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# A Survey of Attitudes Towards Burnout Among Music Students at The University of South Carolina School of Music

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A SURVEY OF ATTITUDES TOWARDS BURNOUT AMONG MUSIC STUDENTS AT  
THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA SCHOOL OF MUSIC

by

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Bachelor of Music  
Texas State University – San Marcos, 2013

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of Master of Music in

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School of Music

University of South Carolina

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Accepted by:

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to define burnout specific to musicians. The study explored the attitudes towards burnout of student musicians at the University of South Carolina School of Music. A survey was created based on models in the research literature, and was administered to music students with the permission of the School of Music administration. Internal review board approval was obtained. The survey was available via the Internet. Participation was voluntary and student anonymity guaranteed.

The population of the survey consisted of 416 undergraduate and graduate music students enrolled in the 2016 spring semester. Of the 416 total students enrolled, 156 students were graduate students and the remaining 260 were undergraduates. The entire population of 416 music students was asked to participate in the Internet-based survey. A total of 102 responses were submitted online for a 24.5% response rate. The research instrument revealed that the majority of music majors at the University of South Carolina are experiencing average to low levels of burnout. Even though the majority have high levels of emotional exhaustion, low levels of depersonalization and high levels of personal accomplishment indicate low levels of burnout. The survey results suggest that music students are experiencing high levels of stress and anxiety caused by music studies.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION AND DEFINITION OF BURNOUT

Burnout is a condition that is recognized across multiple disciplines in the work force. Burnout can interfere with one's productivity, effectiveness, motivation and wellbeing. Burnout has been defined as "a psychological syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment that can occur among individuals who work with other people in some capacity."<sup>1</sup> The three main components of burnout (emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment) are all measurable and applicable to musicians.<sup>2</sup>

The causes of burnout vary greatly and involve many outside factors and variables, but some general causes have been identified. Burnout is usually associated with personal dysfunction, insomnia, physical exhaustion, increased use of drugs and alcohol, and problems within one's family or personal relationships.<sup>3</sup> Burnout may be caused by a prolonged inability to adapt to job stressors.<sup>4</sup> The general causes of burnout are applicable to a musician but additional specific causes may be added such as: stress,

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<sup>1</sup> Carlos P. Zalaquett and Richard J. Wood, eds., *Evaluating Stress: A Book of Resources* (Lanham, Md: Scarecrow Press, 1997), 192.

<sup>2</sup> H. Christian II Bernhard, "A Survey of Burnout among College Music Majors," *College Student Journal* 41, no. 2 (June 2007): 392–401.

<sup>3</sup> Zalaquett and Wood, *Evaluating Stress*, 193.

<sup>4</sup> Corina Ioana Vlăduț and Éva Kállay, "Work Stress, Personal Life, and Burnout. Causes, Consequences, Possible remedies—A Theoretical Review," *Cognition, Brain, Behavior: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 14, no. 3 (September 2010): 262.

performance anxiety, lack of patience with musical progress, imbalance with personal and musical life, and inadequate practice and focus.<sup>5</sup> Exhaustion, cynicism, inefficiency and depression are effects of burnout, and can negatively affect students' academic and performance work.<sup>6</sup>

The effects of burnout are not limited to the individual's professional life and performance in the work place but can extend into one's personal life.<sup>7</sup> For a musician, the effects of burnout may include: inefficient practice, negative performance experiences, and an imbalance between personal and musical life. Understanding the effects of burnout on a musician's wellbeing can be beneficial to preventing or correcting burnout.

### 1.1 PURPOSE OF STUDY

The purpose of this study was to define burnout specific to musicians. The study explored the attitudes towards burnout of student musicians at the University of South Carolina School of Music. A survey was created based on models in the research literature, and was administered to music students with the permission of the School of Music administration. Internal review board approval was obtained. The survey was available via the Internet. Participation was voluntary and student anonymity guaranteed. The results are available in chapter three of the thesis. The survey data was kept private

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<sup>5</sup> C. Barney Dews and Martha S. Williams, "Student Musicians' Personality Styles, Stresses, and Coping Patterns," *Psychology of Music, Performance and stress*, 17, no. 1 (1989): 39, doi:10.1177/0305735689171004.

<sup>6</sup> Jesus Montero-Marin et al., "Coping with Stress and Types of Burnout: Explanatory Power of Different Coping Strategies," *PLoS ONE* 9, no. 2 (February 13, 2014), <https://login.pallas2.tcl.sc.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=psyh&AN=2014-15507-001&site=ehost-live>.

<sup>7</sup> Vlăduț and Kállay, "Work Stress, Personal Life, and Burnout. Causes, Consequences, Possible remedies—A Theoretical Review," 262.

and secure, and no identifying information on individual participants was published. The results will show what factors contribute to burnout for students in the School of Music.

## 1.2 NEED

There is a body of research on burnout as it applies to multiple professions and the general public, as well as a body of literature on burnout specific to musicians. Additional surveys exist on the causes of burnout as it applies to multiple professions including musicians. Additional research is needed to clarify if students from the University of South Carolina School of Music experience burnout and if so, what factors are causing burnout. Because the factors of burnout for students at the University of South Carolina School of Music differ from other schools or universities that have conducted similar studies, further research and study is needed to discover students' attitudes towards burnout. There is a need to examine students at the University of South Carolina School of Music specifically.

## 1.3 LIMITATIONS

The study was limited to providing a definition of burnout, administering of the survey, and an analysis of the results. This study makes reference to surveys and studies related to the subject matter, but was limited to a survey of burnout to undergraduate and graduate music students at the University of South Carolina. Lastly, since the findings are taken from a survey of participants, our conclusions are only a current view of a musician's semester.

## 1.4 RELATED LITERATURE

Raymond MacDonald's, Gunter Kreutz's and Laura Mitchell's *Music, Health, and Wellbeing* is a book that presents research from music psychology, therapy, public health, and medicine to explore relationships between music, health, and wellbeing.<sup>8</sup> Carlos P. Zalaquett's and Richard J. Wood's *Evaluating Stress: A Book of Resources* is a collection of stress measures and studies that survey and evaluate stress.<sup>9</sup> Nicola Sigg's dissertation *An Investigation into the Relationship Between Music Preference, Personality and Psychological Wellbeing* consists of a study that finds a correlation between one's music preference and their state of wellbeing.<sup>10</sup> Victoria PolICASTRO Vega's dissertation *Personality, Burnout and Longevity Among Professional Music Therapists* examines possible relationships between personality, burnout level, longevity, and demographic variables among professional music therapists.<sup>11</sup> Helen Orzel's thesis *Undergraduate Music Student Stress and Burnout* focuses on examining the sources of burnout for undergraduate music students and examining existing methods for controlling burnout.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Raymond MacDonald, Gunter Kreutz, and Laura Mitchell, eds., *Music, Health, and Wellbeing* (Oxford University Press, 2012), <http://www.oxfordscholarship.com/view/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199586974.001.0001/acprof-9780199586974>.

<sup>9</sup> Zalaquett and Wood, *Evaluating Stress*, vii.

<sup>10</sup> Nicola Sigg (Author), "An Investigation into the Relationship between Music Preference, Personality and Psychological Wellbeing" 2009.

<sup>11</sup> Victoria PolICASTRO Vega (Author), "Personality, Burnout, and Longevity among Professional Music Therapists" (University Microfilms International (UMI), 2007).

<sup>12</sup> Helen Orzel, "Undergraduate Music Student Stress and Burnout" (M.A., San Jose State University, 2011), <http://search.proquest.com.pallas2.tcl.sc.edu/docview/848932801/abstract/2F5F3446EB4A4C55PQ/10>.

Christian Bernhard II *A Survey of Burnout Among College Music Majors* surveyed burnout in music majors by using a survey and scale similar to that of Maslach, Jackson, and Schwab's for burnout.<sup>13</sup> C.L. Barney Dew's and Martha S. Williams' article *Student Musicians' Personality Styles, Stresses, and Coping Patterns* focuses on identifying the sources of stress that music students perceive to be most debilitating to them as prospective musicians.<sup>14</sup>

Michael Furr's and Dustin Wood's test *University Burnout Measure* uses a five-point scale to gauge the level of burnout and fatigue.<sup>15</sup> Ronald Feldt's rating scale *College Student Stress Scale* measures how frequently students feel stressed or anxious.<sup>16</sup> Scott Solberg's, James Bradford Hale's, Pete Villarreal's and Jack Kavanagh's questionnaire *College Stress Inventory – Modified* contains items broken into three categories (academic, social, and financial) that are rated on a five-point scale.<sup>17</sup> Audhild Lohre's and Jean Gaffney Kvendset's questionnaire *School Wellbeing and Student Questionnaire* has respondents rank their answers on an ordinal scale with four to five response options.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Bernhard, "A Survey of Burnout among College Music Majors."

