



# The future of music department: Scenarios and envisioning for 2030

Pongpob Sukittiwong<sup>a</sup>, Somchai Trakarnrung<sup>b,\*</sup>, Anak Charanyananda<sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Music Education, Doctoral of Philosophy Program in Music, College of Music, Mahidol University, Nakhon Pathom 73170, Thailand

<sup>b</sup> Faculty of Graduate Studies, Mahidol University, Nakhon Pathom 73170, Thailand

<sup>c</sup> Musicology, College of Music, Mahidol University, Nakhon Pathom 73170, Thailand

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## Abstract

The research aimed to (1) study the influencing factors that affect the future of the Western Music Department (WTMU) at Chandrakasem Rajabhat University (CRU), and (2) analyze and build the futures scenarios of the WTMU at CRU. The informants included (1) five WTMU administrators, (2) three faculty administrators, (3) three CRU administrators, (4) three employers, (5) three administrators from other higher education music institutions, (6) three experts, and (7) Documents. The research method employed deep environmental scanning and ethnographic futures research to study the influencing factors. These factors were analyzed for their impact and uncertainty, resulting in the building of four scenarios. The findings of the research revealed that: seven key factors were identified: (1) changes in state and higher education policies due to changes in the government, (2) the promotion of the National Credit Bank System policy, (3) changes in criteria and methods for determining academic position, (4) the rapid growth of demand for personnel in the entertainment and live performance industries, (5) inflation and the risk of economic recession, (6) the department's inability to adapt to changing situations, and (7) insufficient workload for full-time instructors. The scenarios of the WTMU at CRU consisted of four scenarios: (1) continuation: 3rd generation of WTMU, CRU, (2) limits or discipline: College of Music, Rattanakosin Rajabhat University Group, (3) decline and collapse: the discharge of CRU's vanguard, and (4) transformation: the central hub for music professionals in Bangkok.

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\* Corresponding author.

E-mail address: [somchai.tra@mahidol.edu](mailto:somchai.tra@mahidol.edu) (S. Trakarnrung).

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## Introduction

Thai higher education currently faces substantial challenges due to both domestic and global factors. These include: (1) Demographic shifts, characterized by a declining student population and Thailand's transition to an aged society by 2025, leading to decreased higher education enrollment (Office of the Higher Education Commission, 2018); (2) Rapid economic and labor market transformations driven by technological advancements, alongside outdated higher education instruction that have remained largely unchanged for decades (Christensen & Eyring, 2011), resulting in many existing curricula failing to adequately meet societal needs; (3) The burden of higher education costs, which have grown due to ongoing competition, making it increasingly difficult for low- and middle-income families to afford (Vonderembse, 2018), thus creating significant barriers to accessing and completing education in a timely manner, as well as contributing to student loan debt; (4) The rise in popularity and efficiency of information technology innovations in education (Horn & Staker, 2015), accelerated as a replacement for traditional instruction by the COVID-19 pandemic; (5) The unpredictable challenges posed by the development of artificial intelligence technologies; and (6) Expectations from the Thai government to reform the national education system through a higher education reform (Office of the Higher Education Commission, 2018). These factors exert pressure on higher education in various aspects, such as input, output, and educational processes. Consequently, institutions and organizations within the higher education sector face the challenge of finding ways to adapt and thrive in these difficult conditions.

The Western Music Department (WTMU) under the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (HUSO), Chandrakasem Rajabhat University (CRU) began offering a music education curriculum in 1978. At that time, the music education curriculum focused on producing music teachers with a strong foundation in classical music, similar to other institutions during the same period. However, around 1990, the department administrators at that time were Asst. Prof. Adoon Wongkhaw and Asst. Prof. Rachen Muanchob, envisioned the future of the music industry and its technology (Wongkaew et al., 2020). They made efforts to transform the educational management by promoting and implementing the inclusion of music technology and popular music into curriculum and instruction. In 2006, the WTMU developed a Bachelor of Arts program in Western Music,

which was focused on producing professional musicians and music technologists directly. As a result of these developments, students from the WTMU possessed unique strengths in music technology and professional performance, particularly in popular music, setting them apart from other institutions at the time. Furthermore, the WTMU established a strong network of collaboration with music teachers and professional musicians across the country through its long-standing training programs. This fostered a close-knit, family-like organizational culture, enabling the continuous transmission of profession from older to younger generations. This strong foundation has remained a directing principle for their operations up to the present day.

