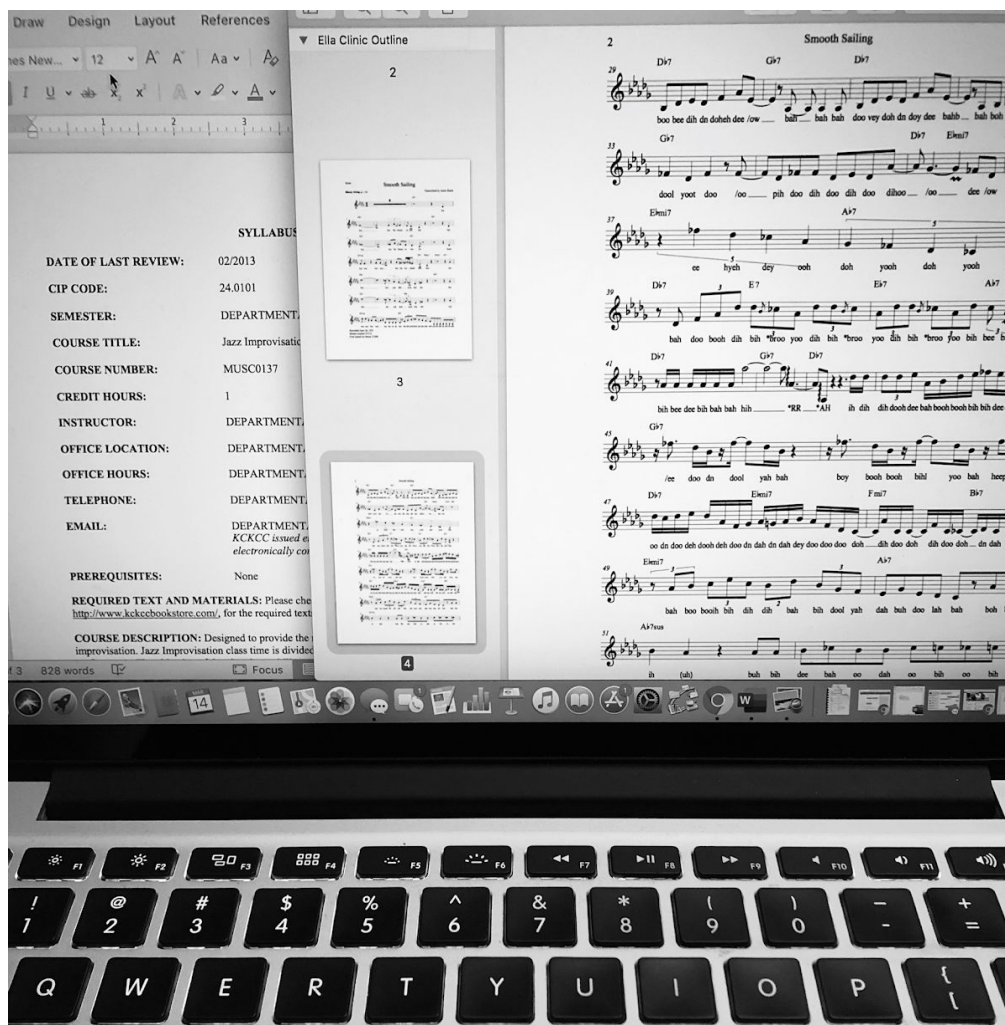




Online Teaching for Non-Online Teachers



Thoughts and recommendations from someone who learned it on the fly
(and made several mistakes along the way)

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Introduction: Why am I qualified to write about this?

Truth be told, I'm honestly not. I am not an expert in online content delivery in any way, shape, or form. But I leapt into it head-first in early 2018, when my daughter was born a week into the semester. Rather than trying to hire someone to fill my place on a (very) short-term basis, my Dean and I decided that the best solution would be for me to work from home and teach remotely during this time. So I'm coming at this from a place of someone who jumped into online teaching and very quickly learned some things that I hope will be of service to those who now find themselves jumping into the world of online teaching, whether they want to or not, and whether they have any experience in doing so whatsoever.

Eight Important Things To Keep In Mind

1. As the cover to the *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* says in big, bold letters, DON'T PANIC. So, just as a reminder, DON'T PANIC.
2. As you are preparing to make the transition to teaching classes and lessons online, don't try to do everything at once. Begin by identifying the first set of tasks that need to be done, and then start checking things off the list.
3. You will do things that won't work. This is okay. Learn from them, and then move on from them.
4. You will NOT be able to accomplish in an online session what you can accomplish in the classroom or in the applied lesson. It is extremely important that you make peace with this as quickly as you can. But even after I got into something of a groove with teaching online, I felt that at maximum I was teaching at 70% effectiveness.
5. Know that at minimum the first time you teach online (lecture or lesson), and most likely the second, will be primarily devoted to sorting out logistics and connection issues. That's okay. You may think that your students are super tech-savvy, but you will be surprised at how much your students don't know about technology.
6. Plan ahead. I like to be extemporaneous in the classroom, and I realized very quickly that online courses don't work that way. Go into each session with a clear plan in mind in terms of what you want to accomplish and how to do it.
7. At the same time, be creative. As I mentioned before, you will not be able to accomplish in an online session what you can accomplish in the classroom or in the applied lesson. But the more creative you can be in terms of how to create the best and fairest teaching experience you can for your students, the better.
8. Your students will be patient with you. Right now, they are also freaked out and trying to make sense of what's going on.

