

A MODEL FOR DEVELOPING A HOLISTIC COLLEGIATE CURRICULUM  
FOR STRING PERFORMANCE AND PEDAGOGY

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the  
Doctor of Musical Arts degree  
in the Graduate College of  
The University of Iowa

August 2014

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D.M.A. Thesis

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has been approved by the Examining Committee  
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Nathan Platte

To my parents, Daniel and Carol Lewis. Thank you for being wonderful educators and for continually inspiring me to be re-imagining the process of learning.

I am not a teacher, but an awakener.

Robert Frost

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would first like to extend my sincerest, heartfelt gratitude to my advisor Dr. Scott Conklin, and to my thesis committee, who have been so gracious to help me on a snug deadline. Thank you to each of you for your wisdom, feedback, and support. To Dr. Conklin especially, I would like to extend my thanks for being a wonderful teacher and advisor, and for being a tireless supporter of my dreams. Additionally, I would like to thank Elizabeth Oakes for mentoring me during my time at the University of Iowa, and for facilitating my deepened love for chamber music. To Dr. William LaRue Jones, I owe a debt of gratitude for modeling professionalism, goodness of character, and a genuine spirit that cares for students and their development.

Several people have been very generous with their time by allowing me to interview them in person for this research. To the JACK, Daedalus, Chiara, Jupiter, and Fry Street String Quartets, please accept my sincere thanks for sharing your thoughts with me on the pedagogy of chamber music. I am also very grateful to Jonah Sirota for giving me permission to include his “Self-Audit” practice guide, a wonderful resource. Additionally, Professor Kurt Sassmannshaus very generously shared his thoughts with me regarding the import and instruction of string pedagogy, for which I am also most grateful.

To the respondents who took time out of your schedules to take the surveys, thank you for sharing your thoughts so candidly. I owe you an enormous debt of gratitude.

I would also like to thank my colleagues and mentors, both at the University of Iowa, and at the Preucil School of Music. Thank you for continually inspiring me through your example of professionalism and excellence in performance and pedagogy.

To my students, thank you for being some of my very best teachers.

Throughout this process I have been blessed with the love, prayers, and unwavering support of family, friends, and my church family. Thank you for believing in me and for your encouragement.

Lastly, I owe deepest thanks to my Heavenly Father for instilling in me a love for music and for teaching. Thank you for giving me life experiences that have allowed me to cultivate my gifts in the hopes that I might be able use them to serve others.



## ABSTRACT

This thesis is directed toward teachers who work primarily with music degree students on the collegiate level. Pedagogy is simply too often “hit or miss” in a student’s degree curriculum, and yet the reality is that most musicians will have to teach at some point in their careers, whether they realize it as students or not.

This thesis provides a model for how to holistically integrate pedagogy into all aspects of the performance curriculum, so that string performance students are provided with the necessary tools to be both excellent performers and teachers, regardless of whether they ever take a pedagogy class. This is accomplished through: the examination of survey results regarding how schools are incorporating the National Association for Schools of Music requirements and recommendations for the integration of pedagogy into course curricula; an overview of survey results reporting how string performers and educators feel about the quality of the education they received in regards to preparedness for artist string teaching; and a discussion of how to create a holistic curriculum for performance and pedagogy that encompasses the three main areas of most string performance curriculums (the private studio, chamber music, and orchestra).

The overarching goal of this thesis is to build on the rich tradition of string playing and teaching that already exists, by introducing a curriculum that will holistically educate the student as both performer and pedagogue. At the heart of this approach is the need for fostering a “see one, do one, teach one” mentality in students.

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## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

By the time a music student completes a degree program in string performance, has she or he acquired the skill sets necessary for being both a performer and an educator? This question forms the basis of investigation for this research. The impetus for this research is twofold: observation of the traditional dichotomy separating degree tracks for string performers from educators in collegiate curricula; and experience completing degrees in both tracks while working concurrently in the field of string teaching. Throughout the course of conducting this research, many wonderful trends in string playing and teaching have been observed. The goal for this paper is to build upon this rich foundation, and to cultivate the idea that educators best serve their students when the educator consciously nurtures the teacher alongside the performer throughout the course of academic study.

