

BUSMEA BUZZ

BUSMEA WINS!!!!



The Presidential Excellence Award is awarded monthly to a full time student, faculty, staff member or club that has made a special contribution to the quality of academic or non-academic life on campus or within the Brandon Community. On a monthly basis, the committee consisting of: a BUSU representative, Quill representative and the Dean of students, selects from nominations received who to award. Anyone interested in nominating an individual or group for the award can email springers@brandonu.ca or quill@thequill.ca.

It is with great pleasure that the committee would like to congratulate Brandon University's Student Music Educators Association on receipt of the award for the month of January, 2010. We would also like to make special mention of the executive of BUSMEA and recognize their efforts to improve the educational experience of Music Education students, both on and off campus.

The council members include:

- Chloé Plamondon - president
- Leandra Williams - vice president
- Anna Jardine - secretary/treasurer
- Stephanie Dzubinski - corresponding secretary
- Carly Swain - fundraising chair
- Jennifer Shead - events coordinator
- Roberta Matheson - student rep
- Robert Hodgins - student rep

The busy executive of BUSMEA this year has many accomplishments to its name. BUSMEA

hosts Tempo annually, which is a conference geared towards building educational resources and networking. The council also prints a Music Education Journal called the BUSMEA BUZZ, which prints its final copy shortly.

Past recipients of the award include Jennalee Burch, Dr. Wendy McCallum, Pat Alvestad and Claire Robson. Each winner has their picture taken with the president of the university, and receives a gift certificate. In the case of a group award, the prize is often a pizza party, or other celebration hosted by the Dean of Students.

Once again, we would like to congratulate BUSMEA on its efforts throughout the year, and for its commitment to academic life here at Brandon University.

Congratulations on behalf of both President Poff and the Presidential Excellence Award Committee. Keep up the great work!

Fellow Music Educators,

As I reflect on my last four years of involvement on the BUSMEA council, I cannot say enough in regards to how grateful I am for all that I have learned, for the people whom I am honoured to have worked with, and for the opportunities to grow as a person, as a leader, and as an educator. As I prepare to write my final President's Address in this final BUZZ of my final year of my undergraduate degree, I find myself reflecting back on what BUSMEA means to me and on what it has meant to me over the last four years.

I became loosely involved with BUSMEA in my second year of university, and discovered that it was comprised of a group of motivated students with a common focus to make their time at university richer than it could be through their classes. At the time, I was unsure about what types of information or skills I could possibly need beyond the daunting line up of classes laid out for me over the next three years. As I became immersed in the culture of the council, I realized that being involved with BUSMEA is a powerful starting place to accomplish the goal of not only becoming a music educator, but learning to be an effective person in the world through my career. I decided that this was important to me and that I needed to be a part of the council.

I realize that I do not have any answers as to how one might

most effectively tackle a music education degree at Brandon University, but I can share what I have learned as a result of my time spent with BUSMEA. I learned that you are the only person in control of your life. You choose how you act, and you choose how you react in every situation. You have the choice of whether to create your own opportunities, or wait for them to come to you. It takes hard work, dedication, and perseverance but the skill and confidence you gain from creating your own opportunities is invaluable. I learned that it is okay to fail. In fact, I would go as far as saying that in order to grow it is necessary to fail. I learned that it is okay to struggle with making decisions, and I have learned that you must believe in yourself in order for other people to as well. I learned that making the decision to become a music educator has been the right one in my life because I have maintained a high level of energy and excitement for growth and development in myself as a music educator.

I would like to extend a sincere thank you to BUSMEA and the community at Brandon University for embracing the possibility of communication amongst student music educators through the use of the BUSMEA BUZZ Journal. Thank you to everyone who has submitted an article this year, and made suggestions for how to improve on this project. I am grateful for the outstanding support shown to us from the

School of Music, Brandon University, the Manitoba Band Association, the Canadian Music Educators Association, and the Brandon University Students Union. We could not have been as successful as we were this year without their ongoing support. BUSMEA is unique to the BU School of Music, and I will always be very proud to say that I was a part of it.

I have seen the council grow, and look forward to seeing where it is going to go in the future. I wish next year's council the best of luck, and I look forward to hearing about what new skills will be gained, what new experiences will arise and about what members can learn about themselves through the council. I feel confident that BUSMEA will continue to grow and expand and I cannot wait to see what will take place. Although I am sad to walk away from the BUSMEA Council, I know that I will take with me the memories, skills, energy and passion gained through my time spent as an executive member, conference and workshop attendee, and writer for the BUSMEA BUZZ.

