NOVICE TEXAS BAND DIRECTORS’ PERCEPTIONS OF THE SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE FOR SUCCESSFUL TEACHING

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Dissertation Prepared for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS

August 2017

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The purposes of this descriptive survey research study were (a) to describe novice band directors' perceptions of the importance of skills/knowledge used in effective music teaching, (b) to describe novice band directors' perception of the difficulty of acquiring each skill or knowledge component, (c) to compare novice band directors' perceptions of the importance and difficulty of the skills/knowledge used in their classrooms, (d) to describe ways that novice band directors perceived university coursework as helpful in acquiring teaching skills/knowledge, and (e) to describe improvements to university coursework that novice band directors perceived could help future band directors. The personal skills/knowledge category ($M = 4.64$) was rated highest for importance, followed by the teaching ($M = 4.60$) and musical ($M = 4.29$) categories. Additionally, participants rated the personal skills/knowledge category ($M = 3.57$) as the easiest to acquire, followed by musical ($M = 3.14$), and teaching ($M = 3.09$) categories. There was a statistically significant difference between teaching importance ratings and teaching acquisition ratings, with the teaching importance category rated higher by participants. Participants perceived secondary instrument instruction, teaching experiences, core music curriculum, and practical skills/knowledge as positive aspects of university coursework. Finally, secondary instrument instruction, field experiences, non-instructional aspects of teaching, and musical pedagogy were reported by participants as areas for possible improvement.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am so grateful for all of the friends and family who have supported me on this journey, and without whom I would most certainly have deviated from the path to success long ago. My parents taught me the importance of an education and the value of work, which carried through to my adulthood. My friends gave me advice and emotional support to make the transition back to graduate school for this degree and listened to all of my thoughts (rational and otherwise) in making the change. And of course, my wonderful wife Min Shien, who has brought such joy into my life that other accomplishments are but pale shadows of the fact that I get to spend the rest of my life by her side.

I have also been blessed by such wonderful colleagues and mentors throughout my time at the University of North Texas. Christina Svec, Jenn Brimhall, Michelle Herring Folta, and Michael Chandler all helped encourage and challenge me during my coursework, and I am honored to be a music educator in such lofty company. Darhyl Ramsey taught me to learn to listen in a time when I thought I knew far more than I really did, and was patient enough to see me grow into a better teacher. Don Taylor has been an unending source of support and kindness, and has shown me what it means to be an educator who truly, deeply cares for his students. Sean Powell has opened my mind to the beauty found in the stories and experiences of others, and the powerful ways that research can reflect on the human condition. Finally, Debbie Rohwer has been an exemplary mentor, wonderful teacher, and friend during the time I have worked with her. I have learned so much about being a researcher, educator, and person from her and will always be grateful for her patience, intelligence, and effort in helping me to succeed.

Lastly, I thank God for the ability to reason, which I have all too often taken for granted.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

The return of students in the second semester of my first-year of teaching heralded a startling revelation; I really had no idea how to be a band director. Granted, I had received instruction on how to play instruments, how to read and understand music, how students learn, and even been warned of some common problems associated with the job. But, in truth, I still didn’t know how to actually occupy the role beyond formally assuming the identity; I didn’t truly know how to effectively teach band or manage a classroom.

It was in this condition that I attended my first Texas Music Educators Association Clinic and Convention: not just as one who wanted a way to survive the remaining school days, but also as one excited to learn and continue to grow. In addition, I wanted to be able to provide anything approaching a positive musical experience to my students. It was also the mindset in which I sat dumbfounded in a presentation, ostensibly designed for the struggling first-year teachers of the world, which rested on the central tenant that the only way to reach students successfully was to use the correct color (i.e. red, blue, green) in your verbal analogies. While the use of colors in feedback is one of many tools viable in a music classroom, at that moment I was desperately in need of help in skills more aligned with my struggles. I craved understanding of such things as classroom management techniques, motivational strategies, or how to identify student errors and isolate the causes.

As I walked out of the conference that evening, questions burned in my mind. What were the skills I was completely lacking? What knowledge did I have that was insufficient? Were there areas in which I felt confident of my understanding? Was I too focused on the wrong things? How could I possibly sift through all of the information on my own? A need for
answers consumed me, lest I waste even more of my students’ precious musical instruction due
to my ignorance. Over the next several months these questions became a driving force in my
professional life. I sought out mentors who were at different stages of their careers, including a
local award-winning retired director, a successful band director 5 years ahead of me in his career,
and a college band director with over 30 years of experience. Many phone calls, emails, and
meetings focused on two core obstacles: (a) how to handle specific situations I was then
experiencing, and (b) the overall knowledge necessary for a new teacher to be successful.
General skills/knowledge began to take shape in my mind from these discussions, combined with
pedagogical readings, and slowly my instruction improved. Next, my focus shifted to
experimentation of various teaching and management techniques to understand further what
worked best with individual students and in my classrooms. Student performances, musical
understanding, and overall experiences improved such that when I left that position at the end of
the school year, the students threw a generous going away party.

The second year of teaching, I assumed, would be better. I knew more, I had some
experience, and I was more comfortable in front of students. These were all helpful things,
largely because they gave me a greater ability to evaluate what I didn’t know. If my first-year
was about a strong desire to, as the medical profession presents it, “do no harm,” then my second
year focused to a greater extend on providing a positive learning experience. There too I
struggled, came up short, and found areas of my field that I didn’t realize needed improvement
during my 197 days of survival the previous year. Such learning and growth merely fed my
desire to understand to a greater extent what constitutes good teaching and how both others and I
could improve transitions into the field.
In subsequent years, I have had the chance to work with a few student teachers from both the cooperating teacher and university supervisor perspectives, as well as to discuss successfully navigating the first-year of band directing with music educators in multiple states. Through these professional experiences, and others, I have learned that the overwhelming experience of surviving the first-year is nigh universal. Many new band directors struggle with the vast panoply of skills/knowledge that seem so essential and yet so foreign, until they either find understanding through assorted means or simply leave the profession (Briskey, 2006; Conway, 2002, 2015; Madsen & Hancock, 2002).

Novice Music Teacher Defined

Although the terms preservice teacher and experienced teacher may contain inherent expectations, the use of the terms beginning teacher, novice teacher, and early-career teacher have often been used interchangeably in the literature to describe varying levels of experience. Definitions of these terms have included first-year teachers (Barnes, 2010; Conway & Christensen, 2006; Krueger, 1996; Peterson, 2005), teachers with 1 to 2 years of experience (Blair, 2008; Conway, 2002), 3 years of experience (Roulston, Legette, & Womack, 2005; Schmidt & Canser, 2006), 1 to 4 years of experience (Ballantyne, 2007a; Ballantyne & Packer, 2004), 1 to 5 years of experience (Leong, 1996), 1 to 10 years of experience (Legette, 2013), or undefined (Ballantyne, 2006). In the current study the term novice band director was selected to emphasize a general lack of experience and include those beginning their first and second years of band directing.

Statement of the Problem

What are the essential skills/knowledge necessary for novice teachers to succeed in music teaching? Much has been written about this question from the perspective of both preservice and
experienced teachers, yet examining what those currently in the early stages of their careers think about the indispensable personal, teaching, and musical skills/knowledge involved in music education has been left largely untouched. Determining which skills/knowledge are most needed in the minds of novice band directors appealed to me as a meaningful contribution to music education programs, adding to what researchers have found in other populations, such as the perceived importance of classroom management skills among experienced band directors (Miksza, Roeder, & Biggs, 2010; Teachout, 1997). This pursuit is in line with Yourn’s (2000) call for research that allows for beginning teacher reflections on diverse aspects of their work experiences.

When developing curricula for preservice music teachers, music education professors must take into consideration the skills/knowledge necessary for novice teacher success based on many different resources (Ballantyne, 2006; Miksza et al., 2010; Teachout, 1997). Cooper (1994) found that band directors were often concerned that curriculum design was severely disconnected from the classroom setting due to a lack of recent authentic experience among university professors, researchers, and pedagogical authors. Despite such concern, much of the novice music teacher literature has focused on other facets, including some of the specific challenges that novice music teachers face in their first years of teaching, novice music teachers’ general views of program preparation, and current mentoring and induction practices (Conway, 2015).

The necessity of specific skills/knowledge for successful teaching has been acknowledged by both researchers (Oakes, Ferrics, Martocchio, Buckley, & Broach, 2001; Tomlinson, 1995) and government overseers (Siwatu, Frazier, Osaghae, & Starker, 2011). Even with such acceptance of the need for skill development among music educators, there is little
research done in regards to the difficulty involved in skill acquisition. In general education research, Mizoue and Inoue (1993) found that skills like lesson planning were more difficult than initially predicted by novice elementary teachers in Japan. Similarly, Okibo and Okeke (2011) found that Nigerian novice math teachers expressed greater levels of difficult in gaining new skills/knowledge than did their more experienced colleagues. In the light of their findings, Okibo and Okeke (2011) also suggested greater attention be paid to preparing beginning teachers to use identified skills for teaching success.

Miksza et al. (2010) suggested that integrating research regarding the challenges faced by music teachers into a framework of necessary skills/knowledge may help to isolate topics essential to emphasis in music teacher preservice education. Several studies regarding specific challenges of novice teachers have highlighted areas such as classroom management (Barnes, 2010; Blair, 2008; Conway, 2003; Conway & Garlock, 2002; Legette & McCord, 2014; Peterson, 2005; Roulston et al., 2005; Yourn, 2000), culture shock (Barnes, 2010; ; Jones, 1978; Peterson, 2005; Roulston et al., 2005), and administrative duties (Conway, 2003; Conway, Hansen, Schulz, Stimson, & Wozniak-Reese, 2004; Conway & Zerman, 2004; Fredrickson & Neill, 2004; Legette, 2013) as areas of struggle. Whereas these studies have sought general participant views as to the transition from student to novice music teacher, a wider investigation as to the relative perceived importance, preparation, and perceived acquisition difficulty of skills/knowledge among novice band directors has yet to be undertaken.

Yourn (2000) suggested that preservice teacher education programs consider the concerns and struggles of beginning music teachers. By continuing to investigate and address these concerns, Yourn (2000) argued that teacher educators may be able to reduce anxiety related to the transition from student to teacher. Education researchers in other disciplines have
investigated novice teachers’ perceptions of difficulty in specific skills/knowledge acquisition (Burris & Keller, 2008; Carlson & Gooden, 1999; Haggard, Slostad, & Winterton, 2006; Hattie & Yates, 2014; Morgan & Bourke, 2008; Mizoue & Inoue, 1993; Mundt & Connors, 1999; Okibo & Okeke, 2011; Rovegno, 1993), yet in music education this question has not been addressed.

While studies, such as Burris and Keller (2008) in agriculture and Ballantyne and Packer (2004) in music education, have compared participants’ ratings of perceived importance and perceived preservice emphasis, no studies have examined acquisition difficulty in a similar context. Previous authors have noted that music skills/knowledge are often rated below teaching and personality skills/knowledge (Ballantyne & Packer, 2004; Miksza et al., 2010; Teachout, 1997). Ballantyne and Packer (2004) suggested that music skills receive lower importance rankings than teaching or personal skills due to more thorough preparation during preservice education. Further research by Cole (2014) found that participants aligned perceived importance with demonstrated ability more closely in musical skills/knowledge than in either teaching or personal skill categories. Likewise, Miksza et al. (2010) suggested that participants focused more on general skills rather than specific musical skills, resulting in lower rankings.

Personality skills/knowledge have been found to be more individualistic and difficult to influence in preservice education (Cole, 2014; Schmidt, 1998). Schmidt (1998) noted the wide differences in definitions of individual personal skills, such as enthusiasm, and Cole (2014) remarked that influencing personality skills may be problematic. Additionally, there has been some overlap between personality and teaching skills in the literature (Cole, 2014; Kelly, 2010). Finally, teaching skills have received the high ratings in previous research (Ballantyne & Packer, 2004; Miksza et al., 2010; Taebel, 1980). If a primary goal of music education programs is to
prepare preservice teachers with the skills/knowledge necessary for successful teaching (Kelly, 2010), understanding which teaching skills/knowledge are both important to novice music teachers and are difficult to master may inform preservice curricular design. Therefore, isolating and comparing both importance and difficulty ratings of teaching skills can give insight into the area most directly connected to preservice education.

The purposes of this study were (a) to describe novice band directors’ perceptions of the importance of skills/knowledge used in effective music teaching, (b) to describe novice band directors’ perception of the difficulty of acquiring each skill or knowledge component, (c) to compare novice band directors’ perceptions of the importance and difficulty of the skills/knowledge used in their classrooms, (d) to describe ways that novice band directors perceived university coursework as helpful in acquiring teaching skills/knowledge, and (e) to describe improvements to university coursework that novice band directors perceived could help future band directors. Although research, such as Teachout’s (1997) seminal study on skills/knowledge perceptions, has addressed the opinions of both preservice and experienced music educators, there is a dearth of material focusing on novice teacher perceptions of skills/knowledge. Likewise, research investigating perceptions of skill acquisition is absent among the beginning band director literature. The guiding research questions for this study were:

1. What was the relative perceived importance of various skills/knowledge categories among novice band directors in Texas?

2. How difficult have skills/knowledge categories been to acquire for novice band directors?
3. Were there differences between perceived importance of teaching skills/knowledge and perceived difficulty of teaching skills/knowledge acquisition among novice band directors?

4. In what ways did university coursework help novice teachers to acquire the necessary skills/knowledge for successful teaching?

5. What changes in preservice education do novice band directors feel would help prepare future preservice teachers to acquire the necessary skills/knowledge for successful teaching?
CHAPTER 2  
REVIEW OF LITERATURE  
Novice Music Teachers  

The transition from music student to music teacher can be a difficult one, often fraught with unexpected challenges and frustrations (Benson, 2008; Conway & Garlock, 2002). Researchers have examined novice music teachers through a variety of lenses and topics (Benson, 2008; Conway, 2015; Conway, Krueger, Robinson, Haack, & Smith, 2002). Conway et al. (2002) stated that effective music teaching consists of specific content knowledge and general teaching skills/knowledge, both of which can produce unique traits for successfully developing into mature teachers. In her recent literature review of novice music teacher research, Conway (2015) identified three areas of focus: challenges and problems of early career teachers, the mentoring/induction of novice teachers, and the views (particularly of preservice education) of novice teachers.

Challenges of Early Career Teachers  

Classroom management struggles were the most commonly discussed challenge in the literature (Barnes, 2010; Blair, 2008; Conway, 2003; Conway & Garlock, 2002; DeLorenzo, 1992; Fredrickson & Neill, 2004; Jones, 1978; Krueger, 1996; Legette, 2013; Legette & McCord, 2014; Peterson, 2005; Roulston et al., 2005; Yourn, 2000). Participants in qualitative studies consistently discussed the difficulties of maintaining classroom order early in their careers (Barnes, 2010; Conway, 2003; Peterson, 2005; Yourn, 2005). Similarly, anecdotal reflections contain numerous discussions of the hardships faced in this facet of teaching (Briskey, 2006; Conway et al., 2004). Krueger (1996) found that student discipline was mentioned by 100% of participants, which was 21% higher than the second most frequently
discussed challenge. Similarly, DeLorenzo (1992) found that participants rated “maintaining a controlled classroom environment” highly, with this item being listed in the top five areas of concern. Likewise, Legette (2013) found that classroom management was considered to be difficult by nearly half of all respondents. Barnes (2010) also found that participants believed “student learning was less effective in a less ordered environment” (p. 70).

Concerns about classroom management have also been remarked to be connected to either a real, or perceived, lack of management skills (Barnes, 2010; Blair, 2008) and a difficulty in implementing theory-based strategies in real time (Barnes, 2010; Roulston et al., 2005). In a pioneering study, Jones (1978) found that 71% of first-year instrumental teachers surveyed felt unsure about approaches to addressing discipline problems. Music teachers interviewed in Krueger (1996) often referenced large class sizes and inclusion students as contributing factors to discipline problems. Conway (2003) also discussed concerns about class sizes, as well as logistical problems like itinerancy, which were unique to music teachers. Additionally, Roulston et al. (2005) and Legette (2013) found class size concerns among early career music teachers.

Such student behavior issues have been found to relate to psychological health concerns in novice music teachers (Barnes, 2010; Jones, 1978). Krueger (1996) found that consistent discipline approaches appeared to help first-year teachers, however Conway and Garlock (2002) noted that outside factors, such as school calendar or weather changes, may easily disrupt teacher plans and increase student behavior problems. Additionally, Yourn (2000) noted that music education undergraduates were regularly surprised to discover that students appeared to willfully misbehave. One participant in Peterson (2005) struggled to make management choices as it conflicted with her self-concept of being a “laid back” individual.
Successfully navigating the context of a new school environment, particularly in regards to communication with parents, faculty, and administration, is another common challenge found in the literature (Barnes, 2010; Jones, 1978; Peterson, 2005; Roulston et al., 2005). The first job often presents a feeling of “culture shock,” which may be made worse if the past experiences of the first-year teacher, such as student teaching or personal experiences as a music student, conflict with the current school context in which the teacher works (Roulston et al., 2005). All participants in Peterson (2005) and Barnes (2010) experienced at least one difficult interaction with parents, which may have been partially related to demographic differences between the teachers and the parents. While these communications can often be stressful (Conway et al., 2004; Roulston et al., 2005), a proactive approach to communication and actively involving parents in supporting the music classroom may help to alleviate such concerns (Peterson, 2005).

Music teachers have been found to struggle with social and professional interactions with non-music faculty and administration (Barnes, 2010; Conway & Garlock, 2002; Edgar, 2012; Krueger, 1996; Peterson, 2005). Peterson (2005) found that clear communications between music teachers and non-music faculty/administration were often cumbersome. These communication problems may stem from a lack of music-specific context on the part of non-music teachers and administrators (Barnes, 2010). Conway and Garlock (2002), in their case study, found that convincing both non-music faculty and administration of the inherent worth of music class was a constant effort, which aligns with other literature on the topic (Barnes, 2010; Jones, 1978; Krueger, 1996). Edgar (2012) found that administrator expectations were often either vague or excessively myopic, and warned that first-year music teachers may acquiesce to pressure from administrators too easily, even when they felt that administrator requests were not in the best interests of the music students. Barnes (2010) found that the perception of support
from the educational community coincided with first-year teachers’ value statements about their work-day. However in DeLorenzo (1992), participants rated developing effective working relationships with colleagues or administrators as the least concerning skill items on the questionnaire.

Non-music teaching responsibilities have been found to be problematic for novice music teachers (Ballantyne, 2007a; Conway, 2003; Conway et al., 2004; Conway & Zerman, 2004; Fredrickson & Neill, 2004; Legette, 2013; Roulston et al., 2005). Several authors have highlighted novice music teachers’ struggles with the volume of paperwork found in schools (Conway, 2003; Conway et al., 2004; Conway & Zerman, 2004; Legette, 2013; Roulston et al., 2005). Fredrickson and Neill (1993) found that 42% of responses regarding the worst aspects of the day addressed job responsibilities, which included responses such as “lunch duty” or “numerous meetings that have nothing to do with fine arts” (p. 95). Navigating varying grading procedures and systems has been noted by both Conway (2003) and Conway et al. (2004) as of particular concern to novice music teachers. In contrast, Legette and McCord (2014) found that few preservice teachers viewed paperwork as difficult prior to teaching. In addition to navigating grading procedures, philosophical differences may lead to differing expectations about the role of grades in the music program (Conway et al., 2004). Similarly, basic practical knowledge, such as building usage procedures or engaging with a booster program, has also been found to be surprising and overwhelming (Conway, 2003).

Novice music teachers have been found to struggle with selecting music for their students (Briskey, 2006; Conway, 2003; Peterson, 2005; Schmidt & Canser, 2006). The varying contexts, such as festivals, concerts, or the classroom, have been found to add to the complexity of literature selection (Conway, 2003; Peterson, 2005). Likewise, novice music teachers have been
found to struggle to identify the characteristics of their ensembles for literature selection (Conway, 2003; Peterson, 2005) or connect musical concepts to appropriate literature (Schmidt & Canser, 2006). Legette and McCord (2014) found preservice teachers had similar concerns about selecting appropriate materials.

Expectations of the first-year have been found to lead to frustrations among novice music teachers (Ballantyne, 2007; Fredrickson & Neill, 2004; Richards & Killen, 1993; Roulston et al., 2005). Richards and Killen (1993) found that preservice music teachers believed that they would be more successful than their peers and that many of the common problems cited among first-year music teachers, such as classroom management, would not be issues for them individually. Fredrickson and Neill (2004) found that novice teacher’s daily expectations began very positively, and then became decidedly negative before reaching equilibrium. Similarly, Roulston et al. (2005) found that preconceived notions of teaching among participants led to internal conflicts as they gained professional experience. Ballantyne (2007a) asked participants to describe their job in a way that someone with no knowledge of music education would understand. In examining these responses, she identified the differences between expectations and reality in regards to both physical/professional isolation and extra-musical responsibilities as being underlying causes of shock for early career music educators.

Several researchers have found participants expressed feelings of being overwhelmed during early experiences in authentic classroom settings (Blair, 2008; Conway, 2003; Conway & Christensen, 2006; Conway & Garlock, 2002; Conway & Zerman, 2004; Edgar, 2012; Jones, 1978; Krueger, 1996; Peterson, 2005; Yourn, 2000). Excessively full schedules (Blair, 2008), transitioning music education cultures (Jones, 1978), teaching assignments outside of participants’ principal areas (Peterson, 2015), amount of time required at work (Conway &
Garlock, 2002; Krueger, 1996), the pressure of festivals (Conway & Christensen, 2006; Edgar, 2012), relationships with mentors (Yourn, 2000), and personal concerns (Peterson, 2005) have all been connected to overpowering emotions during early career experiences. Conway and Zerman (2004) noted that overwhelming feelings were stronger at the beginning of the year.

Studies also have found that perceptions of isolation are common among novice teachers (Ballantyne, 2007a; Conway & Christensen, 2006; Conway et al., 2002; Conway & Garlock, 2002; Krueger, 1996). In many cases, there may only be one music teacher on campus, and thus subject area has been found to serve as an isolating factor (Ballantyne, 2007a; Fredrickson & Neil, 2004; Conway et al., 2002). This demarcation can be further compounded by the finding that strategies and tips used in general classrooms may be less effective for music settings (Conway et al., 2002). Likewise, researchers have found that the views of non-music faculty or administrators on the worth of music instruction served as an isolating factor for participants (Conway & Garlock, 2002; Krueger, 1996). Conway and Christensen (2006) found that feelings of isolation came partially from age and philosophy differences with the general staff, which in turn led to Christensen limiting social interaction primarily to her students. Physical isolation of the music classroom was also found to contribute to novice teacher feelings of isolation (Conway & Christensen, 2006).

Physical exhaustion has been found to be a marked challenge for novice music teachers (Conway & Christensen, 2006; Conway & Garlock, 2002; Jones, 1978; Krueger, 1996; Legette, 2013). Jones (1978) found that “seventy-two percent of respondents indicated that feeling excessively tired at the end of the teaching day was at least a moderate problem for them, and over one-third considered it a strong or extreme problem” (p. 129). Correspondingly, Legette (2013) found that 48% of respondents struggled to maintain their energy. Conway and
Christensen (2006) noted that teachers attending festivals felt exhausted and Krueger (1996) found that logistical concerns like itinerancy and paperwork were related to feelings of exhaustion. Preservice teachers also have expressed concerns about maintaining energy in their early careers (Legette & McCord, 2014).