<sup>14</sup> Dews and Williams, "Student Musicians' Personality Styles, Stresses, and Coping Patterns."

<sup>15</sup> R. Michael Furr and Dustin Wood, "University Burnout Measure," *PsycTESTS*, 2013, doi:10.1037/t22093-000.

<sup>16</sup> Ronald C. Feldt, "College Student Stress Scale," *PsycTESTS*, 2008, doi:10.1037/t07526-000.

<sup>17</sup> V. Scott Solberg et al., "College Stress Inventory - Modified," *PsycTESTS*, 1993, doi:10.1037/t19528-000.

<sup>18</sup> Audhild Løhre and Jean Gaffney Kvendset, "School Wellbeing Student Questionnaire," *PsycTESTS*, 2010, doi:10.1037/t18347-000.

## 1.5 DESIGN AND PROCEDURES

This study comprises four chapters, a bibliography and four appendices. Chapter one consists of an introduction including the purpose, need, limitations, related literature, and design and procedures. Chapter two provides a definition of burnout and its general causes, as well as specific causes of burnout to a musician. Chapter three consists of a survey that measures students' attitude towards burnout as well as the results and findings. Chapter four contains a summary and a conclusion.

## CHAPTER 2

### BURNOUT DEFINED, AND ITS CAUSES

Dr. Christina Maslach, professor and psychologist at the University of California Berkeley is credited for pioneering the term burnout in the 1970's. Along with Susan E. Jackson and Michael P. Leiter, she authored and created the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), the most widely used measurement instrument for burnout.

Maslach has defined the term:

Burnout is a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment that can occur among individuals who work with people in some capacity. A key aspect of the burnout syndrome is increased feelings of emotional exhaustion – as emotional resources are depleted, workers feel they are no longer able to give of themselves at a psychological level. Another aspect of the burnout syndrome is the development of depersonalization, that is, negative, cynical attitudes and feelings about one's clients.<sup>19</sup>

Although the term has been defined within occupations dealing with human services and education, the definition may be applied to musicians. Gold, Bachelor, and Michael created and tested a version of the MBI for college students entitled College Student Survey (CSS). The CSS is identical to the MBI except that the term “work” was replaced with “school,” “co-worker” was replaced with “friends and classmates,” and “job” was replaced with “college.”<sup>20</sup> For the purpose of this study, the term “worker”

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<sup>19</sup> Christina Maslach, Susan Jackson, and Michael Leiter, *Maslach Burnout Inventory Manual*, Third Edition (Mountain View California, n.d.).

<sup>20</sup> Orzel, “Undergraduate Music Student Stress and Burnout,” 16.



was substituted with “musician” and the term “client” with “music” or “studies,” making the definition specific to a musician.

In this study the term burnout will refer to the subscales given by Maslach: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. To further understand the term burnout, each of the three subscales should be defined.

## 2.1 EMOTIONAL EXHAUSTION

Out of the three subscales of burnout, emotional exhaustion is viewed as one of the core components. Arens and Morin define emotional exhaustion as, “feelings of emotional overstrain and reduced emotional resources.”<sup>21</sup> People who suffer from emotional exhaustion have been shown to experience reduced job satisfaction and are less productive.<sup>22</sup> In some extreme cases, emotional exhaustion can lead to an emotional breakdown or even thoughts of suicide.<sup>23</sup> For a musician, emotional exhaustion can lead one to practice less and feel insufficient about their performance experiences, practice sessions, and musical studies.

## 2.2 DEPERSONALIZATION

It is important to note that depersonalization is found in different types of psychological disorders including depression, phobic anxiety, hypomania, and

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<sup>21</sup> A. Katrin Arens and Alexandre J. S. Morin, “Relations Between Teachers’ Emotional Exhaustion and Students’ Educational Outcomes,” *Journal of Educational Psychology*, January 18, 2016, 3, doi:10.1037/edu0000105.

<sup>22</sup> Marieke van den Tooren and Christel Rutte, “Explaining Emotional Exhaustion and Work Engagement: The Role of Job Demands-Resources and Type D Personality,” *International Journal of Stress Management*, September 14, 2015, 2, doi:10.1037/a0039754.

<sup>23</sup> Ayala Malakh-Pines, and Elliot Aronson, *Career Burnout: Causes and Cures* (New York : London: Free Press ; Collier Macmillan, 1988), 13.

schizophrenia.<sup>24</sup> Often in such cases, depersonalization is defined as a persistent or recurring feeling of being detached from your mental process or body.<sup>25</sup>

Depersonalization in relation to burnout refers to a negative or even cynical attitude or feeling towards others.<sup>26</sup> People experiencing depersonalization may view their colleagues and peers as aggregates of problems rather than as individuals.<sup>27</sup> In relation to the MBI and for the purpose of the study, depersonalization refers to a negative or cynical attitude or feeling towards teachers, colleagues, and one's music and studies.

### 2.3 PERSONAL ACCOMPLISHMENT

Personal accomplishment is defined by Maslach as “a feeling of competence and successful achievement in one's work with people.”<sup>28</sup> Diminished personal accomplishment is a sign of burnout and is relevant to several professions. For a musician, diminished personal accomplishment may result in negative feelings towards working with professors and colleagues, and/or negative feelings towards performance experiences.

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<sup>24</sup> Orzel, “Undergraduate Music Student Stress and Burnout,” 15.

<sup>25</sup> Fugen A. Neziroglu and Katherine Fair Donnelly, *Overcoming Depersonalization Disorder : A Mindfulness & Acceptance Guide to Conquering Feelings of Numbness & Unreality* (Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications, 2010), 9, <https://login.pallas2.tcl.sc.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=407426&site=ehost-live>.

<sup>26</sup> Rachel V. Schwartzhoffer, *Psychology of Burnout : Predictors and Coping Mechanisms*, Psychology Research Progress Series (New York: Nova Science Publishers, Inc, 2009), 244, <https://login.pallas2.tcl.sc.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=359014&site=ehost-live>.

<sup>27</sup> Malakh-Pines, and Aronson, *Career Burnout*, 14.

<sup>28</sup> Maslach, Jackson, and Leiter, *Maslach Burnout Inventory Manual*, 4.

## 2.4 STRESS

Stress is one of the leading causes of burnout. Prolonged stress that goes untreated can lead to burnout. The term stress originated in the field of engineering and is defined by engineers as any external force directed at some physical object.<sup>29</sup> This leads to strain, the temporary or permanent distortion in the object's structure, as a result from that force.<sup>30</sup> Researchers in psychology and physiology have adopted this term because the concept corresponds with the body's tendency to resist external changes and stay in homeostasis.<sup>31</sup> Stress can suggest psychological responses such as anxiety and worry. It may also suggest physiological responses such as headaches, muscle aches, and fatigue. In most cases stress is a precursor to burnout. Melendez and Guzman state that everyone experiences stress but that burnout is a distinctive kind of stress specific to work.<sup>32</sup> Although burnout and stress are different, they are related in the sense that prolonged stress can lead to burnout. To better understand burnout, an examination of the causes is necessary.

## 2.5 GENERAL CAUSES

Anthony Cedoline has identified seven major causes of burnout relating to public education. The major causes identified have been found to be applicable to many occupations. The seven major causes of burnout include: lack of control over one's

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<sup>29</sup> Orzel, "Undergraduate Music Student Stress and Burnout," 7.

<sup>30</sup> Jeffrey S. Kaiser and James J. Polczynski, "Educational Stress: Sources, Reactions, Preventions," *Peabody Journal of Education* 59, no. 2 (1982): 127.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 128.

<sup>32</sup> Winifred Albizu Melendez and Rafael M. de Guzmán, *Burnout: The New Academic Disease*, ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Research Report, (1983), no. 9 (Washington, D.C: Association for the Study of Higher Education, 1983), 5.

destiny, lack of occupational feedback and communication, work overload or underload, contact overload, role conflict/ambiguity, individual factors, and training deficiencies.<sup>33</sup>

A lack of control over one's destiny can be detrimental to productivity, self-esteem and enthusiasm. Research has found that people who feel powerless and helpless give less effort to their work and are less enthusiastic about their work.<sup>34</sup> Research has also shown that when one has control over their work or decision-making, their motivation and efficiency increase.<sup>35</sup>

Occupational feedback is defined as “the flow of job – relevant information from one employee to another.”<sup>36</sup> Feedback is critical for the improvement and effectiveness of one's work.<sup>37</sup> Most of the feedback given to a music student comes from their private instructor, ensemble director or conductor and from colleagues and peers. Robert Duke states that teacher feedback has two forms; the first being information the student receives about the consequences of their behavior, and the second being information teachers communicate to learners about their work.<sup>38</sup> Both forms of feedback must be

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<sup>33</sup> Anthony J. Cedoline, *Job Burnout in Public Education: Symptoms, Causes, and Survival Skills* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1982), 40.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

<sup>35</sup> Virginie A. Pérotin, Andrew Robinson, and EBSCOhost (Online Service), eds., *Employee Participation, Firm Performance and Survival*, 1st ed, Advances in the Economic Analysis of Participatory and Labor-Managed Firms, v. 8 (Amsterdam ; Oxford: Elsevier JAI, 2004), 7, <http://library.sc.edu/catalog/offcampus.html?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=189639>.