Thank you again, and goodbye.

Sincerely,



Chloé Plamondon

A SUCCESSFUL DAY: A SYNOPSIS OF THE DA CAPO CONFERENCE BY CHLOÉ PLAMONDON

The 4th annual *Da Capo Conference*, held last month at the Brandon University School of Music, was extremely successful. The 59 attendees included Brandon University music and music education students, Brandon University professors, Westman band directors, representatives from the University of Manitoba, and a group of nine students from the University of Saskatchewan. We were very pleased to see a growing numbers of students from outside our own institute attending the conference. Our goal for the future of the Da Capo Conference is for it to become a place for student networking with surrounding universities.

The day was well spent attending diverse sessions prepared by the remarkable group of inspiring and knowledgeable presenters from Brandon and Winnipeg. Dr. Deborah Poff, President of Brandon University, delivered the keynote address about developing leadership qualities. The morning sessions continued with a joint session by Kevin Doell and Taylor Schmidt on middle school band repertoire, Graham Dion on using technology in the music classroom, and Carolyn Gwyer on what she wished someone had told her about being a high school choir director. The sessions were equally attended and all received extremely positive feedback. In the next session Taylor Schmidt spoke on yearly planning and Kevin Doell shared some of his interview tips. Debbie McLeod joined us from Winnipeg for a session on using the keyboard in the choir classroom.

One of the most well-received sessions of the day was the “New-Teacher Round Table” where three “freshman” music educators shared answers to questions prepared by senior music education students. Those teachers included University of Manitoba graduate Robert Chrol, and Brandon University graduates Mindy Choy and Karen Luptak. Past MMEA President and Brandon-based music educator Marla Fontaine also joined us for the day and presented two interesting well-received sessions in the afternoon related to being a new teacher in an elementary classroom. Graydon Cramer and his Westside grade 8 jazz ensemble demonstrated a new philosophy and process for introducing the Bb blues! Jacquie Dawson from Vincent Massey Collegiate in Winnipeg, Manitoba was joined by her principal, Rick Martin, via Skype. Their presentations centered on community building and shaping students lives through a band program. Other sessions that were equally as educational and interesting were Eric Platz on hand drumming, Wendy McCallum on conducting fundamentals, and Carolyn Gwyer’s second presentation about the tips and tricks of creating an unforgettable Broadway show!

The BUSMEA executive council worked very hard to implement as much organization and efficiency into the day as possible. The equipment and technology subcommittee ensured that each presenter was accommodated with all the necessary supplies. Attendees and presenters were well hydrated and fed throughout the day thanks to the hospitality committee, and the registration committee made sure every person had a collection of handouts from the day, as well as schedules and related materials. We are proud to announce that we finished the event with a balanced budget. The Da Capo Conference could not have been a possibility without the financial support of The Manitoba Band Association, The Canadian Music Educators Association, and The Brandon University Students Union. We hope that the music education community in Canada continues to support the *Da Capo Conference* in the future.

One unfortunate event of the weekend ran slightly out of our hands – the weather! The nine University of Saskatchewan students who drove to Brandon for the conference became snowed in, and could not leave until two full days later! With support from the BUSMEA council, faculty advisor Wendy McCallum, the Brandon University School of Music, and the Brandon University Residence

Office, we made sure that our colleagues were well taken care of for the remainder of their unexpected time in Brandon.

Next years' *Da Capo Conference* will be held on **Saturday, January 22nd, 2011**. We have begun to plan presenters and brainstorm topics in our executive council, but we also encourage anyone to email us ideas and thoughts about what they would like to see at the conference! We can be contacted at busmea@brandonu.ca. BUSMEA received positive feedback in our Conference Evaluation Forms; we are proud to create this opportunity for student music educators to extend their education beyond what is taught in our classes, and to provide a chance for educators to look back and reflect on their current teaching practices. We sincerely appreciate all of the support shown to us by the music education community in Manitoba.

Comments received on 2010 Conference Evaluation Forms:

"This was another informative and fantastic conference! I will most definitely attend next years' conference!"

"SOO many great thing, one long day, Great work BUSMEA!"

"I came from outside of Brandon, and I felt that the trip was worthwhile and rewarding because everything was well planned and communicated ahead of time."