However, due to the current issues in higher education, along with changes in the WTMU, as reflected by (1) the continuous decline in the number of applicants, (2) the generational turnover of full-time instructors and the retirement of senior instructors, (3) changes in university policies, and (4) the insipidity of the long-standing vision that has driven the department, along with numerous factors, presents significant challenges for the department's leadership in making decisions for future operations and maintaining continuous growth from the past. In this complex situation, making decisions based on experience and available information might not be sufficient. It is imperative to study the scenarios of the WTMU based on the concepts and processes of futures research. This is because of the challenges from complex and uncertain factors in Thai higher education today. In order to study and review the factors that drive the futures, both internal and external, it is essential to reflect on the perspectives of those involved in shaping the future, who are key persons in building future events.

Futures studies or future research is a powerful systematic process of gathering and analyzing data based on scientific principles, unlike predicting the future through astrology or horoscope. Moreover, futures studies have become popular and are employed as a process for formulating policies of various organizations and countries. Developing futures scenarios fosters an understanding of possible future consequences, enabling us to prepare, alleviate, or avert undesirable future. Additionally, it drives and shapes the path towards a desired future. In this research, the futures studies were applied to (1) study the influencing factors that affect the futures scenarios of the WTMU at CRU, and (2) analyze and build the futures scenarios of the WTMU at CRU, by integrating various future research techniques, covering quantitative and qualitative data analysis,

such as deep environmental scanning, ethnographic futures research (EFR), impact and uncertainty analysis, and scenario building, as well as connoisseurship to explore the facts and opinions of stakeholders in the organization.

## Literature Review

### *Futures Studies*

Knowledge and understanding about the future have been continually developed in various forms, such as fortune-telling and astrology. However, this research aims to present a specific perspective on studying the future based on modern study principles, which encompass concepts and systematic processes referred to as ‘Futures Studies’ or ‘Future Research’. In this research, the focus is on studying the future based on the key principle that (Dator, 2019) futures studies is not or should not be about pretending to predict the future. Futures studies is about studying the ideas about the future, which are generally called “images of the future”, held by individuals or groups. These images of the future often serve as the basis for action in the present, which is different from other perspectives on future studies, such as: (1) Studying the future through imagining diverse alternative futures, known as “possible futures” (Amara, 1991); (2) Focusing on phenomena that are likely to occur under specific time frames and conditions, called “probable futures” (Bell, 2003); (3) Emphasizing visions, known as “preferable futures” (Hancock & Bezold, 1993); (4) The future from the perspective of utopias of desired societies (Masini, 1981); (5) The future that can accept the possibilities considering what is happening in the present, called “plausible futures” (Hancock & Bezold, 1993); and (6) Future studies driven by unexpected events or “wild cards” (Hancock & Bezold, 1993).

In this research, the study of factors affecting the future was based on the concept of Jim Dator (2019), which suggested that although we could not predict with certainty what would happen in the future, the occurrence of future events could be considered from the interaction of four components: events, trends, images, and actions.

### *Time Horizon*

Determining the time horizon for studying the future, which will be a framework for setting clear future

study goals. The time horizon must be specified by answering the important question of which time frame the study process will cover (Schwenker & Wulf, 2013). Generally, future studies have time-bound scopes that can be divided into five periods (Manasathitpong, 2014): (1) Near term future, referring to the future within 1 year from the present; (2) Short range future, referring to the future between 1–5 years from the present; (3) Middle range future, referring to the future between 5–20 years from the present; (4) Long range future, referring to the future between 20–50 years from the present; and (5) Far future, referring to the future from 50 years onwards from the present. This research aims to study the middle range future because it is a future resulting from both past decisions and potentially rapid and drastic changes, which is an appropriate time frame for preparing to cope.

### *Methods for Studying the Future*

Futurists have developed various methods for studying the future over time, with different principles, objectives, conditions, and limitations. Currently, future studies involve a combination of diverse methods, taking into account the wide range of data types and appropriate participation of stakeholders based on the context of studying the future. This research has chosen to combine four important methods, including:

Ethnographic futures research (EFR) is a process of studying the future that applies the concepts and methods of cultural anthropology and ethnography to explore and identify perspectives on the future for a particular social and cultural group (Textor, 1995).