Several other problems faced by novice music teachers have been noted in the literature. General scheduling constraints created difficulties for the teachers surveyed in Legette (2013). Schmidt (2008) suggested that overloaded schedules may, in turn, increase the difficulty of meaningful reflection, which may already be negatively impacted by a lack of practical experience early in novice teachers’ careers. Failure was experienced more often than expected by some novice music teachers (Jones, 1978), which consequently might have been related to worries about teaching bad lessons, displaying inappropriate teaching habits, and disappointing mentors (Youhn, 2000). Youhn (2000) found that participants were often too focused on the creation of correct lesson plans, and not on the development of successful lessons. In a secondary context, researchers have found novice music teachers suffer from a lack of understanding and difficulty navigating necessary recruiting (DeLorenzo, 1992; Jones, 1978). Barnes (2010) found that scheduling concerns and the frequency of student pull-outs contributed to feelings of music as “second-class citizens” in the educational community.

Mentoring and Induction

Mentoring has been defined as either an apprenticeship model with one master and one novice teacher, or as a community of practice where teachers of a variety of skills and experience levels meets to provide each other with guidance and feedback (Blair, 2008). Varying findings about the importance of mentoring have been presented in the literature, ranging in participant response from negative (Schmidt & Canser, 2006; Youhn, 2000), to general indifference.
(Fredrickson & Neill, 2004), to positive (Blair, 2008; Krueger, 1996; Legette & McCord, 2014; Schmidt, 2008). Schmidt and Canser (2006) found that the initial district-mandated mentor was of little help, due to time and logistical constraints as well as personality conflicts. In contrast, the second district mentor was able to support Canser through his early teaching experiences. Comments about mentorship, mentors, or collaboration were exceeding rare among the 19 novice music teachers surveyed in Fredrickson and Neill (2004), and the authors suggested encouraging future teachers to be less independent. Participants in Krueger (1996) associated positive music mentor relationships with decreases in feelings of isolation. Similarly, Blair (2008) found that music specialist mentors were viewed more positively by their mentees. Furthermore, Schmidt (2008) noted that mentoring preservice music teachers helped a novice music teacher to understand feedback from his own mentor.

New teacher mentoring, often also referred to as induction, has been found to vary by state, and no national guidelines for either are in place (Conway et al., 2004; Koerner, Baughman, Baumgartner, Millican, & Stanbury, 2016; Schmidt, 2008). As such, both Benson (2008) and Koerner et al. (2016) found that the selection of mentors is often unstructured, and mentors often are untrained. Koerner et al. (2016) found that only 24 state music educator associations provided any mentoring programs for their novice members. Mentors were typically chosen by teaching area and geographic location, and meetings between mentors and mentees were inconsistent (Koerner et al, 2016). In spite of some organized mentor programs, Roulston et al. (2005) found that many novice music teachers sought out mentor relationships on an individual basis. This inconsistency in mentor acquisition may contribute to the divergent findings regarding novice teachers’ views of the mentoring process.
In cases where conflict was present, philosophical and experience differences were found to underlie said friction between novice music teachers and either mentors (Yourn, 2000) or administrators (Blair, 2008). Benson (2008) remarked that the establishment of the mentor/mentee relationship should first be present before emotional support can take place. The myriad of situations and approaches to mentoring may create challenges for the formulation of healthy relationships, however.

Differing aspects of mentoring have been found to be important to novice music teachers (Conway et al., 2002; Krueger, 1996; McIlhagga, 2006; Schmidt, 2008). Observations have been found to be a key aspect of mentor relationships, as they can allow for greater contextualization during follow up meetings where constructive feedback is provided (Blair, 2008; Conway et al., 2002; Conway & Zerman, 2004). In order to gain a greater understanding of the value of mentor expertise and feedback, McIlhagga (2006) asked novice music teachers their opinions of the most impactful skills/knowledge their mentors’ possessed, and found that classroom management, knowledge of teaching materials/music literature, rehearsal techniques, communication skills, and general knowledge of music fundamentals were mentioned most often. In contrast, mentor skills/knowledge components such as understanding and using research, arranging/composing, social/psychological uses and functions of music, and improvisation were all viewed as being less important to novice music teachers (McIlhagga, 2006). In addition to skills, novice music teachers may warm to mentors who are not concurrently serving in an evaluative capacity (Conway et al., 2002). Schmidt (2008) found that understanding and interpreting communication from mentors was often difficult for novice music teachers.
Researchers have examined the induction programs offered to novice music teachers and found very little organized professional development for novice music teachers (Conway & Christensen, 2006; Conway & Zerman, 2004; Jones, 1978). Conway et al. (2002) defined induction as “a program provided to a novice teacher that includes professional development that is specific to beginning teachers” (p. 9). In an in-depth exploration of one individual’s perceptions of professional development, Conway and Christensen (2006) found three main sources of professional development: (a) district provided, (b) external organizations, and (c) self-sought opportunities. District-provided professional development has been found to be inconsistent in value, and participants have noted that, although certain offerings were applicable to music teaching, many more were viewed as unrelated (Conway & Christensen, 2006; Conway & Zerman, 2004). These findings reflect Jones’ (1978) study, which found that 44% of participants stated they were provided no in-service for first-year music teachers, and an additional 44% considered the in-service they were provided to be weak at best. Conway and Christensen (2006) noted that some of the most appreciated professional development activities were those that were outside of the district’s scope, and therefore were not eligible for professional development credits. In contrast, the authors found that the use of judges’ comments lacked the context to be extremely useful, despite the status of adjudicated feedback as official professional development.

Views of Novice Teachers

Novice teachers have expressed mixed views about the value of preservice education (Jones, 1978; Roulston et al., 2005). Twenty-nine percent of respondents in Ballantyne and Packer (2004) were dissatisfied with their preservice preparation for teaching. In contrast, more than half of respondents in Jones (1978) answered that courses in music education, conducting,
and performance were helpful. Shires (1990) also found that novice music teachers viewed conducting positively. Participants in Roulston et al. (2005) expressed both positive and negative views about the value of coursework. Ballantyne (2007b) identified three overall themes of novice teacher views of preservice programs: (a) contextualization, (b) integration, and (c) continuity.

Researchers have found a desire for increased emphasis on providing authentic context to preservice teacher education (Ballantyne, 2006; Ballantyne, 2007b; Conway, 2002; Conway, Eros, Hourigan, & Stanley, 2007; Roulston et al., 2005). Ballantyne (2006, 2007b) found that, in the views of novice music teachers, many of the general pedagogical skills/knowledge were less meaningful due to a lack of music teaching context. When examining novice teachers’ perceptions of the efficacy of woodwind and brass methods courses, Conway et al. (2007) found that participants encountered difficulty in relating specific content or organizational aspects of the course to their experiences teaching novice band students. Participants in Conway (2002) did note, however, that student teaching provided unifying context for their development as educators. Additionally, Roulston et al. (2005) found that when student teaching context aligned with the context of the first job, student teaching was discussed as a more meaningful experience. Participants suggested that guided reflection of classroom practice was a possible way to increase contextualization in preservice coursework, student teaching, and the first-year of employment (Ballantyne, 2007b).

Ballantyne (2007b) defined an integrated course as “one that helps students make links between theory and practice, between general education and music education, as well as relating the knowledge presented in all their music discipline and education units to their future professional practice” (p. 129). The finding that novice music teachers preferred preservice
education to emphasize the skills/knowledge, both musical and practical, necessary for successful integration into the profession has been well documented (Ballantyne, 2006, 2007a, 2007b; Ballantyne & Packer, 2004; Conway, 2002; Conway et al., 2007; Jones, 1978; Krueger, 1996). Practical skills outside of the music curricula have been found to surprise and overwhelm participants (Ballantyne, 2006, 2007b; Ballantyne & Packer, 2004). Conway et al. (2004) found that the time spent on music theory or history in preservice teacher education was inverted from the amount of class time spent on these topics in the school setting. Participants in Conway et al. (2007) preferred content that was focused on the fundamentals of teaching beginning instrumentalists over content discussing advanced instrumental performance techniques. Similarly, understanding connections between musical the instruments, such as brass fingering similarities, has been found to be problematic (Conway, 2002). Researchers have suggested that reorganizing coursework to place greater time and emphasis on musical teaching skills may be a way to improve the transition from student to teacher (Conway, 2002; Jones, 1978; Krueger, 1996). Jones (1978) specifically recommended stressing classroom management, instrumental methods, instrument repair, lesson planning, and music repertoire selection in preservice teacher education. Conway (2002) also suggested (a) a wider range of methods course requirements across teaching areas, (b) the combination of some methods courses (such as brass instruments or woodwind instruments), and (c) an extended student teaching practicum.

Skills/Knowledge for Music Teaching

Perceptions of Skills

An essential part of music teacher instruction has been found to involve a myriad of skills and behaviors, which are then combined to foster teaching and learning in the music classroom (Ballantyne & Packer, 2004; Teachout, 1997). Consensus about the skills and behaviors that
comprise impactful music instruction, however, has yet to be reached (Cole, 2014; Rohwer & Henry, 2004). Preservice teacher education institutions and researchers who seek to perpetuate and advance the music education profession may be served by further investigations of effective teaching skills and behaviors, as well as factors that have been found to shape them.

Many of these studies have followed the three categories of musical, teaching, and personal skills/behaviors first laid out by Teachout (1997). Teaching and personal skills have been frequently rated above musical skills by educators (Ballantyne & Packer, 2004; Hamann, Baker, McAllister, Bauer, 2000; Kelly, 2010; Miksza et al., 2010; Rohwer & Henry, 2004; Taebel, 1980, 1990; Teachout, 1997). Researchers have suggested possible causes for the low importance ratings of musical skills, such as participant appreciation for general musicianship over specific skills (Miksza et al., 2010) or as a result of extensive musical preparation during preservice teacher education (Ballantyne & Packer, 2004). In contrast, Kelly (2007) found that high school band students emphasized teacher musical skills when evaluating teaching effectiveness.

Although there has been general consistency in the overall rankings of the three categories, rankings of individual items inside each category have varied, with classroom management and the ability to motivate students being the most agreed upon items. Among teaching skills, classroom management skills were found to be of high importance to music education students (Blocher, Greenwood, & Shellahamer, 1997; Cole, 2014; Davis, 2006; Richards & Killen, 1993; Teachout, 1997) and music teachers (Blocher et al., 1997; Cole, 2014; Miksza et al., 2010; Millican, 2009; Rohwer & Henry, 2004; Taebel, 1980; Teachout, 1997). In their qualitative examination of music student teaching concerns, Killian, Dye, and Weyman (2013) found that music students were concerned with classroom management prior to student
teaching. Likewise, participants in MacLeod and Walter (2001) found their student teachers to be only moderately prepared to handle student behavior concerns. Music teachers have also expressed the importance of having a positive approach (Cole, 2014; Davis, 2006; Kelly, 2010; Madsen, Standley, Byo, & Cassidy, 1992; Miksza et al., 2010).

Other teaching skills/behaviors highly ranked, but less consistently agreed upon, by participants have included lesson planning (Ballantyne & Packer, 2004; Millican, 2009; Taebel, 1980, 1990), pacing (Madsen et al., 1992), the knowledge and ability to engage individual students personally and educationally (Baker, 1981; Ballantyne & Packer, 2004; Millican, 2009; Mills & Smith, 2003), professionalism (Kelly, 2010; Taebel, 1980), displaying confidence (Davis, 2006; Teachout, 1997), clear delivery (Hamann et al., 2000; Rohwer, 2009), and organization (Davis, 2006; Millican, 2009; Taebel, 1990; Teachout, 1997). While music teachers (Baker, 1981; Blocher et al., 1997; Davis, 2006; Hamann et al., 2000; Madsen et al., 1992) and administrators (Blocher et al., 1997) have tended to rate clear lesson presentation and delivery highly in many studies, participants in Miksza et al. (2010) ranked the item “be able to present a lesson with clarity” in the bottom third of teaching skills. Researchers have also identified teaching skills and behaviors participants perceived to be unimportant or of lesser importance, including frequent eye contact (Miksza et al., 2010), technology understanding (Kelly, 2010), knowledge of educational purposes (Ballantyne & Packer, 2004, Taebel, 1980), managing finances (Ballantyne & Packer, 2004; Davis, 2006), understanding of standardized testing (Taebel, 1980), using a variety of activities (Cole, 2014; Rohwer, 2009), and effective use of body language (Teachout, 1997).

Personal skills, while often rated equal in importance to teaching skills, have received slightly less attention from researchers (Johnson, 2014). This may be, in part, due to the
indistinct demarcations between personal and teaching skills. Certain skills/behaviors, such as being professional, can be found under either teaching skills (Kelly, 2010) or personal skills (Cole, 2014; Davis, 2006) depending on the author. Likewise, personal skills or behaviors, particularly those that “make someone exciting” (Cole, 2014, p. 56), may be inherent, and therefore difficult to identify or cultivate. Skills and behaviors, such as having an enthusiastic/energetic demeanor (Baker, 1981; Cole, 2014; Davis, 2006; Mills & Smith, 2003), an ability to build positive rapport with students (Baker, 1981; Ballantyne & Packer, 2004; MacLeod & Walter, 2011), and confidence (Rohwer, 2009; Rohwer & Henry, 2004, Teachout, 1997), have been rated highly by participants. Participants in Schmidt (1998) stressed personal qualities like enthusiasm, yet they held widely different definitions of what such personal terms meant in practice. Madsen et al. (1989) noted extroversion as a common personality thread in music student teachers. Correspondingly, music teachers were found to have social, investigative, and artistic personality traits (Teachout, 2001). These personality characteristics, however, did not contribute to effective teaching behaviors as measured by the *Survey of Teaching Effectiveness*.

Despite participants often rating teaching and personal skills higher, musical skills have been found to be perceived as a meaningful part of instruction among preservice (Teachout, 1997), currently-employed (Miksza et al., 2010; Taebel, 1980; Teachout, 1997), and university music teachers (Rohwer & Henry, 2004). Participants have viewed maintaining high musical standards (Kelly, 2007; Miksza et al., 2010; Teachout, 1997), being musically expressive (Rohwer & Henry, 2004), possessing aural skills (Taebel, 1980) and demonstrating knowledge of the subject matter (Ballantyne & Packer, 2004; Teachout, 1997) as important skills in the music classroom. Killian et al. (2013) noted music education students’ concerned statements
prior to student teaching, yet the frequency of comments decreased after student teaching was completed. In contrast, piano skills appeared towards the bottom of the rankings in many studies in which the skill was included (Cole, 2014; Kelly, 2007, 2010; MacLeod & Walter, 2011; Miksza et al., 2010; Taebel, 1980; Teachout, 1997). Rohwer and Henry (2004), however, found that elementary teachers valued piano skills highly; despite such high importance, Cole (2014) found that elementary music student teachers were lacking in both piano and sight-singing skills. Additionally, studies have found transposition among choral and elementary teachers (Rohwer & Henry, 2004) and singing among band directors (MacLeod & Walter, 2011; Miksza et al., 2010) and band members (Rohwer, 2009) to be less valued than other musical skills.

Researchers have suggested that preservice teacher education may shape skill and behavior rankings (Ballantyne & Packer, 2004; Cole, 2014; Davis, 2006; Teachout, 1997). Ballantyne and Packer (2004) found that nearly one third of participants were somewhat or very dissatisfied with their preparation, and that areas that held high importance for novice music teachers were also areas that displayed low perceptions of preparation. Likewise, results also indicated that skills such as music history, performance practice, and understanding of educational purposes and values were all considered to be over-trained in comparison to their role in successful music teaching (Ballantyne & Packer, 2004). These findings concur with the wider body of research, which has suggested that music skills may be well represented in preservice teacher education yet practical skills may be underemphasized (Cole, 2014; Davis, 2006; Legette & McCord, 2014; Miksza et al., 2010). According to Teachout (1997), educators may use the relative ratings of skills and behaviors to support periodic reexamination of the skills and behaviors emphasized in music education coursework.
Results regarding the perceptions of skills and behaviors have varied based on experience (Ballantyne & Packer, 2004; Doerksen, 1999; Mills & Smith, 2003; Taebel, 1990; Teachout, 1997). Teachout (1997) found that individual skills/knowledge rankings for six items differed significantly by experience group. Experienced teachers rated the items “Be enthusiastic/energetic,” “Maximize time on task,” “Maintain student behavior,” and “Be patient” higher than preservice teachers. Conversely, the items “Be creative/spontaneous” and “Display a high level of musicianship” were rated considerably lower by experienced teachers. Doerksen (1999) found that preservice teachers differed from experienced teachers when commenting on musical items, with expert teachers ranking balance/blend and rhythm/precision as the weakest aspect of performance more frequently than preservice teachers. Davis (2006) found that novice music education students and music education student teachers tended to agree on ratings, and suggested that the similar past experiences across the groups might be the cause. Likewise, music teachers listed past performance experiences and the personal characteristics of previous teachers as influential in their development (Schmidt, 1998). Millican (2009), however, found no significant differences in general pedagogical skill rankings based on teacher experience.

Personal experiences in musical settings have also been found to relate to preservice teacher perceptions (Mills & Smith, 2003; Teachout, 1997). In qualitative investigations, participants have noted a strong connection between incidents in their past as music students and perceptions of music teaching (Mills & Smith, 2003; Schmidt, 1998). Eighty one percent of participants in one study asserted that they either made teaching decisions based on how they were taught, or in direct response to how they were taught (Mills & Smith, 2003). Using a quantitative approach, Kelly (2007) also found that previous experiences as students informed individuals’ skills/knowledge rankings.
Various researchers have investigated skills/knowledge with multiple participant groups, including preservice music education students (Baker, 1981; Davis, 2006; Doerksen, 1999; Hamann et al., 2000; Richards & Killen, 1993), music student teachers (Davis, 2006; Killian et al., 2013), university level music educators (Rohwer & Henry, 2004), education administrators (Baker, 1981), middle school band students (Rohwer, 2009), high school band students (Kelly, 2007), adult band members (Rohwer, 2009), and in-service music teachers in varying combinations of elementary (Ballantyne & Packer, 2004; Cole, 2014, Kelly, 2010; Taebel, 1980, 1990; Teachout, 1997) and secondary settings (Ballantyne & Packer, 2004; Blocher et al., 1997; Doerksen, 1999; Kelly, 2010; MacLeod & Walter, 2011; Miksza et al., 2010; Taebel, 1980, 1990; Teachout, 1997). Teachout (1997) and Doerksen (1999) both combined two of these populations in their studies by examining perceptions of skills through the juxtaposition of preservice and experienced music educators’ responses.

While the majority of research has been conducted with participants from multiple teaching areas, Blocher et al. (1997), Doerksen, 1999, Rohwer (2009), and Miksza et al. (2010) focused on teacher skills in the band setting. Uniquely, Ballantyne and Packer (2004) focused on novice music teachers, defined as those with less than 4 years of experience, in all music teaching areas. The authors argued that their findings provide support for reevaluating preservice teacher preparation, with an increased emphasis on pedagogical content knowledge and non-pedagogical professional skills/knowledge in order to facilitate music teachers’ transition into the workforce (Ballantyne & Packer, 2004).

Researchers have examined various comparisons regarding skills/knowledge for effective teaching (Ballantyne & Packer, 2004; Kelly, 2010; Miksza et al., 2010; Rohwer & Henry, 2004; Teachout, 1997). Teachout (1997) compared preservice and experienced teachers’ ratings on the
ex post facto categories of teaching, personal, and musical skills/knowledge and found that both
groups ranked musical skills/knowledge significantly lower than both teaching and personal
skills/knowledge. Rohwer and Henry (2004) found differences between musical skill importance
ratings based on higher education teaching area, with choral participants rating musical skills the
highest, followed by instrumental and general elementary respectively. Similarly, when
comparing individual skills and traits across instrumental and choral/general elementary
supervising teachers Kelly (2010) found that specific items, such as classroom management,
patience, piano proficiency, eye contact, modeling skills, and music history/theory knowledge
differed by teaching area. Ballantyne and Packer (2004) used an importance performance
analysis to plot importance and preservice preparation scores on a four-quadrant grid using
means to organize items from greatest to least participant concern.

The transition from music education student to music educator has been found to involve
change and to be difficult to navigate (Killian et al., 2013; Miksza et al., 2010). In responses to
open-ended items, participants in Miksza et al. (2010) stressed difficulties that included
motivating students and successfully managing a classroom, as well as the role of both skill
acquisition and mentoring in alleviating these concerns. Killian et al. (2013) suggested that
frequent exposure to teaching experiences through peers and in-field experiences prior to student
teaching may help to assuage the concerns of music education students as they transition into the
workforce.

Skill Acquisition

General education researchers have investigated knowledge and skill acquisition among
teachers in varying settings and career stages (Burris & Keller, 2008; Carlson & Gooden, 1999;
Haggard et al., 2006; Hattie & Yates, 2014; Morgan & Bourke, 2008; Mizoue & Inoue, 1993;
Mundt & Connors, 1999; Okibo & Okeke, 2011; Rovegno, 1993). Mizoue and Inoue (1993) found that, among Japanese fourth-grade teachers, acquiring skills such as lesson planning, administrative duties, and managing extracurricular activities proved to be challenging. These findings aligned with both math teachers in Nigeria (Okibo & Okeke, 2011) and agriculture teachers in Texas (Burris & Keller, 2008). Additionally, researchers have found that classroom management (Burris & Keller, 2008; Haggard et al., 2006; Mundt & Connors, 1999; Myers, Dyer, & Washburn, 2005; Okibo & Okeke, 2011), managing work finances/developing a budget (Burris & Keller, 2008; Mizoue & Inoue, 1993; Mundt & Connors, 1999), communication with parents (Burris & Keller, 2008; Myers et al., 2005) and colleagues (Haggard et al., 2006; Mizoue & Inoue, 1993; Myers et al., 2005), balancing personal and professional responsibilities (Mundt & Connors, 1999; Myers et al., 2005), and implementing appropriate instruction (Burris & Keller, 2008; Okibo & Okeke, 2011) were challenging to in-service teachers.

Education researchers have also identified several factors related to knowledge and skill acquisition among teachers. Exposure to modeling has been found to improve demonstrable knowledge and skills among both teaching assistants (Sharp, 1981) and student teachers (Carlson & Gooden, 1999). Likewise, researchers have found that prior knowledge and experiences were related to successful skill acquisition (Hattie & Yates, 2014; Morgan & Burke, 2008; Rovegno, 1993) and Morgan and Burke (2008) further found that physical education teachers were significantly more uncomfortable teaching activities with that they were unfamiliar and unexperienced. Kollar, Reichersdorfer, Vogel, Fischer, and Reiss. (2014) found that prior achievement, as measured by high school GPA, was a significant predictor of beginning math teacher skill acquisition in learning conditions that relied heavily on text, such as instructions, collaboration scripts, or work examples.
Additionally, Suwarwoto and Lee (2005) found that cooperating teachers and university supervisors were meaningful sources of technological pedagogical content. Gliessman, Pugh, Dowden, and Hutchins (1988), through a meta-analysis of teaching skill acquisition research regarding the specific skill of questioning, found that education variables were significantly related to questioning skill acquisition. Okibo and Okeke (2011) suggested that beginning math teachers perceived greater difficulty in implementing teaching skills, such as effective classroom management strategies and lesson planning, due to issues such as a lack of knowledge about the educational system, a lack of knowledge about students, and a lack of knowledge about classroom materials.

