



The Commission on the Education and Clinical Training of 21st Century Music Therapists

2020 AMTA National Conference Presentation

Update from the 21st Century Commission:
Where We Are Now

History & Formation

In 2018, the AMTA Board of Directors (BOD) did not support the recommendation in the Final Report of the Master's Level Entry (MLE) Subcommittee to move to master's level entry by 2030. However, the BOD *did* support the additional recommendations from the MLE Subcommittee for further exploration of current and future education and clinical training of music therapists through the creation of a Commission.

A Task Force from the AMTA BOD, appointed by then-President Amber Weldon-Stephens and led by then-President-Elect Deb Williams, created the Commission on the Education and Clinical Training of 21st Century Music Therapists.



The BOD charged the Commission to:

- identify inconsistencies within degree programs to support clinical practice in a changing world;
- identify inconsistencies among and between National Roster and University Affiliated Internship programs;
- recommend changes to enhance current education and clinical training practices;
- support the ongoing efforts to increase state recognition of the MT-BC credential;
- and support efforts to encourage diversity and inclusion in the profession.



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History & Formation continued...

The AMTA Task Force appointed five voting members to the Commission, along with the AMTA Director of Professional Programs, Jane Creagan, as an ex-officio (non-voting) member.

Six additional voting members were elected by the AMTA Assembly of Delegates.

The Commission

Ron Borczon

Jane Creagan (ex officio - National Office)

CharCarol Fisher

Jen Hicks (Co-Chair)

Feilin Hsiao

Jennifer Jones

Betsey King

Marisol Norris

Donna Polen (Co-Chair)

Tracy Richardson

Cori Snyder

Daniel Tague



Dena Register, CBMT Regulatory Affairs Advisor, and Judy Simpson, AMTA Director of Government Relations, serve as ad hoc members available for consultation. The President of AMTAS serves as our student liaison. Fiona Riso fulfilled this role for 2020, and Naomi Davis is joining us for the year ahead.

Our First Year: Highlights & Accomplishments

- On January 1, 2019, the Commission on the Education and Clinical Training of 21st Century Music Therapists officially began its work.
- The Commission meets at least monthly via videoconference and conducts extensive work online.



Our First Year continued...

Our early work included focused discussions on topics of:

- identity (individual and collective)
- education
- musicianship
- clinical training
- exploring our own professional identities and biases



Our First Year continued...

We contributed to a variety of reflections documents, including one for each of the five points in our Charge and one for each of the three points defining the 21st century music therapist identified by the MLE Subcommittee.

We reviewed historical documents, current AMTA and CBMT guidance documents, and relevant publications.





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Commission Retreat



With support from the AMTA BOD, the Commission met for a retreat from July 21-24, 2019 on the campus of Southern Methodist University in Dallas, TX.



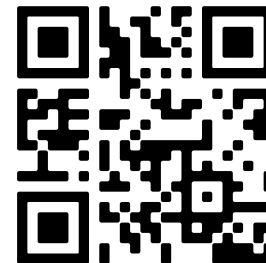
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Retreat Highlights & Outcomes

- Creation of a Commission page on the AMTA website and a Facebook Group and Twitter and Instagram accounts.
- Plans to gather information from multiple constituents/stakeholders to direct our work, including seeking feedback on two main questions:
 - How do YOU envision music therapy evolving in the 21st century?
 - What do you want this Commission to know?

Reach-out has been occurring through a variety of ways:

- Creation of a Google form with space for feedback on the two main questions and five charges.
- Addition of a corresponding QR code to direct individuals to that form.



NOTE:

The Google form is also available on the Commission page on the AMTA website (quick link on main page):

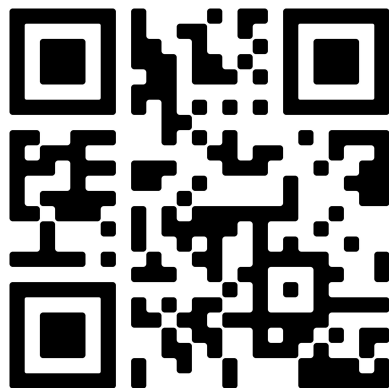
https://www.musictherapy.org/careers/21st_century_education/





Reach-out has been occurring through a variety of ways:

- Multiple posts on Facebook, Twitter & Instagram platforms.

