



**Division of Performing Arts PTE Committee's Evaluation of Dr. Kyle Vanderburg
for Promotion to Associate Professor of Practice**

October 9, 2026

Overview

Dr. Kyle Vanderburg currently serves as Composer in Residence and Assistant Professor of Practice in the Challey School of Music within the Division of Performing Arts. He first joined the NDSU faculty in 2017 as part-time academic staff and was appointed Assistant Professor of Practice beginning Fall 2021. The review period for this evaluation begins in Fall 2021 and ends in Summer 2026. Dr. Vanderburg's effort allocation has been 75% teaching and 25% service. All of Dr. Vanderburg's teaching responsibilities and most of his service responsibilities have been within the Challey School of Music, but he also performs some service for the Department of Theatre, notably in technology support. The Division of Performing Arts PTE committee based its evaluation of Dr. Vanderburg's application for promotion to Associate Professor of Practice on his record in teaching and service in relation to both of the above-mentioned allocations of effort as well as by the Measures of Success found in the Division of Performing Arts' *Procedures and Criteria for Promotion, Tenure, and Evaluation*. Dr. Vanderburg also built an extremely impressive body of creative activity while performing his job duties, but his efforts there were not evaluated in this review, as directed by the Provost Office's memo. However, the committee feels compelled to note that his body of creative activity is on par with tenured faculty in the Challey School of Music, and it ultimately serves him and our students in many beneficial ways, especially in his teaching.

Dr. Vanderburg is well-known for his collegial and professional manner. Throughout the period of review, Dr. Vanderburg has greatly contributed to the life and success of the Challey School of Music through teaching efforts across several courses, the development and implementation of the Bachelor of Music in Composition degree program, his service as Music Curriculum Lead, and his tireless efforts to make our School and music programs better each and every day he shows up for work. He is an eight-time national finalist in The American Prize for Composition, with works reaching this status in the professional divisions of vocal chamber music, instrumental chamber music, orchestral works, and shorter choral works. In short, we believe that Dr. Vanderburg has easily fulfilled and exceeded all Division of Performing Arts expectations for promotion to Associate Professor of Practice.

Teaching

The teaching goals of the Challey School of Music involve continually crafting and delivering a rigorous curriculum that prepares future music professionals while developing and nurturing our students. The requirements and measures of success in teaching are documented in the DPA PTE guidelines.

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The first measure of success in teaching states that a successful teacher "is knowledgeable and current in his/her field, demands high but fair standards in student achievement, is sensitive to the learning needs and satisfaction of students, builds constructive teacher-student rapport, and conveys complex information in a clear, coherent manner." During the period of review, Dr. Vanderburg has been an incredibly flexible instructor in the Challey School of Music; he has taught several successful undergraduate courses in composition, music theory, instrumental arranging, entrepreneurship, academic success, and woodwind methods, as well as several graduate courses in music research and writing methods, thesis, and theory pedagogy. His student evaluation scores are consistently high across all his courses. In a peer review of Dr. Vanderburg's instrumental arranging class, Dr. Warren Olfert notes that Dr. Vanderburg is a "highly effective classroom teacher," writing, "It was evident almost immediately that the class was engaged with the instructor on the class material. The relationship was comfortable and casual..." Additionally, Dr. Vanderburg has created an "increasingly affirming and inclusive" culture in his composition studio, as shown by the supportive nature of studio composition recitals and emerging traditions such as awarding a Composer Pin at a composer's first composition performance. Finally, this committee wishes to stress Dr. Vanderburg's research and creative activity and its relationship to his successful teaching record. Sustained activity and engagement in the field of music composition empowers and allows composers to observe and experiment with changing compositional trends in technique, scope, and instruction. Dr. Vanderburg has amassed an impressive body of research and creative activity that not only benefits his career as a composer but also undeniably benefits his teaching of composition students. External reviewer Dr. Joseph Klein from the University of North Texas remarks about Dr. Vanderburg's creative activity, "I am particularly struck by the fact that he always sets up a unique challenge or goal for himself with each new project. In this way, his work remains fresh and vital, as well as inspiring to his students and colleagues." Dr. Vanderburg's creative activity brings current artistic practices from the outside world into the NDSU composition studio, and these efforts make our students better musicians and composers as well as more competitive in their chosen field.