Setting Things Up For Online Instruction

It would be GREAT if you and your students all had wired ethernet connections and microphones with audio interfaces. However, most (if not all of us) will not have that luxury. On a basic level, simply using the microphone input on your laptop or desktop computer will be serviceable. However, if you as the instructor can set up a USB microphone (or a mic with an audio interface) so that your audio signal is clean and clear, I'd recommend it. But if you cannot do this easily, don't worry about it. At the very minimum, use earbuds with a microphone, because you will be able to hear your students more clearly, and your students will hear less extraneous noise on your end. (But I still would recommend a USB microphone).

Something important to know: almost all sound on the internet is compressed. It is not possible to transmit uncompressed audio within the bandwidth constraints of most people's upload limitations. For those unfamiliar with compression, the short definition is that aspects of the overall sound (high and low frequencies) are taken away, and noise cancellation/ambient noise reduction features built into both apps and computers/tablets/phones also change the sound. Certain apps feature cleaner audio (Apple's FaceTime in particular), but it will never sound the same as being live in the classroom or the teaching studio. Another thing that is important to know: there is always latency (or "lag") when teaching online. We'll get into exactly what this means when we get into teaching specific classes.

No matter what you are doing, it's important that you have a place in your home with minimal audio interference and distractions. This can be easier said than done; I have a *vociferous* two-year old daughter. She's joyous and wonderful, but I have already told my classes to plan on random points when Cora pops up during class time. At this point, we're all making do with what we can, in whatever ways we can.

In addition to everything else, I cannot recommend this highly enough: **RECORD EVERY SESSION ON YOUR COMPUTER**. Things happen. WIFI flakes out. Students forget to charge their computers. Use your computer's native video recording software to record every class session, then upload it either to the course management app that your school uses or to a cloud database that can be accessed by the students. Strive to create as many ways for your students to access the content as possible (without driving yourself completely insane).

Pitfalls and Pratfalls of Online Platforms

Let's get into various means for connecting with our students, particularly if your school doesn't have an in-house infrastructure for you to log into and utilize.

Large-scale meeting options: GoToMeeting, Zoom, Google Hangouts, and similar platforms

- These are the kinds of software options I would recommend for lecture-style classes (Theory, Aural Skills, History, etc.). My college (Kansas City Kansas Community College) also uses Microsoft Teams, and Zoom is built into the Blackboard course management software we use as well. In Spring 2018, I used both Zoom and Google Hangouts for instruction of my Music Theory and my Audio Engineering Music Skills classes.
- In a lecture class setting, whichever platform you use, it is VITALLY important that your students mute their microphones as soon as they log on. If they don't, you will have a garbled mess of vocal interference going on throughout the class.
- Whatever videoconferencing software you use, it is also important that you email your students explicit instructions on how to log on and what your expectations are for the course sessions once you send them an invitation to join the meeting.
- Because I didn't want the classes to be nothing more than "I talk AT the students for an hour while they listen," I encouraged the students to ask questions or comment frequently during the classes. I'd recommend that students simply type "question" or "comment" into the platform's chat interface, which then allows you to say, "Nathan, I see you have a question. Unmute, please." Again, this prevents the lecture from being nothing more than an hour of the instructor talking.
- Different platforms have vastly different capacities when it comes to the mobile interface. Some of your students may be accessing the class through their phones, due to lack of a decent computer. Be sympathetic to these situations, and if possible, strive to stream the class on multiple platforms to give your students multiple options.

One-on one meeting options: Skype, FB Messenger, WhatsApp, Google Duo, and similar apps

- In my (admittedly limited) experience, iOS's FaceTime app provides the best audio quality and reasonably consistent video for the purposes of teaching applied lessons. However, this requires both parties to be on iPhones, iPads, and/or MacBooks, which may not be the case for many students (and teachers).
- Google Duo is quite decent in terms of its interface.
- Skype is the most well-known and popular, but the audio quality is spotty.
- Facebook Messenger and WhatsApp can work great; they can also work terribly.

Specific Courses and Resources

First of all, I want to give a special shout-out to Los Angeles-based jazz pianist and educator Jeremy Siskind, who figured out one of the more ingenious workarounds for applied teaching (but that can also be used for ensembles) that I've seen. Jeremy realized that, for private teaching, he could use his phone, his tablet, and his computer to log on to the same Zoom session, and that he could creatively place them at different camera angles to cover different things. I definitely plan to try this with my piano lessons, and possibly with some of my lecture classes as well.