Through the centuries, the art of teaching has been both valued and revered in some respects, yet also under-appreciated, and even viewed with condescension. The latter is a mindset that has permeated the mentalities of various professional fields. Unfortunately, music has been no exception in under-appreciating the value of teaching. Additionally, a job market driven by educational standards, economics, and audience consumption, is causing many musicians to re-evaluate their roles in the performing arts. The current generation of young string students are demonstrating a remarkable willingness to evolve and develop their skills to meet the needs of this changing artistic economy. This call for a varied and flexible skill palette highlights an increased awareness of the value of honing both performing and teaching skills to a high level of artistry. This awareness often manifests itself as a prominent factor that influences students' choices as they research and select degree program offerings. Students who sincerely desire a

meaningful and fulfilling career want to be equipped with all the skills necessary to fluidly and effectively navigate the myriad situations in which they will find themselves post-graduation.

Eric Booth has worked with many such students,<sup>1</sup> and his thoughts confirm this current trend:

People are welcome to cling to their outmoded prejudices, but in the meantime many of the finest young artists want to develop educational skills; they don't want to perpetuate the nineteenth- and twentieth-century prejudices about teaching. I encounter hundreds of artists in the top orchestras and arts organizations who work hard to learn education skills way too late, angry that they didn't have a chance or a conservatory climate that encouraged them to learn teaching artistry during their schooling. The fine young artists who want to expand their kit bag of essential skills will be grabbing the jobs and redefining what the arts can be in our new century.<sup>2</sup>

There is nothing wrong with a student having a stronger interest in music performance versus education, or vice versa. However, in a world where the performing arts job market is highly competitive and available jobs are becoming fewer and farther between, it behooves music educators and students to be thoughtful and creative in their pursuit of both skill sets. This approach seems especially relevant as it is graduate students with performance degrees who are applying for college teaching jobs in applied instrumental instruction. Many of these students recognize the high probability that they will be teaching in the future and demonstrate a desire to be well prepared by actively acquiring pedagogical skills as part of their degree program where possible.

Before continuing with an examination of the work that is already being done to bridge the gap between the worlds of music performance and music education, it would be useful to have a clear working definition of pedagogy. The Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary states that

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<sup>1</sup> Primarily at the Juilliard School of Music.

<sup>2</sup> Eric Booth, *The Music Teaching Artist's Bible: Become a Virtuoso Educator*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 6-7.



pedagogy is “the art, science, or profession of teaching.”<sup>3</sup> String pedagogy, the central focus of this research, might then be defined as “the art, science, or profession of teaching stringed instruments.”<sup>4</sup> The question then becomes: what is a holistic approach to string performance and pedagogy, and why is this being advocated? Let us then have a clear working definition of “a holistic approach to string performance and pedagogy.” The word “holistic” is defined by the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary as “relating to or concerned with complete systems rather than with individual parts.”<sup>5</sup> Thus, a holistic approach to string performance and pedagogy might be a curriculum designed to comprehensively finesse the relationship between the two. This concept might be easy enough to grasp intellectually, but what does it actually look like in an instructional setting? The following four didactic approaches to the holistic instruction of performance and pedagogy appeared consistently throughout the course of this research: 1) modeling, 2) guided thinking, 3) overt instruction of pedagogy, and 4) experience.

The instructor invariably models behaviors, musicianship, and a professional approach for the student, whether either are aware of it or not. The ability to ask questions designed to lead students down the path of self discovery is also a tool that skilled educators employ frequently. Lastly, the impartation of pedagogical knowledge is often handled via direct instruction, and then reinforced through experience. For most educators, their approach to teaching incorporates all four of these strategies at any given time, either separately or in combination. The same is true

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<sup>3</sup> *Merriam-Webster Dictionary Online*, s.v. “Pedagogy,” accessed July 9, 2014, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/pedagogy>.

