**Michigan State University**

**Music Student Teaching Portfolio**

**Executive Summary**

The **Student Teaching Portfolio (STP)** is designed to provide opportunities for music student teachers to demonstrate effective teaching practices, as demonstrated in MSU’s music teacher education curriculum, by documenting student learning over time.

In order to prepare students for a lifetime of active involvement in music, the learners must acquire a broad body of skills and understandings. Student musicians demonstrate their achievement of these skills and understandings through their ability to engage in the authentic processes (Creating, Performing, Assessing) through which musicians interact with music in daily life. These processes provide a unifying structure not only for evaluating, but also for helping students become independent musicians.

The **STP** is organized into four sections, each demonstrating an important element of the music teaching/learning process. They are:

• **Preparing and Planning for Instruction**

**• Implementing Instruction**

**• Assessing Student Learning**

**• Reflecting on Teaching and Learning**

The **STP** is composed of two general types of information: **documentation** and

**commentaries**. **Documentation** includes materials such as lesson descriptions, student work and videotaped classroom activities that provide evidence about the nature and quality of student learning and the kind of learning environment established by the student teacher. **Commentaries** are brief written analytical and reflective responses to specific prompts.

We believe that the process of documenting the learning process in this way will help our student teachers to connect their preparation to the rich and meaningful experiences provided during the student teaching placement in a way that is relevant and contextual.

Further, we hope that this system will serve as a means to link the collegiate music

teacher preparation program to the best of current music teaching practice in the schools, and we welcome comments and suggestions from our colleagues in the schools as we continue to refine the process.

**Portfolio Guidelines**

Effective music teachers motivate students to become lifetime learners in music not only as performers (singers and instrumentalists) and creators (improvisers, composers), but also as informed audience members and critical consumers. Good teachers also assist students in finding aspects of music in which they would like to remain actively engaged as adults. To motivate students to achieve such independence of thought, teachers must consistently provide students with the tools – intellectual, perceptual, and physical – to make informed decisions about a variety of musical genres.

Effective music teachers provide for active student engagement in the basic elements of music learning. The National Standards for Music Education describe the knowledge, skills and understanding that all students should acquire in music, and provide a basis for developing curricula. Experienced teachers understand that the all music elements are interrelated, and function in harmony with one another in a seamless fashion.

Students who are prepared for a lifetime of active involvement in music must acquire a broad body of skills and understandings. They demonstrate their achievement of these skills and understandings through their ability to engage in the authentic processes (Creating, Performing, Assessing) through which musicians interact with music in daily life. These processes provide a unifying structure not only for evaluating, but also for helping students become independent musicians.

Effective music teachers are expert at integrating Creating, Performing and Assessing activities into instruction. Using lessons learned from one process to extend learning in the others, and linking the processes by repertoire, helps to mutually reinforce multiple ways of understanding for all students.

Effective music teaching is characterized by its cohesive, comprehensive approach, and by an appropriate balance among multiple forms of music knowing. This balance depends on the relationships between and among several conditions: the students’ needs, the teacher’s experience or skill level, the planned objectives, the type of class (performing ensemble or classroom setting), where the students are in the learning sequence, the time of the year, and so on. For example, while a particular situation may dictate an emphasis on only one or two processes for a lesson or set of lessons, a good long-term planning process should ensure that all students will be actively engaged in diverse musical activities that are appropriately balanced depending on instructional goals, circumstances and contexts.

To help all of their students learn to carry out these processes, effective music teachers sequence instruction both within and across lessons toward specific objectives, selecting strategies that address a variety of musical activities and learnings. They integrate the processes within class sessions through experiences such as focused listening to quality compositions (assessing), while they are developing their own compositions (creating), or by asking students to create improvisations or variations (creating) on melodies they are preparing for performance (performing).

**The Music Student Teaching Portfolio (STP)**

The **STP** is designed to provide opportunities for music student teachers to demonstrate effective teaching practices, as described above and demonstrated in MSU’s music teacher education curriculum, by documenting student learning over time. The STP is composed of two general types of information: **documentation** and **commentaries**.

**Documentation** includes materials such as lesson descriptions, student work and

Video-recorded classroom activities that provide evidence about the nature and quality of student learning and the kind of learning environment you establish. **Commentaries** are your written analytical and reflective responses to specific prompts with respect to various teaching/learning activities.

The **STP** is organized into four sections, each demonstrating an important element of the music teaching/learning process. They are:

• **Preparing and Planning for Instruction**

**• Implementing Instruction**

**• Assessing Student Learning**

**• Reflecting on Teaching and Learning**

**Preparing and Planning for Instruction**: When designing objectives and instruction, music educators consider a variety of factors, such as the background and interests of their students, local curriculum goals, state benchmarks, and data on their students’ musical achievement. They incorporate a variety of developmentally appropriate literature and other resources, including repertoire representative of diverse styles and cultures.

