

The UTSA Experience

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When you think of Texas universities with great music programs, most would tell you the University of Northern Texas, University of Houston Moore's School of Music, Texas Tech University, or the University of Texas. I thought about attending one of these universities after graduating high school, but I decided to stay close to home in San Antonio. The University of Texas at San Antonio has an amazing music program that is often overlooked by most high school graduates who are seeking degrees in the music field.

As a recent UTSA graduate, I felt that the faculty and staff worked with me and many other music students to achieve our dreams in the music world. I can confidentially say that I am prepared and ready to become a contributing member to the music education field.

I worked closely with all of my professors instead of graduate assistants. UTSA is a competitive university, but small enough so that students don't become a number. The university offers several undergraduate degree programs in music education, marketing, composition, and performance. They offer graduate degree programs in music education, performance,

conducting, and piano pedagogy. UTSA is also home to an amazing music technology program where any UTSA student can earn a music technology certificate.

During the time that I studied and worked before student teaching, the faculty at UTSA gave me unlimited opportunities to grow. There are unlimited teaching opportunities and leadership roles that undergraduates can participate in. I was able to teach in every methods class, pedagogy class, lab band, and in both competitive ensembles. I was also able to work with middle school students during UTSA's summer music camps. As for leadership opportunities, I assisted the directors as an ensemble associate and assisted with library work for most of the ensembles in the music department. With these experiences, the faculty was able to evaluate all of my work and give me feedback to make me into a successful teacher.

My student teaching experience was one that I will never forget. The music education faculty

worked hard to find appropriate willing and cooperating teachers that would help me grow. I was placed in the North East Independent School District and was able to work with the

directors at Ronald Reagan High School and Tejeda Middle School. Both programs were well established and known for outstanding music programs. I had the opportunity to teach all of their ensembles, as well as sectionals, beginner classes,

and private lessons. I also had the opportunity to do work that most don't see. I assisted with grades, library work, bookkeeping, instrument placements, and inventory. There were unlimited opportunities for me to learn and grow from those directors that I cannot thank them enough for allowing me into their everyday routines. I know that I have mentors for life and can call on them anytime I need advice. Someday I will be in their shoes and will pass on the knowledge that I have gained to a young student teacher. I hope that I will

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be as great as the directors I worked with during my student teaching experience.

Overall, UTSA has helped me grow into the teacher that I am today and will be there to watch me grow in this field. As we used to say in our pedagogy classes, "Don't forget about the mother ship!" It is great that I can go back to the professors that have watched me grow and who know me the best to give me advice if I ever

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need help. UTSA is often overlooked by most music hungry high school graduates because it is a smaller program, but I highly encourage them to take time to look at what they have to offer. I would not have the opportunities I have today if I went to any other university and I am proud to say that I am a graduate of The University of Texas at San Antonio.