

From: Olson, Curtis [mailto:olsonc@msu.edu]
Sent: Thursday, November 01, 2007 2:57 PM
To: R. Sekhar Chivukula; Forger, Jim
Cc: Walther, Sandra; Estry, Doug; Speas, Joy; Stanford, Linda O.
Subject: RE: UCAP consideration of GPA change for admission to Bachelor of Music in Music Education

Dear Professor Chivukula:

Below is the rationale for the change in GPA requirement for the Music Education degree program. Please let me know if you have any further questions.

Rationale for 2.75, which is a change from 2.5:

All students in music education must also be admitted to the College of Education in order to pursue their degrees in music education.

The College of Education requires that students have a 2.75 GPA to be admitted to the College of Education. Therefore, it is consistent and important that we, in music education, require the same GPA. Otherwise music education students will not be admitted to the College of Education, which is a separate but parallel process from being admitted to Advanced Standing in the College of Music. We agreed with the College of Education when they, in the fairly recent past, increased their GPA to 2.75, because the higher standard is more commensurate with the skills and knowledge expected of developing teachers. However, we are catching up at this point in terms of the documentation to place our students on a parallel track.

Rationale for minimum grade of 2.0 in courses utilized to assess entrance into Advanced Standing in Music Education

The skills developed in the courses included in the grade point for Advanced Standing in Music Education are essential for success as a music teacher. Getting less than a 2.0 in any of these courses would result in having musical skills that are too weak for success in teaching. This requirement would not preclude anyone from being a music education major permanently, because students would have an opportunity to take the course again, develop an appropriate skill and knowledge level, and do better in the class in terms of a grade. This is possible with anything lower than a 2.0 at MSU, which is why we chose that specific grade as the determining point, even though 2.0 is a fairly low standard. We did not want to put a student at risk based on a single course grade that could not be changed. This change was also needed because of the aural skills classes, which are only 1 credit. Aural skills are essential to teaching. However, those aural skills grades, when averaged with other courses that have more credits, have little effect on overall GPA. As a result, students occasionally slip through who have aural skills that are inappropriately weak for music teacher candidates. They would not be able to accurately diagnose tonal and rhythm issues when working with an ensemble.

Curtis Olson
Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies and Operations, College of Music
Michigan State University

-----Original Message-----

From: R. Sekhar Chivukula [mailto:sekhar@msu.edu]

Sent: Tuesday, October 30, 2007 4:01 PM

To: Forger, Jim; Olson, Curtis

Cc: R. Sekhar Chivukula; Sandra Walther; Doug Estry; Joy Speas; Linda O. Stanford

Subject: UCAP consideration of GPA change for admission to Bachelor of Music in Music Education

Dear Dean Forger and Associate Dean Olson,

I am writing in response to Dr. Linda Stanford's memo dated Oct. 19 addressed to Dr. Doug Estry requesting that the University Committee on Academic Policy (UCAP) consider a request to change the GPA required for Admission as a Junior in the Bachelor of Music Degree in Music Education.

I note that the documentation attached to the request I received does not provide a justification for this GPA change. Prior to scheduling this for UCAP consideration, I ask that the College of Music provide written justification for this change.

UCAP's purview includes academic policy as it pertains to undergraduate programs. I attach below a list of some background questions -- these are intended to give you a sense of the kinds of considerations that the committee generally has when considering programmatic changes.

Upon receipt of this additional information, UCAP will consider the request at the next available meeting.

Best Regards,

Sekhar Chivukula
UCAP Chair, 2007-8