Music Theory and Aural Skills

Most good music theory textbooks already have quite decent online resources included as part of the text; I use Kevin Holm-Hudson's *Music Theory Remixed: A Blended Approach for the Practicing Musician* (Oxford University Press), which has pretty fantastic online resources included as part of this. Others that I would strongly recommend:

- **MusicTheory.net** is a wonderful resource that also allows teachers to customize exercises for identification, construction, and ear training.
- **Sight Reading Factory** is another great online resource for sight reading practice, and it offers heavily discounted student accounts to any teacher who has a membership.
- **Teoria** is loaded with tutorials, exercises, reference points, and articles to share with students.
- **8notes.com** is extremely detailed, and great for reviewing the basics.
- **SmartMusic** is offering free use of their software through June 30th.

Aural Skills quizzes can get a little tricky. For sight-reading, I'd recommend uploading exercises (so that there is a time stamp) and giving students a defined window in which they need to send a video of them performing said exercises (which they can record using their phones). It's not a perfect solution, but it can certainly work. And it's logistically much less time-intensive (and exhausting) than contacting every student individually to set up one-on-one sight-singing video chats. For dictation, I'd recommend using the classroom video interface, playing the harmonic/melodic/rhythmic dictation exercises (and doing so a few more times than you normally would), then have the students screenshot their work and email it. Once again, give them a very specific time parameter in which to do so.

A note before the next couple of topics of discussion (Jazz Improvisation and Applied Lessons): If possible, it's best if the student can use one device (laptop, phone, tablet) for communication and another for playback of examples. If the student is using a laptop, it's relatively easy to do both simultaneously, but otherwise you will likely have to make modifications to your teaching, likely going to an asynchronous approach (meaning that the bulk of the instruction is done by way of students submitting recordings to you, followed by you responding, rather than instruction being done in real-time). And as a teacher, you may prefer to handle one-on-one instruction with an asynchronous approach – that's perfectly fine! I prefer live video, simply because it helps me feel more connected to the student, but I know teachers who solely prefer asynchronous teaching. You do whatever works best for you and for your students.

Jazz Improvisation

Depending on the size of the class, it's probably wisest to do a blended approach. Unless every student has their computer wired up via an ethernet cable and with everyone using mics connected to an external interface, the lag is going to make it impossible to have everyone play simultaneously. What you CAN do set up a group chat to demonstrate larger points at work,

then set up separate one-on-one sessions to listen to students perform with play-alongs. In addition to tracks you yourself can provide, consider using recordings from Jamey Aebersold, PlayJazzNow.com, the Learn Jazz Standards YouTube channel, and iReal Pro.

I know, I know. We all complain about the wonkiness of some of the chord comping on iReal Pro, but in moments where we're all scrambling to try and find the most effective ways to teach, being able to quickly set up six choruses of "Lullaby of Birdland" in G minor at mm=150, export it as an audio file, and send it to students is a wonderful, wonderful thing.

Again, this is a time for creativity and flexibility. This can also be a great time to have students dig into more transcription projects, which can then be performed either one-on-one for the instructor or over a broader group video platform. The name of the course is "Jazz Improvisation" – it's a great opportunity to think about "improvisation" in a much broader meaning of how we go about our teaching!

Applied Lessons

First things first: if you've never taught applied lessons online, it's a jarring experience the first time you do it. For me, as a voice teacher, my instinct is often to try and correct an error in pitch by playing along with the singer. Due to internet lag, that doesn't work. It's also virtually impossible to lead students through real-time warmups. So, here are a few things to keep in mind when teaching online.

1. It needs to be the student's job to warm up ahead of time. I wrote earlier that you WILL lose 30% of your teaching effectiveness, at minimum. If you are in the habit of beginning lessons with warmups (as happens in many, if not most, vocal lessons), this needs to be the student's responsibility.
2. Provide accompaniment tracks for the students. For classical and theatre rep, the Appcompanionist app is wonderful (though it is a paid subscription service). Beyond that, record accompaniment tracks (either played by you or by another pianist) for the students. For jazz work, take advantage of the various play-along options mentioned in the Jazz Improvisation section earlier. This is a necessity, though, because you will not be able to accompany students in real-time, unless both of you have wired ethernet connectivity.
3. Know that teaching online is a stop/start, "you do the thing, then I comment, then you do the thing, then I comment" process more akin to a coaching session than a traditional private lesson. I highly advise breaking repertoire work into smaller chunks, for the purposes of being able to effectively offer targeted feedback more quickly.
4. Have the student set up their phone/computer in such a way so that you can monitor issues of posture and physical technique. Given that I also teach piano, I have advised my piano students that for our lessons they will need to set their phones/laptops in such a way that I can observe their hands for technical issues.

5. Due to the limitations of sound in online formats (as mentioned earlier), strive to focus on things other than tone. The microphones that most of your students will be using will negatively affect your perception of what's happening tonally.
6. Be patient. Everything will take longer online than it would in the studio.