<sup>4</sup> The string family is vast, but only the violin, viola, cello, bass, harp, and guitar are included in the work for this thesis, as these are the stringed instruments that are most commonly played and taught.

<sup>5</sup> *Merriam-Webster Dictionary Online*, s.v. “Holistic,” accessed July 9, 2014, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/holistic>.

for a holistic approach to the instruction of performance and pedagogy. All of the thoughts shared in this thesis will be framed within the context of these instructional blueprints for learning.

Before moving into a deeper discussion of the methodologies used in this thesis however, it is important to contextualize this research within the work that has already been done in this area of study.

Whether or not a student embarks on their degree with a desire to teach, the fact remains that nearly all will end up teaching at some point in their musical careers.<sup>6</sup> Given this reality, it is surprising that there is not an abundance of research available on the topic of acquiring pedagogical skills concurrent with performance ones. Two important scholarly initiatives that seek to bridge the gap between performance and teaching are: *The Music Teaching Artist's Bible: Becoming a Virtuoso Educator* (published in 2009) by Eric Booth, and *From the Stage to the Studio: How Fine Musicians Become Great Teachers* (published in 2012) by Cornelia Watkins and Laurie Scott. These books represent the two primary sources<sup>7</sup> for a foundation of thought regarding this topic.

Eric Booth's book, *The Music Teaching Artist's Bible*,<sup>8</sup> is comprised of a series of essays that have been appearing in issues of *Chamber Music* magazine since 2003. His approach to developing teaching artistry<sup>8</sup> is delivered in a philosophical manner, but does include concrete

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<sup>6</sup> This outcome is typically the result of a desire to teach, or a need to provide financial support for self or family.

<sup>7</sup> A secondary source that readers might find helpful to reference is an essay entitled: "It's Time for Music Educators and Performing Musicians to Unite" by Katherine Sinsabaugh. This three-page essay appears as a chapter in the book *Policies and Practices: Rethinking Music Teacher Preparation in the 21st Century: Proceedings from the Memorial Symposium Honoring the Contributions of Charles Leonhard*, and discusses what performers and teaching artists can do to help each other in a very general way. Other sources that discuss teaching and performing in a somewhat holistic manner include: *Teaching Genius: Dorothy DeLay and the Making of a Musician* by Barbara Lourie Sand; *The Complete Violinist* by Yehudi Menuhin; *Principles of Violin Playing and Teaching* by Ivan Galamian; and *Playing the Viola: Conversations with William Primrose* by David Dalton.

<sup>8</sup> A term reputedly coined by June Dunbar when she was at the Lincoln Center Institute in the early 1970s.

advice and implementable strategies. This resource covers topics ranging from the definition of the role and responsibilities of a “Teaching Artist” to learning how to become such a person while dealing with the challenges that occur due to teaching setting and demographics. Of particular interest is the chapter entitled “A Teaching Artist’s Curriculum,” as it directly implicates the research of this thesis. The chapter presents the model that was developed for students at the Juilliard School of Music as part of the Art and Education/Morse Fellowship program. Students that took part in this program were committed to participating in two semesters of a three credit hour class that encompassed direct group instruction alongside projects outside the classroom. Following this initial year, students were then placed into two separate elementary school classrooms to put into practice the skills that they had learned. In essence, this model is comprised of one year of direct instruction followed by a year of full-time, hands-on teaching experience. By all accounts, students who went through this program felt very well-equipped to enter a variety of teaching settings after graduation. Thus, this model represents a viable option for instruction and it paved the way for further research in this area.