**Implementing Instruction**: When implementing instruction, effective music teachers create a classroom environment conducive to learning, make efficient use of time available and motivate students to be creative. They use strategies that provide students with opportunities to make informed musical decisions, develop solutions to musical problems, and critically evaluate their own work.

**Assessing Student Learning**: Effective music teachers use a variety of strategies to

collect information about the degree to which their individual students and groups are attaining objectives, and use that information to inform both the design of subsequent instruction and their own professional growth. They:

* assess the full scope (breadth) of the music curriculum;
* assess students individually and as a group;
* use informal assessments (i.e., observing, listening, questioning) and formal assessments (i.e., skill charts, rubrics, worksheets, written tests) throughout lessons to measure student learning, and monitor/adjust instruction as appropriate;
* use assessment information to provide students with specific and constructive feedback (i.e., immediate, specific, and positive); and,
* communicate assessment criteria to students and encourage them to use those criteria to critique and improve their own work and the work of others.

**Reflecting on Teaching and Learning**: Effective teachers reflect on their own practice by critically examining their own instruction and the achievement of students on a daily basis and over time. By asking themselves questions such as “what worked well?”, “what didn't work?” and “what would I do differently in the future?,” teachers develop appropriate re-teaching strategies and/or individual accommodations and refine the design of future lessons. Through continuous analysis of teaching and learning over time, effective teachers identify areas of personal strength and areas in which they need to improve. Such informed reflections form the basis of each teacher’s professional development plan and lay the foundation for a productive and satisfying career.

**Section 1: Preparing and Planning for Instruction**

**Introduction**

The purpose of the STP is to document your ability to design a consecutive series of

lessons, providing students with opportunities to be actively involved in the Processes of Creating, Performing and Assessing music. This series of lessons should build on students’ prior music experiences and the instruction should be sequenced in a way that allows students to develop understandings and abilities within and across the series of lessons. The portfolio also documents your ability to use varied repertoire, activities and strategies that provide the foundation for the instructional process and accommodations for students’ learning needs.

**What to Do**

Select a class or group of students for the focus of your creative project for the STP. From that group, collect the work of several students. When videotaping students engaged in creative activities, be sure to provide a description of those students in the “Introduction to the Series of Lessons” (e.g., *the girl in the red shirt, the boy in the front row*, etc.)

**Tasks**

* Portfolio Class Profile Form: Include as the first page of your Portfolio.
* Introduction to the Series of Lessons: Write an introduction to your portfolio following the instructions below.
* Lesson Information: complete the Lesson Information Form for each of the 3 consecutive lessons in your Series of Lessons. Try to make sure the lessons are taught consecutively, with no gaps between scheduled classes if possible. On each form you are asked to provide *objectives, activities, materials, grouping and assessment strategies* for each lesson. You may write your lesson plans in a narrative format as well. Please note whether an activity is *creating, performing, or assessing* in nature, or a combination of processes.
* Following the Lesson Information, insert a copy of selected repertoire if applicable.
* Include when possible copies of student work inserted after the appropriate Lesson Information Form. Remember to remove student names.
* Individual Lesson Analyses: Write a Lesson Analysis for each lesson in your Series of Lessons after each lesson has been taught. Make sure to address the following prompts:
  + What did the students learn in this lesson, and what evidence do you have to support your claims? Cite specific examples from collected student work, either written or captured on the video (ex., violin student will be seen improvising a melodic answer on video).
  + What adjustments, if any, did you make during the lessons that differed from your original written plan, and why?
  + Describe how you monitored student learning during the lesson.
* Based on an analysis of the assessments and other evidence of student learning, how will you address students’ learning needs during the next lesson(s)?

**Portfolio Class Profile Form**

**Directions**: Include this form as the cover page of your STP.

**Grade levels in your portfolio group or class:**

Pre-K K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

**Portfolio school configuration:**

Elementary Middle High Other

**Music Teaching Assignment:**

Elementary General Music

Band

Strings

Choral

Other

**Portfolio Teaching Topic/Title:**

**Number of Minutes per Class/Class Meetings per Week:**

**Number of Students in Class:**

**Other Adults in Room?** (para-professionals, teacher aids, parent volunteers):

**Introduction to the Series of Lessons**

Write an introduction to your portfolio, responding to the following prompts. Place this introduction after the cover page of your STP.