A note on Flipgrid: I know of teachers who have had decent success using Flipgrid, and who state that it works well for iOS and Android. I've never used it, but those who have seem to enjoy it. The only thing about Flipgrid is that it is a completely asynchronous interface – students record directly to the app or website, teacher gives feedback; and video uploads are limited to five minutes in maximum length. While this does save on bandwidth, it does create other issues, and likely means recording certain works or exercises in chunks, rather than in whole parts. If the schedules of teacher and student can't align in ways that work for family and life schedules, though, it's definitely an option to consider.

For jazz-centered voice lessons, I can't recommend enough Michele Weir's various tools. Beyond her wonderful jazz improvisation and jazz piano books, both MichMusic.com and MusicHabit.com have amazing resources, including master classes with singers like Aimee Nolte and Rosana Eckert, free materials in the Practice Room at MusicHabit (including all of the free tracks from the ScatAbility* app, which is only available for iOS), and a wide range of exercises and articles.

*Full disclosure: I am one of the featured in-app clinicians in the ScatAbility app, but that's not why I'm promoting it here. I'm promoting it here because it's awesome, but I feel that it's important for me to be up-front about these things.

A topic that has come up among the faculty at my school is what to do about juries and graded recitals (capstone or otherwise). I'm tempted to say, "who cares?," but that's not a particularly helpful way to look at all of this. There are also issues with accreditation that need to be dealt with, but there are creative ways to deal with this.

For capstone recitals, if students have at least rehearsed with their accompanist/collaborative performers (and particularly if they recorded those rehearsals), that can be used to take the place of the actual performance. Often these recitals are categorized Pass/Fail anyway, and if not, it's not a stretch to be able to project the likely development of the performance leading to the recital itself (and be generous in your projections). If this has not yet taken place, it's a bit trickier, but even then, there are workarounds. Even the least desirable workaround – the student performing in their living room, accompanied by a practice track – is better than nothing, and will provide something by which to evaluate the student's performance. This performance could either be done over live video (with other members of the recital panel in "virtual attendance") or recorded and submitted to the faculty.

For juries, some of my colleagues and I have already discussed the idea of holding our juries when we would normally hold them, except doing so virtually: setting up a Google Hangout or a Zoom meeting with the student and at least two faculty members. The students would perform

accompanied by tracks, following our typical format in which the student selects the first number that they would like to perform, followed by the faculty making their selections. Once again, it all comes down to creativity. The more creative we can be in finding solutions for our students, the better.

Ensembles

A big source of discussion that I've seen online has been centered around the topic of "how do we rehearse ensembles?" Eric Whitacre's Virtual Choir notwithstanding, it's a logistical nightmare (and, for most school groups, a virtual – pun intended – impossibility to set up a synchronous online rehearsal). So, with that in mind, let's talk strategy.

The fundamental question everyone who directs an ensemble at this point needs to ask themselves is this: are we preparing for anything? My college has cancelled all public activities and performances through May 20 (the day before graduation). For me to assign rep for my Funk Band to work on would be creating busy work for the sake of creating busy work (and likely breeding resentment among my students). However, my colleague is planning to take our top vocal jazz ensemble into the studio to record over the summer, so that ensemble does have something that they are still working towards.

If your ensemble has cancelled all remaining performances, don't make your students learn music that they will never perform. Instead, look for projects that will still inform their performance practice, such as guided listening reviews and score study/analysis. Whatever the case, please don't make the students schedule a time to perform their individual parts for you for a grade online. That's just... I hate to use the word pointless, but I'm going to use the word pointless, anyway. That's just pointless.

If there is the possibility of performance later this semester (though the CDC's recommendation of no mass gatherings for the next eight weeks will probably eliminate this for most schools), this does change things, and will require some creativity. Addressing the vocal side of things first: the easiest way to assist students in their practicing is through the creation of part tracks. Many choral directors are already in the habit of creating part tracks (and part-minus tracks) as learning aids, and this is extremely helpful for assisting students in practicing remotely. One of the most useful kinds of part tracks that can be generated is to enter parts in Finale or Sibelius, and then generate separate mp3s that involve panning everything to one side (I usually do hard left) except for one part. This allow the student to practice their part in context with the option to either hear or not hear their line. Arrangers like Kerry Marsh, Matt Falker, and Jeremy Fox already provide part track options for their charts upon purchase, and it's often a matter of simply contacting other arrangers to see if they can quickly generate the same.

If you DO happen to teach in a school that provides all students with laptops or iPads (and specific software), there is the option to have students record themselves into a common interface (like GarageBand), which actually does give the students practice in the art of remote recording. If the students don't have a decent USB microphone or microphone interface, this

exercise might not have a whole lot of usefulness, aside from the experience of having done so (which can be its own reward, of course).