Deep Environmental Scanning or Deep Horizon Scanning is the process of collecting and analyzing data to distinguish between factors or events that are constant, changing, or constantly changing, as well as identifying weak signals that indicate significant changes and causes that may occur in the future (Ratanawaraha, 2020).

Impact and Uncertainty Analysis is the process of identifying the characteristics of factors by analyzing their impacts and uncertainties. It examines which drivers have high levels of uncertainty or change and have the most significant impact on the future being analyzed. (Innovation Foresight Institute, 2019)

Scenario building is a popular method for forecasting and raising awareness about possible developments and alternatives that may occur in the future. In this research, scenarios will be developed based on Dator’s (2019) concept of the four generic alternative futures which consists of four fundamental potential scenarios

for various societies or organizations: (1) continuation, (2) limits and discipline, (3) decline and collapse, and (4) transformation.

### *The Scope of Factors Affecting the Future*

The scope of internal factors affecting the future of WTMU can be adapted from the research findings of Thuntawech (2017), including (1) administration and management, including organizational philosophies, identity, and budget; (2) curriculum and instructions, including the level of study, Purposes of the curriculum, contents, teaching methods, evaluation, and activities and services; (3) facilities, including buildings and Environments, learning media; and (4) personnel, including instructors responsible for the program, full-time instructors, part-time instructors, students, staff, and alumni.

The scope of external factors affecting the future of WTMU in four aspects according to the PEST framework (Innovation Foresight Institute, 2019) consists of politics, economy, society, and technology.

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## **Methodology**

This research utilized a mixed-methods future research approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative data, as well as various future research techniques, to build futures scenarios for the WTMU at CRU. The research process is divided into two phases: Phase one the Study of influencing factors that affect the futures scenarios of the WTMU, and Phase two analyzing and building the futures scenarios of the WTMU.

### *Informants*

The informants were selected by purposive sampling, focusing on individuals who were key informants about the organization and higher education in music, as well as those who had played a role in driving the WTMU. In the research phase one, there had been six groups of individuals and one group of documents, which had included: (1) Five WTMU administrators who had the qualifications of being current or former chairpersons or board members of the WTMU; (2) Three administrators of the Faculty of HUSO, who held the position of the current dean, former dean, or vice dean of the faculty; (3) Three administrators of CRU, who possessed qualifications as the current or former university president or vice-president; (4) Three employers,

who had qualifications as entrepreneurs in the music industry or music business for more than ten years and had been using graduates from the WTMU for more than five years; (5) Three higher education administrators from other music institutions, who had qualifications as heads of departments, heads of programs, or deans in institutions that offered music program in the group of Rajabhat universities or universities in Bangkok; (6) Three experts in futures studies or administrators of higher education institutions, who had been engaged in academic work in organizations or institutions with a focus on futures studies in Thailand for more than five years, or were administrators in higher education institutions for more than ten years; and (7) Documents, such as curricula, laws, regulations, self-assessment reports, strategic plans, official documents, meeting reports, and public reports.

The research in Phrase two used the same group of key informants as in Phrase one, but specifically selected those who were internal personnel of CRU, which included: (1) Five WTMU administrators, (2) Three faculty administrators, and (3) Three CRU administrators.

### *Data Collection*

The research in phrase one aimed to identify factors that affect the future of WTMU and the impact on the future of WTMU. The EFR approach was used to gather information from interviews with key informants in six groups, and the Deep Environmental Scanning method was used to capture signals and collect data from media and documents.

The research in phrase two aimed to analyze and filter key factors to build scenarios. This was done by evaluating the opinions of internal informants in three groups on the impact and uncertainty of factors obtained from the research in phrase one, using a 10-point rating scale for evaluation.

### *Data Analysis*

In phrase one, data from interviews were transcribed, and a database was created in conjunction with data from document analysis. Analytic induction was performed to code, categorize, arrange, and summarize the list of factors affecting the future of the WTMU.

In phrase two, data from the analysis of impact and uncertainty were processed using average statistics and then plotted on a two-dimensional matrix with the X-axis representing the level of impact, and the Y-axis

representing the level of uncertainty. This classification resulted in two groups of factors: (1) Key Factors, which have high impact and high uncertainty; (2) Predetermined Trends Factors, which have high impact but low uncertainty. These two groups of factors were considered in creating scenarios for the WTMU. Factors with low impact were not considered in building scenarios.