Copeland (1977) found that microteaching experiences were significantly related to successful demonstration of teaching knowledge and skills in a laboratory classroom, he did not find any significant connection between microteaching and knowledge or skill demonstration in an authentic setting. Gliessman et al. (1988) suggested that skills acquired in simplified settings, such as college classrooms, do not always transfer to the authentic classroom environments.

Participants in Rovegno (1993) expressed that effective teaching was quite challenging, and that the complexities inherent in teaching made critical reflection essential, but difficult. Tomlinson (1995) agreed, and in his position paper suggested that the complexities of teaching increase the difficulty of skill acquisition among novice teachers. Such difficulty, Wallace (1981) argued, results in increases in the time needed to become familiar with new approaches to skills such as classroom observation.

Foundational Studies

Teachout (1997) examined preservice and experienced teachers’ perceptions of the skills and behaviors involved in music teaching. These skills were identified through three key
procedures: (a) the results from an open-ended questionnaire administered to preservice music teachers from three separate universities, (b) an extensive literature search, and (c) expert opinions of items identified through the literature review. He then selected the top 20 skills and behaviors from the initial questionnaire, as well as the top 20 from the combination of literature review and expert opinions, for a total of 40 skills included in the questionnaire. The entire skill list may be found in Table 1. Because each skill or behavior was selected due to its importance in either context, Teachout (1997) established a 4-point Likert scale, beginning with 1 representing somewhat important and culminating with 4 representing extremely important. After calculating means and standard deviations, Teachout (1997) then determined the rank order for each item by ordering the means; items were also organized into the three skill and behavior categories of (a) personal, (b) musical, or (c) teaching.

In looking at similarities and differences across groups, Teachout (1997) found that 7 of the top 10 skills were common among both experienced and preservice teachers, which included "Be mature and have self-control," "Be able to motivate students," "Possess strong leadership skills," "Involve students in the learning process," "Display confidence," "Be organized," and "Employ a positive approach" (Teachout, 1997, p. 45). In contrast, 6 of the 40 items differed by overall rating of 10 or more ranking placements and included the items “Be enthusiastic, energetic,” “Maximize time on task,” “Maintain student behavior,” “Be patient,” “Be creative, imaginative, and spontaneous,” and “Display a high level of musicianship.” He found significant main effects for experience and skill, with both preservice and experienced teachers rating musical skills significantly lower than personal skills and teaching skills. No interactions were found. In light of these findings, Teachout (1997) suggested that college educators carefully decide upon skills or behaviors to emphasize and developed in the limited time available during
preservice teacher education.

Table 1

*Teachout’s (1997) Skills and Behaviors for Effective Teaching and Skill Type*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill and behavior</th>
<th>Style</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Enthusiastic, energetic</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Maximize time on task</td>
<td>T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Involve students in the learning process</td>
<td>T</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Possess competent conducting gestures</td>
<td>M</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Maintain student behavior (strong, but fair discipline)</td>
<td>T</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Have a pleasant affect; sense of humor</td>
<td>P</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Be knowledgeable of subject matter materials</td>
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<td>8. Possess good lesson planning skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Maintain an effective rehearsal pace</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Frequently make eye contact with students</td>
<td>T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Move toward and among the group</td>
<td>T</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Be goal-oriented</td>
<td>P</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. Maintain a high level of professionalism</td>
<td>P</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. Employ a positive approach</td>
<td>T</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. Possess excellent singing skills</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Possess musical knowledge (theory, history, etc.)</td>
<td>M</td>
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<tr>
<td>17. Use effective physiological communication (body language)</td>
<td>T</td>
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<tr>
<td>18. Display confidence</td>
<td>P</td>
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<tr>
<td>19. Maintain high musical standards</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Possess excellent ear-training skills</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Be knowledgeable and proficient with secondary instruments</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Be patient</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Be organized</td>
<td>P</td>
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<tr>
<td>24. Have excellent speaking skills (diction, tonal inflection, vocabulary)</td>
<td>P</td>
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<tr>
<td>25. Easily develop a positive rapport with people</td>
<td>P</td>
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<tr>
<td>26. Possess proficient piano skills</td>
<td>M</td>
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<tr>
<td>27. Be creative, imaginative, and spontaneous</td>
<td>P</td>
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<tr>
<td>28. Maintain excellent classroom management and procedures</td>
<td>T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Be able to motivate students</td>
<td>T</td>
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<tr>
<td>30. Display a high level of musicianship</td>
<td>M</td>
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<tr>
<td>31. Possess excellent sight-reading (sight-singing) skills</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Possess strong leadership skills</td>
<td>P</td>
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<tr>
<td>33. Be flexible and adaptable</td>
<td>P</td>
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<tr>
<td>34. Be able to present a lesson with clarity</td>
<td>T</td>
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<tr>
<td>35. Be able to manage finances well</td>
<td>P</td>
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<tr>
<td>36. Possess an understanding of teaching/learning strategies</td>
<td>T</td>
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<tr>
<td>37. Be able to work with students of different ages and abilities</td>
<td>T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. Employ a variety of materials/activities within a lesson</td>
<td>T</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Working from Teachout’s (1997) study, Miksza, Roeder, and Biggs (2010) expanded the sample to currently-employed Colorado band directors of all experience levels. Their questionnaire used the top 10 skills and behaviors from the teaching, personal, and musical categories used in Teachout’s (1997) previous research. Furthermore, they added two open-ended items: (a) “What advice would you give to a new music teacher just entering their first job” and (b) “What are the biggest rewards and struggles you encounter as a school band director” (Miksza et al., 2010, p. 369). Respondents were asked to rank the 10 items in each skill and behavior category before answering the two open-ended items, which were then analyzed for themes. Additionally, participants were asked to rank the three broad categories in order of importance. The open-ended items were used to gain deeper insight into respondents’ perceptions.

In agreement with Teachout (1997), Miksza et al. (2010) found that music skills ranked lower than teaching and personal skills. Among teaching skills, the items "Be able to motivate students" ($M = 3.81$) and "Maintain excellent classroom management and procedures" ($M = 3.92$) were the highest ranked, while “be able to present a lesson with clarity” ($M = 6.05$) “Be able to work with students of different ages and abilities” ($M = 6.18$), and “Frequently make eye contact with students” ($M = 6.38$) ranked lowest (Miksza et al., 2010, p. 371). The item “Be enthusiastic, energetic” ($M = 3.96$) was the highest of the personal rankings, and “Manage stress well” ($M = 6.12$) was in the last rank (Miksza et al., 2010, p. 371). While the musical skills item “Maintain high musical standards” ($M = 2.97$) was segregated in the highest ranking, the items “Display a high level of musicianship” ($M = 3.46$) and “Be knowledgeable of subject matter...
“Possess excellent singing skills” ($M = 7.14$) and “Possess excellent piano skills” ($M = 7.35$) were occupied the lowest two rankings (Miksza et al., 2010, p. 371).

Miksza et al. (2010) identified four themes in the responses to the initial open-ended item regarding recommendations to first-year teachers: (a) advice pertaining to perseverance, (b) use of mentors, (c) being organized, and (d) forming and maintaining relationships. The second, two-part item concerning rewards and struggles elicited additional themes. Miksza et al. (2010) identified the themes of (a) student success, (b) instilling a love for music, and (c) the opportunity to work with children in the open-ended responses. Likewise, (a) motivating students and classroom management, (b) negotiating school schedules, (c) budgetary issues, and (d) dealing with administrators and other teachers were all themes found in comments about the struggles of being a band director. In contrast, themes identified as rewards included (a) experiencing student success, (b) instilling a love for music, (c) and the opportunity to work with children.

Leong (1996) asked in-service music teachers, principals, and final-year music education students to rate 138 skill competencies related to effective teaching, which the researcher then ranked by means. A priori categories of (a) instructional methods and strategies, (b) musical skills, (c) musical knowledge, (d) music teaching assessment, and (e) administration and communication were identified by the researcher through a review of the literature, student evaluation forms originating at two Australian universities, and educator standards from New South Wales and Queensland departments of education. In addition to ratings of importance, in-service teachers were asked to rate how frequently they used each competency, and “the
usefulness of teacher preparation in helping them develop the selected competencies” (Leong, 1996, p. 75).

Teacher respondents rated the items (a) “Set clear guidelines for student assignments,” (b) “Express ideas clearly,” and (c) “Deal appropriately with students who are constantly disruptive” as the most important competencies for effective teaching. Ten of the most frequently used items were aligned with importance rankings, however the items (a) “Set clear guidelines for student assignments,” (b) “Utilize strategies that develop in students creativity,” (c) “Deal appropriately with students who are constantly disruptive,” and (d) “Design & administer teacher-made tests” differed between importance and frequency rankings by five places or more. Additionally, the four frequency competencies of (a) “Evaluate student musical achievement,” (b) “Select music repertoire which optimizes the learning experiences of students,” (c) “Identify elements of musical style,” and (d) “Encourage students to express themselves through musical performance” did not appear in the top importance rankings. Only three items, (a) “Express ideas clearly,” (b) “Maintain a balance between music performance, listening, and creating,” and (c) Define musical terms, signs and expression marks used in scores,” appeared in the top 10 rankings of both preparation and importance rankings.

Administrator and preservice teacher importance ratings differed from those of in-service teachers (Leong, 1996). Preservice teachers rated the competencies (a) “Sequence instruction to optimize the learning experience of students,” (b) “Understand the developmental problems of students,” and (c) “Communicate needs of the music program to the school administration” substantially higher than in-service teachers. Conversely, in-service teachers rated practical items, such as (a) “Identify intonation problems,” (b) “Design & administer teacher-made tests,” and (c) “Detect musical errors in a performance” consistently higher than undergraduate
respondents. Similar discrepancies were found between teacher and principal competency rankings, with principals rating administrative or campus-wide competencies, such as “Articulate the goals and objectives of the music program,” and “Employ a variety of group dynamics in a teaching situation” above in-service teachers. Leong (1996) conducted ANOVAs to examine differences in ratings across the three samples, and found significant differences on items in the musical skills, musical knowledge, music teaching assessment, and administration and communication categories. Caution should be taken in interpreting the ANOVA results, as there was no statistical correction for the number of ANOVAs when determining statistical significance.

Participants in Leong (1996) were also given space for open-ended comments at the end of each category of the questionnaire, and the author reported several common responses. Flexibility and adaptability in learning and developing multiple instructional methods and strategies were mentioned by participants as being important during the first 3 years of teaching. The overwhelming number of musical skills necessary to teach effectively elicited differing comments, as some participants stressed the importance of having a wide breadth of skills, and others underscored the need for a deeper understanding of fewer competencies. Beyond just having musical skills or knowledge, respondents noted that effective communication of musical ideas was vital, and both knowing correct instrumental pedagogy and knowing how to convey this knowledge to students were included in participant comments. Music teaching assessment received few comments, largely relegated to acknowledging the general importance of assessment without discussing specific approaches. In contrast, the administration and communication category received the most open-ended comments. Preservice respondents expected these duties to be acquired informally through experiences, however in-service teachers
expressed concern that such duties were neglected in teacher preparation. In-service teachers also commented on the time commitments required by both administrative duties and wider communication responsibilities. Principals, in turn, stressed the importance of such non-musical duties in justifying music courses to the campus.

In another study from Australia, Ballantyne and Packer (2004) decided upon 24 effective teaching skills that were derived from two prior studies, and were further refined through their own research. These skills were separated into four categories: (a) music skills/knowledge, (b) pedagogical content skills/knowledge, (c) general pedagogical skills/knowledge, and (d) non-pedagogical professional skills/knowledge. Participants were asked to rate the 24 items twice, once in overall importance and once in preservice preparation. Individual items that were included in this study, but were not commonly included in past research were “knowledge of legal issues” and “knowledge of educational purposes” (Ballantyne & Packer, 2004).

Ratings of importance and preparation were compared for each skill. Ballantyne and Packer (2004) identified four quadrants of comparison: (a) high importance/low preparation, (b) low importance/low preparation, (c) high importance/high preparation, and (d) low importance/high preparation. The five pedagogical content skills/knowledge category items of “Knowledge of music teaching techniques,” “Engaging students with music in a meaningful way,” “Implementing the music curriculum effectively,” “Assessing students' in the various aspects of music,” and “Explaining and demonstrating music concepts” were all located in the high importance/low preparation quadrant. Of greater concern to Ballantyne and Packer (2004) was the finding that over 54% of participants rated non-pedagogical professional knowledge and skill items, such as budgeting/financial skill items or communication with various stakeholders, as being ill addressed in preservice education. General pedagogical skills/knowledge, for
instance being able to identify learning characteristics or implement multiple instructional strategies, were found to occupy the high importance/high preparation quadrant. Finally, the last quadrant of low importance/high preparation represented musical skills/knowledge that, in the views of participants, were over addressed in their preservice coursework. These basic musical content skills, aligned with ratings in Teachout’s (1997) study. The content area of aural skills, however, has been documented as important by other researchers (Doereksen, 1999; Taebel, 1980).

Views of Preservice Education

Experienced Teachers

Music teacher education has typically centered on methods courses, yet Colwell (1985) claimed that course presentation and content can be inconsistent across time and instructors. As such, various skills and topic areas have tended to be emphasized or deemphasized in methods courses (Bidner, 2001; Brophy, 2002; Conway, 2002, 2012; Cooper, 1994; Hewitt & Koner, 2013; Legette, 2013; MacLeod & Walter, 2011). Overall, Brophy (2002) found that methods courses were considered by participants to be one of the best and worst aspects of teacher education, depending on years of experience. Participants with less than 10 years of experience rated methods classes positively and all other participants rated the courses negatively.

Researchers have regularly found participants to perceive classroom management techniques as lacking from preservice education (Bidner, 2001; Brophy, 2002; Cooper, 1994; Hewitt & Koner, 2013; Legette, 2013). Nearly half (49.5%) of respondents in Legette (2013) cited classroom management as a challenge in the workplace and 76% felt that classroom management techniques needed more attention in methods classes. Legette (2013) suggested this finding was evidence of a disconnect between curricular content and professional needs. In
contrast, Hewitt and Koner (2013) found that classroom management was given priority in instrumental methods courses. Cooper (1994) used the terminology discipline to discuss managing student behavior and found that while included in methods course, participants recommended even more emphasis on discipline techniques.

Additionally, Cooper (1994) surveyed both college band methods instructors and high school band directors and found that college methods instructors viewed (a) “Motivation & discipline,” (b) “Secondary scheduling/lesson planning,” (c) “Teaching techniques,” (d) “Recruiting and retaining beginners,” and (e) “Elementary teaching techniques” as the most important topics included in methods courses. High school band directors largely agreed, however they perceived “Individual instrument teaching techniques” as more important than “Elementary teaching techniques” (Cooper, 1994). A similar level of agreement existed between high school band directors and college instrumental methods instructors on the least important topics discussed in methods courses (Cooper, 1994). Topics viewed as least important included (a) “History & philosophy of music education,” (b) “String methods,” (c) “Choral methods,” (d) “Community bands,” and (e) “Music for special needs” (Cooper, 1994).

Furthermore, Hewitt and Kroner (2013) found that instrumental methods instructors gave priority to practical skills such as rehearsal techniques, lesson planning, and instrumental pedagogy in their classes. Content focused on diversity, composition, and non-traditional ensembles were given less priority in instruction. Participants have suggested that methods courses should continue to emphasize practical skills/knowledge (Conway, 2012; Legette, 2013), provide greater real world context to supplement course content (Conway, 2012; Legette, 2013; Roulston et al., 2005), expand beyond specific teaching areas (Conway, 2012), facilitate
selecting suitable teaching materials (Legette, 2013), pacing and error detection in rehearsal settings (Macleod & Walter, 2011), and include non-musical skills/knowledge (Cooper, 1994).

Of all the facets of preservice teacher education, field experiences in both methods classes and student teaching have been viewed as valuable learning opportunities (Brophy, 2002; Conway, 2002, 2012; MacLeod & Walter, 2011; Shires, 1990). The majority of participants in Brophy (2002) felt that an even balance between coursework and field experiences would be ideal for teacher education. Legette (2013) found that 56% of participants wanted more hands on teaching experiences, yet 51% also remarked that preservice programs were successful in providing field experiences outside of student teaching. Participants have suggested that extending practicum experiences may provide benefits such as increased practice working with students in authentic contexts (Conway, 2012; MacLeod & Walter, 2011). In a position paper, Teachout (2005) argued that field experiences provide opportunities for reflective practice, and should therefore be extended. Colwell (1985), however, cautioned that increasing field experiences could involve unintentional consequences, such as overloading student course loads or increasing teacher attrition through premature exposure to the classroom environment. Both Conway (2002, 2012) and Legette (2013) stressed the importance of providing context for field experiences to maximize effectiveness.

In-service teachers have commented on strengths they perceived in their preservice education (Brophy, 2002; Conway, 2012; Hester, 2013; Shires, 1990). Brophy (2002) found that in-service teachers felt well prepared to teach historical/cultural connections and reading/writing music. Shires (1990) found music teachers had positive views of the preparation they received regarding the skills necessary to identify/evaluate new ideas and to maintain a high level of student participation. Hester (2013) found that cooperating teachers viewed preservice teachers
as strong in lesson presentation, preparation, planning, curriculum design, and sequencing. Likewise, preservice teachers were perceived as having a high level of individual musicianship.

Researchers have also documented perceived weaknesses relating to preservice teacher education (Brophy, 2002; Hester, 2013; Shires, 1990). Hester (2013) found that preservice teachers felt unprepared for classroom management challenges and musical assessment. Similarly, Brophy (2002) found that in-service teachers felt unprepared in classroom management techniques. Shires (1990) found that teachers felt poorly prepared to (a) structure lessons to learner characteristics, (b) differentiate instruction to further student learning, (c) relate to other disciplines, and (d) inspire students. Brophy (2002) similarly found that in-service elementary music teachers felt unprepared to teach interdisciplinary lessons, improvisation, and composition. Researchers have documented that general education coursework was perceived to provide the least valuable preparation (Brophy, 2002; Conway, 2012).

Preservice Teachers’ Perceptions of Education

Preservice teachers have also rated the importance of practical topics, such as classroom management and teaching strategies, in their university education (Davis, 2006; Legette & McCord, 2014; Teachout, 1997). Participants in Legette and McCord (2014) felt that their preservice coursework could do more to address (a) classroom management, (b) teaching strategies for varying circumstances, (c) connecting course content to practice, and (d) facilitating the selection of relevant teaching materials; hands-on experiences/activities, field experiences, instruction in lesson planning, and course availability/diversity were all areas addressed well in preservice teacher education. While Hammann and Ebie (2009) found that preservice teachers felt prepared by their coursework to teach outside of their specific area (band, choir, orchestra, etc.), participants also stated that they were hopeful for more instructional
strategies both in general and for each specific teaching area. Despite concerns, such as worries about large class sizes, schedule constraints, or lack of resources, preservice teachers have been found to be confident that their education has prepared them to be successful in the workforce (Hammann & Ebie, 2009; Legette & McCord, 2014).
CHAPTER 3

METHOD

Introduction

This study described the perceptions of the importance and difficulty of music, teaching, and personal skills/knowledge by novice band directors. It also compared novice band directors’ perceptions of the importance and difficulty of the skills/knowledge used in their classrooms, described how novice band directors perceived university coursework as helpful in acquiring skills/knowledge, and described what changes novice band directors perceived could improve skills/knowledge acquisition. The guiding research questions for this study were:

1. What was the relative perceived importance of various skills/knowledge categories among novice band directors in Texas?

2. How difficult have skills/knowledge categories been to acquire for novice band directors?

3. Were there differences between perceived importance of teaching skills/knowledge and perceived difficulty of teaching skills/knowledge acquisition among novice band directors?

4. In what ways did university coursework help novice teachers acquire the necessary skills/knowledge for successful teaching?

5. What changes in preservice education do novice band directors feel would help prepare future preservice teachers to acquire the necessary skills/knowledge for successful teaching?

This chapter contains (a) descriptions of the sample for the main study, (b) testing procedures, (c) measurement instrument (including questionnaire development, validity, and
reliability), (d) data analysis, and (e) limitations of the study. A descriptive survey research methodology was chosen to describe the perceptions of novice Texas band directors.

Sample for the Main Study

This study focused on novice Texas band directors, defined as those with 2 years or fewer experience. Survey respondents ($N = 85$) were 50 males (58.82%) and 27 females (31.76%) (and 8 who did not provide an answer to the gender question), whose ages ranged from 22 to 42 ($M = 25.91, SD = 3.69$). Additionally, the gender also contrasted with this study’s pilot respondents, where 28.57% identified as male and 71.43% identified as female. Similarly, main study respondents’ mean age was higher than that documented for participants in the pilot study ($M = 23.46, SD = 1.5$).

Main study respondents’ ethnicities consisted of Caucasian ($n = 58$), Latino(a)/Hispanic ($n = 17$), African-American ($n = 1$), preferred not to say ($n = 1$), and no answer ($n = 9$). Respondents just starting their first year of teaching made up 37.20% of the sample ($n = 32$ out of 85), those beginning their second year made up 61.60% of the sample ($n = 53$ out of 85), with the rest left blank (1.20%). The majority of the respondents held bachelor’s degrees (67.40%), and the remainder had either completed some graduate coursework (9.30%), held master’s degrees (10.50%), had completed some doctoral coursework (1.20%), or left the item blank (11.60%).

Procedures

After receiving institutional review board permission, an email invitation for survey participation was sent to potential respondents. The fall 2016 membership directory from the Texas Music Educators Association (TMEA) was used to identify band directors who had begun teaching in between the fall of 2015 and the fall of 2016 ($N = 170$), when the study took place.
Additionally, the Texas Private School Music Educators Association was contacted to include band directors in private schools, however they declined to provide any information.

The researcher used three different approaches to recruit participants. Initially, respondents were contacted via personal and school district emails from a TMEA provided-list. Originally, the TMEA band division list included 1,826 members, 170 of which had beginning years that qualified them as novice band directors. It should be noted that 97 TMEA band members declined to provide TMEA the year they began teaching. Upon examination, however, the TMEA list contained several errors. The researcher used school websites and emails to verify employment, teaching area, and years of service for individuals from the TMEA list. Individuals whose personal information was inaccurate and did not qualify as part of the targeted population (n = 47), such as those who were not working as band directors, were removed. This brought the total number of novice band directors on the TMEA list to 123.