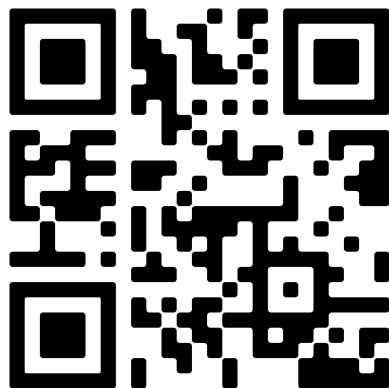


@MTcommission



Reach-out has been occurring through a variety of ways:

- Direct email to ALL music therapists on the CBMT mailing list that included the following:

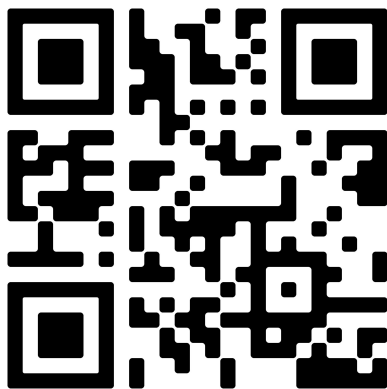


- ❖ Information on the five charges.
- ❖ The two main questions.
- ❖ Ways to provide feedback on all of these.

Reach-out has been occurring through a variety of ways:

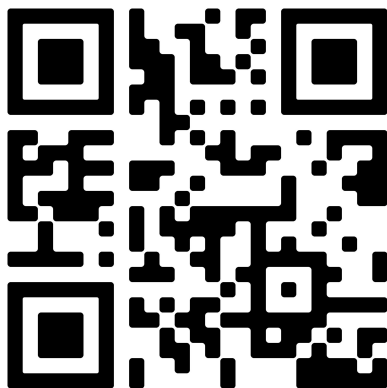
- Posts on state and regional networks, including the following:

- ❖ State and regional websites.
- ❖ State and regional newsletters.
- ❖ State and regional social media platforms.



Reach-out has been occurring through a variety of ways:

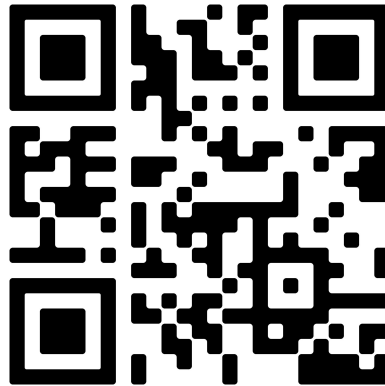
- Intentional engagement throughout the 2019 AMTA National Conference that included the following:
 - ❖ Time to meet as a Commission.
 - ❖ Insert in registration materials.
 - ❖ Presentations for the Assembly of Delegates and AMTA & AMTAS Business Meetings.
 - ❖ Attendance at sessions related to our charges.
 - ❖ Presence at the Commission Booth in the Exhibit Hall.



Your Responses:

- We received over 270 initial responses to the Google form (now over 320!). These included:

- ❖ Responses from all seven regions and around the world.
- ❖ Responses from both AMTA members (65%) and non-members (35%).
- ❖ Responses from students, professionals, educators, researchers, and business owners.



Themes from the Analysis of our Two Main Questions

- How do YOU envision music therapy evolving in the 21st century?
- What do you want this Commission to know?

Overall themes indicate a need for:

- **Elevating the Profession (Question #1) ~ most mentioned overall!**
 - There is a broad sense that the profession needs to elevate its profile in order to create better access and secure the future of the profession. Many different aspects may contribute to elevating the profession, including more and better research, more efficient and effective professional governance, and more well-defined clinical practice.
- **Creating a Sustainable Workforce (Question #2)**
 - There is a need to create a sustainable workforce for music therapists in terms of sufficient pay, reasonable caseload, funding for services, and recognition in the working environment.
- **Cultivating Diversity and Cultural Intelligence in All its Forms (Question #1)**
 - It is expected that we will develop more diversity in theory, practice and demographics in an effort to better serve our clients and work towards elevating the profession.

