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Bringing it all together: formal and informal learning in a university guitar class

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COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS

Dissertation

**BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER:
FORMAL AND INFORMAL LEARNING IN A UNIVERSITY GUITAR CLASS**

by

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*This project is dedicated to my greatest supporters:
Brandy, Eme, Kennedy, and Max*

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Boston University College of Fine Arts, 2015

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ABSTRACT

This study seeks to integrate informal and formal music learning in a university guitar class with a secondary focus on evaluating the effectiveness of this approach in meeting student's stated goals for learning the guitar. Salient features in formal music learning were discovered from an examination of guitar method books. Informal features were examined from a reading of extant research on popular music pedagogy and expounded upon through research devoted to specific areas of informal music learning and popular music pedagogy. These features were used in the creation of a guitar curriculum to aid in the integration of both formal and informal music learning in a university guitar class. Data were gathered through pre- and post-study questionnaires, interviews, and video analysis.

Analysis of data shows that integrating formal and informal music learning in a beginner's guitar class is effective in meeting student stated goals for the course. Note reading was an area that was not effective in meeting student goals for the course. Data revealed that note reading should be taught slowly, in key based relationships and with fewer notes taught over the 16 week course. Integrating

informal music learning procedures in a formal environment proved to be challenging for the students. A difficulty existed in the student's ability to task switch between formal and informal learning in the University setting. Implications from the study are listening should be considered a primary means for learning music and haphazard learning is beneficial, though difficult to include in a systematized curriculum.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Guitar pedagogy, as a field of scholarly inquiry, has lacked substantial attention from music education researchers. A search of ProQuest Dissertations and Theses and database revealed only eight dissertations over the past 20 years have been devoted to the field of guitar pedagogy and few articles exist in peer-reviewed journals related to the subject. This neglect exists despite the guitar's popularity (National Association of Music Merchants [NAMM], 2006). Method and songbooks for the guitar are plentiful and online video distribution channel *YouTube* contains over 286,000 videos on guitar instruction (*YouTube*, 2014). In spite of the instrument's popularity, accessibility, and available repertoire, research in the area of guitar pedagogy is substantially absent.

Two particular areas of research missing in the extant guitar pedagogy literature are a focus on how guitarists acquire musical skill, formally and informally, and guitar instruction in university level guitar classes. This study was conducted to address the void within available scholarship in guitar instruction and was influenced by my experiences learning the guitar.

I began learning the guitar informally at the age of thirteen. I was also learning percussion formally at the same time. The learning I was experiencing was dichotomous: How I was learning music in the school was at odds with how I was learning outside the school (Davis, 2013; Green, 2002; Regelski, 2009; Snell, 2007).

After high school, I went on to study classical guitar at the university

formally, earning a bachelor's and master's degree in guitar performance. As I moved into teaching at the university level, I struggled to reconcile formal and informal music learning experiences. Because I saw no difference in music learning, to me I was just learning to play music, I struggled with conforming to the norms of teaching at the university. Instead of trying to integrate both approaches in the guitar studio I taught the instrument in the same manner as my colleagues and how I learned at the university: formally.

Background of Problem

During the mid-twentieth century the guitar was accepted as an instrument of study in the university. The first school to offer a degree in guitar in the United States was the San Francisco Conservatory of Music in 1964 (Tanenbaum, 2003). Within the next two decades major universities and conservatories in America established classical guitar programs. Because the guitar was viewed primarily as a folk instrument, the guitar lacked a substantial, well-developed pedagogy from which to base instruction in these formal settings (Provost, 1997). Guitar pedagogy in university settings began in the Segovian tradition—the master teacher imparting knowledge to the student. Many guitar department chairs were formal pupils of Andrés Segovia—the grandfather of the modern classical guitar, thus continuing pedagogical tradition. Few university programs emphasized the incorporation of informal music learning in the guitar studio. Historically, guitar instruction from a “master teacher” served as the basis of pedagogy resulting in a focus on specific

learning methodologies, rather than an all-encompassing view of music learning.

University and conservatory guitar programs have since diversified, incorporating popular music and jazz styles. Students entering guitar programs have predominantly had training and experiences that are more informal than formal. Guitar studies at the university and conservatory force students to conform to formal music learning strategies and leave the “garage” behind, perpetuating the divide of informal and formal learning strategies in the academy (Schwartz, 1993). University programs that focus only on informal learning (Lebler, 2008) have not produced guitar-specific research. In order to contribute to the field of guitar pedagogy research, the variety of ways musicians acquire skill should be examined, utilized, and incorporated into existing programs.

Guitar Pedagogy

Because guitar pedagogy lacks substantial attention, an overview of extant research will provide a rationale for this study. The first article in the *Music Educators Journal* calling for the use of guitar in music instruction appeared in 1963, nine years after the founding of the first university guitar program. Grossman (1963) stated, the “guitar can play a significant role in developing musical insights in people everywhere” (p. 140). Grossman did not attempt to establish how the guitar might be included in music education or what styles of music it could be useful for, saying only that it was useful in “helping our nation better understand and appreciate the magic of music” (p. 140). Grossman’s article promoted the prevalent

“hum and strum” method of guitar instruction—meaning the guitar is useful for playing chords to accompany singing (Fesmire, 2006; Grossman, 1963). Hum and strum guitar instruction is one dimensional and cursory; it does not provide the tools necessary for musicians to fully participate in musical performance (Fesmire, 2006).

Bartel (1990) articulated a variety of ways the guitar could be incorporated into the general music curriculum. He reasoned that guitar instruction develops life-long skills, can be used in place of a general music course as it develops musicianship, and deemphasizes public performance. Unfortunately, his article—like most scholarship on guitar pedagogy—is more advocacy than pedagogy. Pedagogical advice is absent in the article. Music educators are not in need of further advocacy for an instrument accepted globally; rather, they need training, pedagogy, and curriculum (Boespflug, 2004). Bartel’s argument does not take into account the popularity of the instrument in amateur music making, such as in church and civic events.

As the guitar becomes more common in school settings research in the area of guitar pedagogy needs to increase. Teacher education does not adequately prepare music educators to teach popular music via informal means, much less via the guitar (Boespflug, 2004; Wright & Kanellopoulos, 2010). For guitar instruction to be successful in the classroom, music educators must have performing and teaching abilities at the at least an intermediate level; they should possess the ability to play in multiple styles adequately, read music on the instrument, and have a

decent command of technique (Fesmire, 2006). School music teachers, however, are often only one step ahead of their students in learning the guitar (Sussman, 2009).

Music educators who perform at high levels and have advanced training on the guitar lack an established pedagogy upon which to base teaching, a pedagogy that embraces formal and informal learning equally, as this is absent in publication. Glise's (1997) text, *Classical Guitar Pedagogy*, is currently the only published text that deals exclusively with guitar pedagogy. This text, however, is for the classically trained guitarist rather than the general music educator. Music literacy and classical performance are the stated goal of the text. Guitar pedagogy needs further development in order to meet the needs of students and better prepare them for music making in and out of schools.

Research suggests most music educators have no comprehensive guitar pedagogy or holistic curriculum from which to base their instruction. A survey of guitar programs in Colorado revealed 67% of music educators teaching the instrument had no formal lessons in guitar (Fesmire, 2006). This lack of training and experience with the instrument prohibits educators from making informed judgments about what material is and is not appropriate in teaching the guitar. For example, Timmerman and Griffith (1971) published a class guitar text, *Guitar in the Classroom*, which focused solely on a sequential process of teaching students to strum chords and accompany singing. Viewing the guitar as an instrument appropriate only for accompanying popular music styles ensured the instrument would not be widely embraced as a serious instrument in music education, as an

accompanying only approach does not take into account state music standards. Alternately, other relevant method books released during the 1970s focused solely on classical technique and music, marginalizing the inclusion of popular music in the curriculum (Fesmire, 2006). Despite its popularity, guitar has not been well incorporated into music education because of the division of curriculum along stylistic lines.

Class-based guitar instruction. Class-based guitar instruction is primarily used to get non-traditional music students involved in music or as an alternative method of curriculum delivery in general music (Sussman, 2009). Fesmire (2006) conducted a survey of guitar programs in middle and high schools in Colorado and discovered only 22.4% of schools offered consistent guitar instruction. The majority of students enrolled in guitar instruction were male (61.2%), and a high percentage of these students did not participate in any music ensemble such as jazz band or orchestra (73%).

Lane (1975) provides a step-by-step approach to implementing the guitar in a class-based setting. Students' initial introduction to the instrument is limited to basic concepts, such as tuning and finger placement. Once students are exposed to the string names and are able to recite them in order from lowest to highest, they are able to "develop a chart showing the location of tones on the fingerboard" (p. 50). After notes have been identified, students are able to create chords from pitches, bypassing the need for chord diagrams. Objectives for Lane's approach are for students to be able to: (a) name the notes on the guitar, (b) build chords from

pitches and play them on the instrument, (c) write music that uses notes through fifth position, and (d) convert a notated melody to tablature. Lane believes the instructor does not need to have any prior knowledge or playing experience as the guitar is only a means of presenting musical ideas and Western music theory.

Bartel (1990) summarized Leonard's article "1984 and Beyond" in relation to a guitar class. A guitar class ought to:

(1) enable each student to develop personal musicianship to the highest level possible; (2) enable students to discover and develop their musical talent to the highest level possible; (3) enable all students to develop discriminations that give them the basis for controlling the aesthetic quality of their musical lives; (4) admit all students to the creative mode – enabling them to develop the abilities necessary for self-expression and for understanding the expressions of others; and (5) enable all students to develop resources for a rewarding life, positive social interaction, and participation in the rites and rituals of society. (p. 42)

The guitar class, therefore, must not be limited to strumming chords or classical guitar solo playing; rather, it must allow students to "develop the kind of maturity that will let them be seen as legitimate equals of the traditional performance programs" (p. 43) by developing skills that will allow a guitarist to make aesthetic judgments about music and to reach their highest musical potential. This comprehensive concept of a guitar class includes developing "skills and understandings" in the areas of melody, harmony, style, improvisation, and performance. Techniques used in this comprehensive instruction are classically based, such as utilization of right-hand classic technique. Although Bartel did provide a few examples of how to teach a concept, such as melody, the music educator is left with no "how-to" guide, or resources, for fully implementing and

realizing Leonard's vision. Leonard's views on the class method are also provincial, focusing on music education as aesthetic education.

Solo vs. group. Phillips (2008) viewed class-based curriculum as primarily solo-based. Students need to be progress through introductory literature to advanced pieces that will ensure acceptance into prestigious university and conservatory guitar programs. In Phillip's example, class-based instruction is "highly individualized, with students working at their own pace. Much of the class time is spent with students practicing individually while the instructor circulates among them, checking their progress, keeping them on task, and assessing them individually" (p. 47). Students only play together during the 15-minute warm-up at the beginning of class. Individualistic focus in guitar pedagogy removes guitar instruction from the heart of real music making. In actuality, not all students will be professional guitarists (Westerlund, 2006) and most learn music through peer interaction (Green, 2002).

Assessment. Class-based instruction from formal learning perspectives necessitates proficiency in all areas of instruction so the student may progress from one level to the next (Canafax, 2007). Formal guitar pedagogues place a greater emphasis on sequential learning than on music participation and enjoyment. Strict assessment allows students' to succeed during the first stages of learning the guitar because it instills good habits and proper technical training (Phillips, 2008). Because assessment does not necessarily assist in meeting students' stated goals, however, guitar class instruction should incorporate assessment of informal elements as well.

Furthermore, this line of thinking can be counter-intuitive because many of the professional guitarists students are familiar with do not possess “good habits” (Schwartz, 1993). Assessing students’ progress in guitar instruction should be a priority in order to provide accurate, consistent feedback to the student. Rubrics may be used to assess the students’ progress in the areas of formal guitar instruction, posture, hand positions, etc., but are not a good indicator of a students’ progress in playing ability. Rubrics are also not a good indicator of musical enjoyment and how music impacts student’s socio-musical contexts.

Formal and Informal Music Learning

Formal music instruction “occurs in a traditional pedagogic environment where clarity of goals and procedures are clearly defined in advance and where learning results in certification or assessment” (Wright & Kanellopoulos, 2010, p. 72) and is often found in school-based settings with an expert guiding instruction (Schwartz, 1993). Informal learning is “situated in and derived from every life experiences” (Batt-Rawden & Denora, 2005, p. 289), often apart from a school setting without an expert guiding instruction. Folkstad (2006) explains four ways of understanding formal and informal music instruction; (1) where does the learning take place, (2) what is the predominant learning style, (3) who owns the learning, (4) what is the intention (pp. 141–142). This view of formal and informal provides broader categories from which to view learning and is less dependent on learner context.

Formal education is the form of schooling developed in the industrialized West. Strauss (1984) defined formal education as, “any form of education that is deliberate, carried on ‘out of context’ in a special setting outside of the routines of daily life, and made the responsibility of the larger social group” (p. 195). A master teacher is present in formal music education and curriculum is usually presented in a systematized way (Green, 2004). Instruction in this manner perpetuates a hierarchy that certain music is deemed more important and worthy of inclusion in music education over others, exalting the Western musical canon (Snell, 2009). Skills are acquired systematically with an expert teacher guiding the progression of skill procurement. Emphasis is placed on reading music notation and participating in music performances (Snell, 2009).

Informal learning takes place “in context” and occurs as children participate in everyday activities and experiences (Batt-Rawden & DeNora, 2005; Strauss, 1984). In a musical context, informal learning occurs in the student’s context, emphasizes participation, and picked up through enculturation (Green, 2002). The *Musical Futures* project lists five principles of informal music learning: (a) learning music that students choose, like and identify with; (b) learning by listening and copying recordings; (c) learning alongside friends; (d) assimilating skills and knowledge in personal ways; and (e) maintaining a close integration of listening, performing, improvising, and composing. (D’Amore, 2009) Music learning is accomplished by democratizing the learning process (Green, 2008).

Learning situations are not exclusively formal or informal. It is difficult to say

when a student is learning informally or formally (Cope & Smith, 1997). A student may develop musical skills informally in a formal setting through observing and learning from peers and attempting to copy what they hear in the classroom. Still, due to the presence of graded curriculum and lesson plans, informal music learning in the classroom is not the norm.

Just as informal learning can be present in formal settings, formal music learning can, and does, take place in non-school settings as evidenced by music training in non-western cultures. For example, in the *guru-shishya-parampara* tradition of North India there is no utilization of music notation and the student learns primarily through imitation and enculturation. This type of instruction provides the impression of informal learning but it is highly formalized. Systematized instruction and the *guru* as a possessor of knowledge demonstrate the formality in which skills are acquired. Strict imitation of the guru is similar to an expert's mode of music transmission in formal music education (Booth, 1986).

Informally, musicians learn through their own effort and experimentation rather than receiving instruction from an expert (Finnegan, 1989). A common feature of self-learned musicians is the manner in which they engage with others in music making, thus enhancing their music learning and development. "Social interaction and participation are key components to learning, particularly when learners share common interests and understanding" (Davis, 2013, p. 29). Through the encouragement of family or peers, imitation, watching, and playing with other musicians they can "pick-up" knowledge and skills that will aid in developing

musicianship and broaden their choices for musical interaction (Green, 2002).

Green (2002) published *How Popular Musicians Learn: A Way Ahead for Music Education*, a book of interviews and observations of popular musicians from 1998–1999. The book provided a glimpse into music transmission in informal settings. Green’s study examined a group of 14 musicians, aged 15 to 50, living in and around London and involved in “Anglo-American guitar-based pop and rock music” (p. 9). Green’s research does not take into account the variety of popular music genres and means of music production, such as music created via electronic means. Green’s study presented foundational elements of popular music pedagogy.

Alongside or instead of formal music education there are always, in every society, other ways of passing on and acquiring musical skills and knowledge....[W]ithin these traditions, young musicians largely teach themselves or ‘pick up’ skills and knowledge, usually with the help or encouragement of their family or peers, by watching and imitating musicians around them and by making reference to recordings or performances and other live events involving their chosen music. (p. 5)

Popular musicians learn music primarily through enculturation, “the acquisition of musical skills and knowledge by immersion in the everyday music and musical practices of one’s social context” (Green, 2002, p. 22). Enculturation often occurs because of immersion within a specific genre. Popular musicians listen to music in three distinct ways: purposive listening, attentive listening, and distracted listening. These three modes of listening all contribute to the process of music enculturation.

Through three styles of listening, popular musicians are learning nuances of specific genres of music. Listening to and copying recordings is a means popular

musicians use to acquire skill. Most of the musicians interviewed by Green (2002), however, did not consider the process of copying recordings via listening learning; rather, they thought of it as something “private, unfocused or unworthy of discussion” (p. 74). Copying recordings is crucial in developing playing ability and compositional skills.

Copying recordings and playing covers are not only related to the development of performance skills but also form fundamental building-blocks in compositional skills. Without the experience gained from copying and covering, original work is unlikely to be convincingly situated within a style recognized as music: music is not a natural phenomenon but has to conform to historically constructed norms, both concerning its intra-musical processes, forms and sound qualities, and its modes of production, distribution and reception. (p. 75)

Most instruments associated with vernacular music making can be learned without the aid of an instructor. Once a few basic musical ideas, chords on a guitar for example, are learned, the student can begin making music for enjoyment and with peers. Musical interaction with peers is also an important element in a student’s musical development (Finnegan, 1989).

Peer-directed learning “involves the explicit teaching of one or more persons by a peer; group learning occurs as a result of peer interaction but in the absence of any teaching” (Green, 2002, p. 76). Collaborative learning is an essential element in popular music pedagogy and can be implemented in formal music study through pop music ensembles (Cutietta & Brennan, 1991; Boespflug, 2004). Traditional music ensembles, such as wind bands and orchestras, do not accomplish the same end as popular music ensembles. A new methodology and approach must be used.

In popular music ensembles, all members are “simultaneously creators, teachers, and learners. Ideally, there is a sharing of ideas, with some of the better ideas prevailing through consensus” (Boespflug, 2004, p. 195). Music educators become facilitators in popular music ensembles, monitoring elements such as lyrical content and group symbiosis (Snell, 2007). The teacher must be wary of stifling musical exploration. Instead, the educator should encourage, observe, and provide guidance when needed or asked (Boespflug, 2004). Focus is placed on observation, diagnosing problems, offer solutions, modeling and assisting students in achieving their goals while taking on the students’ perspective (Green, 2008).

Through the collaborative efforts of those involved in music making, identities are formed through social awareness. Popular music answers questions of identity, gives us a meaning to manage public and private emotions, shapes popular memory, and is something possessed (Frith, 1981). Playing, creating, and emoting that exists in popular music ensembles helps shape a social group, binding them together (Allsup, 2004).

Ensemble members also interact together in formal settings, but in a different manner. Formal music ensembles have an authority figure on the podium homogenizing the individual members of the ensemble. The individual is a part of the whole, thus losing their individuality and voice. Students are also performing music that has little connection to their world outside of the formal music ensemble (Snell, 2009).

Collaborative effort on the part of students should be foundational to guitar

pedagogy. Students should be given a voice in what music to explore, formally and informally, and the opportunity to compose music, make decisions on the performance of music (such as programming, venues, etc.), issues of musicality (phrasing, timbre, etc.), and implications to their socio-musical worlds.

Popular music pedagogy. Popular music pedagogy embraces “a system which approaches the learning of music in ways that contrast with the transmissive forms of music teaching that have dominated” (Lebler, 2008, p. 193) Popular musicians typically do not learn via systematized method books or music notation, but instead acquire skill by listening to and copying recordings (Green, 2002), peer learning, and individual exploration such as online video tools (Smith, 2011). Basing guitar instruction solely on method books and curriculum fails to acknowledge the importance of informal learning and does not prepare students to play music from their socio-musical context. Method books that do incorporate music from the student’s context, such as current popular music, are generally two to five years behind current musical trends (Simmons, 1994). Guitar pedagogy needs to be constructed so that socio-musical realities are accounted for and incorporated into the curriculum.

Popular musicians learn music in ways that are traditionally at odds with Western classical training, which is sequential and deliberate (Rodriguez, 2004) and foreign to the ways in which students engage with the music (Snell, 2009). For example, an understanding of music notation is a core tenet of Western art music. In popular music, notation cannot transmit the precise nuances present in popular

music, such as timbre, groove and pocket (Green, 2002). The manner in which popular musicians learn these esoteric elements of music can serve as a guide in the development of a holistic music pedagogy, training students to communicate with and without written notation. Popular musicians develop an awareness of these musical nuances through copying recordings, which provide an exact replica of the timbre and groove to be imitated.

Systematic music instruction is often reserved for the classroom, while outside the classroom musicians learn music in a more global fashion (Jaffurs, 2004). Techniques are learned as they are needed, rather than as an end in itself:

There is no reason why a starting technique should not provide an adequate basis for both folk playing and for concert playing but, given that very few pupils will ever become concert [guitarists], it would seem to be shortsighted to emphasize technique at the expense of motivation. (Cope & Smith, 1997, p. 287)

Engagement with the material is an important aspect in informal learning (Green, 2002). Instruction should enrich the students' learning through interactive environments, encouraging interaction in the form of questioning, debating, and discussion, and learning that develop skills that benefit students in their daily lives (Hunter, 1999).

Drawing on critical theory, practitioners of popular music pedagogy recognize formal music instructors as the possessors of knowledge. The idea that this possessed knowledge must be transmitted to the student, disregards the prior knowledge students bring to music education (Snell, 2009). Freire (1970) called this the "banking concept" of education. This model of music education does not create

critical thinkers. One way to oppose this model of music education is to create democratic spaces where student's musical experiences and current expertise are taken into account and implemented into education (Snell, 2009). In the creation of democratic spaces, the overarching philosophy of instruction moves from product oriented to process oriented. "If music education were to focus less on semester-end concerts and competitions and more on the joy and process of making music together in the classroom, a sense of community would be more likely to form" (p. 193). Students entering music classrooms have accumulated a wealth of experience by listening to music (Snell, 2009). As music listening is a primary component of popular music pedagogy, it is important that music educators realize this wealth of experience, acknowledge it, and use it as a foundation for music education.

An important way popular musicians learn is through interaction, playing together. "Playing with a band and interacting with others helps the development of the novice's own musicianship as they quickly improve their ears, technique, and overall musical knowledge through activities such as group improvisation, jamming, and collaborative composition" (Snell, 2009, p. 63). Because interaction and playing together is a primary means of informal music learning, guitar pedagogy must account for and implement this group interaction. Interaction can also be used to represent social contexts where music making takes place outside of school (Westerlund, 2006).

Much debate has arisen as to whether or not the inclusion of popular music is appropriate for systematic music instruction, including best means for

implementing popular music pedagogy into the curriculum (Rodriguez, 2004). Educators have used popular music in the past as a “bait and switch” technique to get students involved in music programs (Cutietta, 1991). The inclusion of popular music should be based on the merits of the music, not “hooking” more students (Seifried, 2006).

