



The
UNIVERSITY
of **VERMONT**

DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC & DANCE

September 21, 2018

Dear Professor Besaw,

On September 21, I observed David Feurzeig teach MU 009, Music Theory Fundamentals. He did an excellent job! His demeanor is energized, pleasant, encouraging, instructional, and focused. David's pacing is very good and his teaching is thorough and varied. He was extremely well-prepared this for class!

David's syllabus is comprehensive and well-written. It includes "explicit learning outcomes" and "evaluation" criteria, as well as an explanation of "active music making" – an integral element of the class. In this course, David includes a companion website that is exceptionally thorough and organized, and provides another very helpful resource and layer to his teaching.

The following are some specific items that characterized this teaching episode. David:

- started with call and response singing (David, then the students singing and conducting the steady beat). First, David and students sang using syllables, then David using neutral syllables and the students responding with solfege syllables. This singing started with patterns and progressed to short segments of a folk song – first with solfege, then with the song's words. The short segments progressed to singing of the entire song. Next, rhythm was addressed and the song was notated.
- exhibited excellent eye contact throughout the class
- explained concepts thoroughly and from a variety of perspectives
- sang frequently to model and/or reinforce his points
- used the Smart Board to reinforce his main points
- referred to the homework and connected it to his instruction
- used multiple forms of student engagement to approach concepts from a variety of angles (singing in solfege, singing song words, conducting, tapping the beat, using counting syllables for rhythm, notating, playing recorder, playing the keyboard)
- provided strategies and tips to help students be successful
- scaffolded as needed to give students the best chance of success
- used humor occasionally to keep the environment light

The students were fully engaged throughout the class. They clearly respect David and the skills, knowledge, and understandings he is offering in this class.

Overall, this was an outstanding teaching episode. David is organized, experienced, and masterful. I am so happy that we have this wonderful educator working with our music students on their music theory and overall musicianship skills! I fully support David Feurzeig's promotion to Full Professor.

Sincerely,

Patricia E. Riley, Professor