As I've been writing this document in preparation for the JEN webinar, Michele Weir and I have been in regular contact. She and Kerry Marsh have also begun working on a series for MusicHabit on online skills for jazz choir, which will include modules for remote practice with ensembles. They anticipate having initial offerings available in two weeks.

For instrumental ensembles, the easiest thing is to provide students with big band or combo reference recordings to practice with at home (this also works on the vocal side as well, particularly if a group is doing material from groups like the Real Group, New York Voices, etc.). This can actually be an EXTREMELY useful teaching tool. For instance, Basie-style swing can be one of the hardest concepts to teach a jazz band – why not have them practice playing along with the Basie Band? (Honestly, they should be doing this anyway, but this provides an opportunity to make them get into the habit of doing so.)

Sample Structures for Classes and Lessons

I'll create a couple of sample models here as examples of how to approach certain classes and applied lesson settings. Keep in mind that all of these represent extreme generalities, but will hopefully provide models for possible delivery of course content.

Music Theory II – using Zoom as the means of communication

- **7:50 AM:** Send an email to all of the students in the class with a link to the day's video chat. Remind students to mute their microphones as soon as they are logged in.
- **7:58 AM:** Open Photo Booth on my MacBook and start recording. This is my personal archive of the class session, which I will upload to Google Drive later in the day (this particular Google Drive file will also be shared with all of the students in the class).
- **8:00 AM:** Greet the class, take attendance, ask for a thumbs-up/thumbs-down of how everyone's doing this morning.
- **8:02 AM:** Briefly review concepts covered the previous day; ask students to type responses to questions in Zoom's chat function.
- **8:05 AM:** Ask for anything from yesterday that needs additional clarification. Indicate that if students have a question, they should type "question" in chat, and then I'll give them the cue to un-mute.
- **8:10 AM:** Discussion of the day's concept. (Let's say it's Neapolitan chords, for the sake of argument.) I will have emailed the students a PDF of several examples of N6 chord voice-leading; I'll then play through those and several other examples on piano so that they are hearing how this concept works. I also have a whiteboard near my piano that I use to write some additional examples, which I will also photograph and email to the class at a later point.
- **8:20 AM:** Ask for questions. Assume that this is going to take a while, due to the nature of 1) a new concept, and 2) the online interface.

- **8:40 AM:** Discuss the homework assignment – in this case, a worksheet that has been emailed to them in both Finale and PDF formats. If students have Finale on their laptops, they are welcome to edit the Finale file; if not, they can either print out and write on or digitally edit the PDF. Give explicit instructions, and also repeat those instructions via email. Be very precise about when the assignment is due to be emailed.
- **8:50 AM:** Wish the students well, tell them to email me if they have any questions, sign off, and get ready for Theory IV.

Half of the time has been spent on questions and clarifications, and I'm okay with that. The more clarity I can provide for students, the better.

Applied Voice – using FaceTime as the means of communication

- **11:00 AM:** I call the student via FaceTime's video chat function
- **11:01 AM:** After the initial greeting, I provide a few feedback comments regarding recordings that the student had made and sent to me. I have already emailed several comments to the student, but this provides a final opportunity to follow up on points and demonstrate a couple of concepts. I may ask the student to fire up an accompaniment track or an iRealPro exercise to sing through a couple of these ideas.
- **11:15 AM:** I ask the student to sing through whatever technical exercises I've assigned for the week, whether it's chord patterns, ii-V-I concepts, specific licks to sing in multiple keys, or other ideas. I will also assign some new technical exercises for the following week, demonstrating them live (I will email these to the students as well).
- **11:30 AM:** Repertoire work. For each song we're working on, I will ask the student to sing with a demo track accompaniment. Depending on the song (and the student's experience level), I may choose to only focus on the head at first, then improv for a bit, then the head out, or I may choose to hear an entire performance and then comment. Much of it depends on the student's experience and comfort level.
- **A note to jazz voice teachers:** it is virtually impossible to work on rubato ballad performance online, unless the student is an excellent pianist OR they happen to live with one. The closest thing I've ever found for helping students be able to work in this kind of format is to provide several different accompaniments for them OR create accompaniments based on a recording of how they sing a melody acapella, but this doesn't really replicate the give-and-take that normally goes along with this kind of performance style.
- **11:52 AM:** Discuss assignments for next week, let them know that you'll provide more specifics and any necessary practice tracks or demonstration videos in a follow-up email, and wish them well.
- **11:55 AM:** Transition to get ready for the next lesson in 5 minutes.

The Importance of Patience and Flexibility: A Few Thoughts

Thought #1: I mentioned it before, but be prepared for things to go wrong. It's not because you're a bad teacher or because you don't know what you're doing with technology, it's because you're human, and if you've never taught in this kind of setting before, things will likely

go weird. Again, know that your students do not expect you to be perfect at this, and know that things will also go weird on their end as well.

