

# A Proposal for Reforming BU's MM in Performance Degree: Equipping Students with the Tools Necessary to Succeed as 21st Century Classical Musicians

By Gabe Merton

This proposal presents three measures for improving the master's in music performance curriculum at BU. The curriculum outlined gives students greater flexibility in terms of course selection and broader performance experience, but still respects the fundamental importance of music theory and music history. Moreover, the proposed curriculum contains a "Career Development Elective" component which equips students with the tools necessary to survive in a highly competitive and job-starved market. As side benefits, this curriculum will attract more students to BU and will yield more alumni support by generating more successful musicians. None of the proposals in this paper are radical. All three are drawn from curricula existing at various music programs in the United States. The curriculum presented here is not optimal; the measures suggested are a compromise between what is ideal and what is possible. The three proposed changes to the curriculum are:

- (1) Eliminate the MU649: *Music Research and Techniques* requirement. Instead, give students more practical training by requiring one of the following "Career Development" classes, of which MU649 is included: Finale, Music Business, Music Administration, Performance Psychology, Alexander Technique, Website Design, Instrument Repair, Graphic Design, Recording Arts, Marketing, Writing, MU649 etc.
- (2) Allow instrumentalist master's students to enroll in the contemporary or baroque music ensemble in order to satisfy their large ensemble credit.. This should be done according to very strict guidelines to prevent a decrease in quality in BU's showcase ensembles: the orchestras and Wind Ensemble.
- (3) Under the current system, students who successfully test out of the MU601 and MU602 theory classes are still required to take 6 credits of theory and/or history. For those students who have gained exemption from these classes, broaden the requirement to 6 credits of any combination of theory, history, conducting or music education.

## **I. An examination of the goals of the current and proposed curricula**

There are three goals reflected in the current curriculum (shown below). The departure point of the proposed curriculum is that one of these goals is correct, one should be broadened, and one should be done away with completely and replaced with a more useful requirement. The private lesson, large ensemble and chamber music requirements indicate a goal of developing high level performers. This is the top priority in the current curriculum, as it should be. The proposed curriculum is more effective in achieving this goal as it admits a broader choice of large ensembles.

The only class required without an option of a test out is MU649: *Music Research and Techniques*. According to the course description, the class covers: "The library, basic research materials, primary and secondary sources, reading and writing about music, editions and editing, and sound recordings." This description suggests that the second goal of the current curriculum is to prepare students to write quality research papers. As shall be shown, this is a vast overestimation of what is accomplished by the class. Students would be better off taking a topical music history course or, as is proposed here, a class that will aide career development.

The MM program also requires students to take 6 credits worth of music theory or history. Thus the third goal of the master's program is to produce performers with a strong background in theory and history. Music theory is slightly more important than music history in the current program since a student may have to take certain music theory courses upon failure of an entrance exam. However, students need not demonstrate any proficiency in music history, nor take any music history classes.

### **MM in Woodwind Performance Curriculum**

Music Research Techniques	2 cr.
Applied Music [Private Lessons]	12 cr.
Musicology and/or Theory	6 cr.
Musical Organization [Large Ensemble]	4 cr.
Chamber Music	2 cr.
Approved Music Electives	6 cr.

To summarize, the three main goals of the master's in music performance degree are:

- (1) to produce high level performers,
- (2) to prepare students to write research papers and
- (3) to produce students proficient at music theory and to a lesser extent music history.

The proposed curriculum strives to achieve these three goals:

- (1) to produce high level performers,
- (2) to prepare students to succeed in a difficult job market by giving them the tools they need to find innovative ways of presenting and performing music and
- (3) developing well-rounded musicians.

## **II. A Defense of Proposal #1: Why Money Matters...**

In the fall of 2004, *The New York Times* wrote an article chronicling the fates of 1994 Julliard graduates. Some of the alumni have flourishing careers in music, some are scrambling to get gigs. Unfortunately, 12 out of the 44 graduating instrumentalists are no longer performers. According to the article, "Some alumni complain that [Julliard] failed to prepare them for orchestra playing or teaching, bread-and-butter work for musicians,

or for the practical aspects of running a career; or that it squelched creativity and individuality.” Many students have the same (valid) complaint about BU.