The second measure of success in teaching states that a successful teacher "periodically revises, updates, and/or amends course content in order to improve student learning, and through example s/he instills in students an appreciation for excellence and professionalism." Notable among Dr. Vanderburg's many curriculum developments, revisions, and updates is his development of concurrent/parallel course experiences for first-semester music students enrolled in both MUSC 130 Music Theory I and MUSC 189 Skills for Academic Success. All new music students must take both courses, and Dr. Vanderburg devised a brilliant plan to connect them so first-year music students are in regular contact with music faculty at least four days per week. This helps new students stay engaged in the School of Music and understand the interconnectivity of our music curriculum, which leads to student retention and success. Dr. Vanderburg's course development in MUSC 385 Music Entrepreneurship is equally impressive, as he revised a one-size-fits-all course required of many different types of student musicians and developed a flexible curriculum centered on promoting individualized goals. But the most notable and largest achievement Dr. Vanderburg made in course development was the creation and development of the Bachelor of Music Composition major; this development required an

entire curriculum to be designed to support the major, as well as developing performance opportunities, assessment criteria, and "real world" elements for emerging composers that teach both the skills and business of music composition. His new major is also growing in popularity among current and prospective music students.

The third measure of success states that a successful teacher "recognizes the collaborative nature of his/her faculty duties and works with students and colleagues in a positive and professional manner." Musicians are collaborative by nature, and composers are among the most collaborative of musicians. They constantly work with and write for various groups of musicians, sometimes inventing new ways of making music along the way. Dr. Vanderburg is no exception. He has composed for a wide variety of instruments and for performers that range from individual soloists to small and medium-sized chamber groups to large ensembles. For example, since his appointment as Assistant Professor of Practice, Dr. Vanderburg has composed twenty musical works, many of which were premiered by his NDSU colleagues and/or students. His work with students, both in his composition studio and in the classroom, is also well documented as open, engaging, and collaborative.

The final measure of success in teaching states that a successful teacher "is also an excellent advisor, sensitive to student needs and their educational and career goals, knowledgeable about current academic policies and requirements, and regularly available for consultation." Dr. Vanderburg is a highly effective advisor. He formally advises an average of four undergraduate music majors per academic year, but his role as a composition teacher and curriculum lead within the Challey School of Music allows him to advise and guide many students through a variety of music degree paths. Additionally, music students nominated him during the review period for the University's Excellence in Academic Advising Award.

Dr. Vanderburg is a wonderful teacher and role model for our students. He received two teaching awards from NDSU during the review period: a November 2023 Innovation in Teaching Award from the Office of Teaching and Learning and a 2026 Peltier Innovation in Teaching Award. The quality of his teaching efforts is high, and he meets and exceeds all requirements for promotion to Associate Professor of Practice.

Service

Dr. Vanderburg's service to the Challey School of Music has been far beyond his contractual obligations. He is the Technology Coordinator for the Division of Performing Arts and liaises between the DPA and NDSU IT Services. This has been extremely beneficial since our Division primarily uses Mac-based computers, and many faculty members are able to teach without worrying about our place in a PC-based university environment.

Dr. Vanderburg's development of the Liszt app, known to our music students as Challey.Me, has changed the way the CSoM tracks the progress of its students. Liszt serves as a curricular warehouse for both students and faculty. Students can log in as a "one stop" application to view their jury (final exam for applied music) feedback and results, piano proficiency requirements and standing, and information on assigned instruments, lockers, and storage. Faculty use Liszt

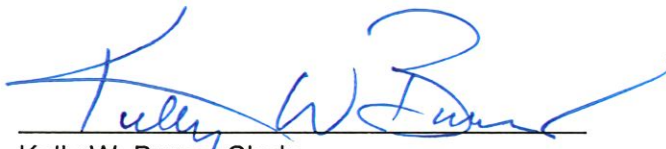
to grade juries, locate equipment, and sign out instruments and lockers from their desk tops. This has saved everyone many office hours, and allowed faculty to teach and serve the students more effectively.

After the wave of retirements and new faculty hires in the past three years, Dr. Vanderburg also serves as an advisor for any students seeking a change of majors, and as a department approver for eForms and DocuSign. Additionally, he has served on the NDSU Faculty Senate, the University Workload Equity Committee, the College Merger Policy and Planning Task Force, and on faculty search committees at NDSU. In service to his profession, Dr. Vanderburg has served within the College Music Society as Acting President of the Central Chapter and as Conference Chair in 2022 when the regional conference was held at NDSU.

Dr. Vanderburg's service is robust, and it meets and exceeds all requirements for promotion to Associate Professor of Practice.

Conclusion

After reviewing Dr. Vanderburg's portfolio, the Division of Performing Arts PTE Committee unanimously finds that he meets and exceeds the requirements for promotion to Associate Professor of Practice at NDSU. Therefore, the committee fully supports promotion to Associate Professor of Practice for Dr. Kyle Vanderburg.



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