Thought #2: Be flexible with your students, and ask your students to be flexible with you. I am going to try to adhere to as consistent of a schedule as I possibly can (8 AM Theory II, 9 AM Theory IV, 10 AM Audio Engineering Music Skills, lessons at normal times), but I'm also going to be at home with a two-year-old who is loveable and sweet and also normally takes a nap from around 1 PM to around 3 PM (or later), and who goes to bed around 7 PM each day. Early afternoon is often when I teach private lessons, so I'm going to be asking students to shift and to be flexible with me, but I may not be able to achieve a time that works with students, particularly since I don't yet know what they're going to be dealing with in terms of roommate situations, work schedules, or even the availability of a piano or keyboard. Though I prefer not to teach asynchronously, I may have to do so for some of my students, and that's okay.

This is another reason to record everything that you teach. First of all, it's a record of everything that you've covered. Second, it provides a failsafe in case you have students whose internet fails them during a given time period, or if they have family circumstances that interfere with class on a particular morning, or they are picking up an extra shift on a temporary job that they are taking because they just lost all of their upcoming gigs.

Thought #3: Be reasonable in your expectations. Assignments will take longer to complete, for a variety of reasons. So, prioritize what is most important, give clear instructions, and assign a reasonable workload. Communicate regularly with your students about whether they feel that your expectations are fair or unrealistic.

Thought #4: Though we live in a world of assessment, student learning outcomes, program outcomes, visioning, and other delightful terms of educational jargon, your goal right now should be to be the most effective teacher that you can be for your students, not whether your online instruction perfectly adheres to whatever system your school has in place to deal with assessment. Your administrators know this, and they should be sympathetic to the fact that you are trying to do the best you can in a situation that is completely upside-down from the way you would normally teach.

Thought #5: Be empathetic. As flustered and confused as you may be right now, I guarantee that your students are feeling exactly the same way, if not even more. For me, the last two days of classes before we went on (a now-extended) Spring Break felt like there was a dark cloud hanging over everything.

I mentioned that my first experience with teaching an online class came when my daughter was born at the beginning of the Spring 2018 semester. One of the biggest reasons why I wanted to keep teaching at that time was because of the second-year theory class. The year prior, my predecessor had been elevated to Dean of the Arts & Humanities Division at my college mid-year, and a substitute had taken his place for the semester. My hiring during the summer of 2017 meant that the then-sophomores would now have had a different teacher for Theory I,

Theory II, and Theory III – all of them with different teaching styles and perspectives. Given that the students had already dealt with that much change in one course sequence, my Dean and I didn't want to put the students in a situation where they were doing to be dealing with ANOTHER teacher for Theory IV (even for a short period of time), so the decision was made to allow me to teach from home for a time. My students were grateful for this, but the shift to an online mode of class instruction was an adjustment, and it wasn't until the second week that the students and I felt like we really settled into a groove.

I would classify that as a “moderate stress” situation – my students had been through somewhat significant change in that course sequence over the course of three semesters, and now they were being forced to adapt again, even though the teacher was remaining the same. But they knew the date that I was going to be back in class, and after that first week, they began to really appreciate what they began to refer to as “Pajama Theory.” Right now, our students are going through an “unprecedented stress” situation – they don't know when they'll be able to return to school, their jobs may be completely up in the air (leading to more stress), they may have had to suddenly move back home some substantial distance, removing themselves from their peer groups... It's rough on all of us. So, remember that as confused as you may be right now, your students are right there with you.

Additional Resources

In addition to the resources I've listed earlier in this document (which I will list again here), there are a number of resources that are being constantly updated. Here's a VERY incomplete list of resources I'd recommend in a heartbeat, beginning with two lists that I love:

Resources for Teaching Music and Audio Production Online

https://docs.google.com/document/d/13fYFK-_gaeVnIGdobLWmtGJfZLutB5181ZTxN9dmD2Y/edit?fbclid=IwAR0_U1gea_2cGS5KgkOP0C7W0yoNJc0RjJ9dXHXVmWgBIE7_L5b8e5UGDfk#heading=h.mt2oyycj3ywx

This is a working document created by Dr. Eric Honour and Dr. Jeff Kaiser at the University of Central Missouri and Dr. Michael James Olson of Minnesota State University-Mankato. It's a lengthy document broken down into Online Instruction, Online Lessons/Academic Music Classes, Online Rehearsals/Collaboration, DAWs and Production, Plugins/Samplers/Synths, Notation, Visual Programming Environments, Telematic Performance, Online Textbooks and Curricula, and Audio Hardware. Absolutely worth bookmarking and refreshing on a daily basis.

The Big COVID-19 Survival Choral Doc

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1rPUGd19SMm-x0acbHdEUmEoXK-EIGPCWr_vpSDwTzH8/mobilebasic?fbclid=IwAR2mzVQes715d9hCatlMBMly_EKiAIGheZ-uTcZ4DenVWaDrYSxc6lSkA8

Curated by Lauren Peithmann and editable by anyone, this list/document is geared towards choral directors, but has resources applicable to a broad range of music educators. Subsections deal with Online Links and Resources, Hyperlinks to Lessons/Worksheets/Assignments, hints on Best Practices, Videos/Demos, Assessment Ideas, and links to other resources. Again, it's worth bookmarking and refreshing on a daily basis.