The two biggest challenges facing young performers are mastering one's instrument and launching a successful career. Unfortunately, the first does not always lead to the second, and BU focuses almost entirely on the first. One of the case studies in *The New York Times* article was a bassoonist who was accepted into the New World Symphony—arguably the best young artists' orchestra in the country. But gigs dried up and he sold his bassoon to cover his credit card bills. Even getting a top orchestra job is not a guarantee of stability as it may have been 20 years ago, as the recent woes of the St. Louis Symphony illustrate. Like many fields, classical music tends to reward those with money. Given two equally talented musicians, the one who can afford the best equipment, to buy plane tickets to auditions, and just stay in the field longer has a far better chance of succeeding. Accepting the first proposal will give BU students an advantage over the graduates of other universities.

There are those in music academia who view any talk of money as a vulgarity. “If you want to be rich, you shouldn't have gone into music,” they will say. In some sense this is true: no classical musician is attending BU with the goal of becoming a millionaire. We are here because we are passionate about playing music. However, for us to sustain this passion beyond the age of 30 we need financing. It is in the best interests of the BU music department to equip music students with the tools we need to remain financially secure. Not doing so is puts classical music one step closer to a field of the wealthy, by the wealthy and for the wealthy.

Since the cost of attending BU (or any American music school, for that matter) is so costly--- it will come to approximately \$25,000 for the typical MM student, music schools have an ethical obligation to offer a program that will enable students to make enough money *in music* to cover this high cost.

Music schools that offer classes to help students survive in a rough job environment design will be rewarded. A happy, healthy and wealthy alumni body will lead to more donations to the school, and will benefit the reputation of the school. I don't know any BU alumni who are more than lukewarm about the music school. Accepting the first proposal will also make the program more attractive to prospective students. Suppose an interested student asks how the master's program will help her cope after graduation. What can BU officials say? That “We have a guest lecturer on career development once a semester. You might not be able to go if you have class at that time. You have the advantage of living in Boston, a great city, but it's not up to us to help you figure out how to take advantage of this fact.” Instead, imagine how the ears of a tired parent might perk up when told: "You're right, it's a tough world out there. That's why we require every student to take at least one class that will give you an advantage over your peers who go to other universities offering obsolete curricula." BU will have a considerable recruiting edge if the first proposal is accepted. Right now, practical classes like those mentioned in the first proposal do not fulfill any of the main requirements of the MM degree.

A good goal for BU would be for every master's student to know how to construct a website upon graduation. An article in *The Boston Globe* reported that a high percentage of employers google prospective employees. Indeed, the difference between the musician who gets a job and the musician who doesn't may be that one of the musicians' homepage gets hit when the search "Freelance Boston Oboist" is executed. Of course, at some point this goal would have to be phased out because everybody will learn how to build a webpage in fourth grade. Unfortunately, MU649 requires students to rehash material that has been taught in fourth grade for years, as shall be demonstrated.

### **III. Why MU649 must go**

Because of the high cost of tuition, any class required without the option of testing out must contain content that the school strongly believes to be critical to all students in the program. A required class should at least satisfy the following criteria: (1) Only exceptional students are capable of mastering the material without taking the class. (2) Only a low percentage of students will have seen the material in a prior class. (3) The material in the class is necessary to the student's success in his or her field. MU649 fails to satisfy any of these requirements.

That the first criterion, which ensures that the class will not be a waste of a student's time and money, is not satisfied is verified by my and my classmates' experience: Several of us did not attend a single class after the midterm. I received a satisfactory grade: a B+. I probably could have performed just as well if I had missed all the classes before the midterm as well. There are students who took the class in subsequent and prior semesters who attended the class less frequently than I did and received higher final grades. All the material covered in MU649 could be written down on about five pieces of paper. In fact, these papers already exist: they are the handouts available at most libraries that detail where books can be found, outlines of the catalogs, and information on how to access online resources.