During further examination, the researcher found that several eligible participants were missing from the list provided by TMEA. In order to reach any potentially absent novice band directors, the researcher employed snowball sampling by contacting the instrumental music education professor of every National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) accredited music program in Texas and asking that he or she forward the initial recruitment email to any recent graduates working in the state. In addition to email invitations, Facebook postings and messages were used to disseminate invitations to participate. To ensure participant eligibility, the questionnaire contained items that addressed employment location and years of experience. Due to the snowball sampling procedures, a total population number was impossible to determine.
The initial recruitment email contained a brief description of the study and purpose, a code for $2 credit at Redbox; the email also informed participants that completion of the questionnaire would result in their entry into a raffle for one $50 Amazon gift card code. The initial $2 code was chosen due to the impact small compensation in the initial phase has been shown to have on response rates (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2014). The email also contained a clickable link to the questionnaire, hosted on the online survey site Survey Monkey.

All participants responded through the link provided, which led them to the informed consent form and web questionnaire. Agreement to the consent form was required before progressing to the questionnaire. After having consented, participants took from 2.35 to 295.85 minutes to complete the questionnaire ($M = 24.70$, $SD = 41.21$). Participants were given 3 weeks to complete this task. After excluding initial respondents ($n = 33$), follow-up procedures were initiated. Non-respondents were contacted through reminder emails on the Tuesday morning, 6 days after the initial email. Additionally, emails were sent out to instrumental music professors on Wednesday morning, 7 days after the initial email. These emails and Facebook posts yielded 40 further respondents from both the list ($n = 11$) and through either professor emails or Facebook ($n = 29$).

At the close of data collection, 73 completed questionnaires were collected using all three sampling methods. Non-respondents from the TMEA list ($n = 80$) were then contacted via phone and offered the opportunity to complete the questionnaire, with 12 (15%) responding. This non-response follow-up amount was aligned with the 10–20% of non-respondents Miller and Smith (1983) suggested for double-dipping procedures. All of the double-dipped sample ($n = 12$) chose to fill out the online form instead of answering the questionnaire items over the phone, and the researcher verified completion electronically.
Overall, 85 completed questionnaires were collected. Once all data had been collected, quantitative items were entered into SPSS and qualitative items were coded. Early, late, and non-respondent demographic means were compared to identify potential differences in age ($F(2, 72) = .89, p = .42, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .02$), gender identity ($F(2, 74) = .05, p = .96, \text{partial } \eta^2 < .01$), ethnicity ($F(2, 74) = .06, p = .94, \text{partial } \eta^2 < .01$), and education level ($F(2, 73) = .17, p = .84, \text{partial } \eta^2 < .01$). No significant differences were found.

Measurement Instrument

The Novice Band Director Perception of Skills/Knowledge (NBDPS) questionnaire was developed for this study and the final version contained 70 Likert skills/knowledge items separated into two sections regarding importance and difficulty, each with three subsections for musical, teaching, and personal skills/knowledge. On items asking for importance ratings, the participants were asked to select how important they felt each skills/knowledge component was to successful teaching on a 5-point scale (1–barely important, 2–somewhat important, 3–important, 4–very important, 5–extremely important). Similarly, participants were asked to rate the ease in acquiring each skills/knowledge component on a 5-point scale (1–hardly easy, 2–a little easy, 3–easy, 4–very easy, 5–extremely easy). Each section contained a total of 35 items in musical (11 items), teaching (14 items), and personal (10 items) subsections. Inside each subsection, individual participants received a different order of items presented randomly to decrease item order effects. Likert items were summed in each subsection (musical, teaching, and personal) for both importance and difficulty. Additionally, two opened-ended items were included that asked (a) In what ways did your university coursework help you to acquire the teaching skills/knowledge for successful teaching and (b) Looking back at your university
coursework, what would you change to help future band directors be able to acquire the necessary teaching skills/knowledge?

Six items regarding participant demographics, including (a) contact information, (b) age, (c) gender, (d) ethnicity, (e) education level, and (f) graduating institution names, were included at the end of the questionnaire. Contact information and graduating institution items were in open-ended format, and age and principal instrument items were presented through drop-down menus. All other demographic items used a multiple-choice format.

Questionnaire Development

A multi-step process was used to identify potential skills/knowledge components for the questionnaire. Initially, the researcher determined the top five items in musical, teaching, and personal categories from both preservice and experienced teachers featured in Teachout (1997). Then, five additional skills for each category were identified from the remaining quantitative skills/knowledge research (Baker, 1981; Ballantyne & Packer, 2004; Blocher et al., 1997; Cole, 2014; Davis, 2006; Hamann et al., 2000; Kelly, 2007, 2010; Leong, 1996; Madsen et al., 1992; Miksza et al., 2010; Millican, 2009; Rohwer, 2009; Rohwer & Henry, 2004; Taebel, 1980, 1990), for a total of 10 items per category. Next, the researcher examined various qualitative studies regarding the challenges of novice music teachers (Blair, 2008; Conway, 2002, 2003, 2012, 2015; Conway & Garlock, 2002; Conway & Christensen, 2006; Conway et al., 2007; Conway et al., 2004; Conway et al., 2002; Conway & Zerman, 2003; Fredrickson & Neill, 2004; Fredrickson & Hackworth, 2005; Krueger, 1996; McIlhagga, 2006; Pembrook & Fredrickson, 2000-2001; Roulston et al., 2005; Schmidt & Canser, 2006; Schmidt, 2008) and compiled a list of 22 skills/knowledge components and the frequency with which they appeared in the literature. Identified items were then selected through comparison of the quantitative results with the
qualitative findings (using both frequency and importance) to arrive at 12 musical, 10 teaching, and 10 personal skills/knowledge components for use in NBDPS.

Open-ended items were then selected to provide context and greater understanding to the quantitative results. Only the teaching skills/knowledge category was addressed in the open-ended items. This decision was made based on the perceived meaningfulness of musical and teaching skills/knowledge to overall music teaching success among various groups (Ballantyne & Packer, 2004; Kelly, 2007; Miksza et al., 2010; Logan, 1967; Teachout, 1997). Ballantyne and Packer (2004) found that participants were the most concerned about pedagogical content knowledge and skills in regards to the effectiveness of their preservice education. In their study, pedagogical content knowledge and skills combined aspects of musical and teaching skills/knowledge into a music teaching category that focused on practical teaching and learning, including items such as assessing students’ abilities in the various aspects of music, explaining and demonstrating musical concepts, and knowledge of music teaching techniques. Participants also were very concerned about non-pedagogical professional knowledge and skills, which included many of the general teaching concerns covered in the teaching subcategory used by Teachout (1997). Ballantyne and Packer (2004) also highlighted this combination of musical and teaching skills/knowledge as an area that can be addressed in institutions of higher education. Kelly (2010) implied that personal skills/knowledge are less likely to be impacted through “traditional academic means,” (p. 31), such as coursework, than those skills/knowledge that fall under musical or teaching categories.

The questionnaire was created using Survey Monkey, an online questionnaire software platform. This platform was selected due to the ease in communication over a large geographic areas, decreased response times, and as a cost saving measure (Dillman et al., 2014). While
Dillman et al. (2014) presented concerns about participant familiarity with technology and access to the Internet, participants were all recent college graduates likely to be familiar with web technology and have computer and Internet access at home or through their respective school districts and campuses. The NBDPS was tested on both Windows and Mac machines with Firefox, Chrome, Edge, Safari, and Internet Explorer browsers and adjustments were made to maximize readability across the platforms.

Validity

Once initial item selection was complete, a copy of the Novice Band Director Perception of Skills/knowledge questionnaire was sent to three content validity panelists for examination of instructions, items, format, general understandability, and effectiveness. Of the panelists, (a) one was a music education professor at a medium-sized university in the southwestern United States who had published both research and pedagogical work addressing skills/knowledge for successful band directing, (b) one was a music education professor at a large university in the southwestern United States with extensive research and editorial experience in the wider field of music education and in the area of skills/knowledge development, and (c) one was a music education professor at a large university in the western United States with over 10 years of research experience in both online survey methods and band director skills/knowledge research.

In regards to questionnaire instructions, several changes were made based on panelist recommendations. The first panelist suggested that the word “completing” be replaced with “submitting” in the instruction “Please check to be sure all items have been marked before completing the survey” found prior to beginning the demographic items. This panelist also suggested that the phrase “for effective teaching” be added to the instructions for the items addressing importance. Additionally, the first panelist suggested that the instruction “How easy
did you find each skill/knowledge to learn once you started working?” be changed to “How easily did you acquire each skill/knowledge to learning since you began teaching?” Both the first and second panelists suggested changes to the wording for the demographic item regarding ethnicity. Ultimately, the researcher elected to alter the instruction to “What ethnicity do you most identify with” as suggested by the second panelist.

Instruction adjustments were also suggested by the second panelist, who suggested that the ease of acquisition items instructions be altered to read “On the items below mark the option that best represents your view of how easy the skill/knowledge was to learn.” Additionally, the second panelist suggested that the sentence “Feel free to print a copy of this page for your records” be added to the informed consent statement and that the subcategory terms of “musical,” “teaching,” and “personal” be bolded and underlined throughout the questionnaire. Likewise, the second panelist suggested the word “learn” be changed to “acquire” in item instructions regarding ease of skill/knowledge acquisition and that the word “once” be changed to “since” in the instruction “How easy did you find each personal skill/knowledge to learn once you started working.” Finally, this panelist suggested that the item regarding gender be reworded to “What gender do you most identify with.”

The third panelist similarly made recommendations regarding questionnaire instructions. These included the suggestion that the phrase “no items may be withdrawn” be changed to “responses can no longer be changed” in the instructions found after the open-ended items. This panelists also suggested the phrase “for Redbox credit and Amazon Gift card drawing only” be added to the contact information item instructions. Furthermore, the third panelist made a suggestion that addressed the replacement of skill/knowledge terminology to abilities in all
instructions, which was not implemented to maintain uniformity across the established literature. All other suggestions made by all three panelists were implemented in the questionnaire.

Likewise, adjustments were made to the individual items based on panelist feedback. In the musical subcategory, the first panelist suggested that the word “appropriate” be deleted from the item “select appropriate music literature.” The third panelist suggested the phrase “through performance” be added to the end of the item “Display a high level of musicianship.” Both the second and third panelists also suggested that the item “Possess music theory/history knowledge” be separated into two distinct items and that the item “Be able to detect errors in group/individual performance” be altered to focus solely on group error detection through the removal of the word “individual.” Additionally, all three panelists suggested that the item “Possess excellent ear training skills” be changed to “Possess excellent listening skills.” These suggestions were implemented in the questionnaire. The first panelist additionally suggested that the items (a) “Be able to establish routines and procedures,” (b) “Be able to sequence musical instruction logically,” and (c) “Be able to model through performance” be added to the musical skills. The items addressing procedures and sequence were added to the questionnaire, however the researcher felt that the modeling item was already addressed under the item “Display a high level of musicianship through performance,” and it was therefore not included.

In the teaching subcategory, all three panelists provided suggestions for improvement. The first panelist suggested that the item “Be able to maintain student behavior” be changed to “Be able to effectively manage student behavior.” This panelist also suggested that the item “Be professional” be reworded to “Maintain a high level of professionalism,” and that the item “Be able to maintain student behavior” be changed to “Be able to effectively manage student behavior.” The second panelist suggested that the word “of” be replaced with the word “about”
in the item “Be knowledgeable of subject-matter materials.” This panelist also suggested that the items “Be able to communicate effectively with parents” and “Be able to communicate effectively with students” be added to the teaching subcategory. The third panelist suggested that the item “Possess an understanding of various teaching strategies,” be changed to “Be able to apply a variety of teaching strategies.” All suggestions regarding the teaching subcategory were accepted and added to the questionnaire.

Similarly, two alterations were made to the personal subcategory based on panelist suggestions. The first panelist suggested the item “Be professional” be reworded to “Maintain a high level of professionalism.” The second panelist suggested that the item “Be able to develop rapport with students” be changed to “Develop rapport with students.” Both changes were implemented in the questionnaire.

Response options were adjusted based on panelist recommendations. Both the first and second panelists made suggestions to limit the responses for ethnicity to those options included by the United States Census Bureau. Likewise, all three panelists offered differing suggestions for changing the “I would prefer not to say” response under the gender item. Ultimately, the researcher changed this response to “I do not identify with either gender category” in accordance with the suggestion provided by the third panelist. The second panelist suggested that the items regarding school size and education level be altered in format to drop-down menu responses. Furthermore, this panelist suggested that that the response option of “Hardly easy” be changed to “Not easy.” These suggestions were implemented in the questionnaire. Both the first and second panelists posed questions about the use of the word “easy” in the items regarding skill/knowledge acquisition, however once potential problems with the comparison between
importance and acquisition were discussed this suggestion was abandoned and not implemented by the researcher.

Finally, other changes were made due to panelist feedback. Individual subcategories were changed to be presented on separated pages based on feedback from the third panelist. All three panelists strongly encouraged randomization of items in each subcategory, and this was implemented in the questionnaire. The third panelist suggested the open-ended items be changed to focus on university coursework to provide greater focus in responses.

After all content validity adjustments were implemented, the questionnaire contained 12 musical skills/knowledge importance, 14 teaching skills/knowledge importance, 10 personal skill/knowledge importance, 12 musical skills/knowledge acquisition, 14 teaching skills/knowledge acquisition, and 10 personal skills/knowledge acquisition items. Open-ended question prompts were examined by the researcher’s advisor. Additionally, peer debriefing was used. Combined with the two open-ended, and six demographic items, the total number of items on the questionnaire prior to pilot testing was 83.

Reliability

Following validity recommendations, reliability was assessed through a pilot test conducted during the fall 2016 semester. Participants were novice band directors in Oklahoma, Georgia, and Iowa (N = 14) who were beginning their first or second year of teaching. Several instrumental music education professors in Oklahoma, Georgia, and Iowa were contacted and asked to provide the names and contact information of recent graduates working as band directors in the state. Emails containing a brief description of the study and purpose, a clickable link to the questionnaire, a statement that all participants who provided a contact email would receive a $2 Redbox gift card code, and the information that participants who completed the
questionnaire would be entered into a raffle for one $25 Amazon gift card code, were then sent to all of the provided emails.

Respondents’ ages ranged from 22 to 27 (\(M = 23.46, SD = 1.5\)), with 10 females and 4 males. Of the respondents, 13 identified as Caucasian, while 1 participant identified as Latino(a)/Hispanic. No other ethnicities were reported. Of the 14 participants, 13 (92.86%) of participants were in their first year of teaching, with the remaining individual starting their second year. Additionally, respondents taught in a variety of school sizes (2 taught in 7A, 1 taught in 4A, 3 taught in 3A, 2 taught in 2A, and 5 taught in 1A, with 1 non-response). Of respondents, 12 held bachelor’s degrees while 2 had master’s degrees.

Oklahoma band directors (\(N = 4\)) were initially selected due to similarities, such as teacher gender distribution and campus classifications, with the target population of novice Texas band directors used in the main study. The Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) found that 22% of all Oklahoma teachers identified as male and 78% identified as female (National Center for Education Statistics, 2011-2012). The Oklahoma Secondary School Activities Association designates classifications for school music competitions by campus enrollment, similar to school size classifications in Texas. High school music programs in Oklahoma were classified from 2A to 6A and junior high/middle school were similarly classified from 2A to 6A, with further clarification of the highest grade (6–9) in the musical group.

However, due to overlap between Oklahoma college graduates with the main study target population, Georgia band directors (\(N = 4\)) were also contacted through their graduating institutions. Georgia was also selected due to similarities, such as teacher gender distribution and campus classifications, with the target population of novice Texas band directors used in the main study. The Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) found that 23% of all Georgia teachers
identified as male and 77% identified as female (National Center for Education Statistics, 2011–2012). The Georgia High School Association governs athletics and school activities for member schools in the state, and organizes schools by size in classifications ranging from 1A to 7A.

To further increase the response rate, Iowa band directors \((N = 6)\) were similarly contacted through their graduating institutions. Iowa was selected due to similarities, such as teacher gender distribution and campus classifications, with the target population of novice Texas band directors used in the main study and for the convenience of disseminating the questionnaire through a colleague. The Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) found that 26% of all Iowa teachers identified as male and 74% identified as female (National Center for Education Statistics, 2011–2012). The Iowa High School Music Association governs school music activities for member schools in the state, and organizes schools by size in classifications ranging from 1A to 4A.

Items that failed to load in either importance or difficulty subcategories were examined for content validity and, if appropriate, removed in order to address the following research questions: (a) What was the relative perceived importance of various skills/knowledge among novice band directors in Texas, (b) How easy has each skill/knowledge item been to acquire for novice band directors, and (c) Were there differences between perceived importance of teaching skills/knowledge and perceived ease of teaching skills/knowledge acquisition among novice band directors? Of the 83 potential items, 1 was removed from the music importance and music acquisition subcategories for reliability concerns, making the total number of items 81. Items in the teaching importance \((\alpha = .91)\), teaching ease of acquisition \((\alpha = .84)\), personal importance \((\alpha = .91)\), and personal ease of acquisition \((\alpha = .86)\) subcategories were found to be internally consistent.
While items in the musical importance ($\alpha = .78$) subcategory showed internal consistency in agreement with the $\alpha > .70$ threshold discussed in prior literature (Cho & Kim, 2015; Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994; Raykov, 2007), musical ease of acquisition reliability ($\alpha = .63$) necessitated the removal of the item “possess excellent singing skills.” Previous researchers have found that many music teachers viewed singing skills as less important than other musical skills/knowledge components (Miksza et al., 2010; Teachout, 1997), particularly among instrumental teachers (MacLeod & Walter, 2011; Miksza et al., 2010; Rohwer & Henry, 2004). MacLeod and Walter (2011) also found that instrumental cooperating teachers frequently did not know or observe student teacher singing skills. This lack of application of singing skills may have contributed to a lack of reliability in the pilot. In light of these previous findings, the item “possess excellent singing skills” was viewed by the researcher as acceptable to remove without compromising subcategory validity.

With the deletion of this item, the internal consistency improved ($\alpha = .67$), yet was still short of the cutoffs recommended in prior literature. Peterson (1994) catalogued various purported cutoffs, including Nunnally’s (1967) initial suggestion of .5 for preliminary research, and found that the majority of recommended cutoffs for coefficient alpha comparisons (including in the work of Nunnally) lacked an empirical foundation. Cho and Kim (2015) and Raykov (2008) noted that artificially attempting to increase alpha may lead to unreasonable sacrifices of validity. As such, the researcher chose to keep the remaining items in the musical ease of acquisition subgroup, leaving the alpha at ($\alpha = .67$). The item “possess excellent singing skills” was also removed from the musical importance subcategory, however the reliability coefficient remained unchanged ($\alpha = .78$). This balancing process was undertaken to maintain equal items between subgroups. Maintaining equal items was deemed important by the researcher to avoid
participant confusion. By preserving equal items in the musical importance and acquisition subcategories, participants might be less likely to assume a mistake was made in the questionnaire. Additionally, retaining equal items might also allow for future use of the questionnaire in greater comparative research.

Due to the decision to retain items in the music importance and acquisition subcategories despite lower alphas, the researcher reexamined reliability after the completion of the main study. All subcategories were found to be reliable above the .70 threshold selected through examination of the literature (Cho & Kim, 2015; Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994; Raykov, 2007). Reliability scores can be found in Table 2.

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subcategory</th>
<th>α</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Musical skills/knowledge importance</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching skills/knowledge importance</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal skills/knowledge importance</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical skills/knowledge acquisition</td>
<td>.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching skills/knowledge acquisition</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal skills/knowledge acquisition</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Open-ended items were coded for themes using descriptive coding. Both codes and themes were subjected to peer debriefing to check for trustworthiness. Peer debriefing has been defined by scholars as an unconnected review by an external individual to examine the procedures, context, and conclusions of a qualitative study (Cresswell, 2013, 2014; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Cresswell (2013) suggested that peer debriefing was “much in the same spirit as interrater reliability in quantitative research” (p. 251). Likewise, Lincoln and Guba (1985) argued “since there can be no validity without reliability (and thus no credibility without dependability), a demonstration of the former is sufficient to establish the latter” (p. 316).
For the pilot study, the peer debriefer was a music education professor at a university in the southern United States with experience in qualitative research, and examined coding procedures, individual codes, and emergent themes for appropriateness and accuracy. The researcher provided all the gathered data, codes, memos, and identified themes to the debriefer. Once the materials were exchanged, the researcher asked the peer debriefer to critically examine the researcher’s biases, methodology, interpretations, and meanings presented as tentative findings. Specifically, the researcher asked the peer debriefer if there was any concern in the data gathering process, if the codes were appropriately assigned to respondent statements, if the codes were themselves accurate and easily understood, if the emergent themes were representative of the coded data, and if the meanings assigned were reasonably emergent from the themes developed.

After the debriefer examined the coding, two adjustments were made based on the peer debriefer’s recommendation. Uses of the code “quality instruction” were merged into the larger “feedback” code. Additionally, the initial use of positive and negative labels for codes was removed based on peer reviewer suggestion. Descriptive coding was determined to be an appropriate approach, and codes were credible and accurate. Once the reviewer was familiar with the data and had assessed the code assignments, they evaluated the appropriateness of the themes based on the agreed upon coding. Additionally, codes and themes were triangulated, when appropriate, with quantitative responses regarding similar skills and knowledge. The themes were determined to be appropriate and developed accurately from the coding of the data.

After pilot testing and the removal of the item “possess excellent singing skills” from both the “musical importance” and “musical acquisition” subgroups, the questionnaire contained 78 items. These items were divided into music skills/knowledge importance (n = 11), teaching
skills/knowledge importance \((n = 14)\), personal skills/knowledge importance \((n = 10)\), ease of musical skills/knowledge acquisition \((n = 11)\), ease of teaching skills/knowledge acquisition \((n = 14)\), ease of personal skills/knowledge acquisition \((n = 10)\), university coursework \((n = 2)\), and demographic information \((n = 6)\).

Data Analysis

Means and standard deviations were calculated for the summed a priori musical, teaching, and personal skills/knowledge categories regarding both importance and acquisition difficulty; and were used for descriptive analysis.

Skills/knowledge categories were placed into rank orders for both importance and acquisition using mean scores. Next, a repeated-measures ANOVA was conducted to measure differences across importance and difficulty ratings in the teaching skills/knowledge item subcategories. Little's (1988) test for missing completely at random (MCAR) was conducted prior to addressing missing data. Listwise deletion was used when respondents failed to complete the majority of items in a category, and were excluded from analysis. In cases where missing data were limited to a small number of items, hot deck imputation was used to generate placeholder values (Andridge & Little, 2010; McKnight, McKnight, Sidani, & Figueredo, 2007).

Qualitative data were coded for themes using the 6-step process outlined in Creswell (2013, 2014). Coding can be defined as “reducing the data into meaningful segments and assigning names for the segments” (Creswell, 2013, p. 180). The first step was to organize and prepare the data for analysis. Second, the researcher read the responses to garner a general sense of the data. Third, all of the data were coded by the researcher using both in vivo and literature based terminology. Codes directly derived from skills/knowledge components were chosen to connect to the literature. All other codes were developed in vivo. Through the use of Dedoose,
an online qualitative data management platform, the researcher assigned specific words and phrases codes representing participant comments. As a fourth step, these codes were then combined to develop distinct, overarching themes from the responses (Creswell, 2013, 2014). During this winnowing process, the researcher aggregated many of the codes into broader emergent themes while discarding others, in accordance with Creswell (2013; 2014). Total code counts, the number of individual respondents who were assigned specific codes, the strength of the language used, and overall context of the responses were used to develop themes. Of note, while code counts were used as one potential indication of participant interest, the development of themes was not solely reliant on code counts. This was to allow for different weighting of statements, in accordance with Creswell (2013). Afterwards, the themes were woven into interconnected representations. Finally, an interpretation of the findings was developed (Creswell, 2014).

