

**Address given by President Dr. Donald Balmos, Friday, January 30, 2009, 8:30 a.m.**

**Chennault Room - Hilton Austin Airport, Austin, Texas**

### **Creative Music Administration**

Since 1938 (for over 70 years) TAMS has existed to serve the music administrators of Texas, their departments, their faculty, and the music students. As our constitution states: ... "It is the purpose of the Association to advance the cause of music in higher education generally and to improve the quality and program of the music education system in Texas through the promotion of cooperation among all colleges and universities and through the exercise of educational leadership". As I reflect on my own adventure as a music administrator; celebrate the victories and question what I could have done better, I am drawn to the title of this brief lecture: Creative Music Administration.

We are creative artists who somehow have become administrators. When we began our first private lessons in voice or piano, did we do so to become a music administrator? When we sang in choir, played in band or orchestra, composed music, did we do so to become a music administrator? Even when we pursued our music studies in higher education; studied music theory; sat in music history class; struggled with the piano barrier; accomplished all of those recital credits; prepared junior, senior level and graduate recitals; and, yes, spent months and years researching and writing theses, treatises, and dissertations, did we do so to become a music administrator? Somewhere along the way, did we intentionally change career paths and decide to become music administrators or did we stumble upon this responsibility because we didn't want to endure someone else doing it to us? For whatever reason, we now are music administrators. Can we be creative?

Let's take a look at a typical job announcement for a music administrator:

Overall Responsibilities:

1. Work collaboratively with faculty.
2. Provide academic, artistic, and administrative leadership
3. Implement the goals of the departmental/division/school/college/and the university.

Specific Duties:

1. Implement the Department's mission including short and long-term plans based on the university's vision statement and goals and the mission of the university.
2. Manage the recruitment, orientation, and advisement of students, faculty, and staff
3. Administer faculty and staff developmental programs and make recommendations regarding faculty reappointment, tenure, and promotion.
4. Administrative responsibility for staffing classes along with planning the class schedule
5. Supervise all employees in the Department including administration of performance evaluations and determining annual merit raises for faculty.
6. Participate in program review for all degrees, NASM accreditation, certification, and other academic programs and develop new programs, improve existing programs and enhance the quality of instruction, academic programs, and research.
7. Manage the music department's facilities and equipment in a manner that

- promotes quality learning in classroom and laboratories.
8. Support graduates in their efforts to secure employment or gain admission to graduate or professional schools,
  9. Administer the departmental budget.
  10. Represent the department throughout the University and serve as a liaison with other University offices and departments.
  11. Serve on elected and appointed committees and accept other duties as assigned by the Dean/Provost
  12. Cultivate relationships with Alumni and friends of the university and participate in fundraising activities
  13. Coordinate review and updating of department policy documents
  14. Participate in facilities planning and management
  15. Teach and perform or publish in the area of expertise.

And finally:

16. Teach half time during the academic year and quarter time during the summer.

Where is there room for creativity when the agenda is set in this job announcement? How can one be a creative administrator? What happened to the life of being a creative artist, a creative performer, a creative composer, or just a creative musician? How would Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms or even Stravinsky function as music administrators?

I had forgotten a basic principle in music composition and had to be reminded by a friend of mine, a Pulitzer prize-winning composer. He was approached some time ago about a commission to write an oratorio commemorating the 100th birthday of a former President. The composition was to be based on his life, writings, and/or accomplishments. My friend declined the offer. The symphony came back to him, several times, and he finally accepted the challenge. I commented that I couldn't think of a more unmusical life to compose about. I would rather set portions of the phone directory to music. His response was..."music composition is the act of solving problems." With a twinkle in his eye, he also said..."This project will ruin the next two years of my life".

Each day, as you continue your adventure in solving problems, keeping faculty happy, keeping administrators happy, keeping students (and even parents) happy, do not lose sight of your original focus in life: Creative Artistry. Now....it is creative administration. Don't fail to visit a music class or a musical rehearsal. Your faculty are artists/performers who love having an audience.

And, finally, do not fail to celebrate all of the musical lives you have touched over the years and the creative artistry that exists because of your efforts at: "Creative Music Administration".

May our organization continue to accomplish its mission for you, your music units and, in particular, the music students of Texas.

Thank You and Have a Great Conference