The class fails to meet the second criterion because similar research technique classes are either offered or required in many undergraduate programs (USC, for example). The only reason to require students who have already taken a similar class to take MU649 would be if BU believes there are challenges in music research specific to the BU library. This seems unlikely: BU's card catalog is similar to that of most other schools, and the music section of the BU library takes up a mere half a floor. The ostensible goal of the class is to prepare students for musicology classes. Some students take and ace graduate level musicology courses at BU before they take MU649. Imagine the ridiculous predicament they find themselves in when after writing several in depth musicological papers they then must take a class where they learn how to find the books that they used in a previous semester!

The class flunks the third, and probably most important criterion, as well. I'm not aware of any study that has shown a link, direct or otherwise, between one's success as a performer and one's ability to navigate a card catalog. The very title of the master's program: Master's Degree in Music Performance, conveys the vocational nature of the

program. An MM is not a research degree. The class is particularly useless to students who don't take any musicology classes while enrolled in the MM program. Classes in conducting, playing a secondary instrument and music education broaden a student's perspective on music performance, which is more important than what's being taught in MU649. Alexander Technique, Performance Psychology and Yoga classes have a direct impact on the longevity of a career, and the mental and psychological comfort of a performer- all are far more relevant to a performer than what is taught in MU649. Classes in Music Business and Administration, Career Development and computers help students start a career. MU649 does not. At least a topical music history class helps students understand music in the social context of the period in which they were written. Yet in the current curriculum, music history is deemed inferior to a rudimentary library skills class.

Ironically, while most research master's degrees at BU do not require an introductory library course, the master's in performance degree, which is not a research degree, does. I couldn't find evidence of a library class in BU's mathematics, chemistry, physics, biology or any other master's program where heavy research is involved. Our brethren in the visual and theatre arts are also exempt from library boot camp: neither the MFA in Graphic Design, nor painting require a research techniques class. My graduate math program at UCLA required no course that taught bibliography writing nor acquainted students with the UCLA library, yet the typical UCLA math student spent the same amount of time in the library that performers spend in the practice rooms. The thinking was that a student who can do graduate mathematics can certainly find their way around a library. Playing a musical instrument is much more difficult than graduate mathematics, so the same logic applies.

#### **IV. How to find a book by Stravinsky**

I presented the following MU649 midterm question to my class of ten fourth graders:

5. When using the Mugar computer catalog, what kind of search would allow you to find books written by Stravinsky?

- a) AUTHOR search
- b) TITLE search
- c) WORD search
- d) AUTHOR and TITLE search

Eight of the ten students answered it correctly. One girl chided me because "Mr. Merton, we learned this in 3rd grade." The material being tested in the above question is typically covered in elementary school. For example, The Crossroads Elementary School, for example boasts that "Middle grade elementary students understand how materials in a library are organized by learning about the Dewey Decimal System. They use encyclopedias and other reference materials for reports on animals, people, and current issues. They can find the books they need by using the computerized card catalog.... By

the time students have completed the fifth grade, they have learned how to use atlases, almanacs, biographical dictionaries, and indexes to find information for their research reports."<sup>1</sup> This is exactly the type of material that was tested in MU649. I tested 20 BU undergraduates on five problems that appeared on the midterm. These questions are listed in the appendix of this paper. Of the 100 total responses, 92 were correct. Two respondents asked me if I thought they were stupid.

## V. Very Good, Gabe!

It is not true that MU649 teaches how to write about music, as advertised in the course description. There were two writing assignments for the class, but the feedback given on these papers made it clear that writing a well-structured paper is not a priority. The first writing assignment was to write an abstract for a given research article. The feedback on my abstract amounted to two words: "Very Good." It's not clear what a student can learn from this feedback, nor is it clear how a "Very Good" factors into a quantitative grade scheme. The major assignment of the class was to write a lengthy research paper. The quantity and quality of the feedback given (as shown in Appendix B) does not do justice to the amount of work students put into their papers, and is certainly not commensurate with the \$1800+ price tag BU compels students to pay. For comparisons sake, I've included the comments written on a term paper I wrote for a British History class. All of the comments on the MU649 pertained to bibliographic or grammatical errors. There were no comments on the content of the paper, its structure, or the strengths of its arguments. These latter items are far more important to master. Moreover, the fact that the grading focused on the bibliography and grammar makes writing a paper a pedagogically inappropriate assignment. Why not just give the class bibliography and grammar exercises if that is all that is being graded?

