

Growing Your Music Ministry

This course is generically called Directing and Managing a Music Program in the MLCP 3-year rotation. Thus you may see the abbreviation “DAMAMP.”

INSTRUCTORS: Marjorie K. Herman, UU Congregation of Princeton, NJ
Thomas Snell, First Unitarian Church of Rochester, NY

COURSE GOALS:

To survey the practical aspects of developing and managing a dynamic music ministry program. Each Student will explore and discuss the various components that best represent his/her faith community, which will serve as the foundation of a successful program.

COURSE CONTENT:

Stage 1 – Looking at the Present

1. Assessing the status of your current program
2. Assessing the culture of your congregation
3. Building community – with staff, with musicians, with congregants
4. Collaborating with ministry team and congregation
5. Recruiting and retaining volunteer musicians

Stage 2 – Visioning for What’s Next

1. Visioning your ensembles
2. Determining what the next music element should be: accompanist, chamber choir, bell choir additional octave, etc.
3. Creating job descriptions and review procedures
4. Developing management procedures: communication networks, absence policies, etc.
5. Research the resources at hand to help fulfill your next goal
6. Developing a music budget

Stage 3 – Harmony in the Beloved Community¹

1. Creating a personal mission statement.
2. Creating a Music Ministry mission statement.
3. Advocating for your Ministry: with clergy, with board, with congregation.
4. Transforming conflict: with clergy, with board, with musicians.
5. Resource list: copyright issues, music borrowing programs, repertoire lists
6. Relating all issues to your mission statements: your bellwether against which all things are measured.

PRE-COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Submit an electronic draft “Profile of Music in Your Congregation” by the end of May to both Marjorie Herman <marjuse@verizon.net> and Thom Snell

¹ Stage 3 will be covered in the Conference Workshop.

<firstumusic@gmail.com>, and include “DAMAMP” in the subject line. Submissions may be in the form of a Word Doc, PDF, or Google Doc. Please include your last name in the file name for easy reference. All profiles will be distributed electronically to the other candidates. Submissions should be in the range of 1500 to 3500 words.

Describe the music program you inherited:

1. Describe your current program (chart or paragraph form)
2. Do you have a current budget? If so, describe. If not, what is your current financial understanding?
3. What is the approximate membership size and typical Sunday worship attendance at your congregation? How many services do you have weekly?
4. How long have you been at your current church? Have you served other churches, and if so, for how long?
5. Describe in 1-2 paragraphs any challenges you’ve experienced and how you handled them.
6. Describe in 1-2 paragraphs a success you’ve had in your music program.
7. What special concerns would you like to be addressed in this class?

All profiles should be read before coming to the summer conference, as part of the pre-course reading.

PRE-COURSE READING

Fisher, Donna: Music in Our Congregations: A Handbook for Staffing a Music Program in UU Congregations, UUMN, October 2008 (Available on UUMN website: <http://173.199.146.204/~muusic/index.php/programs/publications>)

The compiled “Profiles” (pre-course assignment) of all participants. To be sent by the instructors.

SUGGESTED READING

Kroeker, Charlotte: The Sounds of Our Offerings: Achieving Excellence in Church Music, Herndon, VA: Alban Institute, 2011 (<http://www.alban.org/bookdetails.aspx?id=9694&terms=Sounds%20of%20our%20Offerings>)

POST-COURSE ASSIGNMENT

Please send your reflections to both Marjorie Herman <marjmouse@verizon.net> and Thom Snell <firstumusic@gmail.com>, and include “DAMAMP” in the subject line. Submissions may be in the form of a Word Doc, PDF, or Google Doc. Please include your last name in the file name for easy reference.

Part I: Goals

Start in August 2013; Due by October 31, 2013

1. Select 2-3 practical, short-range goals that address the immediate needs of your program. Identify a long-term vision/goal for your program in the next 2-3 years. Describe measurable steps for the implementation of your goals.
2. Describe how your music program will support the spiritual life of your church this year.
3. Survey: Create a congregational survey for soliciting input on your musical program. Please send a copy, and indicate when and how it will be implemented.
4. Describe your current situation regarding job descriptions, covenants, contracts, and review processes. If none exists, work with your church to develop at least one of these. Write a concise description of your current situation, which of the above you chose to develop, and if your efforts were successful. If they do exist, are there any areas of change that you recommend?

Part II: Assessment

Due by March 1, 2014

Start sending these as they are completed.

1. Develop a budget for the 2014-2015 year. How did you arrive at the numbers? How did your mission statement influence the development of your budget? How will you advocate for it? If music is not part of your church budget, describe how you will advocate for resources. Please include a copy of your proposed music budget with your reflections on these questions.
2. Survey: Once the fall survey has been collected, describe how you will use the results to encourage growth and vitality in your program. Do your goals and vision reflect the needs and desires of your congregation?
3. Describe your current system of managing printed and recorded music and identify any areas for improvement. Investigate and report on 1-2 strategies or tools to aid in improvement.
- 4.. Please answer this last. Report on the 2-3 short-range goals you chose to accomplish this year. Describe which parts of your goals were met, or how and why your goals changed. How did achieving your goals benefit your long-term vision for your program?

INSTRUCTORS

Marjorie Herman, D. M., has been Director of Music at the UU Congregation of Princeton for 8 years. She has taught choral conducting and literature at the University of Maryland Baltimore County and the University of Pittsburgh. In 2012, Marjorie was on the summer faculty at Westminster Choir College, co-teaching a week-long course in

Beginning Conducting. In growing the Music Ministry at UUCP, Marjorie has merged her training with her lifelong spiritual growth.

Thom Snell, M. M., is the Sunday Worship Music Director at First Unitarian Church of Rochester, NY. He holds degrees in music from the University of Toronto and Westminster Choir College. Passionate about congregational singing, his goal is to get everyone involved in making music that affirms our values.