Additionally, the key factors were analyzed for their projections to cover the possible variations of the factors, and all data were used to create 4 scenarios (Dator, 2019): (1) continuation, (2) limits and discipline, (3) decline and collapse, and (4) transformation. The synthesis of scenarios considered the consistency of the four scenarios and the interrelationship between cause-and-effect factors. Furthermore, the four futures scenarios were used in a connoisseurship to criticize and propose guidelines for coping with the future, involving representatives from program administrators, faculty, and university levels, totaling four participants.

## Results

This article focused on presenting the research results of Phase two, Analyzing and building the futures scenarios of the WTMU using the results from the study of influencing factors that affect the future in Phase one. It was found that there were 39 factors, divided into 20 external factors and 19 internal factors. These factors were analyzed for their level of impact and uncertainty, and the results were displayed on a two-dimensional matrix with the X-axis representing the level of impact from 0 to 10, and the Y-axis representing the level of uncertainty from 0 to 10. Circle symbols were used to indicate the position based on the average impact and uncertainty of each factor using the abbreviation “F” (Factor) followed by the number of the factor. The presentation was divided according to the groups of factors, including external factors and internal factors.

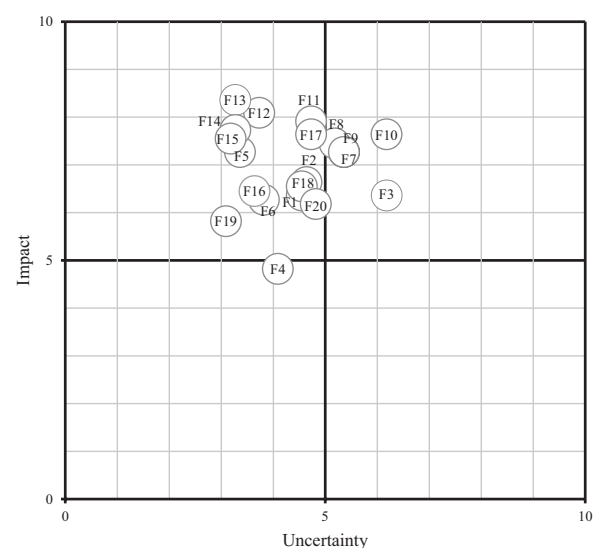
### *The Analysis of the Impact and Uncertainty of External Factors*

Considering Figure 1, we were able to divide the factors into two groups, indicating the average of impact and uncertainty in parentheses after each factor sequentially, in the following order:

**Key factors:** There are 5 factors, including: Factor 3 (event of changes in state and higher education policies

due to changes in the government; 6.36, 6.18), Factor 7 (event of the promotion of the National Credit Bank System policy; 7.27, 5.36), Factor 8 (event of changes in criteria and methods for determining academic position; 7.45, 5.18), Factor 9 (trend of the rapid growth of demand for personnel in the entertainment and live performance industries; 7.27, 5.36), and Factor 10 (event of inflation and risk of economic recession; 7.64, 6.18).

**Predetermined trends factors:** There are 14 factors in this group, including Factor 1 (trend of decreasing government budget support; 6.36, 4.55), Factor 2 (trend of termination, combining, or organizational restructuring in higher education institutions; 6.64, 4.64), Factor 5 (event of regulatory and bureaucratic culture impedes university transformation; 7.27, 3.36), Factor 6 (event of the revision of Thai Qualifications Framework for higher education concerning knowledge, skills, ethics, and personal characteristics; 6.27, 3.82), Factor 11 (trend of the increasing of students taking a break or dropping out of the higher education; 7.91, 4.73), Factor 12 (trend of decreased demand for enrolling in bachelor’s degree programs in music; 8.09, 3.73), Factor 13 (trend of increasing competition intensity among higher education institutions for attracting students; 8.36, 3.27), Factor 14 (event of an increased demand for flexible music curricula catering to diverse student interests; 7.73, 3.27), Factor 15 (event of increased demand for degree or certificate programs focusing on competency development; 7.55, 3.18), Factor 16



**Figure 1** Matrix chart of external factors’ impact and uncertainty



(event of increased demand for higher education courses that enable students to earn income while studying; 6.45, 3.64), Factor 17 (event of changing characteristics of new-generation students; 7.64, 4.73), Factor 18 (event of global competition in higher education due to the development of information technology; 6.55, 4.55), Factor 19 (event of the advancement of music production technology; 5.82, 3.09), and Factor 20 (event of the development of artificial intelligence technology; 6.18, 4.82).