Rationale

Music educators are challenged by the dichotomy that exists between what is taught in schools and what students embrace outside of school (Davis, 2013). Regelski (2009) stated, “What is taught in school has little to no lasting, life-long musical impact on students or society” (p. 68). The future of music education is dependent upon the ability of educators to adapt pedagogies to meet social flux and societal context. Pedagogy should be based on philosophical inquiry, not how music educators were educated. This “legitimation crisis” is due to a lack of pragmatism in music education (Regelski, 2009). Praxis needs to be at the center of pedagogical philosophy as to develop “life-long learning and life-wide application” (p. 74). Music education as aesthetic education does not take into account how musicians engage with and produce music in non-Western contexts (Batt-Rawden & DeNora, 2005; Turino, 2008)

Developing pedagogies that are adaptable means embracing the extant dichotomy in music learning—the formal and informal. Learning how informal music learning can coexist with formal music learning in the classroom is a primary

way pragmatism is brought into music education. Studying how popular and amateur musicians learn and acquire skills will set a foundation upon which to build a comprehensive music pedagogy that integrates both the formal and informal.

Over the past one-and-a-half decades, much research has been conducted in the field of informal music learning and popular music pedagogy. This “growing body of research recognizes a lack of connection between the ways students engage in musical processes outside school and in music education within the school” (Davis, 2013, p. 23). Furthermore, instrument specific applications of integrated approaches are also missing in extant research. The guitar plays a prominent role in popular music, as reflected in Green’s (2002, 2008) research. However, there is no extant scholarship that examines how one acquires skill from both formal and informal learning.

Establishing integrated music pedagogy requires examining how formal and informal learning compliment each other within a specific instrumental context. Formally, music instruction needs to be organized and systematized in order to meet specific learning objectives and standards. Formal music instruction can compliment what occurs in popular music learning by sequencing skills, provide expert instruction in techniques and performance, and provide music examples that would best assist the students in learning how to interact in the “garage” band concept.

Informal music instruction places the teacher in the role of facilitator, allowing students to dictate the direction of the course. Skill acquisition is,

therefore, left up to the student. Although ad hoc skill acquisition is a feature of popular music pedagogy the time it takes to develop necessary skills is at odds with the school learning environment and calendar. Popular musicians are able to develop skills at their own pace, which can be deemed too long for a public school music teacher.

Students learning music informally are better situated to make music from their socio-musical context as they are learning music that relates to their everyday contexts and for enjoyment (Batt-Rawden & DeNora, 2005; Green, 2002). Music learned is their choice and is done in relationship with peers (Green, 2002). Performing and creating music is an activity tied to social events, helping form and reinforce the student's identity (Allsup, 2004; Green 2002). Life-long and life-wide amateur interest and involvement with music is another benefit of learning music informally (Jones, 2009; Regelski, 2009).

In this study, I examine how both of these concepts—informal and formal music learning—complement one another in a class-based setting. Examining salient features of formal guitar methods and informal music learning and popular music pedagogy, I seek to understand if integrated music pedagogy can result in a guitar class that is meaningful to participants. Pedagogy is “the act of teaching together with its attendant discourse of educational theories, values, evidence and justifications. It is what one needs to know, and the skills one needs to command, in order to make and justify the many different kinds of decision of which teaching is constituted. Curriculum is just one of its domains, albeit a central one” (Alexander,

2008, p. 47). Discovery of how these dichotomous learning methods can be connected to forge life-long and life-wide amateur interest and involvement with music is the primary rationale for the development of integrated guitar pedagogy. An understanding of how best to connect the two learning methods will also be gained from this study.

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of the current study was to examine the integration of formal and informal music learning in a university guitar class. A secondary purpose was to evaluate the integration of formal and informal music learning in guitar pedagogy by examining student reception of the integrated curriculum. This study addressed the following research questions:

1. How can informal and formal music learning be incorporated into a university guitar class?
2. How would students respond to formal and informal music learning elements in a formal setting?
3. How would an integrated guitar class meet student goals for the course and life-long music making?
4. What does the collected data state about the effectiveness of an integrated approach in music learning?
5. How do participants respond to an integrated guitar curriculum including informal and formal music learning elements?

Conclusion

Extant literature in guitar pedagogy and informal music learning reveals disengagement from how music is learned in and outside of formal schooling. In order to create the “bi-musical” students that Green (2002) proposed, this disconnect must be addressed and reconciled. Both learning styles are essential in developing “bi-musical” musicians.

Missing from extant literature is a focus on instrumental specific pedagogy that seeks to integrate formal and informal music learning and how one would teach a holistic curriculum. The literature represents a lack of focus in integrated approaches to instrument specific applications. Popular music pedagogy and informal learning focuses on how musicians are acquiring skill and interacting with music outside of school contexts, not on how they are acquiring instrumental specific skills. Formal music learning is focused on a teacher-centered perspective, not on collaborative learning. Discovering salient features of formal learning and categories of informal music learning and applying them to a specific instrumental pedagogy will aid in developing an integrated approach to music instruction.

CHAPTER 2

SALIENT FEATURES OF FORMAL MUSIC LEARNING

In the first phase of research, I examined five guitar methods books to discover common salient features. These elements were combined with features in informal learning and popular music pedagogy in order to create a holistic curriculum that was used to integrate informal and formal music learning in a university guitar class. Each method book presented material within a specific musical style and genre. Style was an important feature in the presentation of material in each method book; for example, *Hal Leonard Guitar Method* presented technique and musical concepts within popular music. Musical style was non-influential in the discovery of salient features. It did not seem to influence the presence or absence of a particular salient concept. These features transcend musical style and genre and can be used and implemented in any musical style.

Guitar Method Description

Guitar methods were selected for this study based on two factors: longevity on the market and reputation of the publisher. Three music publishers are represented in the study: Mel Bay Publications (*Learning the Classic Guitar, Part I–III; Mastering the Guitar Class Method, Book I–II*); Hal Leonard (*Hal Leonard Guitar Method, Book I–III; Essential Elements for Guitar*); and Berklee Press (*A Modern Method for Guitar*).

Learning the Classic Guitar, Parts I–III

Aaron Shearer's (1990) *Learning the Classic Guitar, Parts I–III* is a foundational text in classical guitar education. Shearer is viewed as one of the most important guitar pedagogues of the 20th century (Lawrence, 2005). Shearer began guitar programs at American University, Peabody Conservatory, and North Carolina School for the Arts. His texts are the culmination of previous pedagogical works on classical guitar technique and are based on years of successful guitar instruction (Shearer, 1990).

Part I is an overview of classic guitar technique, method rationale, philosophy, and physiology of guitar playing. Shearer makes clear from the outset that classical—rather than popular—guitar instruction is his goal. Therefore, all content in Part I is dedicated to playing the classical guitar.

Part II contains music and musical examples that accompany Part I. In Part II, Shearer does not address how to execute left- and right-hand techniques. Finger markings and brief technical explanations are included when performing music. Learners begin by sounding two notes on open strings and progress quickly to multi-voiced music using advanced free-stroke technique.

In Part III, topics on performance, memorization, and growth as a guitarist are addressed. Music and technical examples are excluded in Part III. The chief aim of this book is eliminating confusion and error in performance. During a guitarist's development, a series of fundamental steps must be followed to eliminate confusion and error in performance.

Mastering the Guitar Class Method

Mastering the Guitar Class Method, by William Bay and Mike Christiansen (1996), is the only class-based method analyzed in the study, and the only class-based study that met criteria for inclusion. The class-based method was developed from the popular *Mastering the Guitar* series by the same authors. These series of books are the most popular resources produced by Mel Bay publications, placing this class-based method in the lineage of the best-selling Mel Bay methods (Bay & Christiansen, 1996).

The method begins with sounding notes on the guitar using recognizable melodies without notation. All other methods I reviewed began with reading single notes on the guitar. A guitar numbering system—one number indicating the string and the other number indicating the fret—is used to present the melodies. Four melodies are introduced before chord playing or note reading is presented.

In addition to playing recognizable melodies early in the method, ensemble playing is also introduced at the start of the text. Before students have mastered note reading or chord playing they are playing ensemble pieces with others. These early pieces are presented using the same numbering system as the early melodies. As note reading and guitar notation become common in the text, the numbering system is abandoned. Frequent presentation of ensemble pieces allows the student to practice newly learned material in the context of playing with others.

Modern Method for Guitar, 1–3

Modern Method for Guitar, 1–3, by William Leavitt (1999), is the oldest method book examined for this study. The method developed from Leavitt's instruction at the Berklee College of Music, where he served as chair of the guitar department. *Modern Method* is still the foundational guitar text used at the Berklee College of Music (Berklee Press, n.d.).

Leavitt's approach to guitar instruction is literacy based. Tablature and guitar numbering systems are not used in the method. Chord diagrams and left-hand fingering markings are the only example of guitar notation in the book. Explanations of techniques are also absent from the method.

Positional playing is a foundational component of Leavitt's method. Scales and note reading are presented in all positions on the guitar. Learning scales in one position contributes to a convenient presentation of note reading. As the student progresses through the text, multiple positions on the guitar are combined to learn longer scale passages. Scale study is also situated in keys and based around chord shapes.

Chords are presented in two ways: standard notation and chord diagrams. Initially, triads are learned along with the major scale. To begin, five notes of the C major scale—*do* to *sol*—are played as half notes and the major I triad outlined. This continues on each scale degree until all triads in C major are learned. Leavitt moves away from notated chords when closed seventh chord forms are discussed. Closed chords are moveable shapes used in jazz guitar comping. Jazz guitar style is

discussed at the end of Book II.

Book I begins with natural notes in open position and tertian harmony. Successful completion of Book I will ensure the student has knowledge of scale positions in open and first position in the keys of C, G, F, Am, Em, Dm, Bb, D, A, and Eb. Moveable chord shapes are introduced at the end Book I. These moveable chord shapes include major, minor, 7th, diminished, augmented, and 9th chord qualities. By the end of Book I the student will have experienced note reading within the first five frets, reading rhythmic delineations of dotted-sixteenth notes.

Book II begins with a review of first position scale technique and chords learned in Book I. At the conclusion of Book II, the student will play scales up to fourth position, realize moveable and expanded chord forms, and learn altered dominant chord sonorities. Velocity studies follow each new scale form and key in Book II. Advanced articulation appears in the later half of Book II, emphasizing legato and staccato playing. Jazz guitar comping rhythms, such as Latin, are also presented in Book II.

In Book III, the jazz influence in the text is more obvious. Beginning with scale technique, like the previous books, the author begins to introduce arpeggiations of “jazz” chords, culminating in an explanation of a ii7-V7-I7 progression, the foundational chord progression in jazz. Soloing over chord changes and advanced fretboard harmony are introduced in the later portion of the text.

Hal Leonard Guitar Method–Complete Edition

Hal Leonard Guitar Method–Complete Edition emphasizes chordal accompaniment and note reading. In Book I, an overview of the guitar and music symbols before sounding notes on the guitar. Single note melodies on the guitar are provided in standard notation only, tablature and guitar numbering is not used. At the conclusion of Book I, the student should be able to read notes in first position with rhythmic delineation of eighth notes. Chord playing is presented in the text with chord diagrams and photographs. All of the music examples in Book I contain folk or popular songs from the 1950s.

In Book II, the same two areas of focus are developed further, chord playing and note reading. Two additional techniques are included: fingerstyle and advanced strumming. In order to simplify instruction, these techniques are situated within chord playing and written in standard notation and tablature. For example, presenting fingerstyle technique patterns in tablature allows students to realize the music examples before they can fully comprehend how it would be notated in music. Book II ends with an introduction to improvisation, using pentatonic scales and “licks.”

Lastly, Book III explores more advanced techniques and scale positions. Tablature and standard notation are used interchangeably in Book III. While the material and music examples are more advanced, there is no emphasis on the realization of polyphonic music, only melodic playing and accompaniment. Music examples in Book III are written in a lead-sheet format.

Essential Elements for Guitar

Essential Elements for Guitar, by Will Schmid and Bob Morris (2005), is part of the *Essential Elements* series published by Hal Leonard. Sequencing of material and music examples is similar to the *Hal Leonard Guitar Method. Essential Elements* contains popular guitar techniques that are not present in *Hal Leonard Guitar Method*. One of the popular guitar techniques unique to *Essential Elements* is power-chords.

All five methods present formal guitar instruction from different angles and perspectives, and contain differences in material sequencing and music examples. Salient features are consistent among the methods examined. Sequencing of material and style did not effect the inclusion of any salient feature. These features were present regardless of style and presentation of material.

Guitar Method Analysis

All guitar methods in the study were analyzed using conventional qualitative content analysis (QCA). Qualitative content analysis is “a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns” (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1278). Conventional QCA is used in a study when the aim is to “describe a phenomenon”—in this study formal music learning in guitar method books, when “existing theory or research literature on a phenomenon is limited” (p. 1279).

Data analysis began with reading each text repeatedly to immerse myself in the data and overall structure of each method. After this initial immersion, I organized the data by outlining each book and categorizing by similar content. Musical examples in the method books were transformed into written text (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2008). I took notes on each music example registering pitches, key, notational type, meter, rhythm, and performance technique needed. Once this portion of analysis was complete, I specifically looked at how method presented the process of articulation, music notation symbols, guitar notation symbols, and the goal of material (Webber, 1990).

Categories and a coding scheme originated from the data. Due to a lack of extant literature on the analysis of guitar method books using QCA, I developed categories inductively from the data using the constant comparative method. “The essence of the constant comparative method is (1) the systematic comparison of each text assigned to a category with each of those already assigned to that category, in order to fully understand the theoretical properties of the category; and (2) integrating categories and their properties through the development of interpretive memos” (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2008, p. 4). The initial coding scheme, which emerged from the constant comparative method of data, was then sorted to form categories (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Coding in qualitative research generally refers to conceptual coding. Conceptual coding allows the researcher to question the data, opening up new meanings in analysis. By assigning data to these categories I was able to develop a “systematic description” of the material (Schreier, 2012). These

categories were: systemization of learning, technique, music notation, guitar-specific notation, solo playing, and chord playing.

Salient Features

A broad, philosophical view of guitar pedagogy emerged from the examination of data. The categories emerging from QCA revealed six features that are common across the method books in this study. These categories were used in the formulation of a guitar curriculum that was implemented in a case study to examine the integration of informal and formal music learning in a university guitar class.

Systemization of Learning

Designing instruction so that complex skills are broken down into manageable and simplified learning sequences assists learners in achieving learning goals. Sequencing material in music learning increases the students ability to accurately respond to a given stimulus in an order predetermined by the instructor (O'Neill & Senyshyn, 2011). “[S]electing and ordering the tasks... systematically control the success rate of individual performance opportunities and maintain high proportions of successful attempts” (Duke, 2005, p. 93). This approach in music instruction was evident in the guitar methods examined for this study. Tasks were ordered systematically so the student could achieve high levels of success in the execution of each task.

Systemization of learning is defined as the act of prescribing or dictating how

information is communicated, when it is communicated, and what information is withheld. This is done so the student can progress in a logical manner (Duke, 2005). Music learning sequences were implicitly expressed in all methods. The beginner needed to gain proficiency in simpler musical ideas before complex ones were introduced (O'Neill & Senyshyn, 2011). Techniques and musical concepts were withheld in the method books until the student achieved success in the execution of particular concepts.

Technique

Technique is the means of musical production. In the method books, technique encompassed basic right-hand articulations and left-hand finger placement. Method books by Shearer (1990) and Leavitt (1999) required a more developed technique than the other three methods. Music examples included in these texts were more advanced, requiring advanced guitar techniques. Each method book explored technical development explicitly and implicitly. Some method books contained written explanations whereas others addressed technique only through music examples and exercises. Musical examples and exercises accompanied each guitar technique. Guitar techniques included sitting position, left- and right-hand development, fingerstyle, and plectrum technique.

Learning the Classic Guitar. Shearer (1990) provided detailed instructions on proper classical guitar technique; each technique being explored in isolation. Book I is the technical primer and Book II contains music examples and etudes.

There are five areas of classic guitar study relevant to Shearer's (1990) philosophy: technique, reading and memorizing music, musical interpretation and performance. All five topics were addressed with depth and clarity in Book I.

The goal of guitar study, according to Shearer (1990), is to share music with others. Any thought or habit that would detract from a flawless performance must be avoided when learning the instrument. Performance as the ultimate goal of guitar study leads to two areas of performance essentials: security and confidence. Security encompasses two areas of musical study: accuracy and continuity. A musical performance must be accurate and continuous with all notes played without "missed or flubbed notes" (p. 3). Once a performance begins the piece should be played without stopping or hesitations. Habits formed during the learning stages must be directed toward the goal of flawless performance. Confidence is the development of "emotional and intellectual outlook" (p. 3). One must develop a belief that a secure performance can be achieved.

Muscles respond to movements learned during repetitious exercise. Thus, the student must "practice in a way which minimizes error-filled repetitions and maximize accurate repetitions" (p. 4). Shearer (1990) termed the framework for developing this accuracy *Aim-Directed Movement (ADM)*. ADM is "knowing where and how to move before moving—seeing in your mind's eye the movements you'll make on the guitar before you actually make them" (p. 4). Because muscles will respond to inaccurate and accurate repetitions, the student must repeat accurate movements consistently so the muscles will respond positively. Applying the two

phases of ADM—preparation and application—will assure that only accurate repetitions are made. Preparation is clarifying the movement as “fully as possible before playing it on the guitar” (p. 5). Application is the playing of the movement as “accurately as possible, seeing your finger movements in your mind’s eye an instant before you actually execute them” (p. 5). Through ADM, the student will build secure habits quickly and efficiently, only forming habits desired in performance.

Shearer (1990) further explores the anatomy of technique through *Efficient Muscle Function*, focusing on muscular alignment, function of finger joints, direction of joint movements, and counterproductive tension expressed in follow-through. This material is presented without citations or references, presenting his views on hand physiology as suspect.

Detailed information is given in the description of right- and left-hand techniques. Finger movements and positions are explained in depth, leaving no room for students to feel their way through technical development. In Shearer’s (1990) view, there are correct and incorrect ways of playing the guitar. Every explanation of technique, and accompanying illustration, is done from a right-handed player’s perspective. The author provides no explanation or illustrations for left-handed players.

Hal Leonard Guitar Method. In the *Hal Leonard Guitar Method*, techniques are given only when needed to perform musical examples. This withholding of information aligns technical expertise with musical expertise. When a student is learning a musical concept the needed technique is given, not before. This is

different from Shearer's (1990) text, which provides all techniques needed to play the guitar in a separate book. Techniques used in the *Hal Leonard* method are plectrum, fingerstyle, and strumming.

Left-hand technique is addressed at the beginning of the method through illustrations and photos. These images provide a visual reference for thumb and hand placement on the guitar neck. Left-hand technique is mentioned only one other time in the text. During the introduction of chord playing, the authors state strings are to be depressed with the tips of the fingers and arched so as not to touch and mute open strings.

Book III centers on expanding the students understanding and application of scales and chords. Few techniques are presented for both the left- and right-hand that are not covered in previous texts. Illustrations, photos, and brief written explanations are provided here as well.

Essential Elements. *Essential Elements* begins with plectrum technique, showing students how to hold a guitar pick. Strumming the guitar is the first application of plectrum technique. The authors do not explain the motion or control needed to strum the instrument initially. Information on executing a strumming pattern is given at page 30 of the method, a syncopated down and up stroke pattern. To improve successful execution of a strumming technique, the pattern coincides with the melodic line of "Duke of Earl". Dotted-eighth sixteenth patterns and a shuffle introduced later in the text and is the only other time in the method that

strumming technique is addressed. Overall, explanations of strumming technique are not thoroughly explained in the text.

Mastering the Guitar Class Method. The book begins with a section introducing the guitar, holding the instrument, and how to approach the instrument with both hands. Musical examples early in the book are simple melodies written in a hybrid guitar notation to be played with the right hand thumb or plectrum, “unless noted otherwise” (Bay & Christiansen, 1996, p. 10). In Book I, right hand technique expands to include plectrum technique and strumming. Explanations in *Mastering the Guitar Class* are more consistent throughout the text than *Hal Leonard Method* and presented with text and images.

Left-hand technique is explained in the opening of the text as well. Placement on the fretboard and how to press the string against the frets are essential in playing the instrument and thus covered first. The student is encouraged to “square” the finger and push the string against the fret with the tip of the finger, which is a unique wording of the technique as compared to the other methods. Illustrations accompany each description, showing the back of the guitar neck—indicating thumb placement—and front of the guitar neck—indicating finger placement on the fret. Additional information is provided in reference to left-hand placement and pressure applied to the guitar string.

Advanced left-hand techniques are given in Book II. Two techniques, the slide and harmonics, are not used in any music examples after the explanation. The remaining techniques in Book II, ascending and descending slurs, are addressed

with no diagrams or illustrations to assist the written description of the technique. Ascending slur execution is accomplished by “forcefully pushing the left-hand finger on the string” (p. 98). This idea of “forcefully” is not consistent with the same explanation of left-hand technique in other texts. The speed of the finger as it hits the note is what accomplishes a clearly articulated ascending slur, not the force of the finger (Shearer, 1990).

Modern Method for Guitar. Leavitt (1999) does not provide a written explanation of technique with any regularity or specificity in the text. The only explicit statement of technique is in reference to strumming. Here it is given so that a better rhythmic pulse can be achieved. Diagrams and explanations are absent in regards to left- and right-hand placement. Explanations are provided for right-hand articulations only. Leavitt does not explicitly state whether a plectrum or fingerstyle technique is used in playing the musical exercises in the text. Articulation markings—upstroke and downstroke—along with a few sentences in the text, suggest the student should use plectrum technique exclusively.

Conclusion. Techniques were primarily implicit in the method books. Shearer (1990) was the only author to explicitly state goals for learning technique and how to execute specific finger movements. In the remaining methods, technique categories emerged in data analysis of music examples. As this element was analyzed and categorized, it was evident that technique was the primary means for the inclusion of each musical example. To play musical examples at the beginning the methods required little technical expertise. As more complex technical elements

were presented, such as fingerstyle, the music examples reflected greater complexity.

In all methods techniques emerged as simple executions to more complex ones. The development of technique was controlled in the method books. I did not see a technique that I would consider out of place in the method books. Each technique was carefully considered so the student could achieve success at each stage in guitar learning, reflecting a systemization of learning in regards to technical development.

Instructions pertaining to technique in each method lacked clarity. Shearer (1990) went beyond mere description of technique to providing learning objectives, methodology, and explanations of muscle control. Koch and Schmidt (1995) did not present techniques with any sort of clarity. Students would have to feel their way through many of the techniques presented in their method. Left-hand finger placement in chord playing, for example, was absent in their text.

Standard Notation

All method books examined in the study were literacy-based. Each author used standard music notation extensively in the layout of the methods. Shearer (1990) and Leavitt (1999) used standard notation exclusively while the remaining methods included other guitar-specific notation such as tablature.

As data from each method were analyzed, I noticed a similar pattern to how music notation was used and introduced. Notation was the basis for all music and

technical instruction in the method books. Each method book began with the introduction of two to three natural notes—played on open strings—adding additional notes on adjacent strings until all natural notes were learned in first position. Chords were also presented using standard notation, even when a chord diagram was used. Method books containing popular music examples favored standard music notation as well. Popular melodies were transcribed in standard notation as well as guitar riffs and strumming patterns.

Hal Leonard Guitar Method. *Hal Leonard Guitar Method* uses exclusively standard notation in Book I. There is no use of tablature in this book of the method. Books II and III contain a few music examples that are not in standard music notation. These books also feature music notation prominently. Note reading is situated in what the student could perform technically. In early music examples, rhythms are simple—quarter notes and half notes. As technical proficiency increases rhythmic diminutions do as well.