In the main study, the peer debriefer was a music education professor at a university in the mid-western United States with experience in qualitative research. The researcher asked the peer debriefer if there was any concern in the data gathering process, if the codes were appropriately assigned to respondent statements, if the codes were themselves accurate and easily understood, if the emergent themes were representative of the coded data, and if the meanings assigned were reasonably emergent from the themes developed. The codes “field observation” and “rehearsal skills” were added for research question 4, which sought to examine positive perceptions of coursework’s influence on teaching skills/knowledge acquisition. Additionally, coding mistakes were corrected for this research question. Similarly, the codes “non-performance classes” and “mental health” were added for research question 5, which sought to examine negative perceptions of coursework’s connection to teaching skills/knowledge acquisition.
acquisition. The code “authentic experiences” was also merged with “field experience.” Coding mistakes were also corrected. Themes were determined to be representative of the data, and assigned meanings were reasonably emergent.

The Survey Monkey online platform assigned respondent numbers to participants in the order they completed the questionnaire, which were used throughout the analysis and reporting. Participants \((N = 85)\) were asked “In what ways did your university coursework help you to acquire the teaching skills/knowledge for successful teaching” and provided space on the questionnaire to give an open-ended answer. Several participants \((n = 15)\) declined to respond to this open-ended item, dropping the total participants for this question \((n = 70)\). Additionally, participants \((N = 85)\) were asked “What changes in preservice education do novice band directors feel would help prepare future preservice teachers to acquire the necessary skills/knowledge for successful teaching” and provided space on the questionnaire to give an open-ended answer. Of the total participants, 12 chose not to respond to this item, which dropped the total participants to \(n = 73\). Initially, data were analyzed and descriptive codes were assigned to words or phrases.

Limitations

While efforts were made to develop the greatest generalizability, certain limitations remained. The voluntary nature of participation in the study may lead to non-response error, as the sample may differ from the overall population of novice Texas band directors. Similarly, participants who chose to withhold their novice band director status from TMEA may differ significantly from those who added their start year. Questionnaire mode of web vs phone response may also contribute to differences in responses. To alleviate such concerns, the researcher read the questionnaire verbatim to respondents and attempted to maintain a friendly, but neutral tone of voice. Periodic external examinations were conducted to check for
discrepancies in data accuracy, questionnaire administration, and questionnaire completion time. Despite efforts, phone respondents may have experienced pressures to respond in a specific manner that might have been absent when completing the web questionnaire. As such, generalization of these results should be avoided due to small sample size.
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter presents the results of this study based on the five guiding research questions. Results are presented by question, with supporting tables and quotations. The purposes of this study were (a) to describe novice band directors’ perceptions of the importance of skills/knowledge used in effective music teaching, (b) to describe novice band directors’ perception of the difficulty of acquiring each skill or knowledge component, (c) to compare novice band directors’ perceptions of the importance and difficulty of the skills/knowledge used in their classrooms, (d) to describe ways that novice band directors perceived university coursework as helpful in acquiring teaching skills/knowledge, and (e) to describe improvements to university coursework that novice band directors perceived could help future band directors.

The five research questions were:

1. What was the relative perceived importance of various skills/knowledge categories among novice band directors in Texas?

2. How difficult have skills/knowledge categories been to acquire for novice band directors?

3. Were there differences between perceived importance of teaching skills/knowledge and perceived difficulty of teaching skills/knowledge acquisition among novice band directors?

4. In what ways did university coursework help novice teachers to acquire the necessary skills/knowledge for successful teaching?
5. What changes in preservice education do novice band directors feel would help prepare future preservice teachers to acquire the necessary skills/knowledge for successful teaching?

Research Question 1

In answer to Research Question 1, “What was the relative perceived importance of various skills/knowledge categories among novice band directors in Texas”, the researcher found that, for overall participant responses, personal skills ($M = 4.64$) showed the highest mean scores, followed by teaching skills ($M = 4.60$) and musical skills ($M = 4.29$). All three subcategories showed mean scores above the instrument midpoint of 3, which indicated that participants viewed each subcategory of skills/knowledge as on the important side of the scale. Descriptive statistics for skills/knowledge importance overall subcategories, including ranges, means, and standard deviations, for participant scores can be found in Table 3.

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subcategory</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>$M$</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal skills/knowledge importance</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.64</td>
<td>.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching skills/knowledge importance</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical skills/knowledge importance</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.29</td>
<td>.43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Items were rated by participants on a 5-point Likert scale (1–barely important, 2–somewhat important, 3–important, 4–very important, 5–extremely important). In the personal skills/knowledge subcategory, the items “Develop rapport with students” ($M = 4.80$, $SD = .43$) and “Be flexible and adaptable” ($M = 4.76$, $SD = .57$) were the highest rated items. The items “Be goal oriented” ($M = 4.52$, $SD = .65$) and “Be organized” ($M = 4.76$, $SD = .57$) were rated lowest by participants. In the teaching skills/knowledge importance subcategory, the items “Be
able to communicate effectively with students” \((M = 4.84, SD = .37)\) and “Be able to effectively manage student behavior” \((M = 4.84, SD = .40)\) were the highest rated skills/knowledge items.

“Be able to identify and understand student learning characteristics” \((M = 4.46, SD = .63)\) and “Be able to navigate non-instructional duties” \((M = 4.06, SD = .79)\) were rated lowest by participants. In the musical skills/knowledge importance subcategory, the items “Detect errors in group performance” \((M = 4.85, SD = .42)\) and “Possess excellent listening skills” \((M = 4.76, SD = .53)\) were the highest rated items. “Possess music theory knowledge” \((M = 3.80, SD = .86)\) and “Possess music history knowledge” \((M = 3.12, SD = 1.01)\) were rated lowest by participants.

The full listing of skills/knowledge importance ratings can be found in Table 4.

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills/knowledge item</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>(M)</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal importance</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop rapport with students</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.80</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be flexible and adaptable</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.76</td>
<td>0.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manage time well</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.69</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Display confidence</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>0.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain a high level of professionalism</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be patient</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.62</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possess leadership skills</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.62</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be encouraging</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.59</td>
<td>0.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be goal oriented</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.52</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be organized</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.47</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching importance</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be able to effectively manage student behavior</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.84</td>
<td>0.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be able to communicate effectively with students</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.84</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be able to establish routines and procedures</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.79</td>
<td>0.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be able to motivate students</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.74</td>
<td>0.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be able to evaluate and assess students effectively</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.72</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be able to sequence musical instruction logically</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.65</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be able to communicate effectively with colleagues and administrators</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.62</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be able to apply a variety of teaching strategies</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.61</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(table continues)
Research Question 2

In answer to Research Question 2, “How difficult have skills/knowledge categories been to acquire for novice band directors,” means indicated that participants rated personal skills/knowledge ($M = 3.57$) as the easiest to acquire, followed by musical skills/knowledge ($M = 3.14$), and teaching skills/knowledge ($M = 3.09$). Descriptive statistics for skills/knowledge acquisition are found in Table 5.

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subcategory</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>$M$</th>
<th>$SD$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal skills/knowledge acquisition</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical skills/knowledge acquisition</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>4.91</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching skills/knowledge acquisition</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>4.46</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Items were rated by participants on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 to 5 (1–hardly easy, 2–a little easy, 3–easy, 4–very easy, 5–extremely easy). In the personal skills/knowledge category, the highest rated items were “Maintain a high level of professionalism” ($M = 4.08$, $SD = .76$) and “Possess leadership skills” ($M = 3.99$, $SD = .99$). The lowest rated items were “Manage time well” ($M = 3.00$, $SD = 1.29$) and “Be organized” ($M = 2.89$, $SD = 1.22$). In the musical skills/knowledge acquisition subcategory, the highest rated items were “Maintain high musical standards” ($M = 3.62$, $SD = 1.21$) and “Possess music theory knowledge” ($M = 3.44$, $SD = 1.22$). The lowest rated items were “Be knowledgeable about secondary instruments” ($M = 2.70$, $SD = 1.29$) and “Select music literature” ($M = 2.35$, $SD = 1.22$). In the teaching skills/knowledge acquisition subcategory, the highest rated items were “Be able to communicate effectively with students” ($M = 3.52$, $SD = 1.11$) and “Be able to communicate effectively with colleagues and administrators” ($M = 3.42$, $SD = 1.21$). The lowest rated items were “Be able to identify and understand student learning characteristics” ($M = 2.81$, $SD = 1.09$) and “Be able to effectively manage student behavior” ($M = 2.42$, $SD = 1.29$) were the items rated lowest by participants. The full listing of skills/knowledge acquisition ratings are found in Table 6.

Table 6

Skills/Knowledge Acquisition Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills/knowledge item</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>$M$</th>
<th>$SD$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal acquisition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain a high level of professionalism</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possess leadership skills</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be goal oriented</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop rapport with student</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>1.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be encouraging</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>1.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be flexible and adaptable</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Display confidence</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>1.23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(table continues)
Table 6 (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills/knowledge item</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Be patient</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>1.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manage time well</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be organized</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>1.22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Musical importance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills/knowledge item</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maintain high musical standards</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>1.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possess music theory knowledge</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>1.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Display a high level of musicianship through performance</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>1.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possess clear conducting gestures</td>
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<td>Be knowledgeable about subject-matter materials</td>
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<td>Detect errors in group performance</td>
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<td>Be knowledgeable about secondary instruments</td>
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<td>Select music literature</td>
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<td>2.35</td>
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Teaching acquisition

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<tr>
<th>Skills/knowledge item</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
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<td>Be able to communicate effectively with students</td>
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<td>Be able to find help/support when needed</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>Be able to work with students of differing ages and abilities</td>
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<td>Be able to apply a variety of teaching strategies</td>
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<td>Be able to sequence musical instruction logically</td>
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<td>Be able to establish routines and procedures</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>Be able to plan effective musical lessons</td>
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<td>Possess music history knowledge</td>
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Research Question 3

In answer to Research Question 3, “Were there differences between perceived importance of teaching skills/knowledge and perceived difficulty of teaching skills/knowledge acquisition among novice band directors,” a one-way within-subjects ANOVA was calculated to examine
differences between the teaching importance ($M = 4.60; SD = .35$) and teaching acquisition ($M = 3.09; SD = .72$) subcategories. Skewness and kurtosis were calculated for teaching importance (skewness = -.77; kurtosis = -.36) and teaching acquisition (skewness = -.31; kurtosis = -.16) and fell within the -1 to +1 range of acceptability described by Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson (2010). Furthermore, repeated measures ANOVAs have been found to be robust to deviations from normality, both when sample sizes are moderate or large (Norman & Streiner, 2008) and when sample sizes are equal (Hair et al., 2010; Huck, 2012). The assumption of sphericity did not need to be met, due to the condition variable only containing two levels.

Results of the ANOVA revealed a statistically significant difference between importance and acquisition $F(1, 84) = 297.89, p < .01$, partial $\eta^2 = .78$ with participants’ teaching importance ratings being higher than teaching acquisition ratings. This large effect size was aligned with the significance finding, and illustrated that a meaningful difference between perceived importance and difficulty of skills/knowledge acquisition may have been found for the teaching subcategory.

Research Question 4

In answer to Research Question 4, “In what ways did university coursework help novice teachers to acquire the necessary skills/knowledge for successful teaching” the researcher identified 29 separate codes. These codes were then used to develop themes for Research Question 4. The researcher identified four themes:

1. secondary instrument instruction
2. teaching experiences
3. core curriculum
4. practical skills/knowledge
Table 7

**Codes Identified**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code name</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
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<td>Communication</td>
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<td>Confidence</td>
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<td>Content Knowledge</td>
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<td>Ensemble Skills</td>
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<td>Error Detection</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>Evaluations</td>
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<td>External Resources</td>
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<td>Lack of Preparation</td>
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<td>Lesson Planning</td>
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<td>Listening Skills</td>
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<td>Literature Selection</td>
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<td>Music Theory</td>
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<td>Musicianship</td>
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<td>Non-teaching Duties</td>
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<td>Philosophy</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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*Note: Theme identification numbers are as follows: 1 = secondary instrument instruction; 2 = teaching experiences; 3 = core curriculum; 4 = practical skills/knowledge*
Secondary instruments were discussed by the most participants ($n = 25$), followed by field experiences ($n = 18$), practical knowledge ($n = 13$), content knowledge ($n = 12$), and music theory ($n = 12$).

Theme 1 – Secondary Instrument Instruction

Several participants ($n = 25$) remarked that instruction on secondary instruments held great practical importance. Respondent 103 remarked that “By learning about secondary instrument [sic] in hands-on methods classes, I was able to apply those skills in the classroom when a student exhibits a certain playing error to help correct that and create success for that student.” This sentiment was echoed by other respondents. Respondent 80 expressed that they “learned a lot of pedagogy for teaching all of the instruments” during their university experience and Respondent 67 was “so glad I had in-depth instruments methods courses” as such instruction had “greatly helped me with teaching beginners.” Similarly, Respondent 39 stated that the university helped them “to know how to teach beginning band students how to play their instruments.” Respondent 35 singled out professor modeling as being particularly helpful.

Despite the positive nature of the question, a few respondents expressed that their secondary instrument courses were helpful but lacked a desired level of depth. Respondent 52 exemplified this mixed sentiment by stating, “I think helping students learn to play instruments and teach them more than what was current while I was a student would be very helpful, but what I was taught was helpful.” Additionally, Respondent 24 believed the information presented in methods courses was “very helpful,” however much of the knowledge presented was forgotten.
Theme 2 – Teaching Experiences

Respondents stressed the impact of various teaching experiences in acquiring teaching skills. Many of these experiences were gained away from the university classroom. Respondent 89 stated that:

The majority of skills and knowledge that I have learned and have found successful in my teaching I have acquired outside of the University setting; teaching lessons, working at high schools and middle schools, etc. where there is more hands on practical application of the teaching idiom and skills.

Respondent 6 agreed, offering that “The practical application of learned skills in the actual classroom through observation/practice hours at actual schools was the most beneficial in preparing me for the real teaching world.” Many of these comments focused on observations \( n = 8 \), field teaching \( n = 7 \), and student teaching \( n = 4 \).

Respondents often believed that observations provided context. One respondent offered, “We also observed many different groups and age levels around the area to get ideas of how other teachers do things” (Respondent 54). Respondent 42 agreed, stating, “There is a lot to learn by just getting in front of students and watching other people teach.” Additionally, Respondents 42 and 49 commented on the quality of instruction presented by the experienced teachers they observed.

Both field teaching and student teaching were often cited by participants as beneficial aspects of their university coursework. Respondent 42 commented that “There is a lot to learn by just getting in front of students.” Respondent 6 agreed, stating, “The practical application of learned skills in the actual classroom through observation/practice hours at actual schools was the most beneficial in preparing me for the real teaching world.” Student teaching provided opportunities for respondents to continue to develop skills/knowledge. Respondents 41 and 106 both commented on how helpful they found student teaching. Respondent 48 went so far as to
credit student teaching as the most impactful area of the university experience, saying, “However, I will say I probably learned more student teaching…than I did at my university.”

Some participants also commented on the benefits of peer teaching. Respondent 20 relayed that “I was given opportunities to teach during my coursework and that really helped me get comfortable with that aspect.” Similarly, Respondent 61 offered that “The teaching lab situations that we were put in really help build your teacher chops.” Activities such as “mini teaching sessions” (Respondent 88), “secondary instrument teaching projects” (Respondent 40), and “podium time in front of ensembles” (Respondents 10 and 54) were all discussed as being helpful to acquiring teaching skills/knowledge.

Theme 3 – Core Music Curriculum

Several participants expressed an appreciation for much of the instruction they received in their university coursework. Core subjects, such as music theory and music history, were viewed as well covered by participants. Respondent 63 stated that “I was VERY prepared for theory and aural skills parts of my job as well.” Respondent 32 agreed, answering that “High level classes in theory, history, and conducting” were meaningful.

Similarly, musicianship was also well addressed in coursework, according to participant comments. Respondents 23, 46, 56, and 65 all commented on how their universities helped them to grow into mature musicians. Similarly, Respondent 106 believed that “Our ensemble directors, studio professors, history professors, and theory professors all held us to high playing standards.” Even when performing was a challenge, Respondent 20 discovered that personal musical growth impacted teaching proficiency “I also struggled with several aspects of my playing and looking back, this helped me in my teaching in that I had a lot of tips for the students so they could overcome there [sic] own challenges.”
Participants also commented on the general positive impact of coursework. Respondent 42 believed that “Coursework helped me [to] be able to speak intelligently about a variety of subjects and areas of interest even if I am not an expert on them.” Respondents 7 and 77 both addressed the foundational knowledge provided by their coursework, while Respondent 86 stressed that coursework provided the opportunity to learn what questions to ask going into field experiences.

Theme 4 – Practical Skills/Knowledge

Practical skills/knowledge addressed in coursework were often cited as meaningful whenever they were addressed. Respondents cited conducting (n = 12), lesson planning (n = 8), error detection (n = 6), score study (n = 4), specialty ensembles (n = 4), rehearsal skills (n = 4), classroom management (n = 3), and communication (n = 2) as practical skills that participants believed were addressed at some level by their graduating institutions. These practical concerns were greatly appreciated by participants, due to the inherent applicability to their careers. Respondent 34 felt that university coursework helped to develop familiarity with rehearsal skills/knowledge, stating “I felt very comfortable conducting and rehearsing a band.” Respondent 5 agreed, adding that “I was taught different ways to score study and different ways to bring musical ideas from my conducting.” Respondent 1 commented that coursework “helped me understand creating lesson plans and managing behavior” while Respondent 57 highlighted specific rehearsal skills, such as “fine tuning and intonation, adjusting, chord building/theory, balance and blend, pace,” were subjects that were well addressed in their classes.

Summary

In general, respondents expressed satisfaction in the education they received from their graduating institutions. Much of the positive reflections were centered on the quality of specific
instruction and the relevancy much of the content held in regards to respondents’ teaching experiences. Novice band directors in this study greatly appreciated learning both how to teach and what to teach in skills/knowledge areas such as secondary instruments, conducting, score study, and rehearsal skills.

Research Question 5

In answer to Research Question 5, “What changes in preservice education do novice band directors feel would help prepare future preservice teachers to acquire the necessary skills/knowledge for successful teaching”, the researcher identified codes, which were used to develop themes for Research Question 5. A full list of codes for Research Question 5 can be found in Table 8. The researcher identified 4 themes for Research Question 5:

1. secondary instrument instruction
2. field experiences
3. non-instructional aspects of teaching
4. music pedagogy

Secondary instruments were discussed by the most participants \( n = 28 \), followed by field experience \( n = 24 \), authentic experiences \( n = 12 \), classroom management \( n = 9 \), and non-teaching duties \( n = 9 \).

Theme 1 – Secondary Instrument Instruction

While secondary instruments were often discussed as a positive aspect of respondents’ coursework, several respondents \( n = 28 \) also expressed a desire for more time and depth of instruction in their secondary instrument classes. Respondent 20 commented that

I would prefer not to be taught everything one needs to know in order to be a successful wind player. Show me the things that I will encounter the most, and walk me through ways in which I can solve it or help in some way.
Likewise, Respondent 32 added that “Simply memorizing fingerings and making a bad sound on the instrument did not adequately prepare me for troubleshooting student issues.”

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code name</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
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<td>Classroom Management</td>
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<td>Communication</td>
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<td>Curricular Connectivity</td>
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<td>Non-performance Classes</td>
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<td>Singing</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Specialty Ensembles</td>
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<tr>
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</table>

*Note: Theme identification numbers are as follows: 1 = secondary instrument instruction; 2 = field experiences; 3 = non-instructional aspects of teaching; 4 = music pedagogy*
comments were common and brought to light participants’ concerns about instrumental pedagogy.

Greater focus on how to diagnose and deliver meaningful instruction on all instruments was seen by respondents as meaningful adjustments to their university experience. Respondent 104 stated “I wish I had spent more time working on my secondary instruments! Having a list of quick fixes/solutions for each instrument would have been a helpful starting point to have in my first year of teaching.” Respondent 60 agreed, stating they would prefer “More about how to teach each instrument (at different levels) and less about how to play each one.” Respondent 63 highlighted the experience of secondary instrument instructors and the impact it had on student learning:

The instrumental methods courses have been entirely useless because the instructors that taught them have very little experience actually teaching ALL of those instruments. As a brass player, everything I know about woodwind instruments has come from private lessons, self study, and talking to my mentor teachers in the field. I can confidently say that every Brass and Woodwind methods class that I took was a complete waste of my time because it was not based in reality and the TFs that taught them were unqualified and had little real world experience. My string and percussion methods were fantastic though, because the teachers I happened to get all had real world experience.

Respondent 9 summarized the concern by stating:

Future band directors need rigor in secondary instrument classes and direct attention from those who teach those instruments rather than those who only play them. The time of a great instrumentalist is wasted when the time of a great teacher would be much more fulfilling for the undergraduate instrumental music education major.

Theme 2 –Field Experiences

Respondents saw field experiences as an important aspect of teaching skills/knowledge acquisition, and expressed a desire for more opportunities to get “hands on experience” (Respondent 100). Several participants made suggestions as to ways to increase field experiences. Participants frequently suggested that there be increased opportunities for on-site
time prior to student teaching ($n = 7$), as well as more opportunities for longer student teaching ($n = 7$), and more observations ($n = 4$). Respondent 28 suggested that “The first time you're teaching a band shouldn't be in student teaching. You should get time in front of ensembles (to lesser or greater extents) in all levels of your undergraduate degree.” Respondent 24 agreed, stating “I learned most of this stuff [rehearsal skills] while student teaching, but it would have been awesome to have some more of the hands on learning in the undergraduate courses.” Respondent 42 suggested universities “start the real-life experience earlier. I think that each year, you should have to teach something in front of students, even if it is not a full-time placement, and have someone evaluate you.”

Participants similarly proposed providing greater student teaching time. Respondent 23 offered “It would be beneficial to have done two semesters of student teaching (Fall and Spring) as opposed to only one semester. At both middle school or [sic] high school level, the two semesters are vastly different.” Respondent 37 agreed, recommending a “Full year of student teaching,” while Respondent 40 suggested an unspecified “longer student teaching internship time.” Respondents 55 and 98 addressed student teaching in secondary and elementary settings for a more holistic understanding of school contexts.

Increasing observation opportunities was viewed by participants as meaningful to skills/knowledge acquisition. Respondent 39 suggested students “Go out and observe more in all grade levels.” Both Respondents 12 and 49 also suggested greater observation opportunities. Participant 27 expressed the need for context that observations can provide: “Provide more context - more time spent observing.”

