place at vocational or training schools over two to five years, which include certification and qualifying exams to demonstrate training proficiency.

The current system of student teaching is essentially another form of apprenticeship (McIntyre, 2009), wherein the preservice teacher has undergone four years of training and instruction, is working towards qualifying examinations and certifications, and spends time under the supervision of a master teacher during an internship. Like the early era craft guilds, schools were established early on, as early as 2000 B.C. (McIntyre, 2009) with teacher education having only been established as an interest in the 17th century. Student teaching, as part of teacher training, is suggested to have been a part of the Jesuit priests training in Europe during the middle of the 1500s. It was during this era that historians believe Jean Baptiste de la Salle established the idea of practice teaching and became affectionately known as the "Father of Student Teaching" (p. 4). While the evolution of teacher training was progressing in Europe during the 17th and 18th centuries, early American history demonstrates a lack of a formal style of teacher preparation programs until post-Civil War. These programs began to develop as departments of education in colleges and universities with varying approaches consisting of elementary subject preparation in normal schools and scientific field-based concerns at universities (McIntyre, 2009; Urban, 1990).

As discussed previously, normal schools were functioning in the capacity of teacher training during the 19th century in America, but only focusing on the common subjects. Once satisfactory study time on these subjects were completed was admission to a professional training setting authorized (Washburn-Moses & Washburn, 2021). The professional training consisted of a practice or model school of grades K-8 which was held at the same site as the normal school under the supervision of a director who oversaw the candidates for at least two

weeks. The practice of "student teaching" in this way continued on into the 1920s (Washburn-Moses & Washburn, 2021). Because the normal school teacher training and preparation programs were focused on K-8, those in the training program were only really preparing for teaching in those levels, and not those of the secondary level. It is clear from a report of the Committee on Normal Schools to the NEA that the training of teachers was an important consideration for these schools, and should still be student focused in the preparation. The report outlines "…the first interest in the teaching process is the child; the work can and must be so conducted that the child shall receive as good or better training than he would otherwise be likely to receive" (National Education Association, 1899, p. 14). Further, the committee may be the first to emphasize the student teaching internship as "…the most valuable course for the student, for it furnishes, at the same time, both theory and practice" (p. 14). The committee's report further outlines that actual teaching and application of gained knowledge is important and necessary to develop the teacher. It also contains requirements for student teachers in regards to instruction and amount of required time in the classroom. Item 14 of the training school's section in the report lists a minimum of one class period a day for a year and justifies it because:

> Teaching is an art that must be learned, and it is so difficult that it requires time. The object of this student teaching is not merely to see whether the practician can teach passably well or not, but rather to take the practician at whatever point of development he may already have reached, and lead him to improve in his instruction.
>
> For example, it requires a good deal of time and practice to accustom teachers to make summaries at the proper time, to review and apply sufficiently the knowledge already acquired, and to rank facts according to their relative worth. If the application of

> theory were easy, there would need be little student teaching; but since it is recognized as one of the most difficult tasks, there should be abundant provision for it. (p. 17)

Through these stances and outlines, the committee has outlined what student teaching is and how it should be achieved, alongside a justification for its usage and design.

One of the first instances of student teaching internship in American history outside of the normal schools was implemented in 1909 at Brown University. These internships were paid, albeit at half-salary, and lasted the one year. During this time, the interns were still competing coursework while working under a cooperating teacher who supervised their internship, as well as a university supervisor who was a professor of education (McIntyre, 2009). An earlier account is found with Samuel Reah Hall's Concord Academy (Washburn-Moses & Washburn, 2021) where practical application occurred as under the supervision of a current teacher while demonstrating mastery of subjects through paperwork which included subject content, knowledge of students, and establishing lessons plans. A similarity can be seen from the Concord Academy model and current practices of proving content mastery through examinations such as Praxis or subject area tests, and certification requirements consisting of proving knowledge of students alongside preparing for their individualized instruction (CAST, 2025; ETS, 2025a; Praxis, 2025).

This system of student teaching and certification is still in use today with our present systems of cooperating teachers and university supervisors overseeing the student teaching internship, although most universities require a semester of internship (i.e., 12-15 weeks) and unless otherwise noted, is unpaid (Conway & Hodgman, 2006; Greenberg et al., 2011; Ronfeldt & Reininger, 2012). Current setups and goals of student teaching are established by state mandates and collegiate or university practices. As part of educator preparation, the CAEP has

provided standards which also add determining factors to the student teaching experience. Concerning the standard of clinical practice and partnerships, CAEP defines the standard as:

> [Standard 2: Clinical Partnerships and Practice] The provider ensures effective partnerships and high-quality clinical practice are central to candidate preparation. These experiences should be designed to develop candidate's knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions to demonstrate positive impact on diverse students' learning and development. High quality clinical practice offers candidates experiences in different settings and modalities, as well as with diverse P-12 students, schools, families, and communities. Partners share responsibility to identify and address real problems of practice candidates experience in their engagement with P-12 students. (CAEP, 2023a)

While we know that the music student teaching semester is the culminating portion of the undergraduate music education degree and one of the most important experience the preservice music educators will experience (Baumgartner, 2014; Conway, 2002; Draves, 2013; Parkes, 2020), it is important to note that there are a variety of established student teaching practices across states. MTPPs governed by state mandates require specific hours within classroom settings, levels of placement, and can include flexible designs for involving elementary and secondary schooling placements (Conway et al., 2010). The goal for any MTPP is to provide an internship where student teachers encounter a variety or diversity of experiences across levels and settings.

While creating opportunities for diversity are important, they can also be a disadvantage to student teachers. For example, an elementary placement may meet with the same group of students once every 4 or more days over an eight-week period, resulting in only working with those specific students for a total of ten days during that period. When a placement in a single

setting allowed for continuous interaction and time for the student teacher to get to know the students, instruct, and reflect on that teaching, the student teacher might have felt more comfortable with beginning teaching outside the MTPP as opposed to a student teacher who spent eight weeks in one setting before moving to another and having to restart the process over again (Conway et al., 2010). Another consideration for student teachers is the selection of which semester between the fall and spring semester was appropriate for their internship. In the area of instrumental (i.e., band) student teaching, the semester in which student teachers intern determined the content and coverage in a secondary setting. In the fall, marching band is the primary expectations, whereas the spring is more concert band centered. By selecting either semester, the student teacher gained experience in one area majorly, while they relied on their own understanding and transference to compensate for the alternate semester.

The goal for the student teaching semester was suggested to be full immersion of the student teacher into the complete setting of a music teacher (Conway et al., 2010), while student teachers were provided with the opportunities to observe, reflect, and build teaching experiences (Parkes, 2020).

History and Development of Student Teaching Seminar

The development of student teaching seminars was difficult to pinpoint, as there was not nearly the amount of research on student teaching seminars in general or music education as compared to research on student teaching for the same areas. Korthagen (1992), demonstrated this through established descriptions of programs in the Netherlands as "…quite general, and provid[ing] no detailed information about activities which encourage prospective teachers to subject their teaching practice to a critical analysis" (p. 265), alongside a need for "descriptions of techniques or activities which can be used in seminars in teacher education to promote

reflection" (p. 265). Conversely, Ullrich (1992) did present student teaching seminars are important to studies because those student teaching seminars contain multiple areas of teacher preparation (e.g., preservice teachers, authentic field experiences, reflective-based inquiry) (p. 362). We do know, however, efforts have been made to develop the student teaching experience and accompanying seminar as part of reforms (Cochran-Smith, 1991) which helped to establish student teaching seminars as an important component of the student teaching experience. This presented the need for more descriptions of the uses and content for student teaching seminars and provided evidence of a lack of data and need for further study and inquiry.

Additional problems arose with inconsistent use of the term "seminar," especially when referring to individual courses taught in a seminar-style (e.g., Pelton, 2014) versus the title of courses like "student teaching seminar" occurring during the student teaching semester. In researching mentions of student teaching seminar alongside the development of student teaching, Johnson (1968) provided references to reports as early as 1933 which listed the use of seminar-style meetings for those in practice teaching (p. 173). The frequency, content, and purpose of said seminar meetings was not listed, so inference of the use and comparisons are only speculation when likened to current practices. An additional mention by Johnson provided a survey of Minnesotan teacher preparation programs in 1964, but only provided statistics concerning the hosting of seminar courses within institutions (p. 183). Again, these were singular mentions of student teaching seminar course usage, but not of content or purpose from which to draw a historical development line.

Associations created for the purpose of improving student teaching have stated issues that student teaching seminars now propose to address. The Association for Student Teaching, for example, contributed to developing student teaching by contributing "over forty yearbooks, a

considerable number of bulletins, many research reports, a great number of newsletters, and results of surveys - - all dealing with student teaching" (Johnson, 1968, p. 158) by 1965. Within the 1926 yearbook, Sprague (1926) compiled student teacher problems, some of which were areas of discussion currently found in student teaching seminars (e.g., knowledge of students, lesson planning, classroom management and motivation, assessment, professional growth community, theory to practice, transference from self to student) (p. 67). While these examples were in response to student teacher problems found in the normal schools of the time, inference was drawn that these areas are important and should be addressed, especially when compared to content of present-day student teacher seminars, which are discussed in the following sections.

Student Teaching Seminar – General Education

Student teaching seminars could have a varied design in terms of meetings, locations, facilitators, structure, and content (Golsan, 1997; Sumrall et al., 2017; Ullrich, 1992; Windley, 1972). While not all student teaching seminars looked the same, they each trended toward an overarching goal: support the student teachers through examining the student teaching experience and provide reflective opportunities for growth (Greenberg et al., 2011). Often, seminar courses achieved this through group discussions on current experiences, establishing theory-to-practice using authentic learning experiences, developing a community of practice, utilizing activities and strategies for teaching, and providing reflective practices (Kent & Simpson, 2009; Tezgiden, 2016; Ullrich, 1992; Windley, 1972). While not explicit in whether their discussion concerns interactions with student teachers during the internship or a seminar function, Österling and Christiansen (2018) presented a culminating review from literature on mathematics practices concerning the importance of learning from the student teaching experience. The importance they mentioned concerns the improvements to the student teaching

experience from guided discussion and reflection, taking theory to practice, and analysis and reflection which aligned with seminar practices.

The discussions within student teaching seminars often involved inquiry practices, including those where student teachers brought instances from their own experiences and teaching episodes for analysis and discussion (Meyer & Sawyer, 2006). A student teaching seminar usually occurred in response to the "two-world" setting discussed by Meyer and Sawyer (2006), where student teachers have completed their preservice courses and initiated the student teaching semester. The student teaching seminar acted as a bridge between the two worlds: those of the university and of the school classroom, and provided an opportunity for discussion and reflection.

Problems found in some seminar courses were equated to issues also found in the school setting. For example, in Meyer and Sawyer (2006), they described an iteration of a student teaching seminar course to be no different from faculty lounges consisting of unsupported (i.e., research based) advice which did not answer the problems raised and presented the feeling of "watercooler" talk and venting therapy sessions (pp. 51–52). An additional area of concern arose in Quezada's (2004) study of elementary teacher education, where the appropriate coverage within the student teaching seminar's preparation of the student teachers for the transition into full-time teaching by way of employment searches and procurement was discussed:

> Because of various time and curricular restraints in the "student teaching seminar" which often meets once per week during the semester or as few as seven sessions, leaves minimal time for teacher educators to responsibly cover and support the needs of the student teachers in the employment preparation process" (p. 75).

The timing and curricular restraints were not further delineated by Quezada, nor were examples provided, so this set of concerns might have been from a singular setting in which Quezada was involved.

Student Teaching Seminar – Music Education

The last two decades have seen music education student teaching seminars become the subject of increased research interest (Baumgartner, 2014; Baumgartner & Councill, 2017, 2019; Fitzpatrick, 2014; Juchniewicz, 2018). Similar to general education student teaching seminars, music education student teaching seminars were noted to consist of varied structure (Juchniewicz, 2018) and content (Baumgartner, 2014; Baumgartner & Councill, 2015, 2017, 2019). Music education student teaching seminars were stated to be important to PSMT development because they "provide[d] opportunities for interns to reconnect, share stories about their student teaching experiences, and discuss ideas pertinent to their educational and professional journeys" (Baumgartner & Councill, 2017, p. 62). The purpose for music student teaching seminars consisted of broad perspectives designed to "align and [support] the practicum aspects of the student teaching semester" (Baumgartner & Councill, 2019, p. 12). Participants in music student teaching seminars echoed ideas of alignment, citing the factors from their student teaching experience as the purpose of the seminar (Baumgartner & Councill, 2019), viewing seminars as learning communities, support groups, or places to apply knowledge (Councill & Baumgartner, 2017). These views aligned with Fitzpatrick's (2014) suggestion that seminars provided opportunities for social support and reflective thinking alongside communities of practice.

Content for music education student teaching seminars varied when explored by Baumgartner (2014), as respondents to his survey provided areas of student teacher

responsibilities, PSMT professionalism, relationships (i.e., student teacher to mentor teacher), classroom and behavior management, administrative responsibilities, and degree coursework as important topics. Professional topics notated across studies (e.g., Baumgartner, 2014; Baumgartner & Councill, 2019; Councill & Baumgartner, 2017) indicated similar content topics for employment (e.g., resume/cover letter, teaching portfolio, mock interviews) and curriculum/pedagogical (e.g., lesson planning, reflective journaling, peer discussions, classroom management, assessment) to those mentioned by Baumgartner's (2014) respondents. Topics found across studies aligning the music education student teaching seminar to the student teaching semester demonstrated how PSMTs continued in teacher development through communities of practice and support within the seminar class, while delving into topics designed to reflect on their undergraduate courses. As PSMTs reflected on how to apply theory to practice, their content knowledge and skills became transferable from their current student teaching situations to future teaching settings and scenarios.

Teacher Identity Development

The teacher identity is considered complex, consisting of characteristics and qualities within personal and professional makeups of the PSMTs (Beijaard & Meijer, 2017; Draves, 2021; Tucker, 2020). Some researchers (e.g., Freer & Bennett, 2012; Pellegrino, 2009; Tucker, 2020) have examined a duality of PSMT identity developing between musician and educator, and suggest the dualism to be a source of tension between identity development, though Freer and Bennett (2012) see the musical self-efficacy side of PSMTs perceived as "significant in the development of identity" (p. 281). A duality might be present in MTPPs, as Haning (2021) suggests:

> Music teacher education programs devoted a significantly larger proportion of the curriculum to content-based courses. While scholars have called on music teacher educators to prioritize the development of a teacher identity in undergraduate music education students, current music teacher education curricula may not be aligned with these recommendations. (p. 39)

Haning (2021) suggested examining MTPP curriculum for researchers and MTEs to understand teacher identity formation and consider how to best help PSMTs balance music educator identity development as a holistic view throughout the MTPP curriculum.

The Fuller and Bown (1975) three-stage model (i.e., survival, teaching, and student) was commonly used to examine and discuss the evolution of teacher identities (Campbell & Thompson, 2007; Draves, 2021; Koerner, 2018; Liu & Killian, 2025; Miksza & Berg, 2010, 2013a, 2013b) as identity was recognized as "an important part of teacher education and the process of preservice teacher development" (Haning, 2021, p. 39). McClellan (2014) echoed the importance, stating, "undergraduate music education major identity formation is a primary factor in pre-service music teacher education" (p. 279). PSMT identity has been influenced by the relationships formed with students and colleagues, as PSMTs conceive their identity from the views of others (Draves, 2021; McClellan, 2014; Tucker, 2020), relating to the view of "self" consistent with Fuller and Bown (1975). How others (e.g., peers, instructors, mentors, classroom students) viewed PSMTs contributed to their "self" stage and strengthened their concept of personal teacher identity (McClellan, 2014), as noted by participants in Draves' (2021) study. Draves (2021) suggested "the input received from others about [the PSMTs] developing teacher identity was of key importance to participants and resulted in identity evolution" (p. 34).

PSMTs were shown to continue to develop identity through authentic and immersive experiences, especially the student teaching experience. “Student teaching is an authentic and immersive experience in which preservice teachers are responsible for planning, teaching, and interacting meaningfully with students and professional peers, thus contributing to identity construction” (Draves, 2021, p. 28). As experiences were “connected to student identification with professional domain, merit for the music education profession, and identity formation as a music educator” (McClellan, 2014, p. 300), the need for opportunities arose in the early- and late-stages of MTPPs that might influence and encourage further PSMT identity development.

Researchers encouraged more experiences during the early stages of MTPPs (e.g., Draves, 2021; Haning, 2021) to include K–12 teaching, which nurtured developing teacher identities and provided support for PSMT teacher identity development throughout teacher preparation programs (Haning, 2021). As PSMTs in previous studies have shown growth of identity during the student teaching experience (Draves, 2021), the addition of in-depth and sustained teaching experience under university instructor or mentor teacher guidance in junior and senior level courses might prove effective in preparing PSMTs developmentally for student teaching (Draves, 2013). Additional experiences might prove helpful toward moving PSMT identity further along the three-stages (Fuller & Bown, 1975) prior to the student teaching experience. Haning (2021) also viewed the need for experiences to develop the holistic PSMT, as teacher and performer, consistent with Tucker’s (2020) evidence of teacher and performer integration. Since authentic and immersion experiences in student teaching contributed to identity construction (Draves, 2021), providing more authentic and immersive experiences throughout the MTPP might also assist in identity development prior to the student teaching

semester. Continued research should be considered by MTEs as they examine curricular best practices of PSMT preparation.

Mentor Teachers as Identity Influencers

PSE identity development was influenced by the mentor teachers (MTs) they interact with during the TPP/MTPP, and Kindall et al. (2017) suggested PSEs should be mentored continuously "early in their preparation to gain a greater understanding of how to embed professional dispositions as critical components for fostering focused experiences in their professional growth" (p. 199). Kang (2021) viewed the MT as critical to shaping PSE experiences and stipulated "placing preservice teachers (PTs) in classrooms where they interact with students under the guidance of an experienced educator is a hallmark of PT education" (p. 251). Rieker (2022) suggested preservice educators use mentor teacher interactions to gradually acclimate to real-world teaching, while Abrahams (2009) indicated MTs whose practices differed from PSMT trainings offer new leaning experiences which can influence PSMT views. MT influences during interactions were often in the form of modeling, feedback, and socialization (Matsko et al., 2020; Rieker, 2022; Snell et al., 2019). Abrahams (2009) illustrates the PSMT viewpoint during interactions, which seemed to align with the "self" stage of Fuller and Bown (1975):

> The preservice teachers set the cooperating teachers as models and continually compared themselves to those teachers. They conscientiously analyzed the actions they observed…they all spoke about how their cooperating teachers handled specific learning situations. The preservice teachers assigned values to those actions based on their own sense of who they were and how they might react were they the in-service teacher. (Abrahams, 2009, p. 85)

Rieker (2022) implied MTs serve vital developmental roles for preservice educators through modeling and support, which he said preservice teachers emulated "through imitation of mentor teacher practices" (p. 70).

While MT interactions were necessary, issues can arise that can provide unintended negatives for PSE identities. Instances of MT selection were shown to be important, but were also cause for concern among MTEs. Draves (2013) stated "because of their exceptional impact, the selection and preparation of cooperating teachers demands careful attention and consideration" (p. 55), while Abrahams (2009) described a dichotomy of situations encountered by MTEs:

> Universities are often at the mercy of in-service teachers who agree to accept a team of students into their classrooms. In secondary school music programs where there are strong performing ensembles, teachers do not want to relinquish rehearsal time to nurture the preservice teachers whom they perceive to be inexperienced and sometimes ill prepared. Consequently, students may be placed where teachers will accept them rather than in classrooms where high-quality and competent mentoring can be ensured. (P. 82)

Selecting MTs that provided positive influences and help develop PSEs required careful consideration, but sometimes was relegated to subjective (e.g., professional and personal relationships) and objective (e.g., teaching experience, serving as MT prior) criteria or reasoning (Draves, 2013). Ensuring positive relationships has been suggested to have a stronger impact on identities (Draves, 2013). When PSMTs in student teaching experienced a mis-alignment between themselves and the MT, it was found that PSMT growth was impeded. MT current practices misaligned with what PSMTs encountered in their undergraduate courses could be a limitation, possibly restricting PSMTs to imitation instead of application of theories (Draves,

2013). Rieker (2022) described imitation as “mechanical copying or rote mimicry” (p. 70). He suggested mimicry limits teacher development because it is a reproduction of the current setting which limits the creativity of the preservice teacher, “relegate[ing] the practicum to a site of reproduction and at the same time downplay[ing] the role of imitation as a revolutionary, leading activity of development” (p. 70). Mimicry aligned with Abrahams’ (2009) study, where PSMTs did not want to “rock the boat” p. 82), even though they found MT routines to be “inconsistent and incompatible with the model they learned in school” (p. 85), leaving PSMTs feeling unprepared, anxious, and frustrated during practicum experiences. Edwards and Protheroe (2003) identified problems occurring when MTs focus on how PSEs look when teaching over “assisting student teachers to acquire the practical understandings of teaching…and to respond to children as learners” (pp. 229–230). They also found feedback in these situations did not provide opportunities to acquire practical interpretations that could influence PSE responses in the future.

Since MTs have been identified as important to student teaching experiences and preparing future educators (Jaspers et al., 2014; Snell et al., 2019), finding ways to use their influence to better prepare PSEs should be encouraged. Mentoring was important in developing teachers, and Kindall et al. (2017) suggested it should be occurring from the start of the TPP through the clinical experiences. Snell et al. (2019) corroborated the suggestion, believing “preservice students require as many opportunities possible to spend time in schools observing how in-service teachers integrate theory and best practice” (p. 94), which was a shared sentiment with Edwards and Protheroe (2003). Kindall et al. (2017) continued to reinforce how MTs can influence further:

> mentoring within the teacher preparation program can help in the transition of understanding professional growth and development, attitudes, and the view of complex

> behaviors. The dispositions necessary for effective teaching can be honed through cultural and clinical experiences, continual self-reflection, constructive feedback on evaluations of teaching, and targeted mentoring before beginning the clinical student internship and throughout the experience. (p. 196)

By positioning MTs to guide co-opted practices of teaching, PSEs could see an increase in interpretation and evaluation of alternative responses to occurrences in the public school classroom (Edwards & Protheroe, 2003).

Authentic Context Learning

Researchers viewed early field experiences (Draves, 2013; Hourigan & Scheib, 2009; MacLeod & Walter, 2011) and authentic experiences (Baughman & Baumgartner, 2018; Crawford, 2014; Haston & Russell, 2012; Miksza & Berg, 2013a) as important components of PSMT preparation. Experience in the field are outlined by NASM (2025b) as part of time and competency requirements for those in BME degrees with standards concerning how PSMTs "develop the range of knowledge, skills, and competencies expected of those holding a professional baccalaureate degree in music education" (p. 125). The expectation placed by NASM is for general, vocal, and instrumental music teachers to have "laboratory experience in teaching" (p. 127), including those in specific music fields (e.g., individualized tracks of general/vocal/instrumental music) or combinations (e.g., vocal/general; instrumental/general). NASM's (202b) competencies include a requirement that PSMTs have the ability to teach:

> at various levels to different age groups and in a variety of classroom and ensemble settings in ways that develop knowledge of how music works syntactically as a communication medium and developmentally as an agent of civilization. This set of abilities includes effective classroom and rehearsal management. (p. 128)

PSMTs must be able to teach, but also to evaluate through application of assessment techniques. NASM (2025b) expects PSMTs to have "an understanding of evaluative techniques and ability to apply them in assessing both the musical progress of students and the objectives and procedures of the curriculum" (p. 129). Understandings and application signified theory and practice. Juntunen (2014) suggested connections between theory to practice are built during the practice of teaching where PSEs gain "…experience in how to respond to real teaching situations, and to learn to think-in-action" (p. 170). Students learn to problem solve as they synthesize prior knowledge with authentic situations (Crawford, 2014; Paul et al., 2001) and was consistent with what other education fields have implied concerning content understanding, cooperative learning, and ability to teach (Dever & Clement, 2016). Encouraging earlier field experiences in authentic settings could provide more opportunities for MTEs to improve PSE self-efficacy (Dever & Clement, 2016; Hourigan & Scheib, 2009; MacLeod & Walter, 2011), with ACL experiences benefiting the PSMT identity development through impacting teacher effectiveness:

> Teaching experience, in which preservice music educators are responsible for the planning and implementation of lessons, seems to have a profound impact on their identity development. University faculty members who provide their students with opportunities to practice teaching in an authentic context (situated and designed to emulate a real-world teaching experience) may be allowing students to explore their own occupational identity. Students who thrive in this setting may strengthen their commitment to teaching, or desirable attrition based on these experiences may help some students find a career path more fitting their knowledge, skills, and dispositions prior to the culminating experience of student teaching. (Haston & Russell, 2012, p. 387)

Utilizing ACL activities has become more common among professional fields (Paul et al., 2001) and continues to be an effective approach for developing preservice teachers (Stein et al., 2004). ACL experiences as preparation for student teaching provide opportunities for PSMTs to develop identity (Paul et al., 2001) but also serve as a way for MTEs to prepare PSMTs for student teaching by encouraging them to "…not seek to slowly transcend into the role of teacher but rather be prepared to demonstrate skills and behaviors at as high a competency level as possible from the very beginning of their experience" (Kelly, 2008, p. 90).

Peer Teaching vs. Authentic Learning

Peer teaching is an instructional strategy, aligning with "constructivist learning theories emphasizing knowledge construction through social interaction" (Khanal, 2025, p. 26). It allowed PSMTs to "focus on the technical aspects of teaching, such as lesson planning, rehearsal techniques, and delivery, without the concerns of classroom management" (Powell, 2011, p. 12) and was a common practice in multiple fields (Burgess et al., 2012; Burgess & McGregor, 2018; Powell, 2011). When used in professional fields (e.g., medical), peer teaching was encouraged as practice and assessment, believing "the act of peer teaching and assessment can provide a rich learning experience" (Burgess & McGregor, 2018, p. 10) including opportunities for reflection and revision of the preservice professional's knowledge and skills. The professional/medical use of peer teaching was congruent with the educational use as demonstrated by Khanal et al. (2025): "peer teaching, an instructional strategy where students teach and learn from each other, has gained prominence in higher education due to its pedagogical and cognitive benefits" (p. 26). In a study by Paul (1998) it was noted participants recognized opportunities for teacher role development through peer teaching scenarios. PSMTs were also found to value peer-teaching experiences "…for the opportunity it afforded them to concentrate on the technical aspects of

teaching" (Powell, 2011, p. 11), aligning with Khanal et al.'s (2025) belief that "peer teaching fosters active learning, enhances student engagement, and develops collaborative and leadership skills" (p. 26). Khanal et al. (2025) also suggested that those involved in peer teaching often retain material better and display a higher understanding of the content than without its use. Both Powell (2011) and Khanal et al. (2025) indicated peer teaching opportunities allowed for engagement with colleagues concerning environments, materials, knowledge, and skills with feedback and clarity among themselves. "This approach allows students to take on more active roles in their learning journey, encouraging them to explain concepts to their peers, clarify misunderstandings, and reinforce their knowledge" (Khanal et al., 2025, p. 26).

Peer teaching was also seen as a form of cohort or community of practice (CoP) which was thought to "improve the learning process of groups of people interested in improving their practice" (Fitzpatrick, 2014, p. 92). CoPs in education refer to:

> a group of educators who engage collectively in a process of shared learning and development within a particular created community space. The CoP framework emphasizes the importance of social interaction and shared experiences in the learning process, suggesting that knowledge is constructed through participation in communal activities and the mutual exchange of ideas. (Hartlep et al., 2024, p. 383)

Hartlep et al.'s (2024) definition aligned with peer teaching as "network[s] for engaging in regular interactions, sharing resources, and offering support" (Baumgartner et al., 2024, p. 1) with CoPs providing "support, guidance, and feedback" (p. 8) to PSMTs.

Peer teaching, however, was not the same as providing authentic opportunities for PSEs to engage in real-world scenarios and apply their knowledge and skills. Khanal et al.'s (2025) findings indicated "…peer teaching is highly beneficial, but its success depends on structured

implementation and institutional support" (p. 26). The guidance and support within courses affected the effectiveness of peer teaching and is suggested by Kelly (2008) and Draves (2013) to not be as impactful as when PSMTs are engaged with authentic contexts. When comparing ACL to peer teaching, Powell (2011) indicated "studies have reported that preservice music teachers are more apprehensive teaching their peers than teaching public school students" and were "also reported that preservice teachers have a greater difficulty assessing the effectiveness of their own teaching during peer-teaching" (p. 12). Instances were also reported from university instructors concerned that academic achievement or deeper learning was not caused by peer-teaching (Stigmar, 2016), and of challenges to peer teaching effectiveness due to inconsistent levels of skills from peer to peer alongside a lack of pedagogical methods training for peer instructors (Khanal et al., 2025). Powell (2011) saw the main drawback to peer teaching as a "lack of authentic context." (p. 24). His study participants:

> felt that their peers did not react in the same way as K–12 students; therefore, it was difficult to anticipate how effective their instruction would be in the field-teaching episode. The participants also had difficulty in assessing the extent to which their teaching led to improved performance by their peers. (p. 24)

The conclusion drawn by Powell (2011) was aligned with Paul (1998) and illustrated peer teaching options did not provide ACL and is limited in the professional identity development capacity for participants.

Determining if peer teaching or ACL was better for the PSMT is a continuous discussion for MTEs and should be a consideration for best practices among MTPPs. "Peer teaching is obviously not a complete program for all aspects of teacher education, but…it can play an important role in helping [PSMTs] to develop their own teacher identity and professional

knowledge base" (Paul, 1998, pp. 88–89). Participants across studies have found ACL opportunities to be more beneficial than peer teaching (MacLeod & Walter, 2011; Powell, 2011; Teachout, 2004). A combination of peer teaching and ACL was proposed as a beneficial alternative by Powell (2011) where PSMTs would "practice lessons in a peer-teaching context before teaching in a field setting" (p. 24). He believed a sequence of peer teaching to ACL would "allow students to work out technical issues of lesson delivery in the peer setting and to focus more on student interaction in the field setting" (Powell, 2011, p. 24). MTEs might consider how courses in music education would benefit from a combination of peer teaching and ACL to contribute to best practices within MTPPs and PSMT preparation.

Extended Internship as a Vehicle for Authentic Learning

Extending placements with more opportunities for ACL experiences is an area worth exploring when determining best practices for TPPs/MTPPs. Draves (2013) argues that "more in-depth and sustained guided teaching experiences in junior- and senior-level courses may continue preservice teachers' development and prepare them for student teaching more effectively" (p. 59). Sustained guided experiences could be additional immersion courses and longer placements, which is explained by Spooner et al. (2008) as an increase in authentic classroom time for preservice teachers "working with children and experienced teachers" (p. 264), rather than maintaining the current interactions in methods courses. Spooner et al. (2008) listed the need for more time and experience which "provide more opportunities to identify areas in need of growth and development and to hone skills the novice teacher identifies as lacking" (p. 268). Researchers have examined what, if any, impacts a year-long or extended internship has on preservice teachers (Gray et al., 2012; Kindall, et al., 2017) perceiving benefits of "enhance[ing] the learning of both the pre-service and in-service teachers, and therefore be

broader in its outreach and scope than the focus of our individual institutions" (Gray et al., 2012, p. 8). Conway's (2002) study included responses from administrators seeing a loss of important learning: "it seems that by only student teaching for a semester the music teacher must miss some important aspects of the teaching year, for example marching band in the fall or festival in the spring" (p. 32). The same administrators suggested longer internships better prepare PSEs, allowing them to acquire more learning through on-the-job experiences alongside MTs who valued an extension to include multiple placements between semesters (e.g., elementary and secondary) (Conway, 2002).

Research studies have explored longer placements beyond the student teaching semester. Kindall et al. (2017) conducted a study to "explore the unique experiences found to be successful in mentoring pre-service teachers from student to professional during an authentic, yearlong internship experience" (p. 196). Gray et al. (2012) investigated a full year model that was designed "in an effort to provide pre-service teacher candidates with meaningful student teaching experiences which emulate, as closely as possible, the demands of first-year teaching while providing continual mentoring, so-teaching, and support" (p. 7). Spooner et al. (2008) surveyed preservice teachers in a "yearlong internship and their peers in a traditional semester-long internship to compare perceptions across different practice teaching experiences" (p. 263). The results of these studies indicated similar findings. For Kindall et al. (2017):

> the yearlong clinical internship experience in this study allowed intern participants to practice many of the valued dispositions in a supportive environment prior to their first year of teaching. Intern participants received direct instruction on the dispositional attitudes, beliefs, and actions this one teacher preparation program deemed as vital to the success of an effective educator. (p. 206)

Gray et al. (2012) presented findings that not only did preservice and inservice teachers benefit from this extended placement, but the students at the school did as well, which was similar to Spooner et al.'s (2008) findings:

> the students in the yearlong internship reported a better relationship with their supervising teacher, greater knowledge of school policies and procedures, and higher scores for the perceived adequacy of time spent in school than did the students in the semester internship. (p. 263)

Spooner et al. (2008) indicated, "candidates who receive increased amounts of field experience and mentoring opportunities to help them understand the realities of teaching are better prepared to deal with the complex realities of today's schools, classrooms, and students" (p. 264), though they caution that more experiences may not better equip preservice teachers if the quality of the experience is lacking. Gray et al. (2012) and Spooner et al.'s (2008) findings were congruent with Draves (2013) assessment of PSMT benefits for relationships. "Knowledge of the student teaching setting and relationships between the student teacher and others in the student teaching experience provides a richer and fuller understanding of the experience" (p. 55).

