

Student Perceptions of Summer's Only Music Education Master's Curriculum

McKenna Stenson, Assistant Professor of Choral Music Education

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to analyze in-person choral music education curricula offered by three leading public universities within their Summer Only Master of Music Education (SO-MME) programs. Using a mixed-methods approach that integrated comparative, qualitative, and descriptive research, the project aimed to develop informed recommendations for curriculum enhancement tailored to the ever-evolving needs of mid-21st century choral educators.

Research Questions

1. What is the main motivation of teachers to pursue a SO-MME?
2. In what ways do students perceive the effectiveness of current SO-MME curricula?
3. What elements can be derived from this data to develop new curriculum recommendations for SO-MME programs curriculum for choral music education?

Results

Consistent with prior research, 94% of survey participants selected the main motivation for pursuing a SO-MME was to improve classroom teaching. Students felt more confident in their teaching after leaving their SO-MME ($M = 4.62$, $SD = 0.66$). Students also perceive the curriculum is effective ($M = 4.33$, $SD = 1.1$) and the length of the SO-MME programs are adequate for deep learning ($M = 4.38$, $SD = 1$).

Motivation to Pursue a SO-MME

Q7 - What was your primary motivation for pursuing a masters degree? (Select all that apply.) - Selected Choice	Count	Count
Improve classroom teaching	94%	44
Increase salary	64%	30
Prepare for doctoral work	43%	20
Strengthen musicianship	64%	30
Connect with other educators	72%	34
Other: _____	15%	7

Student Survey Results

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Standard Deviation
The curriculum offered in my SO-MME program improved my effectiveness as a choral teacher.	4.33	1	5	1.1
The length and structure of the summer sessions were adequate for deep learning.	4.38	1	5	1
I received sufficient academic support (e.g., academic advising, final project support).	4.41	1	5	0.9
I received sufficient administrative support (e.g., housing, financial aid).	3.69	1	5	1.14
I received specific and timely feedback from my SO-MME professors.	4.21	1	5	0.91
I had the opportunity to collaborate with peers in an academic setting.	4.85	1	5	0.66
I felt comfortable reaching out to my professors outside of the summer session, if needed.	4.41	1	5	0.98
Since completing the program, I feel more confident in my choral teaching.	4.62	3	5	0.67
I am satisfied with the curriculum of my SO-MME program.	4.57	4	5	0.05

Recommendation for SO-MME Curricula

Responses indicated rehearsal techniques, choral conducting, and vocal pedagogy were topics most applicable to SO-MME professional growth. It is recommended that programs prioritize these courses in future curricula development.

Future Research Recommendation

Data from this study demonstrates that the current coursework is effective for SO-MME students. Additionally, programs should consider developing resources to support SO-MME's who have questions related to housing, scholarships, and in-state tuition rates.