Some respondents offered specific contextualization examples that could be addressed by field experiences. Respondents 12 and 46 pinpointed a lack of familiarity with authentic high
school and middle school band sounds as an area where inadequate field experiences can cause problems. Respondent 46 stressed that “I would include more than just a unit or passing comment on… what a NORMAL band program looks like. (The places we observed/discussed in class were abnormalities).” Respondent 63 also suggested “more conversations with real teachers that are actually in the field”. Respondent 42 expressed the power of contextualization present in field experiences, as well as one of the core challenges inherent in preservice teacher education, in their response:

Most of the time, you have to learn by doing, because you don't know what will be important. Every student and every situation is unique. The coursework allows you to have tools in your toolbox and gives you the knowledge to know where to go when you don't know the answer. But you can't know what you don't know until you are up in front of the students.

Theme 3 – Non-Instructional Aspects of Teaching

Participants discussed feeling unprepared for the non-instructional duties and situations common in the workforce. General comments, such as Respondent 103’s statement that “If anything, its [sic] the non-teaching skills/knowledge that takes time to understand and execute (the administrative, behind-the-scenes tasks)” were prevalent. Respondent 77 suggested that university courses could “possibly [go] over some subjects related to potential non-musical duties and responsibilities.” Likewise, Respondent 54 stated “I wish I understood more about the logistics and organization about what all goes into being a band director.” Respondents 21 and 52 also mentioned handling non-instructional aspects in the context of mental health.

Specifically, Respondent 52 stated:

I would like to see more classes about how to manage all of the different things that will go on logistically with a teacher's workload, such as home/life balance, how to effectively make a long-term lesson plan for students (formal or informal), effective ways to talk to administration regarding scheduling- ESPECIALLY on campuses where the arts programs are either unsupported or not supported much.
In addition to general comments about non-instructional aspects of the job, many participants specified specific areas that were perceived as lacking in preservice education, such as classroom management ($n = 9$), instrument repair ($n = 7$), communication ($n = 6$), and finance ($n = 5$). Skills/knowledge in these areas were believed to be difficult and time intensive to acquire.

Communication skills and classroom management were discussed as missing from much of the coursework. Speaking to parents and administrators were the common ideas represented in communication comments. Respondent 16 stated “I knew almost nothing about communicating with difficult parents, and I wish I had practice or warnings about how to handle those situations.” Likewise, Respondent 52 would have appreciated “effective ways to talk to administration regarding scheduling—ESPECIALLY on campuses where the arts programs are either unsupported or not supported much.”

Providing a class largely dedicated to classroom management was suggested by Respondents 11, 16, 24, 33, and 70. Respondent 16 pointed out the differing demands of small versus large classrooms in terms of behavior management. Respondent 95 commented on both classroom management and communication, replying that “I'm not sure how it would be accomplished, but skills in dealing with disciplinary problems in the classroom and tiger moms on the phone would also have been very helpful.”

Several participants expressed a dearth of instruction on instrument repair, which participants believed would help to save time and money in their current work environment. Respondent 43 stated that would have liked to “Learn how to properly fix and adjust instruments on [the] fly to save budget money.” Respondent 96 agreed, adding that “I would have saved way more time if I just knew how to do basic fixes on all instruments instead of googling everything.”
Finances were also cited by some participants as being an area for improvement. Respondent 67 offered that “We did not do any kind of budget project or talk much about dealing with money or how to ask for more money for your program that I recall.” Respondent 54 agreed, saying “I don't feel very knowledgeable about how to budget money, collect money, apply for grants if needed.” Both Respondents 40 and 82 suggested dedicating more coursework to helping music educators develop financial skills/knowledge for running a band program.

Theme 4 – Music Pedagogy

Participants commented on several aspects of music teaching they would like to see explored in greater depth, with a focus on teaching. Respondent 56 suggested “more of an emphasis on HOW to deliver information in addition to what information to deliver.” Additionally, Respondent 7 recommended, “More focus on teaching the information rather than just learning it and being able to take a test over it.”

Some participants (n = 6) expressed a desire for greater training in error detection. These comments singled out the difficulties in detecting errors in actual band settings. Respondent 80 offered, “I also personally need more work on error detection in full band settings.” Respondent 86 agreed, saying, “I would like more practice with error detection in Band pieces. Things like being able to single out in what section someone is playing a wrong note.” Respondent 24 highlighted both “how to listen for mistakes and balance/blend.” Respondent 6 emphasized the content and pedagogy by expressing a desire for more “Error detection on ensembles PAIRED with discussions about how to solve such errors.”

Similarly, respondents (n = 6) expressed a desire for increased understanding of ensemble rehearsal skills/knowledge. Respondent 82 desired more information on “How to teach a piece for the first time to an ensemble.” Likewise, Respondent 24 stated “I would have loved more
hands on learning on how to rehearse bands.” Respondent 76 added a focus on student skill level by asking for “Bigger emphasis [sic] on teaching low ability level ensembles.”

Preparation for music literature selection was seen by participants \((n = 5)\) as something that could be improved. Respondent 14 expressed a desire for “A class covering band repertoire would be hugely important, especially if we take a close look at literature on the PML and the frequency of which those pieces are played.” Respondents 5, 12, 14, and 16 agreed, adding that a focus on beginner and intermediate literature appropriate for their school settings would be beneficial. Respondent 14 even suggested “Perhaps having regular labs where the class plays beginning (middle school) band literature.”

Summary

In general, participants commented on specific subjects and content that they felt was lacking in their university experiences. Many of the comments were focused on areas where respondents felt as if they did not have enough in depth, applicable instruction. The largest of these areas was secondary instruments, which participants stressed as incredibly important in their daily experience. Respondents also expressed a desire for more field experiences and more preparation for addressing non-instructional and pedagogical aspects of teaching.
CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter contains conclusions and discussions of the current study. Beginning with a brief summary of the literature and purpose of the study, the chapter continues with a presentation of the design and analysis used in this inquiry. Subsequently, the results for each research question are presented and accompanied by discussion that addresses connections between the results and past literature, possible implications of the results, and potential recommendations for future research. Finally, a summary of conclusions and future recommendations are presented.

Summary of Literature and Purpose

Researchers have documented that novice music teachers can face several challenges (Benson, 2008; Conway & Garlock, 2002), many of which have been cited as being centered around important skills/knowledge for successful teaching such as classroom management (Conway, 2003; Conway & Garlock, 2002; DeLorenzo, 1992; Fredrickson & Neill, 2004; Roulston et al., 2005; Yourn, 2000), communication (Barnes, 2010; Jones, 1978; Peterson, 2005; Roulston et al., 2005), and non-teaching duties ((Ballantyne, 2007a; Conway, 2003; Conway et al., 2004; Roulston et al., 2005). Understanding the perceived importance of said skills/knowledge can be meaningful for preservice teacher education, and the majority of skills/knowledge research has been conducted with this focus (Ballantyne & Packer 2004; Miksza et al., 2010; Teachout 1997).

There is a lack of research, however, examining novice music teachers’ acquisition of skills/knowledge components. General education researchers have found that acquiring
skills/knowledge poses special challenges for educators in varying stages of their careers (Burris & Keller, 2008; Carlson & Gooden, 1999; Haggard et al., 2006; Hattie & Yates, 2014; Morgan & Bourke, 2008; Mizoue & Inoue, 1993; Mundt & Connors, 1999; Okibo & Okeke, 2011; Rovegno, 1993). Researchers have found that teachers often struggle to obtain pedagogical skills/knowledge unrelated to the subject of their class, such as classroom management (Burris & Keller, 2008; Haggard et al., 2006; Mundt & Connors, 1999; Myers, Dyer, & Washburn, 2005; Okibo & Okeke, 2011), managing classroom finances (Burris & Keller, 2008; Mizoue & Inoue, 1993; Mundt & Connors, 1999), and communicating with parents (Burris & Keller, 2008; Myers et al., 2005). Additionally, general education researchers have found that exposure to content and pedagogy at the university level were meaningful to teachers’ skill acquisition (Carlson & Gooden, 1999; Hattie & Yates, 2014; Morgan & Burke, 2008; Rovegno, 1993).

The purposes of this study were (a) to describe novice band directors’ perceptions of the importance of skills/knowledge used in effective music teaching, (b) to describe novice band directors’ perception of the difficulty of acquiring each skill or knowledge component, (c) to compare novice band directors’ perceptions of the importance and difficulty of the skills/knowledge used in their classrooms, (d) to describe ways that novice band directors perceived university coursework as helpful in acquiring teaching skills/knowledge, and (e) to describe improvements to university coursework that novice band directors perceived could help future band directors. The guiding research questions for this study were:

1. What was the relative perceived importance of various skills/knowledge categories among novice band directors in Texas?

2. How difficult have skills/knowledge categories been to acquire for novice band directors?
3. Were there differences between perceived importance of teaching skills/knowledge and perceived difficulty of teaching skills/knowledge acquisition among novice band directors?

4. In what ways did university coursework help novice teachers to acquire the necessary skills/knowledge for successful teaching?

5. What changes in preservice education do novice band directors feel would help prepare future preservice teachers to acquire the necessary skills/knowledge for successful teaching?

Summary of Design and Analysis

A descriptive survey research methodology was chosen to describe the perceptions of novice Texas band directors. Participants were sampled from novice Texas band directors through three approaches. Initially, names and contact information was gathered from the Texas Music Educators Association (TMEA) and filtered for eligibility. Participants who were eligible and verified to work in those positions were contacted via email. Since several individuals’ information was either incorrect or missing from the TMEA provided list, instrumental education professors were contacted and asked to forward the recruitment email to recent graduates working as band directors in the state. Additionally, Facebook postings were made to disseminate the questionnaire among novice band directors.

After data collection and double-dipping procedures, a total of 85 responses were collected. These responses consisted of participants who were identified through the TMEA list (n = 56) and those contacted through instrumental music education professors and Facebook (n = 29). Once all data collection was completed, quantitative items were entered into SPSS and qualitative items were coded for emergent themes.
Participants \((N = 85)\) responded to the 81 questionnaire items, 70 of which were grouped into six subcategories; music skills/knowledge importance \((n = 11)\), teaching skills/knowledge importance \((n = 14)\), personal skills/knowledge importance \((n = 10)\), ease of musical skills/knowledge acquisition \((n = 11)\), ease of teaching skills/knowledge acquisition \((n = 14)\), and ease of personal skills/knowledge acquisition \((n = 10)\). The means and standard deviations were calculated for each subgroup for both importance and skills/knowledge acquisition.

Conclusions and Discussion

Skills/Knowledge Importance

In answer to Research Question 1, “What was the relative perceived importance of various skills/knowledge categories among novice band directors in Texas”, the researcher found that personal skills \((M = 4.64)\) showed the highest mean scores, followed by teaching skills \((M = 4.60)\) and musical skills \((M = 4.29)\). All three subcategories showed mean scores above the instrument midpoint of 3, which indicated that participants viewed each subcategory of skills/knowledge as on the important side of the scale.

Once means were calculated from participant ratings for musical, teaching, and personal skills; the categories were placed in rank order. This order was similar to previous literature (Davis, 2008; Teachout, 1997). Teaching and personal skills/knowledge have been rated similarly in prior literature, and musical skills were rated lowest of the three subcategories with consistency (Ballantyne & Packer, 2004; Davis, 2008; Hamann et al., 2000; Kelly, 2010; Miksza et al., 2010; Rohwer & Henry, 2004; Taebel, 1980, 1990; Teachout, 1997). Qualitative research has also found that novice music teachers are often more focused on personal and teaching skills/knowledge than on musical skills/knowledge (Conway, 2003; Fredrickson & Hackworth, 2005; Pembrook & Fredrickson, 2000/2001). In contrast, Kelly (2007) noted that high school
students relied heavily on musical skills/knowledge when evaluating teacher effectiveness. Additionally, Kelly (2007) also found that students with prior experience teaching, either private lessons or leading an ensemble, rated skills and behaviors differently. Therefore, the difference in importance among skills/knowledge categories may be due to a lack of actual teaching experiences among high school students. Similar to the contextualization preservice teachers need to successfully transition to the workforce, high school students may lack the necessary context to evaluate teacher effectiveness. Student perceptions may conflict with demonstrated learning, and therefore perceptions may differ between students and teachers. Likewise, Kelly (2007) found that participants’ grade level and school culture impacted skills and behavior ratings, which may also account for the difference in ratings.

In this study, participants viewed the personal skills/knowledge category as most important, followed by teaching and musical skills/knowledge categories. This result was also in line with previous literature (Davis, 2008; Kelly, 2010; Teachout, 1997). Davis (2008) found that “Both the music education students and the student teachers rated personal skills the highest, teaching skills second, and musical skills third” (p. 35). Kelly (2010) found that the highest rated traits among public school supervising teachers were those “frequently associated with an individual’s personality or personal beliefs” (p. 30). Teachout (1997) found similar ratings among the preservice teachers in his study. While still close, the mean ratings for the experienced teachers contrasted with those of the preservice teachers, with teaching skills rated as the most important. Similar to the experienced teacher results from Teachout’s (1997) study, Rohwer and Henry (2004) found that college professors rated teaching skills above personal skills, which also contrasted with other findings (Davis, 2008; Kelly, 2010; Teachout, 1997).
Various factors may have led to the discrepancies in personal and teaching skills/knowledge ratings in the prior literature. Some of the divergence may be due to the differing populations studied. Leong (1996) found that experience and professional role contributed to variations in mean order rankings of importance among preservice teachers, experienced teachers, and administrators. Preservice teachers often gave low ratings to skills/knowledge typically perceived as important, including sequencing of instruction and detecting musical errors, which Leong (1996) suggested may be due to a lack of positivity in teacher preparation programs. Leong (1996) also attributed differences between experienced music teacher and administrator ratings to a lack of communication, however the disparities in training and experience may also have influenced participant ratings. The results of this study may differ from Leong (1996) due to the focus on novice music teachers, the focus on band directors, or the cultural and systemic differences between Australia and the USA.

Similarly, Teachout (1997) found slight, statistically non-significant, differences between preservice and experienced teachers from all teaching areas on importance rankings, which differed from the current study. Once again, the focus on both novice teachers and only one teaching area (band) may account for some of the differences between Teachout’s results and those found in the current study. Richards and Killen (1993) found that preservice music educators were confident in their own personal performance in comparison to their peers. It is possible this confidence also extended to personal skills/knowledge in this study, which may have accounted for higher personal category scores. Furthermore, previous researchers have classified skills, such as being professional, under both teaching (Kelly, 2010) and personal (Cole, 2014; Davis, 2006) subcategories. Similarly, Rohwer and Henry (2004) suggested that
musical and personal skills/knowledge may be affected by other factors, like teaching area or grade level.

The high participant ratings for personal and teaching skills/knowledge categories may impact preservice teacher education. Universities may desire to reevaluate course content and degree plan structure for education majors, creating classes or specific lessons to address some of the areas deemed important by novice music teachers. Introducing skills/knowledge topics in coursework and then dedicating time to areas deemed important may provide a greater sense of understanding and appreciation by preservice teachers upon entering the workforce.

Music education coursework that focused on the development of personal and teaching skills/knowledge may facilitate a smoother transition into the workforce for novice teachers through building both personal confidence and familiarity with teaching. Such classes could include lessons directly addressing personal and teaching skills/knowledge. For instance, offering role-play scenarios to practice personal skills/knowledge may allow preservice teachers to begin to understand personal skills/knowledge. Similarly, peer teaching opportunities, such as with secondary instruments, may provide practice for teaching skills/knowledge acquisition in a more controlled environment. This restructuring may also allow for more relevant topics or greater elective offerings. Additionally, increased field experiences may allow for preservice teachers to demonstrate and develop personal and teaching skills/knowledge (Rohwer & Henry, 2004). Novice music teachers might also have more favorable views of their university experience if the course content was in greater alignment with perceived personal and teaching skills/knowledge importance.

Preservice teacher educators may find that personal skills/knowledge are difficult to observe and assess, due to a lack of authenticity in many of the teaching settings common to the
university experience (Rohwer & Henry, 2004; Teachout, 2001). Coupled with the internal nature of many components in the personal skills/knowledge category, such a difficulty may present a challenge to faculty. Increased field experiences and observations may allow for the evolution of individual concepts of personal skills/knowledge. Furthermore, guided reflections, particularly through the use of video, may help preservice teachers to gain understanding of their own personalities and the personal skills/knowledge necessary for success.

In general, novice band directors may be focused on the skills/knowledge that they perceive as providing the most direct benefit to their daily interactions with students. As such, preservice teacher educators may desire to structure university experiences to provide greater exposure to topics related to personal and teaching skills/knowledge development. The personal skills/knowledge category, due to many of the components’ internal natures, may require structured opportunities for preservice teachers to experiment and experience failure. Peer teaching and field experience may be well suited for facilitating personal development. As was mentioned earlier, providing structured roleplay in the classroom may also facilitate the development of personal skills/knowledge. Additionally, faculty may provide structured reflection and observation strategies to facilitate preservice teacher growth. Such strategies may take the form of observation rubrics, reflection journals, or group discussions.

Likewise, teaching skills/knowledge also may require structured development opportunities. Peer teaching may provide an excellent opportunity to practice specific teaching techniques. Faculty may provide preservice teachers with a specific strategy, for example whole-part-whole instruction, and allow them to focus on a small lesson using this strategy. In putting pedagogical theory into practice, preservice teacher may gain a greater understanding of what skills/knowledge are important for student success.
Researchers have suggested that the lower rating of musical skills/knowledge may be due, in part, to a sense of adequacy in regards to music skills/knowledge preparation (Ballantyne & Packer, 2004; Miksza et al., 2010). Miksza et al. (2010) suggested that musical skills/knowledge may be understood more intuitively. Ballantyne and Packer (2004) specifically highlighted music history and theory as possible areas where university preparation provided music teachers with an excess of skills/knowledge relative to the requirements of their careers. Such levels of either innate understanding or preservice education may lead teachers to place greater importance on teaching and personal skills. This sentiment was echoed in the mean ranking for musical skills in this study.

Similar to the personal and teaching importance recommendations, rebalancing core music curriculum to align more closely with perceived importance may be appreciated by novice music teachers. Greater depth in musical areas deemed important by music educators may be possible with adjustments to the curriculum. For example, reworking music history courses to provide greater background for school music may be seen by preservice music educators as helpful. Likewise, increasing curricular focus on areas like error detection and secondary instruments may help preservice teachers to become familiar with skills/knowledge deemed important in past literature (Rohwer & Henry, 2004; Taebel 1980). Currently existing courses, like aural skills, may be able to accommodate new or different topics like error detection. Adding classes then, may not be the only way to restructure the topics presented in university coursework. Such restructuring of music content may also allow for greater flexibility in the courses and topics addressed during preservice teacher education. For instance, specialty ensembles like mariachi, drumline, and jazz band may be covered in a separate class or in secondary methods courses.
Reworking core music curricula to be in greater alignment with musical experiences of novice music teachers may facilitate success amongst graduates. While external restrictions on degree plans may limit the creation of new classes, faculty may incorporate musical skills deemed important by participants into preexisting courses. Such restructuring of curricula would require a contextual, component-level focus to understand the precise skills/knowledge components that should receive increased or decreased instruction.

Curricular changes in personal, teaching, and musical skills/knowledge topics may be restricted by local and national governing bodies. For example, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) has developed requirements for teacher certification in Texas that include completing an educator certification program and passing certification exams. These educator certification programs include institutions of higher learning, and regulate many of the courses taught. Other states have similar regulating bodies. At the national level, the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation provides accreditations to institutions that maintain an 80% pass rate on state licensure examinations. In music, the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) provides accreditation guidelines for schools of music that often present specific curricular standards. Therefore, it may be challenging to add separate courses to the curriculum. Additionally, the university administration or state governing body may restrict the number of credit hours required for individual degrees, which may further limit the possibilities of adding courses. Finding flexibility to make content changes, such as extra instruction on classroom management or secondary instruments, may be difficult, however adjusting lessons in pre-established classes may be more feasible.

Means for personal, teaching, and musical skills/knowledge were above the instrument midpoint of 3. This may have indicated that respondents viewed each subcategory as important
for successful teaching, which would align with past research (Ballantyne & Packer, 2004; Teachout, 1997). The subcategories of personal, teaching, and musical skills/knowledge may be important to teachers of various experience levels, and should certainly continue to be addressed in preservice teacher education.

Future research addressing skills/knowledge importance may look at changing perceptions across different phases of preservice education, such as between coursework and student teaching. Gaining a greater understanding of early preservice teachers’ perceptions of skills/knowledge importance may help preservice teacher educators guide students towards increased awareness of the realities of music education. Additionally, examining specific components individually may help to isolate the topics to emphasize in coursework.

Skills/Knowledge Acquisition

In answer to Research Question 2, “How difficult have skills/knowledge categories been to acquire for novice band directors”, the researcher found that participants rated personal skills/knowledge ($M = 3.57$) as the easiest to acquire, followed by musical skills/knowledge ($M = 3.14$), and teaching skills/knowledge ($M = 3.09$).

Mean ratings for skills/knowledge acquisition showed that participants viewed the personal skills/knowledge subcategory as easiest to acquire, followed by musical skills/knowledge and teaching skills/knowledge subcategories. The personal acquisition result in this study was in alignment with Kelly (2010), who found that experienced educators who supervise student teachers expected novice music teachers to already have or quickly develop personal skills/knowledge such as honesty and professionalism. Acquisition of such personal skills/knowledge may be made possible through observations of skilled educators (Carlson & Gooden, 1999; Sharp, 1981) or through structured teaching opportunities such as peer teaching.
or field experiences. Similar to the recommendation mentioned in regards to skills/knowledge 
importance, providing opportunities to roleplay scenarios commonly found in schools may 
facilitate the acquisition of personal skills/knowledge. For example, parent communication has 
been found to be challenging for novice music teachers (Barnes, 2010; Jones, 1978; Peterson, 
2005; Roulston et al., 2005). Providing examples of difficult parent communication and 
practicing professional and appropriate responses may increase acquisition of professional 
communication skills/knowledge. Practicing such personal components, like professionalism 
and leadership, in smaller, supervised settings may lead to greater success in personal 
skills/knowledge acquisition.

Because the personal skills/knowledge may contain components that are developed 
internally, the subcategory may also be more impacted by an internal locus of control or 
individual motivation to succeed. Richards and Killen (1993) found that preservice teachers 
were very confident in their own improvement and growth. Novice band directors may be 
similarly confident regarding specific aspects of their personal skills/knowledge, regardless of 
the accuracy of such confidence. In turn, this self-efficacy may impact acquisition ratings. 
Additionally, such an internal locus of control may allow motivated novice band directors to 
acquire personal skills/knowledge more easily than other externally controlled skills/knowledge 
components.

The internal nature of personal skills/knowledge may create concerns regarding 
skills/knowledge acquisition. The personal category may contain components that are inherent, 
and individuals who possess them may self-select into the education profession. Therefore, 
ratings for personal skills/knowledge acquisition may be high due to a higher percentage of 
participants possessing the necessary skills/knowledge prior to any higher education experience.
Additionally, the internal nature of personal skills/knowledge may make such components difficult to define and assess (Rohwer & Henry, 2004). Authentic teaching experiences have been suggested as one possible method to bring personal skills/knowledge to the forefront, and allow for observation and development (Rohwer & Henry, 2004). Similarly, the use of individual video recordings may allow preservice teachers to gain insight into personal skills/knowledge strengths and weaknesses. In turn, such awareness may lead to increased development of internal personal components.

