Online Teaching Survey Comments
April 1, 2020

We had an amazing response to the Online Teaching Survey. Thank you to everyone who participated and shared ideas. There is no order to the suggestions, but there are many great ideas. Enjoy reading through them. It may trigger some new ideas for you to implement.

Zoom is so easy on the iPad!

Still learning, since this is very new. But I realized quickly that I can be most effective when I have a copy of the student's music with me so we can both see the same thing! 😊 I've invested in some more studio copies so I can do that better. Plus it gave me a great opportunity to support my local independent music store!

Set up the device high enough to see the student's face and the piano keyboard. Have your own device do the same. Get closer to your device when you are speaking to the student so you fill more of the screen and it feels more direct.

Be sure to communicate clearly to the parents exactly what you need and when you need it so you don't waste precious lesson time trying to find things. I have parents text me a pic of their student's completed theory assignments. I previously had asked for copies of lesson assignments and solos. I made a folder for each individual student where I keep those items for weekly reference. I write their new assignments and text them back to parents for them to copy in their students own sheet. I have extra copies of all of the bookings that I teach from here so I can follow along as they play. It allows me to play new pieces fitted them as well as pointing out measures they need to work on. Make sure to remind parents to have their device set up so you can see the piano and the students hands as they play. I am planning on a virtual recital and will have them upload their pieces to YouTube and I will email the links to families 10 at a time daily the week of the recital. One other thing: if the student needs a paper for their binders, I email it to the parent to print off. I still encourage them to do online computer assignments at: music learning community.com

Just go for it. There's a learning curve, but that's what life is all about.

The for score app is really useful. It allows me to upload my students music and then easily take notes on it digitally. Then I send it back to my student as a pdf doc.

You can create a keyboard shortcut to switch between cameras!

I like it best when the student Skyped me

For younger children, it is helpful to have a parent present to help them write down assignments or figure out the technology being used.

Zoom seems to be the most efficient forum with students using laptops, not phones.

Zoom is a great platform to integrate educational apps if one has the equipment ability of a laptop and share screen to a tablet / IPad containing whiteboard apps, theory apps, and Forescore (annotations directly onto pdf scores). *Skype has better sound. Important to establish online etiquette rules with students and give them instructions on the best camera angle for their lessons. Theory assignments: Students log time for Tenuto, music theory online, or RCM apps.
Handwritten theory assignments are submitted (photos/ Scan) one day prior to lesson via email. Current equipment: Blue Yeti condenser mic, Logitech C922 HD Webcam, MacBook Pro, and Ipadpro, tripods for Webcam and IPad.

FaceTime and Skype have worked well for me. An iPad has better sound than my laptop. Zoom has been effective for group classes (Let's Play Music). I'm able to mute students until it's their turn to respond and they like seeing themselves on screen and especially gallery view where they see everyone in class. A computer works best for Zoom (for me). I also outlined five things to make online lessons work better. One is putting hands in lap or turning off the metronome after playing a segment (teacher or student) but the biggest help is having a parent present no matter the age of the student. We are creating normalcy and joy with our lessons. Good luck to each of us!

Keep it simple!! :)

It is not enough to have parents send pictures of their pieces. I recommend making a list of all the books the student has and using a duplicate copy at home. It becomes really swift when referring to page numbers. Also, sending notes each time to the parents for it to be printed out has helped ease the parents' burdens with having to homeschool. Technology-wise, you can get by with beginning students using Zoom or FaceTime.

I am making my way in this new world, and don't feel I would be much help, but I'm happy to chat and commiserate. I need ideas for easily switching from face view or keyboard view to "birdseye" view. Does anybody have a good idea for suspending the phone over the keys? I'll go to the UMTA home page and take a look. Thank you for making this info available! I also looked at the MTNA resources. Carol Matz and Carly Walton have an online teaching course they are offering for FREE! I'm going to check it out, since it looks like we're in this for the long haul. Rosemary Olsen rosemary@olsenpiano.com 801-244-7032

My only advice is to make sure you find a way to teach your students everything that you normally teach them in person online.