Though Miksza and Berg (2013a) were examining the three-stage model of Fuller and Bown (1975), they did use an extended placement as a requirement to track longitudinal changes to PSMT mindsets. Miksza and Berg's (2013a) study required participants to "complete a 50-hr practicum at their student teaching placement sites prior to their student teaching semester" (p. 47), which indicated extended placements improved identity and self-efficacy concerns of PSMTs.

> Basic self and task concerns, such as being an organized professional and being able to ask questions, respectively, were no longer evident after the initial practicum. Other basic

> self concerns, such as communication, interacting with peers and colleagues, balancing work-home issues, and concern for personal evaluations, were no longer apparent by the midpoint of student teaching. (p. 56)

They did note that some concerns within the “self” and “task” stages only emerged during student teaching, but did not elaborate on suggested causes. A plausible interpretation could result from the practicum experience prior to student teaching including more observation than participation and thus the PSMTs did not have an opportunity for mindset changes. Similar to Miksza and Berg’s (2013a) study, Killian and Dye (2009) followed PSMTs through three sequential semesters engaged in peer teaching episodes, ACL teaching episodes, and student teaching respectively. They found the view of “self” occurred less often in the final semester (i.e., student teaching) than in the first semester (i.e., peer-teaching), showing improvements in “planning, transitions, [and] delivery” (p. 20). Issues of “self” were proposed to be overcome by Miksza and Berg (2013a) by the PSMT being:

> familiar with a particular teaching setting. This potentially could "free up" energy that then could be devoted to focusing on student-impact concerns. However, should a change in setting or context occur, a preservice teacher once again may be confronted with issues of personal adequacy and teaching techniques that demand the attention and energy they otherwise may have been able to devote to student-impact issues. (p. 58)

They continued to discuss that in order for PSMTs to move form “self” to “student” concentrated mindsets,

> field-based experiences may need to be in the same or similar placements for longer than a semester to mitigate students' tendencies to focus on self concerns as they adjust to a new setting or context. Longer internship experiences in the same setting may allow for

> greater depth of exploration of complex teaching issues. Of course, the teacher educator would need to balance diversity and breadth of placement experiences with depth. (pp. 59–60)

Continued research into extended placements prior to the student teaching semester would provide insight for MTEs. Evaluations of designs for student teaching semesters, extended placements, or additional immersion courses prior to the student teaching semester could provide additional ACL experiences to develop PSMT identity and disposition.

Alterations to the MTPP

Considerations for alterations to the culminating year of preservice teacher education within TPPs/MTPPs is an important step in continuing to improve and develop our future educators. However, instances of limitations towards degree credit hour cap can hinder changes to degree programs. BME degrees were found with hours above the 120-hour NASM minimum consideration (NASM, 2025b), ranging to almost 150-credit hours—though fluctuations to average credit hours for degree completion were reported (Maas et al., 2023; Payne et al., 2025). Maas et al. (2023) cited credit hour policies are likely impediments to flexibility within degree programs, which would mean difficulties for alterations to degree programs beyond a 120-credit hour limit as universities and MTPPs evaluate curriculum in response to credit and cost reductions (Payne et al., 2025).

Some instances of changes to degree programs have occurred with a focus on transitioning the PSMT from student to teacher, adhering to Fuller and Bown's (1975) three stages model of survival, mastery, and consequence-oriented which follow how teachers develop. Glen (2014) presented one such course addition as a transitional capstone course in which:

> [S]tudents can integrate what they have learned in their academic major into useful information for their future career or life path, while providing meaningful data to their university as a component of program assessment. They emerge from this reflective process, seeing themselves no longer as students, but as music educators. (p 150)

Glen's course is designed to give students a process to transition to a teacher identity based on Wiggins' (2007) concept of "bookends" which form the outline of music education degrees at Glen's institution where an introductory course causes students to examine their understandings of music, learning, and teaching, and the transitional capstone course consists of reflections and applications to provide the two ends (Glen, 2014).

In an effort to re-imagine the process of preparing preservice teachers for the student teaching semester, Polly et al. (2012) examined the influence a seminar course used in the semester immediately prior to the student teaching semester at a professional development school (i.e., a working collaboration between university, in-service teachers, and preservice teachers) had on undergraduate elementary and middle school teacher candidates. Their study examined the influence on preparedness to teach and any links to instructional improvement. The description of the seminar consisted of a select number of meetings covering topics primarily of "classroom management, instructional planning, assessment, and an overview of the demands of the student teaching semester" utilizing discussion and activities such as "analyzing classroom vignettes, student work, classroom management plans, and sharing their ideas about the topics they were exploring" (p. 104). Additionally, participants brought questions pertaining to their experiences, observations, and other teaching-related subjects. Final reports by Polly et al. provided insight into the teacher candidates feeling more prepared to enter the student teaching internship.

Miksza and Berg (2013a), while investigating PSMT concerns related to the Fuller and Bown (1975) model, required participants to complete "a 50-hr practicum at their student teaching placement sites prior to their student teaching semester" (Miksza & Berg, 2013a, p. 47). Miksza and Berg's study illustrates an addition of a course prior to student teaching that includes immersion of PSMTs into the classroom that will serve as their student teaching placement and tracks identity development based on Fuller and Bown (1975). Findings from their study included:

> Basic self and task concerns, such as being an organized professional and being able to ask questions, respectively, were no longer evident after the initial practicum. Other basic self concerns, such as communication, interacting with peers and colleagues, balancing work-home issues, and concern for personal evaluations, were no longer apparent by the midpoint of student teaching. (p. 56)

Results from Miksza and Berg (2013a) revealed alignment with Fuller and Bown's (1975) teacher-concern model and demonstrated how an immersive experience prior to student teaching could influence PSMT development "…to overcome issues of self-survival and to internalize or automate tasks when familiar with a particular teaching setting" (Miksza & Berg, 2013a, p. 58). This study provided an example of how an additional immersion course could impact development of PSMTs and should be studied by researchers in an effort to evaluate and update best practices for PSMT preparation prior to the student teaching semester.

Summary of Reviewed Literature

Research on the history of teacher preparation programs, development of student teaching and student teaching seminar processes, the identity development of PSEs, how MTs act as identity influencers, authentic context learning with a comparison between peer teaching and

ACL, extended internship usages, and what alterations may benefit MTPPs were presented within this review of literature. The literature was selected based on how a music education-based introduction to student teaching course could be explored. Understanding the progression of teacher preparation programs provided a historical perspective for how preservice teacher preparation was established and what reasonings existed for designing curriculum and experiences like student teaching and student teaching seminar courses. Throughout TPPs/MTPPs, PSEs were shown to be developing their understanding of content knowledge and skills in preparation for a career as a professional educator. Their identity developed throughout this time, but might be affected by factors of course content and time, presence or lack of field experiences/observations/peer teaching opportunities/ACL opportunities, and how their self-efficacy progressed. MTs were shown to influence the progression of PSE identity and provided validation for perceptions of PSEs, which included time building relationships in ACL opportunities and how feedback and understanding within a context like student teaching continued to impact preservice teachers. Experiences for the PSEs were explored, including peer teaching examples compared to authentic classroom teaching and how some instances of extended internships benefitted preservice teachers. Extended immersions, such as the yearlong internship were shown to be beneficial if designed with quality in mind. Some studies presented ideas of immersion courses prior to the student teaching semester to influence identity and better prepare PSEs for the student teaching experience, prompting a necessity for more study on how courses might prepare PSEs, specifically PSMTs, for the student teaching experience.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to explore introduction to music student teaching courses that preceded the student teaching semester within undergraduate music education bachelor's degree programs at National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) accredited institutions. As a music teacher educator (MTE) and researcher, I am interested in how university faculty design and implement the courses, including the course instructors' perceived benefits and outcomes. Research questions pertaining to this exploration included:

1. What led to the development of the course?
2. What are the purposes and goals of such courses?
3. What are the perceptions from the university or instructor(s) concerning the course?

While these research questions formed the original basis for the study, I anticipated that as discoveries emerged, the research questions could have changed to allow for a deeper delve into the courses. As analysis progressed, additional themes emerged which prompted additional literary review to inform the findings.

Research Design

In order to create a suitable design to accommodate the intent of this exploratory study, multiple points of view were considered. Given that I sought to understand people and programs, a multiple case study design seemed appropriate (Stake, 1995). A case study approach is often utilized due to its adaptability of methodological design, transparency in methodology and investigatory rigor, and its wide use in educational research, which lends itself to subjects concerning teaching, learning, schools, and content matters (Barrett, 2020). I utilized a multiple case study design due to the conditions presented by Yin (2018) including: (a) how and why; (b)

not requiring control of behavioral environments; and (c) focused on a contemporary event (p. 9). The central features for this design included: (a) defining specific cases for description and analyzation of current real-time events, including comparing multiple cases; (b) confining the case to certain parameters of a bounded system involving time and places; (c) providing in-depth understanding of the case and/or comparison of cases through various data; (d) identifying case themes across the cases; and (e) forming conclusions derived from the holistic meanings obtained from the examinations (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Since I utilized a real-life context to provide a description and analysis of a bounded system, it corresponded with Merriam and Tisdell's (2016) depiction of qualitative case study origination. Similarly, this was rationalized by Yin (2018) to clarify cases whose findings "…may reveal insights about normal processes" (p. 50) becoming emergent findings applicable beyond the original bounded system.

Research Design Procedural Order

Due to the emergent nature of this exploratory study and not knowing exactly what might have influenced the particulars of each of the cases involved, I specified an order in which I could conduct this research study. By ensuring an appropriate order of events along the course of the study, I created a flexible and emergent design plan that "…unfold[ed], becomes data, guides analysis, and turns into findings" (Patton, 2015, p. 244) as it progressed. The first step in the process was to obtain documentation and artifacts so that I was provided with "information that cannot be observed" and which "reveal[ed] things that have taken place before the study began" (p. 376). By gathering documentation and artifacts first, I was afforded "…a stimulus for paths of inquiry that can only be pursued through direct observation and interviewing" (p. 377). Thus, the documentation and artifacts informed interview questions and provided for more emergent discussion (Miksza et al., 2023). The second step was to establish the individual research

interviews by defining cases (Yin, 2018) and selecting participants (Stake, 1995), followed by individual analysis of each case before cross-case analysis and further inquiry are utilized (Saldaña, 2021). The final step was to conclude with a SWOC analysis which organized the emergent themes and findings into a structured discussion where comparisons and conclusions were made from both cases.

Cases Defined

Cases, as defined by Yin (2018), appear as various groupings including "…straightforward (e.g., individual people, groups of people, organizations, and neighborhoods) or more fluid (e.g., decisions, processes, social relationships, and sequences of events, such as political campaigns)" (pp. 73–74). To ensure the cases were relevant, limiting and narrowing the scope of inquiry to specific individuals and courses allowed for clarity of the "who." By limiting and defining, a bounding was established for the case(s), helping to delineate and connect each case to the research questions (Yin, 2018). A bounded system, as defined by Creswell (2007), was one in which the boundaries of the case are formed from specific times and places. Creswell's definition appeared consistent with Yin's (2018), thus, establishing validity to the definition and description of a bounded system.

Case Criterion and Selection

I utilized Stake's (1995) case selection criterion as a framework for selection. The cases for this dissertation were inspected for potential to maximize learning alongside building understanding. Additional criteria included an analysis of the cases as generalizations, which I intended to avoid; however, given the nature of this research and its possible application to the field of teacher preparation, I presented petite generalizations (Stake, 1995) as they emerged within the cases involved. Stake's definition of petite generalizations involved describing

particular situations found in a single or few cases not originally thought of as generalizations, but generally occur throughout the selected case(s). Operating on the definition of cases and bounding as a portion of the framework for the design, criterion specific to this study included:

A. NASM-accredited university course
B. A bounded systems of a single course that served an introduction to student teaching
C. Selected course occurred prior to the student teaching semester
D. Instructor(s) and/or course designer(s) involved in design of or responsible for the course were available for interview(s).

Participant Selection

I selected cases for the main study from the responses to the pilot survey, which included NASM-accredited universities granting a bachelor of music education degree (various degree names/types). In order to be considered as a participant, responders to the pilot survey were required to demonstrate: (a) an "introduction to student teaching"-style course was required within the music education degree at the accredited institution, and (b) that they were a faculty member within the music education discipline. Should the potential participant not be a music education faculty member, I would have contacted a faculty member who had served as instructor of, was responsible for, or influenced the development of the introduction to student teaching course for preservice music teachers (PSMT).

Pilot Survey

NASM accredited institutions that awarded a bachelor's degree in music education were compiled from the NASM website's advanced search function available to annual subscribers (NASM, 2025a). A list of member institutions ($N = 479$) was populated to comprise the list from which to gather contact information. I conducted individual searches on each member school

website to determine appropriate contact personnel for the pilot survey. Contacts sought were: (1) chair/departmental head/program coordinator of music education faculty; (2) member of music education faculty whose biography listed courses taught or major areas of study including student teaching observations or music student teaching seminar; (3) dean/chair/director of school/department of music; (4) member of the music faculty who listed music education as an area of instruction; or (5) administrative assistants who might forward the survey to the appropriate faculty member. Since the pilot survey requested information on student teaching courses *within* music education, the music education faculty were the primary searches. If I could not identify a personnel listing for music education, I searched for the director or chair of the school/department of music. Some schools did not list positions or involvement so I left the contact position blank on the compiled search document list and noted the position as "other." The final number of contacts ($N = 609$) was larger than the number of institutions ($N = 479$) due to instances of multiple contacts (e.g., co-chair, co-coordinator) in an effort to elicit a response. A breakdown of contact positions can be seen in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1

Pilot Questionnaire Contact Position/Title Breakdown

Contact position type	*n*	%
Dean, School of Music (or similar, e.g., School of Performing Arts)	22	4
Director/Chair Department of Music (or similar, e.g., School of Music)	207	34
MUED Area Chair/Head/Director/Coordinator	211	35
MUED faculty member	9	1
Administrative assistant	1	< 1
Other (e.g., Seminar instructor, field coordinator)	14	2
Unlisted position	145	24
Totals	609	100.1[a]

Note. $N = 609$.

[a] Total percentage larger than 100% due to rounding.

Once the contact list was compiled, I added 609 email addresses into the directory system of Qualtrics. This system allowed for contact lists to be uploaded into individual directories, so as to not contaminate various lists or contact procedures. From these directories, individual emails were distributed, and one week later, a follow-up email (See Appendix B and C respectively for copies of emails) was sent from the system to the same recipients (Qualtrics Digital Success, 2025). The Qualtrics Survey Software through the University of Oklahoma was selected as the distribution method for the survey tool due to its availability to personnel at OU, and its use of ‘gather[ing] data and insights as well as conduct institutional research and [to] generate reports” (University of Oklahoma, 2024).

Pilot Survey Questionnaire

In order to gain access to potential participants, my first action required the use of a pilot questionnaire to determine the feasibility of the study. The pilot study was approved by administrators of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the University of Oklahoma. Administrators confirmed that a full application was not required due to the pilot's use in gathering preliminary information to determine feasibility of the study (See Appendix A). The pilot survey contained four questions to determine feasibility and provided course and instructor information for viable participant candidates necessary for interviews:

1. Name of institution
2. Does your institution offer "Introduction to Student Teaching" or a similarly named course that immediately precedes the student teaching semester? [Note: This is not in reference to (a) an introduction to music education course at the beginning of the degree, nor (b) a student teaching seminar course taken during the internship semester.]
3. If yes, instructor name, and Instructor's email.
4. If the answer was "yes" to question two (2) concerning the institution offering a course, an additional request for course name will also populate.

Responses from the pilot were analyzed (i.e., pilot survey design, implementation, and results are located under the research design heading) and used to determine feasibility of the study. After proposal approval, I identified potential candidates from the data gathered in the pilot survey responses for participation in the main study. In order to discern further viability, I also investigated the courses listed in the pilot study responses through the respective university website searches and course catalog descriptions.

Pilot Questionnaire Results

A total of 112 (18.4%) of 609 responses from NASM-accredited institutions awarding a bachelor's degree in music education responded to the pilot questionnaire. Of those responses, 26 (23.2%) were unusable due to data not provided (e.g., no email, no contact name, lack of institutional identifiers). The "No" respondent rate for question 3 (Does your institution offer "introduction to student teaching" or similarly named course that immediately preceded the student teaching semester?) was 61.6% (n = 69), eliminating those respondents from further consideration. The remaining 17 (15.2%) respondents indicated "Yes" to the prompt and provided complete replies that included 13 course different titles and at least one instructor contact for each. Final delimitations (i.e., course titles and descriptions) resulted in a usable sample of 5 (4.5%) potential institutional participants. The selected participants were narrowed down due to "Yes" answers to question 3 which prompted a branching question (If so, please list the course title) and was investigated from a course catalog or website.

Main Study Recruitment

The recruitment process identified participants through purposeful sampling (Creswell, 2007; Miles et al., 2020) from the pilot questionnaire response pool. For this study, I utilized direct email contact as the formal recruitment method as described in Negrin et al. (2022). Email contact allowed me to introduce myself and further explain the study to the faculty/instructor(s) and/or designer(s) while obtaining consent to participate. Consent responses were obtained through electronically distributed means prior to the research process and utilizing the contact information gathered from the pilot survey responses. The consent form for both electronic submission and oral consent are found in Appendix E and Appendix F, respectively.

Data Collection

In order to provide the most complete exploration of these case studies, I utilized multiple sources of evidence (Creswell, 2007; Yin, 2018) for data collection and compiled other emergent sources as the main study progressed. Data sources I used were: (1) documentation/artifacts (e.g., syllabi, coursework assignments, course catalog information and descriptions), and (2) individual research interviews. I utilized specific procedures to develop a complete picture of each case (Creswell, 2007) including informing the interview protocols with analyzed documentation and artifacts. I used these protocols because they contained "the procedures and general rules to be followed" which were "essential if you are doing a multiple-case study" (Yin, 2018, p. 94).

Documentation/Artifacts

Documentation and artifacts form an important part of case study research and "follows the same line of thinking as observing or interviewing" (Stake, 1995, p. 68). Their most important aspect was "to corroborate and augment evidence from other sources" (Yin, 2018, p. 115). Documentation and artifacts I asked for were: (a) course syllabi, including course descriptors and all pertinent information; (b) any coursework assignments, if not described in the syllabus; (c) current degree plans with suggested semesterly course of study, if applicable; and (d) course/degree proposal from the when the course was added to the curriculum. Exploring the documents allowed me to better prepare for the interviews by examining open-access items (e.g., university websites, course catalogs, course descriptions) and then comparing that information with data obtained from interviews. Re-examining the documents and artifacts post-interview allowed me to corroborate themes and aspects that emerged as I analyzed the transcripts. I have included artifacts in this segment due to physical evidence presented (e.g., handouts or other

physical media) by the interviewees, which aligned with Yin's (2018) description of the use of computer printouts and notebooks (p. 125).

Exploring the university websites, course catalogs, and course descriptors helped in the selection process from the initial pilot survey responses and provided avenues for questions in the interview process. Documentation and artifacts of syllabi and coursework assignment-related items were gathered from the participants after initial contact was made and consent obtained. The inclusion of syllabi and coursework assignments were important to "serve as substitutes for records of activity that the researcher could not observe directly" (Stake, 1995, p. 68). As I did not observe the course directly, but instead explored the context, these were necessary items to better inform understanding and protocols. I asked for these items prior to the interview, and was able to obtain them, which helped to better prepare and update the interview protocol for the participants.

Individual Research Interview

The initial research interviews with faculty/instructors/designers involved with the introduction to student teaching course were conducted over Zoom, as Zoom was found to be a viable "tool for collection of qualitative data because of its relative ease of use, cost-effectiveness, data management features, and security options" (Archibald et al., 2019, p. 1) while also allowing for long-distance connection between researcher and participants. The purpose of the interview was to gain insight from the facilitator/instructor/designer and learn from their viewpoint on the nature of the course—"allow[ing] [me] to enter into the other person's perspective" (Patton, 2015, p. 426). A semi-structured interview of approximately 1.5 hours was conducted with each participant, informed by the documentation and artifacts, and

allowed for open-ended discussion and investigation (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The semi-structured interview was thus determined to utilize questions which were:

> …more flexibly worded or the interview is a mix of more and less structured questions. Usually, specific information is desired from all the respondents, in which case there is a more structured section to the interview. But most of the interview is guided by a list of questions or issues to be explored, and neither the exact wording nor the order of the questions is determined ahead of time…allow[ing] the researcher to respond to the situation at hand, to the emerging worldview of the respondent, and to new ideas on the topic. (pp. 110–111)

Utilizing a semi-structured interview protocol was the most meaningful approach toward exploring the participants' views and interpretations of courses serving as cases in this study.

Individual Research Interview Protocol. A researcher-developed interview protocol was used as the guiding questionnaire for the semi-structured interviews, which lasted approximately 1.5 hours for each participant. Interview questions, based on research questions, items found within the review of literature, and informed by the documentation and artifacts, were divided into three areas for open-ended discussion: (1) background questions, (2) introductory course information, and (3) course content. Background and demographic data questions were derived from question formation practices listed in Merriam and Tisdell (2016) and Patton (2015). There were six questions including demographic data (e.g., name, institution name, education background), educator role (e.g., length of time in position, courses taught), teaching philosophy, the BME (bachelors of music education) program overview (and acquiring degree plan if possible), certification processes to teach in the participant' state, and any required courses students take in the semester immediately prior to student teaching. Sub-questions to

question six included any classes taken during student teaching, if a student teaching seminar course existed, and particulars about the seminar course if it occurs (e.g., overview, when is it held and where, required/graded, course content). The second area, questions regarding the introductory course, both informed background information on the course (Patton, 2015) and provided historical and directional information. Prompts for this section included background information on the course similar to information gathering of section one (e.g., name of introductory course, when offered in curriculum), how the course came to be (e.g., was the course pre-established, what led to the need for it, course development and implementation) (Glen, 2014, Polly et al., 2012), goals and perceived benefits (e.g., perceptions of the instructor/facilitator, any noticeable improvements for music teacher education, unintended benefits, how the course helps prepare for the student teaching semester) (Glen, 2014; Wiggins, 2007), and future considerations. The third and final section of the interview was designed to elicit information about the pre-student teaching course content. It combined experience questions (Patton, 2015) with areas specific to the student teaching experience including authentic learning experiences (Councill & Baumgartner, 2017; Fitzpatrick, 2014; MacLeod & Walter, 2011; Paul et al., 2001), interactions with cooperating teachers (Eck & Ramsey, 2019; MacLeod & Walter, 2011), content inclusion (Baumgartner, 2014; Councill & Baumgartner, 2017; Korthagen, 1992; Polly et al., 2012), perspectives from instructors (Baumgartner, 2014; Fitzpatrick, 2014), degree alignment and MTPP support (Baumgartner et al., 2024; Councill & Baumgartner, 2017; Fitzpatrick, 2014; Polly et al., 2012), and synthesis and reflection (Baumgartner et al., 2024; Fitzpatrick, 2014; Korthagen, 1992) the instructor(s) might have noticed. See Appendix G for the complete semi-structured interview protocol and IRB approval stamp.

Interviews were audio and video recorded to allow for complete transcription and analysis. Video recording allowed me to capture verbal and non-verbal communications which occurred during the interview, and afforded the opportunity for subsequent viewings as continual examination of context analyzation (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Patton, 2015). The audio recording added to my ability to interpret the data, transcribe it accurately, and list direct quotations in the findings and discussion when necessary. The use of online technology (e.g., Zoom) to conduct interviews provided the opportunity for increased access to potential participants, as well as recording attributes from an audio and visual standpoint (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Limitations to the use of videoconferencing technology were analyzed to prevent possible disruptions to network connections and audio or video blackouts (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). I took precautions to avoid any disruptions and provided for confidentiality in data storage and retrieval, which were outlined in the IRB requirements and consent statements. See Appendix E and F for breach information within the consent documents.

Data Analysis

I used a two stage analysis for this multiple case study design: (1) within-case analysis, and (2) cross-case analysis (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Upon completion of each interview, I transcribed and analyzed the data using transcription and coding software (e.g., NVIVO, Descript). Transcriptions were then coded (Miksza et al., 2023) using *a priori* codes (Creswell, 2007) from the pre-existing and expected topics (e.g., course development, course content, perceptions of instructor, benefits) and emergent coding for examining topics found within the data (Miksza et al., 2023). I utilized a variety of coding methods, given the exploratory nature of this study: deductive and inductive, descriptive and content analytic approach, evaluation, holistic, provisional, a priori, in vivo, and open coding (Saldaña, 2021). It is important to note

that this process as a whole was referred to by Saldaña (2021) as “first cycle coding” (Chapter 4) due to the overlapping coding styles used within a single pass.

My process was to work through data analysis as simultaneously as possible with data collection (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) as qualitative processes presented emergent designs due to “not know[ing] ahead of time every person who might be interviewed, all the questions that might be asked, or where to look next unless data are analyzed as they might be collected” (p. 195). Once an individual interview was completed, I began transcribing and analyzing the data using Saldaña’s (2021) coding methods throughout the process. I continually referred back to literature as concepts emerged which I had not considered or fully researched in order to better understand the data, and incorporated new literary content into Chapter 2. I located saturation points from within the data and literature so that concepts and ideas were shown to have practical purpose and application. Additionally, I utilized my interview notes, musings, and memos to help guide my initial analysis (Chapter 8).

Once I completed the initial analysis (i.e., first cycle coding), I compared the codes for patterns and emergent themes against the research questions (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 203). This process was repeated with both individual interviews for consistency, followed by comparing the coding sets against each other to form a complete or “master list of concepts derived from [all] sets of data” (p. 206). The master list helped to create the categories or themes, both for individual cases and for cross-case analysis. Continuing to examine the master list and data across the cases (i.e., cross-case analysis) provided me with “unified descriptions across cases” leading to “categories, themes or typologies that conceptualize[d] the data from all the cases” (p. 234).

Member Checking

To ensure "internal validity and credibility" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 246) of the interviews, responses, and preliminary/emergent findings, I used *member checking* to "review the material for accuracy and palatability" (Stake, 1995, p. 115). Member checks were utilized to validate my interpretations and ensure no misrepresentations of the participants voices, experiences, or information from artifacts occurred. Participants were afforded opportunities to provide feedback and alterations to the preliminary findings, bringing credibility to their experiences and perceptions through the presentation of the data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

SWOT/SWOC Analysis

Examining the *findings* in Chapters 4 and 5, patterns emerged which I grouped into four categories: (1) strengths, (2) weaknesses, (3) opportunities, and (4) challenges. The four categories were similar to a SWOT Analysis. SWOT Analysis are: "strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats [that] are organizational influences known collectively as 'SWOTs'" (Leigh, 2010, p. 115) providing "…the foundation for realization of the desired alignment of organizational variable or issues" (Helms & Nixon, 2010, p. 215). Findings by Helms and Nixon (2010) demonstrated SWOT is supported as a planning purpose tool and also used in academic and educational research. A typical SWOT analysis utilizes a grid (Helms & Nixon, 2010), sometimes referred to as tables or matrixes (Leigh, 2010), which is formed in a 2 X 2 configuration. The upper row is separated into Strengths and Weaknesses, while the lower row categories are opportunities and threats/challenges (Helms & Nixon, 2010). Leigh (2010) provided an opportunity for changes to the design and usage of SWOT grids as he stated, "the nomenclature of SWOT analysis is far from standardized" (p. 115), with additional correlational labels added to rows and columns in an effort to provide further credibility by addressing areas

of concern or factors which need more examination or consideration. The top row label provided *internal* insight, while the bottom row label examined *external* settings. The left column provided for examining *enhancers* and the right column depicted *inhibitors*. Since "strength" would be in the top left of the 2 x 2 grid, the labels for that area of consideration were *internal enhancers*; likewise, the "threats/challenges" in the bottom right of the grid were classified as *external inhibitors* (Leigh, 2010). Variables of internal and external were explained by Lai and Rivera (2006) as "…controllable (internal) and non-controllable (external) variables" (p. 28). Their definitions of controllable further expand to any component that were controlled by the case being studied (e.g., non-controllable are seen as "larger societal factors that affect the organization" (p. 28)). Utilizing Leigh's non-standardized framework, I made additional reconfigurations of the term SWOT, aligning with acronyms used within academic and educational research resulting in the acronym SWOC Analysis. The acronym SWOC would exchange the "T" of threats within SWOT for a "C" depicting challenges in SWOC. For this study, the full acronym was used as strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges (SWOC). While SWOT was found throughout educational research (e.g., Helms & Nixon, 2010; Longkumer & Rao, 2025; Olipas & Dela Cruz, 2022), the term SWOC was also found within educational journal references (e.g., Aithal & Kumar, 2015; Rajak & Gupta, 2023). An explicit definition or instance for use of either acronym was not readily available. I therefore chose to utilize the SWOC acronym for the purpose of this dissertation because the themes discovered in the findings relate to challenges concerning PSMT preparation more so than threats to PSMTs. While I did not utilize a physical or digital grid system for this analysis—I did instead use prose and framework headings for cross-case analysis—I used the areas of interest (strength, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges) as frameworks for exploring the cases with

references toward labels of interior/exterior and enhancer/inhibitor where the labels benefitted the discussion.

Chapter 4: Findings – Case 1

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore introduction to music student teaching courses (IMSTs) that preceded the student teaching semester. The explored courses were found within undergraduate music education curricula for a bachelor's degree at National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) accredited institutions. Using Creswell and Poth's (2018) qualitative research guidelines, I requested artifacts and documentation to enhance the exploration process of individual interviews. The information gathered preempted and/or provided baseline data for interview questions, provided data points to explore further, and established additional conversation points for the semi-structured interviews. The interviewees were instructors for the courses being explored. To better understand the holistic picture of these courses, I sought to understand the following research questions:

1. What led to the development of the music education pre-student teaching course at each institution?
2. What are the purposes and goals of such courses?
3. What are the perceptions from the university or instructor(s) concerning the course?

The cases are separated into individual chapters (i.e., Chapter 4: Case 1; Chapter 5: Case 2), where I presented descriptions of individual cases that reflected the unique design (Creswell & Poth, 2018) of each course, instructional faculty, and institution. Each case includes a description of the course and instructor background, artifacts that influenced the research, and emergent themes from analysis. After presenting each case, I utilized a SWOC (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Challenges) analysis (Easter, 2020; Shanta, 2013), a variation on the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats) analysis (Helms & Nixon, 2010; Leigh, 2010;

Lia & Rivera, 2006) as the basis for the cross-case analysis and implications in Chapter 6 to highlight similarities and differences between the two bounded systems.

Case 1: Amy and the Senior Transitional Capstone

Location

Case 1, referred to as Mountain West University (MWU) for the purpose of findings and discussion, represented a Mountain West region public doctoral research institution (Carnegie R2) that was originally founded as a teacher's college. Titled "Senior Transitional Capstone," the pre-student teaching course served as a requirement within the Bachelor of Music Education (BME) degree program. Within institutional documents, the university describes the program as one which "…prepares students to become broadly based, knowledgeable, and skilled school music educators" (Program Overview artifact). The emphasis of the degree reflects a dual focus on musicianship and teaching, paired with providing perspectives for social, economic, and culturally responsive components of community identities. The BME "…consists of a few parts. [Preservice music teachers] start with typical major classes…then move into the Professional Teacher Education Program coursework" (Program Overview website). Eligible graduates with a BME degree are recommended for licensure through the state department of education. The license allows for teaching in classrooms from kindergarten to 12th grade (K–12) (Program Overview artifact).

At the time of data collection, the BME degree at MWU required a minimum of 124 credit hours for completion, which were outlined in the degree sheets provided on the university website and gathered as part of the documentation and artifact portion of the study. The degree sheet lists general education requirements, major area requirements, and professional education requirements. A disclaimer is present on the degree sheet listing the state department of higher

education exempting the “typical limit of 120 credit hours” (Degree Requirements website). An examination of other degree sheets available from MWU’s College of Education website, (e.g., Bachelor of Arts (BA) Early Childhood Education, BA elementary Education, BA Special Education), Mathematics website (e.g., Bachelor of Science (BS) Mathematics), and English website (BA English Secondary Education) all post credit hours for degree completion at 120 hours. The BA degree in History for Social Studies in grades 6–12 is listed as 121 credit hours, though there is no disclaimer or notice on their degree sheets similar to the one found on the music education degree sheet.