While overall category acquisition ratings for musical skills/knowledge were often lower than personal or teaching components, past research has bolstered the idea that music educators do still value such skills/knowledge (Ballantyne & Packer, 2004; Davis, 2008; Miksza et al., 2010; Teachout, 1997). Contrary to implications presented in prior literature (Ballantyne & Packer, 2004; Miksza et al., 2010), musical skills were not found to be the easiest to acquire in this study. The lack of specific practical knowledge prior to graduation, such as familiarity with secondary instrument pedagogy and with music repertoire, may make some musical skills more difficult to acquire than other musical skills. For example, Peterson (2005) found that repertoire selection was particularly difficult for first-year instrumental instructors to navigate successfully.

Similarly, some musical skills/knowledge may be perceived as easy to acquire due to the amount of instruction during undergraduate courses. Miksza et al. (2010) suggested that musical skills/knowledge may be “understood intuitively or be well entrenched” (p. 377). Ballantyne and Packer (2004) similarly found that certain musical skills/knowledge components were very well addressed by undergraduate institutions. Undergraduate programs may often dedicate considerable curricular time and effort to music theory through theory, aural skills, and piano classes. The abundance of instruction may prepare preservice teachers extensively for many of
the musical demands of the job. Ballantyne and Packer (2004) suggested that some of these preparations may, however, be excessive to the needs of beginning music educators. Additionally, the love for music that calls many novice band directors to the profession may accompany strong motivation to reach high individual musical standards.

In this study, participants perceived the teaching skills/knowledge subcategory as the most difficult to acquire, which was in alignment with previous general education literature (Burris & Keller, 2008; Mizoue & Inoue, 1993; Mundt & Connors, 1999). Because teaching skills/knowledge have consistently been found to be important to music educators (Ballantyne & Packer, 2004; Hamann et al., 2000; Kelly, 2010; Miksza et al., 2010; Taebel, 1980, 1990; Teachout, 1997), helping preservice music educators acquire teaching skills/knowledge may be an important part of preservice teacher education programs. Reworking the curriculum to increase a focus on important teaching skills, such as classroom management and effective assessment skills/knowledge, may increase the ease of acquisition for teaching skills/knowledge for preservice teachers.

Classroom management, for example, has been found to be challenging for music teachers (Conway, 2003; Conway & Garlock, 2002; DeLorenzo, 1992; Fredrickson & Neill, 2004; Rouslton et al., 2005). Specifically, Conway and Garlock (2002) noted that the specific realities of music education, such as large numbers of students or changing classroom environments, may exacerbate management and procedure issues. Therefore, classroom management skills/knowledge tend to be difficult for novice band music educators to acquire, and may demand greater instructional attention. Case studies may be one effective approach to introducing classroom management skills/knowledge in the university setting. Preservice teachers may, through reading, discussion, or roleplay, examine the possible causes and solutions
for student behavior problems. Similarly, having small field experiences where preservice teachers are expected to deliver a lesson may also provide a basic introduction to classroom management, among other specific teaching skills/knowledge components.

Providing more opportunities to engage with actual teaching has been found to help preservice teachers to conceptualize the theoretical pedagogical knowledge discussed in university coursework (Ballantyne, 2006; Ballantyne, 2007b; Conway, 2002; Conway et al., 2007; Roulston et al., 2005). These learning opportunities may take the form of structured observations, peer teaching, field experiences, or increased student teaching. While providing extra dedicated classes to music pedagogy may not be logistically feasible, providing possibilities to increase teaching skills/knowledge development in the existing coursework may still be possible. Peer teaching could be worked into more core music education courses, allowing for structured mini-lessons that may provide practice for preservice teachers and allow for more concentrated professor feedback. For instance, secondary methods courses could include a peer teaching element where preservice teachers are asked to take one musical concept and teach it to the class on secondary instruments. Although not entirely authentic, such a peer teaching lesson may provide an initial foundation that primes preservice teachers for further teaching skills/knowledge acquisition.

Observations and field experiences, while of great value, are dependent on local schools. This dependency may create logistical hurdles, such as school music classes meeting at times that conflict with university schedules, background check verifications, state or national curriculum requirements for the elementary and secondary students, or the need for administration of university students teaching mini-lessons in the classroom. In spite of such challenges, increased time spent in authentic school settings may be one of the more effective
methods of teaching skills/knowledge acquisition (Brophy, 2002; Conway, 2002, 2012; MacLeod & Walter, 2011; Shires, 1990). Field experiences may allow for transfer of theoretical pedagogical concepts to practical teaching strategies. Coupled with reflection and professor-directed discussion, observations and field experiences may increase the ease with which novice band directors acquire teaching skills/knowledge. Therefore, preservice teacher educators may desire to maximize teaching experiences to develop teaching skills/knowledge in preservice teachers.

Teaching experiences may be gained either as an active part of the coursework or through opportunities outside the university setting. Faculty may provide class days to allow for observations or arrange field experiences for preservice teachers in the local schools. Preservice teachers may also seek out other opportunities, such as teaching private lessons, volunteering at band camps, assisting with local marching bands, or other teaching opportunities. These external opportunities may present excellent chances for the development of personal and teaching skills/knowledge such as flexibility or classroom management, and therefore increase skills/knowledge acquisition.

Furthermore, non-instructional aspects of teaching, such as paperwork, lunch duty, or navigating grading procedures, have been found to present challenges for novice music teachers (Ballantyne, 2007a; Conway, 2003; Conway et al., 2004; Conway & Zerman, 2004; Fredrickson & Neill, 2004; Legette, 2013; Roulston et al., 2005). These teaching responsibilities may also be addressed with greater frequency in the university setting. Professor experience in authentic school settings may be valuable in developing curricula for helping preservice teachers acquire skills/knowledge related to aspects such as assessment, paperwork, and interacting with parents. Institutions may also consider bringing in local experienced music educators to provide lectures
or discussion sessions addressing various practical non-instructional teaching skills/knowledge areas.

There remain many possibilities for future research examining skills/knowledge acquisition among music educators. This study examined components in the context of personal, musical, and teaching categories. Investigations isolating the specific components may provide greater detail for developing and implementing curricular changes at the university level. Such studies may look at the acquisition of components common to the personal, musical, and teaching categories, or may focus on a few specific components for further investigation. For instance, one potential future study may examine the perceived acquisition difficulty of personal, musical, and teaching skills/knowledge, while another study could investigate the efficacy of preservice education on the acquisition of classroom management skills/knowledge. Additionally, research addressing the potential disconnect between preservice and novice teacher perceptions and the reality of coursework content may shed light on skills/knowledge learning and retention. Other populations, such as experienced teachers or choir directors, may also be meaningful for preservice teacher education.

Teaching Importance vs. Teaching Acquisition

In answer to Research Question 3, “Were there differences between perceived importance of teaching skills/knowledge and perceived difficulty of teaching skills/knowledge acquisition among novice band director”, the researcher found a statistically significant difference between teaching importance and teaching acquisition, with the teaching skills/knowledge importance category rated higher by participants than teaching skills/knowledge ease of acquisition. The large effect size was aligned with the significance finding, and illustrated that a meaningful difference between perceived importance and difficulty of skills/knowledge acquisition may
have been found for the teaching subcategory. The differences in the means showed that participants found teaching skills important, but difficult to acquire.

This research question addressed the difference between novice band directors’ importance and acquisition ratings of teaching skills/knowledge items. While using a different approach, Ballantyne and Packer (2004) examined perceptions of importance and preservice preparation among early-career music teachers (4 years or fewer of experience) in Australia. Their results showed that music-specific teaching skills/knowledge were rated as highly important and poorly prepared. In contrast, general pedagogical skills/knowledge were considered both important and well addressed in participants’ preservice educations (Ballantyne & Packer, 2004).

The finding that the teaching skills/knowledge categories were perceived by participants as important and not easy to acquire may have several implications for preservice teacher education. Many music education degree plans require general education coursework, which may focus on teacher skills/knowledge components and approaches more appropriate for general education classroom contexts. Instruction based on the general education classroom may be built on assumptions of environmental factors such as smaller class sizes or the ability of students to work quietly and independently, and may in turn fail to facilitate the acquisition of teaching skills/knowledge components relevant to preservice music teachers. Regulating bodies, including government institutions, may inhibit some changes in preservice teacher preparation. Certification/licensure organizations may require that coursework addresses traditional classroom environments. Strategies designed for the traditional classroom, in turn, may not be applicable to the classrooms of novice music teachers. While potentially disconnected from the classroom environment found in music, skills/knowledge discussed in general education
coursework may still be beneficial both in music instruction and in successfully navigating the overall school environment. For example, Leong (1996) found that music teachers viewed professional dialogue with colleagues and sequential planning as less important than with school administrators. As education courses may serve students from multiple disciplines, a challenge with content relevance may persist. It may be beneficial, therefore, to lobby for music, or fine arts, courses that meet the general education requirements. Faculty may approach the ideas of literacy using environments and materials connected to the music classroom. By approaching the subject material from a perspective closely related to the actual classroom, universities may be able to increase skills/knowledge acquisition.

Similarly, materials in the core music curriculum may not align with school music teaching expectations. As such, novice music teachers may enter the workforce with a lack of preparation in regards to important teaching skills/knowledge. Past researchers have found that preparation in areas such as classroom management (Bidner, 2001; Brophy, 2002; Cooper, 1994; Hewitt & Koner, 2013; Legette, 2013; Peterson, 2005) and teaching techniques (Cooper, 1994; Hewitt & Koner, 2013; Peterson, 2005) was viewed as lacking by participants. Faculty may choose to model specific teaching techniques for preservice teachers, followed by engaging students in discussions to gain further insight. Teaching experiences, both in the university setting and in the field, also may provide areas to practice pedagogical theory presented in coursework. An example of such practice may be allowing preservice teachers to teach specific musical concepts to a small group of students in a field setting. In such field experiences, preservice teachers may receive practice in lesson planning, lesson design, content delivery, and classroom management, among others.
Furthermore, obstacles in transferring theoretical knowledge into practical application may also hinder skills/knowledge acquisition (Conway, 2012; Legette, 2013). Participants may be exposed to the necessary pedagogical concepts and strategies in their coursework, yet lack the context to internalize and transfer the information to new situations. The lack of transfer, such as connecting university coursework content to developing effective classroom lessons, may impede skills/knowledge acquisition once participants are faced with authentic classroom contexts.

Both importance and acquisition ratings, therefore, may be influenced by participant preservice and inservice experience. Important skills/knowledge component development can happen at many stages, and may be acquired in the early stages of music educators’ careers. It should be noted, though, that attempting to acquire necessary skills/knowledge while working may lead to novice music teachers feeling overwhelmed or confused. A more relevant preparation during university coursework, combined with the necessary teaching experiences, may provide a foundation for future learning and skills/knowledge acquisition that extends into the beginnings of preservice teachers’ careers.

Previous personal experience may be related to skills/knowledge acquisition. In general education, Okibo and Okeke (2011) suggested that a lack of educational and vocational experience contributed to difficulty in acquiring and implementing overall teaching skills. Ballantyne and Packer (2004) similarly found in music education that pedagogical skills/knowledge were viewed by novice music teachers as highly important, yet were viewed as underrepresented in preservice preparation. This perceived disconnect between importance and acquisition may contribute to participants’ feelings of a lack of preparation for acquiring individual musical skills/knowledge components. Providing more developed instruction in a few
key areas may lessen the acquisition difficulty perceived by novice music educators. For instance, more comprehensive instruction on secondary instrument pedagogy may help novice band directors to acquire the knowledge to teach beginning instrumentalists successfully. This in-depth instruction may be accomplished by placing secondary instrument instruction under the purview of the music education faculty. Or, secondary instrument methods course instructors who have a performance background may present the information from a more teaching-centered viewpoint, and therefore may also provide in-depth pedagogical information in class. Such instruction would include both performance on the secondary instrument as well as pedagogical idiosyncrasies of each individual instrument.

Overall, participants viewed teaching skills as quite important and less easy to acquire. Further study is needed to establish causality, however several possibilities can be offered. Teaching opportunities are limited in the university setting, particularly those with authentic student interactions. Such narrow occasions to apply theoretical knowledge and develop practical skills may make the transition to full-time teaching more difficult. Conway and Garlock (2002) commented on the shock of starting one’s career, commenting that “I wish I had known that adjusting from college would be a big deal” (p. 18).

Additionally, the immediacy of some challenges may supersede other more general concerns. Classroom management skills/knowledge, for example, may be necessary before effective conducting gestures truly impact teachers’ and students’ experiences in the classroom. Such a hierarchy of skills/knowledge may both funnel perceptions of importance as well as represent acquisition difficulty. Finally, a lack of context prior to university coursework may inhibit the development of teaching skills, despite their perceived importance. Experiences prior to teaching have been found to influence individuals’ perceptions of skills/knowledge
importance (Kelly, 2007; Mills & Smith, 2003; Schmidt, 1998). It is possible that such experiences similarly color perceptions of skills/knowledge acquisition. These experiences might include time spent in secondary music classes, public speaking opportunities, or interacting with volunteer organizations.

Ultimately, more study is needed to gain greater insight into how novice band directors acquire skills/knowledge. Future research might build upon importance ratings already established in the literature, and examine how those skills/knowledge items are acquired by varying teacher groups. This study focused on novice band directors’ perceptions of skills/knowledge importance and ease of acquisition, however future research may branch out to preservice or experienced music teachers from all teaching areas. Additionally, studies examining specific mechanisms of skills/knowledge acquisition, such as peer teaching, course content, or structured observations, may be meaningful for preservice teacher education.

Benefits of University Coursework

In answer to Research Question 4, “In what ways did university coursework help novice teachers to acquire the necessary skills/knowledge for successful teaching” the researcher developed four themes: (a) secondary instrument instruction; (b) teaching experiences; (c) core music curriculum; and (d) practical skills/knowledge.

Results for the theme secondary instrument instruction revealed that participants found many aspects of their preservice education to be meaningful to their current teaching career. Secondary instrument instruction was by far the most lauded facet of preservice education. Respondents regularly commented on the importance of the secondary instrument skills/knowledge introduced and developed through methods courses. These comments stressed the positive impact such coursework had on their teaching experiences. Such emphasis is in
alignment with previous qualitative (Conway et al., 2007) and quantitative (Miksza et al., 2010; Teachout, 1997) skills/knowledge research. Likewise, respondents in this study rated secondary instruments as an important musical skills/knowledge item.

The hands-on nature of many secondary instrument classes provided inherent contextualization to the material, and was perceived during coursework and employment as relevant. Participants cited the specific pedagogical strategies and knowledge in correcting fundamental playing errors as further benefits from their coursework. Many of the comments focused on the connection to beginner instruction, remarking on relevancy in the role of beginning instrumental instructor. Respondent 67 stressed that secondary instrument courses “greatly helped me with teaching beginners,” and Respondent 103 offered that “I was able to apply those skills in the classroom when a student exhibits a certain playing error to help correct that and create success for that student.” These comments were also in alignment with Conway et al. (2007).

Undeterred by the positive nature of the item prompt, some participants expressed mixed feelings about their secondary instrument coursework. These comments focused on both the positive impact of the instruction, while still lamenting what they perceived as a lack of depth or focus. Respondent 52 embodied this perspective, commenting “I think helping students learn to play instruments and teach them more than what was current while I was a student would be very helpful, but what I was taught was helpful.” These sentiments may stem from frustrations in acquiring secondary instrument skills/knowledge once teaching full time. Overall, however, respondents were appreciative of whatever level of secondary instrument instruction they received.
The great importance respondents placed on secondary instrument instruction may suggest that universities be intentional with secondary instrument courses. Many novice band directors will be responsible for beginning instrumentalists’ instruction, and secondary instrument methods courses are the primary source of skills/knowledge acquisition in this area. Institutions should select instructors who are familiar with the instruments taught, and can provide applicable solutions to performance problems. Additionally, having experience teaching beginners may allow for greater inclusion of specific teaching strategies. Respondents often commented positively when secondary instrument methods instructors discussed how to teach each instrument. Building course structures around the need for preservice teachers to have a foundation in instructing each instrument may allow for greater confidence in novice band directors’ early careers. Peer teaching, which respondents discussed as an active part of secondary instrument courses, may provide opportunities for skills/knowledge development. This focus on pedagogy may suggest that secondary methods courses be under the purview of the music education department instead of music performance.

Future research may investigate aspects of secondary instrumental methods curricula. Examining what specific aspects of each instrument may be most difficult to assess or teach may inform instructors’ approaches to secondary instrument classes. Additionally, more investigation on instructor background may provide insight into the differences between music education and music performance instructors.

Results for the teaching experiences theme revealed the possible benefits of teaching experiences, both in the university setting and in the field. Peer teaching was noted as providing situations to “really help build your teacher chops” (Respondent 61). Respondents also expressed the advantage of having space to develop and integrate teaching skills/knowledge into
their approaches. Respondent 20 offered that the university provided space to “teach during my coursework and that really helped me get comfortable with that aspect.” Areas such as teaching techniques, secondary instrument instruction, and ensemble rehearsal techniques may often be addressed through peer teaching opportunities.

Simulated teaching experiences may provide preservice music educators with safe, controlled spaces to practice fundamental teaching skills. Feedback in these settings may also be helpful for reflection and development. While respondents expressed the benefits of peer teaching, prior literature in general education has found little evidence of a connection between inauthentic teaching experiences and skills/knowledge acquisition (Copeland, 1977; Gliessman et al., 1988).

Observations were reported as being meaningful in providing context to coursework. Respondents believed that there was much to be gained by watching skilled, experienced teachers present lessons. Respondent 54 also highlighted the importance of exposure to many different classroom environments, stating “We also observed many different groups and age levels around the area to get ideas of how other teachers do things.” Contextualization and transfer may be furthered through observation, particularly if the observations are structured or are accompanied by reflective aides such as a journal.

Respondents tended to identify field experiences and student teaching as the most impactful teaching experiences of their preservice education. Field experiences were cited as providing authentic opportunities to apply and develop teaching skills/knowledge. Respondent 6 offered that “The practical application of learned skills in the actual classroom through observation/practice hours at actual schools was the most beneficial in preparing me for the real
teaching world.” While often built into the curriculum, field experiences were also reported to be individually created by respondents. For example, respondent 89 stated that:

The majority of skills and knowledge that I have learned and have found successful in my teaching I have acquired outside of the University setting; teaching lessons, working at high schools and middle schools, etc. where there is more hands on practical application of the teaching idiom and skills.

Killian et al. (2013) similarly suggested that field experiences may help to assuage preservice teacher concerns about working in authentic classroom settings. Exposure to actual students in the semi-controlled environments common to field experiences may help to equip novice music teachers in many of the skills/knowledge areas necessary for success.

Student teaching also provided another area for skills/knowledge acquisition and development. Respondent 106 reported “student teaching with outstanding directors and programs” as a wonderful opportunity provided by the university. Likewise, Respondent 48 reported that “I probably learned more student teaching…than I did at my university.” As student teaching is essentially one long field experience, it was not surprising that respondents found it meaningful to skills/knowledge acquisition. This call for more time in student teaching is also in agreement with prior literature (Ballantyne, 2007b; Conway, 2002; Roulston et al., 2005). Like general field experiences, student teaching may acquaint novice music teachers with realistic chances to teach and interact with students.

Field experiences, overall, may be an area for increased development in the university setting. Providing opportunities at earlier stages of the degree sequence may allow for continuous contextualization for preservice teachers. Additionally, extended field experiences may empower preservice teachers to practice important skills/knowledge in an authentic environment. In turn, authentic opportunities for skills/knowledge development may increase the ease of skills/knowledge acquisition.
Future research may examine the influence teaching experiences have on skills/knowledge acquisition. A need for literature addressing the impact of teaching in simplified sessions (such as university classrooms) on teaching skills/knowledge acquisition in music settings currently exists. Furthermore, studies inspecting the connection between increased field experiences (particularly student teaching) and skills/knowledge acquisition may also be insightful.

Results for the core music curriculum theme were reported by respondents as containing aspects that facilitated skills/knowledge acquisition. Subjects such as music theory and music history were believed by participants to be more than sufficiently addressed in coursework. Respondent 63 remarked that “I was VERY prepared for theory and aural skills parts of my job.” Likewise, Respondent 32 felt that “High level classes in theory, history, and conducting” were all helpful in acquiring teaching skills/knowledge.

This finding is in alignment with Ballantyne and Packer (2004), who found that participants felt extremely prepared in many of the core subjects, such as music history. The structure of the wider curriculum, specifically relating to the amount of time dedicated to specific subjects, may be a driving factor in feelings of preparation and ease of skills/knowledge acquisition. Many university programs require several semesters of music history, theory, and piano, all of which may be inversely related to the amount of time these skills/knowledge areas are utilized by band directors in the field (Conway et al., 2004). Therefore, novice band directors may feel over prepared in specific skills/knowledge areas. Rebalancing core music curricula to reflect the current school music environment may allow universities to continue to provide excellent instruction while expanding coursework to cover multiple aspects of music teaching.
Musicianship was also discussed by participants as an area well addressed in university coursework. Respondents often discussed ways in which university professors and coursework helped them to become better musicians. This included helping respondents overcome their struggles on their principal instrument, such as with Respondent 20 who accredited these struggles with helping “me in my teaching in that I had a lot of tips for the students so they could overcome there [sic] own challenges.” Such responses agree with researchers who have suggested that musical skills/knowledge are well addressed at the university level (Ballantyne & Packer, 2004; Miksza et al., 2010). Furthermore, musical skills/knowledge acquisition scores in the current study support the idea that universities have prepared students well in regards to musicianship.

When evaluating core music curricula, universities may desire to balance the needs expressed by novice music teachers with more comprehensive musicianship goals. The results of this study, in conjunction with past research (Ballantyne & Packer, 2004; Miksza et al., 2010), may indicate feelings of over preparedness in certain musical skills/knowledge items. These items, however, have still been found, in both prior literature (Teachout, 1997) and in this study, to be important to participants. Therefore, rebalancing core music curricula should be approached with caution and care in order to retain meaningful curriculum while integrating topics based on importance or acquisition findings. Faculty may consider stressing transfer and relevance in courses such as music theory and history, to help preservice music teachers build connections and transfer skills/knowledge into authentic work contexts.

Other comments by respondents provided further support for the positive impact of coursework. These included individuals such as Respondent 42, who believed that “Coursework helped me [to] be able to speak intelligently about a variety of subjects and areas of interest even
if I am not an expert on them.” Likewise, Respondents 7 and 77 offered that coursework provided an essential foundation of skills/knowledge understanding that was used to survive the transition into the classroom.

Future research is needed to study the impact of the core music curriculum on skills/knowledge item acquisition. Examinations of individual items to identify curricular rebalancing possibilities may facilitate data driven decision making. Furthermore, a greater understanding of the constituent parts of the core music curriculum across multiple institutions may improve instruction and lesson planning among faculty. More direct evaluations of the connection between the core music curriculum and demonstrated skills/knowledge acquisition may also inform future curricular planning.

