

## **Research Grant – CoTA Faculty Research Grant Fall 2015**

**Faculty Member:** David A. Williams

**Unit:** School of Music

**Proposal Title:** Travel to present research at the 2016 National Association for Music Education, Music Research and Teacher Education National Conference

### A. Abstract:

Funding will be used to support travel to make presentations of my research activity at the 2016 National Association for Music Education Music Research and Teacher Education National Conference in March 16-19,2016. I will be involved in two different sessions presenting findings from my research concerning curriculum development and learner-centered teaching in music education. (55 words)

### B. Proposal:

I will be making two presentations at the 2016 NAFME Music Research and Teacher Education National Conference. Both involve learner-centered pedagogical concepts. Involvement with learner-centered approaches to teaching has been prominent in various areas of education for several years and at all levels including primary, secondary and tertiary schools. Interest in learner-centered pedagogies has also been manifested in different areas of music education. Even the New National Music Standards feature learner-centered concepts. This theory of education and learning has roots in the work of several psychologists and philosophers and is associated with the principles of Constructivism. From a constructivist perspective, knowledge cannot simply be given to students: Students must construct their own meanings and teachers need to allow learners to raise their own questions, generate their own hypotheses and models as possibilities and test them for validity.

This has been a research interest of mine for several years and has resulted in three recent publications. My article "The Baby and The Bathwater" was published as part of Volume 55 (August 2015) of the College Music Symposium, the online journal for the College Music Society. Two related book chapters were published in 2014, "Considering Both Curriculum and Pedagogy," In *Music Education in the 21st Century*, Janice Smith and Michele Kaschub, eds., Oxford University Press, and "Music Education: Relevant and Meaningful," In *Rethinking Education and the Musical Experience*, Janet Barrett and Peter Webster, eds., Oxford University Press.

The research project for the first NAFME presentation was inspired by the Orpheus Chamber Ensemble classical music chamber orchestra based in New York, which gives performers total control over the rehearsal process by rehearsing and performing completely without a conductor. My presentation will be a report of a research project conducted during the Spring semester 2015 along with members and directors of the USF symphonic band. Two pieces of music were selected to be rehearsed and then performed by the student musicians with no director involvement at all. The primary research questions for this project were, 1) how will students respond to taking over total control of music rehearsals and performances?; 2) what effect on musicianship and listening

will students report after taking over total control of music rehearsals and performances? 3) in what ways might this experience enhance the training of pre-service music education majors?

The second presentation will be made with co-presenter Clint Randles, Assistant Professor of Music Education at USF. This presentation will review the curricular revisions undertaken at USF over the past several years to produce an undergraduate curriculum that focuses on both traditional teacher-centered approaches to music education as well as learner-centered methods.

Attendance and participation in conferences like NAFME is directly related to two aspects of the College of The Arts Goals. Such conference presentations help CoTA become recognized regionally and nationally for innovative, contemporary research, and meeting with colleagues from across the country provides me opportunities to help recruit diverse faculty members who excel in research activities and teaching. (492 words)