<sup>36</sup> Cedoline, *Job Burnout in Public Education*, 42.

<sup>37</sup> Kristin L. Sommer and Mukta Kulkarni, “Does Constructive Performance Feedback Improve Citizenship Intentions and Job Satisfaction? The Roles of Perceived Opportunities for Advancement, Respect, and Mood,” *Human Resource Development Quarterly* 23, no. 2 (Sum 2012): 177, doi:10.1002/hrdq.21132.

<sup>38</sup> Robert A. Duke, *Intelligent Music Teaching: Essays on the Core Principles of Effective Instruction* (Austin: Learning and Behavior Resources, 2005), 122.

given frequently and effectively to avoid the possibility of increased stress. A lack of feedback can lead students to feel a sense of distrust and a lack of confidence in their teachers and colleagues.<sup>39</sup>

Communication is important for developing relationships, avoiding ambiguities and for the success of an individual's or a collective's growth.<sup>40</sup> Effective communication should relay information, educate and motivate.<sup>41</sup> Individuals who have expressed a positive job experience also indicated that they felt comfortable communicating openly with supervisors and colleagues.<sup>42</sup> A lack of communication can lead to a less motivated music student. The student could become less interested in their musical studies if effective communication is absent between the student and teachers or between the student and colleagues.

Research has found higher levels of stress, which can lead to burnout, in individuals who have an excessive workload.<sup>43</sup> Contributing causes of work overload include; insufficient resources, lack of control of one's work space, constantly dealing with crisis, unclear or unrealistic goals and responsibilities, and inadequate training.<sup>44</sup> Recent research has shown that the opposite can also cause stress. Boring, repetitive, and

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<sup>39</sup> Cedoline, *Job Burnout in Public Education*, 43.

<sup>40</sup> O. P. Agarwal, *Effective Communication. I*, Rev. ed, Effective Communication (Mumbai [India]: Himalaya Pub. House, 2010), 3 – 4, <http://library.sc.edu/catalog/offcampus.html?url=http://site.ebrary.com/lib/usca/Doc?id=10416090>.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>42</sup> Cedoline, *Job Burnout in Public Education*, 44.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 45.

<sup>44</sup> Frank M. Gryna, Annemieke Hytinen, and Paul O'Mara, *Work Overload!: Redesigning Jobs to Minimize Stress and Burnout* (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: ASQ Quality Press, 2004), 13.

tedious jobs have been linked to the same issues brought on by work overload.<sup>45</sup> A music student experiencing work overload may feel that the requirements being asked by private instructors and professors are unreasonable. This could include having too much music to learn in a given time frame, or possibly being involved in too many musical ensembles and rehearsals. If a student is feeling a sense of work underload, he may not have enough music to practice or learn, or the music is not challenging and engaging for the student. In either case, the chances of burnout increase significantly when a student is exposed to work overload or underload.<sup>46</sup>

Contact overload occurs when one is exposed to frequent encounters with others to complete a job.<sup>47</sup> Contact overload may present itself in a music student's life if one is constantly exposed to performing or working with teachers and or colleagues. The same holds true for music students who teach lessons. Constant interaction with teachers, colleagues and students can lead to contact overload. It is important that one is given time to practice and work alone on musical studies without the pressures of having to perform in front of a teacher or colleague. Cedoline states that the emotional pressure of working closely with people is a continual stressor that can lead to or increase burnout.<sup>48</sup>

Role conflict is a major stressor that becomes the main cause of burnout for many people.<sup>49</sup> Role conflict or ambiguity is defined as "the simultaneous occurrence of two or more opposing pressures such that a response to one makes compliance with the other

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<sup>45</sup> Cedoline, *Job Burnout in Public Education*, 45.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 46.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 48.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 50.

<sup>49</sup> Malakh-Pines, and Aronson, *Career Burnout*, 113.

impossible. It is exemplified by being torn between groups expecting different kinds of behavior.”<sup>50</sup> Role conflict is a common occurrence in college students and even more so for music majors. Music students must balance being a university student, a performer, a music teacher, and in some cases an employee in an outside job. Role conflict for students is compounded by the inclusion of social roles such as being a parent, friend, sibling, and spouse. Cedoline states that the three most frequent role conflicts are: “those between the individual’s values and those of a superior or the organization; the conflict between the demands of the work place and the worker’s personal life; and the conflict between worker abilities and organizational expectations.”<sup>51</sup> A music student struggling with a role conflict may experience a decrease in productivity and motivation.

Individual factors play a role in one’s susceptibility to burnout. Research has found that individual factors such as family problems affect tolerance and reaction to stress.<sup>52</sup> Since individual factors are different for each person, it is difficult to study and determine what factors are specifically linked to burnout. Some of the common factors identified include: the death of a family member; impending divorce; environmental changes; life style changes; financial issues. One’s personality type also has a part in how one will deal with stress and burnout. The study of individual factors and personality types and their roles in burnout is beyond the scope of this study.

A music student’s training is primarily focused on the musical performance of one’s primary instrument. Focusing on a single aspect of music can lead to a training deficit. To avoid a training deficit multiple aspects and areas of music should be

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<sup>50</sup> Cedoline, *Job Burnout in Public Education*, 50.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 51.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.

addressed. Along with learning how to perform music to the best of our abilities, one should also receive training on different aspects of musical practice. For example, training regarding practice methods, performance anxiety and training on how to deal with the stress involved in musical study. Regardless of one's profession, the importance of learning the methods used for coping with a variety of stressors is invaluable.<sup>53</sup>

Secondary causes accompany the seven major causes of burnout. Secondary causes include: societal changes, information overload, life-style changes, lack of confidence in one's self, lack of confidence in one's organization or institution, job security, financial security, physical and mental exhaustion, underutilization of one's skills, physical work conditions.<sup>54</sup>

## 2.6 GENERAL SYMPTOMS

There are multiple signs and symptoms that indicate burnout. These symptoms have been placed into four categories: physical symptoms, intellectual symptoms, social symptoms, and psycho-emotional symptoms.<sup>55</sup> A brief overview of each of the four categories will be provided in the following paragraphs.

Physical symptoms can include physical fatigue or exhaustion, physical ailments, tenseness of muscles, and even the abuse of drugs and alcohol. Physical exhaustion and fatigue are the most common symptoms and characterized as an individual having low energy and chronic weakness or fatigue.<sup>56</sup> Physical exhaustion leads to such things as

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 57.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 61–63.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>56</sup> Wilmar B. Schaufeli and Dirk Enzmann, *The Burnout Companion to Study and Practice: A Critical Analysis*, Issues in Occupational Health (London: Taylor & Francis, 1998), 32.



accident-proneness, increased susceptibility to illness, headaches, body aches and pains, and even a change in weight and eating habits.<sup>57</sup> Other possible physical symptoms of burnout include: “bruxism, insomnia, increased activity, speech difficulty, nervous tics, orientation problems, dryness of the mouth or throat, excessive sweating, loss of or excessive appetite, frequent nightmares, and stomach or intestinal disorders.”<sup>58</sup>

Intellectual symptoms of burnout include impairment of decision making, deficiencies in processing information, time distress, and an obsession with work related issues. Intellectual symptoms are often tied to emotional exhaustion. Emotional exhaustion leaves one feeling depressed, helpless and hopeless, and in extreme cases leads to mental illness or thoughts of suicide.<sup>59</sup>

Social symptoms of burnout are often noticeable in the way one interacts with friends and peers. Social withdrawal from family, friends, and colleagues may indicate burnout.<sup>60</sup> Cynicism and a malicious sense of humor are also social symptoms of burnout. It is not uncommon for someone experiencing the social symptoms of burnout to be unaware of their changes in behavior and attitudes towards others.

