Research Practices of Undergraduate Music Students  
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Abstract
This poster details a mixed-methods research study that explored how undergraduate music students conduct research in their field. The methodology included surveys, focus groups, and task-based assessments examining students’ experience with research, confidence levels, attitudes, information-seeking behaviors, and other factors influencing the research process.

Methodology
This IRB-approved study focused on upperclass music students, with a focus on those in a music history class. Methods of data collection included:
- Two surveys administered in music history class
- Two focus groups
- Twelve individual task-based assessments
- Final papers from the music history class

Previous Music Research Experiences

Importance of Research to Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank Order - Skills</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Performance skills</td>
<td>1.78</td>
<td>.974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching skills</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>1.064</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research skills</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>1.492</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing skills</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>1.325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music composition</td>
<td>4.41</td>
<td>1.248</td>
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<tr>
<td>Music improvisation</td>
<td>4.74</td>
<td>1.163</td>
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Citation Skills
- Evaluated on a scale from 0 (unacceptable) to 5 (perfect)
- Final Class Paper (n=28 papers): Average = 3.41
  - 75% of students scored ≤ 4; 25% between 4 & 5.
- Individual Task-Based Assessments (n=12 students)
  - Average for a single-authored book = 3.33
  - Average score for a chapter in an edited volume = 2.5
  - Average score for a journal article = 2

Takeaways
- Students’ confidence level and actual abilities differ considerably (finding, evaluating & citing)
- Undergraduate music students lack experience with the research process
- Surveyed students reported that classmates were their most common source for help (58%)  
  “Informal research” plays an important role in the nascent stages of the research process
- YouTube.com was the most common source for audio
- Students acknowledge the credibility of library materials, but utilize a number of different resources, including many non-academic websites