"I'm re-energized and motivated! Thank you."

"This is such a professional conference. You should all be very proud of your hard work. Great variety of presenters and topics, Great Work!"

"So nice to see that the conference is continuing and growing! You guys have put together a fabulous...FABULOUS conference! Excellent work and Congratulations."

AN INTERVIEW WITH DR. LYNN WHIDDEN BY JARRETT FULLER

As music educators one of the greatest challenges we may face is how to teach Aboriginal students in our classrooms. In a recent interview with Dr. Lynn Whidden, an ethnomusicologist at Brandon University, we discussed her experiences with Native students in Thompson and other parts of northern Manitoba. We also conversed about what types of music are important to the Aboriginal community today and how to approach instruction with the students.

Dr. Whidden started her career as a music teacher in Thompson, Manitoba. She taught there from 1970 to 1979. The students she taught were from places around the world such as, Portugal and Chile. The recruitment efforts by the International Nickel Mining Company made Thompson a multicultural city. Dr. Whidden proceeded to do an ethnomusicology project where she interviewed the people who lived there and learned about songs from their homeland. Once this was completed she put together a book sponsored by the Thompson Multicultural Center Association entitled "Songs from Thompson, Manitoba".

Since 1979 much of the demographic of Thompson has changed: the Aboriginal population has dramatically increased. The Aboriginal people that were coming into the city were a free hunting people with a culture designed to survive in the northern environment. Their relocation to the city changed everything. As Dr. Whidden describes it, "the process that they are going through is the homogenization of tradition. Western culture is mixing with local traditions".

Dr. Whidden believes that ethnomusicology is an interesting field because it is always moving forward. She stated that, "We don't just listen to music, we look at the context as well". Dr. Whidden received her doctorate in ethnomusicology from the Université de Montréal. Most recently, she received an award for her book, *Essential Song, Three Generations of Northern Cree Music*, from ForeWord Magazine and was honoured with several nominations for awards.

Musically, what influences Aboriginal people? In Dr. Whidden's award winning book, *Essential Song*, she has a chapter called, "Country Music: How do you Dance to Beethoven?" The chapter was about the influence of country music on the native population and how they immersed themselves in the country music culture. The radio was popularized in the north in the 1930s. It was mostly American radio stations which played country and western music. The first NCI (Native Communications Inc.) started in Northern Manitoba. It began in the back of a hotel in Thompson; they even used to have Kentucky Fried Chicken ads in Cree. In comparing their traditional music and country music there is some common ground. For examples both are usually solo. During the hunting days Northerners tended to do a lot of their hunting alone. Rhythms in both genres are flexible, traditionally there was no such thing as meters. Another common point is that the range and other melodic elements used in traditional and country music were also similar. In *Essential Song* Whidden asks Cree students why they enjoy country music and they responded, "country music helps them relax and makes them feel comfortable, and has words that are both understandable and meaningful". (Whidden, 2007) The trend of country music is changing from country to rap and pop, but many people are still able to play the guitar or the harmonica. These instruments were very common where religion was present. Many Aboriginals played these instruments for religious purposes. These instruments have become common for Northerners because the instruments are generally reasonably priced, they can be learnt without formal instruction, and they are easy to maintain.

What can music educators do to enhance the musical lives of Aboriginal students? As Dr. Whidden described it, "For teachers it is important to go in with a really open mind. They have a choral tradition but not like ours with harmony. Teachers go in and want them to start singing in harmony or use a soprano vocal range. It's not going to happen for you; it's not a sound ideal that they value."

Immediately there are contradictions between much of the content that we are learning with what Aboriginal students may have experienced and learned. Our duty as Educators is to provide a service to all students, not to impose a curriculum that has little or no relevance this statement goes for all students not just aboriginals. Most students very little if any knowledge of the European "masters" and the information we give them on this subject will have little to do with what lifelong skills we should be giving to them. Dr. Whidden indicated, "I don't think they do because I don't hear them listening to it or appreciating it. So I suppose you might want to go in and find out what they do value...maybe you would have to go in and learn a new music language."

A core component to being a professional is to constantly be learning; why not learn from the students who surround you? They know their culture and once you earn their trust you can adapt your courses to suit their specific needs. A very interesting point that Dr. Whidden stated was that Native students have moved from oral tradition to electronic media. Music literacy may not be the main point to stress when teaching Aboriginal students. Songs that descended from generation to generation were never written down, and they still are not.