Amazing Educational Resources

http://www.amazingeducationalresources.com/?fbclid=IwAR2MPysrMavhrBsiPQBLKLCMiyH17WFM81PkOzAaRveyOTXqSBk_WCuT2ys

This is an absolutely MASSIVE list of education companies that are offering free subscriptions due to school closings. It is updated every few hours, and the organizer of the list intends to add more detailed filters for searching specific topics and/or courses.

Links to platforms and websites listed earlier in this document

Large-Scale Meeting Platforms:

- **Google Hangouts:** Google's group IM/Video chat service is available as a Chrome Extension, through the Apple and Android App Stores, and as an extension within Gmail and Google Classroom.
- **GoToMeeting:** <https://www.gotomeeting.com/> LogMeIn is offering educational institutions free use of many of its products, including GoToMeeting, for the next three months. I've been on a number of conference calls that use this system, and it's been reliable whenever I've done so.
- **Microsoft Teams:** <https://products.office.com/en-us/microsoft-teams/group-chat-software> If you (or your institution) have an Office365 Subscription, you already have access to Microsoft Teams. They are also currently offering a free trial. Though I haven't personally used it to any extensive degree, I have heard good things about the quality and adaptability of the interface.
- **Zoom:** <https://zoom.us/> Zoom is probably the most commonly used group meeting software platform, and it's got a very solid infrastructure and pretty decent audio quality, in my experience. Zoom's CEO, Eric Yuan, recently announced that Zoom will provide videoconferencing tools to all K-12 schools for free. Zoom is also embedded as a meeting tool in Blackboard classroom management software.

One-to-One Video Platforms:

- **Facebook Messenger:** One of the most reviled (in many corners of the internet) part of Facebook, Messenger's video chat function can be a very useful way to connect with students. I've rarely had issues with dropped connections, and the audio quality is okay – not great, but not terrible.
- **FaceTime:** Apple's proprietary video chat extension of iMessage. In my experience, it's the cleanest audio signal for teaching private lessons online, and the video quality is also

quite good. The downside is that both parties need to be using Apple products (iPhones, iPads, or MacBooks) in order to use FaceTime to communicate.

- **Flipgrid:** <https://info.flipgrid.com/> As I wrote earlier, I have never used Flipgrid personally, but I know teachers who swear by it as an effective tool for private lessons, though only in asynchronous teaching formats. The main limitation of the app is its five-minute maximum video length, though that length does make uploading videos extremely reasonable, whether doing so via a computer or through a mobile device.
- **Skype:** <https://www.skype.com/en/> Skype is the granddaddy of video chat platforms, and it's the most commonly used one. In my experience, though, Skype has always been less-than-idea for online teaching. I've frequently encountered issues with dropped connections, poor audio, and video freezing, and I've personally given up on using it for online lessons (and most online video chats, unless requested by the other party).
- **WhatsApp:** A mobile phone, text, and video app that is extremely popular outside the United States. WhatsApp was purchased by Facebook in 2014, and its video chat interface is similar in quality to Facebook Messenger.

Music Theory and Aural Skills Resources I Highly Recommend:

- **The Ancillary Resource Center (ARC) for Kevin Holm-Hudson's *Music Theory Remixed*:** https://oup-arc.com/access/holm-hudson-student-resources#tag_all-chapters This is the textbook that I use in my Music Theory classes at KCKCC, and I LOVE it, primarily because it's written in a way that aligns with NASM standards but isn't a never-ending series of musical examples solely from the Western European classical tradition – there's jazz, pop, theatre, film scores, and a lot more, which is why I'm particularly fond of it. The ARC for this textbook includes a number of interesting videos, special topic PDFs, Finale files to coincide with the chapters, and Spotify playlists.
- **8notes.com:** <https://www.8notes.com/theory/> This is actually a pretty great website for students in terms of reviewing the basics. Within the broader site, there are also some great resources for specific instruments and specific musical styles – again, largely geared towards beginners.
- **MusicTheory.net:** <https://www.musictheory.net/> I LOVE this site, and its related mobile apps (Theory Lessons and Tenuto). My favorite feature of this site is the Exercise Customizer function (located at the bottom of the "Exercises" section) that allows educators to customize quizzes for both identification and construction.
- **Sight Reading Factory:** <https://www.sightreadingfactory.com/> My wife, a middle school choir teacher, uses this website for her students, who record themselves and submit those recordings for grading, and the interface works on smartphones and tablets.
- **SmartMusic:** <https://www.smartmusic.com/> SmartMusic is pretty wonderful in terms of the number of sight reading exercises it offers, in addition to its giant library of repertoire accompaniments. And they are offering free use of their software through June 30th.
- **Teoria:** <https://www.teoria.com/> Teoria has been around for years, and it is loaded with tutorials, exercises, reference points, and articles to share with students. I'm particularly partial to several of the analysis articles and videos, but I'm nerdy that way. Virtually

everything on the site relates to the Western Classical tradition, but that's fine – there's a lot of great stuff within the Western Classical tradition!