The key is to have a really good connection on both ends! Young students also need a parent to sit with them and help for a year or two. After that, they can do it themselves.

Be flexible,patient and a happy face for your students. We are helping our students continue a bit in their normal routine. Have the music in front of you and mark measures that need attention.

Students need to see your hands too.

Use Googledocs for lesson plans! I have been doing it for years—that way it has been very easy to have a random online lesson now and again. The student never loses their lesson plan, too. Parents, teachers, and students always have access.

Keep it simple. Do what feels comfortable to you.

I bought a holder (it has a clamp to attach to your piano and a clamp to keep your phone in place with a flexible arm) for my iPhone on amazon for $17.00. It has made the job so much easier. I highly recommend it.

Pick a day that you don't teach to prepare for the entire week, this would include having the music organized for each student so you don't have to go looking for it during the lesson and having their assignment already typed up so that you can just edit during the lesson to better fit what you actually went over.

I have found so many great resources from here on the UMTA facebook page and from others including Teach Piano Today, Wendy at ComposeCreate.com, Faber Piano Adventures, Carly Walton, and Facebook groups. I still have a couple of questions regarding technology, but I will still keep looking! I think there might be teachers who are looking for books or iPad stands (I tried to order one from Amazon and it won't get here until the end of April!) or

whatever that we could use this UMTA platform as a way to exchange information?

For me it is good to fill in gaps when there is an illness and gives the teacher more insight about the student's instrument and practice situation. However, I prefer to teach in person.

Try to be the same person you are in face-to-face lessons, and enjoy! This is a great way to keep working with students and help them continue to progress. You need to be articulate in your instructions. Make the most of the moment!

I love the quote, "Even detours have beautiful scenery." I have found some wonderful benefits to this "forced learning." For the first time in 15 years of teaching, I have recorded every part to every duet assigned in my studio for our duet recital (scheduled for May). Every student can plan their part as many times as they need; they can play along with the "partner" part, etc. It has become a great resource and benefit to my students. I have never thought of doing this until now! My students and parents love it!

Be yourself. Get your equipment and encourage students to get reasonable equipment. Share your app and encourage online participation for those 6 and above with parental help if 6 or younger.

I finally spent the $15/month yesterday to buy a Zoom membership so I don't have to hang up between lessons. It was SO worth the little I spent to not have to hang up between lessons! :)

1. Adjusting for the best angle possible on the hands of both teacher and student makes a big difference. Use an adjustable stand that can angle whatever device is being used. I prefer using an iPad, but will use an iPhone if necessary. My laptop was getting over heated, so I stopped using it for now. I allow breaks every two hours to rest my devices. 2. I wear glasses with UV protection to avoid eye strain or dry eyes when using a screen. 3. Sound quality is huge. I'm open to suggestions. I bought a quality microphone but am trying to figure out a cord adapter.
I am considering hosting a Zoom session to offer advice and answer questions! I'll check out the Facebook page and post there! - Cahill Smith, USU Piano Faculty

Instead of doing things at the same time as the student(s), use call and response – teacher plays (claps, sings, etc) then student does. In a group class, assign each student a color, and then circle different portions of the music in different colors. Student who is that color plays (claps, sings, etc) that section

Have all books ready before you start. Silence all other ambient noise. Look professional (It's tempting to be more casual at a time like this).

an ironing board makes a great adjustable stand for a laptop or tablet!

Have advanced students send a video link to a performance of their repertoire the day before their lesson so you can hear it with much better sound quality, write up your comments and be ready to discuss it during your video conference lesson.

A wide-mouth mug makes a great phone-holder at the end of the piano. It holds the phone without tipping over and shows the keyboard, hands and student or teacher if a phone is the only available device. No more stopping to adjust the phone!