One thing that surprised me in the interview was when I asked if teaching Native traditions would be a good thing to do. "I think the old hunting songs could be a great music appreciation and music history course but these songs were used to communicate with the animals and many elders do not want them used outside of this context; they call them sacred and I respect that." However there is other traditions of music that can be used especially powwow songs, projects going on such as one by Dr. Helen Armstrong who is doing research into the indigenization of the curriculum in some Dakota schools. There is also an interest in getting elders from the community to come into the schools as artist educators so that the students in these schools learn about their culture and traditions.

Teaching Aboriginal students is a complex issue and will continue to be for a long time. As music educators, we have to constantly be thinking about what we are teaching and whether or not it is relevant to students today. There are many musics out there to be explored other than the music of dead Europeans. We should diversify ourselves so we can help all students live musically enhanced lives. Is music education culturally relevant to Aboriginal students today? That depends on how we chose to educate them and what we think the purpose of education is. The musical culture of Aboriginal students is constantly changing; they are listening to hip hop, rap, and pop. Maybe we can learn from them and incorporate their music into the curriculum. We can expect to learn from them. We should go into Aboriginal communities with an open mind and find out how they are experiencing music and see what we can do to help them lead more musically fulfilling lives. We need to lead music education to the next level.

BY ANGÉLIQUE TRUDEL

Playing a brass instrument is a lot more complicated than picking it up and blowing into it. Although there are many ideas to focus on, it can be broken down into five areas. The first area is proper posture, followed by proper mouthpiece placement. The third is tone quality, followed by taking a full deep breath. Lastly, although just as important, is simultaneous articulation and release of breath. These five topics should and will help any level player improve.

Proper posture is a key element to playing any instrument. Fred Fox states that when standing or sitting while playing, the body should be identical from the hips up (Fox, p.56). As students sit, the upper body position should always maintain the same. "Stand while seated", is what Jacobs always told his students (Frederiksen, p.130). One great example for a beginner of any age is to imagine that there is a string pulling you up. There are many debates about how far back a student should sit in their chair. The answer to this question has one extra question that must be asked. The question is how tall is the student versus the size of their instrument? If a student is smaller in size with a bigger sized instrument, they will have to sit further back on their chair so they can hold their instrument properly. If the student is smaller in size with a smaller instrument they can sit closer to the end of the chair and still be able to play their instrument properly. The discussion ends with this quote "there is a small inward curvature of the spine in the lower lumbar region just above the belt. As the student sits, Jacobs wants the student to retain that curvature of the spine (Frederiksen, p.130)." Proper posture is one of the most important elements of playing any wind instrument.

The embouchure for playing a brass instrument is just as important as posture. "The air-column must continue in a straight line, through the mouth, the lips and finally the horn (Farkas, p.7)." Farkas believes that too much emphasis is placed on exactly where the mouthpiece is placed, such as one third upper lip and two thirds bottom lip, half and half or two thirds upper lip and one third bottom lip. There is only one solution for this. Listen to the sound rather than where the lips are positioned; this will help student succeed.

The other debate about the embouchure is whether players should use dry lips or wet lips. One main idea to keep in mind is that the mouthpiece and contact with the upper lip should always remain the same. "Dry lip players have no problem in this process because the mouthpiece cannot slip around; with the wet lip players, the saliva lubrication could cause slippage, and should be watched carefully (Fox, p.56)." As long as students have a good tone, it does not really matter if they play with wet lips or dry lips.

Philip Farkas came up with three reasons that the angle of the mouthpiece to the lips is very critical. The first is that the lips must aim the air in the direction the mouthpiece is pointed. The second is that the proper angle of the mouthpiece to lips will distribute mouthpiece pressure evenly over both lips. The third and final reason is when placed at a right-angle to the teeth, and consequently to the lips, the mouthpiece will not tend to slide up or down during the playing of various registers.