Overall themes indicate a need for 21st Century Education & Clinical Training:

- **Transforming the Educational & Clinical Training Model (Question #1 & #2)**
 - The current educational model is insufficient and will require broad restructuring at all levels and in all aspects. This includes admissions, skill expectations, scope and specializations.
- **Improving Quality in Education & Clinical Training Preparation (Question #2)**
 - There are inadequacies in student outcomes particularly in areas such as fundamental music and clinical skills and basic clinical understandings.
- **Increasing Consistency in Education & Clinical Training Program Requirements (Question #2)**
 - There are inconsistencies in curriculum across schools and degree programs (e.g., Bachelor's vs. Master's vs. Equivalency) in areas such as therapeutic orientation, fundamental skills, and counseling techniques.

Themes from the Analysis of our Five Charges

- Education
- Clinical Training
- Diversity
- State Recognition
- Other

Overall education themes indicate a need for:

- **Consistent Competency Outcomes**

- There is too much disparity in the competencies students demonstrate as they enter internships and/or the workforce. AMTA's education and clinical training programs must ensure that entry-level music therapists have the requisite ability in clinical musicianship, therapeutic practice, and professional skills.

- **Overhauling Music Therapy Education**

- Music therapy education needs more than updated competencies or a different internship model; it needs to be reimagined from the ground up with difficult decisions about what is possible in an undergraduate degree, what masters-level education is meant to accomplish, and where equivalency programs and certificates fit.

Overall education themes indicate a need for:

- **Clinical Musicianship**

- A music therapy degree needs to be founded on clinical and functional musicianship, with a reduction in the requirements of the performance-based curricula in which music therapy programs often reside.

- **Diversity**

- Music therapy urgently needs greater diversity, both in its educational standards and its practitioners. Music therapy education must include more inclusive admissions standards, more diverse musical experiences, and an emphasis on cultural awareness and humility.

- **Business skills and Entrepreneurship**

- Music therapy education should recognize that current music therapists need business and entrepreneurial skills and include them in the curriculum.

Overall clinical training themes indicate a need for:

- **Curriculum, competence, and change**
 - Define what “functional” means for various aspects of musicianship; Masters programs should include advanced trainings; Standards of practice include technology such as, recording software, beat-making, and rap therapy; Improve understanding of cultural awareness and adopt a broader understanding of music; future MTs need courses in Medical, Neurological
- **Inconsistency in practicum across universities**
 - The inconsistency in practicum across universities is vast. This includes: number of placements, diversity of placements, client contact hours, supervisor qualifications, level of university involvement, onset in degree program, and student readiness. Clearer guidelines, **and** adherence to guidelines, is essential.

Overall clinical training themes indicate a need for:

- **Financial concerns**

- Unpaid internships and unpaid labor are a significant concern. Unpaid internships creates financial hardship on students and reduces the diversity of the field.

- **Improve internship standards and increase accountability**

- Standardization of internship includes both internship administrative structures (applications, forms, templates, deadlines) and clinical training features (diversity of training, timelines of observation to independent caseload, competency expectations of interns at entry and completion). Increased accountability includes greater AMTA oversight of internships and accountability of internship directors.

Overall clinical training themes indicate a need for:

- **Clinical Supervision**

- Required training is needed for clinical supervisors. Effective relationships and ongoing support between clinical supervisors and university faculty is essential for student/intern development.

- **Supports from AMTA**

- Supports for new professionals, educators and clinical trainors, along with improved communication, are needed from the association.

Overall diversity themes indicate a need for:

- **Increase Diversity**

- Increase the cultural diversity of music therapy student and professional bodies.

- **Education and Training**

- Diversify music therapy curriculum to reflect broad music therapy repertoire, cultural competence training, and diversity methods and practices. Create music therapy pipelines for marginalized communities and increase access by 1) adjusting acceptance criteria (classical training requirements), 2) decreasing program cost and financial barriers to internships, 3) supporting underrepresented minority institutions, and 4) creating alternate routes to professional certification.

- **Professional Development and Training**

- Increase cultural intelligence and competence of music therapists through reflexive continuing education and supervision that includes awareness and knowledge of systems, personal bias and cultural identity. Increase cultural competence throughout their professional career.