Psycho-emotional symptoms of burnout include denial or blame for certain situations and circumstances, anger, depression and paranoia.<sup>61</sup> Mental exhaustion can also be grouped with psycho-emotional symptoms. Pines and Aronson state that “mental

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<sup>57</sup> Ayala Malakh-Pines, Elliot Aronson, and Ditsa Kafry, *Burnout: From Tedium to Personal Growth* (New York: Free Press, 1981), 17.

<sup>58</sup> Cedoline, *Job Burnout in Public Education*, 27.

<sup>59</sup> Malakh-Pines, Aronson, and Kafry, *Burnout*, 18.

<sup>60</sup> Cedoline, *Job Burnout in Public Education*, 29.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

exhaustion is characterized by the development of negative attitudes toward one's self, toward work, and toward life."<sup>62</sup> Along with developing a negative outlook on one's self, people experiencing burnout may also develop negative attitudes towards others. This is often referred to as dehumanization. "Dehumanization is defined as a decreased awareness of the human attributes of others and a loss of humanity in interpersonal interactions."<sup>63</sup>

## 2.7 CONCLUSION

Although the majority of research on burnout is directed to occupations dealing with health care, education, and social services, the findings are applicable to music students. Currently, students' knowledge of the causes, symptoms and treatments for burnout is lacking. This indicates that when burnout occurs, it may go undiagnosed and may lead to serious physical, emotional and mental problems that may end up affecting the individual's studies and education. Gaining an understanding of music students' attitudes towards burnout at the University of South Carolina School of Music will help raise an awareness of burnout, its causes and symptoms, and lead to increased awareness of treatments and prevention.

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<sup>62</sup> Malakh-Pines, Aronson, and Kafry, *Burnout*, 18.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

## CHAPTER 3

### PROCEDURE OF STUDY

The purpose of the study was to explore the attitudes towards burnout of student musicians at the University of South Carolina School of Music. A survey was created based on models in the research literature, and was administered to music students with the permission of the School of Music administration. The study will show what factors contribute to burnout for students in the School of Music.

#### 3.1 POPULATION

The population of the survey consisted of 416 undergraduate and graduate music students enrolled in the 2016 spring semester. Of the 416 total students enrolled, 156 students were graduate students and the remaining 260 were undergraduates. The entire population of 416 music students was asked to participate in the Internet-based survey.

#### 3.2 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

An Internet-based survey was developed for the analysis of music students' attitudes towards burnout at the University of South Carolina School of Music. Several documents and questionnaires were reviewed and used as models in developing the *University of South Carolina School of Music Burnout Questionnaire*. These included the following:

- College Stress Inventory – Modified<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Solberg et al., "College Stress Inventory - Modified."

- College Student Stress Scale<sup>65</sup>
- University Burnout Measure<sup>66</sup>
- Emotional Exhaustion Scale<sup>67</sup>
- Burnout Inventory<sup>68</sup>
- Bergen Burnout Inventory – 9<sup>69</sup>
- Measure of Emotional Exhaustion<sup>70</sup>

The *University of South Carolina School of Music Burnout Questionnaire* had eight primary focuses: (1) demographic data and general information on music students, (2) students' attitudes concerning emotional exhaustion, (3) students' attitudes concerning depersonalization, (4) students' attitudes concerning personal accomplishment, (5) students' attitudes concerning musical practice, (6) students' attitudes concerning performance experience, (7) students' attitudes concerning a balance between personal and music life, and (8) students' attitudes towards stress and anxiety factors and methods of alleviation. A copy of the *University of South Carolina School of Music Burnout Questionnaire* may be found in Appendix A.

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<sup>65</sup> Feldt, "College Student Stress Scale."

<sup>66</sup> Furr and Wood, "University Burnout Measure."

<sup>67</sup> Caroline Senécal, Robert J. Vallerand, and Frédéric Guay, "Emotional Exhaustion Scale," *PsycTESTS*, 2001, doi:10.1037/t16260-000.

<sup>68</sup> Roderick D. Iverson, Mara Olekalns, and Peter J. Erwin, "Burnout Inventory," *PsycTESTS*, 1998, doi:10.1037/t11584-000.

<sup>69</sup> Katariina Salmela-Aro et al., "Bergen Burnout Inventory - 9," *PsycTESTS*, 2010, doi:10.1037/t09121-000.

<sup>70</sup> Steffanie Wilk and Lisa M. Moynihan, "Measure of Emotional Exhaustion," *PsycTESTS*, 2005, doi:10.1037/t09304-000.

### 3.3 COLLECTION OF DATA

The *University of South Carolina School of Music Burnout Questionnaire* was posted online through the Internet – based survey software *Survey Monkey*.<sup>71</sup> On February 22, 2016, approval was given by the Dean and Graduate Director of the School of Music to administer the survey to music students. A copy of the approval letter may be found in Appendix B. On March 8, 2016, the University of South Carolina Institutional Review Board for Human Research (IRB) approved the study for exempt review. A copy of the IRB approval letter may be found in Appendix C.

A consent form was created and presented to all who participated in the survey. A copy of the consent form may be found in Appendix D. On March 9, 2016, Ms. Traci Hair, Program Coordinator for Graduate Studies at the School of Music, sent an email to the 156 enrolled graduate students. The email consisted of the consent form and a URL like to the survey. A follow-up email was sent to the same individuals on March 14, 2016. On March 11, 2016, Ms. Margee Zeigler, Program Coordinator for Undergraduate Students, sent an email to the 260 enrolled undergraduate students. The email sent was identical to the graduate student email. On March 14, 2016, the author was allowed to visit and remind undergraduate students about the survey in the undergraduate Recital Class (a weekly class attended by all undergraduate students). Permission to speak with the class was granted by Professor Bryson Borgstedt. The survey portal was closed on March 15, 2016.

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<sup>71</sup> “SurveyMonkey: Free Online Survey Software & Questionnaire Tool,” accessed March 11, 2016, <https://www.surveymonkey.com/>.

### 3.4 DATA ANALYSIS

A total of 102 responses were submitted online for a 24.5% response rate. Four of the questionnaires indicated only gender and failed to answer any other questions and therefore are not included in the study. Of the 98 responses used for the study, 51% of participants were female and the remaining 49% male. Table 3.1 illustrates the response rates in relation to the participant's class.

TABLE 3.1 – PARTICIPANT CLASS

CLASS	PERCENTAGES
Freshman	19.61%
Sophomore	21.57%
Junior	21.57%
Senior	16.67%
Graduate	20.57%

The degree program in relation to the response percentage can be found in Table 3.2 below.

TABLE 3.2 – DEGREE PROGRAM

DEGREE PROGRAM	PERCENTAGES
B.M. Performance	29.29%
B.A. in music	10.10%
B.M. Education	36.36%
Music minor	1.01%
M.M. Performance	7.07%
M.M. Education	1.01%
M.M. Piano pedagogy	2.02%
Graduate performance certificate	3.03%
D.M.A. Performance	6.06%
D.M.A. Piano Pedagogy	4.04%

Table 3.2 illustrates that the majority of respondents are seeking a Bachelor of Music degree in Performance or Education. The primary instrument for the participants varied and included the following instruments: piano, flute, saxophone, voice, percussion, double bass, violin, cello, trumpet, tuba, trombone, guitar, oboe, french horn, and clarinet.

Questions 5 – 10 were focused on participants’ attitudes concerning emotional exhaustion. They were asked to select a rating from 0 – 5 that best fit their answer. The rating scale for Questions 5 – 10 can be found below in Table 3.3.

TABLE 3.3 – RATING SCALE QUESTIONS 5 - 10

SCORE	DESCRIPTION
0	Never
1	Once a month or less
2	A few times a month
3	Once a week
4	A few times a week
5	Daily

In Question 5 (see Table 3.4), subjects were given the following statement to rate, “I feel emotionally drained from my schoolwork.” The results were as follows: twelve (12) respondents (12.24%) rated a one (1); fourteen (14) respondents (14.29%) rated a two (2); thirteen (13) respondents (13.27%) rated a three (3); thirty-seven (37) respondents (37.76%) rated a four (4); twenty-two (22) respondents (22.45%) rated a five (5).



TABLE 3.4 – QUESTION 5  
 “I feel emotionally drained from my schoolwork.”

SELECT ONE	RESPONDENTS (98)	PERCENTAGE
0 – Never	0	0.00%
1 – Once a month or less	12	12.24%
2 – A few times a month	14	14.29%
3 – Once a week	13	13.27%
4 – A few times a week	37	37.76%
5 – Daily	22	22.45%

In Question 6 (see Table 3.5), subjects were given the following statement to rate, “I feel used up at the end of my school day.” The results were as follows: two (2) respondents (2.04%) rated a zero (0); four (4) respondents (4.08%) rated a one (1); ten (10) respondents (10.20%) rated a two (2); eleven (11) respondents (11.22%) rated a three (3); twenty-four (24) respondents (24.49%) rated a four (4); forty-seven (47) respondents (47.96%) rated a five (5).