Yet another irony is that many of the handouts given in class had so many grammatical and typographical errors that they were incomprehensible. One assignment given this semester reads: "...c) indicate above he [sic] notes, in brackets, any accidentals that you would add to he [sic] original....[include] a brief account of the composer' [sic] career..."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.xrds.org/ES/040ESlibrary.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, this kind of editorial inaccuracy occurs frequently in the documentation of BU concerts as well. Last year, we initially advertised a concert featuring Copland's *The Rite of Spring*. I've played in three BU orchestra concerts this semester. The program for the first concert, performed on Oct 8, 2005, claimed that Haydn died in 1802 and also 1809. The program for the second concert, performed on Oct 24, 2005, claimed that Wagner died at the age of 20. Most recently, at our Symphony Hall concert, the program claimed that no clarinetists played in Haydn's *The Creation*. I'm fairly confident this is false based on the fact that I was sitting on stage playing clarinet. These errors go beyond omitting a comma or misusing a colon; they are errors that are obvious to any audience member. We are sending the audience a clear message: we have low standards.

## VI. How to pass MU649

There's not much challenge in passing MU649 since the assignments do not change from one semester to the next. The midterms from the Fall '04 and Spring '05 are virtually identical. There was one minor writing assignment over the course of the term- to write an abstract for an assigned article. The article assigned to all students was the same for the Fall '05, Spring '05 and Fall '04 semesters. 25 of the 27 questions of the Spring '05 midterm appeared on the Fall '04 midterm in the same order. These 25 questions were neither reworded nor reordered. In the case of the multiple choice questions the answer choices were not reordered. Thus, all a student has to do to pass is obtain the assignments from the previous semester. Doing so is easy and occurs frequently. Students taking the class in the spring asked me for my midterm and abstract. Sharing these materials does not amount to academic dishonesty-- many professors give students prior midterms as study guides. Finally, a student could just reuse a previously written music history paper as the term paper for MU649. This is academically dishonest and I would never suggest doing it. On the other hand, doing so becomes not so much an ethical breach as a matter of practicality since the substance and structure of the paper is not being graded.

That the material in MU649 is obscenely elementary, full of grammatical errors, that the feedback on assignments is insufficient, and that the assignments are repeated with little or no alteration are testaments to the fact that MU649 could be a better run library course. But this is beside the point; it is inappropriate to force master's students to take *any* library course given the courses that could be offered and the realities of our field. One could argue that MU649 helps prepare students for doctoral programs in the sense that bibliography writing and source finding is part of the DMA curriculum. However, not all students are going on to doctoral degrees and the class isn't particularly relevant to students in the master's program since they are not required to take any musicology classes. Moreover, MU649 only prepares students for DMA programs in the sense that it prepares them to write the bibliography of their dissertation, and not the paper itself and it's very possible a student has already taken a bibliography class in their undergraduate and will almost definitely have to take another research and bibliography class wherever they choose to do their doctorate (BU, for example). Yet according to one BU musicologist "There are obvious reasons why the department requires music majors to take this class." Many students do learn a lot in MU649, but this is irrelevant. The real question is: is this the most important material to teach all MM students? Once you filter out the students who have already taken a BU musicology class, the students who took similar classes in their undergraduate programs and the students who will not take another musicology class again, and there are few students left for whom the class will be maximally beneficial.

If the curriculum committee insists that MU649 remain in the curriculum, then it has an obligation to answer these questions:

Why should master's students pay an excess of \$1800 in tuition to take a class in which five questions appear on the midterm which are answerable by a majority of BU undergrads and in which one question is answerable by a majority of fourth graders?

Why should performance majors be compelled to take a research techniques class when their degree does not involve heavy research whereas students in research intensive fields are not required to take a research techniques class?

Why is the material tested in MU649 more important than the material covered in music history, conducting, music education, secondary instrument, postural anatomy, or website design courses?

## **VII. Proposal # 2**

The second proposal is meant to give students broader ensemble experience. This is the most difficult of the three proposals to implement because of BU's small size. Larger schools typically have a wider selection of ensembles, while schools similar to BU in size have fewer ensembles.

