

PREDICTING SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THE UNDERGRADUATE MUSIC EDUCATION  
DEGREE PROGRAM  
(Research in progress)

Music Education students generally apply to college first as music majors and then later gain admittance into the music education degree program. The admissions criteria usually include some evaluation of performance skill, general education indicators, and musicianship readiness (music theory/history and piano). Though this type of admission process may be effective for predicting success in a performance degree program, as students are admitted to a particular studio, it may or may not be as effective at predicting which students will successfully complete a degree program in music education ultimately.

The purpose of this study is to determine which admission criteria best predict successful completion of the undergraduate Music Education degree program at a large research university in the northeast. Cohorts of students were tracked for five years using the graduating classes of 2004 – 2008 (N=109).

Admissions data was collected at the point of entry to the School of Music (high school grade point average, audition rating, standardized test score) and the point of entry to the music education degree program (2-year grade point average, applied lesson grades, PRAXIS examination scores), and summative data was recorded at graduation (cumulative grade point average, time to degree, student teaching grades).

A preliminary multiple regression was run on these data using independent variables as predictors while being cautious of collinearity. Then Beta weights were compared to ascertain the best predictors. The model counts for 27.5% of the variance, and is statistically significant ( $p < 0.0005$ ). One of the seven predictor variables run in this preliminary model (average lesson grade) is significant ( $p < 0.0005$ ). A final variable (audition rating) will be added to the model in the final version of the study.

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