

College Prep 101: Preparing your Students for a Successful Transition to College Music

Presented by Dr. Melissa Grady, Assistant Professor of Music Education,
University of Kansas (mlgrady@ku.edu)

and

Mr. Eric Bradshaw, Director of Bands,
Topeka High School (ebradshaw1@tps501.org)

Clinic Outline

- I. Admission to the school of choice: Application packet; financial aid paperwork; standardized tests score requirements (and preparation materials); importance of high school GPA and varied experiences
- II. Campus visits: Campus tour; meeting with dean or chair of academic area, director(s) of ensembles, applied teacher, etc.; housing; technology labs and availability; general “campus atmosphere” – Is this the place for me?
- III. Student Seeking a music degree:
 - A. Audition: Scheduling an audition; selecting music for the audition; preparation timeline; what to bring; how to dress; typical audition process; How am I being evaluated?; When should I audition?
 - B. Scholarship possibilities: merit vs need based scholarships; work study / student worker; outside opportunities to earn money
 - C. Degree choice: Music Performance; Music Education; Bachelor of Arts; Music Therapy; Music Technology / Business; Music Minor; etc.
- IV. Ensemble participation (non-music major): Time / Schedule demands; scholarship / stipend possibilities; cost; auditions; Who can participate?; How is it different than high school?
- V. High School Director involvement is critical! (see attached list)

The Role of the Director

1. **Encouragement!** Advise students to continue participating in music while in college
2. Help the student schedule a meeting to discuss FAFSA with a school counselor
3. Talk to student about what it means to be a music major
4. Talk to student about the possibility of participating in various ensembles
5. **Encouragement!!** Participating in a music ensemble will help students establish a group of friends that share a common interest (just like high school)
6. Students involved in school structured activities, outside of their major (i.e. music ensembles, intramural sports, etc.), have a lower dropout rate
7. Talk to student about the college audition process
8. Have appropriate audition music in your 'solo and ensemble' library
9. Listen to a "mock audition"
10. **Encouragement!!!** Students might have opportunities for potential travel and memorable performing opportunities (just like high school)
11. Help student contact school(s) or ensemble directors
12. Send a letter of support with the student (or directly to the music department)
13. Contact a person in the music department via email or phone
14. **Encouragement!!!!** Students might have opportunities to attend music conferences and sporting events free of charge as a college/university ensemble participant (just like high school)
15. Remember – your alma mater may not be the best place for every student; there are other quality options
16. Suggest to your student to have at least two options when selecting a college/university
17. Be realistic about the ability of your student and the opportunities they might have
18. **Encouragement!!!!!!** Students might have opportunities for increased financial assistance through their participation in college/university ensembles.
19. Meet with your juniors for a few minutes at some point during their Fall semester and provide your students with a resource / handout (i.e. the one provided as part of this clinic) that will assist with the application and audition process
20. Consider hosting (or coordinating with other area music teachers) a college music fair
21. **Encouragement!!!!!!!** Believe in your students! You are a mentor to them. They believe and trust you. Students will listen to what you suggest and will *sometimes* do as you suggest.
- 22.
- 23.
- 24.

Biographical Information

Dr. Melissa Grady is assistant professor of music education at The University of Kansas. She received her Ph.D. in Choral Pedagogy from The University of Kansas (Lawrence, Kansas) and both her undergraduate degree in Music Education and Masters in Music Education with an emphasis in Choral Conducting from Wichita State University (Wichita, Kansas).

At KU, Dr. Grady teaches undergraduate courses in choral methods, choral conducting, diction for music educators, student teaching and conducts the University Singers. Her graduate teaching duties comprise choral methods, history and philosophy of music education, musical values and aesthetics, and adolescent voices. An active researcher, Dr. Grady's research interests include effects of choral conducting gestures on choir sound, choral warm-ups, adolescent voices, choir spacing, and hearing dosage and hearing conservation in choir contexts.

Before her appointment at KU, Grady served as assistant professor of music education at Valdosta State University where she taught courses in choral and general music at the graduate and undergraduate levels. She also previously served as Visiting Assistant Professor of Music at Lake Forest College. During her eleven-year public school teaching career in Kansas, Grady taught at all levels of music education; elementary general music, middle school choir and general music, and high school choir.

Grady is an active clinician and adjudicator in the Midwest for middle school and high school choirs. She is a member of the NAFME and ACDA.

Mr. Eric Bradshaw is the Director of Bands at Topeka High School (Topeka, KS). He received his Master of Music in Tuba Performance and Bachelor of Science in Music Education from the University of Alabama (Tuscaloosa, AL). Bradshaw began his secondary education at West Virginia University (Morgantown, WV) following his graduation from Buckhannon-Upshur High School (Buckhannon, WV).

At THS, Mr. Bradshaw oversees all aspects of the band program. Ensembles include the Trojan Marching Band, Concert Band, Freshman Band, Stage Band, and Advanced Jazz Ensemble. Prior to his appointment at Topeka High School, Eric was the Director of Athletic Bands and Assistant Professor of Music at Valdosta State University (Valdosta, GA) from 2002 – 2016 and taught grades 6-12 in the Carroll County school system (Carrollton, GA) from 1997 – 2002. While living in Georgia, Bradshaw regularly served as a clinician for high school honor bands and adjudicator for marching and concert festivals. He also remained active as a tuba performer in several regional orchestras and chamber groups.

Eric's professional affiliations include the National Association for Music Education, Kansas Music Educators Association, and College Band Directors National Association. Bradshaw is also a member of Pi Kappa Lambda National Music Honor Society, and an honorary member of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia and Tau Beta Sigma.