While it's important to respect the fundamental importance of orchestra, BU students will be at a disadvantage relative to students at universities where there's a broader selection of large ensembles. For example, Indiana University students may enroll in the Contemporary Music Ensemble or the Baroque Orchestra to satisfy their large ensemble requirement. USC's curriculum allows students to satisfy their large ensemble credit by enrolling in Contemporary Music Ensemble or the Early Music Ensemble. University of Michigan requires one semester enrollment in either a woodwind ensemble, Contemporary Directions Ensemble, or the Jazz Ensemble. At BU, jazz is just a four letter word. For some instrumentalists, playing in a baroque or contemporary ensemble is a necessary component of their education.

One way to insure the quality of BUSO and BUCO is to seat them first. Inevitably there will be an excess of players. Under the current system, many of these students simply do not play in one concert rotation. If the size of the contemporary and baroque music ensembles are capped and their orchestration needs are specified in advance, and with the consultation of the orchestra conductors each semester then it should be possible to have a functioning ensemble without causing too much strain on the other large ensembles.

## **VIII. Proposal # 3: Broadening the Academic Experience**

If the purpose of an undergraduate degree is to establish a solid musical foundation, then graduate programs should give students a chance to build upon that base. In the current curriculum, 6 credits of music theory or music history are required. If a student fails to pass a component of a music theory test, the student will be required to take a specific

theory course.<sup>3</sup> A student is only liberated in the sense that he or she is free to choose which history or theory classes to enroll in. This is an insufficient amount of choice.<sup>4</sup>

BU's music education program insists that its students be proficient performers. This philosophy is not reciprocated in the master's of music in performance curriculum: performers are not expected to be capable teachers. While not all performers are interested in teaching, students should be granted the freedom to take a music education course in place of theory and history if they successfully pass the music theory proficiency test. Some knowledge of music education will inevitably open more post-graduation employment doors. How many times have you heard a teacher say "I've learned so much about playing my instrument from teaching"? Indeed, teaching can contribute to one's approach to performing as well. Conducting is another aspect of music that many performers like to learn about. Besides giving students another route to employment, conducting provides students with another way to experience and understand classical music. BU makes it difficult to get a well-rounded music education by requiring music theory and history only. This is not to say these fields are unimportant, but if a student has demonstrated theoretical and historical proficiency, then let him view music from a new perspective.

The bottom line is that more flexibility empowers students. Instrumentalists who can also conduct will be more likely to be hired by music schools, those who have the chance to study multiple instruments will get more jobs playing shows, those who have the chance to play in jazz bands will be qualified for more gigs, those who can take an orchestral excerpts class are more likely to win orchestra jobs. Those who can play in tune are more likely to succeed in any musical setting than those who can take melodic dictations in obscure clefs<sup>5</sup>. Those who know how to produce and market a good demo CD will have an advantage over those that do not. Moreover, all of these measures will be musically enriching to the students who have the opportunity to take advantage of them.

Just as performers must have a balance between good technique and creativity, a music curriculum should offer a balance of classes covering the fundamentals and innovative classes. Prospective students and parents will be interested in curricula that offer something beyond the status quo. Our current curriculum does not have any distinguishing features, while the curricula at many other top universities do. For example, USC requires students to take a conducting course.<sup>6</sup> Indiana University requires clarinet students to enroll in one clarinet pedagogy class, one orchestral

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<sup>3</sup> A music history test is also administered at the beginning of the year. This test is meaningless: it had no bearing on the courses students are required to take. I spent hours taking this test, and the faculty spent hours grading them. All this to arrive at the conclusion that my knowledge of medieval music is pretty bad- a fact I would have been happy to volunteer if anyone asked.

<sup>4</sup> In my case, I took 12 semesters worth of theory and history as an undergrad and passed out of both written theory classes at BU. Is it really necessary for me to take 15 semesters of theory and history? Does this amount to a well-rounded music education?

<sup>5</sup> ...which seems to be the primary focus of the graduate ear training class. The secondary goal is stumping people with perfect pitch.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.usc.edu/dept/publications/cat2003/music/>

repertoire class, and a weekly master class for the duration of enrollment.<sup>7</sup> The University of Michigan offers three Master's degree curricula: a Master of Music in Performance, and a Master of Music in Wind Instruments, and a Master of Music in Chamber Music.<sup>8</sup> Boston University blandly requires music theory, music history, and bibliography writing.