Overall diversity themes indicate a need for:

- **Organizational Body**

- Create an organizational environment where all members feel respected, valued, and included. Demonstrate a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion within the organizational structures, policies, and culture by expanding representation of marginalized groups within the professional and leadership body, reducing levels of cultural harm to marginalized members, creating transparency within communication, and ensuring conferences that are financially accessible, while adjusting standards of practice and recertification to reflect nuances of cultural competence and require diversity CMTE training.

- **Other**

- A small but noticeable number of responses indicated the view that racial diversity, while important, was not necessarily the most important thing to focus on first. They also want to see a diversity of philosophy and other demographics promoted.

Overall state recognition themes indicate a need for:

- **Formal professional recognition**

- Defined for the purposes of this analysis as licensure, title protection, state or national recognition.

- **Adequate pay for music therapists**

- Pay sources for music therapists including waiver funds, insurance reimbursement, and seeking funding sources for clinical services as related to increased professional recognition.

- **Improved communication**

- Communication with other professions/professionals, as well as within the profession of music therapy. Additionally, some addressed a desire for more task force communication and both national and international advocacy.

Overall state recognition themes indicate a need for:

- **Professional identity**

- Learning how to advocate during the education and clinical training process, recognition of the MT-BC credential, having a more clearly defined Scope of Practice and educating MT-BCs. References to evidence based practice and research were included here as they are related to the self concept of music therapy practice. References to levels of practice and/or Masters level entry as related to various perspectives within the profession about how we are perceived and accepted by the public.

- **Funding for advocacy**

- This theme encompasses all comments related to a need for increases in funding for individual task forces and/or staffing through AMTA to assist with national staffing and continued support.

Overall “other” themes indicate a need for:

- **Advocacy**

- Respondents expressed concerns regarding the misrepresentation of music therapy and the need for continued advocacy, not only in the United States but also around the world. Suggestions for future advocacy included crafting a more consistent, concrete definition of music therapy, calling on celebrities and those outside the field of music therapy to advocate for us, and having a presence at conferences for related fields.

- **Sustainability of our Profession & Organization**

- Respondents expressed concerns regarding the high amount of student debt, particularly related to the high costs of undergraduate and graduate tuition and unpaid internships and the low starting salaries for music therapists. Other concerns included job development, retainment, and overall satisfaction and the perception of job-related experience versus education.

Overall “other” themes also indicate a need for:

- **Communication**

- Respondents expressed the need for communication, including to non-AMTA members, and the need for updated technology to better communicate and provide resources. The need for better communication related to accessing clinical and outreach resources was also noted.

- **Supervision**

- Respondents stated that supervision should be required and more accessible, particularly for new professionals, and noted the increasing number of graduate-level trained music therapists with specific knowledge in these areas who could provide these services.

- **Specialization**

- Respondents suggested creating a system for recognizing specializations in clinical expertise and research.

Our Second Year: Highlights & Accomplishments

- Thematic Analysis of the two questions and five charges.
- Presentations either in person or online for all seven regional conferences.





Additional 2020 Highlights & Accomplishments

- Continued reach-outs to the music therapy community.
- Creation of a Student Liaison position in collaboration with AMTAS and inclusion of the liaison in our data analysis process.
- Continued review of guidance documents and relevant literature.
- Prioritization of individuals and groups with whom we need to collaborate and meetings with Ken Aigen and Bryan Hunter for their perspective from unification, APAC, AIAC, CRTF, and DEI.
- Creation of a timeline/roadmap to guide us as we move forward.



Next Steps

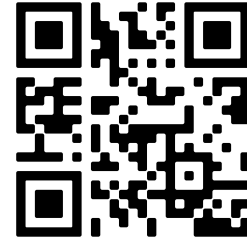
- Continue to meet with related stakeholders (ETAB, Faculty Forum, etc.)
- Integrate this information and other recent surveys and resources to:
 - Review our current education and clinical training/internship programs.
 - Identify strategies to increase diversity and inclusion and support state recognition.
- Continue to check in with you throughout this process.



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Ways to Share YOUR Feedback

- Google Form
- Email



NOTE: Email addresses & the Google form are on the Commission page on the AMTA website:

https://www.musictherapy.org/careers/21st_century_education/ (QuickLink available on the main page!)

- Social Media (@MTcommission)