The introduction to music student teaching (IMST) course is prescribed for the fall semester of the senior year on MWU’s suggested four-year plan of study. This plan is located on the website, listing the recommended sequence of course enrollments for completing the undergraduate degree within the typical four-year timeframe. The sequence is divided into semesters with a breakdown for courses recommended each term. The senior year semesters reflect a pre-student teaching semester and a student teaching semester, respectively, for fall and spring. The recommended fall semester is 15 hours and the spring semester (consisting only of student teaching and student teaching seminar) lists 12 hours. Within the 15 hours of the fall semester are the intro to music student teaching course, pedagogy courses, psychology courses, and final music courses pertaining to ensembles and applied lessons.

Course Instructor, Amy

Amy instructs the IMST course at MWU. Her content knowledge, learning processes, and pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) come from her time as a PK–12 music educator (11 years) and music teacher educator (9 years as a college professor). At the time of this study, Amy was instructor of record for a multitude of music education (MUED) courses at the university,

including instrumental methods and techniques (i.e., woodwind and brass) courses, introduction to music education, instrumental pedagogy, student teaching seminar, practicum, and the student teaching internship. Her experience leading these courses positioned her towards a unique understanding of the preservice music teachers (PSMT's) development, from the introduction to music education course in their first year, through developmental courses in the sophomore and junior years, and culminating with the senior-level courses specific to student teaching. Because Amy was able to monitor their progression throughout the BME, she was in a unique position to lead the PSMTs toward synthesis of content knowledge into practice as an expert teacher model (Lachner et al., 2016). When asked about observing student growth and development as an instructor, supervisor, or music education area member throughout the student's time at the university, Amy's reply was that she "like[d] it a lot." I could see, through her reaction, that this experience made her genuinely happy. It was clear Amy valued the time with her students, acting as an expert teacher model and witnessing their growth in various teaching elements throughout their course of study.

Amy's personal teaching philosophy illustrated a desire to help the PSMTs feel as prepared as possible when entering the student teaching semester and teaching profession. While the IMST course allowed for PSMTs to "[meet] with the same students to prep them for the student teaching experience, not just go into random classes," Amy pointed out that due to full course loads and scheduling issues for the preservice teachers, PSMTs typically chose practicum teachers based on location and availability "…because we want[ed] them to remain consistent" (Interview). She concluded the discussion on these settings as "…something that maybe doesn't super align" with her philosophy. She also mentioned a disconnect that can occur between the cooperating teachers (CTs)—sometimes referred to as mentors or mentor teachers (MTs) in

Amy's responses and course documents—and teacher identity development for the PSMTs. From her perceptions, a feeling of "disconnect between mentor teachers really helping student develop their own teacher identity versus, 'Hey, you're here to do things the way I do'" is a philosophy alignment issue. She mentioned that "students [are] not feeling comfortable implementing strategies that they've learned in courses because it's not aligned with what their [host] teachers do…the students are skeptical about how that would be perceived."

Other parts of Amy's teaching philosophy involved "the community and the connection aspect" with the cohort. The community and connections are "really important to me," Amy said as she continued to elaborate on how the course design impacts preservice teacher development. This part of her philosophy is met because "[PSMTs] start before we start at the university, they have the opportunity to work with a teacher prior to [semester start], when [MTs are] setting up their classroom, when they have P[rofessional] D[evelopment] days before the semester starts." The connections are built because the preservice teachers "…have time to establish relationships [with the host teachers] and kind of get the expectations of the students in before they attend."

Alongside teaching students throughout their time as undergraduates, and as an instructor of the IMST course, Amy was able to observe their growth and development. Her involvement with the IMST course was more recent, having served as instructor of record only once prior to this study; she alternates responsibility with another instructor who previously had taught the course. At the time of data collection, Amy was leading the spring semester IMST course for the preservice teachers who would advance to student teacher status in subsequent fall. She had not taught such a course at her previous institution nor did she mention if an IMST course existed. Because the IMST course was new to Amy and is taught each semester with an alternating instructor (i.e., between Amy and a music education colleague), Amy used the course materials

from the alternating instructor "…so we have some continuity between semesters." Although Amy's familiarity with the course reflected one semester of experience, her teaching expertise allowed her to make discernments and opinions of the IMST course and its outcomes.

IMST Course

The IMST course at MWU is a senior-level course offered in the semester prior to student teaching. The course meets for one 50-minute session per week and is assigned one credit hour. The stated purpose of the course is to "…set [the pre-student teacher] up for success as you go into the field. Every assignment is designed to ensure that you are prepared for student teaching and for the job market" (Course Syllabus, p. 1). The course description from the syllabus states the course "prepare[s] students for student teaching through review of topics including assessment, lesson planning, classroom management, work sample preparation, and special needs students in the music classroom" (p. 1). In order for students to enroll in the course, they first must be admitted to the teacher education program through the College of Education (Program Overview artifact). Admission to the teacher education program requires an application process, fees, and an interview by music education faculty (Program Overview artifact). This benchmark typically occurs during the spring semester of the freshmen year of study (Four-Year Plan artifact).

Objectives and Goals. The objectives of the IMST course are listed on the syllabus along with standards nomenclature for each objective. Objectives of the course include:

(a) refining personal philosophies for music education

(b) reflections on relevant issues of classroom management, organization of programs, and curricular designs

(c) ability to demonstrate an understanding of effective assessments in the music classroom; ability to demonstrate lesson planning and evidence of effective teaching (EET) processes

(d) ability to demonstrate conduct and communication professional standards

(e) completion of 35 to 45 hours of field experience within educational settings as a practicum experience and with the same music specialist throughout (Course Syllabus, pp. 1–2)

The course instructor lists the grading policy for the course as based in "ungrading practices" (Course Syllabus, p. 3). Ungrading is a system where "…students do not earn points or letter grades on individual assignments, but they do receive detailed instructor and peer feedback" (Fox, 2024, p.7). This aligns with the instructor's choice for utilizing ungrading as they believe grades:

(a) don't effectively measure learning in terms of application, transfer, and long-term retention.

(b) emphasize extrinsic motivation.

(c) deemphasize the process of learning.

(d) increases anxiety.

(e) decreases creative and risk-taking approaches to learning. (Course Syllabus, p. 3).

What grades should do according to the instructor is:

(a) reflect student learning outcomes.

(b) motivate and encourage students to feel ownership of their learning.

(c) provide useful feedback to students. (Course Syllabus, p. 3).

The instructor provided this statement in the syllabus to describe how the ungrading system functioned within the IMST course:

> You will receive a letter grade at the end of the semester, per university policy, but no assignments will contain letter grades, score, or percentages. All assignments will receive feedback to help improve your learning and performance on upcoming assignments, but they will receive no score. Each assignment will have specific instructions with clear expectations of all required elements and components.
>
> At the end of the semester you will submit a grade justification; the grade you earned in the course (based on the grading scale below–A, B, C, D, F) and your reasons for that grade, citing evidence from your work that demonstrates your learning throughout the semester and your achievement related to *all* course outcome *and* expectations. We will have a brief conference to compare notes and a semester grade will be assigned. (Course Syllabus, pp. 3–4, emphasis in original)

Course Assignments & Activities. The course calendar portion of the syllabus details the topics for discussion alongside a "to-do" and submission list for students to track activities and deadlines. Weekly topics (Course Syllabus, pp. 8–9) align with the course description and student learning objectives detailed in the opening of the course syllabus (pp. 1–2). A chart of the course objectives designed as learning outcomes is accompanied by state standards, licensure standards, and educator standards with their related assignments (pp. 11–12). Course assignments were designed around the "evidence of effective teaching" (EET) (Interview), one of the main assignments for the course, which was formerly known as a teacher work sample. Teacher work samples are defined by Kohler et al. (2008) as a "…performance-based assessment tool that enables teacher education programs to provide evidence of student teachers' ability…"

(p. 2109). The items required of the EET were compiled into a singular cloud-based storage drive and include the pre-service teacher's resume, teaching philosophy, cover letter, classroom organization plan, unit plan, lesson plans, assessment sample, before and after teaching videos, and reflection.

Field Experience. Field experience hours were required to be completed prior to the end of the course in order to advance into the student teaching semester (Course Syllabus, p. 2). The field experience hours also were required as part of the state department of education requirements for certification, with total hours needed from the IMST course ranging from 35 to 45 hours. Failure to complete the field experience requirement results in an incomplete grade in the IMST course until such time as the hours are completed (Course Syllabus, p. 7). The MT and school setting for the field experience component of the IMST course would not be the same as the MT and site/setting for the subsequent student teaching internship (Interview). Due to the change in cooperating teacher placements, the instructor used the syllabus to encourage students to connect with potential cooperating teachers during the course observational times, but stipulated that students may only utilize up to 10 hours of their required field experience hours to observe potential host teachers (Course Syllabus, p. 7). Limiting the hours for potential teacher connections appears to help keep the focus of field experience observations applicable to the course and course discussions.

Information and Resources. Informational items listed in the syllabus include a list of resources, including field experience logs, student teacher handbook, student teacher application and checklist, and a link to tips and information concerning the upcoming student teaching placement. University policies and acknowledgments conclude the syllabus (pp. 8–12).

Emergent Themes

As the cycle 1 coding process (Saldaña, 2021) and analysis of the transcripts proceeded, multiple codes emerged in reference to various themes concerning the IMST course. Initial coding sequences established a codebook list of 64 emergent codes and seven *a priori* codes which were synthesized into four themes: (1) scope, (2) perceived benefits and justification, (3) deficiency corrections, and (4) issues and challenges. The findings for each theme are explored hereafter.

Emergent Theme 1: Scope. A majority of codes for this theme revolved around ideas of goals and purposes, course origination and implementation, and course establishment. As stated in the syllabus, the IMST course was designed to "prepare students for student teaching" (p. 1) and the objectives found within the course reflect this goal. Artifacts, including the syllabus and assignment examples, aligned with stated course objectives and content included within the course. As part of the preparation for student teaching, checkpoint objectives had to be met by the preservice teachers to provide evidence of competency and completion. The teacher education program required fulfillment of checkpoint objectives by the time preservice teachers reached the student teaching semester. The requirements included (a) general education curriculum credits, (b) major area credits, (c) professional credits, (d) program admission requirements for both the music education program and professional teacher program, and (e) successful completion of all field experiences (Program Overview). Autonomy for certain portions of the certification process were found within the music department, specifically determinations concerning the use of certification systems such as edTPA or Praxis. The use of edTPA, or similar systems, is not an existing state-level requirement, but the music department at MWU did utilize Praxis as a requirement within the MTPP until it was phased out prior to the

interview. Amy informed me the music department had "…dropped the Praxis requirement because it's not required for licensure" (Interview), mentioning that when the music department did use it prior, it was determined to be a financial issue for the students and that women of color were failing most often, indicating a problem for PSMTs. Amy stated the "final straw" occurred when:

> …a student with a severe visual impairment that requested accommodations, like eight months before she needed to take the test, and was just not accommodated. To the point where we were on the phone with people administering the test, and we were like, we're done. (Interview)

She continued to discuss that the phasing out of the Praxis was gradual. "At first, we didn't drop it completely," Amy began, "we said that students, in order to not take the Praxis had to have a certain GPA." She recalled the GPA was likely a 3.0 in all education and licensure courses. Amy noted a further complication, due to students still taking courses required for licensure in the semester prior to student teaching, and that all course grades were not available for consideration at the time of the requirement. To alleviate financial and timeline issues, the Praxis requirement was eventually removed.

Goals. Goals of the IMST course were listed on the syllabus and discussed by Amy. Additional areas of need for PSMTs were identified by Amy and incorporated into the IMST. One specific goal was the instillation of "proactive teaching, rather than reactive teaching." For example, Amy noted instances where the preservice teachers were able to solve problems independently without relying on their mentor teacher for direct guidance (i.e., to tell them "how to fix it"). Proactive (as opposed to reactive) teaching was reinforced throughout music education courses from the freshmen year onwards.

Course Development. Course origination had been established prior to Amy's arrival and employment at the university (Amy was employed with the university four years prior to this exploration). When discussing the origination of the course, Amy mentioned that she never questioned why it existed, even reflecting back to her own undergraduate degree while at another university which she believed offered a similar course. She concluded with the thought of "it just feels natural to me that [the IMST] course is there" (Interview). The IMST course is offered alongside similar courses within the college of education for other subject-specific majors: "They do all have internships, what [the college of education] calls them, before student teaching." Amy continued, referencing the length of internships for other education majors, that "college of ed[ucation] students have a way longer internship [than music education]. They're in the classroom, I think it's a year." That year, she explained, was part of the official four-year program of study, with all university classes held on specific days so that PSMTs could be "…full time, two or three days a week in a classroom."

Establishment Procedures. As is expected of most universities or collegiate entities, in order to establish this style of course, committees and governing bodies for the university must approve the course's creation or implementation. This is reflected in Amy's thoughts on how the course might have been implemented based on the current procedures for her university. She mentioned, "…anything would have to go through curriculum committee here at the School of Music, and then it would have to go through university, [and], higher ed things." She also mentioned that she had not encountered any backlash from music colleagues when changing curriculum, though prior to some recent retirements, there may have been some pushback. Amy lamented, "We had people that just don't know how to stay in their lane here," referencing how unit-level changes could be stalled for over a year and a half without a decision.

Credit Limits. Decisions affecting courses such as the IMST course also could fall under the purview of governing bodies (e.g., NASM) and adherence to the recently popular 120-credit hour rule. "[The university] is really big on getting people out of here in four years" (Interview), Amy clarified as we talked about the recent NASM visits and the push to 120 credits for undergraduate degrees. There were some recent adaptations to the BME degree at MWU following a NASM accreditation visit. Currently, the 124-hour degree plan has been granted an exemption from the state department of higher education to exceed the new limitation (Program Overview). "We just changed our curriculum, and some of the courses, like woodwind and brass class are optional." She did clarify that optional courses were meant for students who had experience on multiple instruments like "…brass students who will come in with experience on three of the five instruments" (Interview), allowing students to now have more choice in their degree plan. Though the woodwind or brass techniques reflect each one credit hour, they still meet two times per week for 50 minutes (typical of a 2-credit course). Further changes consisted of zero-hour credit availability. "That's student choice," Amy began, "[they will] load up on ensembles and take them for zero credit just to stay under 18 [credits] or whatever, and still be enrolled in five ensembles." Amy believed the zero-hour credits still applied towards total credit counts in the degree. Examining alternative ways to achieve the goal of 120 hours through various means allowed MWU to balance the degree requirements with total credit hours necessary for completion. The use of alternative hours could serve as a supporting example for other universities toward implementing and/or establishing a course similar to the IMST within an already 120-hour exceeded curriculum.

Emergent Theme 2: Perceived Benefits and Justification. Exploring alignment of how the course benefited the students, prepared them for the student teaching semester, and why the

course is necessary contributed to the codes for emergent theme 2. With the goal of the final semester to be focused on student teaching, preservice teachers at MWU were restricted from taking additional courses beyond the student teaching enrollment and student teaching seminar. According to Amy, "[the preservice teachers] are not allowed to enroll in anything else unless they have a special exception" (Interview). This was important because the IMST course was designed to prepare PSMTs for the singular focus of student teaching. "It's like an essential warm-up, if you will," says Amy as she describes the benefits. "This is an opportunity for students to go into student teaching as prepared as possible." When discussing the synthesis of curriculum content throughout the degree during the introductory class or student teaching itself, Amy remarked, "I think that their student teaching is better because this course exists."

Peer Mentoring. Amy noted peer mentoring as one of the areas she finds is most beneficial to PSMTs within the IMST course. Peer mentoring is different from the peer teaching aspect of other methods courses within the curriculum at MWU. Within IMST, peer mentoring allows the students to be "extremely friendly with each other" to the point they form "…a really tight cohort" (Interview). Throughout the course, students utilize a shared Google spreadsheet with discussions of "what was the highest point of the week" and "what was the lowest point this week." The students are comfortable sharing and, according to Amy, they see a sense of "I'm not alone. I'm celebrating [when] there are things to celebrate. And then when things don't go well, I'm not alone." From her observations of the PSMTs over time, Amy discussed their improvements as teachers as a benefit of the course, noting how specific PSMTs had benefitted. "They have improved as teachers," she starts, "I think that the community builds into the improvement of teachers because they're comfortable sharing their struggles…I love seeing the way they support each other and can commiserate when needed."

Taking Risks. Advantages to peer mentoring also include the sense of risk-taking, which is attainable through the ungrading process Amy established within the course. PSMTs were given the opportunity to try strategies and be proactive in their approaches in the real-world classrooms before returning to the IMST course classroom to receive feedback and encouragement from peers. PSMTs brought in lesson plans and videos of their teaching for peer and instructor discussion. The end goal of the process combined discussion with learning outcomes where PSMTs try to see "are your strategies leading to your outcome?" (Interview), allowing for reflection, but encouraging ownership of their learning–two objectives of Amy's ungrading policy. She hoped because of practices like ungrading, PSMTs would respond with "I'm much more likely to take a risk now, because if it doesn't go well, I'm not going to be docked for it." Continual peer mentoring was provided through feedback from their peers encouraging identity development through procedural comments such as "pacing was great," "you're interacting with students," and "you're modeling…you know what you are doing." Though at times the students do not see the transfer or synthesis from other courses in the moment, Amy does and redirects PSMT learning to help them make the connection. Because Amy wants the PSMTs to take risks, the discussions and redirects for synthesis are not done with extrinsic motivations (e.g., grades) but with the aim of helping the PSMTs to see connections through relationship building, networking, and mentoring.

Longer Varied Experiences. From the instructor's point of view, PSMTs benefit from expansion of teaching ideas and methodologies. To encourage PSMTs to encounter varied ideas and methodologies, the PSMTs in the IMST course were placed with one selected MT for the IMST semester's time, and then another MT for the duration of the student teaching semester. This was consistent with Amy's philosophy for experiences, as she stated "I'm in the mindset of

different perspectives [and] different experiences are good" (Interview). Varying the PSMT placement and MT between IMST and student teaching semester was viewed as a benefit for Amy. These experiences allowed for PSMTs to see a consistent set of students with the same MT "…one or two days a week that they're there at the same time…we would aim for them to be working with [the same] students then," gaining experience with one set of ideas and methodologies before changing to another classroom, age group, and/or mentor for the student teaching placement. These placements were thought to provide authentic experiences for the students in a real-world setting, oftentimes beginning prior to the start of the university semester. Amy discussed the preparation for the student teaching semester through this course as one that provides an "…opportunity to work with a teacher prior to students coming there, when they're setting up their classroom, when they have P[rofessional] D[evelopment] days before the semester starts." Similar to changing MTs and classrooms, experiencing various university instructors is also reflected in the design of both the IMST course and Student Teaching Seminar course. Amy's view of experiences extended to the university classrooms so PSMTs could "…have a different experience from a different professor in practicum and student teaching…they need a different perspective and different feedback on their work." After witnessing public school students consistently and in a singular setting, preservice teachers were observed making personal connections: "These are students that I see regularly; these are who they are as humans," says Amy. The insights gained from such experiences were suggested to influence how the preservice teachers understand the students they are working with. They begin to synthesize "...these are their learning capabilities," and ask questions of "so how do I plan instruction and interact with them on a continuous basis?"

Networking Opportunities. Opportunities for working with MTs in the IMST course (and ahead of the student teaching internship) provided preservice students a chance to fulfill another goal of Amy's: networking. Her students were able to "…establish relationships and get the expectations of the students in before they attend." It was an area that Amy would have also liked to see expanded more to "…continue helping [preservice teachers] build the networks and connect to different teachers, [pause], connect with each other" (Interview).

Authentic Context Opportunities. When discussing the authentic context situation, Amy continued to describe the benefits as:

> The experience they are getting with the consistency with one mentor teacher, with one or two classes of students that they get to interact with continuously, the opportunity to refine their lesson planning practice, to see and apply the theory that they've learned in other courses in an actual classroom setting. *This* is a consistent opportunity for them to do that. (Interview)

Amy determined authentic context learning (ACL) to be important because many of the other courses/classes within the curriculum were peer teaching focused—a characteristic determined by scheduling conflicts and rotations of classes within the public schools, which were suggested to limit the opportunities for PSMTs to observe students in a real-world learning environment. "Trying to get [the preservice teachers] in a classroom to do any teaching on a consistent basis is a logistical nightmare. It's not happening." According to Amy, "peer teaching is very different from working with K–12 students," though she did mention that peer instruction still affords PSMTs practice in teaching. The benefit of the IMST course was seen as once the preservice teachers reached the practicum level, "…they are actually doing the things, or hopefully doing the things from their coursework with K-12 students." Amy continued to point out this is "crucial

to [the preservice teacher's] development" —growth in both their teacher identity and their ability to teach. The preservice teachers get to see "…how those students respond to [the coursework], receiving feedback from them and revising with the help of a mentor and a professor" (Interview). Through the IMST course, preservice teachers were afforded opportunities to work with students more consistently, instead of peer teaching in simulated environments. In these settings, preservice teachers were thought to experience true contextually authentic environments.

Teacher Identity Development. True experiences during the IMST course were viewed as a helpful tool by Amy because they allowed opportunities for PSMTs to form cohorts while being immersed in real-world scenarios. The benefit of true experiences for PSMTs was thought to emerge from how their teacher identity develops, which was observed by Amy through the PSMTs' reflections on self-as-teacher. "We can watch videos together, and we can go over the plans. There's no judgment or shame. We're here to get better," remarked Amy, on the importance of the course experiences. Instances of self-as-teacher reflection are also demonstrated through Amy's recollection of the PSMT cohort's discussion spreadsheet where a preservice teacher's high point stated "I didn't cry during our observation meeting" (interview), which led Amy to investigate the challenges of the class, behaviors, or other phenomena. She mentioned, "I understand the anxiety of being observed, but I need to know if there's something that we're doing or the supervisors are doing that are making you feel anxious, or making you feel like you have to be perfect in your observation." This in turn led to conversations where Amy found the preservice teacher to be focused more on themselves (rather than the students), even referencing to Amy that "I don't want to disappoint you." Amy shifted this situation into a moment of growth for the PSMT, without judgment or shame, and guided them to reflect on the

experience through evaluating themselves. “I would rather see you try something and stumble than stick to what is comfortable,” said Amy to her PSMT. “There’s so much perfectionism in music, as you know. Let go of that and embrace failure as part of the learning process” (Interview). Embracing those experiences was part of Amy’s justification and opinions on establishing the IMST course. It was important for Amy to have “student data, or student feedback on the importance of the course and preparing them for student teaching.” Amy viewed IMST as an “opportunity to apply theory to practice with actual students, [an] impact on their confidence in front of a class, [on] their ability to pace lessons and adapt in the moment.” More than once Amy stated “it’s just so important to their development.”

Emergent Theme 3: Curricular Reinforcements. Instances of necessary reinforcements that emerged from areas of concern comprised the codes for this theme. Determinations for these codes consisted of references to how the IMST course was meant to correct or bring to attention to PSMT needs. In talking with Amy about the progression of the preservice teachers and their development, areas of connectivity were addressed, along with reinforcements of pedagogies that would be relevant to the student teaching experience.

Reinforce Pedagogies Across BME Curriculum. When Amy first joined her current university four years prior to this study, she noticed “…students were really lacking in their ability to write effective outcomes, or even specific measurable outcomes” (Interview). To combat this need, she began to use reinforced pedagogies in the other curriculum areas that would synthesize into the IMST course. “We started modeling in our courses. I put the outcomes for our class period on a PowerPoint that they see at the beginning of class.” In order to help the students make connections with what the instructors were doing, Amy mentioned the courses would have the students then “practice not just writing them, but we will do an activity.” The

activities were described as almost reverse-engineered settings: “Okay, this was the activity. Write an outcome for it, and we can discuss in class.” Amy also would remind the PSMT that these outcomes were not to be viewed as monotonous or “busy work,” but rather necessary because “we instill making music for the joy of making music. Yes, being effective educators, but also we don’t have to ‘drill and kill’ and put fear and intimidation into performing well.” These scenarios fostered an opportunity to discuss with the PSMTs how to keep themselves open to various points of view as they go through the experiences of field work, practicum, and student teaching. Discussions on how they might have seen things done in a classroom does not imply that one teacher’s approach is the only way: “…it’s a fine balance between [not trying to] trash their own experience and their previous music teachers, to saying there’s a different way of doing things.” Amy suggested to her PSMTs that in teaching, there are multiple ways of getting to the same thing, which is reinforcing what PSMTs are taught through universal design for learning (UDL).

Identity and Knowledge Implementation. Finding the balance between previous experiences and alternative ways was part of how the IMST course was designed to identify and reinforce PSMT challenges. PSMTs were sometimes identified as having a disconnect concerning their identity development during the IMST course and working with new mentor teachers, which Amy noted as an area of concern. She indicated when preservice teachers are unsure of their role and ability to implement their knowledge, they did not feel like teachers. She reported that “students [are] not feeling comfortable implementing strategies they’ve learned in courses because it’s not aligned with what their teachers do,” which she says leads to feelings of “skepti[cism] about how that will be perceived” (Interview). Further adaptations, while not specific to the IMST course, were discussed for the mentor teachers in the area of provided

professional development towards the process and responsibilities. Amy also indicated new content knowledge was an issue and the IMST course provided an opportunity to engage with material not previously covered in the undergraduate curriculum. “This might be the first course where they actually do a resume,” Amy mentioned. The occupational teacher identity and job market were important parts of Amy’s networking philosophy, providing experience for PSMTs prior to seeking employment once certified after the student teaching semester.

Synthesizing Content. Amy described challenges in the PSMTs’ abilities to synthesize prior knowledge and concepts from undergraduate courses so they could draw upon that knowledge for student teaching. While discussing the current state of the students and the hours required of the program, Amy mentioned areas of overstimulation and increased stresses that (in her perception) led to limited cognitive synthesis. When mentioning the brass or woodwind classes, prior to changes in the degree program, Amy described a fall semester load which entailed being “in three instrumental classes in one semester.” While learning these instruments, the curriculum would have the students change at the same time and exams would align so that “…they would all have [a] playing exam all at the same time on those three instruments, and it was a lot” (Interview). With large amounts of content and expectations placed quickly upon students and without application, it affected their ability to retain and synthesize that material in upcoming courses and teaching settings. By the time PSMTs reached the student teaching semester, Amy and her graduate assistants noticed that students were unable to recall and implement meaningful teaching strategies or performance/modeling abilities. Amy mentioned having one discussion with a graduate assistant concerning an observation of a preservice teacher, where the student “…had no strategies.” She saw the missed connection between the content and application “even though we’ve worked on lots of strategies: we use movement and

kinesthetic to teach rhythm and establish patterns in our body. We chant, we sing, we use flashcards, and we model. They're not incorporating those [strategies]" (Interview).

Proactive Versus Reactive. Amy strived to ensure her students were as prepared as possible for unplanned events, demonstrating the ability to problem solve. She stated earlier that a goal of the course was to "…instill proactive teaching rather than reactive teaching" (Interview). What she thought seemed to be missing for her PSMTs was the ability to anticipate problems in the classroom before they occurred, including planning strategies to remedy inaccuracies. "We never learn how to be independent music makers or solve our own problems, so we're trying to instill that early…and then incorporate [it] into their lessons." Amy wanted to see proactive considerations happen for the students, so that they have planned ideas for an "if-then type" scenario. "If this happens, then I can do this. And you know, you might have five strategies that you don't use, but it's better to be prepared and have them, while also realizing you can't plan for everything."

Observation Versus Teaching Hours in Field Experience. Prior to the student teaching semester, PSMTs at MWU were required to have 160 hours of field experience (Interview). Depending on individual course requirements within the degree plan, it was indicated those hours could be mainly observation and lack applied teaching opportunities. The field experience hours, according to Amy, were "sprinkled in" and "tied to different courses" (Interview). She expanded on the breakdown as "10 hours are tied to [the general music methods] course that have to be in a K-5 classroom," "in the instrumental pedagogy class, there are 10 hours…and those must be in a beginning instrumental music classroom setting." She mentioned another 90 hours are tied to various classes, with a portion spent in teaching projects: "Some of [the hours] are allowed to be the students themselves teaching. We have a [project] here…if they're a

[project] teacher, they can count some, not all, the hours they do." Another instance she mentioned from the instrumental pedagogy class was that students can count one hour of "…watching a beginning band concert," while "the rest have to be in classrooms." The remaining 50 hours come from any classroom observed during undergraduate courses, with a small number of hours allowed from projects the students participate in themselves as the teacher (e.g., acting as string project teacher).

Amy mentioned little of *teaching* hours within the field experience requirement, and most mentions involved observations as field experience. The IMST course design was suggested to target teaching hours through the 45-hour requirement of field hours in a consistent space where the preservice teachers engaged with a specific set of students/classrooms throughout the placement. It was important for Amy to "transition [preservice teachers] with the consistency of the 45 hours. Being in the same classroom, establishing relationships with those students, learning about them as learners, and being able to make your plans suitable for those particular students" (Interview). Amy's perception was that this transition set up the preservice teachers for the student teaching semester, since they experienced consistent immersion with one group of students and applied content knowledge to authentic settings—with actual teaching opportunities.

Experiences in Various Environments. In addition to the hours of field experiences built into the IMST course, the need for those hours to cover as many K–12 music classroom possibilities emerged as a concern for Amy. As the PSMTs are going to be certified for teaching all grades K–12, and will have different mentor teachers in both the practicum and student teaching semesters, they were encouraged to utilize the IMST course as a way to strengthen their areas of least competence. Amy would encourage PSMTs to utilize a cross-curricular placement

to help with strengthening areas they found themselves to be under-prepared in, or to gather experience across disciplines. Amy discussed one scenario where a student wanted to be a high school choir director and wanted their student teaching placement to reflect that. Amy reasoned, "If that's going to be their secondary placement, then we want them in a practicum that's going to be middle school instrumental of some sort" (Interview). She explained the reasoning behind it to be "because they are going to be certified across the whole board, and we want them to have experience [in varied settings]." Still, other students would choose specific areas for practicum placement because "…they feel like it's their weakest area and they want more practice there." This comment was in reference to some students who chose an elementary placement for the practicum, even though according to Amy, "they don't specifically want to be elementary teachers," but will need to ready to teach at all levels.

Within IMST. Changes to the course can happen in instances where the instructors notice needs of curricular reinforcement. Amy cited opportunities arose where she could add applicable materials to portions of the course (i.e., specific topics) due to seeing some of the students' individual needs in real-time. She mentioned "…in some instances, [I've] modified the assignment just for specificity. I want to see you implement 'XYZ' in this lesson because that's something collectively we're struggling with, and that's really important" (Interview). It is important to note that Amy referenced additions to activities, not wholesale changes to the course or a replacing existing materials or assignments. "We just change a focus here and there," stated Amy.

Emergent Theme 4: Issues and Challenges. The final theme within Case 1 centers on codes related to issues and challenges with the course, degree, or other areas of concern that affect or are affected by the IMST course.

Strong Mentor Teacher Availability. While Amy presented many positives to the IMST course, she also noted areas of concern or ways in which the course might be prohibitive. While preservice teachers would be able to get more interaction consistently with the same students and mentor teacher, Amy did point out that sometimes the mentor teacher is not the best aligned with program goals or philosophies. The chosen mentors for PSMTs were sometimes necessities, due to scheduling availability or location (i.e., school near campus). While this course served as a prelude to student teaching, and those 45 hours in the field are more consistent in preparing preservice teachers for the student teaching semester, Amy exhibited a feeling of not having enough strong mentors affecting PSMT preparation and development during this course.

Mentor Teacher Disconnect. Mentor teachers were also shown to display a disconnection between an understanding of the program goals and how they approach the development of the PSMTs. MTs might task the PSMTs to mimic their classroom in a "you're here to do things the way I do" mentality, as Amy described it, versus "really helping students develop their own teacher identity" (Interview). Mimicry was not thought to allow the level of teacher identity development or risk-taking that Amy focused on in the IMST classroom. At other times, inservice teachers had reached out to Amy and requested a PSMT with specific specializations: "We get emails like 'I could really use some help here. Can you send me a student?'" Amy laments, "That's the opposite. [pause]. They should be more work for [mentor teachers], not lightening [their] load. [PSMTs] are not an assistant." Amy demonstrated some frustration with the fact that some inservice teachers—both within the IMST course and/or student teaching internship—"…have some disconnect in the roles of our students." She referenced her department working on providing support and education in the form of professional development for the mentor teachers in the hopes of correcting the issue.