Essential Elements. *Essential Elements* is the only method that does not begin with an overview of note reading and basic musical terminology. Pitch recognition and musical terminology is provided when needed. Rhythmic notation is the first notational concept taught. Natural notes on the first string follow the introduction of rhythmic notation. Two three-string chords follow and are written with a combination of rhythmic, slash, and pitch notation for each chord. Chords and melody notes are performed by strumming once for every slash or at a specific point in a popular melody.

Barlines and time signatures are explained using previously learned material. After a student has played three-string chords using slash notation, the same material is given but divided by barlines, accompanying the given time signature, 4/4. Next, the student strums along with the melody, "Are You Sleeping, Brother John," with the same rhythm as a notated melody, which simplifies the reading of rhythms. In rhythm examples, the student is encouraged to practice first by clapping and then by playing. Music literacy in *Essential Elements* evolves slowly, allowing the student to practice newly learned music elements with three to four music examples.

Pitches are presented by string, beginning with the first string, notes E-F-G. These notes do not have a harmonically directed goal as evidenced in the music examples. The goal of these examples is to bring about awareness of note location on the staff and the corresponding location on the instrument. Beginning with notes on the first string allows the student to play notes cleanly, as no string is located below to accidentally sound. New notes on each string are accompanied by three to four music examples. After the student has learned the natural notes on the first three strings, resulting in a G mixolydian scale, music examples turn to melodies of popular music. The melodies are simplified rhythmically so the student can perform popular music via standard notation.

Learning the Classic Guitar. Shearer's (1990) presentation of note reading is done in music that has a harmonically directed goal. Note reading begins on open strings, the third and fourth, which provide a *do* to *sol* intervallic relationship. The

instructor's part to each of these duets is played along with the student in the key of G. These two notes in the student part give the author an opportunity to create a V-I cadential resolution in each of the musical examples. The next note presented is another open string, the second string, which is the note B.

After all natural notes have been learned in first position, musical examples become multi-voiced, beginning with a two-voiced texture—bass and melody notes. Examples at this point in the text are based in the key of A minor, a result of using only natural notes. Each music example in the text has a minimum of two phrases and ends with an authentic cadence. Other methods are not as structured musically in early stages of note reading.

Mastering the Guitar Class Method. Note reading begins with natural notes on the first string, E-F-G, similar to *Essential Elements*. An introduction to music reading, notes, rests, and time signatures precedes notes reading on the first string. The authors move freely between standard notation and guitar notation throughout the method. These are used interchangeably to accommodate other aspects of guitar technique and playing, such as chording, that the student will not be able to read in standard notation.

Book II expands note reading to include polyphonic music examples, double stops, and triads. Music notation is used almost exclusively in Book II with the exception of tablature in the sections on "Improvisation" and "Fingerpicking". By the conclusion of Book II, note reading has been presented through the twelfth fret on the first string.

A Modern Method for Guitar. Only *A Modern Method for Guitar* uses standard notation exclusively. Note reading is not introduced gradually like in the other methods examined in this study but begins with a C major scale in one octave. Instructions on how to read music notation is absent in the text. To assist the student in reading standard notation, numbers are provided above each pitch, indicating the string and fret on which the notes are to be played. Score markings indicating string and fret are common in classical repertoire due to the number of ways a note can be played on the guitar, but were not common in the guitar methods examined for this study.

A primary goal explicitly stated in the method is teaching the student to read music in all positions on the guitar. Therefore, string and fret indications in the music are gradually omitted. Because these markings are viewed as crutches, the indications are rarely present after page 15. All music examples in the text are original compositions by Leavitt, who reasoned that a student would not learn how to read music by playing familiar melodies. Rather, it is only through playing unfamiliar music that a student will develop proficiency in note reading on the guitar.

Conclusion. Note reading was a dominant element in all the method books I examined. During the initial gathering of data, I noticed this dominance compared to other elements in the method books. All author's placed note reading in such a prominent place that I considered music literacy as a primary goal of each method.

To achieve a level of proficiency in music reading, compositions were

primarily monophonic and homophonic, with *Learning the Classic Guitar* utilizing polyphonic music examples and etudes primarily. Music examples in *Learning the Classic Guitar* focused on developing classic guitar technique, while the remaining texts did not specify preferred articulation technique.

Guitar-Specific Notation

Guitar-specific notation is the appearance of and use of tablature and chord diagrams. Tablature is a method of notation created as early as the 14th century that was used in Renaissance lute and guitar music (Dart et al., n.d.). Performers read the “notes” from a series of lines, containing a number that indicates the fret to be played. Modern tablature is similar to early tablature but does not contain rhythmic notation markings. However, music notation is often provided above the tablature part, which gives accurate rhythmic notations. Three of the five methods used tablature in the presentation of material.

Chord diagrams are another type of guitar-specific notation, providing a visual for guitarists to reference in the playing of chords or scales. These diagrams show the student the string to play, left-hand finger to use, and fret to depress the string. Four of the five methods used chord diagrams in the presentation of the material. *Learning the Classic Guitar* was the only method book that did not use chord diagrams. Shearer (1990) was explicit in presenting classical guitar only material in his texts, which chord diagrams are not a common feature in classical guitar literature and methodologies.

Hal Leonard Guitar Method. Chord presentation in the method is accomplished with chord diagrams. In the text, chords are not written in standard notation but shown with a chord diagram and accompanying chord letter symbol. Chord diagrams are also used in the introduction of each new pitch. Pitches are written on the music staff and connected to a chord diagram, indicating where the note is to be played.

The first use of tablature in Book II is in the section on power chords. Here tablature and music notation are utilized. Tablature is used in this section because the pitches needed to perform the music examples are out of first position. Notes in first position are the only pitches covered by this point in the method. Chord diagrams are also used in Book II in the introduction of pitches with accidentals and in the section on pentatonic scales. The scale pattern is shown on the diagram with bold circles indicating which notes to play.

Essential Elements. *Essential Elements* uses diagrams at the beginning of the text and throughout the book to show the student how to form chords, to indicate left-hand fingerings, and location of specified notated pitches. Photographs further illustrate finger placement and position on the guitar neck. This provides an additional technical aid as the student can see the curvature of the left-hand fingers and hand placement.

Tablature is presented first in the section on fingerpicking. The use of tablature in fingerpicking is different than other uses throughout the text. Here tablature is used to connect right-hand fingers to a specific string in chord

arpeggios. Tablature is used again in the section on power chords due to the difficulty in reading double-stops as a beginning guitarist.

Mastering the Guitar Class Method. *Mastering the Guitar Class Method*, Book I, begins with guitar-numbering notation, making this an exception to the other methods. Three musical examples are given in a fret-string number combination. A number on one line, written horizontally, indicates the fret that will be played and the string that will be played is written underneath. Beginning with this form of notation allows the student to play recognizable melodies on the instrument without knowing how to read tablature, chord diagrams, or music notation.

After an initial introduction of tablature and note reading, chord diagrams are used only for the presentation of chords, not scales. Tablature is used sparingly once the student begins note reading on the guitar. Exceptions to the sparse use of tablature are the sections on improvisation and music examples containing notes out of first position. In the improvisation section, tablature is used to demonstrate how a pentatonic scale can be used to improvise. The full-scale pattern is shown as well as shorter “licks” that can be used in improvisation. Melodies containing notes outside of first position are accompanied by tablature, allowing the authors to use music with greater pitch variation while assisting the student in playing notes not learned at this point in the method. Along with three short melodic pieces, there is a guitar ensemble piece notated in a modified tablature form. Some of the tablature is shown in a rhythmic slash notation, connecting the tablature numbers to a rhythmic

stem. After natural notes are learned and rhythmic delineations of an eighth note are achieved, uses of tablature and chord diagrams diminish and eliminated.

Conclusion. Guitar-specific notation provided clarity regarding pitch location on the guitar, finger placement for chords, and scale patterns. The guitar-numbering system in *Mastering the Guitar Class Method* concisely delivered the information needed to play melodies on the guitar. In chord application, diagrams assist the student in playing chords built from notes not yet learned. Scales on the guitar are pattern oriented, making chord diagrams a preferred means of presenting the concept. Guitar-specific notation and chord diagrams also allow the student to easily play the scale pattern in different keys. Notating scales would force the student to learn the whole- and half-step formula of each scale pattern, applying it to each key, or learn all of the notes related to each scale.

Guitar-specific notation was secondary to standard notation in the methods. While guitar-specific notation often accompanied the introduction of pitches, it was not used in music examples that followed each new pitch. Tablature provides greater specificity with regards to playing notes on the guitar. This guitar-specific notation shows the exact fret and string each note is to be played on. Music notation does not take into account the number of places on the instrument a pitch may be played.

Solo Playing

In this study, solo playing refers to a piece of music containing a melody with accompaniment to be played by one guitarist. These pieces are introduced in the methods by adding a bass note to a melody. Solo pieces are played with fingerstyle technique and plectrum technique. When plectrum technique is used the student alternates plucking the bass and melody.

Each method book contained extensive music examples of solo playing. Solo playing in all methods began with a simple melodic line composed of a few notes. After mastery of basic melodic concepts was attained, music consisting of a melody with harmony was common. Polyphonic music examples were prominent in *Learning the Classic Guitar* and *A Modern Method for Guitar*.

Learning the Classic Guitar. *Learning the Classic Guitar* contains solo pieces almost exclusively. Exceptions are duets presented sporadically in the text. In the first section on note reading, duets are more common. After the student has learned to play natural notes in first position duet pieces are composed of equally difficult parts, making the instructor's part no longer distinguishable from the student's.

"Bugler's Tune" is the first solo piece in the text, presented after the first five duet pieces. It contains notes from a G major triad and is composed with eighth note delineations. As the student is exposed to more notes in first position and complex rhythmic diminutions, pieces become increasingly difficult. Although the goal of the text is learning the classic guitar, using classic literature, the solo pieces reflect this aim.

Mastering the Guitar Class Method In Book I & II solo pieces are used to reinforce note reading on the instrument. Book I features single note melodies that can be played solo or with an accompaniment CD. Book II continues the use of short melodic pieces based around keys to continue reinforcing note reading on the guitar. At the end of Book II, there are 16 short solo pieces without accompaniment, to be performed with fingerstyle technique. The authors delay the inclusion of solo playing until fingerpicking technique has been presented and practiced via chord arpeggio exercises.

A Modern Method for Guitar. Leavitt introduces solo playing and duets as the primary means to learn guitar. Duets are composed so the student can play both guitar parts at their current level of proficiency. There are only three specified solo pieces in the method; the rest are called studies. Most of this material is to be practiced and played solo. Leavitt's text presents solo playing as exercises useful in the development of technical skills and increasing music literacy, not as composed polyphonic compositions.

Conclusion. Solo playing in the method books was based around playing simplistic melodies. Even as note reading proficiency increased the music examples still maintained this simplistic approach. Although pitch recognition increased, rhythmic recognition did not. Popular melodies in *Hal Leonard Guitar Method*, for example, were composed to only eighth note and eighth rest delineations.

Complex music examples in the method books were chord-based. These compositions revolved around open chord forms learned earlier in each method

book, making these pieces a type of arpeggio etudes. Shearer's (1990) text was the only method to present complex solo literature as stand alone works. The pieces contained in the later half of Shearer's book were not arpeggio etudes but developed short solo works.

Chord Playing

Playing chords on the guitar forms a harmonic foundation for multiple styles of music. Even in rock music, in which acoustic guitars are used sparingly, chord playing remains an important musical element. Power chords are used as the harmonic foundation in rock music. Because the guitar is so closely tied to this element of playing, I anticipated this would be a salient feature in all of the guitar methods examined.

Chord playing was introduced early in four of the five methods. After an introduction to playing chords, chord playing was used to accompany melodies and improvisation. Early examples of chord playing in the methods are open chords articulated with quarter note strumming patterns. Strumming patterns in all methods were basic, consisting of quarter note and eighth note combinations.

Hal Leonard Guitar Method. Chord playing is an essential part of the student's development with the *Hal Leonard Guitar Method*. The first chords—C, G7, and D7—are delayed until natural notes on the first four strings have been covered. These chords are written out as full open chords, but the student is advised to perform them as three string chords until a level of technical comfort is reached.

Chord playing accompanies each musical example in Book I. Instructions on chord strumming are delayed until the remaining natural notes are learned on strings five and six. Book I concludes with a chord chart containing chords that were not presented in the text.

Book II continues the development of open chord playing. Barre technique and power chords are new chord features in Book II. An F major chord with a partial barre is the form used in Book II, requiring the first two strings to be depressed by one finger. Power chords are the first moveable chord shape presented in the method. Moveable chords shapes give the player an ability to change chords by moving the hand, not the fingers.

In Book III, chord playing begins with the full barre. Barre technique is presented with moveable chord shapes, the chord root being located on the fifth or sixth string. Chord sonorities in this section are: major, minor, seventh, and minor seventh. Music examples following barre technique allow the student to use moveable chords in a variety of rhythmic patterns, simulating different musical genres. Book III concludes with a miscellaneous chord chart. These chords were not discussed in Book III and are provided for the student to utilize on their own.

Essential Elements. The text begins with chord playing instead of note reading. After the initial presentation of four chords, chord introductions alternate with single note playing throughout the text. Chord instruction begins with three-string chords. Once these chords have been used in a few musical examples, new chord shapes are provided in full-chord form.

Modern Method for Guitar. In Leavitt's (1999) text chords are first presented in standard notation, not through chord diagrams. For example, after the notes from C major have been introduced and practiced via music examples, the author includes triads from the key of C in standard notation. Leavitt does not give the chord name and quality, only the notes of the triad. As more difficult chords are introduced, such as seventh chords, Leavitt utilizes chord diagrams and moveable closed-chord shapes.

Chord playing in this method prepares the student for "comping" in jazz contexts. Movable chord form voicings are presented toward the end of the method so the student can play jazz charts. Leavitt also includes a chart explaining chord substitutions and simplification—playing a chord with fewer extensions, and added chord tones. In reference to chord substitutions, the author provides information on substituting a known chord for an unknown one.

Conclusion. Chord playing lacked development in relation to strumming patterns in four of the five methods. Strumming patterns revolved around "keeping time" in the method books, not on interesting or complex rhythmic patterns. The methods explained how to form the chords but little information on how to articulate—strum—the chords.

Conclusion

A thorough examination of each text revealed consistent salient features discovered in all methods. Each author presented the features within different

musical styles and musical examples. Shearer (1990) and Leavitt (1999) focused primarily on one particular genre—classical and jazz, respectively. Remaining methods favored one genre over another but did not use one exclusively. I believed style would be an important factor in revealing the salient features in the different texts; however, it was not important in the techniques and concepts presented. Style was only a means for the presentation of the salient features, not a feature itself.

All method books began with basic musical concepts and ideas and moved to more complex iterations of the features. Music literacy was a dominant feature in all of the method books. Methods that began with guitar-specific notation quickly moved to standard music notation, using guitar-specific notation sparingly after a level of proficiency in music literacy was reached.

Of all the salient features, technique was the most diverse in application and presentation. I believe technique reveals the author's goal for the method more than any other feature. As evidenced in Shearer's method, classical technique was used exclusively. He also stated that learning the classical guitar was the goal of the method. Leavitt did not specify a specific technique to be used in playing the material in the method; however, the music examples, scales, and etudes all point to jazz guitar technique and application. Each technique necessary to realize music examples was based in jazz guitar playing. The remaining methods emphasized plectrum technique over fingerstyle. Fingerstyle playing was covered in the remaining texts but only in relation to chord arpeggiations, which marginalized its

importance. Plectrum technique was used in solo playing, note reading, chord playing, and ensemble playing, making this the dominant means of note articulation.

The frequency and depth with which guitar techniques were presented was not consistent across the methods. Shearer (1990) situated technique within one complete book of his method series; Book I. Leavitt (1999) did not provide any explanations of technique. Technical development was positioned in exercises and etudes, not written language. I found that advancing a student's technique progressively was a goal of each method. This is clearly seen in structure of the material. Mastery of one technical concept had to be obtained before a new technique was presented. Techniques were also presented logically and sequentially, moving from easier to perform techniques to more complex.

Note reading in all five methods was expressed differently. Shearer's (1990) text was the only one to promote note reading in the context of polyphonic compositions. Shearer and Leavitt (1999) were the only authors to base note reading in key relationships. In each of these texts, the level of note reading proficiency a student could reach by the end of the method was more advanced than the remaining three. I therefore, used this concept of music literacy in the creation of the 16-week curriculum implemented in the case study.

Chord playing in Leavitt's (1999) text is key based as well. Leavitt presented chords in key relationships from the beginning of his book. The first chord strumming example revealed a I-IV-V-I progression in the key of C. Leavitt breaks with this key based relationship in chord playing when moveable chord forms are

introduced later in the text. At this point, Leavitt provides chord forms based on chord quality instead of keys.

Each of the salient features was used in forming the 16-week curriculum for the guitar class. In forming the curriculum, I carefully considered the placement of each of the salient features. I approached note reading and chord playing in the curriculum from a key based perspective. Using Shearer (1990) and Leavitt (1999) as a guide, I made sure each introduction of new pitches and chords were based around a single key. Beginning note reading was based in the key of G. When more pitches were learned I then shifted musical examples to the key of A minor, in order to utilize the open fifth string—A—and open sixth string—E. Chord playing also began with the key of G, exploring all chords except B minor and F# diminished.

Once the formal aspects of the curriculum had been developed, I turned my attention to discovering the features of informal learning as expressed in popular music pedagogy. The addition of these features to the 16-week curriculum would also be carefully considered. Combining both formal and informal music learning.

CHAPTER 3 SALIENT FEATURES OF INFORMAL MUSIC LEARNING

Informal music learning occurs without the presence of expert guidance and in everyday situations. As this type of learning is present throughout the stages of life it is difficult to discover the salient features that are specific to music learning (Schwartz, 1993). In order to discover salient features in informal learning, as it relates to music, it is necessary to examine extant scholarship in popular music pedagogy along with studies of informal music learning. This chapter presents the salient features in the area of informal music learning as expressed in popular music pedagogy. Popular sources in informal music learning and popular music pedagogy were consulted and then additional research was conducted to elaborate on salient features.

The way musicians acquire skill in non-school settings is the basis for popular music pedagogy. Through the act of making music, informally trained musicians acquire musical skills and contextual knowledge related to performing these skills. In schools, vernacular music, such as popular music, is valued less than cultivated music due to an emphasis on a notated music tradition, a specific repertoire of exemplar works, certain performance practices, and issues of power (Finnegan, 1989; Finney & Philpott, 2010).

Informal Learning and Popular Music Pedagogy Texts

In order to discover features of popular music pedagogy and informal music learning, I examined three texts: *How Popular Musicians Learn: A Way Ahead for*

Music Education (Green, 2002), *Music, Informal Learning and the School: A New Classroom Pedagogy* (Green, 2008), and *The Hidden Musicians: Music-Making in an English Town* (Finnegan, 1989). These texts were selected due to their prominence in extant music scholarship, clarity in presentation, and the examination in amateur music making. Both Green's and Finnegan's work have been used repeatedly as a springboard for further examination in informal music learning and popular music pedagogy (e.g., Allsup, 2003, 2004; Bowman, 2004; D'Amore, 2009; Feichas, 2010; Finney & Philpot, 2010; Rodriguez, 2004; Snell, 2007, 2009a). Green's (2002, 2008) research provided a clear framework on which to base my exploration of popular music pedagogy. Finnegan's (1989) research provided additional clarification to the framework provided in Green's texts. Finnegan's ethnographic study of amateur musicians in England provided insight that was helpful in determining which aspect of Green's research would prove to be beneficial in my study. In addition to these texts, I sought additional research that focused solely on informal music learning categories expressed in Green's (2002, 2008) and Finnegan's (1989) texts, allowing for further clarification.

The Hidden Musicians

Finnegan's (1989) ethnography focuses on the musical practices of folk musicians in Milton Keynes, England. Specifically, the study focused on the activity of the folk musicians and the music they play. The research begins with a presentation of the differences of amateur and professional musicians. When amateur musicians

perform music in community or church settings few question how skill was acquired. Learning is often done in secret. Amateur musicians are often unaware that musical learning is even occurring. The study references participants as musicians, not amateur musicians and professional musicians. It is difficult to categorize amateur and professional musicians with any specificity. Finnegan's (1989) goal is to discover the "hidden practice" of local music making by folk musicians. The context of Finnegan's research is important in that it deals with musicians from a particular location in England. Finnegan's research does, however, illuminate how amateur musicians developed skills without the aid of formal music instruction, which proved beneficial for this study.

Folk musicians were those that performed music known as "folk" that was "melodic, relatively quiet and intimate in presentation, with particular emphasis on song and often explicitly regional flavour, from Ireland, Scotland or particular England counties" (Finnegan, 1989, pp. 65–66). Musicians primarily learned music by ear and relied on memory over written forms of music. Often, musicians learned on the job as they participated in musical performances. The "stanzaic" nature of music allowed the musicians to learn the music quickly. Many of the musicians in Finnegan's study knew how to read music notation due to having some form of classical tuition. As a result, some of the musicians learned folk tunes through published collections.

Country and Western musicians examined in Finnegan's (1989) research learned primarily through aural means, learning new music from recordings. Similar

to folk musicians, these musicians performed by memory and by ear. In addition to learning music from recordings, these musicians would at times use a chord chart, writing the words of the song down and filling in the chords. Once familiar songs were learned, the group produced their own arrangements. Country and Western bands performed more original compositions over copying other music.

Finnegan (1989) presented a synopsis of learning styles among the varied groups surveyed. Formal music instruction is accomplished through the standard style with emphasis placed on music notation, Italian musical terms, understanding of music theory, and performing music written by composers. Informal music learning occurred through participation in bands, self-learning, peer-interaction, copying other musicians, on the job learning, and learning by ear.

Finnegan (1989) examined three models of composition as expressed in classical, jazz, and rock bands. Classical musicians perform compositions from standard notation. Jazz musicians use a “skeleton-like” form of notation that provides basic themes and structure, which Finnegan calls “composition-in-performance” (p. 166). Rock bands perform composed music without a written score. Musical structure and themes are worked out through practice, labeled “prior-composition-through-practice mode”. Composition is worked out collectively. Commonly one band member begins the composition by “coming up with an original idea, which would then be worked out and expanded by the other members of the group” (p. 167). Although the composition is set, leeway existed for individual creativity.

How Popular Musicians Learn.

Green's (2002) work, *How Popular Musicians Learn*, was the first seminal study of how popular musicians acquire a high level of proficiency in the absence of a teacher. The study focused on 14 rock musicians, ages ranging from 15 to 50. Green studied a small sampling of available popular musicians. Additionally, the study only focused on musicians participating in "Anglo-American," guitar-based pop and rock music styles. The participants in the study were 12 males and 2 females. Lacking from her research are popular musicians that develop skills using available technology, such as computer-based manipulation of music. Even with the narrow sampling of popular musicians in her study, Green provided a clear framework for how popular musicians acquire musical skill. A second text from Green (2008), *Music, Informal Learning and the School: A New Classroom Pedagogy*, was also consulted in this study. This text is a presentation of the implementation of Green's (2002) previous research in a classroom setting.

Green (2002, 2008) described two extreme learning practices in her research: "unconscious" and "conscious". Unconscious learning occurs without any "particular awareness" from the learner. Conscious learning occurs when learners know they are learning and are "attempting to learn, have explicit sets of goals combined with procedures for reaching them, such as structured practice routine, and are able to consider, name or otherwise conceptualize and isolate their learning practices" (Green, 2002, p. 60). Unconscious learning is similar to "encultured learning" (Cope & Smith, 1997, p. 284), as it is picked up as the learner participates

in the life of the community. Conscious learning is not “picked up” as the learner participates in the life of the community but as the learner “wills” learning to occur (Green, 2002).