Fox states that many factors can impair the tone quality of a brass instrument. Firstly, a large dent in the instrument itself would choke the sound. Second, a player's tight throat can choke the sound in a similar manner. Third, the diaphragm may be too relaxed, causing the tone to lack vitality and firmness. Fourth, if the vowel or tongue position is incorrect, the sound may be either too dull or tubby, or too pinched and edgy. Fifth, the sound may be too breathy if excess air is used for any given dynamic level. Lastly, the embouchure may be too tight or too relaxed causing the sound to be too flaccid (Fox, p.10). One way of fixing the tongue position is a three step process. Playing a note in the middle register with the vowel sound "ee" as in see; this note should sound very thin. On the other side, if the same note is played with the vowel sound "aw" as in law; the note will sound dull. The third time, play the same note but in between both of these vowel sounds. Everyone will have a different vowel sound or tongue position which will make their tone rich and beautiful.

Understanding the air column will help any level player improve. One commonality is for high notes to sound strained. This is caused by a tight throat. "There must be no unnecessary "choke" spot from the lips to the bottom of the lungs (Fox, p.56)." Yawning is one good example of how open the throat should be. "A full deep breath cannot be taken without expanding the lungs in the upper chest (Frederiksen, p.105)." Many beginning players raise their shoulders when they take a deep breath. This bad habit must be caught early or students will never be able to take a full deep breath. Fox has a great rule that should be followed. "If the lower diaphragm is hardened before the attack, there is no beneficial effect. If the lower diaphragm hardens after the note is played, there is no beneficial effect. It must harden at the moment of the attack, like a tug on a rope, to be effective (Fox, p.34)." If players can take a deep breath with an open throat, and it remains in a neutral position, then the player will succeed further in their playing career.

Articulation can only happen successfully if a full deep breath is taken. Jacobs believes that an attack is simply the start of vibration of the lips, that the tongue should be used as a focusing tool, [and] not as a valve to stop the air (Frederiksen, p.128)." Many students focus on the tongue, where as the focus should be the vibrating lips. Because every person is different, not everyone will have the same tongue position within the mouth. The placement of the tongue will vary, but typically "the most effective contact point for the tongue to contact on attack is the lower edge of the upper teeth, as low as possible but at no time touching the lips (Fox, p.28)." Keep in mind that the throat should and must remain open at all times while playing.

Technique and fingerings are only a couple aspects of playing a brass instrument, but there are a lot more that need to be covered; proper posture, mouthpiece placement, tone, breathing, and articulation of a brass instrument. Fox, Farkas and Jacobs are only three of many brass specialists that have books available, and each one of these players have their own styles, which are uniquely different.

Bibliography

Farkas, P. (1962). *The Art of Brass Playing*. Edwards Brother Inc.

Fox, F. (1976). *Essentials of Brass Playing*. Volkein Bros., Inc.

Frederiksen, B. (1996). *Arnold Jacobs: Song and Wind*. Windsong Press Limited.



The Brandon West Side Grade 8 Jazz Band under the direction of BUSMEA alumni Graydon Cramer showed Da Capo participants how to improvise AND sound good.



The visitors from the University of Saskatchewan.



BU Jazz Studies faculty member Eric Platz in action in his hand drumming session.



Alumni of Brandon University's Music Education program.

Photos by Dr. Wendy McCallum.



Experienced teachers, new teachers, and students alike were all engaged by this year's presenters.



Westman choir director Carolyn Gwyer shares her knowledge.



Brandon University president Dr. Deborah Poff delivers the keynote address.

The graduating members of this year's BUSMEA council beaming post-conference.



AT FIRST GLANCE: THE DA CAPO CONFERENCE BY PATTI GALICIA

With attendance of several BU students as well as representatives from the University of Saskatchewan, and the University of Manitoba, the 4th Annual Da Capo conference had become a huge success! Whether you're a fifth-year student about to enter their career or a first-year considering music education, the conference had proven to be a unique opportunity to explore an assortment of teaching methods, technology, paperwork, as well as the expectations of staff, students and their families, in order to score - and effectively maintain - your very own music program.

The conference opened with a keynote speech from Dr. Poff, President of Brandon University. Special emphasis was given in staying true to your own character, and accepting the fact that you cannot please everyone, just because of your position in authority.

Bearing Dr. Poff's message in mind, it was time to attend various workshops of the conference,

presented by seasoned music educators.

Workshops consisted of the do's and don'ts for your interviews, using classroom technology, budgeting, to running successful school musical productions. In addition to the workshops, a round-table discussion featured three teachers currently on their first year. This component of the conference allowed current university students to inquire about the candidates' experiences so far. All three candidates have ended up teaching ages groups other than what they had in mind - perhaps even all at once!

