



Year 2 (2026) - FAR Implementation Report

Music

Undergraduate Programs

(reviewed 2023/24)

Recommendation #1: Create an area of emphasis or concentration related to Sound Studies/Sound Design/and or Sound and Technology.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted for consideration. The Committee recognizes that as the Department considers how to expand in “Sound Art” they will need to proceed through normal channels of advocacy for the resources that would be required.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean of Humanities to report by the end of academic year 2024-25.

Actions	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Resume MWS committee meetings for the development of a Sound Design program/concentration.	Associate Dean of MWS and Sound Design Committee	T	T	
Action #2 Explore opportunities to improve MUSI offerings related to Sound Design, including equipment, software and recording spaces.	Chair and Departmental Committee	T	T	
Action #3 Consult with other departments about current offerings and collaborative possibilities related to Sound Design/Technology.	Chair and Departmental Committee	T	T	

Comments 2025:

We have been considering a concentration/minor in Sound Design/Technology for a few years now. In the Spring of 2024, an MWS-wide committee was formed to discuss the logistics of establishing a more comprehensive Sound Studies program. Meetings were held in May and June, with representatives from across the four units within the MWS. The discussions focused on the development of minor programs vs. concentrations, where the program might be housed, and how such a program could benefit all units within the MWS. Within our own

*On Target (T), Delayed (D), Complete (C), Complete and Ongoing (O)

department, we have had discussions about the possible repurposing of spaces, including the Music Cognition Room (MWS 127) and the former Orchestra library on the 4th floor, and have considered the potential for MWS 103 to be converted into a recording space.

We in MUSI are keen to see this initiative continue to move forward and will be discussing next steps about specific needs and goals for our own program as they relate to course offerings and funding for technological support and faculty resources.

Comments 2026:

Dr. Nina Penner took the lead drafting the Concentration and Minor in Sound Design. We submitted these new degree paths to UPC in 2025 and UPC approved them for implementation in the 2026-27 academic year. The flexible selection of courses comprising the concentration and the minor are housed in VISA, MUSI, DART, and IASC. We are launching one new course, MUSI 3P00 Sound Recording and Production, which we will be offering for the first time in 2026-27. We believe the concentration, especially, will be a recruitment tool to attract students who wouldn't otherwise have considered studying Music at Brock.

Under the new degree architecture, however, the concentration will cease to exist. The minor can't be taken by Music majors, so this will not recruit new majors to our program. Additionally, under the new degree architecture, it's not clear that a Minor of this sort could exist, because many of its courses are not required courses of our Honours Major in Music.

Recommendation #2: Build up Global Content and Activities throughout the curriculum.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted for consideration. The Committee recognizes that as the Department considers how to enhance global content and activities within their curriculum, they will need to proceed through normal channels of advocacy for the resources that would be required.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)	
Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean of Humanities to report by the end of academic year 2024-25.

Actions	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Expand diversity of repertoire in lessons, ensembles and academic courses.	Chair and Departmental Committee	T	T	
Action #2 Review course curricula to include greater diversity of content and approaches.	Chair and Departmental Committee	T	T	
Action #3 Engage with BIPOC artists and scholars.	Chair and Departmental Committee	T	T	
Action #4 Reduce barriers in audition process and course prerequisites.	Chair	T	T	
Action #5 Expand faculty diversity in our department.	Chair	T	T	

Comments 2025:

Being a classically-based program, we recognize that thoughtful action is needed in this area, including (and not limited to) 1) greater diversification of repertoire in lessons, ensembles and academic courses, 2) revisions to course curricula to include diverse music traditions, histories and theories, 3) collaborations with BIPOC artists and scholars, 4) reduced barriers related to auditions and course pre-req's, and 5) increased faculty diversity.

#1. We are making gradual progress in expanding repertoire and pedagogical approaches in our ensembles and private lessons. In the choir and the private voice studio, there is a noticeable expansion of repertoire beyond the Western European canon. However, there remains a need to continue diversifying the repertoire of under-represented composers in private lessons, ensembles and academic courses.

#2. In our non-performance-based courses, efforts to enhance global content and activities are a work in progress. Outlined here are a few examples: Our core Music History courses take an anti-racist approach by confronting how classical music was supported by colonialism and anti-Black racism and studying this tradition in dialogue with others such as jazz, Rock 'n' Roll, and Indigenous music in Canada. In first-year music theory, students now complete a mid-term project analyzing a pop/rock song of their choice, expanding the course's repertoire beyond its former traditional scope. World tuning systems are also integrated in the Acoustics course. In Foundations in Music Teaching, students explore a diverse range of traditional and emerging pedagogical approaches that lead them to consider implications of socio-cultural context, bias, and inequality in school and community-based music leadership.