TABLE 3.5 – QUESTION 6  
 “I feel used up at the end of my school day.”

SELECT ONE	RESPONDENTS (98)	PERCENTAGE
0 – Never	2	2.04%
1 – Once a month or less	4	4.08%
2 – A few times a month	10	10.20%
3 – Once a week	11	11.22%
4 – A few times a week	24	24.49%
5 – Daily	47	47.96%

In Question 7 (see Table 3.6), subjects were given the following statement to rate, “I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day of school.” The results were as follows: four (4) respondents (4.08%) rated a zero (0); fourteen (14) respondents (14.29%) rated a one (1); sixteen (16) respondents (16.33%) rated a two (2); sixteen (16) respondents (16.33%) rated a three (3); twenty-eight (28) respondents (28.57%) rated a four (4); twenty (20) respondents (20.41%) rated a five (5).

TABLE 3.6 – QUESTION 7  
 “I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day of school.”

SELECT ONE	RESPONDENTS (98)	PERCENTAGE
0 – Never	4	4.08%
1 – Once a month or less	14	14.29%
2 – A few times a month	16	16.33%
3 – Once a week	16	16.33%
4 – A few times a week	28	28.57%
5 – Daily	20	20.41%

In Question 8 (see Table 3.7), subjects were given the following statement to rate, “I feel frustrated by my schoolwork.” The results were as follows: one (1) respondent (1.02%) rated a zero (0); sixteen (16) respondents (16.33%) rated a one (1); sixteen (16) respondents (16.33%) rated a two (2); twenty-three (23) respondents (23.47%) rated a three (3); twenty-four (24) respondents (24.49%) rated a four (4); eighteen (18) respondents (18.37%) rated a five (5).

TABLE 3.7 – QUESTION 8  
 “I feel frustrated by my schoolwork.”

SELECT ONE	RESPONDENTS (98)	PERCENTAGE
0 – Never	1	1.02%
1 – Once a month or less	16	16.33%
2 – A few times a month	16	16.33%
3 – Once a week	23	23.47%
4 – A few times a week	24	24.49%
5 – Daily	18	18.37%

In Question 9 (see Table 3.8), subjects were given the following statement to rate, “I feel a general sense of burnout.” The results were as follows: three (3) respondents (3.06%) rated a zero (0); nineteen (19) respondents (19.39%) rated a one (1); twenty-two (22) respondents (22.45%) rated a two (2); fifteen (15) respondents (15.31%) rated a three (3); twenty-two (22) respondents (22.45%) rated a four (4); seventeen (17) respondents (17.35%) rated a five (5).

TABLE 3.8 – QUESTION 9  
 “I feel a general sense of burnout.”

SELECT ONE	RESPONDENTS (98)	PERCENTAGE
0 – Never	3	3.06%
1 – Once a month or less	19	19.39%
2 – A few times a month	22	22.45%
3 – Once a week	15	15.31%
4 – A few times a week	22	22.45%
5 – Daily	17	17.35%

In Question 10 (see Table 3.9), subjects were given the following statement to rate, “I feel burned out specifically from schoolwork.” The results were as follows: five (5) respondents (5.10%) rated a zero (0); twenty-four (24) respondents (24.49%) rated a one (1); ten (10) respondents (10.20%) rated a two (2); nineteen (19) respondents (19.39%) rated a three (3); twenty-two (22) respondents (22.45%) rated a four (4); eighteen (18) respondents (18.37%) rated a five (5).

TABLE 3.9 – QUESTION 10  
 “I feel burned out specifically from schoolwork.”

SELECT ONE	RESPONDENTS (98)	PERCENTAGE
0 – Never	5	5.10%
1 – Once a month or less	24	24.49%
2 – A few times a month	10	10.20%
3 – Once a week	19	19.39%
4 – A few times a week	22	22.45%
5 – Daily	18	18.37%

In Question 9 (see Table 3.8), subjects were given the following statement to rate, “I feel used up at the end of my school day.” The results were as follows: two (2) respondents (2.04%) rated a zero (0); four (4) respondents (4.08%) rated a one (1); ten (10) respondents (10.20%) rated a two (2); eleven (11) respondents (11.22%) rated a three (3); twenty-four (24) respondents (24.49%) rated a four (4); forty-seven (47) respondents (47.96%) rated a five (5).

Questions 11 – 15 were focused on participants’ attitudes concerning depersonalization. They were asked to select a rating from 0 – 5 that best fit their answer. The rating scale for Questions 11 – 15 as well as Questions 16 – 27 can be found below in Table 3.10.

TABLE 3.10 – RATING SCALE QUESTIONS 11 - 27

SCORE	DESCRIPTION
0	Strongly disagree
1	Disagree
2	Partly disagree
3	Partly agree
4	Agree
5	Strongly agree

In Question 11 (see Table 3.11), subjects were given the following statement to rate, “I’ve become more callous towards people since enrolling at USC School of Music.” The results were as follows: twelve (12) respondents (12.24%) rated a zero (0); twenty-three (23) respondents (23.47%) rated a one (1); fifteen (15) respondents (15.31%) rated a two (2); twenty-five (25) respondents (25.51%) rated a three (3); ten (10) respondents (10.20%) rated a four (4); thirteen (13) respondents (13.27) rated a five (5).

TABLE 3.11 – QUESTION 11  
 “I’ve become more callous towards people since enrolling at USC School of Music.”

SELECT ONE	RESPONDENTS (98)	PERCENTAGE
0 – Strongly disagree	12	12.24%
1 – Disagree	23	23.47%
2 – Partly disagree	15	15.31%
3 – Partly agree	25	25.51%
4 – Agree	10	10.20%
5 – Strongly agree	13	13.27%

In Question 12 (see Table 3.12), subjects were given the following statement to rate, “I worry that school is hardening me emotionally.” The results were as follows: eleven (11) respondents (11.34%) rated a zero (0); twenty-eight (28) respondents (28.87%) rated a one (1); seventeen (17) respondents (17.53%) rated a two (2); twenty-four (24) respondents (24.74%) rated a three (3); nine (9) respondents (9.28%) rated a four (4); eight (8) respondents (8.25%) rated a five (5). One (1) respondent skipped Question 12 and did not provide an answer.



TABLE 3.12 – QUESTION 12  
 “I worry that school is hardening me emotionally.”

SELECT ONE	RESPONDENTS (97)	PERCENTAGE
0 – Strongly disagree	11	11.34%
1 – Disagree	28	28.87%
2 – Partly disagree	17	17.53%
3 – Partly agree	24	24.74%
4 – Agree	9	9.28%
5 – Strongly agree	8	8.25%

In Question 13 (see Table 3.13), subjects were given the following statement to rate, “I feel that I am losing interest in my colleagues and friends.” The results were as follows: twenty-two (22) respondents (22.45%) rated a zero (0); twenty-one (21) respondents (21.43%) rated a one (1); seventeen (17) respondents (17.35%) rated a two (2); twenty-four (24) respondents (24.49%) rated a three (3); ten (10) respondents (10.20%) rated a four (4); four (4) respondents (4.08%) rated a five (5). One (1) respondent skipped Question 13 and did not provide an answer.

TABLE 3.13 – QUESTION 13  
 “I feel that I am losing interest in my colleagues and friends.”

SELECT ONE	RESPONDENTS (98)	PERCENTAGE
0 – Strongly disagree	22	22.45%
1 – Disagree	21	21.43%
2 – Partly disagree	17	17.35%
3 – Partly agree	24	24.49%
4 – Agree	10	10.20%
5 – Strongly agree	4	4.08%

In Question 14 (see Table 3.14), subjects were given the following statement to rate, “I feel myself caring less about what happens to my colleagues or friends.” The results were as follows: thirty-one (31) respondents (31.63%) rated a zero (0); twenty-four (24) respondents (24.49%) rated a one (1); twelve (12) respondents (12.24%) rated a two (2); twenty-two (22) respondents (22.45%) rated a three (3); five (5) respondents (5.10%) rated a four (4); four (4) respondents (4.08%) rated a five (5).

TABLE 3.14 – QUESTION 14  
 “I feel myself caring less about what happens to my colleagues or friends.”