After 7 intensive hours of soaking in all that information, - with nothing more than a cup of coffee and an omelette for brunch - foreseeing the reality of being a music teacher had certainly taken its toll on *this* first-year university student! Not only were participants able to learn from first-hand experiences of current teachers, written references from each workshop allows us to remember each element of a quality music classroom.

REVIEW AVENUE BY CHLOÉ PLAMONDON

CONFESSIONS OF A FIRST-YEAR MAESTRO - A GUIDE FOR YOUR FIRST YEAR OF TEACHING BY CATHERINE BELL ROBERTSON

I first found out about this book on a list of "good reads" from a session I attended at a PD event. It sounded interesting, and the presenter spoke highly of it, so I did what I always do, and I added it to my Christmas list. My Mom bought it for me the Christmas of my fourth year of my music education degree. Awesome! I started reading my book right away and unfortunately I was very disappointed. It is a story of a teacher's reflection on her first year in the music classroom, written in a very casual journal format. It was written with a lot of detail about day to day events of her life, and I felt very disconnected from the content. What was I supposed to learn by reading about this particular teacher's scenario? I was not planning to teach chamber music and orchestra and marching band, how was I supposed to relate to her story? This book does not supply the reader with a 'how to' guide for your first year of teaching; it does not teach about rehearsal techniques, and it does not have strategies to add to the 'bag of tricks' that I had been working towards at that point in my university career. I had a hard time believing that the content was worth my time, and I felt detached from the book.

One full year later, in my graduating year I found myself home for Christmas looking for a book to read. I decided to give *Confessions of a First-Year Maestro* another chance. And am I ever glad that I did. I picked it up and was instantly immersed in the journal entries of Catherine Bell Robertson's first year of teaching. Around Christmas time I had really started to feel the heat of my impending graduation, followed by being a music teacher all on my own. Her stories helped calm my nerves, and helped my mind sort out some of the logistical aspects of being a first year music teacher. I had come to a new

stage in my university career where my concerns no longer lay in the fact that I did not know everything, but had begun to centre around being able to create a positive learning environment in my classroom, on students receiving the education they rightfully deserve, on how I can live a balanced life while having a successful career; on how I can connect to students but still earn their respect, on not only what do I need to know to do this job – but on how can I be as successful as possible in this job. These are the types of questions that Robertson's reflects on in her book.

Catherine Bell Robertson is director of bands, choirs and ensembles at a parochial high school in Wisconsin. In her first year of teaching she was to teach chorus, string ensemble, concert band, marching band, show choir, sectional lessons, chamber music ensemble, concert choir,

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jazz band and music fundamentals. NINE different ensembles, plus a "bookwork" class on the fundamentals of teaching were her assignment. In her FIRST year of teaching. It seemed so overwhelming at the beginning of the book, but my anxiety settled as I started to read through her journal entries and how she kept organized, and managed the heavy load of this job. She was an instrumentalist at heart, played in and studied jazz bands in universities, and also had some experience with chamber music and choirs. Show choir was something that she knew very little about, and she had never thought about what she might teach in a fundamentals of music class for non-musicians. She forced herself to write reflective journals every day that she taught. Every day she had a new question for administration and staff members, every day she learned something from her students, and almost every day she either made a mistake, or did not know something right away. One of the most important messages in this book is that it is okay to ask questions, that it is okay to not know something right away, and that you need to expect that you will make a mistake every once in a while.

Another important lesson that can be taken from this book is that it is possible to be successful, even in what seems like a tough, time consuming, and sometimes confusing situation. In her first year of teaching, she had to plan a lot of concerts, and live up to what had been a strong music program in the past. She worked to build respect with students through high behavioural and musical expectations. Robertson also worked to create a positive atmosphere in her classroom through the use of only one rule – RESPECT. Respect yourself, your instrument, your music, and your classmates. It was relieving to know that she was able to create a positive environment, and that it seemed to come fairly naturally. The strategies she used in the classroom came to her very naturally, and she was able to follow through and defend her reasoning for why she did certain things in the classrooms, at concerts, etc...

Interrupting the journal entries of her first year of teaching are the authors reflections on the journal three years later. She talks about how she would have done certain things differently, and she also talks about what was going on in her life besides her new career (married, house, etc...). She talks about how she felt at the time, and how she could have avoided the situation, or how she approached something differently over the next three years. This is a valuable section to me as a soon to be first year teacher because there is a lot to learn from others mistakes and trying not to make the same ones. It opens up the floor for making new mistakes.