Finnegan’s (1989) ethnographic study predates Green’s (2002) study. In addition to many years separating the two studies, Finnegan focused on folk music and local music making, while Green focused on popular musicians from an Anglo, white context. There are many similarities between the two studies related to how non-formally trained musicians learn to play music at a high level. Learning through peer interaction and creativity are two examples of the similarities.

Green (2002) was influenced by Finnegan’s (1989) work. Finnegan’s study was the first to study at length how informally trained musician’s acquired skill. Finnegan’s work went beyond Green’s, in that *The Hidden Musicians* also speaks to the social and environmental implications of music learning.

These two studies were conducted 15 years apart and in locations that were different, rural England and urban England. If Finnegan’s study were replicated today the results would be similar. Folk music and the transmission of folk music is less hindered by technology. As a folk musician, and a rock musician, I played in a bluegrass band in Texas with informally trained musicians. Amateur musicians desiring to play bluegrass learned in similar ways to musicians that had been playing for 20+ years, —participating in bluegrass jams, watching, and peer-to-peer instruction. Green’s (2002) study would likely produce different results. Popular music is more influenced by technology than folk music. Technological

advancements and the ubiquity of devices that connect to the Internet have influenced the way popular musicians interact with and learn music (Smith, 2011). A replication of Green's (2002) study will likely yield the same results. Differences would occur in the way musicians learn from and copy recordings. These recordings are now digitally distributed in audio and video formats that are readily available.

Informal and Popular Music Pedagogy Analysis

Informal music learning texts were analyzed using conventional qualitative content analysis as described in Chapter 2. Data analysis began with a thorough reading of Green (2002, 2008) and Finnegan (1989) in order to immerse myself in the content of each source. I identified the following themes having one or more of the following elements: learning music, musical interaction, and music performance (Webber, 1990).

Categories and a coding scheme developed from the data. I developed the initial coding scheme through a constant comparative method. Salient feature categories emerged from the sorted data (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The salient feature categories are copying recordings, contextually based learning, skill assimilation in real world contexts, choosing music, enculturation, and collaborative learning.

Features

In the analysis of informal music learning six features emerged. After identification additional research was examined to provide further depth and

clarification on each feature. Extant research was specific to emergent category and used for elaboration. These categories were combined with those of formal music learning in the creation of a 16-week integrated guitar curriculum.

Copying Recordings

The most important learning practice of popular musicians is the listening to and copying of recordings (Green, 2002). Musical conventions are assimilated subconsciously through listening to and copying recordings, since music contains subtleties that are not easily notated. For example, it is difficult to indicate the placement of notes on and around the beat. Instrumental timbres are also difficult to indicate with music notation. By listening to and copying recordings musicians are able to learn nuances that are genre and instrument specific. These nuances are difficult to learn without extensive listening to a particular musical style (Snell, 2007).

As musicians gain familiarity with specific genres, their ability to play and learn via listening is enhanced. Each musical genre has specific characteristics that are picked up through listening to and copying recordings. Harmonic and melodic relationships become easier to identify once a musician knows how these conventions are used (Johansson, 2004). The ability to recognize musical patterns and genre-specific characteristics are “built up by listening to such patterns many times, over a period of years” (p. 99). In fact, as instrumental expertise increases so do the individual’s listening expertise (Cutietta & Stauffer, 2005). Thus, music

listening should be genre specific and contextually based to more fully develop instrumental proficiency.

Green (2002) described four types of listening that are common among popular musicians: purposive, attentive, distracted, and hearing. *Purposive* listening is directed at learning some aspect of the music. The musician tries to “put it to use in some way after the listening experience is over” (pp. 23-24). This type of listening is common among students attempting to learn a particular riff or chord change. According to Johansson (2010), purposive listening is incomplete in that it does not provide the depth and breadth of listening to genre specific characteristics.

Attentive listening “may involve listening at the same level of detail as in purposive listening, but without any specific aim of learning something in order to be able to play, remember, compare or describe it afterwards” (Green, 2002, p. 24). The remaining types of listening, distracted and hearing are less important in skill acquisition but do assist in developing awareness of musical style traits. *Distracted* listening is on and off listening with the listener “barely paying any attention to it at all (p. 24).” *Hearing* is awareness of music being played but the listener is giving it little cognitive attention.

The ability to recognize and remember musical patterns develops through repeated listening to music. Recognition and remembrance of musical patterns occurs through listening “many times, over a period of years” (Johansson, 2010, p. 99). Listening to specific aspects of music helps in identifying how chords are used in music. There are five elements to listen for in music: harmonic rhythm, bass line,

melody, chord extensions, and style and sound (Johansson, 2010).

Harmonic rhythm is the process of identifying where, within a phrase or the larger form, a chord occurs. For example, noting that a chorus begins with the tonic chord assists the student in learning the piece, as they can assume this will be consistent throughout the composition.

Bass line movement can help in identifying chords within music. The movement of a bass line over static harmony, for example, can serve as an indication of chord inversions. Bass line movement can also identify root movement, which aids in chord identification.

Melodies that are “singable and locked in to the harmony by mostly using chord tones” (Johansson, 2010, p. 101) can help in discovering what is occurring in the harmony. This helps in identifying chord sonorities, major and minor keys, and harmonic direction.

Additional notes within a chord changes the sound and chord usage. For example, 9th chords imply a dominant sound/sonority, while chords with an added 2nd imply a tonic or subdominant sonority. The ability to identify these additional notes and chord sonorities is developed through repeated listening.

Musicians learn to play by ear by playing by ear (Johansson, 2004; Karlsen, 2010). Learning in this manner, praxially and contextually, allows the musician to also learn musical traits, such as “specific clichés and harmonic formulas”, and to recognize and realize chords within correct genres and styles of music (Karlsen, 2010, p. 37). Musical characteristics learned through ear playing can only be

executed once specific formulas have “accomplished meaning” (Johansson, 2004, pp. 100–101).

Familiarity with the style and sound of a genre provides information related to harmonic expectations, instrumental combinations, melodic contour, and groove. Changes in instrumental timbre within a song, or from song to song, provide context and information that cannot be notated. Repeated listening develops expectations within the listener of what a style should sound like.

Green (2002) discovered that most participants did not feel that copying music via recordings was an aspect of learning. They believed it was something “private, unfocused or unworthy for discussion” (p. 61). Copying of recordings served to build up a knowledge base from which to further music participation.

Copying recordings also leads to the development of compositional and improvisational skills.

Without experience gained from copying and covering, original work is unlikely to be convincingly situated within a style recognized as music: music is not a natural phenomenon but has to conform to historically constructed norms, both concerning its intra-musical processes, forms and sound qualities, and its modes of production, distribution and reception. (Green, 2002, p. 75)

Contextually Based Learning

In many non-Western cultures, music activity is viewed as something all participants do (Cope & Smith, 1997). Participation in musical activities is accomplished through specific cultural contexts and is “about a special type of direct social intercourse rather than creating a finished artistic product” (Turino, 2009, p.

106). Alternately, with school-based music instruction music is learned in cultural contexts that are not consistent with lived contexts (Bowman, 2004). In-school learning favors individual cognition, decontextualized learning, and non-specific situations in order to offer broader applicability of the subjects content. This tendency to isolate musical elements from their “original, social, historical, personal, and musical contexts” is further encouraged through formal curriculum and method books, which separate musical elements from the music pieces being performed (Snell, 2007, p. 43).

Contextually based learning is linked to specific contexts and socio-musical situations (Batt-Rawden & DeNora, 2005). Learning music contextually places the student in the situation in which the musical knowledge will be used, “specific communities of practice,” where learning works synchronously with application (Karlesen, 2010).

One way popular musicians learn contextually is through copying recordings and performing covers of music. Through listening to and performing cover versions of music, popular musicians learn how to situate music within a particular style and genre (Green, 2002). Without this process original work will not be convincingly placed within a genre or style that is recognized as music (Finnegan, 1989).

Most of an amateur musicians learning is done through participation in a local band (Finnegan, 1989). In this context, skills and genre specific characteristics are learned, absorbed into the musicians’ vocabulary, and created into music of their own. Musicians learn to play music with others as the “solitary player is antithetical

to the traditional notion of music as a social activity” (Cope & Smith, 1997, pp. 286–287).

When popular music is brought into the music classroom it ceases to function as popular music, losing the context in which it was originally conceived (Green, 2006). Because educational institutions do not easily influence context, a music classroom results in a cultural ersatz. In an effort to contextualize music, educators are forced to create context by providing concerts and performance opportunities that are not easily found outside of the music classroom, which creates false contexts (Cope, 2002).

Learning of music and the acquisition of technical proficiency should not be approached without a specific socio-musical context (Cope, 2002). In Finnegan’s (1989) study, technical proficiency and performance were understood through societal convention and vested interest from the members of a particular group. Musicians would not wait to participate in playing music until they achieved technical mastery on an instrument. Skills were developed “in a group context which held not only all the satisfaction of joint musical experience, but also —very often—of peer group involvement in a valued and self-enhancing activity with rewards as self-chosen rather than set by external examinations or outside recognition” (p. 137).

Skill Assimilation in Real World Contexts

Popular musicians often acquire skills in haphazard and global ways (Jaffurs, 2004). Technique is not learned through conscious effort as “the concept of technique as a conscious, conventional aspect of controlling the instrument or as an aide to development came late to most of the musicians” in Green’s (2002) study. Musicians in Green’s study did not incorporate scales and arpeggios into their practicing until they had become professional musicians.

In developing technical proficiency, maintaining a student’s motivation is important. Students that are asked to focus on developing a high level of technical proficiency are often frustrated. Initially, a beginning level of technical ability should provide an adequate foundation for both classical and popular styles of playing. Popular musicians acquire technical proficiency as needed. Formal music education often places an emphasis on technical development over musical development and performance, in essence placing technique over motivation (Cope & Smith, 1997). In the classical repertoire, scales and exercises supplement pieces of music in order to develop techniques necessary for performance. These scales and exercises are “pedagogically logical—but their decontextualized nature means that they are neither psycho-logical nor, indeed, socio-logical” (p. 285).

Developing skills on the job was evident in Finnegan’s (1989) research on folk musicians. Learning to play music was primarily accomplished through participating in performances, real world context. Often, beginning musicians would have only a basic knowledge of chords or musical structure but still participate in

musical performances. This training was also viewed as self-enhancing and led to other intrinsic rewards (Finnegan, 1989).

Acquiring musical skill in real world contexts establishes greater meaning in the music learned by popular musicians. Knowledge is gained from the musician's needs and motivation and not a teacher's instruction. Intrinsic motivation increases the learner's enjoyment of music learning and performance. As learning is group-oriented and not individualistic, it is related to the musicians "everyday life" (Feichas, 2010, p. 51).

Participation in the real world music context of popular musicians is generationally based. Since popular musicians do not often have older musicians from whom to learn, their skill acquisition is based in their individual socio-musical world. This musical world is comprised of peers who are often at a similar level in regards to musical skill (Green, 2004).

Choosing Music Themselves

Popular musicians choose music they want to play. There is no external force, such as a teacher, guiding or instructing them to choose specific pieces of music to learn. When students choose the music, their experiences become "authentically situated learning" experiences that help define "abstractions" (Cope & Smith, 1997, p. 285), democratizing the learning process. Music that is unfamiliar to the student produces musical experiences that are meaningless.

In choosing music themselves, issues of ownership are confronted as

students choose what music to learn and play (Finney & Philpott, 2010). Musical selection also helps to form musicians' identities. By choosing the kinds of music they are familiar with and identify with, popular musicians present music that is "self-reflective and intrinsically meaningful" (Allsup, 2004, p. 206). Musical activities revolve around music, which the learners identify with and are thoroughly encultured. Therefore, learning is a matter of personal choice (Green, 2005).

Enculturation

Music enculturation is the process of learning by immersion in the music and music culture of one's environment (Green, 2004; Campbell, 2001). Popular musicians learn music predominantly through enculturation. Learning is not always tied to formal events or rigorous structure but is picked up as students participate in a specific culture. Informal learning of music occurs as students immerse themselves in the musical practices in non-formal settings (Wright & Kanellopoulos, 2010).

Learning music through enculturation is accomplished primarily through extensive listening of the prevalent or chosen musical style, playing music together, and composing. In order to learn the intricacies of musical style, popular musicians employ what Green (2002) calls *attentive listening*. Popular musicians are unconsciously assimilating musical conventions of a particular genre and style (Snell, 2007). By trying out sounds and methods of playing, students are actively engaged with music production. Composing music also involves aspects of

improvisation aiding in the feeling out of music. Encultured learning provides a platform for students to explore what is normal in a genre or style in regards to composition and improvisation (Turino, 2008).

The process of enculturation through listening allows a student to experience and learn musical elements that cannot be precisely written down, what Green (2002) calls the “ephemeral details.” These elements encompass the “precise timing of notes on and around the beat, the exact and often changing sound or timbre of each instrument, the sensitive interrelations and responses between the instruments and many other subtleties” (p. 32). Video recordings can also be used in encultured learning as it provides a visual representation of music being learned (Smith, 2011).

Learning music through encultured practice provides a level of feedback about what music is appropriate and acceptable in a given social group, not society as a whole (Turino, 2008). This information can change or reinforce the musical practices of a social group (Allsup, 2004). Viewing musical learning as cultured practice can shape, and is shaped, by society means that by participating in a “practice, one also learns the practice” (Folkstead, 2006, p. 138). Students, therefore, are learning not only musical gestures and nuances but also what is acceptable within a social group (Turino, 2008).

Collaborative Learning/Peer Instruction

Music learning for popular musicians often occurs in the absence of a musical expert, a teacher, but not in isolation. Learning is accomplished by interacting with one another, acquiring knowledge and skills from peers. A solitary learner is antithetical to popular music learning, and thus antithetical to popular music pedagogy (Green, 2002). In collaborative music learning environments students are “simultaneously creators, teachers, and learners” (Boespflug, 2004, p. 198).

Green (2002) distinguishes between three types of collaborative learning: peer-directed learning, group learning, and watching. Peer-directed learning involves explicit teaching from peer to peer. Group learning occurs through peers’ interactions with one another. Explicit teaching is absent in this form of collaborative learning. The third form of collaborative learning is watching. Students learn by observing what their peers are doing.

Collaboration is essential in the popular music ensemble. Democratic action and ideals are displayed through musical decisions, song choice, band name, rehearsal locations and strategies, and performance (Snell, 2007, Rodriguez, 2004). Members of these groups often identify themselves as equals with no one in charge (Jaffurs, 2004). In musical situations one participant might be considered the “expert,” one who is more accomplished than the remaining members of the group, but not as a controlling “expert”, as the musical resources are democratically approached.

In collaborative learning students construct knowledge socially (Bruffee,

1995). As individual musicians and the parts they play are combined with others, musical independence is “coupled with social responsibility” (Snell, 2007, p. 149). Each member of the group has a responsibility to contribute to the musical process and output. Collaboration is also necessary in the selection of songs to learn and perform, names for original compositions, and even the name of the band (Snell, 2007).

Folk musicians in Finnegan’s (1989) study learned via peers the process of on the job training. Once folk musicians learned a few musical elements, such as guitar chords, they would join the group playing music. These musicians learned to navigate the complexities of the musical performances through interacting with other musicians, learning in context. Musicians in Green’s (2002) research also learned from others, gaining insight from more experienced players.

Conclusion

Through an examination of Green’s (2002, 2008) and Finnegan’s (1989) research, features from informal music learning and popular music pedagogy have been identified. A 16-week integrated guitar curriculum was developed from the formal and informal music learning features. This curriculum served as the means of implementing both areas of music learning in a university guitar class. While informal music learning elements seem antithetical to a university guitar class, I planned to include informal elements and moments in the class from the outset. While I had to “plan” for the informal moments, these portions of the class where

conducted with as little input from me, downplaying the formality of the classroom situation. Additionally, informal music elements in the class impacted the development and implementation of formal music salient features revealed in Chapter 2. Formal guitar elements of the course were planned around the informal elements.

Informal music learning and popular music pedagogy is a burgeoning field of inquiry that focuses on how musicians acquire skill outside of formal music learning contexts. Extant research in these areas is not focused on instrument specific skill acquisition through informal means. Research focuses on group interaction, such as rock bands, and ensemble applications. The purpose for examining extant research on informal music learning and popular music pedagogy was to discover broad categories that could inform guitar pedagogy and instrument specific applications.

The most prominent feature discovered was copying and listening to recordings. Through copying recordings, skill acquisition is situated in the style musicians were likely to perform, which contextualizes music learning. This salient feature was also the choice of the musicians in Green's (2002) study. Music choice is an expression of democratizing the learning process, as no "expert" was present in the selection.

Playing music with others contextualizes music skill acquisition (Rodriguez, 2004). This type of participation encourages a musician's development. In Finnegan's (1989) study, musicians lacking advanced skills were still included in the performing of music. Beginning musicians would pick up needed licks, riffs, and

chords of the style they were playing. Musical skills were, therefore, developed at a faster pace than musicians that did not participate in performances.

Situational learning is the process by which popular musicians learn a genre or style of music with specificity. Although these musicians are proficient in one style of music, they often remaining amateurs in performing other styles. Situating learning in a genre allows popular musicians to develop the ability to predict melodic and harmonic formulas of a given style (Johansson, 2004; Snell, 2007). This ability to predict musical formulas serves to inform improvisation, musical feel, and deepen the musician's ability to communicate with others.

Democratic action is also evident in informal learning as musicians are involved in the process music selection, composing, and performing music. Democratizing the learning process influences musical and performance choices and techniques. Popular musicians are not bound by didactic literature and graded technical exercises. Therefore, skill acquisition is the choice of the individual musician.

Features of informal music land popular music pedagogy were incorporated in a 16-week curriculum used in the case study. Because music listening was an important part of learning in popular music pedagogy, I embedded music listening into the entire curriculum. Johansson (2004) revealed that melodic and harmonic formulas are learned through repeated listening over time. Therefore, I included recordings of typical harmonic and melodic formulas of music the students said they

would like to learn. These harmonic listening examples were also used enhance the students ability to learn music via recordings.

CHAPTER 4 CASE STUDY

This chapter describes a case study of a beginners' guitar class in which formal and informal music learning was integrated through a holistic guitar curriculum developed from features from chapters three and four. The first section presents the methods for participant selection, data collection, and data analysis methods used in the study. First, I describe the setting, participants, and participant recruiting. Next, I present and justify how data were collected over the course of the study. Following this is an explanation of how data is analyzed and my role as researcher. In the second section, I present the findings of the study.

Methods and Procedures

In this section I present data collection methods and procedures, providing detailed information on how data were gathered and analyzed. Data were collected from August to December, 2010. The analysis phase began six weeks after all data were collected.

Data Collection

I conducted the study from August 2010 through December of 2010, following the university's semester schedule. I used four methods for collecting data: semi-structured interview, questionnaire, field notebook, and video data. Data collected from these methods provided insights from the participant and instructor/researcher perspective on the integration of formal and informal learning. Data collection began with the full number of participants ($n = 14$) enrolled

for the course. At the mid-point interview the number of participants had decreased ($n = 9$). By the conclusion of the course, the participant number had fallen from the start of the study ($n = 6$). I dropped the participants wanting to withdraw from the course. The most prominent reasons participants gave for withdrawing from the class was “not enough time to practice” and the pace of the course. I asked these participants to elaborate further on this statement. Most responded they did not have enough time to devote to learning the guitar with the other responsibilities they currently had. One participant did not provide any further comments as to why he withdrew from the class.

Questionnaire. Participants completed two questionnaires—one pre-study and one post-study. The pre-study questionnaire was used to discover participants’ demographic information, previous musical training, experience playing the guitar, perceptions of their current playing level, and motivation for enrolling in the course. A post-study questionnaire was administered to discover whether the curriculum effectively met the participants’ stated goals, the participants’ perception of their current playing level, and the participants’ involvement in playing with others outside of the course. I asked participants to comment on the curriculum to gain insight into what they believed was most beneficial in their development as a guitarist—formal or informal aspects of music learning.

Interviews. Three semi-structured interviews were conducted during the study. The first interview was conducted before the first class session. Participants answered questions related to playing ability, music study, motivation, and goals for

the course. Midway through the course I conducted a second semi-structured interview. During the interview I asked participants to reveal their perceptions about the curriculum, pace of the course, and music making outside of class. A final interview was conducted at the conclusion of the course. Participants spoke about the curriculum, instruction, and their goals for the class were met. These interviews allowed participants to elaborate on some of the information provided in the questionnaires, such as motivation and goals.

Observations. I wrote extensive notes in my field journal, which allowed me to capture my own thoughts, feelings, and reflections on the research (Yin, 2011). I was unable to write notes during the class meeting time because I was the instructor; therefore, I wrote my field notes immediately after each class meeting. My field notes contained my perceptions on student engagement, receptiveness to instruction and curriculum, and personal thoughts about the success of each class meeting.

Video Data. At the start of each class meeting I set up a video camera to capture each session. The video camera was placed in the room so all participants were visible in the video. There were times when participants would move in and out of the video frame. When participants worked in groups the audio quality diminished. In these moments I was unable to transcribe the dialogue word for word. I used my field notes to fill in these gaps in data collection. Video data allowed me to observe the participants while I was not delivering the curriculum. This

removed perspective provided a level of objectivity that was not possible to achieve as the instructor.

Timeline. Data collection began two days prior to the beginning of the course. I administered the pre-course questionnaire and conducted all interviews in my office. The post-course questionnaire was administered at the conclusion of the final exam. Video data and field notes were collected over the entire 16-week semester. At the conclusion of each week, I organized and compiled my field notes into a word-processing document, which aided in data compilation at the end of the study. All video data was stored in a locked file cabinet. I watched and transcribed video data six weeks after the conclusion of the course.

Data Analysis

Data analysis commenced six weeks after the study concluded. Due to my role as instructor, I did not analyze the data during the course. I did not want to change the curriculum based on what I observed during video analysis. Text data, however, was compiled during the course to promote organization. After data had been compiled and transcribed, I begin the process of coding data. I used the online qualitative coding program *Dedoose*. I chose this program due to having access to data wherever I had Internet connectivity.

Questionnaire data was compiled in table format and used as a reference in the coding process. This data was used to establish demographic information, participants indicated previous musical training, guitar playing ability, and

motivation and goals, which established a baseline for data collected at the mid-point and end of the study.

After the data were coded, analyzed, and reassembled (Yin, 2010), categories emerged revealing themes. In the initial coding phase, 76 different codes emerged. I was able to reduce the number of codes by combining similar coding themes. The next phase of code analysis resulted in the discovery of 10 categories. A closer analysis of these categories allowed me to further reduce them due to similarities. After this analysis, five categories emerged as themes of the study: note reading, listening, creativity, chord playing, formal and informal learning. These categories form the basis of the discussion.

Role of the Researcher

I was the person responsible for conducting and implementing the case study. My first role in the study was that of researcher. I administered the questionnaires, conducted the semi-formal interviews, and collected video data and field notes during the study. Data gathered through the field notes were an expression of my thoughts of the day's instruction. At the conclusion of each class meeting I wrote 1–2 typed pages of my impressions of the curriculum, student reception of the instruction, and student progress from meeting to meeting. These insights were helpful in providing a deeper understanding of the case study and to clarify video data.