* Describe the nature of the selected class or group of students (e.g., instrumental ensemble; chorus; general music class; selective or auditioned)
* Describe students’ music learning that occurred prior to and served as a foundation for the Series of Lessons.
* Describe the main learning goals across the Series of Lessons.
* Describe how you plan for students to be engaged in creating, performing, and assessing music.

**Lesson Information Form**

Directions: Please write a narrative (1-2 pages) that contains the information below. Use a new form for each of the three lessons taught and documented for the portfolio. The form is an option to help you organize lesson information. Feel free to include any other forms or resources that demonstrate your ability to prepare for and plan instruction (bubble plans, annotated scores, notes, etc.)

Place these materials in your portfolio after the Introduction to the Series of Lessons.

Lesson # (x/3): \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_ Date of lesson: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Objectives

Students will demonstrate their ability to:

Activities/Strategies\*: indicate how the lesson addresses each of the three required competencies (creating, performing, assessing), if applicable

Assessments\*\*:

Materials:

Class Groupings: Circle all that apply:

Full Group

Small Group(s)

Section(s)

Individual(s)

Other:

\*C = Creating, P = Performing, A = Assessing (Note all that apply.)

\*\*Using a short phrase, identify assessment strategy used. (For example, “written

worksheet”, “vocal performance assessment”, “instrumental performance rubric”, etc.)

Cite sources for recordings, books and any published materials used in this lesson.

**Section 2: Implementing Instruction**

**Introduction**

The purpose of Section 2 is to document your ability to incorporate the Processes of

Creating, Performing and Assessing into your instruction. This balance depends on the relationships between and among several factors – the students’ needs, the planned objectives, the type of class (instrumental/vocal), where the students are in the learning sequence, the time of year, etc. One set of lessons may appropriately require a mix heavy in performing (e.g., the chorus concert is fast approaching), while another situation may call for more creating and assessing (e.g., the 4th grade music class is deeply involved in a “found sounds” composition project). Move the timeline ahead several weeks, and the proportions might be reversed, with the chorus focusing on improvising in a blues style and the 4th graders performing their compositions at an “informance” (i.e., concerts that inform, such as demonstrations for parents, town meetings that integrate the arts, etc.) during the school day.

**What to Do**

**Tasks**

• **Video Recording of Three Lessons**: Prior to video recording, check with your cooperating teacher and other school officials regarding school and district policies for videotaped recordings of students. You are encouraged to video regularly, but must submit video segments of at least three lessons for the STP.

Ideally, position the video device to capture the students and the teacher. Select

three continuous video segments (for a total of no more than

10-12 minutes of video) that focus on an appropriate balance of Creating,

Performing and Assessing music, based on your students’ needs and your

instructional goals. Each of the Processes must be featured at least once across the

three segments.

More specifically, in one segment you may choose to show only creating, or creating and assessing, while in another segment you may feature performing and assessing. How you decide to balance the Processes across the video segment(s) depends on your instructional goals for the series of lessons.

In selecting your video segments, be sure to include footage that features

your own musical modeling (conducting, accompanying, playing an instrument,

singing, demonstrating technique). Reviewers will be looking for accurate musical modeling and its effect on your students’ work. Focus your video segments on the actual instructional processes and interactions of your class, not on repetitive activities (i.e., showing each student echoing the same tonal or rhythmic pattern). You can edit portions of a videotaped lesson that include lengthy segments that are highly repetitious or during which few teacher-student or student-student interactions occur (i.e., administering a written test, uninterrupted listening to a lengthy musical excerpt, or performing a work several minutes in duration without stopping). After all edits, the total amount of instructional time for the tape should be no more than 10-12 minutes.

• **Video Form**: Submit the Video Form, which asks you to include the

Lesson Plan number, the date of the video recordings of lessons and any identifying

information that might help the reviewers in their assessment of the tap. Identify where the editing of any repetitious activities has created gaps in the segments. If you have not done so earlier in the portfolio, describe any students whose work you are featuring.

**Video Form**

**Directions**: Include the Lesson Plan number and the date of each of the three (3) video recorded lessons. Identify where the editing of any repetitious activities has created gaps in the segments. If you have not done so earlier in the portfolio, describe any students whose work you are featuring.

(See the **Procedures for Classroom Video Recording** below for additional information on video procedures.)

Video Segment 1:

Lesson Plan # \_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Description of student work (optional):

Video Segment 2:

Lesson Plan # \_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Description of student work (optional):

Video Segment 3:

Lesson Plan # \_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Explanation of edits:

**Procedures for Classroom Videotaping**

**Introduction**

It is important that the quality of the video recorded lessons be sufficient to demonstrate information about the discourse and learning environment in your classroom. To accomplish this, it is important that you have a reliable video-capable device (i.e., iPhone, iPad or tablet, camera), a stable tripod or platform/holder, and some advance planning.