SELECT ONE	RESPONDENTS (98)	PERCENTAGE
0 – Strongly disagree	31	31.63%
1 – Disagree	24	24.49%
2 – Partly disagree	12	12.24%
3 – Partly agree	22	22.45%
4 – Agree	5	5.10%
5 – Strongly agree	4	4.08%

In Question 15 (see Table 3.15), subjects were given the following statement to rate, “I feel that I have become less productive.” The results were as follows: twenty-one (21) respondents (21.43%) rated a zero (0); twenty-two (22) respondents (22.45%) rated a one (1); nineteen (19) respondents (19.39%) rated a two (2); thirteen (13) respondents (13.27%) rated a three (3); twelve (12) respondents (12.24%) rated a four (4); eleven (11) respondents (11.22%) rated a five (5).

TABLE 3.15 – QUESTION 15  
 “I feel that I have become less productive.”

SELECT ONE	RESPONDENTS (98)	PERCENTAGE
0 – Strongly disagree	21	21.43%
1 – Disagree	22	22.45%
2 – Partly disagree	19	19.39%
3 – Partly agree	23	13.27%
4 – Agree	12	12.24%
5 – Strongly agree	11	11.22%

Questions 16 – 18 were focused on participant’s attitudes concerning personal accomplishment. They were asked to select a rating from 0 – 5 that best fit their answer. The rating scale can be seen in Table 3.10

In Question 16 (see Table 3.16), subjects were given the following statement to rate, “I feel good after working closely with my colleagues.” The results were as follows: one (1) respondent (1.04%) rated a zero (0); two (2) respondents (2.08%) rated a one (1); ten (10) respondents (10.42%) rated a two (2); thirty (30) respondents (31.25%) rated a three (3); thirty-seven (37) respondents (38.54%) rated a four (4); sixteen (16) respondents (16.67%) rated a five (5). Two (2) respondents skipped Question 16 and did not provide an answer.

TABLE 3.16 – QUESTION 16  
 “I feel good after working closely with my colleagues.”

SELECT ONE	RESPONDENTS (96)	PERCENTAGE
0 – Strongly disagree	1	1.04%
1 – Disagree	2	2.08%
2 – Partly disagree	10	10.42%
3 – Partly agree	30	31.25%
4 – Agree	37	38.54%
5 – Strongly agree	16	16.67%

In Question 17 (see Table 3.17), subjects were given the following statement to rate, “I have accomplished many worthwhile things while attending USC.” The results were as follows: two (2) respondents (2.08%) rated a zero (0); six (6) respondents (6.25%) rated a one (1); eight (8) respondents (8.33%) rated a two (2); twenty-seven (27) respondents (28.13%) rated a three (3); twenty-four (24) respondents (25.00%) rated a four (4); twenty-nine (29) respondents (30.21%) rated a five (5). Two (2) respondents skipped Question 17 and did not provide an answer.

TABLE 3.17 – QUESTION 17  
 “I have accomplished many worthwhile things while attending USC.”

SELECT ONE	RESPONDENTS (96)	PERCENTAGE
0 – Strongly disagree	2	2.08%
1 – Disagree	6	6.25%
2 – Partly disagree	8	8.33%
3 – Partly agree	27	28.13%
4 – Agree	24	25.00%
5 – Strongly agree	29	30.21%

In Question 18 (see Table 3.18), subjects were given the following statement to rate, “I feel I am positively influencing peoples’ lives through my work and music.” The results were as follows: three (3) respondents (3.13%) rated a zero (0); eight (8) respondents (8.33%) rated a one (1); six (6) respondents (6.25%) rated a two (2); thirty (30) respondents (31.25%) rated a three (3); thirty-five (35) respondents (36.46%) rated a four (4); fourteen (14) respondents (14.58%) rated a five (5). Two (2) respondents skipped Question 18 and did not provide an answer.

TABLE 3.18 – QUESTION 18  
 “I feel I am positively influencing peoples’ lives through my work and music.”

SELECT ONE	RESPONDENTS (96)	PERCENTAGE
0 – Strongly disagree	3	3.13%
1 – Disagree	8	8.33%
2 – Partly disagree	6	6.25%
3 – Partly agree	30	31.25%
4 – Agree	35	36.46%
5 – Strongly agree	14	14.58%

Questions 19 – 21 were focused on participant’s attitudes concerning musical practice. They were asked to select a rating from 0 – 5 that best fit their answer. The rating scale can be seen in Table 3.10

In Question 19 (see Table 3.19), subjects were given the following statement to rate, “I feel focused during my practice session.” The results were as follows: three (3) respondents (3.13%) rated a zero (0); nine (9) respondents (9.38%) rated a one (1); fourteen (14) respondents (14.58%) rated a two (2); forty-one (41) respondents (42.71%) rated a three (3); twenty-four (24) respondents (25.00%) rated a four (4); five (5) respondents (5.21%) rated a five (5). Two (2) respondents skipped Question 19 and did not provide an answer.

TABLE 3.19 – QUESTION 19  
 “I feel focused during my practice session.”

SELECT ONE	RESPONDENTS (96)	PERCENTAGE
0 – Strongly disagree	3	3.13%
1 – Disagree	9	9.38%
2 – Partly disagree	14	14.58%
3 – Partly agree	41	42.71%
4 – Agree	24	25.00%
5 – Strongly agree	5	5.21%

In Question 20 (see Table 3.20), subjects were given the following statement to rate, “I maintain focus throughout a practice session.” The results were as follows: one (1) respondent (1.04%) rated a zero (0); seventeen (17) respondents (17.71%) rated a one (1); twenty-seven (27) respondents (28.13%) rated a two (2); thirty-one (31) respondents (32.29%) rated a three (3); sixteen (16) respondents (16.67%) rated a four (4); four (4) respondents (4.17%) rated a five (5). Two (2) respondents skipped Question 20 and did not provide an answer.



TABLE 3.20 – QUESTION 20  
 “I maintain focus throughout a practice session.”

SELECT ONE	RESPONDENTS (96)	PERCENTAGE
0 – Strongly disagree	1	1.04%
1 – Disagree	17	17.71%
2 – Partly disagree	27	28.13%
3 – Partly agree	31	32.29%
4 – Agree	16	16.67%
5 – Strongly agree	4	4.17%

In Question 21 (see Table 3.21), subjects were given the following statement to rate, “I feel accomplished after a practice session.” The results were as follows: two (2) respondents (2.08%) rated a zero (0); eleven (11) respondents (11.46%) rated a one (1); seventeen (17) respondents (17.71%) rated a two (2); thirty-five (35) respondents (36.46%) rated a three (3); twenty-two (22) respondents (22.92%) rated a four (4); nine (9) respondents (9.38%) rated a five (5). Two (2) respondents skipped Question 21 and did not provide an answer.

TABLE 3.21 – QUESTION 21  
 “I feel accomplished after a practice session.”

SELECT ONE	RESPONDENTS (96)	PERCENTAGE
0 – Strongly disagree	2	2.08%
1 – Disagree	11	11.46%
2 – Partly disagree	17	17.71%
3 – Partly agree	35	36.46%
4 – Agree	22	22.92%
5 – Strongly agree	9	9.38%

Questions 22 – 24 were focused on participant’s attitudes concerning performance experience. They were asked to select a rating from 0 – 5 that best fit their answer. The rating scale can be seen in Table 3.10

In Question 22 (see Table 3.22), subjects were given the following statement to rate, “I feel excited for performances and performance opportunities.” The results were as follows: three (3) respondents (3.16%) rated a zero (0); three (3) respondents (3.16%) rated a one (1); twelve (12) respondents (12.63%) rated a two (2); twenty-four (24) respondents (25.26%) rated a three (3); thirty-five (35) respondents (36.84%) rated a four (4); eighteen (18) respondents (18.95%) rated a five (5). Three (3) respondents skipped Question 22 and did not provide an answer.

TABLE 3.22 – QUESTION 22  
 “I feel excited for performances and performance opportunities.”

SELECT ONE	RESPONDENTS (95)	PERCENTAGE
0 – Strongly disagree	3	3.16%
1 – Disagree	3	3.16%
2 – Partly disagree	12	12.63%
3 – Partly agree	24	25.26%
4 – Agree	35	38.84%
5 – Strongly agree	18	18.95%

In Question 23 (see Table 3.23), subjects were given the following statement to rate, “I feel calm and ready before a performance.” The results were as follows: three (3) respondents (3.16%) rated a zero (0); twelve (12) respondents (12.63%) rated a one (1); thirteen (13) respondents (13.68%) rated a two (2); thirty-six (36) respondents (37.89%) rated a three (3); twenty-five (25) respondents (26.32%) rated a four (4); six (6) respondents (6.32%) rated a five (5). Three (3) respondents skipped Question 23 and did not provide an answer.

TABLE 3.23 – QUESTION 23  
 “I feel calm and ready before a performance.”