Factor 4 (event of the announcement of the ministerial regulation B.E. 2564 (2021) on the higher education institutions grouping; 4.82, 4.09) was not considered in building scenarios.

### *The Analysis of the Impact and Uncertainty of Internal Factors*

Since there are no internal factors with an impact value lower than 5.00, the values on the vertical axis start from 5.00 onwards, which can be seen in Figure 2.

Considering Figure 2, we were able to divide the factors into two groups, indicating the average of impact and uncertainty in parentheses after each factor sequentially, in the following order:

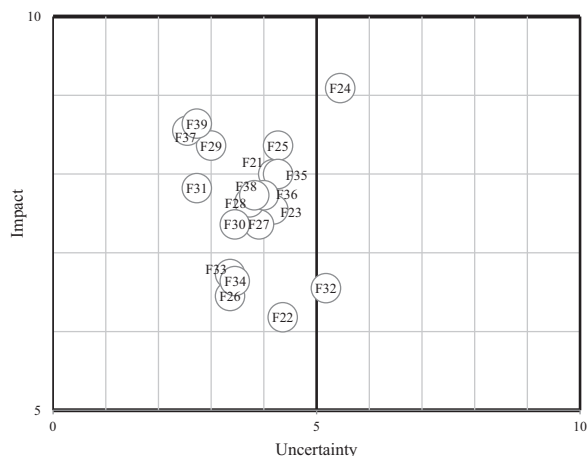
**Key factors:** This type of factor has two factors, consisting of factor 24 (event of the department's inability to adapt to changing situations; 9.09, 5.45), and factor 32 (trend of insufficient workload for full-time instructors; 6.55, 5.18).

**Predetermined trends factors:** There are 17 factors in this group that will affect all scenarios. These factors include: Factor 21 (trend of decline in family-like relationships between instructors, students, and alumni;

8.00, 4.18), Factor 22 (trend of decreased financial support from the university; 6.18, 4.36), Factor 23 (trend of the department having the opportunity to be supported as a distinguished department of the university; 7.55, 4.18), Factor 25 (event of the department attempts to change its identity to suit the current personnel and social context; 8.36, 4.27), Factor 26 (trend of merging the western music education and Thai music education programs; 6.45, 3.36), Factor 27 (trend of the department having more flexible curricula to respond to the diverse needs of learners of all ages; 7.36, 3.91), Factor 28 (event of the department begins to develop certificate programs focusing on musical performance and music technology in collaboration with other organizations; 7.64, 3.73), Factor 29 (event of deteriorating and insufficient classrooms and teaching equipment; 8.36, 3.00), Factor 30 (event of administration of teaching and learning facilities without unity; 7.36, 3.45), Factor 31 (trend of full-time instructors having a workload exceeding their capacity; 7.82, 2.73), Factor 33 (trend of increasing full-time instructors with a doctoral degree, not less than 4 people; 6.73, 3.36), Factor 34 (trend of increasing assistant professor positions, not less than three people; 6.64, 3.45), Factor 35 (event of a high turnover rate among full-time instructors; 8.00, 4.27), Factor 36 (event where current full-time instructors have a chance to leave their positions; 7.73, 4.00). Factor 37 (event where non-academic workload reduces work efficiency; 8.55, 2.55), Factor 38 (trend of a slight decrease in the number of new students; 7.73, 3.82), and Factor 39 (trend of a clear decrease in the number of applicants for enrollment; 8.64, 2.73)

Upon reviewing the overall picture, it was found that external factors had an average impact rating of 6.98, while internal factors had an average rating of 7.62. This reflected the opinions of the informants that internal factors had a more severe impact, often reaching a level of 7.62 out of a maximum score of 10.

Additionally, in terms of the uncertainties, external factors had an average rating of 4.39, while internal factors were at 4.79. This reflected the perspective of the informants that internal factors were slightly harder to predict than external ones. However, these average values were in the moderate range out of a full score of 10, indicating a general view that all factors had a medium level of uncertainty.



**Figure 2** Matrix chart of internal factors' impact and uncertainty

### *Futures Scenarios Building for the WTMU*

The futures scenarios of the WTMU at CRU were descriptions of situations and surrounding components

that could have affected the WTMU in the future. The researcher had named each scenario to provide an easily understandable definition of that particular scenario, along with a detailed description of the conditions and situations of that scenario. In this article, the focus was on presenting only the highlight parts of each scenario.