Robertson was successful in her first year of teaching because she was able to trust herself and her knowledge that she had gained during the five years of her University degree. At this stage in my life it is comforting to know that although I have questions, I do not always have to know all of the answers right away. This book gave me the ability to trust myself, and the faith to know that I can be successful.

BRANDON UNIVERSITY CLARINET CHOIR BY ERIC CALROW

This year I had the great privilege to join the Brandon University Clarinet choir. It has been a great experience for me because this is the first time I have had an opportunity to join this type of ensemble. I have been able to learn another instrument, the contrabass clarinet, and add it to my collection. This year I played the contrabass and the bass clarinet. Playing the contrabass clarinet in the clarinet choir is tricky, because sometimes I am with the bass clarinet then other times I am alone. To this day, I am still getting feedback about my performances on the Contrabass Clarinet.

In its inaugural year, the clarinet choir consists of 11 members from the clarinet studio. Students are from the School of Music and from other faculties, from first to fourth year. The clarinet choir was established for us to enjoy and experience the different members of the clarinet family.

A clarinet choir is a small ensemble made up by the different members of the clarinet family. The repertoire for the clarinet choir is like any other ensemble. Original pieces are composed for the choir and others are arranged. Presently in our choir, we have members that play the Eb Clarinet, A clarinet, Bb clarinet (the most common clarinet), alto clarinet, bass clarinet and the Contrabass clarinet.

On January 20th and 21st, 2010, the Brandon University Clarinet Choir went on tour to four schools in Winnipeg. At these schools, we performed for the students. In addition to performing, we worked with student clarinetists at three of the schools. We wanted to showcase Brandon University clarinetists and increase the visibility of the clarinet program. In addition, we wanted to inspire musicians to take their current

playing to the next level. After one of our performances, I was approached by an audience member who said that I “rock” at my instrument. After that, I felt good about what we were trying to do on the tour. At every school we performed, the response was great.

Members of the clarinet choir have to thank her. Dr. Catherine Wood; she is willing to work with us every Wednesday night, and she pushes us to the next level of achievement. Her hard work and dedication towards the clarinet choir make us successful. Dr. Wood, thank you for all of your hard work!



Back Row (Left to right): Dr Catherine Wood, Greg Monias, Christopher Byman, Jolene Cook, Justine Gould, Bryton Moen, Eric Calrow
 Front Row (left to right): Lauren Marshall, Joelle Nielsen, Suzu Enns, Sarah Lalonde, Alysha Klippenstein

SUCCESSFUL RESUME AND COVER LETTERS

THE DO'S AND DON'TS

In today's competitive job market having an impressive cover letter and resume will assist the job seeker in getting that all important job interview! The following list of do's and don'ts are a good reminder of what an employer looks at when your cover letter and resume arrive in the inbox.

DO'S

DON'TS

Ensure the company name you are applying to is spelled correctly

Depend on spell check, have a second set of eyes review your resume and cover

Find out the name of the Hiring Manager and use his or her name

Use an email address that may be funny for your friends to read but unprofessional for the business world e.g. better to see jdoe@tvs.com than boywonder @tvs.com

Ensure your resume and cover letter arrive before the deadline posted

Give personal details, send pictures of yourself, identify your age etc.

Include all the information asked for e.g. salary expectations, job reference no.

Send a resume without your job history clearly indicated with duties and dates worked for each employer

Send multiple resumes to job listings that you are qualified for

Use type font smaller than 10

Highlight the skills and abilities that you possess based on the job description in the posting in your cover letter

Crowd your information and leave margins

If you do decide to use an objective section make sure your objective is in line with the job description e.g. if the job is for full time work don't state that you are seeking part time work.

Feel it is necessary to use an "Objective" section. Usually employers know your objective is to seek employment with them.

Highlight your strengths and accomplishments in your resume

Have a lengthy resume - 2 pages is optimum, 3 pages maximum

Follow up by telephone or in person on your application if you do not have a response by 10 days following the closing date of the posting

Don't be afraid to "toot your own horn" Highlight your strengths and accomplishments in your resume

Happy Job Hunting!

Written by: Susan Thompson, an HR professional with 12 years of experience as a generalist responsible for recruitment and retention, on boarding, employee relations, compensation and benefits.