It's a frustrating reality that despite BU's many qualities, it is still considered a second tier music school. This has been the case for many years. How can a university that commands such a wealth of resources, is located in the most important classical music city in the country, and which has many faculty members who play in the Boston Symphony Orchestra not be one of the top five music schools in the country? Why can't BU be the best music school in the country? The answer is, it can be. Unlike Julliard, Curtis and NEC, our school has a university at its fingertips. The big Midwest schools- Indiana and Michigan- are at geographical disadvantages. We are lucky because we are not subject to these external problems. We are lucky because all our problems are internal and hence fixable. Yet BU has suffered the same institutional problems for as long as anyone can remember. BU will continue to lag behind other schools unless BU officials are willing to identify and ultimately purge those problems that are weighing us down. Part of the problem is a lack of awareness regarding the practices of other music schools in the country, the needs of performers, and the needs of BU students and faculty. What the music school needs more than anything else is leaders who have a clear vision of what this school can become, the ability to interface with BU higher-ups and the community to get the funding to implement the vision, and the strength to modernize outdated modes of thought, of which the curriculum is just one manifestation. Much of the (hopefully) common sense thinking presented in this paper could be applied to

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<sup>7</sup> [http://www.music.indiana.edu/som/grad/Master's/03/Clarinet\\_MM\\_04.pdf](http://www.music.indiana.edu/som/grad/Master's/03/Clarinet_MM_04.pdf) notice the detail and clarity given in IU's degree requirement webpage. There's a list of all the classes that satisfy the academic component of the degree, as well as an explanation of test out options. This contrasts with the corresponding BU webpage link from <http://www.bu.edu/cfa/music/degrees/musm/majors/performance.htm> which fails to mention that one may test out of 601 and 602 and does not contain a list of classes satisfying the academic requirements. Nor does it mention the ear training requirement. It's difficult to find any BU documentation containing this information. The lack of clarity about the degree requirements in the music dept. is a big problem. Earlier this year there was a discrepancy regarding MM requirements between the CFA office and the School of Music Bulletin. According to the CFA office, many MM students were required to take a history course, contrary to the School of Music Bulletin. After some discussion, the CFA office agreed that I did not have to take this course. But to the best of my knowledge, nobody bothered to tell other students who had been potentially misadvised that an error occurred.

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.music.umich.edu/departments/winds/degree.lasso>  
The University of Michigan also offers three undergraduate curricula for a Bachelor of Music degree: The Bachelor of Music in Performance: Wind Instruments Major, Bachelor of Music in Performance: Wind Instruments Major with Teacher Certification and Bachelor of Music in Performance: Performance Major.

recruitment<sup>9</sup>, community outreach, and the way we interface with the rest of the university<sup>10</sup>.

Classical music is a field that is traditionally, well, traditional. We must be aware and beware of this tendency. While other academic departments strive to offer the most up to date information and the most cutting-edge classes, the music department seeks the most old-fashioned and conservative curriculum possible in the master's program. Other universities offer more innovative programs, so BU must change if it is to remain competitive. BU's music school could be a model for all other schools in the country, now is the time to start working towards this very plausible goal.

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<sup>9</sup> We do not recruit well. For the last two semesters, for example, we've had to higher students from other Boston music schools to fill our own ensembles. This is embarrassing and is not the best use of students' tuition money.

<sup>10</sup> For example, we could attempt to forge a relationship with the Business School and devise a class consisting of business and music majors. The main project of the course would require the business students to design and implement a marketing strategy for an ensemble consisting of performers in the class. The business students win because they'll have "real life" experience in marketing one of the most difficult products to market: a chamber music group. The musicians win because they'll get more playing opportunities, a greater understanding of music business, and they'll meet people their own age who may one day be very useful to their career. This is really just the tip of the iceberg: ways in which we could be taking greater advantage of our university setting could take up another paper.

## Appendix A

Five questions from the MU649 midterm given to 20 undergraduate students. Of the 100 total questions, 92 were answered correctly.