#3. Our Music@Noon concert series this year opened with the Strong Water Singers drumming circle and our 2025 Walker Cultural Leader, John Robert Matz, presented over the course of four days his integration of the Indigenous music of New Caledonia into his score for the videogame *Tchia*. We have also recently confirmed our WCL leader for next season, Dr. Shireen Abu Khader, a Palestinian Jordanian Canadian artist, composer and music educator whose work aims to promote Arabic choral music through performance, pedagogy, recording, and publishing.

#4. We have made significant changes to both our audition requirements for incoming students and our pre-req's for current students enrolling in courses. Both are done in recognition of the growing diversity of musical experiences, backgrounds and styles that young musicians are exposed to prior to post-secondary studies.

On Target (T), Delayed (D), Complete (C), Complete and Ongoing (O)

Students no longer have to audition for the B.A. Music Degree, which is our more generalized music program. We have also removed many course pre-req's, which offers more flexibility and accessibility to the range of students we teach.

#5 We are committed to greater diversification amongst our teaching staff and welcome the support of the university administration for future hirings. We also continue (annually) to refine the job description for a new TT faculty hire should that opportunity arise in the future.

Comments 2026:

We are encouraged by increased applications for the coming year and believe that adjustments made in this area have had an impact on recruitment.

#1 and #2. This remains an important focus. Diversification of repertoire in lessons and ensembles continues to expand, more so in some areas than in others. (The Chair notes here a need for more guidance and communication of department goals with our part-time instructors who teach lessons and lead ensembles so that our efforts are more unified across the music curriculum.) Pedagogical approaches and content in our non-performance-based courses continues to expand but more work is needed here.

#3. Our WCL guest this year was Dr. Shireen Abu Khader, a Palestinian Jordanian Canadian artist, composer and music educator whose work aims to promote Arabic choral music through performance, pedagogy, recording, and publishing. Her residency with us in February was very well-received by both students and the public who were in attendance at the culminating lecture-performance. Engagement of BIPOC artists in our RBC Music at Noon series is an area requiring more intentionality.

#4. We are seeing positive outcomes in recruitment as a result of ongoing revisions to the differentiation between the BA and BMus programs, as well as adjustments to MUSI course prerequisites. These changes are helping to align our offerings more effectively with prospective student needs.

We recognize that the profile of the "music student of 2026" differs significantly from that of previous cohorts. Increased diversity in musical backgrounds, forms of music literacy, and professional aspirations necessitates continued adaptation. In response, we are actively refining our curriculum and program structure to ensure we provide relevant and flexible degree pathways for our students.

#5. Realization of goals in this area would be significantly enhanced with the addition of new faculty.

Recommendation #3: Experiential Learning and the Community.

Additional text: *Given Brock's excellence in attracting and teaching those interested in music education, especially from the local/southern part of the Golden Horseshoe area, we highly recommend leveraging more interactions with community partners to expand visibility of the music program among local music programs and community groups and give students more hands-on experience during their degrees. This may be as simple as bringing community partners into upper-level classes to showcase and workshop their needs. It could also mean bringing in more high school, elementary, or grade school students for workshops with the students or co-creative activities. It might also mean having advanced students go out into the community to work with choirs, for example, or musical theatre groups, or schools. There is a wide menu of opportunities that could be considered that also reflects the preparedness and skill level of the students. We again recommend drawing on the expertise of the CCEE team to implement this recommendation.*

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted, although already current practice. The Committee expects that the Department will move forward as appropriate to enhance experiential learning opportunities for their students and expand their community connections.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department with the support of CCEE
Timeline:	Dean of Humanities to report by the end of academic year 2024-25.

Actions	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Continue expanding connections with local schools through events and updated promotional material.	Chair and Associate Dean of MIWSFPA	T	T	
Action #2 Increase awareness and develop more targeted promotion of our Music@Noon series.	Chair and Concert Coordinator	T	T	
Action #3 Build more partnerships as part of the Music in Community course.	Chair	T	T	

Comments 2025:

We continue to seek more experiential learning and community-based music opportunities for our students. Some existing collaborations with community partners include Brock University Choir's performance collaboration with Chorus Niagara and their participation and leadership in the 2025 DSBN Choral Outreach Day for 175 middle-school students across the region. Our choirs have also hosted several combined rehearsals with local high school choirs, including Laura Secord Secondary School and Blessed Trinity Secondary School in Grimsby. Our WCL residency with John Robert Matz this year included a sound jam, where students engaged in music creation activities in a collaborative setting over the course of a weekend. Of note as well is our (free to the public) Music@Noon Series in which our students are given the regular opportunity to perform for members of the community. This is a unique and rare offering for a university music program, made possible by our downtown location, our partnership with the First Ontario Performing Arts Centre, and the funding we receive through the RBC Foundation. We are looking at expanding our promotion of this free concert series to reach more community members. As well, through our MIW Recruitment Officer, we typically host 2-3 area high school music classes to tour our facility and attend a Music@Noon concert, followed by a Q&A about our program. Finally, a number of our ensembles engage members of the wider community which provides a unique opportunity for intergenerational music-making.