Credit Hour Limitations. Governing bodies and institutional barriers are also a related challenge to this course. Within the push by institutions to adhere to 120-credt degree programs at the undergraduate level, or changes being made to move towards a traditional 120-hour four-year program of study (Doerksen, 2020; Maas, et al., 2023; NASM, 2025b), an addition of a course such as the IMST (or other curricular need) were discussed as possibly being met with resistance or denied outright by administration. Amy's university had received an exemption from their state department of education to breach the cap on hours within the music education degree, extending their program to 124 total hours. Despite the exemption, Amy remarked that her university "…is really big on getting people out of here in four years" (Interview). However, instances of "hidden hours" within the overall program of study still existed: "We just changed our curriculum, so some courses now are optional. All the instrument classes, they have to take X number of them, but they can choose which one." Student choice also affects variable hours in the required ensembles, which add to a student's load, but zero-credit options reduce the number of credits on paper as well as cost to the students (i.e., no credit hour or fee charges). "[It's] student choice. Like, I'll take this ensemble for zero credits…to stay under 18 [credits] or whatever, and still be enrolled in five ensembles." Courses and hours of this design were thought to lead to strain on students' time and focus, reducing the ability for preservice teachers to synthesize the materials being covered prior to student teaching as "…the number of credit hours versus the number of hours in the classrooms just overstimulate, over-stresses." Additionally, at a time when PSMTs were supposed to be immersed more fully into the public classrooms, ensemble directors were requesting them to come back to campus and participate in large ensembles—even during the student teaching semester. "We've had some conflict with ensemble directors wanting students to play in ensembles," Amy confirmed. Those requests usually were

in response to a perceived lack of instrumentation in the ensemble, but the response from Amy was “absolutely not. I have to miss some student teaching hours? No!”

Institutional Barriers. Barriers towards implementation of the IMST course also appeared at the institutional level and could be influenced by the 120-hour mandate. Amy mentioned that, like most universities, course implementations or curriculum changes at her university would require that “anything would have to go through curriculum committee here at the School of Music, and then it would have to go through university, [and], higher ed things” (Interview). She mentioned that some curriculum changes can receive backlash from faculty, especially when changing hour or credit requirements to facilitate courses. Some backlash was suggested to come from unexpected areas, leading to disagreements between faculty members or departments/areas within the school. Amy expressed frustrations when “people that just don’t know how to stay in their lane here” and involved themselves with curricular revision. She indicated influencers from other music areas would insert themselves into another’s narrative without content knowledge or full understanding, making transitions to revised curricula difficult.

Barriers Within IMST. Within the IMST course itself exist areas of concern, from Amy’s perspective. As she continued to develop the course as an instructor, she recognized areas of need not found throughout the program or not thoroughly covered, suggesting these deficiencies could be addressed in the IMST course: “…just a clearer emphasis on peer mentoring and a stronger emphasis on networking” (Interview). She viewed a large part of the course as career preparation, and stated that, as an instructor, she was “…trying to prepare them to combat possible music teacher isolation, which very much exists in our profession.” Her emphasis on these improvements was formulated around “getting [the preservice teachers] to build a strong

network as they transition into teaching, so they have multiple people they can rely on for support" (Interview).

Amy alluded to issues where programs might experience difficulty in completing required field experience hours. "We would do experience Fridays," Amy began:

> We tried it last semester. We would take university vans and we would go a whole day. We would try to hit elementary, middle, and high school. And within the middle and high school, we would make sure there were multiple music classes going on so [the preservice teachers] would have a choice. They could see orchestra for a bit and then go to a choir classroom…we got to take them to different areas outside of this district so they could see other places. But some [preservice teachers] still had [classes] on Fridays, so it didn't work for everybody. (Interview)

These hours were seen as still not consistent, nor were the classrooms and students, because each day would be spent in a different area, with a "menu of choice" (i.e., multiple classrooms for PSMTs to choose from) within schools. Amy mentioned that the NA*f*ME-collegiate chapter at her university tried to be involved in getting students together to enhance field placement experiences: "This year, our NA*f*ME officers implemented a little carpool," Amy explained. The students were able to create a shell within the university's web-based learning management system and create posts listing dates, times, and drivers. "[The officers] would post something like 'Three of us are going to go to this school and see this teacher at this time. I have room for two more in my car if anyone wants to go.'" Amy recognized the need for building community and getting the students into the school classroom early on in their degree plan. Again, she mentioned how field experience hours and placements are inconsistent throughout the program, fluctuating across a variety of classrooms, students, and teachers; most did not involve more than

an observational focus. While preservice students did experience hours in school classrooms, Amy noted that they failed to make as many meaningful connections or transfer of knowledge as she would like.

Case 1 Summary

The IMST course at MWU was utilized as an opportunity for PSMTs to connect prior learning with authentic context scenarios in preparation for the full-time student teaching experience. The four main emergent themes consisted of: (1) the scope (e.g., goals and purposes; course development and establishment), (2) perceived benefits and justifications (e.g., peer mentoring; risk taking; longer varied experiences; networking opportunities; ACL opportunities; teacher identity development), (3) curricular reinforcements (e.g., reinforcing pedagogies; identity and knowledge implementation; synthesizing content; observations versus teaching hours; experiences in various environments) , and (4) issues and challenges (e.g., mentor teacher availability; mentor disconnects; institutional barriers). The course was viewed by the instructor, Amy, as an important transitional experience combining fieldwork, reflection, peer support, professional networking, and synthesization of content to practice. The IMST course was suggested by Amy to help PSMTs develop identity and confidence through authentic experiences and was a worthwhile endeavor for preparing the PSMTs to enter the student teaching semester.

Chapter 5: Findings – Case 2

Case 2: Barbara and the Practicum Seminar

Location

Western University (WU), located in the Western United States, is an open-access institution whose history stems from a local school and through various transformations, originating as a college before achieving university status (University Website). A cursory search of the university and Carnegie Classification (American Council on Education, 2025) websites do not specify the university's status, other than a "Special Focus: Arts and Sciences" (American Council on Education, 2025). The university's website also listd notable information and demographics, though those statistics were not pertinent to the description of the case nor would influence the themes, so inclusion of those details was omitted. This was also done to further anonymize the university and its exact location.

The explored course at WU, "Practicum Seminar," is a requirement within the educational and professional portion of the curriculum found in the Bachelor of Music Education (BME) degree program. The program overviews and descriptions are based on discussions with the instructor for Practicum Seminar at WU and from the university website. Specific citations were omitted due to anonymity and replaced with reference to which artifact or interview from which they were retrieved. An important distinction to note: the music education program at this particular location is listed as directed at secondary education and the licensures required for those specific areas; however, the degree goals are designed to prepare preservice teachers for all music-related areas, including general music (Program Overview). Though this degree is targeted towards licensure in secondary education, an elementary music endorsement is also obtainable through additional coursework within the BME degree.

The teacher preparation program/music teacher preparation program (TPP/MTPP) requires preservice music teachers (PSMTs) to submit applications for, and be admitted to, the secondary education program during the mid-point of the third year, affording all preservice educators (PSEs) access to professional education courses. Additional requirements include content area subject test(s), less than 5% remaining of their major coursework, and approval from the department advisor of their major academic content area (Program Overview artifact). Licensure is completed by the state department of education upon recommendation from the university after completion of the educator preparation program (University Website).

The BME degree at the time of exploration was listed between 127 and 131 credits, depending on the inclusion of the elementary music endorsement. The degree is outlined through degree sheets and curriculum explanations found on the university website. I obtained program curriculum, licensure information, degree plans, and learning outcomes as part of the documentation and artifact portion of this study. The degree overview and plan include a listing of all required general education courses, major area courses, and professional area or educator preparation program courses. Graduation requirements list the minimum accumulation of 127 college-level credits to complete the degree without endorsements.

The introduction to music student teaching (IMST) course is located in the first semester of the senior or fourth year (Graduation Plan; Online Curriculum Website). The degree plan artifact contains a recommended plan of study and progression of courses in order for PSMTs to complete the degree within a four-year period. The degree curriculum overview artifact lists, defines, and organizes the courses necessary for successful degree completion into categories and levels. There is no division of courses for vocal or instrumental music education within the artifacts, as the graduation plan lists interchangeable course numbers for specific content areas.

Enrollment in the IMST course is suggested during the fall segment of the fourth year (Graduation Plan). Though not explicitly defined as a pre-student teaching semester, the other courses listed on the artifact within the fall semester of the fourth year are mostly professionally based (e.g., curriculum and instruction, secondary assessments, classroom management) and pertain to the education classroom with department of education catalog identifiers and codes (examples omitted for anonymity). The final semester of the fourth year, or spring semester in the graduation plan, lists the courses required as student teaching and student teaching capstone. The fall semester recommends 16 hours for the various courses, while the spring semester lists 13 hours—10 of which are contained within secondary student teaching.

Course Instructor, Barbara

Barbara served as the course instructor for the IMST course at WU. She was selected as the primary interviewee due to her experience with the course and understanding of degree processes at her institution. As with Amy at MWU, Barbara also reflected Lachner et al.'s (2016) expert teacher model: Her background consists of 25 years in the public education classroom teaching band, with some experience teaching elementary bands, before she moved into higher education and music teacher education. Her time teaching band at the secondary level (6th–12th grades) included multiple locations around the school district, giving her a wide array of experiences from which to draw upon when working with PSMTs. At her current university, Barbara's instructional responsibilities included teaching in both applied and academic/classroom areas. She served as instructor for the saxophone studio, theory and ear training level one (one of two instructors), woodwind study, fundamentals of music, introduction to music education, rehearsal techniques, choral methods, instrumental methods, supervisor of the practicum (both elementary and secondary, the latter serving as the IMST course for this

case), and student teaching for music education majors. Her roles as a previous public school educator and now collegiate professor inform her ability to formulate an understanding of the students and their growth/development as music educators across the degree.

Barbara's philosophy towards teaching PSMTs and the IMST course highlighted an encouragement toward well-rounded and prepared students. Although the BME degree at WU is based in secondary education, she hoped more students will make use of the additional courses that lead to elementary preparation and endorsements. Barbara noted that, in order for students to receive the elementary endorsement from the state, they are encouraged to "take just four extra credits in music methods, the elementary music methods and the practicum." While she urges them to do so, "only about half of them take advantage of [the elementary courses and endorsement]." Additionally, Barbara touted real-world experiences as part of WU's preservice experience, stating "we encourage [the preservice teachers] to go out and help as much as they can." She further noted possible areas of PSMT interaction within the educational community, ranging from occasional volunteering to heavy/regular involvement within the local schools.

As part of her philosophical outlook, Barbara was also concerned with the design of the curricular program. Examining the program requirement artifact illustrated a semester breakdown of instruction, assessment, management, and methods courses recommended during the same semester as the IMST course. When discussing this courseload, Barbara was quick to point out that although it might be listed that way on the artifact, "we're encouraging everybody to take the methods course before they take those." Her comments confirmed that the suggested course sequence was designed to afford preservice teachers an understanding of music education methods/technique prior to secondary education courses to foster concept alignment and synthesis. "I thought we had fixed that in the present—the way it looks online. We've done that

[methods before secondary education courses] pretty solidly for the last three or four years." Barbara referenced common conversations with students where she carefully advised them accordingly: "No, you're going to take methods in the spring before you start your secondary ed[ucation]" (Interview).

IMST Course

The IMST course at WU is populated under the TPP's secondary education requirements for music education undergraduates. Labeled as *Practicum Seminar*, the course is listed under the degree program description/course list artifact, which is divided into general requirements, teacher preparation program preparation requirements, teacher preparation program professional requirements, music requirements, music education requirements, applied lessons, and ensembles. Further examination of the artifact establishes the IMST course during the final year, in the semester prior to student teaching and student teaching seminar.

The IMST course was required for all students within the teacher education program. It serves as "an integral part of the field-based Education Program, and provides students the opportunity to apply concepts learned in coursework to real-life teaching in the classroom" (Course Syllabus, p. 1). The course description in the syllabus outlines the duration of time spent in the classroom as "one full day per week, and one full week during the semester (p. 1)." Barbara noted in the interview that they now employ a full two weeks of complete immersion during the semester. Practical applications found within the course description highlight an emphasis on:

> …[the] delivery of lesson plans that are appropriate to the contextual factors of the classroom and align to local and state curriculum and standards; implementation of

classroom routines, procedures, and instructional strategies; collaboration with families of students; and development of professional dispositions of the practice. (Syllabus, p. 1)

Listed last were the references to cooperating, or mentor, teachers and observations from university supervisors utilizing required state department of education tools for assessment. Prerequisite requirements for enrollment in the course are listed as admission to the licensure program for secondary education (University Website).

Objectives and Goals. The objectives and outcomes of the IMST course are found both in the syllabus artifact and university website. The syllabus artifact contains a program statement defining the outcomes as "align[ing] to national accreditation standards (AAQEP), [state] standards for effective teaching (acronym omitted for anonymity), and [university] core themes of learning, engagement, and opportunity" (p. 1). Both the syllabus artifact and the university website list outcomes for the course, only differing in the presented order. The outcomes are listed as:

1. Discuss and reflect on successes and challenges that arise during the practicum teaching experience.
2. Discuss and reflect on facilitating classroom activities and helping with behavior management as directed by the cooperating/mentor teacher.
3. Create and teach two observed lessons that utilize effective instructional strategies and teach accurate content concepts and skills to whole classes and small groups of students.
4. Collaborate with grade-level teams to analyze student learning data, inform and adapt instruction, and build understanding of district policies and procedures.

5. Discuss and reflect on development of professional dispositions, and develop action steps for continued growth.
6. Engage counselors, school administration, and related personnel and community resources to understand and support students' educational progress and goals.
7. Discuss and reflect upon ways to engage parents/families in students' educational progress under the guidance of cooperating/mentor teacher. (Syllabus)

An additional list of five student outcomes tied to state standards also appears in the syllabus. I omitted the specific standards here to protect anonymity, but those standards were correlated to each of the outcomes below:

1. Attend to the unique learner characteristics by personalizing learning, building relationships, respecting learner backgrounds and perspectives, and fostering student self-awareness.
2. Design instruction that is aligned to [State] Core Standards, communicates clear pathways for learning and growth, is engaging to learners, and is supported by student learning data.
3. Use practices, strategies, and tools for instruction and assessment that are research- and data-informed and meet the learning needs of each student.
4. Create a classroom climate that fosters mutual respect among teacher and learners, and is organized and structured to promote safety, learning, and growth.
5. Adhere to professional and ethical standards by adhering to relevant laws, rules, and policies impacting educators, and by upholding the dispositions of the profession. (University Website; Syllabus, p. 1).

Course Assignments & Grading. The grading scheme for completion of the IMST course is pass/fail (Syllabus, p. 4). A breakdown of percentages is not present in the syllabus, but there are explanations for attendance, formal lessons, and rubric scoring that serve as the threshold for passing the practicum. The IMST course heavily enforced attendance and engagement due to the practicum and field-based design and requires a disposition rubric completed as self-evaluation (syllabus, pp. 2–4). The same disposition rubric wass also utilized by the mentor teacher (MT), and required for completion of the final year. If satisfactory results were determined form the MT, the disposition would suffice through the student teaching semester as well and not have to be completed again. Unsatisfactory dispositions determined by the MT are to be addressed in conference with university supervisors, the MT, and PSMT. At that point, the disposition rubric would continue to be evaluated throughout the student teaching semester and would be required to be returned as satisfactory before the completion of student teaching (Case 2, Interview). The main component listed in the syllabus as required for passing practicum involved the completion of formal lesson plans, implementation of the lessons, and observations during two "whole-group formal lessons" which are evaluated using a competency-based rubric. The PSMT's "supervisor will assign a score for each competency row…these individual competency scores will be added together for a final summed score" (Syllabus, p. 3). A table of course titles and numbers lists the required competency score threshold (Syllabus, pp. 3). Students must pass each segment of the course (i.e., attendance, lesson plan, lesson scoring, self-assessed disposition rubric), to continue in the program's sequential curriculum. Failure of any portion of the course's segments would require students to repeat the practicum before they are allowed to continue in the program (Syllabus). Following in alignment with course objectives and outcomes, the assignments coincided through observation, creation of lesson plans,

reflections, and disposition assessments. The assignments reflected the syllabus descriptions and grading schemes outlined. The last page of the syllabus also lists a chart of the individual competencies and target scores by semester, including the summed score necessary by end of semester in order to achieve the desired outcome (pp. 4–5).

Policies and Resources. The last segments of the course syllabus are listings of university policies, important dates, and additional links toward resources within the university and calendars (pp. 4–5). Additional descriptions were addressed as necessary under the *Emergent Themes* heading within Chapter 5.

Emergent Themes

Through my analysis of WU artifacts and interview transcripts, I cataloged 91 emergent codes (and seven *a priori* codes) and cross-referenced the code book before merging codes into categories and themes. Four main themes emerged: (1) teacher development, (2) policy and process, (3) perceived benefits and justification, and (4) issues and challenges. Initial findings and subcategories within the themes were explored in the following sections.

Emergent Theme 1: Teacher Development. Codes within this theme were comprised of history and development, relation to other courses within the curriculum, identity development, and authentic experiences. The BME degree program artifact contained the overarching description for a program that "provides students with the training needed to be successful as Music Teachers" (BME Overview Website). The training was also designed to prepare preservice teachers for "a variety of other teaching and general music-related opportunities," (BME Overview Website) though the specificity of opportunities was not defined. The training throughout the degree program adhered to accreditation associations (e.g., NASM, AAQEP) and

was historically based on the elementary education degrees first established at the college[1] (Interview; University Website). Barbara remarked of the reputation that, "a high percentage of the school teachers in this county had gotten their elementary ed degree from [the college] and it had a really good reputation for elementary education" (Interview). The addition of secondary education degrees were established after the status of university was obtained, and the original elementary education practices influenced contributions of degree requirements towards the secondary setting. "We used to be a junior college," Barbara began, "only elementary ed. They didn't have secondary programs at all, and when [the college] became a university…they started to add secondary ed degrees. That's when our music ed[ucation] degree [started]." She continued to discuss the use of practicum in the elementary program and its inclusion in the secondary, finishing with, "And so since the elementary program included practicum, when [the university] did the secondary program, they just said 'practicum is great, so let's just make it a part of it.' So it always has included the practicum semester." She recounted that the decision to include the course was due to the aforementioned elementary education reputation. "When they envisioned [the secondary ed degree], they said 'let's just keep [practicum] as the elementary degree here at this university has a great reputation statewide'." Now, practicum courses are utilized throughout the education preparation programs, from elementary education through secondary music education, as part of all PSE/PSMT preparation areas.

Teacher Identity. The TPP also included a focus on teacher identity development throughout courses within the curriculum, including time in simulated and authentic settings for the preservice teachers. Barbara commented on the designs within courses with a desire to

[1] I use "college" here due to the development of the university and its history. The university underwent many changes throughout its history, so this affords the appropriate classification at the time of the development for degrees and information discussed with Barbara.

"create as many classroom-like settings as we can" (Interview) and how some authentic opportunities involve groups such as community-based New Horizon Band (NHB) ensembles. She mentioned the NHB had been "great to come in during our course time…and our students get a chance to lead [rehearsal techniques]." The PSMTs were afforded opportunities for reflection through videotaping of their teaching, which included group sight-reading practices alongside large ensemble rehearsal techniques. Most BME courses at WU often required the PSMTs to form rehearsal groups for peer-teaching episodes. "I just use the students themselves," Barbara began. "We just create a choir because usually there's enough students in [the class]. I haven't brought anybody else in to create an outside choir, we just use the students themselves." Some of the decisions for peer teaching are due to course restrictions (e.g., time, credit hours). Barbara mentioned other instances of peer teaching within their typical 2-credit music education courses, where the faculty attempted to provide PSMTs with more podium time, or "as much as we can. And then when students are not on the podium, we usually have them playing in the ensemble somehow." When asked about the amount of peer teaching episodes compared to authentic opportunities, Barbara reflected on what preservice teachers are doing for authentic experiences. "If they do [get authentic experiences], it's kind of [on] their own. They've inserted themselves into helping with the teacher. And we encourage them to go out and help as much as they can." She mentioned that authentic context learning (ACL) experiences often go beyond observations and involve volunteer teaching, where PSMTs are encouraged to visit classroom teachers and offer to take various sections of ensembles or programs. "Other than observing in the fundamentals or the intro [to music education] class, and then when they finally get into their practicum, those are really the only assigned and directly course-related observations that they're

getting." Barbara concluded, "if they do anything [beyond observation] other than that, they're on their own. It's their own initiative that gets them into the classrooms."

Authentic Contexts. The IMST provides more opportunities for preservice teachers to experience authentic context learning (ACL) than the other portions of the TPP/MTPP. The PSMTs utilized the practicum semester prior to student teaching as immersion into the classroom, where throughout the semester, they are spending at least one day a week fully in the public education classroom with a consistent MT and set of students. Towards the end of the semester, the preservice teachers are immersed for two complete weeks, full time. The preservice teachers responded to questions from Barbara about how they are doing during this time. She mentioned responses of "Oh man, this is intense" and "This has been really fun to finally see the kids every day" (Interview). Barbara reflected on these comments by concluding, "they're just glad to finally see kids day to day, and they start to understand how different kids are day to day…also [the students'] little incremental growth that they make, they can see it better." This was designed because "the ed[ucation] department just thought it would be more valuable to them to do two weeks solid rather than do two or three more weeks of just [single] days." The two-week immersion during the practicum appeared to help continue PSMT development and confirm teacher identity as the PSMTs were directly involved in teaching content. Barbara affirmed, "their identity is more of a teacher by that point than a student." Barbara observed the PSMTs throughout the semester and made remarks after watching one student: "[they] did a good job, but with a little too content heavy. That's one of the first things [the preservice teachers] find out. [They] get out there and want to do everything all at once, and they realize, 'I tried to cram too many things in'." Barbara concluded the PSMTs need to experience and

understand that "[the students] should just practice more. It's okay if I don't get to the end of my lesson" (Interview). These efforts also shown to have been in conjunction with mentor teachers.

Mentor Teachers. The mentor teachers were held in high esteem by Barbara. She mentioned "we have a great group of mentor teachers, and the teachers in our district are long timers. Most of them have been in their jobs for well over 10 years" (Interview). Having longitudinal understanding of the IMST course and its goals helped with the opportunities for ACL and development of PSMTs from the mentor teachers. "When [the MT] find a student teacher, or even a practicum teacher, that they trust, they'll get them involved immediately…they team teach." Barbara suggested part of what the MT did for the preservice teacher development during the practicum was to treat them as colleagues: "They talk to these practicum students as if they were fellow teachers and treat them almost like equals." Barbara continued discussing that the mentors provided true mentorship and involved the PSMTs with discussions of "'What do you think we should do in this situation?' or 'Let me explain why I treat the students the way I did'," and then provided feedback in the form of disposition rubrics for the PSMTs. While the BME degree was described as training for a successful music teacher which prepared preservice teachers for various opportunities (BME Overview), the IMST course was suggested to provide and reinforce those program descriptors through authentic application.

Emergent Theme 2: Policy and Process. Theme 2 was formed from codes related to policies and certifications which influenced or were a part of the IMST course.

Certification and Licensure. The rationale for the curriculum within the programs at WU was found in the program licensure and certification requirements of the BME degree overview. Established policies determined that while the curriculum led to "professional licensure [and] are designed to prepare students for [state] licensure and certifications requirements" (BME

Overview, p. 1), the granting of licensure or certification was not guaranteed and that "licensure and certification requirements are set by agencies that are not controlled by or affiliated with the University, and licensure and certification requirements can change at any time" (p. 1). Specific to WU and the state in which the university is located, the policy for certification and licensure from the State Department of Education has undergone modifications in the years leading up to this study. According to Barbara, she did not know when this changed, but at some point "…everybody's music ed[ucation] programs in the state were secondary" (Interview). When asked if that meant just 6th through 12th grades, she confirmed that "the state does their certification that way. When I graduated with my degree…back in the 1980s, [licensure] was [for] K–12." Barbara did add that the license could be complemented with an elementary endorsement, stating "most of the universities offer a way for their students to still get some elementary training so that their license when they actually start is a K–12 license with an elementary endorsement." The license done in this way was mentioned in a lamented fashion as Barbara provided information on the state's point of view saying, "it isn't statewide policy that there's music taught at the elementary level, so hopefully that'll get fixed at some point." The way schools approached a complete K–12 music curriculum, according to Barbara, was that schools opt for elementary music specialists:

> There's been a funding source approved through the state legislature for Arts Education in elementary, and so the principals have kind of an option of where they want to direct that arts education to: to visual art, to music, to dance, to theater. (Interview)

While the funding was suggested to be directed towards certain programs, how it was utilized was not stipulated. In the district Barbara used for her student IMST placements, she highlighted the existence of an elementary music program, but split amongst schools: "We have some full-

time elementary teachers here in our district. They usually teach at two schools to have a full gig. Part time at one school, part time in another, but they do it full time."

Professional Assessment Measures. Additional updates to policy occurred from within the Department of Education at the university, including the passing of PRAXIS II as a benchmark for licensure recommendation. Test usage or determination fell under state board oversight, as the "licensure boards in each state establish requirements for licensure and certification for their respective states," (BME Overview, p. 1) and oversaw the requirements. Barbara informed me "the requirement is still there at the state level, so we require it for the students to get into the secondary ed program" (Interview). PRAXIS II was defined as the subject area test required for admission into the secondary education program (BME Overview, p. 2). Barbara noted that "a lot of content areas have been dropping their Praxis exam, but the music area has not dropped it yet from the state." She later mentioned that she believes PRAXIS II to be "well placed," though how long it may remain a requirement for music was unknown by her: "The state's been dropping some other ones [subject area Praxis tests], so I don't know what or how they're feeling about the music one. I like it." When asked about its content in relation to courses and practicum, Barbara mentioned, "it's got everything in it…it's a lot more wide-based than it used to be." Content areas Barbara mentioned included updates to world music, theory, folk music, and history. "It's also got some great pedagogical questions in it," Barbara began, before listing areas of questions from suitable musical lines for beginning players to where resources are located within the National Association for Music Education (NA*f*ME). She also mentioned additional areas where students would be asked about music technology, equipment, apps, recording processes, and microphones.

Alongside the PRAXIS II exam, WU required (for a time) successful completion of a teacher performance assessment (TPA) measure: the PPAT. Educational Testing Services (ETS, 2025a) labels the PPAT (Praxis Performance Assessment for Teachers) as an assessment that "…provides a solution, developed by educators for educators, for measuring a teacher candidate's readiness to teach effectively." WU did make a change away from requiring the PPAT, though Barbara did not mention when that change was made. She did say she saw the change away from PPAT as a response to paranoia within the university education department. "They went into [PPAT], and they were so paranoid about it, because all of a sudden, the [formal evaluation] was not [completed by someone] within the university" (Interview). This change caused ripples within the music education curriculum, as courses that covered rehearsal techniques and classroom management were eliminated so the preservice teachers could enroll in the department of education's classroom management course—viewed at the time as critical for successful completion of the PPAT.

Discussion of the elimination of the rehearsal techniques course came about during a recent accreditation visit by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM). NASM "establishes national standards for undergraduate and graduate degrees and other credentials for music and music-related disciplines…" (NASM, 2025d) and issues accreditations for music programs that meet established competencies for music program components. Within NASM's requirements for the bachelor's degree in music education was a credit hour designation, stating "baccalaureate degrees require a minimum of 120 semester or 180 quarter hours and the equivalent of four academic years" (NASM, 2025b, p. 84). Barbara mentioned, "[NASM] said, 'You really need to have a rehearsal techniques thing going,' even though they knew [why it was eliminated]." (Interview). While NASM appears to be supporting 120-hour degree plans, the

BME degree at WU currently ranges from 127 to 131 hours (for the additional elementary music education endorsement). According to Barbara, neither the university nor NASM had been insistent on hour changes to the WU program due to the BME being "…a professional degree and has a license that goes with it, so we've been given a little bit more leeway." She continued: "there's a higher education board in [the state]…and so since it's a professional degree, they take the 120 cap off of it" (Interview).

The Disposition Rubric. While the 120-hour policy has been exempted, the issues with PPAT were still a concern with the department of education. I asked Barbara about their current situation, and she responded in the affirmative that WU replaced the PPAT with an internal assessment alongside a state-mandated professional disposition rubric for teacher candidates (Interview; Disposition Rubric). Teacher candidates were required to demonstrate specific professional dispositions by the end of their student teaching experience. This goal was documented through the rubric, with description and purpose presented as "to be used as a *formative assessment* to facilitate feedback to candidates on their growth in these dispositions and for the development of action plans to improve in any indicated areas" (Disposition Rubric, p. 1, emphasis in original). According to Barbara, this rubric is "pretty rigorous…it's something that all of the departments of education are using in the state" (Interview). The single rubric is used between the IMST course and student teaching, and is only required to be completed once, so long as the competency scores meet expectations and the score target is reached (Syllabus, p. 3). Once the preservice teacher receives those marks, the rubric is considered complete. The single use of the rubric was determined by the education department in an attempt to minimize workload on MTs: "Let's just make it as easy as we can on the mentor teacher. So we only ask that one rubric from them" (Interview). Concerning the department of music, Barbara noted one

area of the rubric that she says needs to be changed. “[There is] one element of that rubric that our department feels needs to be split into two different scores. And the state has not split it, and so we’ve got this one thing that we’re dealing with” (Interview).

Field Experience Policy. Specific policies affecting the IMST course also included the course design, referenced in the course description (Course Syllabus, p. 1). As part of the university’s department of education policy, PSEs within the practicum course are required to gather hours in the field. The IMST course assisted with this need through the weekly placements of full-day immersion. When discussing time in the field, Barbara noted education department policies, stating a change to how placements work later in the practicum semester: “The ed[ucation] department thought it would be more valuable for [preservice teachers] to do two weeks solid rather than do two or three more weeks of just Tuesdays to equal the [required total] hours” (Interview). Barbara mentioned that this immersion is important in the preservice teachers’ development because “they start to understand how different kids are day to day,” and that the increments of growth shown by the students during this time can be seen better by the preservice teachers.

Emergent Theme 3: Perceived Benefits and Justifications. Codes within this theme were categorized as dealing with necessity and justifications for the course, perceived benefits from the instructor, university or students, and unintended benefits that emerged.

ACL Opportunities. As previously stated within the course description of the course syllabus, the IMST course was justified as an “integral part of the field-based Education Program, and provides students the opportunity to apply concepts learned in coursework to real-life teaching in the classroom” (p. 1). Barbara had previously discussed ACL opportunities or experiences as relying on the preservice teachers to obtain them by “insert[ing] themselves into

helping with the teacher" or by "…their own initiative that gets them into the classrooms" (Interview). The reason for this, and why those codes fit within necessity and justification for WU, was the suggested lack of ACL experiences available in other parts of the curriculum or degree coursework. Barbara informed me "other than observing in the fundamentals or the intro class, and when they finally go into their practicum, those are really the only assigned and directly course related observations that [the preservice teachers are] getting." The practicum then served as a necessary time to gather authentic teaching experience, which aligned with the course objective and goals as detailed in the syllabus.

Application of Content Knowledge. Alongside the time in real-life classrooms, the IMST course was designed to provide students "…the opportunity to apply concepts…" (Syllabus, p. 1), which was echoed in Barbara's personal assessment of the course. She mentioned that students were able to transfer and apply concepts from other coursework through this course and that "it seems to work okay" (Interview). Given the one day each week (specifically designated during the pre-student teaching semester as an immersive day in the classroom) and 2-week culminating unit, Barbara was confident in the practice of transfer in the IMST course, stating "I'm sure they're taking things from all those classes and putting them into practice as much as [they] can during practicum." She recalled discussions with preservice teachers that examined the nature of the content they carried into and enacted within the practicum context, with some students informing her "Oh, I'm glad you made us do that, because I just used it in one of my classes and it was perfect!" Later in our discussion on the benefits Barbara had seen due to this course, she referenced these experiences, concluding, "it's just real-world experience!"

Establishing a Cohort. Justifications for the IMST course also involved the establishment of a cohort and the importance it played in the development of the PSMTs/PSEs. Barbara explained how they came to establish this community during the on-campus professional education courses and IMST classroom. Once the cohort was established, it continued throughout the student teaching semester and student teaching seminar course (held during the student teaching semester). According to Barbara, the preservice teachers had "…been in those same secondary ed[ucation] courses for the whole first part of the [final] year, and so they start to create a pretty good bond with all the students across all the different disciplines" (Interview). She remarked this happened because the preservice teachers were "…in those same classes during practicum, and they kind of continue to keep track of one another."

