1. In the *Futures Project Self-Study Report* the Music Department completed in August 1999, the music faculty proposes, as part of the “Christian Orientation Standard,” under the heading “Virtues,” a rationale for the following desired student learning outcomes:

The discipline required for excellent musical performance offers significant opportunities for the practice of Christian virtues. Courage, self-control, faith, patience, and hope are required in abundance of those who undertake to master an instrument, as progress may take place only over long periods of time and through prolonged effort. Faith, hope, and patience are exercised by the composition student who struggles to create a worthy piece of music. All these students must love music, and God who gives the gift, in order to be able to continue to give to it the time and energy required to achieve excellence.

Music students must give much time and energy to composition, practice, rehearsal, and performance. Prudence is essential to budgeting time for these activities and to maintaining good health and adequate physical and mental energy. As in any communal endeavor, students in ensembles are required to practice self-control and love for one another. Failings in either of these areas adversely affect group morale and quality of performance.

The practice of these virtues is integral to the Christian life to an extent that an enumeration of the ways in which they are cultivated in the broader college experience might be interminable.

While we strongly desire these virtues for our students, the extent to which they are developed in them through their study of music is difficult to assess. One method that has proved successful in our ensembles in the past is self-assessment, in which students are asked to write about how they are progressing individually in these areas through their involvement in ensembles. In addition, we have noted that music students’ self-assessment as part of the recently-developed senior interview process has proved very enlightening and encouraging, and feel this method might be employed generally to assess the development of Christian virtues in our students.

For these reasons, we have decided that during their senior year, each of our students will be required to submit a written self-assessment of their development during their time at Westmont in the areas courage, self-control, faith, patience, hope, and love through their private practice of an instrument, voice, or composition, as well as through their involvement in music ensembles. Completion of this self-assessment will be required for graduation.

2. As part of the “Critical and Interdisciplinary Thinking Standard” of the *Futures Project* report, the music faculty notes:

The music curriculum offers students opportunities to develop critical thinking skills in many contexts. As students interpret a piece of music, they must
carefully examine the score to determine the composer's intent, employing musical terminology. They learn to analyze music with regard to melody, harmony, rhythm, dynamics, and timbre, and are required to examine vocal and choral music with regard to the structure, stress, syntax, and semantics of the text.

Later, the music faculty states:

[Students] are taught to evaluate music from an historical perspective, in order to understand how it may reflect the personality of the artist who composed it, as well as the time and place in which, the circumstances under which, and the purpose for which it was composed.

While these sorts of analysis and evaluation are taught by an example in private lessons and ensemble rehearsals, perhaps the best arenas for the concrete assessment of students’ growth in these areas are music history, music analysis, and conducting classes, in which assignments are given that require students to record their judgments concerning these matters. Besides grading these assignments and returning them to the students, representative samples will be copied and filed in a departmental archive, as evidence that our students are developing the capacity for critical thinking in the area of music literature.

3. As part of the same standard,

Music performance provides a number of opportunities for students to collaborate with students and faculty in other disciplines in order to solve problems and make decisions. Student composers must work closely with performers seeking to interpret their pieces; the final result reflects this collaboration.

Video records of student performances and our student composers recitals offer graphic testimony that students have developed the collaborative skills necessary for performance of classic repertoire and new student works. These recordings will be kept on file as evidence of our students’ development as collaborative problem solvers and performers.

4. We would like to inculcate in our students an appreciation for the intrinsic value of music, as a gift from God to be returned to God, rather than as a tool for self-indulgence, self glorification, or emotional manipulation.

Students come to Westmont well equipped to make judgments concerning worship music based upon emotion; the music faculty hopes to enable them to examine such music critically, in order to balance emotional responses with historical research and intellectually informed assessments to develop tastes for service music of depth and variety. We hope that our students leave us knowing that while having opinions about worship music is good, having reasoned opinions about excellence throughout a wide range of such music is better.
Additionally, the music faculty recognizes that within the myriad types of fine music available for use in worship, types and styles exist that are more appropriate-- and less appropriate-- to particular settings. An important goal for the music faculty is that our students will become competent to comment with significant depth of insight and understanding on the comparative fit of various types of music to assorted worship situations.

For these reasons, we have decided that during their senior year, each of our students will be required to submit a written self-assessment of their development during their time at Westmont in the area of diverse worship music, addressing types and styles, and 'fit' within assorted settings.

5. Students in music courses naturally become acquainted with a variety of devotional resources as they explore fine creative poetry intended for worship music through participation in Westmont ensembles, private lessons (primarily voice and composition), music survey and history classes, and our church music course. Resources gleaned during these studies may provide a significant contribution to broadening our students' devotional experiences. Specific opportunities for personal reflection are available during times of concerted devotion and prayer during classes and ensembles, and faculty and student devotionals, along with the singing and playing of hymns in classes, provide additional samples of devotional resources, both textual and musical.

For these reasons, we have decided that during their senior year, each of our students will be required to submit a written self-assessment of their development during their time at Westmont in the area of devotional resources for both individual and corporate use.