As the person implementing the curriculum, I was responsible for delivering

the content in each class meeting. This role presented me with a great challenge. I wanted to be faithful to the integrated curriculum and not change it based on how I thought the class was progressing. Once my field notes were captured I did not review them prior to the next class meeting. I wanted to approach each class meeting as an instructor and not as a researcher trying out a new formula, testing and changing as the course progressed.

I also felt external pressure from other faculty in the music department. Some of the music faculty did not view informal music learning practices as acceptable in university music instruction. Because informal music learning methodologies were not a part of standard music instruction at the university, I consistently struggled to maintain the integrity of the curriculum that was developed from this study in light of faculty concerns. Additionally, the guitar was also viewed suspect as an instrument worthy neither of university class time or professor teaching load.

During the development of the study I also struggled with my past as an untrained and trained guitarist in developing the curriculum. I began studying piano formally at the age of six and moved to studying classical percussion at the 11, which I continued for the next seven years. At 13, I learned guitar on my own, informally, in a similar way to what Green (2002) discovered in her research. I entered the university to study classical guitar, in which I completed two degrees. My music learning experiences help to inform my method of content delivery in the course. I wanted the salient features of formal and informal music learning to guide

the integration of these concepts in the guitar class.

The rock musician teaching classical music in the University is a struggle that I have dealt with for the past seven years. My learning experiences, and the way I have acquired musical skill, were different from every other faculty member I was teaching with. Learning classical percussion and rock guitar simultaneously—one formal and the other informal—I was unaware that a dichotomy existed between the two learning styles among faculty. Learning in this hybridized way was just how I thought you learned music. As a faculty member in higher education, I continually struggled with how much informal to include in my teaching. I feel that I compromised what I thought was good way of teaching for what was conventional.

Setting and Participants

The study was implemented at a parochial university in Texas with a student population of 1,100. Enrollment at the university is primarily undergraduate students. Most of the students claim an evangelical Christian faith, which seemed to greatly influence participant rationale for enrolling in the class. Students signed up for the class for elective credit in their respective degree programs. The course occurred over a 16-week semester. Initially, 14 students signed up for the guitar class with only six completing.

Description of the Setting

The setting for the case study was a beginning guitar class. A beginner's guitar course had been offered at the university consistently for three years prior to

the implementation of this study. Historically, enrollment is relatively low in the beginner's guitar class: The average class size has been eight students. During the semester the study was implemented, students interested in taking the beginning guitar class were encouraged to enroll in this study. Another beginners' guitar section was offered for students not wanting to participate in the study.

Students met in the same classroom throughout the semester, which is designed for lectures. Overall, the room met the basic needs of the course; however, it lacked an appropriate number of music stands and listening stations, such as CD players.

I chose this setting to conduct the case study due to availability and accessibility. As a teacher at this university I had access to the room and was able to offer an additional section of the beginner's guitar course for those not wanting to participate in the study. Because the course was an elective and not part of the university's core requirements, the dean of the School of Music agreed to allow me to implement this study.

The Christian Evangelical university environment influenced how participants responded to certain elements of the instruction. I believed that informal elements would be welcomed and embraced by the students. The data revealed this was not the case. It is plausible to think that the environment influenced this uncertainty of the students. While doctrinal teaching at this university was not overly dogmatic it did not allow for deep or extensive questioning. Students that held beliefs that were not conventional were ostracized

and viewed as a project to reform. This mentality could have contributed to the student's reluctance to fully embracing and interacting with the informal elements of the course.

Description of Participants

Participants were selected for the study based on their interest in learning the guitar. Any student enrolled in the university, whether full- or part-time, was given the opportunity to participate in the class. No prior music training or guitar playing ability was requirement for admission in the course. Students had to own an instrument and agree to practice for a minimum of 20 minutes a day, five days a week. I sent an email to all full- and part-time undergraduate students in order to recruit participants. Students that had enrolled in the guitar course prior to this announcement were notified of the case study and given an opportunity to participate in the study or enroll in the additional guitar class section.

Demographics. Initially, 14 participants signed up to participate in the course. Of these, only six participants completed the 16-week course. Participants that dropped out of the class notified me via email, allowing me to document their rationale for withdrawing. Overall, two factors contributed to the participants withdraw from the class, lack of time to devote to learning the guitar and the pace of the course. None of the participants that withdrew from the course remained in the class or asked to transfer to the additional class section.

Green's (2002) research demonstrated that more males participated in

popular music making than females. This overrepresentation of males was true in this course as well. Six out of the 14 participants that began the course were female, comprising 42.85% of the population. Only one female was a part of the group that finished the course, comprising 16.66% of the population. The total female population at the university comprises 53% of all undergraduate students. There is no known reason for the change in female population percentages throughout the course. In the pre-study questionnaire and interview the female participants expressed similar motivations for learning the instrument as their male counterparts.

More freshman and junior level students enrolled in the course. These were also the only two classes represented in the final group that finished the course. I believed the class would have a lower enrollment of freshman students due to the call for participants being sent via email prior to the commencement of the fall semester. I assumed first semester students would not have acquired the acumen to navigate university email and registration procedures and, therefore, not responded to my call for participants.

Table 1
Participant Demographics and Experience

	Finished Study	Total Population
<u>Male</u>	5	8
<u>Female</u>	1	6
<u>Classification</u>		
Freshman	4	5
Sophomore	0	3
Junior	2	4
Senior	0	2
<u>Time Playing Guitar</u>		
0–1 Years	1	7
2–3 Years	4	5
4–5 Years	0	0
6–Above	1	2
<u>Perceived Playing Ability</u>		
Beginner–No Ex.	0	5
Beginner–Minimal Ex.	3	5
Intermediate	3	4
Advanced	0	0
<u>Motivation</u>		
Personal Enjoyment	1	3
Playing for Organized Assemblies (ex. Church)	3	8
Professional Aspirations	2	3
None of the above	0	0

Previous experience and music training. In order to establish a baseline of music and guitar competency, students were asked to identify previous musical training. In the pre-course questionnaire students identified their ability to read music notation and how long they have played the guitar. Of the 14 students, all but

one, Steven, stated they had studied music previously. Others viewed musical training broadly, some considering a family member or friend showing them how to play being music instruction. In the interviews, only three students revealed taking formal music lessons or participating in music ensembles offered in secondary education.

Perceived music literacy was high for a beginner's course in music training. 57.15% of participants claimed an ability to read music notation. I believed at the outset of the study that music literacy would mirror the percentages of students claiming formal musical training. There was no definition of reading music notation that accompanied the questionnaire, which could have resulted in the high percentage. Based on what occurred in the class, and the students view on music training, it can be assumed that the ability to read guitar notation, chord diagrams, and tablature were considered an ability to read music notation.

Most important in establishing a base line in the study was length of time playing guitar prior to the study and perceived playing level. Prior guitar playing ability was an indicator of the student's endurance throughout the course. Each student was asked to identify how long he or she had played guitar. Two thirds ($n = 4$) of the students who finished the course had been playing the guitar for two to three years. None of the final students viewed themselves as beginning guitarists without prior experience. Half of the six students were classified as beginning guitarists with minimal experience, with the remaining three as intermediate players.

Students were asked what they believed their playing level would be at the completion of the study. Most identified an intermediate level. Half of the students that finished the study believed they would fall into the advanced category. Michael viewed the ability to “play with proper technique and read music” to be the main reason he would be an advanced player. The questionnaire data shows that students believed they would move up at least one level at the conclusion of the course.

Motivation. On the pre-course questionnaire students were asked to reveal their rationale for enrolling in the class. I wanted to discover the students’ goals for enrolling in the course and to learn if this influenced whether or not they would complete it. Students were asked to select if their goal was for personal enjoyment, playing for organized assemblies, professional aspirations, or none of the above. During the pre-course interview I asked students to elaborate on these goals, which helped to clarify the questionnaire data.

Students that indicated personal enjoyment were seeking to learn the guitar for themselves. When asked about what personal enjoyment meant, these students expressed a desire to play only in their own home, use the guitar for accompanying times of spiritual devotion, and to accompany singing with others. I asked these students, “Would you see yourself playing in front of others?” The answer was overwhelmingly no. Students’ responses indicated that they viewed playing in front of others —on a stage or in a church setting—as performance.

Most of the students in the class indicated their goal was to play for organized assemblies, primarily church services. Because this study was conducted

at a parochial university, I initially believed this would be the predominant rationale given for learning the guitar. The majority of students held this motivation.

I did not anticipate any of the students indicating professional aspirations as motivation for enrolling in the course. Those students that did state professional aspirations as a goal were advanced players from the start. They were adept in chord playing, rock guitar playing and improvisation, and had rock band experience. When asked to clarify how they believed the class would help them, these students indicated they felt they lacked technical skills and the ability to read music. It was their belief that these skills were prevalent in professional guitarists and therefore needed. Of the three that indicated professional aspirations only one withdrew from the course.

By week nine only six students remained, all of which finished the course. University classification was not a factor in student success in the class. I believed some freshman level students would withdraw from the course due to figuring out college life. This was not the case. Of the six that finished the study four were freshman. Therefore, student longevity was not determined by classification. A better indicator for their success in the course was previous guitar experience. Of the six students that finished the course all but one had previous experience on the instrument.

Derrick. Derrick was a first semester freshman student. He had played guitar for a number of years and considered himself a beginner guitarist. As I observed Derrick in the first few course meetings it became clear he was not a

beginner but an intermediate guitarist. Derrick's playing ability was based in popular music and jazz styles. He told me in the pre-course interview that he participated in a class guitar course offered at his high school. Even though he spent two years in the course he lacked fundamental guitar technique and was unable to read music notation. Derrick participated in band for 4 years in high school, playing percussion, saxophone, and bass guitar. At the time of the study, he also played bass guitar in a rock/funk ensemble at his church.

During the pre-course interview Derrick revealed he did not know how to read music. His inability to read music did not hinder his participation in high school music ensembles. "I don't know how to read music for drums, I just make up something." Derrick also mentioned he learned to play saxophone by listening to music and other people playing the instrument seated near him. He was shown "how to play notes on the saxophone" but did not learn to read music on the instrument. Success in music came from his listening ability. Derrick shared with me on more than one occasion that reading music was difficult.

When I asked Derrick how he learned to play the guitar he told me "by hearing other guitar players. I honestly learn more by hearing, honestly, than seeing." In the pre-study interview Derrick told me learning to "read music is a primary goal" he has for taking the class. A secondary goal was to improve his technique and "raw playing skills". At the mid-point interview Derrick expressed he felt he was improving on his technique and reading ability; however, in the post-course interview he stated he did not read "much music" in the course. "Reading

was hard, so I just listened to what you were playing and tried to figure it out.”

Throughout the course I noticed Derrick seemed disinterested in the instruction. I would often observe him "noodling" on the instrument when I was providing explanations. When I asked him to play notated melodies he would “feel out” the notes, searching for them by moving his fingers up and down the fretboard. Due to his developed ear he was able to "hear" melodies and chords and replicate them on the instrument.

George. George was a sophomore who had been playing guitar for 4–5 years. He played saxophone in his school band for seven years and participated in the university marching band. Even though George had more than seven years of music training, he did not read music on the guitar. He learned to play guitar by “watching concert footage of guitar players I liked. I watch the videos and see where the guy is putting his fingers. I stop the video and put my fingers where they are and try to play it.”

George’s motivation for enrolling in the course was to improve his technique, learn to read music on the guitar, and learn more about “soloing.” He also told me in the pre-course interview that he wanted to be a professional guitarist. “I don’t want to learn how to play in every style, you know. I just want to know different ways of approaching the instrument.”

Like Derrick, George seemed disinterested when issues of technique were described in the course. George also seemed impatient when working with other students during the peer and collaborative learning moments. George and Derrick

most often worked together when I asked the students to work collaboratively.

George was the most experienced guitarist in the class.

Lee. Lee was a sophomore student who identified as a beginning guitarist. Based on my observations, I confirmed that Lee was a beginning guitarist with minimal experience. He played open chords on the guitar and could accompany himself singing but was unable to maintain a steady tempo. Lee did not know how to read music on the guitar or how to play scales or barre chords. He did participate in band in high school, playing trombone, and told me he could “read music in the bass clef, but not treble. I mean, it would take me a real long time to read the notes, and stuff.”

Lee’s motivation for participating in the course was to learn more about scales so he could “know what key he was playing in, how to solo and create melodies on the guitar”, and to improve his ability to lead music from the guitar in church services. Although Lee possessed an external motivation he often seemed uninterested in the instruction. His disinterest was the same for instruction I led or in peer learning moments. I observed Lee noodling frequently on his instrument while someone was talking. I had the opportunity to observe Lee in other courses at the university. His in-class behavior in other courses was consistent with what I observed in the study. Lee seemed disengaged, in a daydream like state, and often asked for clarification on an instruction when no one else needed clarification.

Even though Lee was not the most experienced player in the course he was the most encouraging to other students. When students paired up to work on final

exam pieces or peer learning settings, Lee encouraged and worked with those that were struggling in the class. He worked with one student in the early portion of the class who was struggling. I did not ask him to assist the student. He did so because “I knew he was struggling and thought I could help out.”

Michael. Michael was a first semester freshman student. He categorized himself as a beginning guitarist with minimal experience. Michael knew how to play a variety of heavy metal guitar riffs and open chords. He also knew a little about improvisation, being able to play the minor pentatonic scale and “some blues licks.”

Michael explained that he learned to play guitar from his grandfather who showed him a few chords—G, C, and D—and from watching guitar videos he purchased. The guitar videos were of heavy metal bands he liked. He told me those instructional videos were “what really taught me how to play the guitar.” When I observed Michael play the guitar early in the class it was obvious to me he was an intermediate guitarist, not a beginner with minimal experience.

In high school, Michael played tuba in the marching band. Like Lee, he could only read music in the bass clef and did not know how to read music on the guitar. One of Michael’s motivations was to learn how to read music on the guitar. He demonstrated a strong desire to develop music literacy. Michael was the only student that completed each of the music notation handouts and demonstrated he practiced all the music examples throughout the course. Often, he was the only student able to play the assigned note reading exercises.

In addition to an expressed desire to learn to read music on the guitar, he

also expressed a higher interest in learning how to play with classic technique. Michael never told me the reason for this. He was the only other student who completed the study that possessed professional aspirations. This could be the main reason behind this desire. I asked him what kind of professional he wanted to be. His response was, “music minister.”

Steven. Steven was also a first semester freshman and a beginning guitar player with no previous experience. Steven considered himself a musician as he played bass and piano at his church. He said he learned to play these instruments by ear. Throughout the course and in the mid- and post-course interview he revealed that observation was another way he learned to play music. “I basically just watched other people, seeing what they were doing and stuff. Then I just tried to do the same things.”

Steven’s piano and bass proficiency were in playing gospel-style music. Having watched him play both bass and piano, I believe his abilities on these instruments were at an intermediate level in gospel-style music. After hearing Steven play a gospel-style piano tune I asked him what key he was playing in, scales he used, and chords performed. He was unable to answer those questions but was able to tell me what notes he was playing. Even though he played piano and bass quite well he was unable to read music. He did know where the notes were on the bass, and subsequently, the lowest four strings of the guitar. This meant he was able to identify a note name with a fret.

Throughout the course Steven struggled with note reading and guitar

technique. He told me in the pre-course interview he really wanted to learn how to read notes on the guitar. Consistently, Steven expressed verbally in the course that reading music was “really hard” and “slow going.” I asked him numerous times how long he was practicing the note reading exercises. He responded, “not much at all.”

Of all students in the class, Steven excelled the highest on listening assignments and exercises. He developed his listening skills through 4–5 years of playing solely by ear. Other students were astounded by Steven's ability to learn music by listening. I observed Steven trying to play notated music examples using his ear instead of reading. He did this by moving fingers up and down the fretboard until he found the correct note. He had the ability to quickly correct a wrong note, quickly moving his fingers in the right direction on the guitar neck. The level of accuracy he displayed during these moments of feeling his way through the music was impressive for a beginning guitarist. This again demonstrated the level to which he had developed his listening skills.

Michelle. Michelle was a first-semester freshman and beginning guitarist with minimal experience. She was very timid in her playing and in verbal communication. In the pre- and mid-course interviews Michelle seemed timid in the answers she provided. She would often pause and edit answers as she moved through the interview. I also observed timidity during the video analysis. She rarely played the guitar at a volume that was noticeable on video and rarely spoke in class. Michelle was also the only female student to complete the course. Being the only female might have added to her shy personality and timidity.

As a guitar player, Michelle claimed to be a beginning guitarist with minimal experience. She felt comfortable playing open chords with basic strumming patterns. Michelle also told me she could play “a Bach piece.” She learned to play Bach’s “Minuet in G” using guitar tablature she downloaded from the Internet. I asked her to play a little bit of the piece, which she did using a fingerstyle technique she developed. Michelle had never taken music lessons. She grew up in a small border town in Texas that had no music program beyond general music in elementary school.

Description of the Curriculum

The curriculum was developed from the salient features present in formal and informal music learning. One of the goals of this study was to bridge formal and informal music learning. This is expressed in the creation and implementation of the curriculum. The curriculum was developed so that formal and informal music learning methods could be easily integrated in a beginner’s guitar class.

I created the curriculum for a 16-week beginner’s guitar class. In order to determine the end goal for the curriculum I relied on two aspects of the salient features found in formal and informal music learning. In each of the guitar methods natural notes in first position were covered. Additionally, the major scale and pentatonic scales were also discovered in each of the texts. I used both of these concepts—note reading and scale playing—as end goals of the guitar curriculum.

Informally, I incorporated two salient features of popular music pedagogy

into the guitar class—learning via recordings and peer learning. Listening became a prominent feature in the guitar curriculum. I initially structured listening into two main components—bass note identification and chord quality—to establish skills that would assist the students in learning music via recordings. Peer learning was a feature that was also important in the guitar class and used in the final exam assignment.

Analysis and Discussion

The class met twice a week for 16 weeks. During this time, students that finished the course were committed in attending each class meeting. The salient features that emerged from the analysis of formal and informal music learning—note reading, listening, creativity, chord playing, formal and informal learning—were used as the foundation of the guitar curriculum. Additional salient features—technique, solo and ensemble playing, peer learning—emerged as categories from data analysis. In this section, I describe and discuss the case using the emergent categories revealed through an analysis of questionnaires, observations, interviews, and video data. In the discussion I also present participant response from those that did not finish the study. Data gathered on the participants were included in data analysis.

Note Reading

In conducting the content analysis on guitar methods, the only feature consistent in all method books was note reading. Each method presented note

reading differently while maintaining a similar outcome. All methods began by presenting a few notes on the guitar, situating these notes in basic rhythmic delineations. Note reading in all method books covered natural notes in first position being presented.

Curriculum. Note reading was prominently featured in the guitar methods examined. As a result, note reading was also featured prominently in the curriculum. The end goal for note reading in the curriculum was consistent with the formal methods—reading all natural notes in first position. I used a similar philosophy in introducing note reading: I presented a few notes at a time in eighth and quarter note delineations. Shearer's (1990) text added an element to the introduction of note reading that was unique, situating note reading within a key. In his text, the key of G was used as the basis for basic note reading.

Presentation of music reading began with an introduction of the basic elements of note reading: pitch, note values, staff, and clef. From this point, open strings were utilized in lesson 3 to provide a connection between the guitar and music symbols. Similar to Shearer's (1990) text, I choose to use the open 2nd, 3rd, and 4th strings, which provided a harmonic relationship within the key of G and forming a G major triad. Basic eighth note rhythms were presented as well in this lesson.

The handout accompanying the introduction to note reading presented 4 music examples for students to use in practicing sessions. Additionally, a worksheet was provided to increase recognition of notes on the music staff. I asked students to

bring the completed worksheet to the next class meeting.

By week six, all of the natural notes in first position had been presented. From this point forward, musical examples and exercises were given using all natural notes. These examples ranged from four to eight measures in order for students to gain a greater level of proficiency in note reading. I explained each music example and went over one to two measures in the class, asking questions about pitch name, location on the instrument, and rhythm to further clarify the note reading examples.

Multi-voiced music was also feature of note reading the guitar method books. I included two-voiced texture music toward the end of the course, which is the style of playing most common in classical guitar technique. Notes used in the two-voiced music examples only contained notes in first position.

For the final exam—which was required due to being a university course—I assigned a 32 measure “Etude” by Mauro Guliani. This piece has a two-voiced texture—melody and bass—and is played with the right-hand fingers *p*, *i*, and *m*. Students were given the score in week 12 and assessed in week 16. During each class meeting following week 12, I spent a few minutes discussing the piece with students, as well as hearing them play. I also encouraged them to help each other. More experienced players were encouraged to help less experienced players in the learning of the piece.

Narrative. In the analysis of video data, the initial presentation of note reading was done primarily aurally. Students did not play the guitar until 18:28 into

this class. I observed students following along with the handout I provided and answering questions about note reading. I also noted that most students did not seem interested in note reading, often looking around and at others. This lack of interest was most likely the result of the lengthy discussion on note reading.

Before students could play notated pitches on the guitar I had to explain and define the symbols used in music notation. During this discussion the students that were familiar with music notation quickly answered each question I asked. I felt this placed others at a disadvantage and made them feel out of place in the class. Recognizing this, I began to ask students by name to answer the questions.

The first note-reading lesson presented three notes. I began with open strings to eliminate the fretting hand from the examples. This gave students the opportunity to focus on fewer aspects of note production while reading music. These notes were written in eighth note and quarter note rhythms to simply rhythmic counting. Pitches changed from measure to measure, allowing students to read one pitch for an entire measure.

In Lesson 4, I presented three fretted notes in first position—A, C, and D. These notes, along with pitches from lesson three, comprise the first five notes of a G major scale. On the guitar, these notes fall underneath three fingers on the fretting hand. Students had been playing positional exercises, which aided in their ability to play the notes in these frets without looking at the fretboard. The rhythmic delineations continued at eighth and quarter note combinations.

After the students had performed six note-reading exercises and successfully

completed three worksheets, I presented the natural notes on the first string—E, F, and G. Four music examples of eight measures followed the introduction of these pitches. Lesson six completed notes in first position by presenting the open fifth and sixth strings of the guitar.

Once students had gained a level of mastery with single note playing I presented multi-voiced music consisting of a bass note and melody. At this point in the course, the student population had been reduced to seven. Additionally, these students had also gained a level of mastery with fingerstyle technique, which is necessary in realizing the multi-voiced examples.

Analysis. When I presented melodic playing via notation, students were asked if they knew how to read music. Only Michael and George acknowledged an ability to read music. This was contradictory to the pre-course data. In the pre-course questionnaire 57.15% of the students indicated an ability to read music. However, when presented with the note reading examples the percentage was not accurate. Students believed the ability to read chord symbols were the same as knowing how to read music. For most, music notation meant “something written that let’s you know what to play.”

Once the note reading progressed to melodies of four to eight measures, including natural notes on the first four strings, students seemed to lose interest quickly. I assigned note-reading assignments throughout the course. At the beginning of the course, students were prepared to play the music reading examples; however, as the course progressed students were not as prepared, often

failing to play the music examples.

Music that accompanied note reading was not on the same level of difficulty or satisfaction as the music performed during chording and “peer-learning” moments. Students had to master specific notes and rhythms, including the articulation of notes, before satisfactory melodies could be played via music notation. This seemed to cause those students learning for self-enjoyment to be apathetic in their preparation from class to class.