Extended "Student Teaching Experience." Further perceived benefits of the IMST course stemmed from PSMTs' near year-round involvement/immersion in the schools. She described how the course prepared the preservice teachers for the student teaching semester through the placements. In most cases, her students were placed with the same mentor or cooperating teacher for both the IMST practicum (fall semester) and subsequent student teaching internship (spring semester): "That's the goal, and generally, that's going to happen" (Interview). Barbara further justified this approach:

> It just gives [preservice teachers] time to spend that first semester getting to know the kids. And since most music classes are yearlong classes, there might be a guitar class that switches out, or a piano class that switches out. But most of them are year-long so [the PSMTs] can get immersed so much faster in their student teaching. And they already know the kids' personalities. They already have some relationships set up as far as the

> kids feeling comfortable with them. And so the majority of our graduates have done their student teaching in the place where they did their practicum. (Interview)

Barbara recalled some of her PSMTs referring to this arrangement as intense, yet they recognize the importance of working with the same children more regularly—especially the daily scenarios during the 2-week window at the end of practicum. "[The PSMTs] are glad to finally see the kids day to day, and start to understand how different kids are day to day." Barbara's perceptions of PSMTs' recognition of student growth and understanding were represented in her discussion of what she noticed during observations of her preservice educators in the field: "I've seen it. [Seeing the same students] gives them time to digest what middle school and high school students are like" (Interview). She believed the constant immersion to be important as she formulated questions in the form of the PSMTs who might only see one day, and explained "…Because [what] if you only see it once? You [are] just like, 'What did I see?' or 'Why was the student so angry?' and 'Why was the student growly?' and the next time, [the student] is fine." Barbara noted that this immersion afforded PSMTs the opportunity "to see how incredibly up and incredibly down kids get at some point, but then they're there." This experience of getting to know the students on a human level was important because she saw sustained, daily interaction with the same students as helpful for PSMTs to develop a deeper understanding of students as individuals. "[The PSMTs] also get to see how resilient kids are and that they're okay. Like their world is devastated one minute, and then they're fine the next minute." Understanding the students as individuals was thought to contribute to the PSMTs' professional and dispositional growth (as recorded in the Disposition Rubric) and aligned Barbara's observations and beliefs with Davis's (2013) assertion that educators must understand "children's models of adult–child

relationships and their relational schemas, including conceptions of emotional closeness, conflict, and dependency" (p. 211).

Mentor Teacher Involvement. Another benefit was the mentor teacher alignment and feedback for the PSMTs throughout both semesters (i.e., practicum and student teaching). Barbara mentioned the MTs were wonderful assets to have as "the teachers in our district are long timers. Most of them have been in their jobs for well over 10 years" (Interview). These placements were important to Barbara, as she reflected on the preservice teachers "…just get[ting] really good role models with the mentor teachers we have." Barbara appreciated the lengths the mentor teachers go through during the final year with her PSMTs, mentioning "they talk to these practicum students [as] if they were fellow teachers and treat them almost like equals." She continued to mention the mentor teachers often ask questions like "'What do you think we should do in this situation?' or 'Let me explain why I treat or talked to that student the way I did'." Good judgment and discussions between the MTs and PSMTs were also reflected in the disposition rubric. "All the MTs [complete] a disposition rubric [on the PSMTs] and they're only asked to turn in that one thing…it's not subject related at all. It's just teaching disposition [of] the student." The disposition rubric followed the PSMT through student teaching—with the same MT—and outlined behavioral and professional-type actions across the year-long experience in that placement. The rubric was a checklist (i.e., yes and no responses) allowing MTs and supervisors to address dispositional issues with the PSMT during the IMST course and student teaching semester. ""If there's [an issue], we address it and it has to be [corrected] by the end of the semester or they don't pass practicum…[or rather] in the syllabus it's worded that they have actually from practicum all the way through to the end of their student teaching to fix the thing." Barbara's correction was aligned with the course syllabus (p. 3), which only requires the

PSMTs' self-assessment rubric for the pass/fail portion. Completion of the student teaching semester required the MT's satisfactory rubric responses. Once the PSMTs completed their rubrics, "the student and their practicum supervisor [would] create a plan for growth as needed, and dispositions will be monitored continuously throughout the remainder of the program" (p. 3), which was also in tandem with the MTs' discussion, feedback, and concerns. If the mentor teacher reported the PSMT was strong in all checklist areas of the initial rubric during the IMST course, "[the PSMTs] don't have to do it again" (Interview). Though Barbara does mention that if a dispositional problem were to arise at another time after the rubric had been completed (e.g., later in the IMST semester, during the student teaching semester), there were forms that could be used by the MT to document dispositional concerns and be addressed.

Emergent Theme 4: Issues and Challenges. The final theme for Case 2 at WU explored the issues and challenges associated with the IMST course.

Culture and Location. While Barbara explored many facets of benefits and outcomes of the IMST course, we discussed what was missing from the course or for the PSMTs to be prepared for student teaching. Some areas or topics of discussion were suggested to be limited due to time and culture, but also due to locations the PSMTs were assigned to, especially in specific regions of the state (omitted for anonymity). Barbara specifically mentioned marching band as an area of limited preparation for the PSMTs because of those factors of time and location. "We don't have anything that really immerses [the PSMTs], even for a little while, in any marching band stuff. The culture of marching band in this [area] of the state is just not really big" (Interview). This statement prompted more discussion on how content might be covered within the curriculum, which led to discussion of marching band events hosted on the WU campus—though not run by WU—including state-level competitions. During those events, the

PSMTs experienced what Barbara called a "laboratory weekend," where her students watched performances, observed various program sizes, and interacted with the contest hosts (i.e., guests/directors in charge but outside WU faculty). "Once in a while," she recalled, "the festival hosts will be willing to drive some of our music ed[ucation] students around through the back lots [and] practice fields, so they can just see how huge of a setup it is to get into a championship level" (Interview). The ability to synthesize or relate experiences like these to the student teaching experience was suggested to become difficult, mainly because the music education (MUED) portion of the TPP does not include a course focused on marching band techniques. Similar to how PSMTs take initiative to visit school programs or gain ACL opportunities, it appeared the PSMTs were on their own for these experiences. Barbara noted "we need to get that in[to the degree program] somehow." She referenced the NA*f*ME-collegiate chapter as a way to focus on areas not covered in the formal curriculum, or to afford PSMTs more time focusing on various topics:

> We might have an instrument repair night or marching band immersion thing...let's bring somebody who's an expert about marching band, just to talk about it...anything that might be missing [in MTPP] we try to maybe have CNA*f*ME somehow address the topic at least. To try to bring in an expert and let kids ask questions." (Interview)

The chapter meetings provide "a way of addressing some of the missing links," according to Barbara, though she did conclude that interview segment with a confirmation that even with this perceived curricular limitation, she believes her PSMTs graduate be prepared to enter the classroom: "But as far as getting ready to teach, I think they're pretty ready…they'll be great student teachers. They're ready."

Alignment with Student Teaching and Student Teaching Seminar. An additional issue for the IMST course at WU was how to align it with the seminar course and coverage during the student teaching semester. When asked about the student teaching seminar (or capstone course), Barbara stated that "I don't know [what content is covered], because that's covered with the education department" (Interview). The fact that the seminar was facilitated outside of music education made it difficult to determine how the IMST course might provide meaningful links between the theory to practice, and synthesis, during the student teaching semester. As we discussed it further, Barbara did offer what she knew of the course: "They meet as kind of a *Zoom* group, every Monday…after the school day is over and they get together [and] talk a lot about just procedural things." The procedural items Barbara mentioned were listed as "what to do to make sure their license is going to be where it needs to be, how their scores are coming…[pause to think]…I really don't know what kind of topics come up in that." Barbara tried to surmise the content but stated that she was never invited into that course and did not know exactly what topics were covered. From what she could gather, "they just check in with each other and with the placement director who runs that…I don't know how long they meet." When asked about grading schemes or processes within the seminar course, Barbara did not have much information: "I could probably find out, but I don't know how it's graded. I don't know if it is pass-fail…and I don't even know if they turn in assignments for it. Other than just make sure all their paperwork is done…I don't know if there's any kind of extra project in the that capstone class or if it's just a kind of oversight thing."

Course Longevity. For Barbara's specific situation, longevity of the IMST course posed challenges stemming from recent to upcoming changes in university leadership. Barbara stated "there's a lot of turnover in [our university] education department," including institutional

leadership roles from the Dean to new faculty members. Barbara worried about the future of that course or program design as she informed me, “When I was talking to some of the ed[ucation] department [faculty members] about your questions and trying to get the history of practicum and everything, they said they weren’t sure how it would stay because there are going to be some new people coming in” (Interview). This posed a problem for student development, Barbara inferred, as she noted “I hope it stays, because to me, it seems really stable, and I love what it’s doing.” I asked her what would happen to the degree or student teacher preparation if the course was removed and she replied that “the students won’t get nearly the immersion in student teaching if they don’t have practicum in front of it.” This started a conversation on what was already missing just going into student teaching by itself, and Barbara mentioned:

> When you’re student teaching, you miss—because of the way the college semesters don’t align with the school district semester—you miss all that beginning stuff. All of that setup stuff, like what makes a teacher decide to do certain things with their classroom management. (Interview)

Barbara did point out that the way the IMST course was designed at WU allows for the PSMTs to experience the whole-year as teaching time:

> But our students, when they do practicum and then go with the same teacher – we actually have them start their student teaching when the school district starts it. They already know that teacher, and they’re student teaching a week before the university classes even begin, and they get this start of a semester. They get to see the implementation of class, routine, training, and all that kind of stuff that they miss at the beginning of a normal year. So that’s another advantage. (Interview)

While Barbara saw an advantage of year-long immersion and loves how the course prepared the PSMTs, she was still wary of how changes in university leadership or faculty may affect the course.

Placement Issues. An additional concern arose from the design of the course and how PSMTs and MTs interact through the placement process. No system is perfect, and Barbara confirmed this through reflections of past problems:

> There's been a few times when the practicum experience was just, well the two [MT and PSMT] didn't mesh. The mentor teacher wasn't really giving the student a chance to even get in front of the students at all. They were just doing 100% observation. (Interview)

Due to instances like these, Barbara mentioned that changes had to be made: "Sometimes we will intentionally change a location for student teaching [if] it's really not going to be productive" (Interview). Other instances of placement change reflected different plan types involving the PSMTs (i.e., what grades/levels they wanted to experience). Barbara gave one example where "[one] wanted to see multiple grade levels. [They] wanted to do practicum at this middle school and student teaching at that high school." While Barbara said she knew about that instance ahead of time and planned for it, because it wasn't the same location and with the same MT, the students "just don't get immersed as fast in student teaching when they do that."

Inclusion of IMST. A final set of challenges was shown to come from administratively placing the course within the degree program. NASM accreditation and the "push to 120" were thought to be instances that can affect implementation or inclusion. Barbara mentioned WU's way of being able to deal with the credit hours and accreditation requirements stems from the degree being classified as a professional degree. "Because it's of the profession that's a professional degree, and has a license that goes with it, so we've been given a little bit more

leeway," Barbara stated. She compared the music education degree to medical and other professional degrees on campus that lead to licensure that also do not have a 120-credit hour limit, and reasons it as oversight from the state board:

> The [State] Higher Ed Board says since it's a professional degree, they take the 120 cap off of it. Whatever degrees of professional [type], like some medical degrees and well, lots of degrees on campus that have a license attached to them take the cap off. (Interview)

Case 2 Summary

The IMST course at WU provided PSMTs with an opportunity for immersive full-day and long-term (i.e., 2-weeks) placements. Through the course, PSMTs engaged in observation and instruction alongside reflection and actionable feedback. The MTs provided a collegial support and monitored PSMT disposition and progression in similarity to CTs/MTs during a student teaching semester. The four main emergent themes consisted of: (1) teacher development (e.g., teacher identity; authentic contexts; mentor teachers), (2) policy and process (e.g., certification and licensure; professional assessment measures; disposition rubric; field experiences), (3) perceived benefits and justifications (e.g., ACL opportunities; application of content knowledge, establishment of cohorts; extended student teaching; mentor involvement) , and (4) issues and challenges (e.g., culture and location; alignment of professional semester courses; course longevity; placement issues; course inclusion). Barbara's views on the IMST course suggested it was an important part of the PSMT preparation. The IMST course showed application of teacher development support, ACL opportunities, mentor teacher involvement and validations, and strengthening PSMTs preparation for student teaching.

Chapter 6: Discussion

I sought to explore introduction to music student teaching courses through qualitative inquiry as research concerning introductory courses for music student teachers proved a topic of minimal or non-existent prior exploration. This baseline study was designed to gather initial data to inform an understanding of introductory courses and aims to benefit music teacher education programs and the profession through this knowledge. Research questions were aimed towards discovering anticipated (*a priori*) and emergent themes through singular and cross-case analysis. In this chapter, I employed a SWOC Analysis format to highlight enhancing or inhibiting internal and external factors involving the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges of the similarities and differences between institutional programs. Where appropriate, implications and suggestions for further exploration and research were also discussed.

Review of Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this exploratory study was to discover merits, purposes, goals, and achievements emerging from introduction to music student teaching (IMST) courses occurring immediately prior to a music student teaching semester within undergraduate music education degree programs. Exploration of IMST courses provided a beginning for discussions aimed at continued development of music teacher preparation programs (MTPPs) and best practices concerning preservice music teachers (PSMTs). Themes emerged which presented an opportunity for a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges (SWOC) outlook to help understand the research questions through depth of inquiry within a limited pool of study participants.

There were three research questions forming the lens from which I sought to explore IMST courses:

1. What led to the development of Introduction to Music Student Teaching course(s)?
2. What are the purposes and goals of such courses?
3. What are the perceptions from the university or instructor(s) concerning the course?

All research questions were addressed through semi-structured interviews with course instructors and informed by artifacts obtained from the universities housing the courses, including websites and course catalogs, and provided by the course instructors themselves.

Strengths and Opportunities

SWOT/SWOC analyses are a "…flexible tool that can be applied to situations and problems in a wide range of disciplines. [The process] can also be applied to case studies, providing a framework for student discussion and analysis" (Lai & Rivera, 2006, p. 26). I began the discussion of these cases by examining the *Strengths* and *Opportunities* of the IMST course. Leigh (2010) defined *strength* as "an internal enhancer of competence, valuable resource or attribute" (p. 115) while seeing *opportunities* as external factors which enhance objectives through pursuits aimed at gaining benefits. For the purpose of this cross-case exploration, I detailed areas within the courses or universities that contributed to the preparation of the PSMT. The overall strengths and opportunities are outlined as: (1) preparation for student teaching, (2) course outcomes, (3) identity development, (4) relationships, (5) additional placements creates almost year-round internship, (6) transferability, (7) dispositional development, (8) benefits to PSMTs, (9) immersion through authentic context learning (ACL), and (10) backwards designing via new perspectives.

Strengths and Opportunities 1 – Preparation for ST Semester

Instructors from both Mountain West University (MWU) and Western University (WU) shared a philosophical ideal that all students should be well prepared for the student teaching

semester and the teaching profession as a whole. This philosophical ideal was enhanced through instilling problem-solving abilities and independence through application of synthesized concepts within the practicum and transitional capstone. According to Amy, students should be able to independently solve problems without relying on direct instruction from a mentor teacher and use a "proactive teaching [approach], rather than reactive." Barbara also noted her confidence in this transfer of learned concepts, skills, and knowledge, suggesting that PSMTs would be able to "tak[e] things from all those classes and [put] them into practice…" (Case 2, Interview). Both Amy and Barbara discussed how the IMST course served as a gateway towards providing consistent opportunities for the application of learned theory into authentic settings, using the course syllabi to demonstrate those opportunistic goals. Goals from both MWU and WU's IMST courses take external experiences of the PSMTs (e.g., observations, field experience, current course experiences) and utilize them as reflective opportunities. The IMST course goals at MWU included: (a) refinement of personal education philosophies, (b) reflection through examining current issues in education via their experiences, (c) application of theory to practice through demonstrating effective processes and assessments in the music classrooms, (d) creation of appropriate instructional strategies and outcomes, (e) and recognize student needs which affect PSMT preparations (Case 1, Syllabus), with WU's IMST course containing similar items of (a) understanding the classroom and students through establishing relationships, personalizing learning designs, and utilizing background information, (b) reflecting on how instructional design incorporates state standards and demonstrate growth through student learning data, and (c) understand how instructional tools and assessments meet learner needs (Case 2, Syllabus). For universities (like WU) whose teacher preparation programs (TPPs) or MTPPs were focused on singular levels or areas (e.g., primary or secondary music instruction,

primary or secondary education), a limitation on external refinement opportunities for PSMTs could occur. For music teacher educators (MTEs) who noticed a neglect of other levels or areas in acquiescence to increased focus in another, the IMST course could provide an opportunity to combat those limitations as a secondary source of preparation toward fully covering all areas and levels included in state licensure. At MWU, the IMST course was used to contend with limitations and singular foci through cross-curricular preparation, affording PSMTs experiences in a variety of possible classroom settings and achievement/developmental levels. Amy's philosophy was to direct PSMTs towards classroom experiences that differ from the student teaching classroom because of the K–12 certification in her state. "[The PSMTs] are going to be certified across the whole board, and we want them to have experience…[The PSMT] practicum mentor teacher cannot be their student teach[ing] mentor teacher" (Case 1, interview). Experiences for PSMTs within IMST courses could prepare them for the student teaching semester by reinforcing areas the PSMTs or MTEs determined to be weaknesses or areas in need. "[Some PSMTs] don't specifically want to be elementary teachers, but they feel like it's their weakest area and they want more practice there" (Case 1, Interview). Expanding the experiences (e.g., placement choices, classroom levels) would also be a way in which the PSMTs could have control over their learning and education, which related back to the philosophy of independence and problem-solving skills within the IMST courses at MWU and WU.

Amy and Barbara's philosophies appeared to align with the National Education Association's (NEA) stance on student teaching. In a previous committee report (National Education Association, 1899), the NEA identified student teaching as the course most valued towards applying learned theory into practical application, describing the internship as a necessity, for "if the application of theory were easy, there would need be little student teaching;

but since it is recognized as one of the most difficult tasks, there should be abundant provision for it" (p. 17). The NEA continued to value the student teaching experience through the NEA Aspiring Educators – a united preservice teachers program whose stance on student teaching and residencies is stated as "your best and last chance to get real classroom experience…so it's one of the most important parts of your teacher training" (National Education Association, 2026). Researchers in music education (e.g., Baumgartner, et al., 2024; Baumgartner & Councill, 2017; Bell & Robinson, 2004; Conway, 2002; Draves, 2013) have echoed this sentiment. Polly et al. (2012) provided an assessment of a year-long, extended placement similar in concept to the IMST courses at MWU and WU, which provided more opportunities and aligned with the NEA's stances. Polly et al.'s (2012) addition of seminars coupled with the first semester of authentic classroom immersion focused on coursework and activities in conjunction with their MTs. The outcomes demonstrated more prepared student teachers and indicated "that the seminar did lead to teacher candidates' self-efficacy and impacted their perceived readiness to enter their full-time internship" (p. 105). Combinations of courses focused on preparation through reflection and application of content knowledge and skills with authentic setting immersions could provide more ways to strengthen preparations for the student teaching semester. The IMST courses for MWU and WU relied on similar practices of Polly et al. (2012), meaning an impact of elongated immersion and reflective practices could be an import addition to MTPPs and PSMT preparedness.

Strengths and Opportunities 2 – Course Outcomes

Instructors perceived the IMST courses as strengthening their music teacher programs. The instructors felt student teachers were more prepared for the internship due to the IMST course, with Amy stating that "…student teaching is better because this course exists." Barbara

agreed with the sentiment after the conclusion of the course, noting "as far as getting ready to teach…they're ready." Given the overall goal of TPPs was to establish the necessities of the teaching profession (Rodríguez & Bulnes, 2024), the use of the IMST course seemed to function as an appropriate link between preparation and practice. This functionality was apparent in Amy's case, where she listed the course as a transitionally important piece of the curriculum, as PSMTs spend 45 hours in the same classroom. This consistency provided an opportunity for the PSMTs to apply skills and pedagogy in authentic settings. Barbara addressed this in her course description stating that PSMTs are provided "…opportunit[ies] to apply concepts learned in coursework to real-life teaching in the classroom" (Case 2, Syllabus). Strengthening the TPP through changes in curriculum like the IMST courses allowed for preparing future teachers (Rodríguez and Bulnes, 2024), but also for innovating curriculum as a necessary part of teacher evolution and development (Ediger, 2018).

Strengths and Opportunities 3 – Identity Development Through Authentic Context Learning

Fuller and Bown (1975) suggested a three-stage setting for teacher development, which was commonly referred to by the areas of concern/focus of self – task – student. Within the IMST courses, Amy and Barbara provided opportunities for PSMT identity development as students progressed through these three stages. Amy noted, once the PSMTs have entered her Senior Transitional Capstone "…they are actually doing the things" (Interview). The "things" she refers to reflect authentic teacher responsibilities—including the teaching and instruction of students—which she viewed as "crucial to their development" (Interview). For Amy, the course became crucial to PSMT identity development because it afforded students the ability to see themselves as teachers. The instructors' focus in this course reflected Fuller and Bown's (1975) model where they suggest PSMTs move from a self-survival focus to one of teaching situations,

and eventually student concerns. Barbara's fostered as many "classroom-like situations" (Case 2, Interview) as possible in her course, with the practicum of IMST as a more genuine experience that promoted identity development through immersion. Amy echoed Barbara's stance, stating the importance of development coming from the opportunity to work with actual students, which impacts "…[PSMTs] confidence in front of a class" and fosters the transitions from self (e.g., wondering about class and opinions) to curriculum and socio-emotional needs of their students (i.e., student-centered). This development emerged from both the students and the mentor teachers, who "…talk to these practicum students [as] if they were fellow teachers and treat them almost like equals" (Case 2, Interview). The co-teaching aspect in an authentic setting with other professionals provided a time for the PSMTs to develop their own identity in a professional setting. Amy indicated that the IMST course afforded PSMT instances to build upon or explore prior knowledge *prior* to the student teaching semester (Case 1, Interview).

Strengths and Opportunities 4 – Relationships

A core area the IMST courses impacted at both institutions was relationship building, which helped to form PSMTs' identity, content knowledge, and knowledge of students. For Amy, the idea of community and connections was one of the most important elements of her philosophy: "the community builds into the improvement of teachers" (Case 1, Interview). Barbara reflected on the PSMTs' mentoring relationships with host teachers, stating "they just get really good role models with the mentor teachers that we have…they talk to these practicum students as if they were fellow teachers" (Case 2, Interview). Amy viewed the course design as important for PSMTs to foster professional connection ahead of the collegiate semester. Since collegiate class meetings often began after the public school academic calendar, she celebrated the fact that the PSMTs worked with the teachers ahead of time. PSMTs were able to engage in

K–12 professional development sessions, taking "…time to establish relationships [with mentor teachers] and kind of get the expectations of the students in before they attend" (Case 1, Interview), which allowed PSMTs to begin learning classroom and district procedures while gathering information about students. This finding aligned with those by Conway et al. (2010) and Parkes (2020), who identified the goal of student teaching as immersion into the complete music teacher setting, while simultaneously affording PSMTs opportunities to observe and reflect on foundational teaching experiences. Barbara's connections with the music teachers were important because she saw these relationships as part of the identity formation for PSMTs. For some of Barbara's mentor teachers (MTs), once trust is built, "…they'll get [the PSMT] involved immediately." Amy hoped that participation in the IMST course helped expand connections through "…build[ing] the networks and connect[ions] to different teachers; connect with each other" (Interview).

The relationships built with the other PSEs/PSMTs also emerged as an important aspect of the course for both Amy and Barbara. They viewed these peer, professional relationships as impactful toward furthering PSMTs' identity development. Amy utilized peer mentoring as an important aspect of the IMST course, suggesting that the friendliness aspect forms "…a really tight cohort" (Interview), often creating shared documentation and communications to help them not feel isolated and alone—especially during those times when PSMTs might experience things that do not go well within their placements. Barbara viewed the cohort as a 'community of practice" (CoP), since the PSMTs had been enrolled in multiple education courses together throughout their degree programs: "they start to create a pretty good bond with all the students across all the different disciplines" (Interview). Both Amy and Barbara's views seemed to align with what music education researchers have found concerning CoPs as they "provide support,

guidance, and feedback" (Baumgartner et al., 2024, p. 8). The difference for Barbara and Amy here was that the classes where these bonds formed were housed within different units of the university: Amy's PSMTs created a cohort within *music* education classes, but Barbara's PSMTs formed theirs through courses in the education department. Peer cohorts as learning communities were previously identified within the student teaching seminar course (Baumgartner & Councill, 2019) and reflected the shared desire of seminar instructors (Baumgartner et al., 2024). For Amy and Barbara, they seemed to foster the previously established peer cohorts throughout the IMST course. IMST courses were demonstrated to be effective through intentional relationship and connection building, including those obtained through CoPs and MTs. Both cases illustrated the crucial role IMST courses hold in shaping PSMTs' identity, confidence, and teaching readiness.

Strengths and Opportunities 5 – Additional Placement Creates Almost Year-Round Internship

The design of IMST courses at MWU and WU aimed to help with preparation of the student teaching process. The PSMTs were effectively immersed in a second semester of consistent teaching with a singular MT and placement, (and sometimes multiple classes within the workday), for extended periods of time. Amy noted that general education students had longer internships at her institution than those within music, stating "they're in the classroom, I think it's a year" (Interview). At WU, Barbara referenced the same notion, indicating elementary education students might even be immersed in a classroom setting for up to two years prior to graduation (Case 2, Interview). The IMST course could have provided opportunities for PSMTs to engage with classrooms for more extended periods in a similar fashion. For instance, MWU had 45 hours of placement experience within the semester on top of the class meeting times (Case 1, Syllabus) and WU required "one full day per week, and one full week during the semester" (Case 2, Syllabus, p. 1). Barbara did correct the syllabus to be 2 full weeks now (Case

2, Interview). These immersion settings provided additional time in real-life classrooms and followed the process that PSMTs will likely encounter during student teaching, which included, but were not limited to, MT and supervisor observations, teaching time in the placement, and an understanding of the students:

> Delivery of lesson plans that are appropriate to the contextual factors of the classroom and align to local and state curriculum and standards; implementation of classroom routines, procedures, and instructional strategies, collaboration with families of students; and development of professional disposition of the practice. [PSMTs] will work closely with cooperating (mentor) teachers and university supervisors via frequent conferences and observations using [University] Department of Education assessment tools. (Case 2, Syllabus, p. 1)

At WU, the settings chosen for these placements were designed to provide additional experiences through a singular placement to inform the student teaching experience. The ideal was for PSMTs to remain in the same schools with the same MTs: "the majority of our graduates have done their student teaching in the place where they did their practicum" (Case 2, Interview). Barbara provided justification:

> [PSMTs] spend that first semester getting to know the kids. And since most music classes are year-long classes…they can just get immersed so much faster [than] in their student teaching. They already know the kid's personalities. They already have some relationships set up as far as the kids feeling comfortable with [the PSMTs]. (Interview)

For Amy, the IMST placement was 45 hours of field experience in a consistent space, with the same students, teachers, and materials (Interview), was an important component towards understanding the student teaching experience:

> Getting [the PSMTs] to the practicum level where they are actually doing the things, or hopefully doing things from their coursework with K-12 students, seeing how those students respond to that, receiving feedback from them and revising with the help of a mentor and a professor. It's crucial in their development. (Interview)

While the placement at MWU was not the same for both semesters, it was designed in such a way as to mimic the student teaching experience while providing an opportunity for PSMTs to be immersed in more contexts of complete public school music programs (e.g., elementary, intermediate, secondary; general music, vocal, instrumental). It allowed the PSMTs to witness how each semester begins, the continuity of the curriculum and design, and how transitions might be handled between placements and settings, which is consistent with Conway et al. (2010) and CAEP (2023b) standards that showed MTPPs required designs that included involvement in all level of schooling placements. PSMTs tasked with a single semester internship for student teaching should, according to CAEP (2023a), develop themselves while being offered experiences in varied settings (e.g., elementary, secondary, rural, urban) where real-world application and engagements occur; however, Conway (2002) noted administrators and graduates from MTPPs were concerned about shorter experiences compared to other content areas. Graduates who student taught in the Spring claimed to be lost in the fall (p. 30), while administrators mentioned concerns for missing out on important aspects for the full year, which other university internship programs did not (p. 32). The strength of the IMST course was that it could combat these concerns for student teachers and administrators by providing an extended student teaching experience where PSMTs were involved for the full year in order to understand and experience all aspects expected within a year of a complete music program.

Strengths and Opportunities 6 – Transferability

The transfer of learned knowledge and skills was an important part of both IMST courses, including where they are positioned (semester immediately prior to student teaching) to best facilitate synthesis and transfer for the PSMTs. Amy noted in her course syllabus that a goal of the IMST course was to "…set [the PSMT] up for success as you go into the field…[and] designed to ensure that you are prepared for student teaching and for the job market" (Case 1, Syllabus, p. 1). Similarly, Barbara prescribed standards that expect the use of strategies, practices, and tools to create appropriate classroom environments for learning as a professional educator (Case 2, Syllabus). The concept of transfer—when examined from a music and human learning, or psychological perspective—was one in which someone might apply "…acquired knowledge and skills in situations other than those in which the knowledge and skills were originally learned" (Duke, 2017, p. 139). Amy saw transfer happening for her PSMTs when she observed them in the teaching environment, reviewed videos of their teaching with them, and facilitated peer feedback-driven discussions within the IMST university classroom. PSMTs at WU illustrated a confidence in transfer of learned knowledge and skills from coursework into the teaching environment as Barbara remarked, "they're taking things from all those classes and putting them into practice as much as [they] can during practicum" (Case 2, Interview). She also advocated that the IMST course functioned as a "laboratory to try those things in. [PSMTs] need a laboratory while they're talking about [knowledge and skills], to either try it themselves or talk to a teacher who's using them" (Interview). If MTPPs were finding a lack of connection between concept and application, utilization of an IMST course could have provided an opportunity for MTEs to facilitate transfer. The importance of transfer and forming connections between theory

to practice of knowledge and skills aligned with what other researchers have suggested (Baughman & Baumgartner, 2018; Edwards & Protheroe, 2003).

Given that the IMST course was designed to prepare PSMTs for student teaching, Amy compared it to an essential ensemble warm-up: an opportunity for students to go into student teaching as prepared as possible" (Case 1, Interview). Her view was consistent with Juntunen (2014), as they suggested connections between theory to practice are built during the practice of teaching towards "gaining experience in how to respond to real teaching situations, and to learn to think-in-action" (p. 170). Amy demonstrated how her PSMTs gained experience through the expansion of ideas and methodologies within their IMST experiences, noting "different perspectives [and] different experiences are good" (Interview) which supported her philosophy concerning PSMTs experiencing varied environments to prepare them for a career in any K–12 music teaching situation. For her, PSMTs transferring their gained knowledge and skills into the various environments and levels was necessary preparation. Current MTEs might consider more immersive elements in teacher preparation, so PSMTs have an opportunity to transfer and reflect on their knowledge and skills between classrooms, levels, content, and students in order to facilitate the preparation of student teachers.

Strengths and Opportunities 7 – Dispositional Development

The IMST course can serve as a path to address pedagogical deficiencies and perceived dispositional development issues prior to student teaching. Barbara reported PSMTs "can immediately see if they've got a weak link…or if they feel immediately that they don't have as good a grasp on the classroom management as they thought they did" (Case 2, Interview). As part of developmental checks and PSMT preparation, the IMST course at WU contained an evaluation of PSMTs concerning disposition and growth through self-reflected and mentor

submitted rubrics. The rubrics outlined "specific professional dispositions that [University] teacher candidates are expected to demonstrate" (Case 2, Disposition Rubric, p. 1), such as consideration of learner needs, providing appropriate learner experiences, collaboration, communication, ethics, and recognizing strengths and weaknesses with strategies for improvement (pp. 1–7). Through the dichotomous rubric completions, the PSMT worked with the MT and university supervisor to correct areas where expectations were not met. Barbara's analysis of the rubric then determined if PSMTs "need improvement on a bunch of behavioral things, [and/or] professional type actions" (Case 2, Interview). For areas identified as "needs improvement", the PSMT and practicum supervisor "…will create a plan for growth as needed, and dispositions will be monitored continuously throughout the remainder of the program" (Case 2, Interview) ensuring the PSMTs exhibited the characteristics deemed important for teachers (Kindall et al., 2017; Ripski et al., 2011) and necessary for their professional educator career and teacher effectiveness.

Strengths and Opportunities 8 – Benefits to PSMTs

Benefits of the IMST courses perceived by Amy and Barbara consisted of teaching time as opposed to observational time, samples of teacher work as criteria over theoretical assignments, and aptitude towards risk-taking within teaching roles.

