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California State University, Sacramento
School of Music

6000 J Street • Capistrano Hall • MS 6015 • Sacramento, CA 95819
T (916) 278-5155 • www.csus.edu/college/arts-letters/music

Saturday, April 20, 2024

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for the proposed creation of a Commercial Music Certificate program in the music department at Butte College. As an advocate for music education and the inclusion of popular-based music, I believe that such a program would greatly benefit students and serve the local community.

I have always felt the Community College system plays a vital role in providing affordable and high-quality education to students throughout California. On a personal note, I attended Palomar College, a community college in Southern California, as a music major before transferring to San Francisco State University and completing my undergraduate degree in music. By offering this certificate program in commercial music, Butte College will have the opportunity to expand educational offerings and cater to the interests and aspirations of a diverse student body.

For example, the musical and culture of hip-hop is a world-wide, recognizable phenomenon that is still largely absent in an approved university curriculum (Ladson-Billings, 2014) relinquishing hip-hop artists to perform in extra-campus spaces or away from school venues. Given the digital foundations of contemporary music making and visual representations of sound – ranging from MIDI data, audio wave forms, and equalization levels – should have equal consideration when referring to *standard* notation in a collegiate music curriculum. The Butte College popular music ensembles will allow students to develop their collaborative skills, musical versatility, and stage presence through real-world performance opportunities. Meanwhile, courses in theory/musicianship and digital music production will provide them with the technical skills and theoretical understanding essential for creating music in contemporary styles.

One of the primary purposes of community college is to serve the needs of local communities, and the establishment of a Commercial Music Certificate program is a tangible expression of this commitment. Furthermore, including courses in songwriting and production allows students to explore *their* creativity and artistic expression, fostering an inclusive learning environment through a variety of musical experiences and backgrounds.

In conclusion, I wholeheartedly endorse the establishment of a Commercial Music Certificate program in the Butte College music department. This program will enhance academic offerings, attract talented students in the community interested in pursuing careers in music, and incorporate essential skills



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necessary for a twenty-first century learner in a current school music program. I look forward to working with the faculty in the music department at Butte College and assisting them in my role as Assistant Professor of Music at Sacramento State University. If I can provide any further information, please feel free to contact me at c.zullinger@csus.edu.

Sincerely,

Chad Zullinger

Assistant Professor of Music

California State University, Sacramento

President

California Music Educators Association



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