The Academic Program Review Committee (APRC) concluded that the UVic School of Music is a vibrant, active unit that works hard to maximize its efforts and thrives as a student-centered professional School. The School has a unified philosophy of predating its training on strong performance skills in all programs. The APRC observed an intense commitment of both full and part time faculty. They are all engaged in both traditional and innovative research and performance/creative work, providing excellent modes for their students while contributing to the scholarly and professional artistic world. While offering traditional music programs, the School also offers an innovative Music and Computers program which seeing success even in its infancy. The APRC found the curriculum to be meaningful and well structured. Student satisfactions with the programs within the School are high. The additional achievement of becoming Canada’s first “All Steinway” school speaks to entrepreneurial initiative and underlines strong administrative support.

The APRC concluded that the number of programs offered (Comprehensive, Composition & Theory, Music Education, Music History & Literature, and Performance) by the School to be appropriate and of high quality, thus attracting strong students. The APRC identified the most significant feature of the Music curriculum to be the inclusion of four years of individual instruction for all music students, regardless of major. As hiring has been focused on this priority, the School enjoys an enviable array of full time faculty in Performance. The APRC observes that the focus on tuition creates a niche which is a recruitment advantage and creates a low faculty-student ratio. The concern and disadvantage is that this model is resource intensive.

The Dean understands, as noted by the APRC, that the support staff seem to be struggling in the School. The Dean and the Provost support the hiring of a concert coordinator/operations manager for the School to alleviate such staffing pressures (budget increase was given to Faculty for a professional position in 2008-09. However, any further increase in staff resources will need to be carefully considered under the School’s current hiring plan.

With respect to the low faculty-student ratio in the School and the APRC’s comment that the School of Music will always be different in this regard, the Dean with the support of the Provost has argued that is not fair to other units if the Faculty who have equally important commitments to student learning within their discipline. Nor is the current ratio sustainable in terms of the overall university budget resources. While the School has tried to balance this situation by increasing the number of service courses offered, these efforts have not resulted in significant cost savings from year to year. Both the Dean and the Provost strongly encourage the School to review their options carefully. It may be necessary to put resources into developing a program structure which requires significantly fewer hours of individual instruction and changing the method and philosophy of course delivery to bring the School in line with the Faculty budget.

The APRC expressed concern over challenges in the area of Music Education. The faculty who are responsible for Music Education belong to the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and not the School of Music creating communication problems and as viewed by the APRC, unnecessary administrative obstacles. Therefore, they recommend that the Music Education program be integrated in the offerings of the School of Music. With this change, the APRC sees an opportunity for the School to create a diploma or certificate in Music Education for those music graduates who return to university to pursue music education after graduation. The Dean confirms that the Faculties of Fine Arts and Education have begun discussions about moving Music Education. The Provost is encouraged to hear that there is
initial interest from all parties and looks forward to receiving a plan for this restructuring and an assessment of the impact it will have to both Faculties should it take place.

With respect to charge backs for using the Farquhar Auditorium, the Dean advised that initial investigations indicate that the School may have already received budget in order to cover this cost. A search is underway for the correspondence which will confirm this arrangement.

The issue of workload is begin studied across all five Faculties in Fine Arts and a policy regarding these matters should be completed by the end of 2010. The Dean urges the School of Music to participate fully in the faculty level discussions and bring their concerns about extra-to-load, graduate supervision and other matters to the table.

The Dean and the Provost congratulate the School of Music for completing this review which was concluded with very positive results. The Provost encourages the School to continue to consider the recommendations noted above and others made by the APRC.