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Our Choral Connections program regularly offers choral workshops and practicums for conductors and educators, the latest of which was a three-day workshop in January 2025. Recognizing our limited faculty resources, we remain committed to exploring new and ongoing connections with the wider community in the form of collaborative performances, workshops, guest presentations, practicums and capstone projects.

We are currently developing our upper-year *Music in the Community* Practicum course to provide more directed placements that offer students hands-on professional experiences ranging from music administration to music therapy to music teaching and tutoring.

As alumni also represent the “community” of which we are a part, we should also report that in celebration of our upcoming 10th year Anniversary, we will be featuring Brock MUSI alumni in our Music@Noon concert series over the course of the year.

Comments 2026:

There are no new developments here but we continue our efforts in this important area.

Recommendation #4: Take advantage of Library supports.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee believes that the Department, in consultation with the Library, is best positioned to determine appropriate strategies to move forward on this issue.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department with the support of the Library
Timeline:	Dean of Humanities to report by the end of academic year 2024-25.

Actions	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Continue expanding library access to the students at the downtown MWS campus.	Departmental Committee	T	T	

Comments 2025:

The MIWSFPA has enhanced access to Library Collections as it is now an official pickup/drop-off location in the library's OMNI system.

Education around library supports has historically been integrated into MUSI 2P50 (a core course for our students). In the past, drop-in sessions with librarian Justine Cotton have been provided to students. However, going forward, the instructor plans to host a site-visit with the entire class at the main library for greater impact.

Comments 2026:

A site visit wasn't possible this year but is planned for the next academic year.

On Target (T), Delayed (D), Complete (C), Complete and Ongoing (O)

Recommendation #5: Explore the possibility of a Concurrent Education option for the music program and build out more robust opportunities for students to gain teaching experience.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted for consideration. The Committee advises the Department to work with the Dean's office and Faculty of Education to explore the viability of a Concurrent Education option.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Dean
Timeline:	Dean of Humanities to report by the end of academic year 2024-25.

Actions	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Continue conversations with Faculty of Education about a MUSI Concurrent Education degree.	Chair	T	T	
Action #2 Continue developing opportunities in our Music in the Community practicum courses.	Chair and Departmental Committee	T	T	

Comments 2025:

While our department is keen to continue exploring this, it remains largely beyond our purview. The Department Chair of Music is committed to continuing discussions with the Faculty of Education as we see the development of Concurrent Education degree in Music as a benefit to both departments. Many concurrent education students enroll in our music courses and a greater connection between our programs could enhance the experience of aspiring teachers interested in more music-focused training.

With respect to teaching opportunities for our MUSI students, we continue to encourage students to consider our *Music in the Community* placement courses, MUSI 3P75 and 4P75.

Comments 2026:

The Chair had a number of conversations at the outset of this academic year but nothing concrete has emerged to date. With the announcement of revisions to degree architecture across campus, we will be revisiting this recommendation with that new lens.

Recommendation #6: Continue to support music's access to the FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC acknowledges the importance of this recommendation but considers it to be outside the Committee's jurisdiction. ARC advises the Department and Dean to proceed through normal channels of advocacy to ensure access to the FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre.

No Implementation Plan.

On Target (T), Delayed (D), Complete (C), Complete and Ongoing (O)

Comments 2025:

We are pleased that our reviewers noted the importance of a healthy working relationship with the FOPAC. It is the only space in which our department can hold rehearsals and performances and is *critical* to the functioning of our program. It is also a space through which we are effectively connecting with the local community who come to this downtown space to enjoy our university concerts and recitals. It should also be noted here that we are most grateful for the strong leadership provided by Colleen Smith, Executive Director of the FOPAC, and her staff. Their support of our program and their flexibility and hospitality in our use of the Recital Hall and Partridge Hall are invaluable.

Comments 2026:

We unfortunately lost most of our access to the FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre (PAC) this year, with the exception of our Tuesday at Noon concert series and three student solo recitals (capstone performances). All ensembles and classes were relocated to area churches and the Marilyn I. Walker. This arrangement is not a sustainable solution for the music program.

Having to resort to alternative solutions has amplified just how valuable this partnership is for the delivery of our music curriculum, Brock University's connection to the broader community, and the successful recruitment of future students.

Weekly studio masterclasses (performance seminars) were held in rooms around the MIW building. The wind and jazz ensemble rehearsals and performances were held at St. Thomas' Church. Choir rehearsals were relocated to the lobby of the MIW. These spaces are not suitable in the long-term for the delivery of performance-based courses. The lack of sound-proofing in the MIW and absence of rehearsal spaces leave us with little to no options if we do not regain access to the PAC.

We are also concerned about our RBC Foundation Music@Noon Series. This series, funded by RBC for many years, has regularly drawn members of the local community to support our guests and student performers, helping to bring community visibility to our program and to Brock University.

By reestablishing Brock's partnership with the PAC, we can maintain university-level standards for our music program and highlight the university's role as a collaborative, community-focused institution.