#### *Scenarios I continuation: 3rd Generation of WTMU, CRU*

The WTMU has experienced continuous growth, transitioning from the first generation led by pioneering instructors, to the second generation where the vision was passed on by alumni instructors. In this scenario, this will evolve into the third generation, driven by new instructors with diverse backgrounds who have received their education from various institutions. This leads to a shift in organizational culture, becoming more systematic and focused on work efficiency. The situation is propelled by important internal factors, such as the WTMU adapting the organization to the changing landscape while being encouraged by the CRU to become a distinguished department. The WTMU has established their vision and strategy based on existing reputation and strengths. It has developed master's and certificate programs that emphasize professional development for a large number of alumni, aligning with external factors that continue from the current situation, such as the implementation of the National Credit Bank policy. This causes higher education institutions in music to compete by offering diverse programs. Moreover, the existing bachelor's programs have been revised in collaboration with industry partners, focusing on outcome-based education and work-integrated learning, as well as developing programs to accommodate students from the People's Republic of China. Furthermore, the department and university have gradually expanded their education management under investment efforts, aiming to make the WTMU stand out as a representative that attracts interest and creates a new image for the university.

#### *Scenarios II limits and discipline: College of Music, Rattanakosin Rajabhat University Group*

The WTMU has experienced significant structural changes due to the centralization policy of the Rattanakosin Rajabhat Universities Group. As a result, overlapping music programs within the group have been consolidated under a centralized college of music, which manages resources such as budget, facilities, and instructors collectively. The WTMU is responsible for teaching popular music and music technology.

These subjects are part of the central bachelor's degree program in music, which allocates teaching responsibilities for major subjects to Rajabhat universities in the group based on their areas of expertise. Additionally, the department is tasked with developing related certificate programs in popular music and music technology. However, due to stringent standards and regulations, it has become challenging to develop graduates with unique identities. Instructional methods have come to resemble industrial production processes, lacking charm and artistic inspiration. Furthermore, the WTMU has been affected by state policies and regulations, creating pressure on their work, and forcing some expert instructors to leave the system. This has led to a decrease in the department's size, as well as changes in the organizational culture, with a decline in close-knit, family-like relationships. The department now lacks the autonomy to make decisions for driving the organization as it did previously, relying on centralized decision-making and being pressured to pass quality insurance based on international standards.

#### *Scenarios III decline and collapse: The discharge of CRU's vanguard*

The role of the WTMU has been significantly reduced from a leading department that drove the curriculum and activities to enhance the university's reputation. This decline is primarily due to organizational management issues rooted in a bureaucratic culture. This has led to the loss of talented personnel because of frustration and the emergence of different values among individuals who prefer staying in their comfort zones. The department lacks vision and creativity in problem-solving and strategic organizational development. While the department has revised its undergraduate curriculum periodically, it has not adapted its content to meet the evolving needs of society.

The WTMU is grappling with several external factors, such as severe budget cuts from the government due to the economic downturn, fierce competition from other institutions, rapid advancements in technology, especially artificial intelligence, and strict enforcement of professional qualifications in the entertainment industry. These factors have dramatically transformed the nature of work and societal demands, shifting focus towards modern, flexible curriculums that emphasize essential professional skills and technology-driven approaches. As a result, the WTMU's curriculum and activities that have not adapted to these changes have experienced a significant loss in popularity, leading to

a decrease in new students and a shortage of workload for full-time instructors. The WTMU is no longer at the forefront of producing professional musicians and music technologists for society.

*Scenarios IV transformation: The central hub for music professionals in Bangkok*

The WTMU has been working hard to modernize and adapt its organization to the changing society. They have turned the intense competition in higher education, arising from the National Credit Bank System policy, into an opportunity to reach new groups of students. The department utilizes its strengths, including location, alumni network, industry connections, expertise, university support, and investment in disruptive educational technology, to drive curricula and activities that align with society's needs. The cooperation between older and newer generation instructors, resulting from successful organizational culture reform, has made curriculum and activity implementation highly effective. Moreover, the WTMU has become a hub for professional music by establishing a center for professional music and performance services. This collaborative effort between instructors, students, alumni, and business networks provides comprehensive services through a cooperative education management system. It offers students professional experience while delivering serious business services. In addition, students are developed to meet industry professional standards and utilize technology to enhance the quality of education and reduce workload.