Time on Task. TPPs or MTPPs can broadly be perceived as a developmental and preparatory process of future educators and music educators to enter the professional workplace (Ballantyne & Packer, 2004; Conway, 2002, 2012, 2022; Hourigan & Scheib, 2009; Livers et al., 2021; Rodríguez & Bulnes, 2024; Sirek & Sefton, 2024). As part of many preparation programs, and often mandated by governing or oversight bodies, PSEs experience time in the field or classroom (CAEP, 2018; NASM, 2025b; OEQA, 2024, 2025b). Experiences ranged from

observations to hands-on situations working directly with children. Amy viewed the IMST as an opportunity for time-on-task, where PSMTs could actively apply what they had learned in an authentic setting and remarked on how it benefitted them:

> I've seen improvements in their lesson planning, improvements in how they structure the plan, how it's organized, how sometimes they'll have like specific outcomes for specific activities or timestamps so they can guide themselves on their pacing…I've seen their ability to self-reflect improve…they're constantly reflecting on their work, [on their] confidence in their teaching abilities. (Case 1, Interview)

Amy compared the observational aspect of other educational courses to the IMST that illustrated the benefit as well:

> I think it differs from their observation where they're just in and out of classrooms, and those observation hours can be whatever they want them to be. They can sit and observe – if they want to bring a secondary instrument and sit in, or sit in our rehearsal or get on the floor and do whatever activities [the students] are doing. They can teach as they want to, but this really gives them [the notion] these are the students I see regularly. These are who they are as humans. These are their learning capabilities, and so how do I plan instruction and interaction with them on a continuous basis? (Interview)

The IMST course served as a platform that afforded PSMTs these opportunities alongside teaching occurrences in a consistent manner. MWU's 45-hour field experience requirement for the IMST course was spent "…consistently with one mentor teacher, with one or two classes of students that [the PSMTs] get to interact with continuously…*this* is a consistent opportunity for them to do that" (Interview, emphasis in original). Compared to peer teaching models often reflected in prior methods courses at Amy's institution, "the peer teaching is very different from

working with K–12 teachers' students" (Interview). Other researchers have found instances of university instructors reporting academic achievement or deeper learning was not caused by peer-teaching (Stigmar 2016), with challenges to peer teaching effectiveness due to inconsistent levels of skills from peer to peer or pedagogical methods training (Khanal et al., 2025). The IMST course could be used to overcome these challenges through time on task in authentic settings, which Haston and Russell (2012) reported had a significant correlation during the student teaching semester due to the ACL experiences. An IMST course would then provide a viable way in which MTEs could incorporate more experiences for PSMTs for teaching episodes and self-reflection, which would also benefit previously stated areas of strengths and opportunities (e.g., identity development, relationships, transferability, extended placements).

Teacher Work Samples. How the PSMTs' preparedness for teaching was examined during the IMST courses also served as a key benefit for the PSMTs. For both Amy and Barbara's IMST courses, the use of teacher work samples (TWSs) were important components. For Amy, the TWS was used in the ungrading process so that PSMTs view their teaching ability as the reflective point of interest. By the time PSMTs had completed the IMST course, they achieved the stated course goals (Case 1, Syllabus) through evidence of competency and completion. These goals were clearly aligned with checkpoint objectives set forth by the institution as evidence that PSMTs were prepared for the subsequent student teaching semester. For Barbara, the IMST course used the same state rubric for student teachers (Evaluation Artifact – name omitted for anonymity) that would also be used during the student teaching semester to assess the PSMT's teaching, lesson planning, and reflections from supervisor and mentor observations. WU utilized a field-based setting for both rubrics (i.e., student teacher and disposition), affording evaluation of competencies required of her state and institution (Case 2,

Syllabus) and providing a benefit that would allow opportunities for corrective measures geared towards the PSMT's preparation for student teaching. The use of TWS as evidence of preparation and preparedness aligned with other standard TWS designs found throughout education research (Baumgartner & Councill, 2017; Kohler et al, 2008) and matched other state practices concerning student teacher competencies (Greenberg et al., 2011). Utilizing TWSs within an IMST setting would allow for MTEs to prepare PSMTs more fully for what is expected of them from a work standpoint and can give the PSMTs a better understanding of their own progress towards content knowledge and skill application within teaching scenarios and placements.

Risk-taking. Since Amy used the ungrading process to allow PSMTs to reflect on their outcomes, determine ownership of their learning, and receive useful feedback from instructor and peers (Case 1, Syllabus), she determined a benefit to the PSMTs was their ability to take risks in a no-judgment setting. Providing a space within the course where the PSMTs were allowed multiple approaches to try through consistent modeling opportunities in an authentic classroom setting fostered a perceived willingness to let go of the perfectionist approach so often found among musicians (Arbinaga, 2023; Mateo-Laguia, 2025; Sinden, 1999). PSMTs were encouraged to try new things, even if they failed—so long as the experience was viewed as beneficial to their development. Risk-taking in the IMST courses functioned as a benefit due to the feedback from peers, mentors, and instructors available immediately to the PSMTs. For Barbara, feedback coincided with reflection, fostering immediate actionable changes that encouraged reflection and the opportunity to "try again" in a more informed manner. For Amy, the IMST course utilized a different placement/MT than the subsequent student teaching semester. She perceived this difference (which aligned with her philosophy) as important to the PSMTs for receiving varied perspectives and feedback: "…[PSMTs] should have a different

experience from a different professor in practicum and student teaching…they need a different perspective and different feedback for their work" (Case 1, Interview). While Amy's views reflected the instructor perspective, MT feedback from different settings and mentors provided more ways in which PSMTs could enhance their development which was suggested to lead to more applications of theory to practice. By providing more opportunities for teaching geared towards reducing anxiety and building teacher confidence (Pelton, 2014) and helping the PSMTs to move past Fuller and Bown's (1975) self/survival focus, PSMTs might be more likely to try their practiced theories from undergraduate courses, instead of opting for the singular focus of current procedures utilized by the MT.

Strengths and Opportunities 9 – Immersion Through ACL

Both Amy and Barbara acknowledged the importance of Authentic Context Learning (ACL) settings and utilized them within their IMST courses, though Barbara would have liked to see more throughout the undergraduate experience, "it would help if [the PSMTs] had more authentic experiences…they are way better off when that happens" (Case 2, Interview). The immersion within IMST at WU allowed the PSMTs to "finally see kids day to day. They start to understand how different kids are day to day, but also their little incremental growth that they make. They can see it better" (Interview). Amy's view of immersion importance in the IMST course at MWU was similar, where she believed in "transitioning [the PSMTs] to – with the consistency of the 45 hours – being in the same classroom, establishing relationships with those students, learning about them as learners, and being able to make your plans suitable for those particular students" (Case 1, Interview). For both instructors, opportunities for PSMT immersion within ACL settings *prior* to the IMST course were limited within their programs. At WU, if PSMTs obtained ACL experience prior, "it's kind of on their own…other than observing in the

intro [to music education] class and then when they finally go into their practicum" (Case 2, Interview). "840 is the state requirement" (Case 1, Interview) for field experience hours at MWU – with a majority of those as student teaching hours and only around 90 hours tied to undergraduate courses as observations (Interview). Amy listed opportunities where PSMTs might spend the day in schools, but they were observationally designed: "[the PSMTs] go see orchestra for a little bit, and then go to the choir classroom…we try to hit elementary, middle, and high school, and within the middle and high school make sure that there were multiple music classes going on so they could have a choice" (Interview). It appeared that while both instructors saw the need for ACL opportunities, their responses indicated a need for more scaffolding of ACL experiences within their respective degree programs prior to the PSMTs' student teaching semester. As effective instructional techniques can be complex, Hindman et al. (2020) suggested "teacher candidates likely need substantial scaffolding to use them" (p. S197). Scaffolding was often perceived as sequential learning support that developed and deepened learning (Griner, 2016; Verenikina, 2003, 2004), so incorporating increased and improved scaffolding of ACL opportunities throughout both degree programs could provide a beneficial outcome for the PSMTs prior to student teaching.

Both institutions designed the IMST courses to include days of constant interaction between PSMTs and children as part of the immersion process and beyond just observations. Amy listed the university classroom time as twice a week for 50 minutes, and the 45 hours were set based on schedules between MTs and PSMTs, where the PSMTs get "consistency with one mentor teacher, with one or two classes of students that they get to interact with continuously" (Case 1, Interview). Barbara explained WU's placement process was blocking out other classes on opposite days so that "Tuesday is reserved as the all-day practicum day" (Case 2, Interview).

The Tuesday practicum then culminated in a two-week, full-time immersion (Interview). Amy shared the importance of "…actually doing the thing," which she pointed out was "crucial to [the PSMTs'] development" (Case 1, Interview). The development of the students during a consistent basis showed the PSMTs growth and helped them to understand student development, to a point where students the PSMTs worked with were seen as "these are the students I see regularly. These are who they are as humans" (Interview). Understanding the students was expected of teachers as a large part of teacher performance or preparation assessments or processes like the PPAT, the entire first task of which was dedicated to getting to know your students (ETS, 2025b).

The IMST courses served as ways PSMTs were provided a curricular opportunity to gain ACL experiences prior to the student teaching internship where they were teaching instead of observing: "[The IMST course] provides students the opportunity to apply concepts learned in coursework to real-life teaching in the classroom" (Case 2, Syllabus, p. 1). Amy's view was similar "[the IMST course] is a consistent opportunity for [the PSMTs] to do that" (Case 1, Interview). The importance of ACL opportunities have been explored by researchers (Haston & Russell, 2012; McClellan, 2014; Paul et al., 2001; Stein et al., 2004) and were consistently shown to improve PSE/PSMT identity and teacher processes, including role performance and application of content knowledge and skills. Should other institutions or TPPs/MTPPs find themselves in similar situations (i.e., limited field experience/ACL opportunities prior to student teaching), the IMST could serve as an example of how to integrate teaching experience and ACL opportunities within curricula prior to the internship.

Strengths and Opportunities 10 – Backward Designing Via New Perspectives

Both instructors perceived additional opportunities that IMST course had on earlier curriculum within the BME degrees because of their involvement throughout the MTPP. Since

both instructors also taught multiple courses throughout the BME degree and MUED curriculum (Case 1, Interview; Case 2, Interview), they had recurring opportunities to combine theories from preparatory courses into the IMST course to encourage synthesis and/or address areas of deficiency or concern. Because these instructors were able to observe and host discussions during the IMST course, they also had opportunities to influence first-, second-, and third-year music education course curricula to better serve the PSMT preparation for the internship. Amy referenced altering coursework to address end-of-program areas of concern and instill improved preparation of PSMTs through pedagogies focused on proactive preparation instead of reactive tendencies. She strived to guide IMST students to problem-solve without relying on their MTs to identify issues and possible remedies, and started incorporating such pedagogies into the curriculum/coursework beginning in the freshmen year (Interview). She also noted a lack of ability of PSMTs to "write effective outcomes, or even specific measurable outcomes," (Interview) which she perceived as necessary when planning lessons and instruction. Addressing learning outcomes in prior courses was an opportunity to increase preparedness for when PSMTs arrived at the IMST course and then the student teaching semester, consistent with what music education researchers have posited concerning learning outcomes as important components of method courses prior to student teaching (Conway, 2020; Hoffer, 2017; Wesolowski, 2015). A final synthesis of these pedagogies was also noted by Amy as she was able relate prior courses into IMST discussions and redirect student learning through reflection.

Weaknesses and Challenges

Inhibitors classified as weaknesses and challenges emerged through the exploration of IMST courses. Inhibitors deemed weaknesses concerned those of internal sources (e.g., PSMT schedules, course design and alignment, program alignment) affecting "…competence,

resources, or attributes necessary for success," (Leigh, 2010, p. 116) while those considered as challenges represented "external inhibitor[s] of performance that [have] the potential to reduce accomplishments" (p. 116), such as MT placements and availability; the role MTs have for the PSMT in the classroom; and factors affecting the inclusion of IMST courses. Since both internal and external areas reflect inhibitors to the IMST course, I combined them into one area for streamlined discussion. I determined the combined weaknesses and challenges to be: (1) mentor teachers, (2) disconnect between MT and PSMT identity development, (3) changes to immersion, (4) program alignment, and (5) creation and inclusion of IMST.

Weaknesses and Challenges 1 – Mentor Teachers

A weakness of the IMST courses at both institutions existed within the scheduling and availability of the PSMTs and MTs. Similarly, instructors noted challenges regarding the availability of appropriate MTs for PSMT partnerships. Both Amy and Barbara experienced situations through the IMST course where MT placements were not always the most favorable, and did not always align to program philosophies or goals. Some MTs were utilized as a necessity due to school/site location and the availability of PSMTs (i.e., university course schedules). The priority for Amy and Barbara appeared to be ensuring the PSMTs had consistent days/hours in the schools. Barbara experienced compatibility issues between MTs and PSMTs, which resulted in changes to the PSMT's placement between the practicum experience and student teaching. She remarked there had been times when "…the practicum experience just, well the two [MT and PSMT] didn't mesh…" (Case 2, Interview) which resulted in Barbara's perception that the PSMT in that situation did not get immersed in the student teaching experience as fast as those who remained in the same placement, "it's really not going to be productive" (Interview). Depending on state requirements and district decisions, availability also

was a limitational challenge. Since Barbara's state did not require elementary music for children within the public schools and the TPP covers only secondary settings, students seeking elementary placements for observations or practicum found it difficult to locate appropriate sites. School districts around Barbara's university split time for elementary music specialists, causing them to travel to multiple schools, or lack elementary music programs in general. Limited time at district sites or lack of programs complicated PSMT placements for those PSMTs pursuing elementary endorsements or who requested to change locations for student teaching. "Some [PSMTs] actually go in with a plan. Since they want to see multiple grade levels, we can do practicum at [site 1] and student teaching at [site 2]" (Interview). Due to a lack state policy overseeing or requiring music be taught in elementary schools, elementary music programs are seemingly scarce. Funding measures have been passed for arts education, but principals have "…kind of an option of where they want to direct that arts education [money] to visual art, to music, to dance, or theatre" (Interview). Because of the lack of available elementary music programs, the MTs selected for PSMT pairings at that level did not always reflect the best fit or strongest example for PSMTs, but rather were chosen because of location to the university or scheduling availability. Cooperating/Mentor teachers (CT/MT) are an important factor within the various placement types within a TPP or MTPP (Baughman, 2020; Edwards & Protheroe, 2003; Jaspers et al., 2014; Snell et al., 2019) and the student teaching triad (Pennello, 2020). First-year teachers have reflected on their MTPP experience, citing student teaching as the most valuable component of their program (Conway, 2002), suggesting that the influence of MTs on PSEs is invaluable (Jasper et al., 2014). Some respondents even mentioned learning how to be a teacher *in* student teaching, rather than in courses within the MTPP (Conway, 2002), with one crediting the amount of learning to the CT/MT. Guiding the PSMTs was done mostly by the MT in field

situations (Denis, 2017), and was the place least in control of MTEs (Conway, 2002). It was clear the MT has an important responsibility to the PSMT, but so did the institution that placed PSMTs with MTs. Some researchers (Goldhaber et al., 2018; Ronfeldt et al., 2018) have suggested PSEs experience more effective instructional coaching and are observed more often with higher quality MTs, which should lead MTEs to continue refining approaches towards determining appropriate MTs for placements and ensuring PSEs are paired with the best possible mentor for their dispositional development and field-work.

Weaknesses and Challenges 2 – Disconnect Between MT and PSMT Identity Development

Disconnects between how MTs viewed PSMTs and their roles in the public school classroom arose as an additional inhibitor. Amy noted disconnects or misinterpretations of PSMT roles by MTs which she noted impacted their identity and development. She recalled sentiments of "Hey, you're here to do things the way I do" (Interview), which reflected a contrast between Amy's philosophy for teacher development and the PSMTs' ability to see themselves as a teacher. It was important PSMTs be afforded opportunities to deliver instruction in their own way to continue formulating teacher identity, versus strict mimicry and emulation as a carbon copy without understanding or reasoning (Rieker, 2022). Amy discussed that the PSMTs became skeptical of perceptions, retreating into the "self" identity of Fuller and Bown (1975), and concerned with perceptions now focused on the MT, rather than on the students and their learning. PSMTs' sense of instructor support for strategies and improvisations of techniques was present in the IMST classroom, but Amy saw the PSMT strategies and improvisations disappear as the disconnects happened in the real-world environment under some MTs. This approach ran counter to how Amy designed the course and used the ungrading system built on ownership of learning, feedback, and relieving anxiety (Case 1, Syllabus). She encouraged risk-taking and

trial-and-error where she would "…rather see you try something and stumble than stick to what is comfortable" (Interview). Amy observed a negative impact stemming from the disconnect she witnessed between PSMTs' identity development when placed with MTs who expected the PSMTs to only imitate their approaches. Instead, Amy believed that MTs should be "really helping students develop their own teacher identity" (Interview), aligning with educational researchers concerned with the growth and development of PSEs through explorative and reflective practice (Beijaard & Meijer, 2017; Draves, 2013, 2021) and sharing concerns with what other PSMTs felt towards displeasure of imitational behaviors (Abrahams, 2009).

Disconnects also emerged in the perception of PSMT roles and duties within the school classroom. Amy noted that when a PSMT comes into a classroom, it should mean "…more work for [the MT], not lightening your load. [PSMTs are] not an assistant" (Interview). Yet she had instances of MTs contacting her asking for PSMTs, recalling one as saying "I could really use some help here. Can you send me a student?" which Amy viewed as a "disconnect in the roles of our students" (Interview). Pennello (2020) suggested possible approaches to overcome this perception through professional development for MTs, providing preparation points (to the MTs) ahead of time to encourage a positive collaborative experience, noting that a lack of understanding can lead to the disconnect in understanding of PSMTs' purpose, guidelines, and roles in the ACL setting.

Weaknesses and Challenges 3 – Changes to Immersion

Deciding the design and content of courses can be a challenge for MTEs (Conway, 2020). A weakness of the IMST course was derived from the design and implementation of it in conjunction with the student teaching semester. Information we do not have is whether or not placements in one location (i.e., for both IMST and student teaching) was better or more

effective than adjusting placements (i.e., changing placements at semester), or if either way was ineffective at all. Research exists which discussed mentor teacher development and importance (Conway & Holcomb, 2008; Snell et al., 2019), as well as PSE placements (Draves, 2013; Harwood et al., 2000), but was lacking when exploring changing placements or changing mentor teachers – whether between placements or within a semester – and might be an area of continued study and exploration. This presented a challenge for determining best practice when looking at how to structure the IMST course to best benefit the PSMTs and their placements.

Both Amy and Barbara listed the importance of immersion, or surrounding the PSMTs with consistent real-world experiences, toward building PSMTs' understanding and preparation of students and PSMT teacher identity through the IMST course, but with dichotomous views. Barbara's approach to immersion was keeping the PSMT in the same classroom for both the IMST course and the subsequent student teaching semester. She stated "practicum was like a gradual immersion kind of deal" (Case 2, Interview) and later relates the benefits she sees with staying with the same MT: "[The PSMTs] already know that teacher…they get to see the implementation of class, routine training and all that kind of stuff that they miss at the beginning of a normal year. That's another advantage…" (Interview). When asked about those who do change MTs or placements, she saw the positive concerning the plans of the PSMTs, but did lament, "[the PSMTs] just don't get immersed as fast in student teaching when they do that" (Interview). Alternatively, Amy utilized two different yet similar placements so that students could experience more variety. Her institution contends PSMTs need more areas of instructional opportunities to be best prepared for all areas of K–12 teaching. Amy illustrated this through how she might approach placements for a choral emphasis PSMT:

> If [the PSMT] want to be a high school choir director, and they want their student teaching to be [in a] high school choir, then…we want them in a practicum that's going to be middle school instrumental of some sort, because they're going to be certified across the whole board, and we want them to have experience. (Case 1, Interview)

Continued challenges may arise from the availability and location of MTs for universities like MWU that seek a variety of placements between a course like the IMST and the student teaching semester, which could in turn lead to challenges with MT quality and disconnect. While Amy did not see any issues with the change between semesters, Barbara's experiences illustrated issues witnessed with the immersion process restarting under subsequent placements. Interestingly, Amy and Barbara have opposite viewpoints, but both saw the processes as effective for their PSMT placements, which aligned with Goldhaber et al.'s (2018) perspectives on challenges to the student teaching placements and preservice teacher development.

Both approaches created consistency at placement sites for the PSMTs, albeit the length of time in placements differed, and Amy and Barbara's differing approaches both aligned with findings by Conway (2002), who reported that PSMTs were able to learn from experiencing both (a) varied authentic placements/settings and (b) the same placement, where students could witness all aspects of a program throughout an academic year. While Amy and Barbara's comments pertain to their particular methods and programs, speaking to what works for them, those methods and designs may not be feasible in all programs or situations. Insight from Amy and Barbara's experiences can provide MTEs options to utilize when establishing or designing placements within curriculum.

Course Exclusion. Another challenge towards immersion was the possibility of course exclusion or elimination. Barbara saw any potential removal of the IMST course from their

curriculum as a hinderance for PSMT development, similar to how she viewed a change of placements: “The students won’t get nearly the immersion in student teaching if they don’t have practicum in front of it” (Case 2, Interview). Barbara worried about PSMTs not doing any initial teaching, resulting in a delay until student teaching, “Boy, to have your first lesson ever in student teaching? That’s a biggie!” (Interview). Barbara’s MTPP did not afford students many opportunities for ACL within coursework until the practicum, so the removal of the IMST course would present increased challenges to the preparation of PSMTs in her program. She also saw this challenge aligned with semester starts from the collegiate side compared to public schools: “…Because of the way the college semesters don’t align with the school district semester – you miss all that beginning stuff. All of that setup stuff…” (Interview). Without her IMST course, she anticipated gaps in PSMT preparation, lacking ACL opportunities to apply of prior knowledge or witness instruction in the same setting, effectively starting over each semester without the gathered knowledge of location, procedures, student understanding, and teacher roles. Music education research has suggested the importance of ACL experiences (Haston & Russell, 2012; Paul et al., 2001), which include building relations ships with the students, MTs, and at sites, as well as how it develops the PSMTs’ understanding of their self as the teacher (Hourigan & Scheib, 2009; McDowell, 2007; Scheib, 2006). Removal of the IMST course or ACL opportunities within the music education curriculum could then pose a challenge towards best practices for preparation of PSMTs prior to the student teaching semester (Hourigan & Scheib, 2009).

Weaknesses and Challenges 4 – Program Alignment

An important issue emerged for the IMST courses concerning how they aligned with other BME, MTPP, and TPP program courses. Depending on institutional departments or

program structures and how courses are categorized (or which department houses those classes), degree program courses could be located within music departments or classifications (e.g., music education, music technique) or outside the music area (e.g., teacher education, teacher preparation, professional courses). The challenge for an IMST course was then how did it align in design, scope, and procedures in comparison to other curriculum and courses within teacher preparation programs. Alignment issues that emerged from the cases in this study included (a) length of internships, (b) content not addressed for preparation, (c) sequence, (d) lack of knowledge to connect course, (e) recall of knowledge for synthesis, and (f) lack of observation to application for IMST prep.

Outside Music Education. Instances of content alignment obstacles and synthesis challenges emerged for the IMST course at WU concerning the department of education dictating course requirements and curriculum. Course requirements for the Bachelor of music Education (BME) degree were listed previously (See Chapter 5, Case 2), indicating that respective areas of the BME degree were under the purview of departmental entities within the university. Changes were listed by Barbara that affected PSMT synthesis between topics necessary for the practicum and student teaching experiences. Courses within the BME degree were once under the school of music (e.g., rehearsal techniques), but due to changes in certification processes including the addition of PPAT and the subsequent removal, the department of education decided to require courses within their structure. “They were so paranoid about [PPAT] because all of a sudden, the assessment was not within the university…so they said, ‘okay, we’ve got to pull the students out of that rehearsal techniques thing and they need to take our classroom management class’” (Case 2, Interview). Removal of the techniques course eliminated content specific management and rehearsal strategies which would apply

directly to the IMST course and were suggested as necessary to draw upon in authentic environments. Barbara continued to see the need for this, as does the NASM accreditation body. "We went through a NASM certification, and they said you really need to have a rehearsal techniques thing going. Even though they knew about the story, and how [we] had it" (Interview). Alignments were also an issue because the IMST course was taught by a music education faculty member, but housed under the secondary education program within the department of education (Case 2, Graduation Plan) and its design/curriculum originally overseen outside of music intended to match other education disciplines. The problem emerging is content or curriculum from outside of the instructor's department dictated to additional departments does not always match or align with program goals or needs for PSMTs from adjacent programs. The current IMST course was based on a pre-existing elementary education practicum course and transmigrated into the secondary education design, occurring when those programs were initialized as the college became a university (Case 2, Interview; University History website). Because the IMST course is designed through the department of education, the curriculum and framework shell were created for all instructors to adapt—regardless of subject area. PSEs from content areas (e.g., music, English, history) were enrolled in the education department-based course and then placed with instructors from their content area. Barbara described the process as "…enroll[ing] each content area with their content area expert as the teacher of their practicum course…the practicum was in the ed department with secondary, with me as a content expert" Barbara was instructed to use a learning management system (LMS) course shell and curriculum that she received from the education department: "They said, 'Everybody use this template so all the students have exactly the same information'" (Case 2, Interview). The template also included black and red text, where Barbara mentioned changes could be made to anything in red, "…so if

it doesn't apply to your course…you just eliminate stuff that didn't apply" (Interview). Since the curriculum was dictated by the education department, it was her responsibility to determine which content to adapt to music education, or even leave out, while maintaining content that might not align with music education if required by the education department. These curricular guardrails presented a challenge as Barbara adapted the IMST course to best prepare PSMTs for music student teaching, leading her to experience what other researchers outside of music education have presented as examples concerning the need for courses outside curriculum areas or majors to align content and curriculum when students are shared among various departments (Witham & Ellis, 2021). It then became important for courses to align for the purpose of connection and application of knowledge between multiple departments and contexts (Soledad et al., 2023) to aid student development.

Weaknesses and Challenges 5 – Student Teaching and Student Teaching Seminar Alignment.

Aligning the IMST to the music education (MUED) program's student teaching semester was determined to be a challenge for Barbara due to how the final semester coursework was organized between departments. At WU, the IMST was led by MUED faculty, but the curriculum and design were orchestrated by the department of education. For the final semester, PSMTs were enrolled in two courses (secondary student teaching and student teaching capstone), both housed within the department of education. A placement director was responsible for PSMTs' placements—which were intended to be the same in both the practicum (i.e., IMST course) and student teaching. However, the instructor for the student teaching seminar was not the same as the practicum instructor (for IMST) and was instead the placement director from the department of education (Case 2, Interview). Because the placement director was not from the music

department, and the student teaching seminar course was not music-specific or consisting of just music education student teachers, alignment to music education-specific content cannot be guaranteed. While one of the outcomes for the student teaching seminar course was to "discuss and reflect on current issues in education and topics that arise during the student teaching experience" (Case 2, Student Teaching Capstone Course Description artifact), determining if those discussions aligned became an issue. Since the student teaching seminar course was not part of the exploration and the instructor was different, it was not an area of concern within this study beyond how content linked to that of the IMST course. What was known concerning the student teaching seminar course and how it might align to the IMST course was addressed by what Barbara knew of the course:

> They meet as kind of a Zoom group, every Monday, typically. They just get together, they talk a lot about just procedural things like what they've got to do to make sure their license is going to be where it needs to be, or how are their scores coming. I don't really know what kind of topics come up in that, but they just check in with each other and with the placement director who runs that…I don't know how long they meet. (Case 2, Interview)

Barbara's knowledge of the student teaching seminar course concluded that certification is a large focus, and was consistent with issues concerning PSMT time being consumed for items like a TPA and removing focus from the student teaching experience (Goh et al., 2021) or perceived negative impacts (Prichard, 2018). When the education department at WU changed the BME course structure to place courses under their purview, it was due to concerns over PPAT. When I encountered focus issues, it also involved the PPAT as the main certification exam which limited my ability to collaborate on student teaching experiences or help guide the PSMTs towards

synthesizing student teaching experiences due to their complete focus being shifted to a large requirement of certification. Shifting the focus from the PSMT experiences to certification detracts from what Baumgartner and Councill (2015) presented concerning seminar course content and purpose. Since the student teaching seminar course at WU was outside the school of music and not led by a music education faculty member, synthesis of music content area specifics in regards to the current student teaching placement and prior IMST course might not have occurred leading to a breakdown in the purpose of the student teaching seminar (Baumgartner, 2014) and the outcomes seminar should provide towards PSMT growth and development (Chaffin & Manfredo, 2010; Stegman, 2007).

Inside Music Education. Connecting the IMST course to the rest of the BME degree curriculum was a goal of both participants. "[It's]an integral part of the field-based education program, and provides students the opportunity to apply concepts learned in coursework to real-life teaching in the classroom" (Case 2, Syllabus, p. 1). Amy's transitional capstone was designed "…to ensure that [the PSMT] are prepared for student teaching and for the job market" (Case 1, Syllabus, p. 1). These courses were meant to serve as a catalyst toward the synthesis of classroom theories and authentic practices. However, challenges within the music education curriculum sometimes conflicted with those purposes and goals.

The 120-Credit Hour Cap. A challenge to aligning IMST courses within the BME degree existed due to mandates affecting degree credit hour limits. BME degree programs have been found to range from 120- to almost 150-hours (Maas et al., 2023; Payne et al., 2025). As collegiate programs are mandated to reduce hours to the typical 120 credits required for bachelor's degrees, content prescribed by oversight bodies (e.g., NASM, CAEP) must be retained within the slimmed-down curriculum. While understanding the changes to credit caps

and mandates, MWU and WU secured exemptions from their respective states to the 120-hour credit limit, affording them opportunities to include courses such as the IMST. Institutions that experienced similar exemption statuses as MWU and WU would be more likely to incorporate an IMST course into their degree plans, but for institutions that are reducing credit hours in response to mandates, adding additional courses can add strain on program adherence to policy while balancing the needs of students. Should institutions choose to incorporate the IMST course, faculty might embed skills and concepts of the IMST within existing courses to cover the content, rather than implementing a stand-alone course. Existing MTPP courses and structures have been shown to prepare PSMTs for certification requirements (e.g., P–12, K–12), while individual tracks (e.g., instrumental, vocal, general) are still present and dictate degree plans (Greher & Tobin, 2006). For certification requirements expected of K–12 with training in all areas of musical education (e.g., elementary, secondary, vocal, instrumental), breadth and depth of PSMT training is affected, as broader outlooks for PSMTs "…could require teacher preparation programs to offer greater breadth in courses covering all areas of music education rather than allowing for greater depth in one area" (May et al., 2017, p. 84). Combining the broader outlooks within MTPPs with a limit to credit hours likely will result in challenges for music education faculty when determining content in official degree programs. In such situations, increased credit hour limitations and broader program foci may hinder institutions from adding an IMST course to their degree and pose a challenge to course alignment.

Degree and Curriculum Changes. In addition to limited hours, course designs and course placements (i.e., term offered/suggested) within the BME degrees also created challenges for MTPPs and IMST course alignment. Amy noted changes to the curriculum at MWU—even with the exemption of the 120-hours—that made courses optional, depending on student

background and prior knowledge. “We just changed our curriculum, and some of the courses, like woodwind and brass class, are optional” (Case 1, Interview). Optional courses for students who have already obtained content knowledge could allow for more choice within the curriculum, and allow for courses like IMST to be inserted. However, for those students who do not come to MTPPs with the transferable knowledge base intact, the option of creating time within their degree plan for an IMST course would not be feasible and likely add additional credit hours and expenses while extending their degree. Amy illustrated how challenges within the degree affected her students by reporting PSMTs were “in three instrumental [instrument] classes in one semester” (Interview). She explained the three courses required PSMTs to change multiple instruments at the same time throughout the three courses “…they would all have [a] playing exam all at the same time on those three instruments, and it was a lot” (Interview). Within IMST course discussions and placements, recall and synthesis of instrumental pedagogies and teaching practices suffered from the overload, which Amy saw as a missed opportunity for connections between content and application: “Even though we’ve worked on lots of strategies…they’re not incorporating those [strategies into their teaching]” (Interview). Barbara noticed an overload and lack of synthesis for student teaching within the graduation plan at WU, which originally had “four ed[ucation] courses…[PSMTs] need a laboratory to try those things in, they need a laboratory while they’re talking about them, to either try it themselves or talk to a teacher who is using them” (Case 2, Interview). If content was being adjusted to incorporate more breadth and less depth, alongside already overloaded student course loads and coursework, the ability to synthesize and transfer into real-world scenarios without guided or reflective practices could see a lack of PSE preparedness (Browning & Korthagen, 2023; Edwards & Protheroe, 2003). Without control of the content or the opportunities to guide student synthesis in

instructional settings, PSMTs' demonstration of application of learned knowledge and skills prior to student teaching may prove difficult.

Creation or Inclusion of IMST. Institutional policies and procedures may reflect a barrier toward inclusion of an IMST course at colleges and universities. Reflecting on variation in administrative processes among institutions, Amy noted that any proposed changes to degree plans "…would have to go through curriculum committee here at the school of music, and then it would have to go through university [and] higher ed things" (Interview). Amy cited concern with securing support of music colleagues outside of music education, noting that course and degree revisions can be fraught with backlash by faculty from other areas within the unit: "We had people that just don't know how to stay in their lane here" (Case 1, Interview). Navigating micropolitical challenges affecting the music education area where content experts see needs but become limited in their ability to implement changes resulted in obstruction of proposed necessary changes. Amy encountered curricular proposals that stalled when decisions were delayed due to a lack of non-music education faculty support. Aydin and Ok (2025) made note of the same issues in curriculum changes within faculties of education. To implement a course like IMST, Amy shared her need for "student data, or student feedback on the importance of the course and preparing [PSMTs] for student teaching" (Interview) in swaying colleagues' perceptions and recommended institutions seeking to add an IMST course should acquire the same. Polling or requesting information from institutions like MWU or WU could provide the necessary data, but taking into account the struggles with finding programs that utilize IMST courses and receiving feedback or data from them could be a severe limitation and challenge. Finding ways to share data and communicate the importance of course benefits for IMST courses

among music education and music faculties would benefit not only MTPPs and institutions, but the PSMTs whom we are trying to best prepare for real-world practices.