5. When using the Mugar computer catalog, what kind of search would allow you to find books written by Igor Stravinsky?

- a) AUTHOR search
- b) TITLE search
- c) WORD search
- d) AUTHOR and TITLE search

6. When using the Mugar computer catalog, what kind of search would allow you to find books on Igor Stravinsky?

- a) AUTHOR search
- b) TITLE search
- c) WORD search
- d) AUTHOR and TITLE search?

Record 14 of 21 (Full)

Title: Beethoven and the piano.  
Author: BILSON, Malcolm  
Source: *Clavier* [United States]; Vol. XXII/8 (October 1983)

18-21. Music examples.

ISSN: 0009-854X.

Publication Type: article in a periodical or yearbook; ap  
Major Topic: SOUND SOURCES - Keyboard, general  
Abstract: Describes the differences beteen [misspelled on

midterm]

late 18th- and early 19th-c. pianos, and gives several

examples from the Beethoven piano sonatas that are

either

unplayable or misunderstood on modern grand pianos. (Author, abridged)

Subjects:

beethoven, ludwig van >> performance practice >>

sonatas, piano >>

relation to grand piano;

instruments-keyboard [piano family] >> piano >> 18th-

19th c. >>

introduction

Language: English

Record ID: 1983-06087-ap

**4. What is the name of the journal in which this article was published?**

5. **When was this article published?**
6. **How long is this article?**

## **Appendix B**

Comments on my MU649 term paper:

Interesting paper, well documented, but too many careless mechanical and grammatical mistakes. Endnotes should follow the directions specified in class.

[Additionally, some technical flaws were circled in red.]

Comments on my British History paper:

1. For such a good essay, this seems an unnecessarily defeatist opening. Tackling complex historiographical problems isn't meant to be easy.
2. Good, concise opening that sets out the structure and outlines the argument. Key point; this was also the perception of other c18 heads of state.
3. The opposition was also particularly prominent, since it directly affected lawyers and all legal transactions.
4. Particularly since the envisaged revenue was not enormous from this duty.
5. Throughout, there is potential to develop a broader theme at which you seem to be hinting throughout: that it was the very *space* that George III opened up between himself and his ministers over issues of decision-making and responsibility that ultimately could prove as damaging in the public image as any individual opinions he held himself.
6. Good; the reduction of military threat is another key point. Moreover, the Seven Years War had also supplied important lessons as the colonists saw the war as evidence that imperial coo-operation could work as locally-raised troops and British regulars had combined to defeat the French. From the British perspective, however, the war had revealed the weaknesses inherent in existing colonial arrangements: increased levels of direct control would be required.
7. And the see-saw was largely a legacy of the ways in which Cabinet govt. had evolved under the largely absentee monarchs, George I and George II. Although a practical means of sustaining the business of govt. when monarchs were not prepared to participate, was less defensible in the face of a committed monarch like George III.
8. Excellent quote: could you have taken this as your point of departure in the introduction?

9. And, interestingly, Franklin considered monarchical arrangements for America.

10. Good; another key point.

11. Hence the accompanying interest in historiographic counter-factuals to balance this notion of inevitability.

12. Excellent quote.

This is another excellent piece of work which I thoroughly enjoyed reading. It is extremely well conceived, crisply-argued and lucid in its reasoning. There are some particularly well-chosen quotes and your account skillfully juxtaposes sensitive analyses of personal motive alongside critical interpretations of public documents regarding policy presentation. Overall, it's a very thoughtful piece of work: well done!

## **Appendix C**

### **A word about DMA's**

Although the focus of this paper is reforming the master's program, the proper perspective to view many of the problems with the master's program is through understanding DMA programs at BU and around the country. The DMA in performance degree is markedly different from doctoral degrees in other subjects in several different ways. Consider the following statements:

In fields where a doctorate degree is available...

- (1) the top professionals in that field possess doctorates,
- (2) the majority of professors at the nation's most prestigious universities have doctorates,
- (3) doctoral curricula are designed by experts who work in that field or are expert pedagogues in that field,
- (4) the most important assignments in a doctoral curriculum are representative of the work done by professionals in that field.

These four statements are true for just about every field I can think of. They are all false for DMA in performance degrees at most U.S. music schools.

