

The consensus among Music Department faculty regarding disciplinary communications objectives for our majors centers on two key points. First, faculty note that every student learns specialized music literacy skills, including fluency reading and writing music notation, a specialized vocabulary for talking about music, and an aural literacy comprising the ability to recognize harmonic and melodic musical materials; furthermore, students learn a variety of analytical notations involving text, music notation, and various forms of visual representation such as graphs. Second, while the Department's extensive music-theory curriculum fosters all of the specialized literacy skills listed above, it remains important for every music major to learn more traditional forms of written communication and argumentation. The limited availability of W credit within our core curriculum at present -- a few students in various music-history and music-culture courses are able to arrange with the instructor for W credit if they submit supplementary work in line with the current W-course requirements -- is consistent with this second point.

Given our present resources, it is difficult to envision making W credit more broadly available within the Music curriculum. If significant, course-specific writing support were made available to the Music Department, we could imagine making W credit a universal feature of various music-history, music-culture, and possibly music-theory courses.