Barbara referenced a different set of challenges toward inclusion/creation of the IMST course. Though WU already utilized an IMST course, external factors (e.g., administrative, personnel) worried Barbara about the course longevity and inclusion. Although Barbara saw the IMST course as a positive aid toward PSMT student teaching preparation, degree plans and factors controlled from administrative and oversight sources (e.g., department of education) were suspected of limiting the ability to create, implement, or retain IMST courses similar to expected issues concerning the 120-hour mandates. When administrative policies created barriers, such as when new personnel or ideas emerged through turnover within departments, or at administrative levels, the inclusion of courses viewed as necessary can be challenged. Unit administrators informed Barbara that "they weren't sure how [the IMST] would stay because there are going to be some new people [administrators] coming in" (Case 2, Interview). Should the education department choose to discontinue the IMST, the challenge would then become shifting oversight of the IMST to the school of music (recognizing the impact of the course on PSMTs' development): "The students won't get nearly the immersion in student teaching if they don't have practicum in front of it" (Case 2, Interview). Such an action would likely result in eliminating some other music or music education course from the overall degree plan to make space, highlighting more challenges of lower credit hour mandates (Maas et al., 2023; Payne et al., 2025).

Implications for Music Teacher Preparation Programs

While this was an exploratory study and limited in the number of cases, there were emergent areas that seemed appropriate to discuss regarding future implications for MTPPs. The

IMST courses examined in this study were pre-existing, and I acknowledge that the addition of new courses within pre-established degree plans may not be feasible, especially for institutions examining their credit hour limits due to administrative mandates or accreditation requirements (Maas et al., 2023; NASM, 2025b). However, it seemed important for future MTPP practices to examine how elements of the IMST courses could be incorporated into existing curricula (if not a stand-alone course). Below, I identify a number of such elements and propose multiple implementation possibilities.

Authentic Context Learning Opportunities

MTPPs in accredited schools were designed to build knowledge, skills, and competencies for the PSMTs in advance of classroom teaching (NASM, 2025b). IMST courses in this study acted as a conceptually culminating bridge between the theoretical side of learning for PSMTs and the application of those concepts in authentic learning environments. These settings reflected consistent immersion, including student and mentor interactions, with both cases providing evidence through instructor portrayal of overwhelming positive necessity towards inclusion. The main focus for the two IMSTs reflected *consistent* teaching at the same location, with the same students, and under the same MT for the extent of the course. This approach was different from PSMTs' observational opportunities or field experiences, which may be a single or a series of observations, lacking in context for PSMT synthesis (Conway, 2002), vary from school to school within a semester or course, or vary between classes to fit PSMT schedules (Case 1, Interview; Case 2, Interview). Additionally, peer teaching was commonly used in laboratory experiences (NASM, 2025b; Powell, 2011) within TPPs/MTPPs, and the need for more authentic opportunities (i.e., teaching actual children) was seen as tantamount for PSMTs to apply knowledge in practical situations (i.e., theory to practice) in an environment resembling a

professional teaching setting (Crawford, 2014; Ediger, 2018; Hart, 2019; Paul et al., 2001; Rodríguez & Bulnes, 2024; Wiggins, 2007). The IMST course may then serve as an effective bridge towards student teaching, reflecting a stable, consistent opportunity for PSMTs to apply practices in authentic settings and further develop their music teacher identity.

For programs devoid of available schedule and/or credit hour space, elements of consistent ACL opportunities (reflective of the IMST course) could be incorporated into existing class/curricula (Wiggins, 2007). Paul et al. (2001) suggested ACL helps PSMTs identify as teachers through role negotiation and performing the role of the teacher in the authentic context, which was echoed by Haston and Russell (2012), who advocated that student teaching performance is better informed by ACL experiences during the undergraduate curriculum. To provide PSMTs with more teaching episodes in authentic settings, MTEs should consider instances for curricular incorporation of ACL opportunities within courses that range from instrumental, vocal, or pedagogy methods at beginner, intermediate, or secondary levels and scheduled as teaching days in real-world classrooms of neighboring public school districts. Incorporation not only of teaching time in authentic settings, but of provided opportunities for self-reflection and discussion through videotaping and feedback served as some of the most fundamentally important skills of the teacher (Conway, 2020; Paul et al., 2001). Working with public school teachers to find consistent days and utilizing the same classroom students may afford PSMTs increased time to work in authentic settings, thus recognizing longitudinal progress of their teachings and reflect on how to effectively prepare and instruct those varied levels appropriately.

PSMTs With No Prior ACL. For MTPPs with limited interaction in schools, such as Barbara with Case 2 at WU, students were encouraged to seek out ACL opportunities outside of

the official MTPP curriculum. With limited opportunities or peer-teaching laboratories only, PSMTs may lack meaningful application prior to student teaching and be forced to synthesize their content knowledge in an ACL setting for the first time during final internships. Institutions similar to WU might observe PSMTs have one or more semesters prior to student teaching without opportunities to apply learned theories in a controlled environment depending on curriculum design and course offerings. Powell (2020) listed traditional field experience problems which appeared to share similar issues with application and reflection as "a lack of authenticity; few opportunities for reflection; superficial interactions among preservice teachers, P–12 teachers, students, and communities; and the absence of continuity, consistency, and intensity among field experiences" (p. 487). Interactions without context (Conway, 2002) or persistent problems (Powell, 2020) might be less effective than MTEs want when preparing PSMTs, and notice the growth of contextual synthesis towards applicable teaching and reflection is stunted, lacking in "experience and knowledge to appropriately learn from these early classroom interactions" (p. 487). Powell further paraphrases Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann (1985) to illustrate that problems with the field experiences can limit the impact and "even cause it to be harmful to teacher development" (p. 487). In program structures similar to WU, the IMST course can provide ACL opportunity for students who otherwise would not be afforded many, allowing them to "warm-up" (Case 1, Interview) so they have time to further their identity development and comfortability with concepts, skills, and teaching ability prior to student teaching.

With Music Student Teaching Seminar. For MTPPs with music student teaching seminar courses, a similarity between IMST courses and student teaching seminar content which reinforces curriculum design, rehearsal planning, and assessment of students was found, leading

to the question of necessity for the IMST course. Baumgartner (2014) posited that reinforcements are important for these topics; continued reinforcement of pedagogical approaches through the IMST course would afford such opportunities. The difference observed with IMST courses when compared to music student teaching seminars can be seen in the frequency and settings. Studies of student teaching seminars (e.g., Baumgartner, 2014; Baumgartner & Councill, 2015) identified variations and fluctuations concerning seminar scheduled meetings. The IMSTs—in both cases—were developed to be consistent, with at least once per week instances (sometimes more) in authentic classroom settings of the same students, with opportunities to immediately reinforce feedback and implement changes with assistance from MTs. The IMST course may prove to be more impactful for PSMTs than many of the student teaching seminars that met less frequently (Baumgartner & Councill, 2015).

Music Educator Identity Development

MTEs understand the development of PSMTs, including the commonly understood stages presented by Fuller and Bown (1975) of self, task, and student. Prior research illustrates continued development of PSMT teacher identity throughout their MTPPs (Freer & Bennett, 2012; Haning, 2021; McClellan, 2014), with the student teaching experience likely serving as the most immersive experience affording opportunities to blend personal characteristics and professional qualities into a complex identity (Draves, 2021). Amy and Barbara presented the IMST courses as important ways to continue fostering development of teacher identity through situational opportunities for PSMTs, seeing themselves as the teacher instead of student. IMST courses that require stable MT placements and encourage frequent conferences between the PSMT and their MT, which can foster both relationships and understanding. These experiences afforded PSMTs opportunities to move beyond the “self” and “task” stages of teaching, focusing

more on student-centered concerns—an important component of standard teacher performance assessments (TPA) (e.g., PPAT, edTPA) —through an understanding of the classrooms in which they are assigned (ETS, 2025b; Pearson Education, 2026). Witnessing daily student progress allowed PSMTs to develop effective teaching strategies based on growth and understanding. Identity changes beyond the base level concerns of self and task also were noted by Miksza and Berg (2013a) when utilizing a practicum prior to the student teaching internship. These unique approaches of curricular-based ACL experiences prior to student teaching appeared to provide PSMTs with a firm view of their self and how to best serve the task and student prior to full-time student teaching.

In both Amy and Barbara's cases, PSMTs instructing in a co-teaching scenario displayed continuous identity development demonstrated by their self-efficacy and reflections on themselves as the teacher. PSMTs built relationships with the children and MTs, the latter also helping to establish a network of colleagues and mentors upon which the PSMTs could turn to for help and guidance after their practicum and student teaching experiences. Given that teacher identity development, understanding students, and developing relationships were important towards transitioning to the teacher role (Draves, 2021; Miksza & Berg, 2013a), the IMST course presented opportunities for continued development. Since the IMST at both MWU and WU demonstrated success in continued identity development, and Miksza and Berg's (2013a) study presented evidence of movement beyond "self" and "task" due to a practicum course, MTEs might consider ways to incorporate the IMST practices if there is not a way to include the IMST course within the curriculum. MTEs incorporating IMST practices would afford them opportunities to identify ways in which combining ACL experiences, knowledge of students, and relationship building with future colleagues might be instituted within other areas of the BME

degree program so that PSMTs are best prepared for the student teaching semester with a formulated identity. Frequent opportunities for PSMTs to "do the thing" by applying learned knowledge to real-world settings align with the philosophical approach of practicing concepts and working towards mastery. Through practicing *as* a teacher, teacher identity is established. When that practice occurred prior to student teaching, PSMTs were suggested to move into the teacher role sooner and have viewed themselves as such.

Complete Music Teaching Setting

Many student teaching settings began after the initial semester start in public schools (i.e., spring term) due to calendar differences between public schools and universities, resulting in PSMTs entering the learning environment *after* classes have been established. A lack of extant research concerning how children's learning or behaviors were impacted by student teachers entering the classroom after the environment was established by the MT limits a determination of effect; however, Arlin (1979) did note that some student teachers experienced less anxiety and classroom disruptions—mainly concerning transitions between tasks or time-on/time-off task—when the MT had established and maintained high classroom expectations. Program requirements, course offerings, and other factors impact the semester in which PSMTs student teach. For example, traditional four-year degrees would logically end with student teaching in the final spring semester. For wind and percussion instrumentalists, a spring internship resulted in missing fall semester marching band—a core component of current practices in most secondary band programs in the US. For string and wind/percussion instrumentalists, fall often included beginning instruction at the middle or elementary school level; another fundamental component of public school music teaching positions. Students with a choral focus similarly would have experienced fundamental choral development, voicings, and part placements in a fall term.

Conversely, if PSMTs student taught in the fall, they may fail to experience typical springtime opportunities in the music classroom (e.g., contest preparation, trip and budgeting concerns, recruitment, musicals, elementary programs, entry into the profession at the beginning of the academic year). Conway (2002) interviewed administrators who saw a difference in general classroom teachers encountering the full year during student teaching, and noted that one semester internships oftentimes preclude PSMTs from experiencing important aspects of complete music programs. The desire for year-round internships to increase the knowledge base and experience of student teachers prior to their full-time teaching career may not be feasible for all programs/students, but literature suggested a positive outcome for extended student teaching experiences over the traditional one-semester internship (Spooner et al., 2008) with some universities already ascribing to multi-semester or year-long internships (Greenberg et al., 2011). When year-round student teaching is not possible, IMST courses can effectively increase the length of an internship placement by affording PSMTs both fall and spring classroom opportunities. Furthermore, using one mentor teacher year-round (Case 2, WU) or additional settings with a consistent MT for each semester (Case 1, MWU) provided opportunities for these soon-to-be educators to build more in-depth relationships with their mentors. Amy's IMST approach extended PSMT internships and broadened teaching placement possibilities to include larger-scale teaching episodes. Her PSMTs participated in various schools and/or programs in general, instrumental, and choral music across developmental levels, between the IMST and student teaching semesters. PSMTs at WU were involved with their same MT/placement setting between the IMST course and student teaching for the whole year building relationships, understanding students, and furthering teaching identities in preparation for the student teaching semester. For both Amy and Barbara, the IMST courses allowed for PSMTs' earlier entry into the

schools and provided the extra time at the beginning of the public school year/semester before the collegiate semester began. This setting was more consistent with other educational programs at their universities, which already required extended internships for areas such as elementary education. In order to provide the PSMTs with complete music settings, MTEs should continue to examine the certifications and licensures within their states for broad (e.g., K–12 music, PK–12 music) or specific (e.g., instrumental, choral, general music) areas and identify aspects of programs or placements that can be reinforced by an IMST course. Formulating plans for extended opportunities of PSMT development is important to ensure PSMTs are best prepared for the student teaching semester and entering the teaching profession.

Limitations

This dissertation was a product of over two years of work, which created a longer timeline than I originally intended. The lengthened timeline resulted in extended time between communications, participant recruitment, interviews, analysis, and member checks. Timeline extensions could have seen changes in perceptions of the instructors or universities for the IMST courses since the initial data was collected. Changes to the governing handbooks (e.g., university handbooks, course syllabus, NASM Handbooks) might have occurred since the investigation began, including implementation of new ideas within the curriculum or processes for the BME degrees at these institutions or the IMST courses.

Pilot Survey Challenges

It was expected that the IMST course may be an uncommon program component and an exploratory investigation would start from an already reduced population from which appropriate applicants could be obtained. Utilizing the pilot study to confirm the existence of an IMST course provided more unusable or "no" responses (84.8%, $n = 95$) than possible participants and

affirmed the uncommon component expectation. My ability to determine if an IMST course existed at an institution proved difficult due to complications with verbiage or nomenclature from institutions and instructors in their responses to the pilot, leading to only five potential participants in what I had already perceived would be a small population. Complications with verbiage or nomenclature were possible misidentifiers or colloquialisms, which led me to reflect that respondents might have misinterpreted the type of course or the purpose I sought to investigate. Usable pilot survey responses included "yes" answers to identify the existence of an IMST course, but when asked to provide the title of the course for further investigation through university websites and artifacts, the title was listed as an introduction to music education course (freshman or sophomore level) rather than an introduction to student teaching. Such responses were unusable for further consideration from that point. Other respondents indicated their institution had an IMST course, yet they noted they were not the instructor of record nor did they provide contact information for the faculty member responsible for the class and no further contact was obtainable. Still others replied with "yes" but did not include institutional identifiers; I had no way to follow up with these individuals. Although I anticipated a smaller sample size for the main portion of the study, I believe these initial data collection complications contributed to a smaller sample size than likely reflects IMST course existence across US institutions at this time.

Main Study Challenges

To further complicate the main study, two of the potential participants did not respond to follow-up inquiries inviting them to take part in the research, resulting in only three viable candidates. Communications were established with all three remaining candidates, but one stopped responding shortly thereafter, reducing the final size of the participant pool to two. Since qualitative research is not intended to be generalizable (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) but to explore

and inquire through depth of study (Creswell, 2013; Creswell & Poth, 2018), using two participants for the cases still provided an opportunity for meaningful research.

Similar Instructional Faculty

Both instructors/participants in this study listed their primary background as wind/instrumental. Similarly, this identity reflected my own professional background, which may have been a source of bias for steering interview questions towards more band-related understandings of student teaching and preparation during data collection. Likewise, it is possible that—even through acknowledgment and bracketing of my own background (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016)—I utilized my instrumental music education training as a lens through which to understand, analyze, and interpret participant responses. Some mention of choral or elementary distinctions was made by the participants, but additional instructors from choral or elementary backgrounds as study participants may elicit a broader understanding of instructor perceptions of the IMST course, including the need for those focus areas in a heterogeneous class setting.

Suggestions for Future Research

This study was an exploration of IMST courses, uncovering information on a subject area not wholly explored or understood in music education research or curricula. I believe that a continued exploration of IMST courses would be beneficial to determining varied approaches, perceptions, and impacts on PSMT development. It is likely that more courses of this nature exist in curricula around the United States, but may have been excluded due to differing nomenclature or title. Other disciplines have discussed the need for consistent terminology (Hill et al., 2012), which would benefit music education researchers when discussing or researching terminology and nomenclature for seminar, practicum, or introductory courses and allow for a larger population when investigating in the future

Targeting specific regions within the United States might lend a focus to the researcher lens and allow for more specific inquiry, particularly where geographical/cultural differences affect music education preparation curriculum. Research exists identifying the importance of preparing music teachers for culturally responsive diversity and awareness in MTPPs (Hunt, 2009), particularly concerning rural and urban music education settings. MTPPs that stress the importance of experience in rural and urban settings, in addition to settings the PSMTs might be more familiar with, could present more ways MTEs incorporate PSMTs into authentic settings in preparation for student teaching and careers. MTPPs might include additional courses similar to the IMST that focus on additional settings, though under a different nomenclature and thus did not appear in the initial search of this study. While an incorporation of courses with similar goals to the IMST would be beneficial, an overall broader sample of IMST courses would benefit the comparison of cases and purposes in order to provide a larger understanding of current practices.

Music education researchers may find it useful to utilize a single case to elicit further depth of study on the IMST phenomenon. Interviewing the instructor and PSMTs from one course, visiting the site/setting in-person, and/or observing content application and student/instructor reflection would reflect a more immersive approach to singular case study methodology and may result in a deeper understanding. Investigators might consider tracking PSMTs throughout the term of the course, using the student teaching internship (i.e., subsequent semester) to ask reflective questions and uncover PSMTs' perceptions of the IMST course and its impact on the internship. Such perceptions then could be compared to how instructors view the course, to determine any congruence or disconnect between the two stakeholders.

Selection of participants based on backgrounds or areas of concentration could prove enlightening for points of view and specific content area information unknown to the researcher.

For this study, it would have been interesting to hear from the perspective of elementary music or choral music instructors who lead an IMST course. It also was not discussed (in interviews or follow-up) if the participants' IMST courses were track aligned (e.g., instrumental, vocal, elementary) or homogenous, similar to student teaching seminar courses which typically involve all content areas within music (Baumgartner et al., 2024; Baumgartner & Councill, 2017, 2019; Councill & Baumgartner, 2017).

While Spooner et al. (2008) demonstrated the positive outcomes of extended internships on PSEs, explorations of music MTs' effectiveness during the longer internships (e.g., year-long, multi-semester, IMST/student teaching) should be conducted. Examining whether keeping consistent MTs throughout the year-long placement or changing MTs at semester end during a multi-semester (e.g., IMST/student teaching) placement for PSMT development would be valuable. Examining the variable placement lengths and possible MT changes from MTE and PSMT perspectives, particularly utilizing aspects of reflective inquiry, may benefit MTEs and IMST instructors in planning for IMST course structures and assigning the most meaningful student teaching placements.

Conclusion

This study explored introduction to music student teaching (IMST) courses to gain an understanding of the merits, goals, purposes, and perceptions from the perspective of instructors and institutions which currently utilize IMST courses in preservice music educator preparation programs (MTPPs). The utilization of a SWOC analysis (i.e., Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges) provided for investigation and discussion of emergent themes and considerations from interviews and artifacts. A multiple case study design (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2018) was chosen to define the bounded system and allow for in-depth explorations of individual

cases with a concluding comparison (i.e., SWOC analysis) (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The expectations from utilizing a multiple case study aligned with the goal of revealing insights from processes with applications possible outside the bounds of the original system (Yin, 2018). Emergent themes provided many discussion points outlining the benefits and concerns for incorporating an IMST course within music teacher preparation programs. MTPPs were seen as important to the development of future music educators, the culmination of which was usually the student teaching semester. Within the student teaching semester, PSMTs were immersed in continuous authentic teaching contexts where they were afforded opportunities for application of theory to practice. This study highlighted findings which suggested additional opportunities for immersive authentic context learning and reflective practices for PSMT preparation prior to the student teaching semester, as well as teacher identity and an understanding of the development and instructional needs for children. Continued work with mentor teachers and university supervisors/IMST instructors was suggested to provide more opportunities for feedback and immediately applicable changes to PSMT teaching strategies within the IMST immersion setting. While an integration of the IMST course may not be feasible for all institutions, my hope is this study provides an opportunity for MTEs to examine current practices and procedures. Such examinations could reveal instances for possible incorporation of elements from the IMST course found necessary to their respective MTPPs or BME degrees in an effort to provide best practices for PSMT student teaching semester preparation.

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Appendix A: Institutional Review Board Email Confirmation for Pilot Questionnaire

Hi Lane,

This sounds like you're wanting to collect pilot to determine if a full study is even feasible. If that's the case, you do not need to submit for irb approval if you're not needing to use the results of your explorative survey in your dissertation.

I think this answers your question but let me know if you need anything further.
Thanks!

[redacted]
Quality Improvement, Education & Training Coordinator
Office of Human Research Participant Protection - IRB
University of Oklahoma
[redacted]

Folds, Lane A.
[redacted]
Good morning, [redacted]!

I am working on my dissertation and going through some ideas for design of methodology, but need some help from an IRB standpoint on how to proceed. I wasn't sure since this this exploratory and preliminary steps if I needed to submit a full application or something else.

The gist is: I want to explore a specific class that I have found in a few institutions as my dissertation. Where I am running into an issue is that there is not empirical data on the number of the classes, similarities, course names, etc. to define the methodology for exploration.

What I would like to do is to prep for the data research, and send a quick survey to NASM accredited schools (I already have the list and contact info) asking them 2-4 simple questions:
1 - Name of Institution
2 - Do you have this class/class type at your institution
3 - Instructor Name if applicable
4 - Instructor email if available

The reason for this is to see if a large enough sample exists to do a quantitative survey, or so small that I need to do qualitative interviews.

Thank you for the help and guidance! I am happy to chat over the phone if that helps to explain it better or answer questions. My cell is [redacted].

Thanks again!
Lane A. Folds, ABD

Appendix B: Pilot Questionnaire Invitation

Pilot Invitation
Send Date: TBD
Subject Line: Exploratory Questionnaire – Pilot study concerning Introduction to Student Teaching Courses

Dear Colleagues:

I am working to determine the feasibility of a study concerning introduction to student teaching courses with this pilot exploratory questionnaire.

Since the purpose of this is to determine feasibility of a study, the University of Oklahoma Institutional Review Board has determined that this pilot does not require review/approval. Information gathered will still remain confidential, will not be disclosed, and will only be used to determine the feasibility of a study methodology. Thank you for your participation in this pilot. This questionnaire should take no more than 2 minutes and is completely voluntary.

Pilot Questionnaire Link:
https://ousurvey.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3sz5GMSWG4MIXsy

If you have any questions, you may contact me (lfolds@ou.edu) and/or my dissertation chair, Dr. Christopher Baumgartner (cbaumgartner@ou.edu).

Sincerely,

Lane A. Folds, ABD
University of Oklahoma
Interim Assistant Director of Athletic Bands

Appendix C: Pilot Questionnaire Invitation Follow Up

Pilot Invitation Follow Up Email
Send Date: TBD
Subject Line: Follow-Up: Exploratory Questionnaire – Pilot study concerning Introduction to Student Teaching Courses

Dear Colleagues:

This is just a quick reminder in case you haven't had a chance to complete the quick, 2-minute survey concerning determining the feasibility of a study over introduction to student teaching courses with this pilot exploratory questionnaire.

If you have already completed the survey, please disregard this email, and thank you for your help! Following is information on the pilot survey.

Since the purpose of this is to determine feasibility of a study, the University of Oklahoma Institutional Review Board has determined that this pilot does not require review/approval. Information gathered will still remain confidential, will not be disclosed, and will only be used to determine the feasibility of a study methodology. Thank you for your participation in this pilot. This questionnaire should take no more than 2 minutes and is completely voluntary.

Pilot Questionnaire Link:
https://ousurvey.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3sz5GMSWG4MIXsy

If you have any questions, you may contact me (lfolds@ou.edu) and/or my dissertation chair, Dr. Christopher Baumgartner (cbaumgartner@ou.edu).

Sincerely,

Lane A. Folds, ABD
University of Oklahoma
Interim Assistant Director of Athletic Bands

Appendix D: Institutional Review Board Main Study Documentation



Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects

Approval of Initial Submission – Exempt from IRB Review – AP01

Date: January 08, 2025 **IRB#:** 18107

Principal Investigator: Lane A Folds

Approval Date: 01/07/2025

Exempt Category: 1 & 2

Study Title: Introduction to Student Teaching Course Exploration Study

On behalf of the Institutional Review Board (IRB), I have reviewed the above-referenced research study and determined that it meets the criteria for exemption from IRB review. To view the documents approved for this submission, open this study from the *My Studies* option, go to *Submission History*, go to *Completed Submissions* tab and then click the *Details* icon.

As principal investigator of this research study, you are responsible to:

- Conduct the research study in a manner consistent with the requirements of the IRB and federal regulations 45 CFR 46.
- Request approval from the IRB prior to implementing any/all modifications as changes could affect the exempt status determination.
- Maintain accurate and complete study records for evaluation by the HRPP Quality Improvement Program and, if applicable, inspection by regulatory agencies and/or the study sponsor.
- Notify the IRB at the completion of the project.

If you have questions about this notification or using iRIS, contact the IRB @ 405-325-8110 or irb@ou.edu.

Cordially,

Aimee Franklin, Ph.D.
Chair, Institutional Review Board

Recruitment Message

Dear [NAME],

My name is Lane Folds and I am the Interim Assistant Director of Athletic Bands at the University of Oklahoma completing my Ph.D. I would like to officially invite you to participate in my research project as part of the dissertation process titled "Introduction to Student Teaching Courses: An Exploratory Examination." As an instructor of record for a course that matches this description, you have experiences with this course that can help further our understanding and development of music teacher education. The goal is to be able to utilize data gathered to continue discussions among music education researchers and practitioners on how to best serve our pre-service music education students as they prepare for the student teaching semester. Per the attached consent form, your participation in this project is voluntary and you may choose to remove yourself from the research at any time.

If you agree to participate, we will schedule a time that is best for us to hold an individual interview that will last approximately 1.5 hours, which will be audio and video recorded and then transcribed. These recordings and transcriptions will help in the dissertation process and could be utilized in conference presentations or article transcriptions. After all participants have completed an interview, a focus group discussion invitation may be extended. I invite you to provide any documents or artifacts that you feel are important in understanding the course, your experiences, and any observations as well. The University of Oklahoma Institutional Review Board has approved this research and the approval number is listed below. If you wish to participate, please print, sign, date, scan, and return to me via email at the address listed below within one week of the receipt of this message.

[INSERT IRB APPROVAL HERE]

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary; you may choose to withdraw at any time. If you have questions pertaining to the research project, you may contact either me (lfolds@ou.edu), my faculty advisor, Dr. Christopher Baumgartner (cbaumgartner@ou.edu), or the OU-NC IRB (irb@ou.edu or 405-325-8110) at any time.

Thank you in advance for your assistance!

Sincerely,

Lane A. Folds, ABD
Interim Assistant Director of Athletic Bands
University of Oklahoma School of Music
500 West Boyd Street
Norman, OK 73019
lfolds@ou.edu



IRB NUMBER: 18107
IRB APPROVAL DATE: 01/07/2025

Appendix E: Interview Electronic Consent Form

Consent to Participate in Research: University of Oklahoma

Would you like to be involved in research at the University of Oklahoma?

My name is Lane Folds and I am the Interim Assistant Director of Athletic Bands at the University of Oklahoma completing my Ph.D. in Music Education. I would like to invite you to participate in my research entitled: **Introduction to Student Teaching Courses: An Exploratory Examination**. You were selected as a possible participant because you were recently identified as being instructor of record for a course determined to fit the study, or part of the design team from a university which utilizes said course. You must be at least 18 years of age to participate in this research.

Please read this document and contact me to ask any questions you may have BEFORE agreeing to participate in my research.

What is the purpose of this research? This research will be used for dissertation purposes to examining the designs, usage, objectives and goals, benefits, and outcomes of courses established as part of undergraduate music educator preparations prior to the student teaching semester. I aim to discover and understand (a) how universities design and implement these courses, (b) the purposes and goals of such courses, (c) the benefits and outcomes that were experienced from the instructor(s) perspectives, (d) the structure and context of said courses, and (e) the what perceived benefits have been observed from the university or instructor(s) reflections.

What will I be asked to do? If you agree to be in this research, you will participate in an interview and possible focus group concerning the introductory course which should be **no longer than 90 minutes each**. Interviews can be held in a variety of ways, depending on your availability and wishes. Additional questions and contact can also occur via email.

How long will this take? Interviews and focus group discussions with participants should last no more than **90-minutes** each.

What are the risks and benefits if I participate? You may experience these minimal risks:

Data collected online or by a device and transmitted electronically: You might receive various email communications which may ask for clarification or confirmations. The interview process may also take place over Zoom and be recorded for transcription. Member checking of transcribed data could be transmitted as part of this process. The organization hosting the data collection platform has its own privacy and security policies for keeping your information confidential. There is a risk that external organizations, which are not part of the research team, may gain access to or retain your data or your IP address which could be used to re-identify you. No assurance can be made as to their use of the data you provide for purposes other than this research.

Collection of demographic or geographic location data that could lead to deductive re-identification: You will be asked to provide demographic information that describes you, your institution, and the course. I may also gather information about your geographic location in this research. Different combinations of personal and geographic information may make it possible for your identity to be guessed by someone who was given, or gained access, to our research records. Direct quotes utilized will be given pseudonyms to mitigate re-identification. University names will not be used unless specifically allowed by you, the participant. Universities will be listed in general geographic setting (e.g., a midwestern university). If you so choose, you may allow the usage of your real name and university as part of the course descriptions.



IRB NUMBER: 18107
IRB APPROVAL DATE: 01/07/2025

Are there benefits for participating? There are no benefits for participating in this research, including no compensation for participating, and your participation is voluntary.

Who will see my information? Information in research reports will not make any mention of identity, and research records will be stored securely. Only approved researchers and the OU Institutional Review Board will have access to the records.

What are my rights to my data? You have the right to access the research data that has been collected about you as a part of this research. However, you may not access this information until the entire research has finished and you consent to this temporary restriction.

Do I have to participate? No. If you do not participate, you will not be penalized or lose benefits or services unrelated to the research. Even if you choose to participate now, you may stop participating at any time and for any reason.

Will my identity be anonymous or confidential? Your identity will remain confidential beyond the research team. Any identifying information for you or your institution will be removed from the dissertation unless explicitly stated otherwise by you in the consent form. Pseudonyms and geographic generalities will be utilized to maintain anonymity.

As part of the interview process, emergent and in vivo direct quotations from the responses could appear throughout the dissertation and any presentation or publication derived from the research project. A submission number or pseudonym, such as "participant #1" or "respondent #2" will be used to de-identify any responses if used, unless otherwise explicitly stated from the participant in the consent form.

What will happen to my data in the future? I will not share your data or use it in future research.

Audio Recording of Research Activities: To assist with accurate recording of your responses, interviews may be recorded on an audio recording device. You have the right to refuse to allow such recording but you will be unable to participate in this study.

Video Recording of Research Activities: To assist with accurate recording of your responses, interviews may be recorded on a video recording device. You have the right to refuse to allow such recording but you will be unable to participate in this study.

Future Contact: The researcher might like to contact you to gather additional data or recruit you into new research with your permission.

Who do I contact with questions, concerns, or complaints? If you have questions, concerns, or complaints about this research, please contact me as Principal Investigator at lfolds@ou.edu or Dr. Christopher Baumgartner, faculty advisor at cbaumgartner@ou.edu. You can also contact the University of Oklahoma – Norman Campus Institutional Review Board at 405-325-8110 or irb@ou.edu with questions, concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant, if you don't want to talk to the researcher(s), or if you cannot reach the researcher(s).

Please print this document for your records.



IRB NUMBER: 18107
IRB APPROVAL DATE: 01/07/2025

[INSERT IRB APPROVAL HERE]

Please check all of the options that you agree to:

I agree for data records to include my identifiable information. ___ Yes ___ No

I agree to being quoted directly, as long as a pseudonym is used. ___ Yes ___ No

I allow the researcher to utilize my name and my institution name in the research if needed ___ Yes ___ No

I consent to audio recording. ___ Yes ___ No

I consent to video recording. ___ Yes ___ No

I give the researcher permission to contact me in the future. ___ Yes ___ No

Final Confirmation and Consent:
By providing information to the researcher(s), I am agreeing to participate in this research.