WHATEVER YOU DO ... DON'T PANIC! BY ANNA JARDINE

Tips for first-time student teachers

In September 2009, BUSMEA held an evening to debrief about our spring placements. Student teaching occurs at the end of the academic year, then we all take off for the summer and never get a chance to really share and discuss our experiences! For all the students that are about to head into their first placement, here are some of the results of our debriefing night. We hope you will find them helpful in preparing to go student teaching for the first time.

THE WORRY LIST (as compiled from the debriefing discussions)

1. Not knowing transpositions.

Our advice to you: **STUDY THESE NOW!** They take a while to become automatic, but they will only become natural if you practice them.

2. Lack of conducting experience

It is a known fact that music education students are expected to go out into their first placement with no classes in conducting and score study.

Our advice to you:

- Do your best to observe your conductors meaningfully in your own ensemble rehearsals. Ask your professors how they practice conducting and for some suggestions of how you could practice. Keep a pad of paper in your folder and take notes and write down questions to ask the conductor later.
- If you get the opportunity to direct a church or community choir/band... **TAKE IT!** This gives you opportunities to try things out with supportive and engaged musicians before you begin to conduct student ensembles.
- get in front of the band at your school as soon as possible and as much as possible. Ask your co-operating teacher to video tape your conducting and accept constructive feedback.

3. Classroom Management

Students going into their first student teaching experience have rarely taken a course in classroom management, but there are some things you can do that will help you!

Our advice to you:

- **NEVER** explain what you can demonstrate with sound. A strong instrument model is crucial.
- always have something for the students to do. If you are rehearsing one section, the others should be actively engaged in listening and giving feedback, helping to keep time or anything else you can think of to keep the whole ensemble involved.
- get to know your students. If you have made an effort to get to know each student personally and you show them that you care about them and respect them as people and musicians, they will be more likely to show you the same respect.

4. Confidence in Myself

Our advice to you:

- remember, you are a second year, and you have spent just two years out of high school. You will not know what to do, and that's okay. **ASK, ASK, ASK! LEARN, LEARN, LEARN!**
- reflect meaningfully in your journals and ask your co-operating teacher for feedback. (What happened? Why did it happen? What will I do next time?)

- practice getting in front of a big group as much as you can NOW! Volunteer with community or church choir or ask to help out at a local high school/junior high with extra- curricular activities.

LAST MINUTE ADVICE...

- make it a priority to know all of your students' names by the end of your first week. Ask your co-operating teacher for seating charts and as you're observing in your first few days, go over their names and faces in your head. Also try to know something about each student as quickly as possible. This takes more time.
- be visible: stand in the hallway during break and talk to kids as they go by and be at the door and welcome students to class. (by name as soon as possible)
- be open-minded, flexible and honest. If you don't know something (which you won't and it's okay), ask! Take full advantage of the highly experienced teacher you will be working with.
- you can't learn anything if you don't try, so get in there and get your hands dirty as soon as possible! And have fun in the process!
- give students consistent, honest, and genuine feedback. Avoid generic "that was good". Give them something specific so they feel valued.

SOME HILARIOUS MOMENTS SHARED BY YOUR FELLOW STUDENTS!

"The podium was broken and I fell off a lot." - Chloé Plamondon

"I got lost when my group went to another school, went out the wrong door and I ended up at the garbage dump." - Michaila Jersak

"I learned that using the term 'blowing hot air' is not a good idea in a room full of teenagers." - Anonymous

The 2010 Da Capo conference was an excellent opportunity for professional development. As a music education student at the University of Saskatchewan, I am always looking for opportunities to learn more about the profession. All of the lectures at the conference were very informative and well planned. The most insightful presentation was given by Kevin Doell, a school administrator in Manitoba. He gave a very in depth description on the job interview process for music teachers and how to prepare for the interview. Some of the other great topics at the conference included teaching jazz improvisation, selecting repertoire for middle school bands and running a musical production at your school. In addition to the fantastic presentations, the members of BUSMEA and Brandon University were wonderful hosts. They made every effort to make us feel welcome and at home. I would recommend this conference to all music educators and music education students and will make a concerted effort to return next year.

Mitchell Bonokoski
University of Saskatchewan

This edition of the
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formatted by:
Stephanie Dzubinski

edited by:
Dr. Wendy McCallum.

Cover photo by:
Naomi Leadbeater.

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