**Preparation for Video Recording**

* Schedule and/or reserve the necessary video-capable device well in advance.
* Arrange for and test the video-capable device before starting your portfolio unit. This will help you avoid technical difficulties while documenting the unit.
* Select a camera operator if possible. You might consider asking your mentor, a colleague, department chair, an administrator, a media specialist or a paraprofessional (not a student) to serve in this role.
* Plan a video schedule that allows for some flexibility, in case you need to change the day on which the lesson segment occurs.
* Decide what features of the lesson should be captured on the videotape.
  + Decide where to position the camera so that teacher and student voices will be recorded.
  + Will different activities require students to regroup or move around the classroom?
  + If applicable, when should the video zoom in or rotate to a new position?
* Practice the video recording process. This will provide a chance to test the device and give your students an opportunity to grow accustomed to its presence in the classroom.

Consider that your first attempt or two at video documentation are for practice only, and understand that they won’t be used in the portfolio. Many beginning teachers

report that videotaping every day during the unit gave them flexibility in selecting

appropriate lesson segments to include on the final edited videotape.

**Audio Guidelines**

* Practice recording a non-portfolio lesson to determine whether the device’s built-in microphone is sufficient.
* When reviewing the video, consider whether others will be able to understand what you and your students said (e.g., teacher directions and questions, student questions and responses, discussions).
* If you find that the discourse is not audible, try to obtain an external microphone that can be connected to the camera to pick up sound throughout the classroom.

**Other tips to improve audio:**

Remember that your sound recording will be better the closer the microphone or device is to the speaker. Decide where to position the microphone to best capture teacher and student voices. Consider the use of an external microphone.

**Section 3: Assessing Student Learning**

**Introduction**

The purpose of Section 3 is to document your ability to use a variety of assessment strategies that are aligned with the lesson objectives, and your ability to use assessment information and feedback to adjust your instruction This section also documents how you communicate assessment criteria to students as well as the different kinds of feedback to promote student learning of lesson objectives.

The authentic work done by students in the portfolio class provides evidence about the nature and quality of the learning assignments, the criteria you use to evaluate students’ learning, and the ways in which you inform students about the quality of their work. You may submit either originals or scanned copies of student work. If you submit originals, note feedback to students in a distinct color or font; if you submit copies, highlight your feedback so that reviewers can easily distinguish your writing from the students’ writing.

Photographs depicting models or posters created by the students that are part of their learning performance may be included in the portfolio if they provide important information about student learning during the unit. The student work submitted as part of portfolio documentation must:

* be the authentic work of the students in the portfolio class, completed during the portfolio timeframe;
* meet the criteria described in the instructions for your specific portfolio content area;
* have students’ names concealed;

**What to Do**

**Tasks**

* **Document Students’ Learning**: Collect and submit samples of student work produced in the portfolio class or group. Student work should represent authentic student learning done to achieve the objectives of the Series of Lessons. Samples can be written work, video or audio recordings, or other formats as appropriate (pictures, drawings). Remove all students’ names from submitted samples. Your written feedback should be clearly seen.
* **Provide Assessment Instruments**: Submit copies of assessment tools and evaluation criteria (rubrics, checklists, quizzes) that you designed to assess student learning during the Series of Lessons.
* **Assessment Commentary**: Write an Assessment Commentary in which you respond to the following prompts. Place the Assessment Commentary after the copies of assessment instruments in your STP.
  + What assessment strategies were used and why?
  + What were your expectations for student learning and how did you communicate these expectations to students?
  + How did students accomplish the objectives for the Series of Lessons? Cite specific evidence from student work to support your claims.

**Section 4: Reflecting on Teaching and Learning**

**Introduction**

The purpose of Section 4 is to provide evidence of how well you analyze your overall teaching and student learning. This section specifically documents your ability to describe what worked well and didn’t work well, and your ability to identify the changes you will make in your preparing, planning, instruction, and teaching that will enhance student learning. This section also documents your ability to reflect on your own musicianship in the learning process, and how you identify your professional development needs.

**What to Do**

**Tasks**

* **Reflection Commentary**: Write a Reflection Commentary addressing the following prompts. Include this commentary after the Assessment Commentary in your STP.
  + Describe what the students learned in relation to the 3 Artistic Processes of Creating, Performing, and Assessing as a result of this Series of Lessons.
  + Analyze your musicianship and its effect on student learning. Refer to the video and other sources of evidence in the portfolio.
  + Describe how your classroom environment promoted student learning.
  + Based on this analysis of your teaching and student learning, describe how you can improve the instructional design and implementation of this Series of Lessons for a similar group of students in the future. Be specific, and support your ideas with student assessment data from your portfolio.