Participant Signature:	Print Name:	Date:
Signature of Researcher Obtaining Consent:	Print Name:	Date:
Signature of Witness (if applicable):	Print Name:	Date:

IRB APPROVED
IRB NUMBER: 18107
IRB APPROVAL DATE: 01/07/2025

Appendix F: Interview Oral Consent Form

Consent to Participate in Research: University of Oklahoma

Would you like to be involved in research at the University of Oklahoma?

My name is Lane Folds and I am the Interim Assistant Director of Athletic Bands at the University of Oklahoma completing my Ph.D. in Music Education. I would like to invite you to participate in my research entitled: **Introduction to Student Teaching Courses: An Exploratory Examination**. You were selected as a possible participant because you were recently identified as being instructor of record for a course determined to fit the study, or part of the design team from a university which utilizes said course. You must be at least 18 years of age to participate in this research.

Please read this document and contact me to ask any questions you may have BEFORE agreeing to participate in my research.

What is the purpose of this research? This research will be used for dissertation purposes to examining the designs, usage, objectives and goals, benefits, and outcomes of courses established as part of undergraduate music educator preparations prior to the student teaching semester. I aim to discover and understand (a) how universities design and implement these courses, (b) the purposes and goals of such courses, (c) the benefits and outcomes that were experienced from the instructor(s) perspectives, (d) the structure and context of said courses, and (e) the what perceived benefits have been observed from the university or instructor(s) reflections.

What will I be asked to do? If you agree to be in this research, you will participate in an interview and possible focus group concerning the introductory course which should be **no longer than 90 minutes each**. Interviews can be held in a variety of ways, depending on your availability and wishes. Additional questions and contact can also occur via email.

How long will this take? Interviews and focus group discussions with participants should last no more than **90-minutes** each.

What are the risks and benefits if I participate? You may experience these minimal risks:

Data collected online or by a device and transmitted electronically: You might receive various email communications which may ask for clarification or confirmations. The interview process may also take place over Zoom and be recorded for transcription. Member checking of transcribed data could be transmitted as part of this process. The organization hosting the data collection platform has its own privacy and security policies for keeping your information confidential. There is a risk that external organizations, which are not part of the research team, may gain access to or retain your data or your IP address which could be used to re-identify you. No assurance can be made as to their use of the data you provide for purposes other than this research.

Collection of demographic or geographic location data that could lead to deductive re-identification: You will be asked to provide demographic information that describes you, your institution, and the course. I may also gather information about your geographic location in this research. Different combinations of personal and geographic information may make it possible for your identity to be guessed by someone who was given, or gained access, to our research records. Direct quotes utilized will be given pseudonyms to mitigate re-identification. University names will not be used unless specifically allowed by you, the participant. Universities will be listed in general geographic setting (e.g., a midwestern university). If you so choose, you may allow the usage of your real name and university as part of the course descriptions.



IRB NUMBER: 18107
IRB APPROVAL DATE: 01/07/2025

Are there benefits for participating? There are no benefits for participating in this research, including no compensation for participating, and your participation is voluntary.

Who will see my information? Information in research reports will not make any mention of identity, and research records will be stored securely. Only approved researchers and the OU Institutional Review Board will have access to the records.

What are my rights to my data? You have the right to access the research data that has been collected about you as a part of this research. However, you may not access this information until the entire research has finished and you consent to this temporary restriction.

Do I have to participate? No. If you do not participate, you will not be penalized or lose benefits or services unrelated to the research. Even if you choose to participate now, you may stop participating at any time and for any reason.

Will my identity be anonymous or confidential? Your identity will remain confidential beyond the research team. Any identifying information for you or your institution will be removed from the dissertation unless explicitly stated otherwise by you in the consent form. Pseudonyms and geographic generalities will be utilized to maintain anonymity.

As part of the interview process, emergent and in vivo direct quotations from the responses could appear throughout the dissertation and any presentation or publication derived from the research project. A submission number or pseudonym, such as "participant #1" or "respondent #2" will be used to de-identify any responses if used, unless otherwise explicitly stated from the participant in the consent form.

What will happen to my data in the future? I will not share your data or use it in future research.

Audio Recording of Research Activities: To assist with accurate recording of your responses, interviews may be recorded on an audio recording device. You have the right to refuse to allow such recording but you will be unable to participate in this study.

Video Recording of Research Activities: To assist with accurate recording of your responses, interviews may be recorded on a video recording device. You have the right to refuse to allow such recording but you will be unable to participate in this study.

Future Contact: The researcher might like to contact you to gather additional data or recruit you into new research with your permission.

Who do I contact with questions, concerns, or complaints? If you have questions, concerns, or complaints about this research, please contact me as Principal Investigator at lfolds@ou.edu or Dr. Christopher Baumgartner, faculty advisor at cbaumgartner@ou.edu. You can also contact the University of Oklahoma – Norman Campus Institutional Review Board at 405-325-8110 or irb@ou.edu with questions, concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant, if you don't want to talk to the researcher(s), or if you cannot reach the researcher(s).

[INSERT IRB APPROVAL HERE]

I will be asking some questions to find out how you want me to report your ideas. You can refuse any that you do not like without any penalty.



IRB NUMBER: 18107
IRB APPROVAL DATE: 01/07/2025

I agree for data records to include my identifiable information.	___ Yes ___ No
I agree to being quoted directly, as long as a pseudonym is used.	___ Yes ___ No
I allow the researcher to utilize my name and my institution name in the research if needed	___ Yes ___ No
I consent to audio recording.	___ Yes ___ No
I consent to video recording.	___ Yes ___ No
I give the researcher permission to contact me in the future.	___ Yes ___ No

Date of interview: _____

Name of Interviewee: _____

Mailing or Email address for electronic consent copy: _____

Name of Researcher and Date of the Consent Process: _____

Signature of the Researcher: _____

IRB APPROVED
IRB NUMBER: 18107
IRB APPROVAL DATE: 01/07/2025

Appendix G: Individual Research Interview Protocol

Semi-Structured Interview Protocol

Participant:_____ Consent: _____Yes _____No

Background Questions:

1. Please tell me your name, institution, and education background.
2. Please tell me your role at the institution.
    a. How long have you been there?
    b. Courses taught?
3. Please tell me about your personal teaching philosophy.
4. Please tell me about the BME program at your institution.
5. Please tell me about the certification processes your music education students have to complete in order to teach in your state.
6. Please tell me what courses the students take in the semester prior to student teaching.
    a. During student teaching.
    b. Is there a student teaching seminar class?
        i. What does the seminar class entail/when is it held?
        ii. Is it required/graded?
        iii. Content?

Introductory Course Information

1. What is the name of your introductory course?
2. When is the course offered in the curriculum?
    a. How does it work in relation to the student teaching semester and student teaching seminar?
3. Did you establish the course or did you inherit it?
4. Can you tell me what led to the need for the course?
5. Can you tell me about the course's development and implementation?
    a. Were there any specifics not being covered for music educators that you felt needed to be included in this course?
    b. Why?
6. What are the basic goals of the course?
7. Have you seen any benefits from the course so far, and if so, what are they?
8. Can you tell me about any changes have been made to the course?
9. Can you provide syllabi and course texts/content for examination?
10. Has the university seen any improvements towards music teacher education from this course?
    a. Have you noticed any unintended benefits from the course usage?
11. What future changes or goals do you see for the course?
12. How does this course help to prepare students for the student teaching semester?

IRB APPROVED AAHRPP
IRB NUMBER: 18107
IRB APPROVAL DATE: 01/07/2025

Course Content

1. Can you walk me through the typical semester in this course?
    a. Expand on topics presented from semester content
2. Are there authentic context learning opportunities within this course?
    a. Please describe
3. How does this course help with student teacher and cooperating teacher interaction?
4. Please tell me about any areas of content you wish were included in the course
    a. Why would these be necessary?
    b. Why are these not included?
    c. How might you incorporate them?
5. What has been the most impactful part of this course for students from your perspective?
6. How does the content of this course align with the curricular design of the BME degree at your institution?
7. How does this course help with student teacher preparation and support?
8. Do you see the students synthesizing their prior coursework better because of this course when they enter student teaching?
    a. How have you noticed the differences?
    b. Can you share any observational differences from watching the student teachers before and after this course?
        i. Or from when this course did not exist to now, if applicable?

IRB APPROVED
IRB NUMBER: 18107
IRB APPROVAL DATE: 01/07/2025

Appendix H: Request for Permission to Use Figures and Email Correspondence

Lane Folds
[redacted]

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to request permission to print the following material within a dissertation:

> James A. Keene, *A History of Music Education in the United* States, 1982:
>
> Course Term Outline (Utilize as Figure) Pages 207–208; Course Array (Utilize as Figure), Page 218:
>
> Other identifying information and remarks: These are listed as reproductions of Normal School Curriculum. I wish to reproduce those curriculum settings as they are presented in the book within my dissertation.

I request non-exclusive world rights for all editions of my *dissertation*, including any electronic and foreign-language editions.

If you are the copyright holder, may I have your permission to reprint the above material in my *dissertation*? If you do not indicate otherwise, I will use the usual scholarly form of acknowledgment, including publisher, author, title, etc.

If you are not the copyright holder, or if additional permission is needed for world rights from another source, please indicate so.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. A duplicate copy of this form is enclosed for your convenience.

Sincerely yours,

_____

The above request is hereby approved on the conditions specified below, and on the understanding that full credit will be given to the source.

Date:_____ Approved by:_____

Dear Lane,
Thank you for reaching out. As this title is out of print, it would be best for you to check with the author — we're happy to allow the use of those figures, but the rights currently lie with James Keene.

I have the following email address on file for this author: [redacted]
(Though this title was out of print when it came to us from UPNE, so I am not sure if this is up to date.)

Best,
[redacted]

Good morning,

My name is Lane Folds and I am working on my dissertation at the University of Oklahoma. I was tracking down the permission holder for a book published by the University Press of New England, and the searches list Brandeis University Press as the current catalog holder for all rights and publishing. I hope I have found the right location.

Brandeis.edu lists the University of Chicago Press as distributers, but it was unclear if the book was held through them. If I should contact them, please let me know.

I was hoping to reproduce 2 figures within James A. Keene's *A History of Music Education in the United States* (1982) that are reprints of curriculum from Normal Schools in the late 1800s and early 1900s. The figures are found on pages 207-208 (Course Term Outline) and page 218 (Course Array).

Could I obtain permission to reproduce those figures in my dissertation? I have attached a generic permission request form as well for your convenience.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Lane Folds

[redacted]

Appendix I: Redacted Case 1 Course Syllabus

The following is a redacted version of the course syllabus for Case 1. All identifying information has been removed.

[redacted] **Senior Transitional Capstone**

[redacted]

Teacher: [redacted]

For help or to chat:
[redacted]

Welcome!
Congratulations on making it to the final step before student teaching. The purpose of this course is to set you up for success as you go into the field. Every assignment is designed to ensure that you are prepared for student teaching and for the job market.

Course Description
Prerequisite: Completion of Application for Full Admission to PTEP. Capstone course to prepare students for student teaching through review of topics including assessment, lesson planning, classroom management, work sample preparation, and special needs students in the music classroom.

Course Objectives
Students will be able to:

- [redacted] Refine a personal philosophy of Music Education, which will guide their practice as a Music Educator. [redacted]
- [redacted] Reflect on relevant issues facing educators in the classroom, including classroom management, program organization, and curriculum planning. [redacted]
- [redacted] Demonstrate understanding of effective assessment in the Music Classroom. [redacted]
- [redacted] Demonstrate understanding of the lesson planning and [redacted] by developing a mockup of the required work sample, appropriate to a group of hypothetical students in a K-12 music classroom or ensemble. [redacted]
- [redacted] Demonstrate high standards for professional conduct and communication. [redacted]
- Complete 35-45 hours of Field-Based Experience Hours (FBEH) in an instructional setting, to satisfy the requirements of both their [redacted], as well as the [redacted] Licensure Requirements. This requirement will be completed as an assigned Practicum Experience, completing all of the required FBEH with the same music specialist in their educational setting.

Classroom Expectations and Policies

Engagement!

This is an active participation course, and you are expected to engage with all course content and materials to the best of your ability. This includes all in class demonstrations and activities and all readings, assignments, and other tasks.

Technology use:

Technology is crucial for communication and a successful course experience.
Please be prepared to:

- Complete assignments via Canvas.
- Have a device to video record yourself and the tools and skills to upload the video to Canvas.

If we need to hold class virtually and/or must shift any class period to asynchronous work, all information will be shared via Canvas, including any Zoom links to class. Please note, unless we all go virtual, class is in person. I will not personally Zoom you in for any class period. If you are contagiously ill but are well enough to virtually attend class you may ask a classmate to FaceTime or Zoom you in, but I will not.

Classroom Environment

You can expect me to welcome and value you as individuals, learners, and future music educators. You can expect me to work hard to provide you a positive and engaging learning environment with appropriate, relevant, and meaningful assignments and thoughtful, honest feedback. You can expect me to be on time and prepared for each class period, be physically and mentally present for you, to communicate clearly, and to make myself available to help you be successful in this class and as future music educators. I respectfully ask that you reciprocate and hold yourself to similar standards for me and your peers/future music colleagues.

Artificial Intelligence

In this course, we **may** work with AI **only** as a tool to make your writing more polished, efficient, and marketable for future jobs. It is important that you follow the steps in the assignments to ensure that you don't end up with word salad on written work, however. You **may not** use AI to complete tasks for you, you may use it as a tool to help improve your work when applicable (we will discuss this together). If you prefer not to use AI because you are already a confident writer, great!

Course Grading and Ungrading Policy:
Since Fall 2023 I have used ungrading practices and will continue to use them this semester. I chose an ungrading approach because grades:

- don't effectively measure learning in terms of application, transfer, and long-term retention.
- emphasize extrinsic motivation.
- deemphasize the process of learning.
- increases anxiety.
- decreases creative and risk-taking approaches to learning.

Grades should:

- reflect student learning outcomes.
- motivate and encourage students to feel ownership of their learning.
- and provide useful feedback to students.

Research repeatedly shows that assigning scores or letter grades, even with detailed feedback, tends to have a detrimental effect on student learning. Feedback given with a grade often goes unlooked, as students only care about the grade, rather than progressing and improving. Sometimes even instructor feedback is geared around justifying a particular grade rather than to improve student learning going forward.

You will receive a letter grade at the end of the semester, per university policy, but no assignments will contain letter grades, scores, or percentages. All assignments will receive feedback to help improve your learning and performance on upcoming assignments, but they will receive no score. Each assignment will have specific instructions with clear expectations of all required elements and components.

At the end of the semester you will submit a grade justification; the grade you earned in the course (based on the grading scale below–A, B, C, D, F) and your reasons for that grade, citing evidence from your work that demonstrates your learning throughout the semester and your achievement related to **all** course outcomes **and** expectations. We will have a brief conference to compare notes and a semester grade will be assigned.

We will use the following grade scale for final grades (no plus (+) or minus (-) grades):
A: exemplary work
B: above average work
C: average work
D: below average work
F: unsatisfactory work

Although you will not be graded on each assignment your final grade will reflect **all** these factors (in no particular order):

- Successfully meeting all course outcomes, hours, and expectations. You are preparing to student teach and it is crucial you fulfill these expectations.
- Your class presence/engagement/effort. This is an active and discussion-based class, and you are expected to be fully present–physically and mentally–and engaged in all class activities, not on your phone or doing other activities.
- The quality of your work throughout the course of the semester (you will know its quality based on continuous feedback). Is it thorough? Does it demonstrate your ability to show performance and pedagogical skills on these instruments? Is it consistently your best effort?
- Completeness and submission of your work–including all assignments for EET, teaching samples, and reflections. Do you have missing or incomplete assignments? If so, how many? Are assignments consistently submitted on time or consistently late?
- Successfully completing a PET presentation (considered a "final exam")
- Response to feedback given/improvement over time. How have you incorporated feedback given, and how has your work improved, and you progressed because of it?
- Your attendance (see detailed policy below).

Attendance

Although we are using a type of ungrading this semester, you will still receive a final grade, and attendance will be a factor. The following statement is in ALL music education syllabi this semester, adjusted with variations in certain types of courses (2x/week vs. 3x/week courses, secondary instrument courses, as examples).

This is an active participation class. Each meeting will include discussion, activities, and interactions that guide and reinforce our learning. When you miss class, you miss valuable engagement and learning that cannot be made up by getting notes or checking in with a classmate. The class is also missing the opportunity to learn from your experiences and insights. Attending every class session is the accepted standard.

You are in a teacher preparation program and expected to adhere to a professional educator model. If a teacher has to miss school, they must alert the school in time for a substitute to be called. If they do not communicate, they leave a room full of students unattended, and that is unacceptable. If you need to miss class for any reason, you must communicate! Notify me as early as possible, preferably before class. Even if you miss class, assignments are still due at their designated time. Teaching/practicum/performance grades are a special case. You MUST be in class on days you are assigned to teach/perform or you may not be allowed to make up the assignment.

- For this class, there is no difference between excused/unexcused absences.
- Please do not come to class sick, for the safety of yourself and others.
- You are permitted 2 absences.
- If you are absent a 3rd time, we will have a conference and determine a path for success.
- If you are absent a 4th time (4 weeks' worth of class meetings, 25% of our class meetings) your highest possible grade will be a D+, requiring you to repeat the class.

[redacted]

- Chronic tardiness will be handled at the discretion of the instructor.

[redacted]

- Reminding you again: teaching/practicum/performance grades are top priority. You MUST be present to earn your grade and make-up opportunities are not guaranteed.

[redacted]

Please note, field experiences and observation hours are to be completed outside of class time. Do not schedule observation hours when you have classes.

<u>Professional Responsibility Statement</u>

I 100% support you as humans and learners. I understand that music education is a demanding major that comes with a full course load and that you have a lot going on in your professional and personal lives. I know it can be overwhelming. I can be flexible and adaptable. However, do not take advantage of this support and flexibility. You are responsible for your choices, including organizing yourself and managing your workload. If you choose to take on more than is required for your course load (i.e., multiple electives and/or ensembles) and additional clubs and activities (i.e., drum corps, campus organizations), you are choosing to accept responsibility for the extra time and energy that may take and **all** consequences for your choices.

To be successful in this course:

- Come to class. Every day.
- Stay on top of assignments
- Keep an open mind during class discussion
- Avoid comparing yourself to others.

[redacted]

- Create an organizational scheme for your portfolio early on.
- Attack your practicum hours head on.
- Support your classmates and they will support you.
- If/When you feel discouraged, come talk to me. If none of my regular Student Hours work for you, let me know and we will find another time. Feel free to bring a friend.

Course Materials
There is no text purchase required for this course. All required materials are available electronically via the course schedule linked below and Canvas.

Assignments
Most assignments will center around your EET. There will be additional assignments to complete including readings and written work. Each will have detailed instructions in Canvas.

The EET: Evidence of Effective Teaching (formerly known as Work Sample)
Throughout the class, you will collect the following documents and compile them in an organized, easy-to-access, cloud storage format:

- Resume
- Teaching Philosophy (updated to be suitable for job applications)
- Cover Letter
- Classroom Organization Plan
- Unit Plan
- Lesson Plans
- Assessment Sample
- Before and After Teaching Videos and Reflection

Pet Project Presentation
There will be one 15-minute group or individual presentation on a topic of your choice intended to educate the class on an area specific to your interests. These could include, but are not limited to the following:

- Team building and community
- Teaching a diverse student population
- Educational technology in the classroom
- General music in the secondary setting
- Non-ensemble based courses
- Social justice in the music classroom
- The case against concerts
- Teaching Improvisation

Or *whatever* you want to share with the class. Your presentation should include student interaction and engagement rather than creating a PowerPoint presentation where you read slides for 15 minutes.

Field Experience (Pass/Fail Requirement)
Field Experience Guidelines

35-45 Field Experience hours are required for this course.
It is a CDE requirement to complete all observation hours to become an educator. While you will not receive an assignment grade for these hours, students who do not complete their hours will automatically receive an incomplete or failing grade until fulfilling all hours required by the course. Students will not be allowed to move onto student teaching until all observation hours are complete.

Up to 10 hours of observation time may be used to observe potential host teachers for student teaching.
We encourage you to make connections with potential cooperating teachers so they will know what an awesome person you are before your name comes across their desk for a student teaching placement request. Please don't request people you have never met/never intend to meet.

Late Work
Grade deductions may differ between classes (see below for details in this class), but music ed classes agree that after the 5th calendar day, work will not be accepted. For example, if an assignment was due at 11:59pm on Thursday, it will not be accepted after 11:59pm on Tuesday. Please remember, an extension is only an ask away, but you must be proactive and ask.

Please also note that due to the nature of assignments with set class dates for teachings grace periods and extensions do not apply to in-class teachings/demonstrations/performances.

For this class: All work is due by 11:59p the day before each class (Monday).

Resources:
Here's where you can go to log field experience hours:
[redacted]

Student Teacher Handbook:
[redacted]

Student Teaching Application:
[redacted]

Student Teaching Application Checklist:
[redacted]

Tips and Info for Student Teaching Placement
[redacted]

Calendar

* This calendar is a guide and does not include all due dates. All due dates, including those posted, are subject to change. All assignments and due dates will also be posted on Canvas. You must check the weekly Canvas modules to keep up with your to-do lists, class assignments, and due dates. The instructor reserves the right to alter this calendar according to class needs.

Canvas will have a weekly module. It will include a to-do list of what you should be reading, completing, and submitting in between each class meeting. Please keep up with the weekly to-do lists and always feel free to ask if you have questions.

Week	Topic	To-Do & Submit
1: Jan. 14	Syllabus/Student Teacher Handbook/Practicum Placements	
2: Jan. 21	Practicum Logistics and Resumes	Contact forms Resume
3: Jan. 28	Educator Values	Teaching philosophy
4: Feb. 4	Teaching Philosophy	
5: Feb. 11	Demographic Study and Classroom Organization	Classroom organization plan
6: Feb. 18	Practicum Check in	Teaching #1
7: Feb. 25	Curriculum Design	Unit plan Observation reflection
8: Mar. 4	Curriculum Delivery	
9: Mar. 11	Practicum Check in	Summative Assessment Teaching #2
Mar. 18	NO CLASS, SPRING BREAK	
10: Mar. 25	Summative Assessments	
11: Apr. 1	Getting a job	Cover letter and resume
12: Apr. 8	Keeping a job	
13. Apr. 15	Presentation meetings	

14: Apr. 22	TBD/More presentation work	Teaching #3
15: Apr. 29	Teachings	
16: Finals week	PET presentations	PET presentations scheduled during our final exam time [redacted]**

**in the event that a university closure occurs during the scheduled final exam period, the final exam policy will be to record yourself presenting your PET project and submit the video in place of presenting live. This policy is ONLY in effect if the university closes.

University Policies (REDACTED)

Course Objectives (in the form of outcomes) Students will…	[redacted]	**Licensure Area Standards**	[redacted]	**Readings, Assignments, etc.**
Refine a personal philosophy of Music Education, which will guide their practice as a Music Educator. [redacted]	Teachers link professional growth to their professional goals.		[redacted]	Students write a teaching philosophy that includes the topics of inclusion and diversity Students engage in goal-setting activities. They also give a workshop style presentation on a topic that they want to incorporate into their own class.
Reflect on relevant issues facing educators in the classroom, including classroom management, program organization, and curriculum planning. [redacted]	Teachers integrate and utilize appropriate, available technology to engage students in authentic learning experiences. Teachers provide students with opportunities to work in teams and develop leadership.		[redacted]	Music teacher candidates observe and reflect upon happenings in K12 classrooms from and consider multiple variables when explaining [redacted] and students' progress or lack thereof as demonstrated. Teacher candidates also work with qualified

				educational professionals in both student teaching and in a quasi-practicum in which they monitor performance of [redacted] and [redacted] students with multiple and consistent documented examples of progress over time in lesson plans and reflections.
Demonstrate understanding of the lesson planning and EET process by developing a mock up of the required work sample, appropriate to a group of hypothetical students in a K-12 music classroom or ensemble [redacted]	Teachers provide instruction that is aligned with the [redacted] and their district's organized plan of instruction. Teachers model and promote effective communication.			Students create lesson plans that show connection between [redacted] and the instructional planning contextualized by designated school setting.
Demonstrate high standards for professional conduct and communication. [redacted]	Teachers model and promote effective communication. Teachers demonstrate high standards for professional conduct.			Students facilitate communication with their practicum placement host Students must dress, speak, conduct themselves professionally during practicum placements

Appendix J: Redacted Case 2 Course Syllabus

The following is a redacted version of the course syllabus for Case 2. All identifying information has been removed.

[redacted]
Department of Education
Syllabus

Course Title: Practicum Seminar	**Course Number:** [redacted]
Meeting Days/Time: Variable	**Credit Hours:** [redacted]
CRN: [redacted]	**Instructor:** [redacted]
Semester/Year: [redacted]	**Instructor's Phone Number:** [redacted]
Instructor's Email: [redacted]	**Instructor's Office Location and Office Hours:** [redacted]

	Mission Statement The mission of the Department of Education is to create learning experiences for its candidates that foster collaboration, professionalism, and competence in content and pedagogical knowledge. Through the integration of leadership, scholarship, reflection, and community partnerships, the Department prepares its candidates to be outstanding teachers within diverse and changing communities.

[redacted] **Learning Outcomes**

The outcomes listed below align to national accreditation standards (AAQEP), [redacted] for effective teaching [redacted] *, and [redacted] core themes of learning, engagement, and opportunity.

At the successful completion of this program, students will be able to:

1. Attend to unique learner characteristics by personalizing learning, building relationships, respecting learner backgrounds and perspectives, and fostering student self-awareness. [redacted]
2. Design instruction that is aligned to [redacted], communicates clear pathways for learning and growth, is engaging to learners, and is supported by student learning data. [redacted]
3. Use practices, strategies, and tools for instruction and assessment that are research- and data-informed and meet the learning needs of each student. [redacted]
4. Create a classroom climate that fosters mutual respect among teacher and learners, and is organized and structured to promote safety, learning, and growth. [redacted]
5. Adhere to professional and ethical standards by adhering to relevant laws, rules, and policies impacting educators, and by upholding the dispositions of the profession. [redacted]

*Full list of [redacted] available at [redacted]

Course Description:

[redacted] **Practicum Seminar**

Required for all Secondary Education Teaching [redacted] students. The practicum experience is an integral part of the field-based Education Program, and provides students the opportunity to apply concepts learned in coursework to real-life teaching in the classroom. Students will spend one full day per week, and one full week during the semester, in their assigned classroom. Students will complete all programmatic requirements for this semester, including field-based assignments from coursework, in this classroom. This course emphasizes delivery of lesson plans that are appropriate to the contextual factors of the classroom and align to local and state curriculum and standards; implementation of classroom routines, procedures, and instructional strategies; collaboration with families of students; and development of professional dispositions of the practice. Students will work closely with cooperating (mentor) teachers and university supervisors via frequent conferences and observations using [redacted] assessment tools.

Course pre-requisites and/or co-requisites:

This is an upper division course and enrollment is limited to those accepted to the [redacted] licensure program.

Lab or course fees:

[redacted]

Course Objectives & Corresponding Outcomes and Assessments:

Student will (I can):	[redacted]	**Corresponding Course Assessment(s)**
Discuss and reflect on successes and challenges that arise during the practicum teaching experience.	[redacted]	▪ Lesson reflection & conferences
Discuss and reflect on facilitating classroom activities and helping with behavior management as directed by the cooperating/mentor teacher.	[redacted]	▪ Lesson reflection & conferences ▪ Mentor evaluation
Create and teach two observed lessons that utilize effective instructional strategies and teach accurate content concepts and skills to whole classes and small groups of students.	[redacted]	▪ Formal lesson observations ▪ Lesson reflection & conferences

Collaborate with grade-level teams to analyze student learning data, inform and adapt instruction, and build understanding of district policies and procedures.	[redacted]	▪ Lesson reflection & conferences ▪ Mentor evaluation
Discuss and reflect on development of professional dispositions, and develop action steps for continued growth.	[redacted]	▪ Disposition review & conference
[redacted] Engage counselors, school administration, and related personnel and community resources to understand and support students' educational progress and goals.	[redacted]	▪ Lesson reflection & conferences ▪ Mentor evaluation
[redacted] Discuss and reflect upon ways to engage parents/families in students' educational progress under the guidance of the cooperating/mentor teacher.	[redacted]	▪ Lesson reflection & conferences ▪ Mentor evaluation

Practicum Grading

1. Attendance: 100% attendance is required for practicum, and any missed days must be made up. You must contact the mentor teacher, placement director, and supervisor if you need to miss any days. Then, plan with your mentor teacher when the day can be made up.

2. Formal Lesson Observation: You are required to teach two whole-group formal lessons. For each lesson, you will need to do the following:
    - Schedule the lesson with the mentor teacher and supervisor. We encourage you to schedule your first observation in the first half of your practicum experience and the other before the end of your practicum experience.
    - Plan your lesson and submit it to your supervisor at the time of your observation. Students must send Contextual Factors sheet, along with the lesson plan, as context for the supervisor.
        - The lesson plan should do the following:
            - Tell what you and your students will do in each section of your lesson
            - Include details of formative assessment as well as differentiation, scaffolds, and supports as appropriate to your contextual factors
            - Include/attach any materials your students will see during your lesson (e.g., PowerPoint slides, worksheets, or handouts)
    - Arrange to have your teaching filmed. You may have a colleague film your lesson for you, or you may set up a device to film yourself. You may use your own device (e.g., a phone, tablet, or camera), a device available at your practicum site,

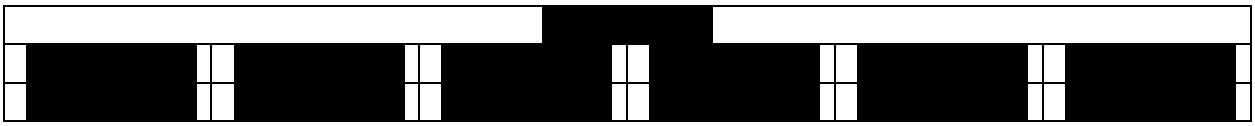
or one borrowed from the Department of Teacher Education. The Department has two Swivls available for student use and check-out, as well as iPads. Coordinate with your practicum supervisor to ensure you have the equipment you need for a formal observation, and plan ahead.

- Teach the lesson. For third semester Elementary Education students, one of your observed lessons must be the Social Studies Comprehension Lesson.
- Watch the video and rate yourself using the [redacted] rubric. Include a description of evidence that explains how your teaching justifies the score you assigned yourself. Turn in to Canvas.
- Schedule a time to conference with your supervisor.

Formal Lesson Scoring:

Each of your formally observed lessons will be evaluated per the [redacted] rubric, and your supervisor will assign a score for each competency row. For each competency assessed, the highest score earned within a given semester will be recorded as the final score for that competency (e.g., if a student is scored at a 1 for a competency on the first observation and a 2 on the second observation, the score of 2 will be recorded for that semester).

These individual competency scores will be added together for a final summed score. Your summed score must meet or exceed the score expectation listed in the table below in order to pass practicum.



Score target calculations reflect expectations at different points in the program curriculum and the developmental trajectory of practicum experiences across the program. Refer to the table at the end of the syllabus to see specific targets by competency for each program semester.

3. Disposition Rubric: Complete one self-evaluation using the Disposition Rubric. This is to be turned in by the end of practicum to Canvas.

Students enrolled in practicum and Student teaching will receive feedback on their professional dispositions once during the semester. Feedback from the practicum supervisor will be provided directly to the student. This feedback may include the perspectives of program instructional faculty, the practicum mentor teacher, and the practicum supervisor.

Students will also self-assess their own growth in professional dispositions once during the semester. Once this feedback is shared with the student, the student and their practicum supervisor will create a plan for growth as needed, and dispositions will be monitored continuously throughout the remainder of the program.

Throughout the program, instructional faculty and practicum supervisors will continue to monitor professional dispositional growth and will provide additional formal reviews to students on an as-needed basis.

Assignment and Final Exam Completion: Practicum courses will be awarded grades on a P/F basis. **You must pass each required section of practicum in order to continue in the program.** Passing practicum includes a passing score by the end of the semester (see table above). You can reach a passing score on one or both of your formal lesson observations. You may have up to one additional lesson to reach a passing score, as determined by your supervisor.

All course assignments must be completed and submitted to the supervisor by the end of practicum or student teaching. Any exception to this policy requires written approval of both the instructor and the Department Chair and must be finalized by the end of the last day of classes.

Important dates to remember for [redacted]: Semester calendars are available at [redacted]

Date & Time of Final Exam for this course: All practicum-related assignments are due in Canvas prior to the end of practicum.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES WERE REDACTED

Instructure Canvas: If anyone has forgotten their login information or your course is not displaying, please contact the Helpdesk and/or the help desk website: [redacted] The [redacted] is located on the [redacted] of the [redacted], across from the [redacted]. Online tutorials for CANVAS can be found at [redacted]

Individual competency score targets by semester (REDACTED)