Applied Teaching (with a focus on jazz and voice) and Jazz Improvisation:

- **Appcompanionist.com:** <https://www.appcompanionist.com/> If you teach classical and musical theatre as well as jazz, this app can be a bit of a life-saver. The beautiful thing about the free version of the Appcompanionist app is that there are hundreds of vocal exercises and warmups included; as I wrote earlier, in order to maximize efficiency, your students need to be taking care of warmups ahead of time, and this is a great way to for them to do it (at least in part).
- **Jamey Aebersold Play-Alongs:** <http://www.jazzbooks.com/jazz/category/aeball> The entire Jamey Aebersold play-along library is available for digital download in mp3 format at JazzBooks.com (and many of the books themselves are available in PDF format).
- **iReal Pro:** <https://irealpro.com/> Yes, lots of jazz musicians bag on iReal Pro for having a stiff swing feel or for the piano feeling wonky or for lots of things. But to have a single app that can provide six choruses of “What Is This Thing Called Love” in Bb in a bossa nova groove with the flexibility to drop the volume of the drum set and boost the volume of the bass is a wonderful teaching tool, particularly when we can't be there to guide our students in person. I love it.
- **Learn Jazz Standards Play-Along Playlist:**
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLEk1V5QgcGrPLxInIV_NPFyh8mfAvPCE Mostly created with Band-in-a-Box, these are (admittedly) not the hippest recordings in the world. But there are a lot of them. And they are free. And they're in the standard keys.
- **MusicHabit:** <https://www.musichabit.com/> Michele's newest venture offers master classes from master teachers (available for purchase), and a free PracticeRoom section that contains PDFs of exercises, scat singing exercises, jazz piano exercises, backing tracks, and a jazz glossary.
- **PlayJazzNow.com:** <http://www.playjazznow.com/> A different take on the “jazz backing track” format, their tracks are available in a variety of backing piano/bass/drum configurations, and are quite decent.
- **ScatAbility:** Michele Weir's iOS app features demos by professional jazz singers, exercises, etudes, call-and-responses, and the ability to both record and export recordings with the backing track. And yes, I am one of the singers on the app, but I think it's awesome (and not just because I'm one of the singers on the app).

Keeping Yourself Informed

Given that the news is changing every single day in regard to information on the spread of COVID-19 (and yes, I've intentionally avoided discussing it until now), it's important to follow RELIABLE news sources for information. Domestically, the Associated Press (<https://apnews.com/>) and Reuters (<https://www.reuters.com/>) consistently rate as the most reliable, least biased news sources by nearly every study on media trustworthiness. It's also worth bookmarking the Centers for Disease Control's website (<https://www.cdc.gov/>) for the

latest official news and updates from the CDC, as news rapidly changes. While I was working on this document on Sunday evening, the CDC's recommendation that in-person events consisting of fifth or more people throughout the U.S. be postponed or canceled for the next eight weeks came across my news feed, causing me to insert an extra sentence into the section on ensemble rehearsals.

From a music education perspective, the National Association for Music Education has a very good (and growing) page of COVID-19 Resources and News at <https://nafme.org/covid-19/>. Some of the links are more general in scope, but several are music-specific. The American Choral Directors Association also has a lengthy page dedicated to this at https://acda.org/ACDA/Resources_for_Choral_Professionals_During_a_Pandemic.aspx.

Finally, I'm happy to be a resource moving forward, and I'll happily continue to evolve and shape this document with input from everyone reading. Please feel free to contact me at justinbinek@gmail.com or jbinek@kckcc.edu, on Facebook/Messenger (justin.binek), via Instagram DM (justinbinek), or through the contact form on my website (<https://www.justinbinekjazz.com/>). Be well, friends.

Dr. Justin Binek is an internationally renowned jazz and classical singer, pianist, educator, clinician, and composer/arranger. He is a frequent presenter and performer at the Jazz Education Network's annual conferences, and has contributed significantly to the field of vocal jazz pedagogy, writing "The Art and Craft of Scat Singing and Melodic Alteration," "Vocal Pedagogy for the Jazz Singer," and his dissertation focusing on the evolution of Ella Fitzgerald's syllabic articulation in scat singing. He is also a featured in-app clinician on Michele Weir's ScatAbility app for iOS. Along with numerous credits as a sideman, Justin released one album ("Songbook") as a bandleader. Justin is an Assistant Professor of Music Theory and Jazz Improvisation at Kansas City Kansas Community College, and he also serves on the teaching faculties of the Jazz Harmony Retreat and the Halewynstichting Jazz Workshop.

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