The falsity of the first two statements can be demonstrated by examining the personnel of the BSO and the BU music faculty. Certainly the BSO is a valid sample of the best musicians in the world. I looked at the bio's of every instrumentalist in the BSO and I couldn't find a single member with a DMA. BU's music faculty is one of the school's strongest assets. Many students come to BU solely because of their teacher. Only 6% of the instrumental faculty have DMA's. The university-wide percentage of faculty with terminal degrees is 78%. Since getting a DMA in Performance renders a student

statistically unlikely to get a top orchestra job or a post in a prestigious university, it is unclear what exactly DMA programs are meant to accomplish.

That (1) and (2) are false are probably caused by the failure of (3) and (4) to hold for DMA programs. Typically, DMA in performance curricula are structured by people with far less performance experience than their students. They frequently have little experience teaching people how to perform. This leads to inappropriate assignments, namely dissertations. Dissertations are absolutely fundamental parts of physics, biology, history, literature and mathematics doctoral programs because they are representative of the work done by professionals in that field. After graduating, students in that field will be expected to publish papers on par with their dissertations. Graduate students in chemistry often write and publish several dissertation length papers before graduating. When students in these fields apply for jobs in academia, they will be asked what about the nature of their dissertation and who their advisor was. None of this is true for music performers. Dissertations are not representative of the work top notch performers do. Typically, Performance DMA students will not write another document so massive. When they apply for jobs in academia, they will be expected to perform and teach a master class<sup>11</sup> as part of their interview. Hiring committees are not interested in the subject of their dissertation. This leads to the ultimate irony: while music academies are the most likely institutions to hire doctoral students, they are simultaneously not preparing their doctoral students to beat out the great performers and teachers who end up getting the jobs. It doesn't have to be this way. If schools were committed to producing great performers, as the title of the degree suggests, they could do so. This would involve short term sacrifices, but whichever music schools adjust will be rewarded in the long run.

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<sup>11</sup> Which is yet another reason why a music education course might be more helpful to a career than a bibliography class. Some colleges do give instrumentalists teaching experience by allowing them to teach non-music majors lessons. BU does not except for violin, piano and voice.

## Appendix D

Table summarizing required and non-required material in BU's master's in performance program.

Topics Required in BU's clarinet performance MM program (that is, topics discussed in MU649).	Topics not Required in BU's clarinet performance MM Program
<p>Given that you want to find a book by a certain person, you should do an author search. (See Appendix A).</p> <p>How to write a good bibliography.</p> <p>Is the New Grove Dictionary a dictionary or an encyclopedia?</p> <p>How do you spell 'Tchaikovsky'?</p> <p>Should you italicize the period of a citation?<sup>12</sup></p> <p>Which is correct: '12-tone' or 'twelve-tone'?<sup>13</sup></p> <p>Suppose you know that an article covers pages 18 - 21 of a journal, how many pages long is the article? (See Appendix A).</p>	<p>Any aspect of music history.</p> <p>How to write a good paper.</p> <p>Any aspect of music education.</p> <p>Any aspect of conducting.</p> <p>Any aspect of music business or administration.</p> <p>Any aspect of performance psychology.</p> <p>Any aspect of acoustics, recording techniques</p> <p>How to use PowerPoint, Finale, Flash or design a web page.</p>

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<sup>12</sup> Which of the two periods are italicized: .. ?

<sup>13</sup> Students were marked off for writing '12-tone.' Many respectable scholars use this spelling, including musicologists and the Encyclopedia Britannica. The point is that it's not the optimal use of students' time to subject them to lectures on BU's particular preference for a minor grammatical rule about which there is no general consensus among the highest levels of academia. Here are a few links to pages that use the 'incorrect' spelling:

- A music history homepage at Indiana University:  
<http://www.music.indiana.edu/som/courses/m402.s05/schedule.html>
- Encyclopaedia Britannica '12-tone' entry:  
<http://www.britannica.com/eb/article?tocId=9073942>
- A bibliography resource edited by J. Peter Burkholder, Andreas Giger, and David C. Birchler:  
<http://www.music.indiana.edu/borrowing/browsemn.html>
- Syllabus for a theory class at the Eastman School of Music:  
<http://theory.esm.rochester.edu/th513/syllabus.html>

