Highways and Byways: Options for Professional and Musical Growth for Each Stage of Your Career

Dr. Blair Williams  
Assistant Professor of String Music Education, Texas Tech University  
blair.williams@ttu.edu

Rachel Dirks  
Director of Orchestral Studies  
Cello Instructor  
Kansas State University  
rdirks@ksu.edu

Liz Dinwiddie  
Performing Arts Dept. Chair, Ashley Hall School, Charleston, SC  
dinwiddiee@ashleyhall.org

Dr. Lindsay Fulcher  
Assistant Professor of String Music Education, University of Northern Colorado  
Lindsay.Fulcher@unco.edu

The path from dreams to success does exist. May you have the vision to find it, the courage to get on to it, and the perseverance to follow it. - Kalpana Chawla

Personal Professional and Musical Roadmaps: On-ramps, Off-ramps and Intersections

What are the Green Light/Yellow Light/Red Light aspects of your current professional and musical position(s)? How do you avoid the construction or how do you breeze down the highway?

Red Lights/Construction

How do you self-identify? TEACHER, MUSICIAN, CONDUCTOR, DIRECTOR, etc. or a mixture at different times? What are your goals for your current professional and musical position(s)?

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

Career Growth Options for Your Professional and Musical Life

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Christensen and Fessler (1992) Career Stages</th>
<th>Career Growth Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preservice</td>
<td>Teaching experiences: lessons, sectionals, ensembles, String Project, within music education coursework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Induction</td>
<td>Seek a mentor, attend PD (local, state, national), play/conduct/make music!!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competency Building</td>
<td>Attend conferences, join/volunteer/lead local &amp; state music education organizations, considering going back to school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enthusiastic and Growing</td>
<td>Open a private studio, start a new performance project, apply for students to perform at state and national festivals, seek out travel experiences and new teaching experiences, apply to present educational sessions at local and state music conferences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Frustration</td>
<td>Seek professional peer support, jump start your enthusiasm with an exciting experience (see below), prioritize students, self-care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stability</td>
<td>Become a mentor, continue seeking new information through conferences, local PD or digging into new coursework, share your knowledge with your colleagues both locally and beyond through PD and conferences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Wind-Down</td>
<td>Adjudicate festivals, observe student teachers, substitute teach, teach private lessons, mentor, share your knowledge as widely as possible (website, newsletter, blog)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Options for Enhancing Your Professional and Musical Career

- Summer workshops
  - State ASTA workshops
  - State/national workshops (OSU String Teacher Workshop, Michigan String Educators Workshop, Texas Orchestra Directors Association Summer Conference, Retreat for Violin and Viola Teachers at Indiana University)
  - Specific method workshops
    - Suzuki certification
    - Kodaly certification
    - Orff certification
    - MLT (GIML in Michigan) PD levels
    - Alternative styles
    - National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Certification
    - Rolland Workshops
    - Conducting Workshops
    - Private lessons or Chamber Music experiences
  - Conducting Symposiaums
    - Collegiate
    - Symphony Orchestra sponsored
    - International

- Conferences
  - National
    - ASTA
    - NAfME In-Service
    - Midwest Band and Orchestra Conference
  - Regional
    - College Music Society
  - State
    - State MEA conferences
    - State ASTA meetings/workshops

- Degree Options
  - Summer masters
  - Full time masters
  - Online masters or Ph.D.
  - Hybrid masters and Ph.D. (summer in-person, school year online)
  - Ph.D.
Limitations for Degree Seeking Options: What do you need to consider?

- Funding/TA position and duties
- Location (teacher and workshop/degree)
- Timing
- Length of time commitment to successfully earning degree
- Travel
- Family
- University requirements
  - GRE
  - Licensure changes
  - Entrance exams/interviews
  - Fellowship/Assistantship applications

Advice and Insights: Informal Learning

- D. Thornton: Graduate School, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VqRFKhYbmv4
- Conway (2008) --”Findings support past research in that teachers perceived informal interactions with other music teachers as the most powerful form of professional development. Findings also suggest that professional development needs of music teachers may change throughout their careers” (p. 7).
- F. Ricci: How to Change Careers When You’re Lost, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TUtx-wC5mqA

Plan Your Journey: Now where do you want to go? What are your goals for the future?

__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________

Selected References and Resources