SELECT ONE	RESPONDENTS (95)	PERCENTAGE
0 – Strongly disagree	3	3.16%
1 – Disagree	12	12.63%
2 – Partly disagree	13	13.68%
3 – Partly agree	36	37.89%
4 – Agree	25	26.32%
5 – Strongly agree	6	6.32%

In Question 24 (see Table 3.24), subjects were given the following statement to rate, “I feel accomplished and proud after a recital.” The results were as follows: one (1) respondent (1.05%) rated a zero (0); four (4) respondents (4.21%) rated a one (1); twelve (12) respondents (12.63%) rated a two (2); thirty-two (32) respondents (33.68%) rated a three (3); thirty (30) respondents (31.58%) rated a four (4); sixteen (16) respondents (16.84%) rated a five (5). Three (3) respondents skipped Question 24 and did not provide an answer.

TABLE 3.24 – QUESTION 24  
 “I feel accomplished and proud after a performance.”

SELECT ONE	RESPONDENTS (95)	PERCENTAGE
0 – Strongly disagree	1	1.05%
1 – Disagree	4	4.21%
2 – Partly disagree	12	12.63%
3 – Partly agree	32	33.68%
4 – Agree	30	31.58%
5 – Strongly agree	16	16.84%

Questions 25 – 27 were focused on participant’s attitudes concerning balance between personal and music life. They were asked to select a rating from 0 – 5 that best fit their answer. The rating scale can be seen in Table 3.10

In Question 25 (see Table 3.25), subjects were given the following statement to rate, “I feel I spend more time on music studies than socializing with friends and family.” The results were as follows: four (4) respondents (4.21%) rated a one (1); fourteen (14) respondents (14.74%) rated a two (2); twenty-three (23) respondents (24.21%) rated a three (3); eighteen (18) respondents (18.95%) rated a four (4); thirty-six (36) respondents (37.89%) rated a five (5). Three (3) respondents skipped Question 25 and did not provide an answer.

TABLE 3.25 – QUESTION 25  
 “I feel that I spend more time on music studies than socializing with friends and family.”

SELECT ONE	RESPONDENTS (95)	PERCENTAGE
0 – Strongly disagree	0	0.00%
1 – Disagree	4	4.21%
2 – Partly disagree	14	14.74%
3 – Partly agree	23	24.21%
4 – Agree	18	18.95%
5 – Strongly agree	35	37.89%

In Question 26 (see Table 3.26), subjects were given the following statement to rate, “I feel that I spend more time socializing with friends and family than on music studies.” The results were as follows: twenty-seven (27) respondents (28.42%) rated a zero (0); twenty-eight (28) respondents (29.47%) rated a one (1); twenty-five (25) respondents (26.32%) rated a two (2); ten (10) respondents (10.53%) rated a three (3); four (4) respondents (4.21%) rated a four (4); one (1) respondent (1.05%) rated a five (5). Three (3) respondents skipped Question 26 and did not provide an answer.

TABLE 3.26 – QUESTION 26  
 “I feel that I spend more time socializing with friends and family than on music studies.”

SELECT ONE	RESPONDENTS (95)	PERCENTAGE
0 – Strongly disagree	27	28.42%
1 – Disagree	28	29.47%
2 – Partly disagree	25	26.32%
3 – Partly agree	10	10.53%
4 – Agree	4	4.21%
5 – Strongly agree	1	1.05%

In Question 27 (see Table 3.27), subjects were given the following statement to rate, “I feel I maintain a healthy balance of personal and music life.” The results were as follows: nine (9) respondents (9.47%) rated a zero (0); seventeen (17) respondents (17.89%) rated a one (1); nineteen (19) respondents (20.00%) rated a two (2); thirty-five (35) respondents (36.84%) rated a three (3); thirteen (13) respondents (13.68%) rated a four (4); two (2) respondents (2.11%) rated a five (5). Three (3) respondents skipped Question 27 and did not provide an answer.

TABLE 3.27 – QUESTION 27  
 “I feel I maintain a healthy balance of personal and music life.”

SELECT ONE	RESPONDENTS (95)	PERCENTAGE
0 – Strongly disagree	9	9.47%
1 – Disagree	17	17.89%
2 – Partly disagree	19	20.00%
3 – Partly agree	35	36.84%
4 – Agree	13	13.68%
5 – Strongly agree	2	2.11%

Question 28, a closed-ended question, asked subjects “Do you feel stress or anxiety related to your music studies at USC School of Music?” Of the ninety-one (91) responses only five (5) said that they do not feel stress or anxiety related to their music studies. Question 29, an open-ended question, asked subjects “What factors elevate your stress and anxiety?” Some of the responses to Question 29 include:

- Private lessons
- Homework and projects
- Rehearsal and ensemble practice
- High expectations from professors and peers
- Finances
- Inadequate practice facilities
- Deadlines for schoolwork
- Relationship problems



Question 30, an open – ended question, asked subjects to “Please list anything you do (healthy or unhealthy) to alleviate your stress and anxiety.” Some of the responses to Question 30 include:

- Sleep
- Exercise
- Play video games
- Watch television or movies
- Drinking alcohol
- Smoking marijuana
- Going to parties
- Reading and writing
- Drawing and painting
- Cooking
- Volunteering at local pet shelters
- Meditation
- Prescribed medication

## CHAPTER 4

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of the study was to explore the attitudes towards burnout of student musicians at the University of South Carolina School of Music. A survey was created based on models in the research literature, and was administered to music students with the permission of the School of Music administration. The University of South Carolina Institutional Review Board for Human Research (IRB) approved the study for exempt review. A copy of the IRB approval letter may be found in Appendix C. The Internet-based survey was distributed to the 416 University of South Carolina School of Music undergraduate and graduate music majors. The survey was distributed on March 9, 2016 to the graduate students and to the undergraduate students on March 11, 2016. The survey was closed on March 15, 2016. A total of 102 responses were submitted online for a 24.5% response rate. Four of the questionnaires were not completed properly and were not included in this study. A copy of the research instrument may be found in Appendix A.

#### 4.1 SUMMARY OF QUESTIONS CONCERNING EMOTIONAL EXHAUSTION

Questions 5 – 10 were focused on participants' attitudes concerning emotional exhaustion. An average of 50.85% of respondents experience emotional exhaustion multiple times a week. This indicated that just over half of the subjects who participated in the study were currently facing high levels of emotional exhaustion. Studies have

shown that high levels of emotional exhaustion usually lead to a high degree of burnout.<sup>72</sup> Although a high level of emotional exhaustion is more likely to lead to a high degree of burnout, one must also take into consideration depersonalization and personal accomplishment.

#### 4.2 SUMMARY OF QUESTIONS CONCERNING DEPERSONALIZATION

Questions 11 – 15 were focused on participants' attitudes concerning depersonalization. Results from the study show that 60.32% of respondents have low levels of depersonalization. The remaining 39.68% of respondents showed high levels of depersonalization. For the subjects who scored high levels for both depersonalization and emotional exhaustion, above average to high levels of burnout are to be expected.<sup>73</sup>

Participants who have high levels of emotional exhaustion but low levels of depersonalization may experience average to low degrees of burnout. The few participants who have low levels for both emotional exhaustion and depersonalization may expect low degrees of burnout.

#### 4.3 SUMMARY OF QUESTIONS CONCERNING PERSONAL ACCOMPLISHMENT

Questions 16 – 18 were focused on participants' attitudes concerning personal accomplishment. The results from the study show that 84.03% of respondents have high levels of personal accomplishment and the remaining 15.97% of respondents experience low levels of personal accomplishment. A low score of personal accomplishment accompanied by high scores in both emotional exhaustion and depersonalization indicate

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<sup>72</sup> Maslach, Jackson, and Leiter, *Maslach Burnout Inventory Manual*, 5.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

a high degree of burnout.<sup>74</sup> Based on the results from the study, many of the respondents experience average to low degrees of burnout. The subjects from the study have an overall healthy outlook and attitude towards burnout as it is related to their musical studies.

#### 4.4 SUMMARY OF QUESTIONS CONCERNING PRACTICE

Questions 19 – 21 were focused on participants' attitudes concerning their musical practice. 64.93% of the participants show a healthy and positive attitude towards practice. 37.07% of participants had a negative attitude towards their practice and their ability to focus and progress during a practice session.

#### 4.5 SUMMARY OF QUESTIONS CONCERNING PERFORMANCE EXPERIENCE

Questions 22 – 24 were focused on participants' attitudes concerning their performance experience. 78.56% of participants show a positive outlook towards performance experience and performance opportunities. Only 22.10% of participants felt insufficient about their performance experiences.

#### 4.6 SUMMARY OF QUESTIONS CONCERNING BALANCE BETWEEN

##### PERSONAL AND MUSIC LIFE

Questions 25 – 27 were focused on participants' attitudes concerning balance between personal and music life. 52.63% of participants felt they are able to maintain a healthy balance between their personal and music life whereas the remaining 47.56% feel that they are not balanced and the majority of their time and efforts go to musical life.