Shylah: I just don’t get it.

Steven: It takes me so long to figure out what the notes are, and then to find them on the guitar.

Emily: Are these notes ones that we have learned?

Michelle: I think the hardest thing for me is getting the eighth notes, like, two beats and then the eighth notes. Recognizing that... and is not that easy.

Students expressed confusion and difficulty in note reading during lessons three through six. When asked to identify notes that I wrote on the whiteboard, students were successful. Confusion and difficulty appeared when they were asked to play the notated examples on the guitar. Students were not making the connections between identifying notes and the location of those notes on the instrument.

I believed the students with prior experience in band would do well with early note reading. These students did not perform any better than those that had no prior experience in band or choir. I wrote in my field notes that “Amazing Grace”

was the point where most students “threw their hands up” in the class. I chose “Amazing Grace” at this point in the class because three of the six notes (including the octave D) of the melody could be played on open strings, making this an easy melody for a beginner to play. In essence, students were giving up on learning to read music. After this point in the class only seven students remained. Michael and George were the only students that did not seem to struggle with the note reading early in the class.

Rhythmic recognition was more difficult for students to learn. In my examination of note reading in the method books, I noticed an absence of 16th note delineations. When I asked students which was more difficult to learn, notes or rhythms, they all responded “rhythm.” Some of the students that struggled with rhythm identification utilized peer-learning to aid in learning. Asking more skilled students—or seemingly skilled—to provide assistance seemed to bridge the gap better than what I could have done from the front of the classroom. Students were able to explain how to read rhythms in a way a novice player could comprehend.

Note reading in the course concluded with the final exam piece. Steven and Derrick indicated developing note-reading skills as a goal for participating in the study. However, their performance on the final exam revealed they had not met this goal.

Steven: I know I need to learn how to read music, and stuff...but, you know... I guess I just need to do it.

Derrick: It's really hard to read the notes on the guitar...I've never had to do that before and it's...um, hard.

Michael was the only student that played the assigned final exam piece successfully. George and Derrick were unable to play the piece correctly, stopping repeatedly during performance. Derrick told me that he learned the piece more by “ear, from hearing George play,” than from reading the actual notes. The length of the piece and level of difficulty was not an issue as these notes and rhythms were learned by week six. Based on student feedback, the problem seemed to reside in the area of motivation. In hindsight, I believe a popular music selection might have produced a better result from students in regards to note reading. However, due to issues of copyright a musical selection in the public domain was chosen for the final exam piece.

Listening

As popular musicians learn music by copying recordings, the development of listening skills was essential. Listening skills were developed through a series of bass note and chord quality identification exercises. Once students could successfully identify these elements, easy guitar songs were introduced so they could further develop listening skills and learn songs on their own from recordings.

Curriculum. The first few lessons centered on the correct identification of chord quality and bass notes. Students were initially asked to identify bass notes on the guitar. I gave each student 10 recorded bass note examples. They were asked to listen to the note being played and locate that pitch on the sixth string of the guitar. The goal in this listening assignment was to begin the development of bass note

identification, which would assist the students in determining the root of the chord played in more complex recordings.

Identification of major and minor chords was introduced in week two. During the introduction of chord qualities, I used word descriptors for major and minor chords, happy and sad. Students were asked to identify chords I played on the guitar using the happy/sad designation. During the demonstration all students were involved in answering the questions and the results, as visible by a show of hands, were over 90% accurate. I felt confident that the students could continue their training of chord qualities via a recording. I also provided and an accompanying worksheet for students to record their answers. All chords on the recording were played on the guitar in order to establish the sound of the chords to the instrument being learned.

In week three, students were exposed to note identification on the sixth string. I recorded ten examples of a note played on the sixth string. I performed each note four times. My intention in playing these notes on the sixth string was due to the timbre difference in playing the same notes on the fifth and fourth strings, which might have caused some confusion in note identification, and that students could utilize one left-hand finger in the identification. In order to focus the students on locating the sounding pitch on the guitar, I did not include any specific rhythm. Notes were played four times each with one to two seconds of silence between pitches.

Students reportedly felt confident identifying the notes in the first listening

examples. I asked them to record the fret location of the note played. Overall, students successfully completed this exercise with an 85% accuracy rate. Since the students experienced positive results with this assignment, the next listening examples included bass notes on other strings and chord qualities using barre chords.

Next in the progression of chord identification was establishing the ability to hear chord qualities in a chord progression with steady rhythm and strumming pattern. Adding this new dimension did not deter the students with previous training. Those that began the course with no training were confused with the added dimensions and felt lost. For example, Shylah said, "The chords are moving too fast for me to hear them."

Throughout the remainder of the course I assigned listening examples of popular music that utilized chords from keys covered in the course. Music examples centered on keys G and D were the easiest for students to successfully complete. A recording of Jimmy Buffett performing "Another Saturday Night"—originally by Cat Stevens—was the first popular music selection used in the study. I used a YouTube video of the song so the students could have access to the recording outside of class. I chose this song due to the prominence of an acoustic guitar in the recording and the use of chords from the key of G, primarily the I IV and V chords. In addition to the presence of an acoustic guitar in the recording, I also located a video that prominently displayed the guitarist's hands. I believed this would assist students in chord identification.

Similar music examples were also used in the course: "Every Rose has its Thorn" by Poison and "Runaround" by Blues Traveler. Students were able to successfully identify the chords being used in these two examples, both from the key of G. After successful completion of these assignments I assigned a more difficult selection to see if the students were building the listening skills necessary to play music from the record.

A song with a modulation was used in the next step of chord identification. I assigned "Amarillo by Morning" by George Strait. This song begins in the key of D and then modulates to E. All of the chords from the key of D had not been learned at this point in the study. Those from the key of E, however, had been learned. I felt the students should be able to at least identify the chord quality and bass note of the one chord not learned in the music example, $f^{\#}m$ from the key of D. This, however, confused the participants. During the next session of the course I asked participants to identify the $f^{\#}m$ chord. Only the experienced players could successfully identify this chord. The remaining students did not get the correct answer. I then played the selection, asking the students to go through the two steps in chord identification: identify quality first and bass note second. As a class, we went through these steps and students were able to figure out the chord.

The final expression of chord identification and listening was in the last assignment. For the final exam I asked the students to choose a song and learn it from the recording. It was my hope that students had acquired the appropriate listening skills to be able to learn the chord progression successfully. I asked each student to

tell me the name and artist of their song choice. I wanted to make sure the students did not choose a song that would be too difficult for their current playing level. With the exception of George and Derrick, all of the students chose songs that were simplistic in harmony and within their current playing level. Derrick chose a song by the Beatles, "Blackbird", and George chose a song by City and Colour, "What Makes a Man". Both George and Derrick were experienced players and the chord difficulty in these songs did not pose a problem for either one.

Narrative. Derrick did not learn the song "Blackbird" while listening to the song. Most students learned the chords while listening to their iPods. Instead, Derrick said he played a chord that sounded like the beginning of "Blackbird". He then proceeded to figure out the rest of the chords from his aural memory. Throughout the course Derrick demonstrated advanced development of listening skills. Having observed Derrick in the class sessions I have no reason to believe he knew how to play the song prior to this assignment. Derrick worked out each chord on the guitar, playing a note that was incorrect and then fixing the wrong note. I asked him on several occasions how he learned to play by ear and he said succinctly, "by listening." It was out of the scope of this study to probe further into Derrick's development of listening skills; however, he displayed a high level of listening awareness and musical sensibility.

George learned his song by listening repeatedly to his iPod. He said the chords being played were not hard, meaning the basic harmony. For him, the challenge in learning the song was in the nuances he wanted to replicate in

performance. The song "What Makes a Man" is performed with voice and acoustic guitar. Moving lines and half-strummed chords are present throughout the song. George worked hard to replicate these features for the final exam. His performance was an exact replication of the guitar part from the recording. I had become familiar with the song after George told me it was his final exam choice. His ability to pick up on the strumming nuances in the recording was quite astounding for a player at his level. He said, "I was listening for how he was doing the pull-offs and stuff. He played the same chords over and over, so that wasn't hard."

The remaining students also completed the assignment successfully. As mentioned, song choices of the remaining students were based around keys covered in the course. All students chose songs without regard for key or playability on the instrument. They selected songs they liked. With the exception of Lee, all students selected songs they did not know how to play. Lee said, "I just really like that song... You, know...it's just a good tune."

Students were asked to learn the chords and melody of their song and teach one aspect to another student in the class. They could choose to teach the chords or melody to a peer. Most students chose to play the more challenging part of their song. Michelle was the only one that did not. She chose a song that Lee, her partner in this assignment, knew. When performing the song for the class Michelle was unable to replicate the melody, playing only the hook of the song. Michelle told me that she procrastinated in doing the assignment. "I just couldn't figure it out, so, I just... you know... Lee helped me to figure out the song."

Michael and Steven were paired together for the final assignment. Michael chose "Redemption Song" by Bob Marley. Michael chose to play the melody because it was more challenging than the chords. Because the song is in the key of G and contained a simple strumming pattern, he felt it was nicer to give Steven the chords. Michael did not play the melody exactly like the recording. "I wanted to make the melody my own, you know." Steven's song was Lady Gaga's "Bad Romance." Steven chose to play the melody and hook of the song. He played the hook on the sixth string, moving up and down the fretboard. Steven and Michael played both songs successfully and had also worked out song endings.

By the end of the course less experienced students did increase in their ability to learn music by listening to a recording. The intention for this portion of the curriculum was to increase the student's ability to hear chord qualities and identification of bass notes.

Analysis. Based on information revealed in the interview and what I observed, Steven's ability to learn music by ear became clearer. Steven played piano and bass without taking lesson or knowing how to read. His piano skills were developed to the point he could accompany a gospel style church service. He developed his ability to replicate what he heard due to learning music in that manner. Steven said his teacher "just showed me where to put my fingers and stuff, and I... just tried to do what he was doing." After the initial learning of instrumental technique, he began to try and replicate what he heard, not what he was reading. His ability to play by ear was forged through years of learning music solely by ear.

Derrick also possessed highly developed listening skills. Derrick learned to play the guitar, he stated, "by listening to music....I didn't learn from videos or books or anything, just by listening to what they were doing." Like Steven, learning how to play music by ear benefitted him in this portion of the course. He was able to figure out a complex guitar part for the final exam. I observed Derrick working out this riff from what he heard, or remembered, about the Beatles song. He would play the chord and adjust the finger that was on the wrong pitch. After doing this a few times for each of the chords, he played the progression trying to add the appropriate right-hand fingerpicking pattern.

Both Steven and Derrick's ability to hear was influential in the student's development of listening skills. Michelle said, "Steven blew me away with the listening thing. I was amazed he could do stuff like that." Michelle told me that she learned a lot by observing Steven pick up music from a recording.

Creativity

Creativity is an important concept in popular music pedagogy, as popular musicians often create versions of cover tunes rather than playing verbatim (Green, 2002). With this in mind, the guitar course was developed to maximize musical creativity utilizing playing skills students were developing.

Curriculum. Students were given technical exercises in order to develop guitar-playing skills. I purposefully selected scales and right-hand techniques that would provide tools for creativity. Scales on the guitar can be thought of and taught

as a series of patterns, which allows a guitarist to play scales in all 12 keys without having theoretical knowledge or note reading ability on the instrument. Right-hand techniques were presented so that students would have foundational techniques to use in melodic and chordal playing.

After students learned a major scale pattern I asked them to start creating melodies. Through demonstration and explanation students gained an understanding of how melodies are composed using scales. Students were encouraged to play the scale as an exercise and then to spend time "messing up the order" of the scale, in essence creating melodies and improvising.

Narrative. Initially, most students did not feel comfortable creating melodies. A sense of "fear" or "playing something that's not right," as two students shared, seemed to be the universal consensus of the group. Through consistent encouragement, explanation, and devoting class time to this concept, most students began to open up and create after a few weeks. The melodies they composed were simplistic rhythmically and often revolved around two or three notes.

To help students in melody creation, I gave them brief assignments with instructions to guide them. Creating melodies was a concept most stated they had never done. For example, students were instructed to create a melody using a G major scale, based on the major scale pattern learning in week two. Melody length, rhythm, and pitch choice were the decision of each student. I encouraged each student to focus only on the sound of the notes, not rhythm, and record these pitches using the guitar numbering system used throughout the course.

As students gained more experience in melodic composing, I began to implement harmonic creativity by incorporating chords the students were learning. Since chords were learned in key relationships, the students were able to take a set of chords and arrange them in any order, which resulted in a workable chord progression.

I took the class through the process I wanted the students to use at home. I asked them to identify all of the chords from the key of G they had learned. After writing the chords on the whiteboard, I invited the students to select a chord and the number of beats and rhythm it would be played. At this point in the study the students had a basic understanding of rhythmic notation. I arranged the chords into measures once the exercise was complete.

Scale patterns were also used in improvisation. I explained the process of improvisation is similar to mixing up the pattern of a major scale in the creation of melodies. Initially, students were reluctant to create via improvisation. The beginners were encouraged to play notes only on the first three strings, minimizing the number of notes and finger placements they would have to remember. Most improvisations sounded like three to five notes of a major scale, descending and ascending and then repeating. Michael stated, "Wow... that's awesome. I can see how this could help soloing."

Students were taken through the improvisation process for three consecutive lessons. During this time the minor pentatonic scale was introduced and used as another element in improvisation. Once students understood how to use the scale in

a major key, most favored the pentatonic scale over the major scale. When asked why, Michael responded it sounded more “bluesy.”

Analysis. Beginning guitar students were hesitant in sharing their creative endeavors with the group. Shylah explained, “I don’t want to play my melody ‘cause it’s not any good.” Some students believed that playing anything that was not considered good would result in mocking from the other students. The students were unable to articulate what made something musically good.

In the class meetings that followed the initial melody creation exercise, I encouraged students to play their melodies for the group. Michael was the only student to play his melody. His melody was scalar, lacking leaps, and brief. Other students were encouraging to Michael commenting on the quality of the melody. Since no other student wanted to play, I demonstrated a melody I had created using the same process. I deliberately chose to play a simple melody as to not discourage the students through performing a challenging melody.

I encouraged students continuously after the first melody creation exercise. After a few weeks students were more comfortable in sharing their creations. Additionally, the class size had become smaller due to students dropping the course. The smaller size of the group helped students become less vulnerable, as they were more willing to share their music.

In the lesson where chords were included in melodic creation, I asked students to participate in a class demonstration of the assignment. After all students weighed in on the selection of chords, I had the group play through the progression

using a simple quarter note strumming pattern. Once complete, students voiced their disdain for the placement of some of the chords in the progression. Based on their prior knowledge of music and understanding of the harmonic formulas of popular music, some chords were placed incorrectly. Steven voiced his opinion about the piece ending on the iii chord, “that’s not right.” After a brief moment of discussion, I asked them what they would change. The decision was unanimous, the final chord. Participants played around with the progression and eventually chose to end the example on the tonic chord.

As the course progressed, I presented fewer opportunities for melody creation and improvisation. However, in the final exam, most of the students displayed elements of creativity in playing the cover tunes, adding their own embellishments to the melodies and chord rhythms. Michael embellished the melody of “Redemption Song”. He explained that he was trying to put in moments of creativity, “not that Bob Marley wasn’t creative, or anything. I just wanted to do some of my own stuff.” This type of creativity is similar to what Green (2002) describes in her study of popular musicians, using the original tune as a guide for creativity.

Through the reluctance stage to full participation in the creation process, students demonstrated growth in creativity. Utilizing the scale patterns and chords based in keys did produce a successful result and positive feedback from the participants in the post-study interview.

Chord Playing

Chord playing was a salient feature of guitar methods and emerged as a category in the case study data analysis. In the creation of the guitar curriculum I deliberately placed key relationships at the center of chord instruction and playing. Shearer's (1990) text on classical guitar served as a guide for how best to accomplish this. Note reading was based around specific keys. With this in mind, I presented chords in key relationships in the study.

Curriculum. During the second lesson I explained chord diagrams and demonstrated how to form a G chord. I also demonstrated a C chord, which is the IV in the key of G. The C chord used in these examples was actually a C2, which included the D on the second string. By using a C2 instead of a standard C chord I was able to maintain the same shape as the G, which simplified the chord transition process.

Students were able to change between the G and C chord with little difficulty. In the formation of these chords the traditionally weaker fingers on the left-hand, the third and fourth fingers, are stationary. Stronger fingers are moving to adjacent strings. After a few times practicing the transition participants were able to switch between the chords with ease.

Lesson three included a new chord, D, and three basic strumming patterns. Strumming patterns were based on simple divisions of the beat. First, students were shown how to hold a pick and execute a down-stroke strum. In the method books I examined, a detailed explanation of right-hand movement in a strum was omitted. I

included this in the study to ensure participant success. After students executed a simple quarter note pattern, I introduced eighth note rhythms.

The next key to be used in chord playing was E. I utilized a common chord shape, which allowed students to play these four chords in a brief period of time. Chord sonorities produced by this chord shape were E5, c#m7, Bsus, and A2.

The last key used in chord playing in the study was the key of C. Only two additional chords were introduced in this lesson—F and Dm. C major was used most in accompanying melodic playing during the later part of the course. Students had learned all of the natural notes in first position by the time chords from the key of C were introduced. This allowed me to construct the curriculum so that note reading and chord playing could be combined.

George introduced the rock element in chord playing in the curriculum, power chords. During lesson 12, George explained and demonstrated how to play the power chord on the guitar. This chord shape is the same for any chord. Therefore, George used a popular guitar riff to assist students in learning how to play power chords, “Smoke on the Water”. The opening riff to “Smoke on the Water” is originally played in fourths. George was using the basic progression as a way of teaching someone power chords. The riff is memorable and he was able to call out the lowest fret number of each power chord, simplifying his instructions.

Narrative. During the second lesson I introduced two chords—G and C2. These chords shapes are similar and students can switch between the chords easily once the initial shape is formed. Students did not express any difficulty in making

the chord shape or moving from one to the other. While there were some muted notes, overall the students were successful in sounding the notes of the chords.

Difficulty arose in the third lesson where an additional chord and strumming patterns were introduced. The addition of the D chord forced students to learn a new chord shape on the guitar. When playing the G and C2, students are able to keep two fingers in the same location on the fretboard. The introduction of the D chord forces the student to move all but one of the fretting-hand fingers.

The first strumming pattern introduced was a simple down-stroke motion. Students did not have difficulty in executing the down-stroke, quarter note strumming pattern. The addition of eighth notes to the strumming pattern, forcing an up-stroke, did cause problems for the students. Adding an up-stroke to the quarter note pattern divided the beat into two parts, providing moments of confusion and frustration for the students. The second strumming pattern was one quarter note followed by two eighth notes. William would often lose the down-up combination on the second and fourth beats, using two down strokes. Sensing that many students were experiencing this confusion I had them play on muted strings, minimizing the number of elements they needed to concentrate on. Simplifying the strumming pattern profoundly improved participant success. Each student was able to successfully maintain the strumming pattern with a slow, steady tempo. When the chord was added, students reverted back to confusion.

After a series of muted string exercises students were experiencing more success when adding the chord shapes. More experienced players were able to

execute the strumming pattern with chords immediately, while beginning guitarists needed more time. William told me he was confused with the strumming patterns. "I'm not sure when I'm supposed to play the down stroke and the upstroke."

The next key to be used in chord playing was E. Students worked through the chords three times as a group and then on their own for a few minutes. William was struggling with the movement from E5 to c#m7. His fingers could not maintain the chord shape. Lee began teaching William where to put his fingers as well as how to shift down the guitar neck. I did not ask Lee to help William. Lee and William were friends and this seemed to be one friend helping another.

Analysis. As the number of students declined from 14 to 6, my ability to move into barre technique and introduce moveable chord shapes increased. A smaller class size allowed for more individual time and closer group interaction. Students could see the other members of the class better due to the circle configuration being closer together and were closer in playing ability.

Four of the remaining six students had a motivation to use their guitar playing in church worship activities. Therefore, chord playing was one technical aspect in which the students excelled. Since all of the students had to attend a mandatory chapel service I chose songs that had been used in that setting to practice chord playing. Familiarity and interest in these songs contributed to the students excelling during this portion of the study. Lee said, "I really like how we can use these chords in those songs. I can sing them in my dorm."

Integration of Formal and Informal Learning

A teacher-centered approach in the course was not explicitly stated in the curriculum. Aspects of formal learning were evident in the study due to the nature of skill acquisition as it related to the pedagogy. Because the course was limited to 16 weeks, the students needed to be exposed to formal aspects of skill acquisition. This exposure provided the technical foundation from which informal methods could be successfully utilized.

Curriculum. Informal learning in this class was expressed in the participants' ability to learn through peer instruction, playing and jamming with others, learning via video, democratization of lesson material, and musical choice. With the course occurring at a university where students consistently experience a top-down approach to teaching, having the students embrace a bottom-up approach would be challenging. Also, the formality of a class setting was also challenging in establishing an environment for informal learning to occur.

Skill acquisition emerged as an important feature in the formal aspects of the pedagogy. Technical skills were presented in the very first lesson when left-hand position was demonstrated and explained. Without the ability and knowledge to sound a note on the instrument, students would not be able to teach each other or learn music from the recording in a timely fashion.

Left-hand technique was presented at the beginning of the course. This insured the students would know how to sound a note on the guitar. I deliberately avoided the constant correction of hand positions. Instead, I allowed students to

“feel” their way into a position that was comfortable. After this initial introduction, left-hand technique was only addressed if it was necessary to execute a musical idea, such as barre chords.

Narrative. Greg, a left-handed guitarist, presented some challenges in the presentation of technique. As observed in the analysis of the guitar methods, material is presented with a right-handed bias. Diagrams and explanations are for right-handed individuals. I attempted to control this bias as much as possible and referred to the hands as the articulation hand and fretting hand. Greg did not seem to mind the bias, "I've had to deal with it all my life," he stated. As evidenced in the analysis of the data it did not hinder his progress. Greg did not, however, complete the course, withdrawing in week nine.

Right-hand technique was presented with more consistency in the course. Students were shown plectrum technique, strumming technique and single-line playing, and basic fingerstyle guitar playing. Detailed explanation was provided for each technique as well as images. Musical examples were created to reinforce newly learned techniques. This gave students an opportunity to practice the technique in a musical setting.

With each new right-hand technique, most of the students struggled to properly execute the concept. More advanced players initially tried to hold their pick like I was demonstrating but later returned to their old way of playing. Single-note picking technique was the most difficult technique for the beginner guitarist to learn.

Rachel never used a pick to play scales or single lines. Accuracy increased for her when she played with her thumb. She stated, "It was easier to feel where the strings are" when playing with the thumb. Remaining students varied in their level of success in executing right hand plectrum technique.

When students were led through note reading and chord playing a systematic approach to music instruction was used. Students expected this instructional approach. Throughout the course, and confirmed via video analysis, no student questioned the progression of information. Instead students responded well to direct top-down instruction.

Classroom setup changed throughout the course. When formal methodology was used to present the material the classroom was setup in a semi-circle with the instructor at the head of the class. For the majority of the course I chose to sit to minimize the teacher dominant role of a traditional lecture based course. When the course utilized informal methodology the classroom reflected this approach in that chairs were not organized into any geometric shape. Instead, the setup took the shape of the different elements students were working on.