Results for the practical skills/knowledge theme consisted of respondents positively discussing the relevancy of skills/knowledge components that were perceived as practically applicable to the classroom setting. Conducting, lesson planning, error detection, score study, specialty ensembles, ensemble rehearsal skills, classroom management, and communication were all practical skills/knowledge areas mentioned as being addressed in university coursework. Many of these items were in alignment with prior research (Ballantyne, 2007a, 2007b; Ballantyne & Packer, 2004; Conway, 2002; Conway et al., 2007). The comments regarding these skills were universally positive, and many respondents specifically mentioned the relevancy of each item to their daily careers.

Respondent 5 offered that “Another class that I learned a lot from was my conducting classes. I was taught different ways to score study and different ways to bring musical ideas from my conducting [sic].” While topics such as lesson planning, error detection, score study, and others were mentioned by participants, it should be noted that few participants discussed each
specific skills/knowledge component even though many different components were addressed. The variety of topics respondents discussed positively may be due to specific strengths in individual preservice education programs. Individual respondents may have received more or above average instruction in one or more practically applicable areas while simultaneously receiving less or subpar instruction in others.

The general desire for instruction on practical aspects of music teaching has been well documented in the past literature (Ballantyne, 2007a, 2007b; Ballantyne & Packer, 2004; Conway, 2002; Conway et al., 2007; Jones, 1978; Krueger, 1996) and the results of this study are in alignment. The importance that recent graduates and experienced music educators placed on practical skills/knowledge components may lead universities to consider including more opportunities for skills/knowledge acquisition. Ballantyne (2007b) suggested that guided reflection of classroom practice may facilitate the acquisition of pedagogical content knowledge. Similarly, structures highlighting practical skills/knowledge topics prior to employment may introduce preservice teachers to new areas of concern, and may serve as a source of priming for skills/knowledge acquisition. Respondent 86 reported that aspects of the coursework served as a basis for future questioning and learning, highlighting gaps in Respondent 86’s understanding. Additionally, extra-curricular approaches, such as lecture series, community music engagement programs, or question-and-answer sessions, may be used to provide increased practical knowledge instruction.

While practical skills/knowledge components have appeared in research, future research examining individual practical skills/knowledge components in an acquisition context may be meaningful for preservice teacher educators. Studies might consider how participants acquire practical skills/knowledge, such as classroom management techniques or ensemble rehearsal
skills, which in turn may inform university instructional approaches for imparting these skills/knowledge components to preservice teachers. Additionally, research examining individual practical skills/knowledge components may reveal that the individual components are already well addressed in university coursework.

In overall response to research question 4, respondents felt that university coursework provided instruction and support for skills/knowledge acquisition in many different areas. Specific topics, such as secondary instruments, were greatly appreciated due to their direct, relevant connection to authentic classroom instruction. Building context and transferring coursework curriculum to the classroom was largely viewed as positive through actual teaching experiences in the university classroom and out in the field. Additionally, the core music curriculum covered subjects like music theory and music history well. Participants were appreciative of any areas they felt were practically applicable to the classroom setting.

Areas for Improvement in University Coursework

In answer to Research Question 5, “What changes in preservice education do novice band directors feel would help prepare future preservice teachers to acquire the necessary skills/knowledge for successful teaching”, the researcher developed four themes: (a) secondary instrument instruction, (b) field experiences, (c) non-instructional aspects of teaching, and (d) music pedagogy.

Results for the theme secondary instrument instruction theme indicated that respondents saw secondary instrument instruction as an area with room for improvement. Respondent comments focused largely on the approach used in secondary instrument courses. Respondents desired instruction to be centered on teaching the instruments to beginning students, rather than on their own personal performance skills. Respondent 20 offered:
I would prefer not to be taught everything one needs to know in order to be a successful wind player. Show me the things that I will encounter the most, and walk me through ways in which I can solve it or help in some way.

Other respondents shared these concerns, often remarking on the direction of class or the experience of the instructor. Respondent 63 claimed that “instrumental methods courses have been entirely useless because the instructors that taught them have very little experience actually teaching ALL of those instruments.”

These results are in contrast with Teachout (1997), who found that knowledge and proficiency with secondary instruments was not very important to experienced or preservice teachers. One possible explanation for the discrepancy can be found in the population studied. Novice band directors may be struggling with beginner instruction more than their experienced counterparts. Likewise, preservice teachers may lack experience with beginner instruction, thus lowering the importance ratings. Additionally, Teachout (1997) did not separate participants by teaching area. Band directors, due to the large number of disparate instruments found in the ensemble, may place greater emphasis on secondary instrument skills/knowledge, than choir or orchestra directors.

As such, respondents suggested that university instructors for methods courses be well versed in teaching all of the instruments for each course. Many institutions already follow this suggestion;, however several respondents graduated from institutions where applied faculty and graduate students led the secondary instrument instruction. Participants Conway et al. (2007) were divided by who they desired to teach secondary methods. Half of the participants strongly desired secondary methods instructors who had experience teaching beginning instrumentalists, while the other half appreciated the performance background of the instructors. All participants agreed, however, that some performance expectations were too high. Likewise, participants
desired a strong foundation of the basics on each instrument and instructors who could convey fundamental concepts essential for successful beginner instruction. Both the idea of excessive performance demands and a desire for practical instrumental pedagogy were aligned with the results of this study. The demands of successful beginner instruction, as well as the ways early instruction may impact future development of a band program, may drive novice band directors’ craving for practical secondary instrument instruction. One possible solution for this desire is to appoint instructors who, regardless of area of focus, have experience instructing beginners on the instruments taught.

Respondents also expressed a desire for greater depth or rigor to their secondary instrument courses. These comments were often paired with discussion about the pedagogical approaches participants felt were lacking. Conway et al. (2007) noted that the time allotted for secondary instrument courses presented challenges due to the vast array of material related to each individual instrument.

Providing adequate coverage of the instruments needed for band instruction may be important to novice band director success. Preservice teacher educators may consider the approach used to present secondary instrument content, focusing on the skills/knowledge needed to teach each instrument well. These may include embouchure, hand position, fingerings, articulation, error detection, and equipment issues, among others. Faculty and graduate students responsible for instruction may desire to spend class time discussing specific pedagogical approaches to common problems on each instrument. Novice band directors may gain greater secondary instrument skills/knowledge acquisition when such a pedagogically structured approach is used in the classroom.
Future research may identify performance issues common to beginners and typical pedagogical solutions to said issues. Results may then help faculty to adjust course content to provide improved secondary instrument instruction. Additionally, researchers may examine the connections between secondary instrument methods courses and secondary instrument skills/knowledge acquisition. Improved acquisition, in turn, may impact beginner instruction and novice band director confidence upon entering the workforce. Additionally, future research comparing band and orchestra teachers’ perceptions of secondary instrument preparation may provide insight into the unique factors inherent to each ensemble context.

Of note, the existence of homogenous beginner classes in many Texas band programs may have increased the frequency of participant comments desiring greater secondary instrument instruction. Additionally, band directors at both the high school and middle school level may be involved in teaching said homogenous classes, which in turn may increase the importance of an in depth understanding of pedagogical issues across all of the wind instruments. Future research may then examine the perceptions of novice band directors in other states in order to verify or challenge the findings in this study.

In the results for the field experiences theme, respondents reported that field experiences, due to the contextualization and development opportunities they provide, should be increased or extended. This finding was consistent with previous literature (Ballantyne, 2006; Ballantyne, 2007b; Conway, 2002; Conway et al., 2007; Roulston et al., 2005). Some respondents suggested that universities provide more observation opportunities as part of the coursework. Respondent 39 suggested that students “Go out and observe more in all grade levels.” Other respondents remarked that observations provided context for information presented in their coursework. In the general education context, Wallace (1981) suggested that the difficulty of skills/knowledge
acquisition indicated that greater time should be spent observing authentic teaching. When connected with coursework, observation may provide valuable understanding for various skills/knowledge components.

There are possible challenges with implementing increased observations. Time restrictions may impede increases in observations during university coursework. Providing core music instruction on essential theoretical and pedagogical concerns may trump observations, as the contextualization power of the observation may be diminished due to a lack of necessary foundational knowledge. Additionally, limited space and opportunities in the public schools may also limit observations. Faculty may, however, use video recordings to provide in class examples and develop greater context for course content.

Teaching experiences were also discussed regularly by participants. Respondent 28 suggested that “The first time you’re teaching a band shouldn’t be in student teaching. You should get time in front of ensembles (to lesser or greater extents) in all levels of your undergraduate degree.” Respondent 42 agreed, remarking that universities should “start the real-life experience earlier. I think that each year, you should have to teach something in front of students, even if it is not a full-time placement, and have someone evaluate you.” Providing teaching experiences at varying points during preservice teacher education may work together with coursework to provide a more complete education. Contextualization, when teaching experiences are provided throughout the coursework, can feed into instruction. The instruction, in turn, then can provide more knowledge to be contextualized, continuing a skills/knowledge learning feedback loop, which may positively impact preservice teacher skills/knowledge acquisition.
Several respondents commented about the flexibility provided by the university schedule to allow for field experiences, even as they recommended greater time allotted for being in schools. Like with secondary instrument instruction and observations, limited space and resources may create logistical hurdles for universities in increasing field experiences. Additionally, school districts, school administrators, and in-service music teachers must also be willing to accommodate university students in their classrooms. Furthermore, the close proximity of many universities may overload schools with requests for field experience opportunities. It is important to note that field experiences should be representative of varying teaching realities. A few participants reported that their observations and teaching experiences in the public schools were greatly divorced from what they experienced in the workforce. Respondent 46 stressed that “I would include more than just a unit or passing comment on…what a NORMAL band program looks like. (The places we observed/discussed in class were abnormalities.)” As such, developing contacts and partnerships with in-service teachers in a variety of school environments may help preservice teachers to build a more comprehensive picture of the realities of music education. Nonetheless, maximizing field experiences during coursework was seen by novice band directors as a substantial improvement to their university experience.

Student teaching was also an area where respondents would like more time. Several participants suggested a full year of student teaching. Respondent 23 reasoned that “At both middle school or [sic] high school level, the two semesters are vastly different.” This idea of getting a wider range of experience was echoed by respondents, who highlighted both the different aspects of fall and spring semesters as well as having the chance to spend more time in varying elementary and secondary settings. Longer student teaching would facilitate
transitioning from university student to novice teacher, with greater chances to learn skills/knowledge components. Like with field experiences, logistical concerns may inhibit large scale changes to the university curriculum. Moreover, student teaching is generally part of licensure/certification, and is therefore regulated. Institutions may be prohibited from making changes due to governing body restrictions. The lack of autonomy regarding student teaching may not be common knowledge among novice band directors, and may account for the lack of comments regarding any possible problems with extending either field experiences or student teaching.

Several avenues for future research exist in regards to teaching experiences and skills/knowledge acquisition. The suggestion that video observations may provide some of the same contextualization as on-site observations may benefit from further investigation. Researchers could compare participant perceptions of on-site and video observations, and examine any implications for preservice teacher education. Similarly, research investigating the impact, if any, of teaching experiences at varying points during the university curriculum may provide greater understanding for curricular development. Finally, research probing the effect of increased field and student teaching experiences on skills/knowledge acquisition may provide support for changes, particularly to any regulating bodies that oversee on-site components of preservice teacher education.

In the results for the non-instructional aspects of teaching theme, respondents frequently commented on the challenges presented by non-instructional aspects of their jobs. Comments addressing non-instruction aspects ranged from general remarks on how “it’s the non-teaching skills/knowledge that takes time to understand and execute (the administrative, behind-the-scenes tasks)” by Respondent 103, to more specific remarks about concerns such as
communicating skills, classroom management strategies, instrument repair, and managing finances. Respondent 16 reported “I knew almost nothing about communicating with difficult parents, and I wish I had practice or warnings about how to handle those situations.” Similarly, other respondents commented on difficulties communicating with administration, “ESPECIALLY on campuses where the arts programs are either unsupported or not supported much” (Respondent 52).

Many experienced music educators have encountered onerous parent communications, and providing some introductory information on navigating the sometime tenuous relations with parents may be helpful for future band directors. Insights into appropriate approaches to such difficult conversations often require maturity and experience, which can be shared by professors and mentors. For example, the importance of documenting conversations with parents after the fact can be discussed, with procedures for maintaining a record of contact that may alleviate stress and fears for novice music educators going into the workforce.

A few respondents suggested that universities provide a class explicitly dedicated to classroom management. Comments addressed concerns, such as the differences in management approaches between small and large classrooms, and expressed an eagerness for practical strategies that could be directly implemented in their daily routine. Such comments are consistent with previous literature (Barnes, 2010; Conway, 2003; Peterson, 2005; Yourn, 2005). Blair (2010) found that the gap between student behavior expectations and the reality of student behavior was trying for novice music teachers. Presentations during coursework may help to provide more authentic expectations, however without the context of working with actual students it may be difficult to truly prepare preservice teachers for this facet of band directing.
Further research may shed light on the impact of classroom management training of novice music teacher management skills/knowledge acquisition.

Instrument repair was also a recurrent motif among respondents. Managing time and money were often presented as motivating factors for respondents. Comments included a desire to “Learn how to properly fix and adjust instruments on [the] fly to save money” (Respondent 43) and “I would have saved way more time if I just knew how to do basic fixes on all instruments instead of googling everything” (Respondent 96). While not all institutions have in-house repair facilities, there are often regional music stores that offer maintenance and repair. It may also be meaningful to have a repair specialist give a guest lecture or videoconference into class to answer common questions. Ideally, a class or short internship working with actual instruments would provide the necessary experience to allow novice band directors to develop the necessary skills/knowledge to serve their students better. As with many of the suggestions presented by respondents, limited space in the college curriculum may restrict the implementation of instrument repair coursework.

The last non-teaching aspect frequently discussed was managing finances. While some respondents were fortunate enough to have some introduction to managing finances in their coursework, many expressed a lack of preparation in this area. Running a band program, particularly in Texas, may come with considerable financial responsibility. Respondent 67 offered that “We did not do any kind of budget project or talk much about dealing with money or how to ask for more money for your program that I recall.” Handling finances with either school budget money or facilitating boosters may be an intimidating experience. Also, there may be aspects that are unfamiliar to novice band directors. For example, procedures for purchase orders may not be consistent or clear. Similarly, understanding the differences between school
finances and booster organization finances may be confusing to novice band directors. Giving preservice music teachers exposure to possible financial concerns may help to decrease stress and confusion early in their careers.

Future research may investigate the relationship between specific training/coursework and non-instructional skills/knowledge acquisition. Examining both the perceived effectiveness and actual skills/knowledge acquisition after classroom management instruction may be one of many beneficial areas of study. Similar studies considering other non-instructional skills/knowledge areas, such as instrument repair or finances, may also be helpful in refining music education coursework. Additionally, expanding the populations to include other teaching areas as well as other geographic areas may help in gaining a more complete understanding of the topic.

In the results for the music pedagogy theme, respondents reported a desire for more pedagogical information, specific skills/knowledge, and approaches to successfully conveying music content to students. Selecting music literature and ensemble error detection were commonly mentioned concerns by participants. Respondent 14 suggested “A class covering band repertoire would be hugely important, especially if we take a close look at literature on the PML [Prescribed Music List] and the frequency of which those pieces are played.” Focusing on literature that is appropriate for beginner and intermediate students in some level of coursework would fill a void in many students’ knowledge base. The disconnect between repertoire studied and repertoire that will be taught may often be exacerbated by the performance focused repertoire selection found in most university ensembles. One respondent suggested “Perhaps having regular labs where the class plays beginning (middle school) band literature” (Respondent 14). While, once again, scheduling for such a contextual lab experience might be challenging, it
is worth noting that music literature selection could easily be incorporated into secondary ensemble methods courses. Furthermore, ensemble rehearsals could be constructed outside of a formal course structure to allow preservice teachers practice literature selection and rehearsal skills, provided there was enough preservice teacher interest. The desire for greater pedagogical knowledge also aligned with the acquisition ratings found in the quantitative portion of this study.

Respondents reported ensemble error detection skills as challenging, which also aligned with acquisition ratings from this study. While detecting errors in individual performance may be difficult, the process may be further complicated in group settings. Furthermore, novice music educators are less experienced with listening to ensembles in the role of conductor/instructor. Respondent 86 highlighted one challenge, saying “Things like being able to single out in what section someone is playing a wrong note” was a skill that was lacking. Additionally, it is important that once an error has been correctly identified, novice band directors have the knowledge to make corrections. Understanding all of the secondary instruments in conjunction with having a strong musical foundation may help future band directors to develop corrective strategies quickly and effectively. Preservice teacher educators may choose to include ensemble error detection as part of currently existing coursework, such as in aural skills or conducting classes. Specific errors can be controlled in a class setting, which may allow for isolation and practice for preservice teachers.

A few respondent comments addressed rehearsal skills/knowledge. For instance, respondent 82 wanted more preparation on “how to teach a piece for the first time to an ensemble.” Novice band directors may rely heavily on their most recent musical experiences, which may often be high level college ensembles. These ensembles, while providing meaningful
musical and aesthetic experiences, may in turn be more closely modeled on the professional orchestra. Secondary school ensembles, in contrast, have many added complications including scheduling problems, insufficient equipment, varying levels of dedication and achievement, inconsistent rehearsal times/spaces, etc. Therefore, the model from which novice band directors draw may be quite disparate from their initial teaching experiences. University and field experiences that highlight the nature of the ensembles preservice educators will most likely direct may be impactful in helping build skills/knowledge acquisition. In addition, the previous suggestions that teaching experiences be provided throughout the undergraduate curriculum, may also bolster familiarity and proficiency with rehearsing ensembles.

Future research may be useful that can explore individual music pedagogical approaches for perception and efficacy in greater depth. For example, studying the impact of a beginner repertoire reading ensemble on literature selection skills/knowledge or the relationship between ensemble error detection instruction and accuracy of ensemble error detection among preservice teachers may provide insights that could be useful in shaping future coursework. Moreover, research examining the balance of skills/knowledge in the core music curriculum may also give insights into healthy integration of some of the skills/knowledge identified in this study into undergraduate coursework.

In general, respondents focused their comments on the content quality and distribution present in their university experiences. Many suggestions involved creating more classes or opportunities to increase the skills/knowledge base before exiting into the workforce. While logistical concerns may prevent implementation in the original forms presented, perhaps rethinking the curriculum across the undergraduate degree plan may be meaningful to help novice band directors maximize their skills/knowledge acquisition.
Conclusions

In this study, the researcher examined importance, acquisition, and novice band director perceptions of the role university coursework played in the development of skills/knowledge for successful teaching. Findings indicated that Texas novice band directors viewed personal, teaching, and musical skills/knowledge categories as important. Personal and teaching skills/knowledge components were similarly rated, which aligned with prior literature. Similarly, musical skills/knowledge components were also rated least important, in agreement with previous studies (Ballantyne & Packer, 2004; Hamann, Baker, McAllister, Bauer, 2000; Kelly, 2010; Miksza et al., 2010; Rohwer & Henry, 2004; Taebel, 1980, 1990; Teachout, 1997).

Both the importance and acquisition concerns noted in this study align with findings of qualitative literature (Conway & Garlock, 2002; Fredrickson & Hackworth, 2005; Peterson, 2005). Conway and Garlock (2002) discussed the increased complications of managing a music classroom, such as discipline with a larger number of students and addressing procedures with students from multiple teachers and paradigms. Such complications may have contributed to lower acquisition scores in this study.

When looking at ease of acquisition, participants also found personal skills/knowledge to be the easiest to acquire, followed by musical and teaching skills/knowledge. A general sense of control and preparedness may have contributed to acquisition ratings. Participants often evaluated skills/knowledge components that were well addressed in their university coursework as easy to acquire, such as professionalism, assessment, and musicianship. In the open-ended responses, respondents described the skills/knowledge components that were acquired less easily; these included skills/knowledge components such as staying organized, being knowledgeable about secondary instruments, and implementing classroom management.
strategies. Qualitative comments further expanded on the positive impact of university instruction and the areas that respondents felt were open for improvement.

Continuing to address those skills/knowledge components viewed by novice music teachers as important may improve both the transition into the workforce and perceptions of preservice teacher education efficacy. Although many different skills/knowledge areas are viewed as important overall, prioritizing based on the results of this study and other past studies may been seen by future music educators as meaningful. Many institutions may already base their coursework on similar results, however qualitative comments in this study may indicate that room for improvement still exists.

Though more study on skills/knowledge acquisition is warranted, results from this study reflect novice band directors’ desire for university assistance in acquiring practical skills/knowledge components. Participants perceived teaching skills/knowledge components as the least easy to acquire, and preservice teacher educators may desire to focus on approaches that facilitate acquisition. Various methods, such as increased focus on the core music curriculum, on music pedagogy, or increased field experiences, may support preservice teachers in their quest to develop the teaching skills/knowledge necessary for success. It is also important to note that relevant skills/knowledge may be difficult to acquire without assistance.

Many of the proposed suggestions stemming from this study regard reevaluating university preservice teacher education. Although external factors may limit changes to the curriculum, preservice teacher educators may still incorporate some skills/knowledge adjustments in the undergraduate coursework. Providing preservice teachers with an adequate foundation in pedagogical and non-instructional topics may alleviate some of the praxis shock that has been found to accompany the transition from student to novice teacher (Ballantyne,
Additionally, improved skills/knowledge acquisition may lead to novice music teacher success, and in turn greater teacher retention.

Building consistent access to teaching experiences, for the purpose of skills/knowledge practice, acquisition, and contextualization may also be beneficial to future band directors. These contextual opportunities may include peer teaching, observations, field experiences, or student teaching and should be provided throughout the undergraduate curriculum. While developing the circumstances necessary to provide teaching experiences may be challenging for university faculty, the findings of this study support the suggestion that such teaching experiences are perceived as meaningful by novice band directors. Preservice teachers may benefit by clear instruction regarding skills/knowledge components, as well as opportunities to see and acquire skills/knowledge in varying contexts.

Future Recommendations

This study examined novice Texas band directors’ perceptions of the importance and acquisition of skills/knowledge necessary for successful teaching. Quantitative items provided mean rankings for the personal, teaching, and musical skills/knowledge subcategories. Qualitative items were used to develop themes regarding respondents’ views of the effective aspects of university coursework on skills/knowledge acquisition and the ways in which university coursework might be altered to improve skills/knowledge acquisition. Future researchers may branch out in varying directions.

While skills/knowledge component importance has been studied frequently, component acquisition remains relatively untouched in the music education literature. Further research regarding general skills/knowledge acquisition and specific skills/knowledge component acquisition may provide meaningful insight into how preservice and novice teachers gain the
necessary skills and knowledge to be successful. Future studies may examine skills/knowledge acquisition of music educators from different teaching areas, in contrast to the current study that focused on band directors. Similarly, expanding the population studied to include various levels of experience may also give greater insight into skills/knowledge acquisition. Additional investigation into the differences between skills/knowledge importance and acquisition may be broadened to include personal and musical skills/knowledge components. Few studies have addressed any skills/knowledge acquisition in music, and further examination may contribute relevant findings to preservice music teacher education.
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doi:10.1177/1057083709344045

doi:10.1017/S0265051702005260