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

#### 4.7 SUMMARY OF SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

Questions 28 – 30 consisted of one closed-ended and two open-ended questions. The majority of respondents, excluding five, feel stress or anxiety because of to their music studies at USC School of music. A variety of factors that elevate stress and anxiety were identified. A list of the most common factors was listed in Chapter Three of the study. Our study found that the majority of respondents claim that private lessons and schoolwork (homework, exams, projects) are the main factors that elevate stress and anxiety. The final question of the survey asked participants to list anything (healthy or unhealthy) that helps alleviate stress and anxiety. A list of the most common alleviations can be found in Chapter Three of the study. Some of the most common responses included sleeping, exercising, drinking alcohol, and watching television and or movies.

#### 4.8 CONCLUSION

The research instrument revealed that the majority of music majors at the University of South Carolina are experiencing average to low levels of burnout. Even though the majority have high levels of emotional exhaustion, low levels of depersonalization and high levels of personal accomplishment indicate low levels of burnout. The survey results suggest that music students are experiencing high levels of stress and anxiety caused by music studies. Students who experience high levels of stress and anxiety for prolonged periods of time are more susceptible to increased levels of burnout.

The survey results suggest that the majority of music majors are maintaining a balance between personal and music life. This is supported by the fact that the majority

of music majors are reporting productive practice sessions along with positive performance experiences.

This study revealed that at the time of the study music students attending the University of South Carolina report having stress and anxiety due to musical studies, but are able to maintain a healthy balance between personal and music life and show signs of average to low levels of burnout. It is important that students are aware that prolonged exposure to stress and anxiety can lead to burnout. When experiencing burnout, passion and motivation for one's work is depleted and what was once a calling can become a struggle and burden. Music students who feel high levels of stress and anxiety should seek help from teachers and the University of South Carolina Student Health Services counseling center.

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APPENDIX A – UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA SCHOOL OF  
MUSIC BURNOUT QUESTIONNAIRE

**Demographic Data / General Information (Please select from the drop down menu)**

1. Gender: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Year in School (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, graduate): \_\_\_\_\_
3. Major (B.M. performance, B.A. in music, B.M. education, Music minor, Undergraduate performance certificate, M.M. performance, M.M. education, M.M. piano pedagogy, M.A. teaching, Graduate performance certificate, D.M.A. performance, D.M.A. piano pedagogy, etc.): \_\_\_\_\_
4. Primary Instrument: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please circle the rating that best fits your answers. The rating is as follows:*

*0 – Never, 1 – Once a month or less, 2 – A few times a month, 3 – Once a week, 4 – A few times a week, 5 – Daily*

**Questions Concerning Emotional Exhaustion**

5. I feel emotionally drained from my schoolwork.  
0 1 2 3 4 5
6. I feel used up at the end of my school day.  
0 1 2 3 4 5
7. I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day of school.  
0 1 2 3 4 5
8. I feel frustrated by my schoolwork.  
0 1 2 3 4 5
9. I feel a general sense of burnout.  
0 1 2 3 4 5
10. I feel burned out specifically from schoolwork.  
0 1 2 3 4 5

Please circle the rating that best fits your answers. The rating is as follows:

0 – Strongly Disagree, 1 – Disagree, 2 – Partly Disagree, 3 – Partly Agree, 4 – Agree, 5 – Strongly Agree

**Questions Concerning Depersonalization (One’s feelings towards work and colleagues)**

11. I’ve become more callous towards people since enrolling at USC School of Music.

0 1 2 3 4 5

12. I worry that school is hardening me emotionally.

0 1 2 3 4 5

13. I feel that I am losing interest in my colleagues and friends.

0 1 2 3 4 5

14. I feel myself caring less about what happens to my colleagues or friends.

0 1 2 3 4 5

15. I feel that I have become less productive.

0 1 2 3 4 5

**Questions Concerning Personal Accomplishment**

16. I feel good after working closely with my colleagues.

0 1 2 3 4 5

17. I have accomplished many worthwhile things while attending USC.

0 1 2 3 4 5

18. I feel I am positively influencing peoples’ lives through my work and music.

0 1 2 3 4 5

**Questions Concerning Practice**

19. I feel focused during my practice session.

0 1 2 3 4 5

20. I maintain focus throughout a practice session.

0 1 2 3 4 5

21. I feel accomplished after a practice session.

0 1 2 3 4 5

**Questions Concerning Performance Experience**

22. I feel excited for performances and performance opportunities.

0 1 2 3 4 5

23. I feel calm and ready before a performance.

0 1 2 3 4 5

24. I feel accomplished and proud after a performance.

0 1 2 3 4 5

**Questions Concerning Balance Between Personal and Music Life**

25. I feel that I spend more time on music studies than socializing with friends and family.

0 1 2 3 4 5

26. I feel that I spend more time socializing with friends and family than on music studies.

0 1 2 3 4 5

27. I feel I maintain a healthy balance of personal and music life.

0 1 2 3 4 5

**Short Answer Questions (DO NOT write your name in the responses)**

28. Do you feel stress or anxiety related to your music studies at USC School of Music?

29. What factors elevate your stress and anxiety?

30. Please list anything you do (healthy or unhealthy) to alleviate your stress and anxiety.

*This concludes the University of South Carolina School of Music Burnout Questionnaire, thank you for your participation.*

## APPENDIX B – ELECTRONIC MAIL APPROVAL FROM SCHOOL OF MUSIC ADMINISTRATION

Gmail - consent

<https://mail.google.com/mail/?ui=2&ik=47bf215526&view=pt...>



philip castro <philipd.castro@gmail.com>

---

### consent

1 message

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**GOWAN, ANDREW** <agowan@mozart.sc.edu>  
To: philip castro <philipd.castro@gmail.com>

Mon, Feb 22, 2016 at 9:27 AM

I have communicated with Dean harding, and we offer our consent for you to administer a survey to students at the USC School of Music.

Andrew Gowan, D.M.A.  
Executive Associate Dean of Music  
Director of Graduate Music Studies  
University of South Carolina  
813 Assembly Street  
Columbia, SC 29208  
803-777-2838 phone  
803-777-6508 fax

## APPENDIX C – IRB APPROVAL LETTER



### INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FOR HUMAN RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER for EXEMPT REVIEW

This is to certify that the research proposal: **Pro00053597**

Entitled: *A Survey of Attitudes Towards Burnout Among Music Students at The University of South Carolina School of Music*

Submitted by:

Principal Investigator: Philip Castro  
School of Music  
813 Assembly Street  
Columbia, SC 29208

was reviewed in accordance with 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2), the referenced study received an exemption from Human Research Subject Regulations on **3/8/2016**. No further action or Institutional Review Board (IRB) oversight is required, as long as the project remains the same. However, the Principal Investigator must inform the Office of Research Compliance of any



changes in procedures involving human subjects. Changes to the current research protocol could result in a reclassification of the study and further review by the IRB.

Because this project was determined to be exempt from further IRB oversight, consent document(s), if applicable, are not stamped with an expiration date.

Research related records should be retained for a minimum of three (3) years after termination of the study.

The Office of Research Compliance is an administrative office that supports the University of South Carolina Institutional Review Board (USC IRB). If you have questions, contact Arlene McWhorter at [arlenem@sc.edu](mailto:arlenem@sc.edu) or (803) 777-7095.



Sincerely,  
Lisa M. Johnson  
IRB Manager

## APPENDIX D – PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

You are being invited to participate in a research study about music students' attitudes towards burnout at the University of South Carolina School of Music. Philip David Castro, candidate in M.M. Piano Pedagogy, is conducting this research project.

The objective of this research project is to attempt to understand music students' feelings concerning emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, accomplishment, and work/life balance, as contributing factors to burnout.

Anonymity of participants is guaranteed, and there is no risk associated with participation, nor is any financial cost associated with participation in the study. If you choose to participate, do not write your name on the questionnaire. Although results from this study will be published, no information that could identify you will be included.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose to participate, visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/USCburnout> and complete the questionnaire.

If you have any questions or concerns about completing the questionnaire or about participation in the study, you may contact Philip Castro at [pcastro@email.sc.edu](mailto:pcastro@email.sc.edu).

The USC Institutional Review Board has reviewed my request and granted approval to conduct this project. Approval has been given by the Dean and Graduate Director of The University of South Carolina School of Music to administer the questionnaire. If you have any concerns about your rights in this study, please contact The Office of Research Compliance at 803-777-7095.

*IRB NUMBER: Pro00053597*