I dictated music selection for some of the class. Music was selected based on the connection to guitar elements being learned at that point in the course. For example, music selections were picked based on what chords were and were not learned and present in the music selection. I attempted to select songs that I felt had an appeal to the students that were also popular guitar songs. I also gave the students a choice by providing multiple musical options. The students embraced the

music examples used throughout the study.

Analysis. During video analysis I noticed that the students seemed more comfortable with formal instruction than informal. This is most likely due to the environment in which the study took place. Students were generally uneasy with the informal aspects of the course.

Peer learning emerged as one expression of informal learning in the study. For the final exam I asked each student to select a song, learn the chords and the melody, and then teach another student. Students expressed enjoyment in teaching each other how to play something on the guitar. This "show me what you are doing" concept allowed the students to utilize their knowledge. All students chose a song they were familiar with, which increased their understanding of the song's feel, melodic contours, and harmonic formulas.

Early in the course I asked two advanced students to teach the group a song or technique. Lee asked, "What do you want me to teach? I'm not sure I can do that." After visiting with him for a few moments he agreed and decided to teach the class a worship tune. Lee was confident in his ability to strum chords and he selected a song he knew well. Lee used a mixture of musical terminology he felt he should know—for example, time signature—and terminology he had "picked up from other people who played guitar." Chords he demonstrated to the class were conventional open chords. He informed the group to leave the "little finger on the third fret" for the duration of the tune, "I kind of like the way it sounds", he said. This addition actually made it easier for other students to change chords. He did not explain how

he was strumming the guitar. Through observing and listening to Lee's playing all of the students copied his strumming pattern.

I had planned to introduce power chords in lesson 12. Knowing George had experience playing power chords I asked him to teach this aspect of the lesson. I did not provide George any instructions as to how you teach power chords. Instead, I wanted to observe how he would communicate the ideas to the group. George was not as empathetic with the group as Lee was. He seemed to be put out that he was showing them something so basic. A quick explanation of where to put the left-hand fingers and which strings to pick, George quickly ended the demonstration with "that's it." Part of the brevity was due to my lack of instruction to George about what I would like him to teach. However, I wanted to see if he would be able to teach the concept of power chords and then demonstrate a song to use them in. I asked George to teach a guitar riff using power chords and he taught the group "Smoke on the Water". Once George completed his portion of the lesson I took what he had explained to the group and demonstrated how you can use power chords in place of open chords to give something more of a "rock" sound. We then played "Amazing Grace" in a "Green Day style," as Derrick explained.

Differences in motivation, I feel, were responsible for the alterations in peer learning. Lee was taking the course for himself and to be able to use the instrument better in church services. George's motivation was to become a "professional" and he was serious about the information he was learning. George might have felt like time was being wasted teaching other guitarists who were not as serious.

Throughout the course I asked students to pair up and show each other what they were doing. In pairing students I made sure at least one member of the group could play the example. This concept was helpful during technical explanations. William did not grasp technical concepts as fast as the remaining students. He had a visual handicap that made looking at the left and right hands challenging. Lee would turn toward William, even while I was teaching, and provide assistance in these exercises.

In the explanation of the major scale pattern William was having a difficult time following along. In the analysis of the video, I observed Lee showing William how to play the finger pattern of the major scale. Lee provided some verbal explanation by stating where fingers needed to be placed. Lee relied mostly on demonstrations and physically moving William's fingers to the correct position on the guitar.

Toward the end of the semester students spent four class sessions working on their songs for the final exam. In this context I was able to see how they were teaching each other. Michael and Steven were paired together for the final exam. I observed them listening to the song repeatedly before attempting to play it. Michael had learned the chords to the song but had not learned the opening guitar line, a simple melodic line before the chords were strummed. As I watched the two interact with the recording, Steven began to figure out the open melodic idea and show it to Michael. Steven's ability to hear the direction of a melodic line and locate those notes on the instrument helped him learn and teach Michael.

Derrick and George were paired together in the final exam. Peer learning in this context was not as explicit as in the case of Michael and Steven or Lee and Michelle. Derrick and George listened to George's song selections before practicing. In George's song, he chose to play the accompanying part, due to its nuances. He believed this part was more challenging than the melody. Derrick had heard the song many times and did not need George's assistance in learning the part. Likewise, George was familiar with "Blackbird" and listened to it before each practice time. As a result he did not need as much help from Derrick in learning the melody. In this context peer learning expressed itself in issues of musical style, appropriateness, and rhythmic feel. George would express to Derrick that the feel of the melody was not right and then proceed to demonstrate it. Derrick commented to George about keeping the melody at a certain part of the fretboard and the use of vibrato, though he called it "bending," which is raising a pitch by pushing the string across the fretboard.

Lee was the primary teacher in the peer-learning concept with Michelle. Lee enjoyed singing and when he showed Michelle the chords to his song he started singing. His singing improved Michelle's timing in playing the chords. Michelle had heard Lee's song before. He did not write anything down for Michelle. When the structure of the song would change from verse to chorus Michelle would often miss the chord changes. This was remedied through repetition.

I did not observe Michelle teaching Lee how to play her song. I asked them at the conclusion of the final exam if they had practiced outside of class. Both said they

spent “a couple of hours before the exam working on her tune.” Apparently, Michelle could not pick out the melody or chords to the song she chose. She ended up playing another song that they knew from chapel services. She was only able to play the hook of the song, and not even in its entirety. Based on the responses I received to my questioning, Lee gave the impression that he knew the song and taught Michelle. This was not the goal of the assignment but does demonstrate the concern for others that Lee expressed throughout the study. He did not want any participant to do poorly.

Playing with others was also an aspect of informal learning. In the first lesson students were shown how to play "Amazing Grace." Because the first chords presented were from the key of G, this melody allowed students to accompany one another in performing the song.

The six remaining students experienced more opportunities to play together. Due to having a greater proficiency on the instrument I would often ask them to pair up and take turns improvising. George and Derrick paired up consistently throughout the course. Both students had similar tastes in music and were closer in playing level. George and Derrick played licks and riffs they knew when improvising. George played blues guitar fairly well. Improvising over the chord progression Derrick played, George utilized licks that were bluesy and not based around the scales learned in the course. Derrick's improvisation was jazzier in sound. Derrick's musical background included playing bass guitar in a funk-based church band and the high school music program. Like George, he did not utilize the scales learned in

the course. Their interaction was more refined than the other participants. They were able to maintain a steady tempo and react to each other while playing.

Video instruction was an element of informal learning. Due to a number of students indicating they learned by watching video, I felt it necessary to include this component. Students responded well to the video instruction. Each video was positioned at a point in the study where techniques needed to execute the idea were finally established. Student responses about the videos were positive. Michelle stated, "I like being able to watch them over and over again... I can see what you're doing."

Learning from videos provided an additional informal learning element. Students could skip elements they did not want to learn or already knew as well as repeat the instruction. In the videos I made I tried to present the information as a fellow learner. I incorporated some of the peer-to-peer learning elements observed in Lee and George's teaching in the study. I did not give any formal instructions about how to play the concept. Instead, I showed the students how to play the concept.

As the course progressed, I consistently asked students to be more involved in selecting material. Each class session began with a warm-up. I asked students to tell me the scale and key they wanted to play. This simple act of democracy opened up other avenues for student interaction. Primarily, student input increased in the musical styles they wanted to learn. Each student was vocal about what type of music they wanted to play and what material they would like to cover in the course.

Therefore, as the course progressed I began to find ways to incorporate chords and scales into songs of their choosing. This resulted in increased excitement in regards to material being presented.

This democratization did have a negative consequence. When student enrollment reached the final number of six they began to express their disdain for note reading. They wanted to work on other musical ideas. I began to feel that Steven and Derrick were no longer interested in learning how to read music. They felt most comfortable playing by ear, not music notation.

Students also began to express at the start of each lesson what they wanted to cover that day. When these requests were made I adapted the curriculum to incorporate some of their wishes. For example, in Lesson 20, I planned to go back and explain how the scale pattern was movable and could be used to play in all 12 keys. Once a melody is learned using the scale pattern you could move the melody to another place on the guitar neck, changing the key you are playing in. One of the students presented the idea of learning a rock song. I quickly made an adjustment, changing this theoretical concept—modulation—and incorporated the student's request. I used the melody of the song as the impetus for the lesson on using the scale pattern to play in multiple keys. Students responded favorably to this change in instruction.

Conclusion

The curriculum was implemented in a beginner's guitar class over a 16-week university semester. Data gathering began two days prior to the start of the guitar class. I gathered data using semi-structured interviews, questionnaires, video recordings, and field notes. This data was analyzed to reveal the emerging themes of the study.

During the beginner's guitar class, students were taught using a curriculum developed from my analysis of formal and informal music learning methodologies. The features discovered in both areas of music learning served as the basis for curriculum layout and progression of the course.

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION

The primary purpose of the current study was to examine the integration of formal and informal music learning in a university guitar class. A secondary purpose was to evaluate the integration of formal and informal music learning in guitar pedagogy by examining student reception of the integrated curriculum. This study addressed the following research questions:

1. How can informal and formal music learning be incorporated into a university guitar class?
2. How will students respond to formal and informal music learning elements in a formal setting?
3. How would an integrated guitar class meet student goals for the course and life-long music making?
4. What does the collected data state about the effectiveness of an integrated approach in music learning?
5. How do participants respond to an integrated guitar curriculum including informal and formal music learning elements?

The case study was an examination of a university guitar class that integrated informal and formal music learning. This was accomplished through the implementation of the 16-week guitar curriculum in a beginner's guitar class the included both music learning elements. The case study took place over a fall semester at a parochial university in Texas. Initially, the study began with 14

participants from each student classification—freshman to senior—and beginner to immediate guitar playing levels. Over the course of the semester the number of participants was reduced to six. Participants withdrew from the course beginning in week two with the final number being reached in week nine. The reason participants withdrew from the study was due to the pace of the course and not enough time to practice the material.

Salient features of formal guitar methods were utilized in the creation of a curriculum for a 16-week guitar class for beginners along with categories from informal music learning and popular music pedagogy. Two formal salient features were used to determine the end goal for the class: note reading and scale playing. In each of the guitar methods natural notes in first position were covered. Additionally, the major scale and pentatonic scales were also discovered in each of the text. I used both of these concepts—note reading and scale playing—as the end goals of the guitar class.

Informally, I based the curriculum on two features of informal learning and popular music pedagogy—learning via recordings and peer learning. Listening became a prominent feature in the guitar class. I structured listening into two main components: bass note identification and chord quality (Johansson, 2002). Peer learning was a feature that was also important in the case study and used in the final exam assessment. While formal assessment is not an element of informal music learning, I had to include this element due to the case study implementation over a university semester and in a university sanctioned course.

Findings

This section presents the findings of the current study pertaining to my research questions. Each research question will be presented and answered in the following section.

Integrating Informal and Formal Music Learning

I initially thought that the implementation of the curriculum would result in students having a well-rounded music learning experience. The guitar course at the university is taught in a manner consistent with a class piano—learning how to read music and play with proper technique. I also believed that students would receive the “best of both worlds” of instruction by learning technical skills that could be incorporated in informal and formal music settings. Technical skill acquisition allowed the students to easily execute musical ideas sooner than if left to their own in developing guitar skills and techniques. Listening exercises allowed the students to develop skills that assisted in bass note identification and chord qualities. Through listening exercises, students were also developing skills that are essential in popular music pedagogy, but learning them in a formal environment in a systematized way. Developing an awareness and understanding of what to listen for in music allowed participants to more accurately replicate music from their socio-musical contexts.

Theoretically, incorporating formal and informal music learning into an integrated curriculum was easy. Salient features from each style of learning fit well

together in the creation of a guitar curriculum. However, as theory is seldom forthright in application, a breakdown occurred in the guitar class due to a variance in student playing ability. Students entering the class with an intermediate playing ability were further along in the area of skill acquisition and in informally learned musical elements, such as listening to and copying recordings. Furthermore, students' lack of practice during the study and prior experience with music instruction and performance made implementation challenging. Those that practiced consistently were better prepared to participate in both the formal and informal elements of the course.

I structured the integrated course similarly to the guitar methods I examined. The course progressed from basic playing technique to note reading to chord playing. Students were also shown guitar techniques as they became necessary to perform the musical concepts being taught, which is an element of systematized learning. Early in the guitar class informal features were also systematized or programmed. As previously stated, structuring informal elements moves them from informal to formal. The nature of informal learning was utilized in the case study as the elements were implemented in a formal setting. Informal features were introduced at moments in the class where they could be synchronous with the guitar technique or musical idea covered in the lesson. Toward the later part of the guitar course formal features diminished in importance and informal features became more prominent in the class meetings. Class meetings were directed by the teacher but focused on peer learning, copying recordings, and playing together. The

course was structured so students could gain the necessary skills—formal and informal—to execute the musical ideas and concepts in the later part of the course.

Participants in the study were more receptive of the formal music learning than informal. I believe students enrolled in the course had preconceived ideas of what a guitar class at a university would entail. Additionally, because the study was implemented during a university semester and utilizing assessment points similar to other university classes, students may have been expecting more formality in the delivery of content. This was the opposite of my initial impressions. Since most of the participants had prior guitar playing experience I believed they would be more receptive of the informal elements in the course. This was not the case. While this class had democratized elements the students were hesitant to embrace them. Instead, they waited on me to direct and instruct them.

Procedures of Informal and Formal Music Learning

Delivering the integrated curriculum was challenging. I often had to remind myself not to teach in the manner in which I was comfortable. When students struggled with a concept or were stuck in identifying a chord from a recording, I wanted to jump in and provide instruction. Instead, I waited for students to ask for help. When I was asked I told the students to seek help from one of the more experienced guitarists. I wanted to help the students grow in their level of comfort with the democratized elements in the course.

Each class meeting began with a technical exercise and warm-up. Initially, I

conducted each of these warm-up sessions. As students gained proficiency on the guitar and became more comfortable with the environment I invited them to take the lead in selecting exercises and leading the discussion on technique.

After the technique and warm-up concluded, note reading and chord playing were addressed. These moments in the guitar class lasted from 10 to 20 minutes. Students were taught early on how to read music notation and chord symbols. Each introduction of a concept ended with the performance of a brief musical example. I concluded each note reading and chord playing section with an assignment the student was to have ready for the next lesson.

Informal elements were placed last in the guitar class. I placed the informal features at the end of the class so students could develop the necessary technical skills and musical nomenclature. For example, when I introduced chord playing in lesson two I ended the class meeting with bass note recognition. During the third class meeting I again taught chord playing and ended this session with another listening concept, chord quality. Early in the curriculum the informal features were tied to the formal feature being taught. As students acquired the skills and musical expertise on the guitar formal elements became less important in the instruction. Instead, my role as the instructor moved to that of a facilitator.

Meeting Goals and Objectives

The guitar class met stated course objectives and student goals for the course through the development and delivery of the curriculum. Each element of the guitar

class was constructed to meet course objectives that were consistent with the salient features discovered in the formal guitar methods. These objectives were: the ability to read natural notes in first position; ability to play chords from the keys of G, C, and D; ability to play major scale and pentatonic scale patterns; ability to use proper fingerstyle, plectrum, and fretting hand techniques. In retrospect, I would have simplified the note reading elements to natural notes on strings 1-3, with eighth-note delineations.

Through a systematized approach to music instruction these objectives were met. For example, the first lesson established proper fretting hand technique through a simple four-note exercise. This lesson taught the principles of positional playing, fretting hand position, and sounding a note on the guitar. Following lessons expanded this concept to include positional scale playing and scale playing with fingerstyle and plectrum techniques.

Student's stated goals for the course were not available to me when I created the integrated guitar curriculum. The goals students stated during the pre-course interview were met through some of the formal elements of the course, but mostly met through the informal ones. The major goal students had for the taking the course was to be able to play with others in popular music settings, such as church bands. This goal required the students to develop an instrumental proficiency, an ability to decipher music and guitar notation, the ability to learn from a recording, creativity, and collaborative learning. Each class meeting was structured to meet

both goals in every lesson. Lessons began with skill acquisition, formal elements, and closed with informal elements.

Curriculum Effectiveness

With the exception of learning to read music, the curriculum was effective in meeting the goals of the participants that finished the course. The end goals participants expressed were; ability to play chords, enhanced technical ability, knowledge of scales, and playing in a band for organized church functions. Each participant addressed his or her goals in the post-course interview. Lee wanted to grow in his understanding of scales, soloing, and extended chording. He told me in the post-course interview, "I kind of feel like I know what I'm doing. Before the class I couldn't figure out what key I was in, you know, and what scale I'm playing." The progression of material in the curriculum was also beneficial in participants reaching their goals. Michelle said, "I felt like the class went slow enough for me to get it. I had time to work on the songs and learn how to play the chords."

George had loftier goals than the remaining five participants. He wanted to be a professional guitarist and expressed an end goal of expanding his technical ability. George believed his technique had improved "considerably" and his understanding of scales did as well.

According to my field notes written at the conclusion of the course, I believed the curriculum was ineffective in the area of note reading. Participants were exposed to note reading in first position on the guitar during the course. The

curriculum, I believed, was structured in a way that note reading proficiency in first position should be attained by the 10th or 11th week of the semester. Instead, students struggled with reading notes in first position through week 16, as expressed in their performances on the final exam. The objectives I had related to note reading were higher than what the students could successfully accomplish in a 16-week beginner's guitar class. Note reading should have been developed gradually during the course, culminating with melodic playing in first position and not polyphonic music realization. In past courses I have taught, all natural notes in first position were taught. However, the difference in previous courses was that I was not concerned with incorporating informal elements such as listening and peer-learning.

Participants withdrawing from the course provided another view into the effectiveness of the curriculum. The two primary reasons these participants gave for withdrawing from the course were not enough time to practice and pace of the course. The first reason was not due to the curriculum and course instruction, the second, however, is. Elements in the class were structured so as to maximize the time the students were in the course. I wanted the participants to be at a specific level at the end of the course, which is expected in formal learning environments. I did not fully prepare for, nor anticipate, how students responded individually to the instruction. Each participant entered the class at different levels of guitar playing ability, musical ability as expressed in prior music instruction, and overall musical

understanding. The curriculum did not take into account these variations in student preparation for the class.

Informal Learning in School Contexts

In the analysis phase of the study I began to see how difficult it was for the students to move seamlessly between formal and informal learning methods. Early in the study students were reluctant to teach and learn from each other or to be involved in the decision-making process. They were in the classroom for only one hour a day. The remaining courses they were experiencing at the university were more formal in nature. At the midpoint of the course students began to embrace the transition between the two differing styles of learning. As previously mentioned, neither purely formal nor complete informal learning exist (Davis, 2013; Folkstad, 2006); therefore, the deliberate focus on both learning styles and the presentation of these learning styles in this class made it challenging for participants to embrace initially.

Another point of concern was the high number of students withdrawing from the course. The students that withdrew expressed personal enjoyment as their motivation for learning the guitar. It is plausible that these students would have endured in the course had the learning focus been more informal, eliminating note reading and classical technique. Discovering this forced me to question the approach taken in curriculum delivery. A class comprising students with a singular motivation could have resulted in more of them finishing the course. Additionally,

this could have also altered the curriculum and course objectives. Due to this study's examining the integration of formal and informal music learning, I did not consider altering the curriculum and content delivery during the study.

The remaining students stated they had put into practice elements studied in the course. The effectiveness of the integrated curriculum in preparing students for music making in broader contexts was another element that emerged in the analysis. Lee stated, "I have shown the guitar player at church that major scale thing. He was blown away by it... it was pretty cool." All of the remaining students stated they had played with other individuals during the course of the study. Most expressed playing with vocalists only.

Listening was the greatest surprise in the analysis of data. I began to notice certain patterns in the listening abilities of Derrick and Steven. As I examined the data I noticed that prior informal music instruction was the reason for their highly developed listening abilities. George had been playing the guitar for five years prior to the study, all without a teacher, but acquired his guitar skill by watching other players and magazines. Steven's learning of music solely by ear contributed to his highly developed listening skills. Derrick's listening skills were advanced by his "figuring out what the chord sounded like" on the guitar. He learned to play jazz chords by playing one note and then playing other notes around it until he heard the correct sounding chord. These students developed skills through informal means, though they sought to learn music formally. I believe this reinforces the view that

some genres and ways of learning music are deemed as correct or appropriate over others.

Finnegan and Green in America

Both Finnegan (1989) and Green (2002) conducted their studies in England. If these studies were conducted in America I believe the outcomes would be the same. Popular musical genres are similar in England and America. In rock-n-roll there is equal borrowing from the American and English traditions. For example, blues music being a foundational element to *The Rolling Stones* music. Folk music traditions are different between the two countries. England has a well-established folk music tradition, and a tradition with a longer history. In America, folk music is not as highly celebrated. Additionally, folk music in America has greater diversification due to the population and size of the country.

Although there are differences in sound and tradition the way folk and popular musicians learn music is similar. Folk music traditions and sounds cannot be transmitted through written notation or text. Instead, they are learned as musicians participate in the musical life of the community. Situated learning does not belong to one group of people or continent. Instead, it is a part of human existence, the process of enculturation. Popular musicians learn songs equally from England and America. For example, in the study “Smoke On the Water” was used in the curriculum. This song was written by an English rock band, Deep Purple, and well known by the students. Likewise, Blues Traveler “Run Around” reached

number eight on the US Billboard charts and number 183 on the UK charts (Billboard, n.d.). While there is a discrepancy in the numbers, the song was still relatively popular in the UK. I believe that Finnegan (1989) and Green's (2002) study would be similar if replicated in America.

Discussion

The analysis of that data revealed that a guitar class that integrates formal and informal music learning is effective in meeting most of the students goals for a beginner's guitar class. A guitar class that incorporates informal and formal learning is also beneficial for instrument-specific curricula. Data also show that integrating informal and formal music learning in school environments requires a shift in teaching focus for the instructor and teaching the students how to engage with informal elements in formal settings.

Peer Learning In and Out of Formal Environments

During the class meeting times students were asked to teach each other scale and chord techniques and songs. This peer learning was structured—since it was placed at specific points in the course and dictated by the instructor—and skill level appropriate. Other peer learning occurred without my initiation, especially when Lee was teaching William how to play the major scale. In the final exam, students were asked to teach each other an element of a song for the final exam, thus expressing another peer-learning.

When I asked the students who were at an intermediate level to teach

beginning students a musical element, all but George were excited to do so. Their instruction was well received by other students. Michael was asked to teach two students how to play power chords, which he did with using a popular guitar riff, "Smoke on the Water". Both students were able to play the chords but not with an appropriate tempo or rhythm. Michael noticed they were struggling and adjusted his teaching to accommodate the students' playing ability. He did this by repeating the instructions and slowing down the tempo of the song. The students were responding well to Michael's calm demeanor and teaching style. After 15 minutes devoted to teaching them the riff, both were able to play the piece slowly but with a consistent tempo.

I asked Lee to teach the participants a song that he liked to play. As Lee taught the class he would recount his thoughts and decision-making to the group:

Lee: I was asked to teach you guys a song. I was trying to start with a song that everyone knows. First, I was trying to start with a capo and I said, 'wait a second, not everyone has a capo,' so I can't do that.

Lee began by telling the students the chords in the song and that he would show them "a more simple way so we don't have to barre, we don't have to move too much." Lee demonstrated a way to play the song that was consistent with all students' skill level. This sort of mindfulness Lee expressed was consistent with his other teaching moments in the course.

I wanted to examine how one student would teach another outside of class. The final exam required each student to teach someone else an element of his or her final exam song. I asked each student to chose a song they wanted to learn and play.