Despite facing crises and numerous pressures, the department's dedication and support from the university have made the WTMU stand out professionally. The WTMU is becoming a prominent professional music hub in Bangkok.

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## Discussion

The results from the connoisseurship to criticize the futures scenarios and propose guidelines to cope with the future indicated clear directions. The most important variable in every futures scenario is the actions of the WTMU, or the factors that mean the WTMU cannot adapt to the changing situation. The average of the impact is the highest at 9.09, and the uncertainty is at 5.45. The administrators have identified the main cause of this factor as "cooperation and unity among personnel in the organization". They propose a suitable way to create cooperation for the current situation:

personnel in the WTMU must accept changes in the organizational culture. In the past, the WTMU had a family-like culture where most of the full-time instructors were alumni. However, now the personnel have diverse backgrounds. The appropriate approach today is to change to the new organizational culture. The personnel should participate in decision-making and determine the important direction for the WTMU. This is to create a sense of ownership in the organization together, as well as to use the advantages of the diversity of the personnel as a factor in determining the direction of the organization. Operating in such a manner will result from rationality, appropriate compensation for assisting the organization. And, cooperation will emerge from facing the situation together.

In addition, strategies for pushing towards the desired future involve leveraging the department's past strengths to suit the present, such as developing relationships with networks of entrepreneurs for collaboration in education management and job creation for graduates, promoting activities that create professional momentum and public relations for the WTMU after the pandemic situation, and creating professional service businesses based on the department's expertise by leveraging personnel at all levels as a mechanism to generate income and negotiate for support from the university.

Moreover, the relationship between external and internal factors that had affected each scenario had been significantly driven by the actions of personnel within the organization. That is to say, external factors consisted of obstacles, pressures, and opportunities. When the internal factors, especially the adjustments to various changing situations, had arisen, it led to diverse future alternatives. The scenario IV reflected a strong attempt to adapt and turn crises into opportunities, thus creating a significant growth leap for the organization. This was different from the scenario I, which had adjusted according to the trends of change, and growth had occurred continuously, gradually following the changing trends. This was different from the scenario II & III, where the organization couldn't adapt in time, and hence, they were impacted by the severe external factors in various ways.

Furthermore, the results of studying factors affecting the future in several aspects are consistent with the results of past studies, such as (1) The Factor event of regulatory and bureaucratic culture impedes university transformation, are consistent with the key factors in the studies of Boonjae (2014) and Kijtorntam (2006), which are the main conditions leading to the scenario II: Limits and Discipline; (2) The Factor event of



non-academic workload reduces work efficiency remains an unresolved problem within the WTMU, as seen in the results of past studies by Kochasanee (2010); (3) The event of a increased demand for flexible music curricula catering to diverse student interests, continues to be a direction stemming from past research by Chandransu (2010) and Thuntaweche (2017). However, this research result shows greater clarity in practice, that is, the push factor of the National Credit Bank System policy, which, if implemented, will lead to the development of curricula that cater to the diverse needs of society.

## Recommendation

The futures studies research process that was used to study the future of the WTMU has enabled a comprehensive study and analysis of data from multiple perspectives, including the views of administrators and experts, as well as factual evidence. The findings from this research can be used to improve policies, vision, and operational methods in the WTMU, while also considering efforts to prevent or avoid undesirable futures and impel desirable ones. Moreover, the significant facts and evidence in this research can be used to communicate and convey the needs and conditions to the university administration and faculty, and to promote collaborative efforts among all stakeholders in order to develop the WTMU towards a desirable future through joint work and support.

This research is a specific case study and cannot be directly generalized to other educational institutions. However, many factors and the research process align with several educational institutions in the same context. Thus, it can be beneficial for consideration in decision-making, provided that the specific context and situation are taken into account before applying the research findings.

In this research, informants were specifically selected to emphasize specialists who are responsible for or have sufficient experience to assess significant events or information affecting WTMU's future. These individuals play crucial roles in shaping the organization's direction. They have witnessed the link between the past and present, leading to future projections. Therefore, the focus is on strategic planning rather than covering every stakeholder group.

## Conflict of Interest

This study was reviewed and approved by the committee for research ethics (social sciences), Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Mahidol University. The informants provided written informed consent to participate in the study. The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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