They were also asked to teach another student an element of the music—chords or melody—and perform the song together for the final exam. Each student chose to play the most challenging part of the song him or herself. They told me this was not done to reduce the difficulty in teaching another a musical part. It was done out of courtesy for the other student. Michael stated, “I didn’t want to give him the harder part and just get away with the easy part.”

Skill Acquisition

Techniques were presented systematically during the study. I wanted the student to have developed playing skills at a certain level before a new technique was introduced. Withholding techniques until they are needed is not consistent with popular music pedagogy, where technical skill is acquired haphazardly (Green, 2002). Skill acquisition was systematized in order to increase student success in the execution of chord playing, improvisation, and note reading. I felt this to be the best way of progressing, even though it contradicts the informal learning research, due to having 16-weeks to reach the stated course objective from formal music learning. If the curriculum were constructed so haphazard learning could occur naturally, the course objectives would have to have been different, for example, changing the number of keys covered in chord playing and fewer notes presented in note reading.

Early in the course, I asked students to focus on one hand over the other when learning a new concept, like scales. Shelia, who did not finish the study, would often place the plectrum in her mouth when playing scales. “It is easier for me to feel

the strings without the pick.” As the course continued, Shelia was able to play the scale using a plectrum. Other students also seemed to benefit from focusing on one hand over the other.

The goal of skill acquisition was musical performance and creativity. Therefore, scales were not an end in themselves but a means for creating melodies and improvising. Students were hesitant when asked to create melodies from the scale patterns. Each student was asked to create a melody based on a pentatonic or major scale pattern. I asked them to share their melodies with the group in the next study session. Michael was the only one to demonstrate his melody. I asked the other students if they had created a melody, assuring them they did not have to play in front of the group. No one stated they had done so. Creative expression such as melody creation was not embraced by all early in the course. Most of the students were hesitant to demonstrate their creations in front of the group. Shelia commented that “fear” prevented her from doing the assignment. She feared that the more experienced guitarists in the class would make fun of her for creating simple melodies that were executed poorly. I should have anticipated this student response before asking students to share. While playing together and learning from others are elements in informal music learning, they do not exist without trust between musicians (Allsup, 2004). In this class setting, students did not feel a level of trust that would enable them to be vulnerable in front of others. This form of sharing should have been withheld until later in the course or done in smaller group settings among friends.

Listening Skill Development

Listening skills were addressed in the course by focusing on bass note movement and chord quality (Johansson, 2002). Bass note identification was introduced along with key based chord playing. Chord quality identification was presented after students had learned the chords G, C, and D.

I recorded bass note identification examples by playing a series of notes on the sixth string four times each. Students were given a CD-ROM of the music examples and asked to identify the notes, recording the fret number on the sixth string. George explained this exercise was an “educated guess. When it sounded like the note was low I played lower notes on the guitar until I found it.” As students gained expertise in identifying isolated bass notes I began to introduce full chords. When asked to identify the bass note of a full chord student success rate declined. Isolated bass notes were identified quickly and with a high level of accuracy. Students struggled with bass note identification in full chords for three weeks.

Chord quality identification was easier than bass note identification for students during the introduction of this concept. I used the terms “happy” and “sad” to identify major and minor chords. During the first lesson of week four, I asked the students if they felt more confident identify the bass notes or the chords. Overwhelmingly the response was chord identification. Michelle stated it “is just easier to hear the chords than the other.”

Implications for Guitar Pedagogy

The purpose of the study was to examine the integration of informal and formal music learning in a university guitar class. In this section I present implications for guitar pedagogy based on the findings from the study. Guitar pedagogy is an area of research that is underdeveloped. Extant scholarship is focused on guitar history, performance practice, and literature. While the guitar has a long and storied history, its inclusion in university study is relatively new (Tanenbaum, 2003). This study is unique in that it focuses on integrating formal and informal music learning in a university guitar class, focusing on expanding research in the area of guitar pedagogy. I address three recommendations for guitar pedagogy: listening as a form of learning, skill acquisition in real-world contexts, and collaborative learning.

Popular musicians develop musical skill and expertise by copying recordings (Green, 2002). In this study, participants were taught how to listen to recordings to learn musical nuances, melodies and chord qualities. Initially, the participants' ability to accurately define chord quality and correct bass note was underdeveloped. At the conclusion of the study the participants were able to identify chord quality and correct bass notes quickly, which allowed them to identify the correct chord being played on a recording. Participants toward the end of the study were also able to incorporate complex strumming patterns in the chord playing from extended listening to acoustic guitar recordings. The rhythms present in the recordings throughout the semester were not notated. Participants had to listen repeatedly to

the recordings in order to replicate strumming patterns and proper rhythmic.

Note reading and chord playing were also tied to listening in the study. In the methods books I examined, the ability to replicate a notated pitch was fundamental to playing the guitar. Replicating a notated pitch was accomplished in these methods through literacy only, not through reproducing what was heard. In this study I noticed participants were more able to accurately replicate notes that were closely tied to music from their socio-musical context. Extensive listening to a particular song or genre helped participants identify melodic direction and beginning and ending pitches of a musical phrase. Chords were presented in key relationships in the study and then tied to music the students knew and liked. Connecting chords to music participants were familiar with increased accuracy in chord identification on recorded examples. The participants' ability to quickly and accurately identify chords played on the guitar was evident in the analysis of video data related to the final exam assignment. Connecting listening to learning is a fundamental aspect in popular music pedagogy that should be foundational in guitar pedagogy due to the increased accuracy of chord identification, note replication, and rhythmic playing as expressed in the findings.

For most guitar students, skill acquisition on the guitar is developed outside of real world music making, in isolation and in systematized ways. In this study, skill acquisition was placed within real world music making, as seen in the connection of scale technique to creativity. Informally, skills are not acquired for the sake of acquiring skills but are learned as musicians participate in music performance and

practice. This concept is seen clearly in Green (2002) and Finnegan's (1989) research. Popular and amateur musicians learn how to play music by performing music with others. Guitar pedagogy should align skill acquisition to real world music making and applications. Skill acquisition is removed from real world music contexts and applications when students acquire these skills apart from participating in music with others. While gaining an ability to play a technical exercise does have a place in guitar pedagogy, it is not as effective as situating skills in real world musical applications. Scale technique, for example, should be taught as a means for musical creativity, such as melody creation and improvisation, and not as the ability to move the fingers with greater fluidity.

Participants in the study were taught how to play scales on the guitar early on. The initial introduction of a chromatic scale was to increase finger independence and fluidity in the participants playing. Developing major and pentatonic scale technique was not an end goal, creativity was. In the lesson following scale introduction, participants were asked to create melodies based on the scale patterns. Participants demonstrated an ability to create a basic melody without regard to notated pitch or rhythm. As the study progressed, scale technique was used to replicate melodies and solos heard on recordings. George and Derrick were paired together during one of the listening exercises. They were asked to identify the chords from Blues Traveler "Runaround". Both of them identified the chords quickly and accurately. I asked them to figure out the harmonica melody during the introduction of the song. Since the song was in the key of G, I mentioned the major

scale pattern could assist them in accurately identifying the notes and playing the melody. George and Derrick were able to play the first measure of the harmonica melody as a result of the learned scale pattern. Connecting scale technique to this song forced them to play the scale with different nuances and articulations as well as increased velocity.

Lastly, collaborative learning is an element that should be present in guitar pedagogy. Having students teach musical and technical concepts aligns guitar pedagogy with informal music learning. In this study, collaborative learning elements were more effective in content delivery than teacher-centered approaches. Often, students are able to more accurately assess a student's musical performance due to their repeated listening to a specific musical genre. An instructor might not have the breadth and depth of music listening experience within a particular genre a student is playing. A peer can more accurately assess and direct a student to greater levels of musical achievement as a result (Lebler, 2008). The data also revealed that students were more receptive to peer instruction than that of the instructor. Advanced students teaching the material can result in better and quicker reception from the beginning player.

Suggestions for Future Research

In this study I was concerned with examining the integration of informal and formal music learning in a university guitar class. I chose a guitar class due to the instrument's popularity in contemporary music and it being my main instrument.

Additionally, there is a long history of guitar players who have highly developed skills acquired through informal means (Green, 2002).

Additional studies should be conducted with other instruments to examine the effectiveness of integrated approaches to music instruction that are instrument specific. Implementing this study with another instrument would most likely have results that are different from what I discovered. Because the guitar is closely aligned with popular music production and learning, this study relied upon elements of popular music pedagogy. Additional study would provide supplementary data to assess whether integrating informal and formal music learning would be useful for class-based music instruction in other areas.

Another suggestion for future research would be the use and implementation of informal learning in formal university environments. While some studies have been done on popular music programs (Lebler, 2008), little research exists on informal learning in other disciplines. Participants in this study had a difficult time switching between classes with predominantly formal learning, such as a math course, to one that incorporated informal elements and sought to democratize the learning process. Research focused on helping students “task switch” between formal and informal would be important to future implementation of informal learning in higher education.

I would like the chance to conduct additional studies in the future with guitar classes comprised of different age groups. It is my belief that younger participants would be more willing to embrace informal learning elements than older ones

(Finnegan 1989). Reproducing the case study in different age groups would provide additional data from which to judge the effectiveness of an integrated curriculum and approach in meeting student and instructor objectives. Additionally, I would like to conduct an additional class with fewer course objectives, allowing for informal learning elements to unfold organically.

Reflections

Before the study began I had recorded my biases and expectations in my field journal. My initial thoughts were that teaching formal and informal music learning could be, and should be, seamless. I also noted that students would be more involved in the informal elements of the course than in the formal. My pre-study reflections were “Pollyanna” compared to my reflections post-study.

Throughout the study I found the participants hesitant to embrace and participate in the informal learning elements of the study. As I reflected on this, I believe this hesitance had more to do with the culture in which the study was conducted than the actual request for participation. My experience teaching at this university has been students want to know what is on the test. Attempts to push learning beyond the required text and questions for exams are seen as a waste of lecture time.

When participants in this study were invited to help guide the curriculum and chose music most did not want to do so. This hesitance was not what I was expecting. Instead, the participants in turn asked me what I wanted them to do and

play. During Week 10, I began to notice the participants being more open to democratization, as learning is culturally situated. Participants were accustomed to a top-down approach to learning at the university, not a bottom-up approach in which the student helps guide instruction.

During the development of the curriculum, the formal and informal moments were planned to work seamlessly. In reality, it was more compartmentalized than my initial belief. I found myself as the instructor fighting against formalizing all instruction. "It was easier," I reflected, "to tell students what to do than to let them figure it out on their own. It is painful to watch." This was a constant battle for me as the instructor and researcher. To prevent the formal intervention, I relied on the curriculum that was developed, not on my intuition or desires. In hindsight, I intuitively planned for this battle, knowing that I would try to step in and move the learning along when participants were stalled on a musical concept.

In the beginning, I structured listening elements of the course to meet specific objectives; bass note identification and chord quality. After reflecting on the study, I should have focused more on listening to develop a broad understanding of harmonic and melodic formulas along with bass note and chord identification. Because this study focused on examining an instrument specific pedagogy, the study revealed a bias in music listening by focusing on only those elements pertinent to playing the guitar.

Incorporating the informal elements into the course, I feel, broadened the student's understanding of how to utilize the techniques and music elements in the

performance of their own music. I have taught a guitar class at this university for three years prior to the study, but have been teaching a class guitar course for eight years total. I noticed a difference in the participants of this study, as they were engaging with their own music. Allowing students to teach elements of music also removed me from the role of driver and decision maker of the curriculum. When Lee taught the class a song he liked I noticed students were more engaged than with my instruction. According to the findings in the study, an integrated curriculum is useful when the objective is developing breadth of musical understanding and skill acquisition in students.

Another point of concern was the high number of participants withdrawing from the class. Participants withdrawing from the class had a motivation of personal enjoyment in learning the guitar. Discovering this forced me to question the approach of the curriculum. I felt it necessary to maintain the progress I initially laid out in the curriculum. After examining the data post-study I realize I could, and should, have allowed the curriculum to ebb and flow organically. A class of similarly motivated students would have resulted in a different experience. This might have resulted in more participants finishing the course. Due to the study examining the integration of informal and formal music learning in guitar pedagogy this alteration was not a consideration.

Discovering features of formal and informal music learning allowed me to construct an integrated guitar curriculum that I used to examine how diverse learning methods could be used in a university guitar class. By focusing on an

instrument-specific implementation of the curriculum, I was able to accurately assess participants' views on the incorporation of these elements. Additionally, an instrument-specific focus in the study allowed participants to gain a higher level of proficiency on an instrument than if the approach was broadly based. The findings from this study should be used to further an area of research in instrument specific pedagogies and curriculum that integrate informal and formal music learning.

APPENDIX A
PRE-INSTRUCTION QUESTIONNAIRE

Please select the appropriate answer to the following questions:

1. Gender
 - a. Male
 - b. Female

2. Age range:
 - a. 18–20
 - b. 21–22
 - c. 23–25
 - d. 26–above

3. What is your current classification:
 - a. Freshman
 - b. Sophomore
 - c. Junior
 - d. Senior

4. Have you had any previous musical lessons or training? (Example: piano lessons as a child)
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

5. Can you read music notation?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

6. How long have you played the guitar?
 - a. 0–1 years
 - b. 2–3 years
 - c. 4–5 years
 - d. 6–above

7. How would you classify yourself as on the guitar?
 - a. Beginner – no experience
 - b. Beginner – minimal experience
 - c. Intermediate
 - d. Advanced

8. With your current playing level in mind, where do you believe yourself to be at the end of the course?
 - a. Beginner – minimal experience
 - b. Intermediate
 - c. Advanced
 - d. Unsure

9. Do you have clearly defined goals in mind for studying the guitar?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

10. Identify a goal you have for studying the guitar.
 - a. Personal enjoyment
 - b. Playing for organized assemblies (such as church functions)
 - c. Professional aspirations
 - d. None of the above

APPENDIX B
PRE-INSTRUCTION INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

1. Tell me what events brought you to enroll in the guitar class?
2. Why do you want to study the guitar?
3. What are some outcomes, or goals, you have in relation to this course?
4. Have you played the guitar prior to this class? If so, what styles of music do you play and how did you learn how to play it?

APPENDIX C
INSTRUCTION INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

1. Tell me how things are going in the class?
2. Do you feel you are improving on the instrument? If so, in what way?
3. What are your thoughts on the method of instruction? The pedagogy, not the instructor.
4. Have you been able to implement some of the elements you have learned thus far in the course into music making outside of the classroom? If so, explain.

APPENDIX D
POST-INSTRUCTION QUESTIONNAIRE

Please select the appropriate answer to the following questions:

1. How effective was the method of instruction?
 - a. Not effective
 - b. Somewhat effective
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Effective
 - e. Very effective

2. How effective was the method of instruction in helping you achieve your goals for the course?
 - a. Not effective
 - b. Somewhat effective
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Effective
 - e. Very effective

3. Do you feel you are able to play the guitar better now than before guitar instruction?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Somewhat

4. Did you play your guitar outside of class and unrelated to assignments?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

5. Did you play your guitar with other musicians?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

6. If so, what instrument did he/she play?
 - a. Guitar
 - b. Bass
 - c. Drums
 - d. Vocals
 - e. Other instrument
 - f. N/A

APPENDIX E
POST-INSTRUCTION INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

1. Tell me how you thought the class went?
2. How did the instructional method help you meet your goals for the class?
3. How do you plan to use the guitar in the future?
4. Do you feel that you that the instructional method has provided you the ability to make music in a variety of contexts?

APPENDIX F
LETTER OF NOTIFICATION OF STUDY

To Whom It May Concern:

You have recently registered for Class Guitar I, MUS 2177-01, for the _____ semester. This letter is to notify you that this class offering will be used to conduct case study research for my dissertation. The dissertation topic is guitar pedagogy for class-based instruction. Data gathered for the course will be used to evaluate the guitar pedagogy and the effectiveness of it.

This study is voluntary and your grade for the course will not be affected by any part of the case study. Your information will be kept confidential and will not be used in any manner that would affect your academic progress. If you choose not to participate, you would have to register for an alternate offering of the course. Should you have any questions or need further clarification please notify me, lbeaumont@hputx.edu.

Thank You,

Lance Beaumont

APPENDIX G INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Boston University College of Fine Arts
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INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Title of Project: Guitar Pedagogy for Class-Based Instruction: Reconciling Informal and Formal Music Learning

Purpose

We would like permission to enroll you as a participant in a research study. The purpose of the study is to implement a holistic guitar pedagogy in a class guitar course. Through the implementation of the reconciled pedagogy in a class-based guitar course the effectiveness of the pedagogy can be determined. The Principal Investigator, Lance Beaumont, is a Doctoral student at Boston University and the project is being completed for his dissertation research.

Procedures

If you volunteer to participate in this study, we would ask you participate in **three interviews conducted at the start of the course, mid-semester, and at the courses completion, not to exceed fifteen minutes each; complete two questionnaires, administered pre- and post-instruction;** and participate in the sixteen-week class guitar course in which the pedagogy will be implemented. The **first** interview and questionnaire will consist of questions related to your prior music training, if applicable, goals for the course, and potential uses of the guitar in future music making; **the second interview will be a semi-structured interview in which you would be asked to provide feedback on the direction of the pedagogy to date; and the final interview and questionnaire will consist of questions related to the pedagogies effectiveness at reaching stated objectives and goals from the first interview. All interviews will be audio recorded** Each class meeting will be video taped.

The implementation of the pedagogy in the class will occur during the normally scheduled course time. **Students are encouraged to spend twenty to forty-five minutes in practice five to six days a week.**

Risks and Discomforts

There are no known risks associated with participation in the study.

Benefits

This study will contribute to an understanding of holistic pedagogy as it pertains to guitar instruction. **Expected benefits from the study are that you will know how to perform music on the guitar, in a variety of genres and playing styles, which will provide broader opportunities for music making.**

Compensation

You will not receive any compensation for participating in this study.

Confidentiality

Your answers will be kept confidential and may not be disclosed, unless required by law or regulation. The information you provide will be published only in aggregated form (for example, tables of information). No identifiable information will be included in any presentation or publication.

Data will be stored in password protected computer files only accessible to the Principal Investigator and his dissertation advisor. The signed consent forms will be kept separate from the research data.

Audio recordings will be transcribed within six months. The audiotapes will then be erased. **Video tapes will be viewed and transcribed within six months. The video tapes will then be erased.**

Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this research is purely voluntary. Refusing to participate or discontinuing participation will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Should you discontinue participation, you can request that all data previously collected be destroyed. You may refuse to answer any question in the interview or on the questionnaire. **All participants of the study must be at least 18 years of age.**

Contacts

If you have questions regarding this research, either now or at any time in the future, please feel free to ask them. The Principal Investigator – Lance Beaumont at 325-649-8504 or at lbeaumont@hputx.edu will be happy to answer any questions you may have. Questions may also be addressed to the faculty advisor, Dr. Ronald Kos (rkos@bu.edu). You may obtain further information about your rights as a research subject by calling the Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects Research at Boston University at 617-358-6115.

Agreement to Participate

I have read this consent form. All my questions have been answered. I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

Name of Subject

Signature of Subject Date

Permission to Audio Tape Date

Permission to Video Tape Date

Person Obtaining Consent Date

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CURRICULUM VITAE

WALTER LANCE BEAUMONT

Education

B.M.	Texas Christian University, Guitar Performance	1999
M.M.	Texas Christian University, Guitar Performance	2002
D.M.A.	Boston University, Music Education	2015

Professional Experience

Church Ministries Associate—Music and Worship 2014-Current

Southern Baptists of Texas Convention – Grapevine, TX

-Equip and train worship leaders in the state of Texas. Plan and oversee training opportunities and conferences for student worship bands, children’s music leaders, and ministers of music and worship. Also oversee the area of worship technology, providing assistance to churches in regards to sound reinforcement, projection, and innovative uses of technology in worship.

Adjunct Professor of Music and Worship 2014-Current

Northwest Christian University – Eugene, OR

-Teach online courses in worship theology, history of worship in the church, worship arts, and guitar.

Associate Professor of Music and Worship; Program Director 2012-2014

Northwest Christian University – Eugene, OR

-Head of the music program at NCU. Oversee music faculty - hiring, assessment, teaching loads. Develop and maintain depart budget and spending. Redesigned the music program and curriculum. Design and implement strategic plan for music department - program assessment, curriculum development, recruiting, and technology initiatives. Teach courses in music history—Western Art music, ethnomusicology, popular music—applied guitar and class guitar.

Assistant Professor of Music; Director, Music Computer Lab 2007-2012

Music Department, Howard Payne University – Brownwood, TX

- Head of guitar studies program and musicology, Director of Music Lab. Developed guitar program and Bachelor of music degree in guitar performance and music education. Taught music history sequence. Developed and taught online course, “Introduction to Music Technology.” Responsible for music lab operations and student workers. Active in recruiting students for admissions department through endorsement clinics, performances, and working with area school music teachers. Assisted in writing the report for NASM accreditation site visit and pre-site visit.

Associate Worship Leader 2007-2012

Coggin Avenue Baptist Church - Brownwood, TX

-Lead and plan weekly contemporary worship services. Direct contemporary praise team and band, oversee the audio-visual area, conduct rehearsals for instrumental ensembles for various programs and services.

Adjunct Professor of Music and Guitar 2006-2007

Music Department, Lamar University – Beaumont, TX

-Head of guitar studies program and professor of music business. Started the guitar performance program and guitar music education program. Taught courses in music history and music business.

Adjunct Professor of Guitar 2005-2007

Music Department, San Jacinto College

-Taught classical/jazz guitar to music majors, audio engineering majors, and non-majors and mentored students in audio engineering and music business.

Adjunct Professor of Music 2006-2006

Music Department, Cy-Fair College, Cypress, TX

-Taught music appreciation courses to non-music majors. District evaluator of music appreciation curriculum.

Adjunct Professor of Guitar 2004-2005

School of Fine Arts, Dallas Baptist University

-Taught classical/jazz guitar to Music Business majors and mentored majors in the business of music.

Publications

The Capo Chord Book published by Mel Bay Publications, Inc. 2005

Committee Service

Northwest Christian University

Academic Council 2014

Faculty Development Committee, Co-Chair 2012 – 2014

Music Department Faculty Search Committee, Chair 2013

Howard Payne University

Outstanding Faculty Member of the Year Committee 2011

HPU Website Design Committee 2011

HPU Sound Reinforcement Committee 2011

HPU Music Department Faculty Search Committee 2011

Presentations

Curating Worship: Transformational Worship Design; Expanding Your Acoustic Guitar Playing

-Worship Northwest Conference, Salem, OR 2014

Worship Architecture: Designing Services Outside the Rut; Spice Up Your Acoustic Guitar Playing; Maintaining and Developing Teams

-Worship Northwest Conference, Salem, OR 2013

Guitar Pedagogy for Class-Based Instruction: Reconciling Music Learning

-International Society for Music Education, Regional Conference Villahermosa, Tabasco, Mexico 2011

Guitar Pedagogy for Class-Based Instruction

-Symposium for Research in Music Teaching and Learning, University of North Texas 2011

Guitar Pedagogy for Secondary Education: Philosophical Framework for Pedagogy Synthesis, Curriculum Development, and Teacher Training

- American String Teachers Association National Conference 2010

Women and the Blues: From Emancipation to Legacy

-Howard Payne University 2009