Cornelia Watkin’s and Laurie Scott’s book *From the Stage to the Studio* is divided into three main sections: performance; teaching; and the logistics and challenges associated with setting up a teaching studio/environment. The over-arching message from the authors is that musicians can become both excellent performers and excellent teachers; this goal is accomplished through tracing connections between teaching and performance via practical pedagogical suggestions. In the *Preface*, the authors state that their book was written to “provide real answers and solutions.”<sup>9</sup> Accordingly, the book pursues the following themes:

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<sup>9</sup> Cornelia Watkins and Laurie Scott, *From the Stage to the Studio: How Fine Musicians Become Great Teachers*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), xiv.

- Musicians who examine and translate the best of what they do into what they teach will quickly find that it enhances, rather than diminishes, their performing abilities.
- A course in pedagogy need not put the instructor between the applied teacher and the students. Instead, a well-conceived pedagogy class can provide a framework for each musician to examine the best of what he or she does, and involve the applied teacher's expertise in the process.
- A heterogeneous class of outwardly unrelated instrumentalists, singers, and conductors will begin to see themselves as a unified group of fine musicians with very similar goals, who can benefit from considering each other's approaches.<sup>10</sup>
- Applied instructors required to teach pedagogy will now have a resource for their students, hopefully making the subject far easier to teach as an independent or interactive study class.<sup>11</sup>

As noted from this list, the authors are advocates for pedagogy instruction offered as a class separate from the private applied studies curriculum. Students in these classes draw upon their experience of learning in a private studio setting, and have the additional potential benefit of being taught pedagogy by their current private studio instructor. Recently, Cornelia Watkins and Laurie Scott have begun to explore a more holistic approach to the instruction of performance and pedagogy that is concurrent with this research. This was evidenced through an article that was written for *The Strad Magazine* in the fall of 2013 entitled "Who Teaches the Teachers?" In this article the authors described "their vision of a unified training that combines performance and pedagogy."<sup>12</sup> Their suggestions encompass two courses that would be offered outside of the mainstream degree curriculum. The first is a seminar providing the participants

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<sup>10</sup> This suggestion is the authors' solution for "The highly impractical notion that schools, in order to offer music pedagogy, must provide a separate course for each performance area." (Pg. xiv)

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Watkins, Cornelia, and Laurie Scott, "Who Teaches the Teachers," *The Strad Magazine* 124 (2013).

with the opportunity for reflection regarding “their own lives as musicians and performers.”<sup>13</sup>

The second is a course that would cover the various facets of studio teaching. Thus, the authors’ core approach for a unified curriculum involves one year of special pedagogical training via these seminar classes alongside the core curriculum of the degree track. The authors also mention that students would have the opportunity to participate in other course offerings that would include: an overview of career opportunities; assistance in developing career-specific skills (i.e. educational outreach); and master class teaching.

Booth, Watkins, and Scott present excellent models and curricular suggestions for ways to create course offerings that will provide students with the opportunities to acquire teaching skills that will prepare them for their careers. None of these models, however, address the most common curriculum design for performance degree tracks: the one that does not include the overt curricular instruction of pedagogy. In the meantime, how are students who are going through these degree programs acquiring pedagogical skills? Or are they even acquiring them? These are the questions being asked by this research. There must be a way to teach the core curriculum such that our performance students can master objectives relating to performance, while gaining knowledge of how to teach the skills that they are learning. With this in mind, this thesis has been written for teachers who are primarily working with music students on the collegiate level. The goal is to provide a model for how to holistically integrate pedagogy into all aspects the performance curriculum so that string performance students will be provided with

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<sup>13</sup> Watkins, Cornelia, and Laurie Scott, “Who Teaches the Teachers,” *The Strad Magazine* 124 (2013): 47.

the necessary tools to be both excellent performers and teachers.<sup>14</sup>

To frame the starting point for a discussion of music degree curricula, the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) Handbook was examined to ascertain what the requirements and recommendations are for the inclusion of string pedagogy in performance degree curricula.<sup>15</sup> This handbook is the most relevant resource for a discussion of music degree curricula because it is the governing document for accreditation requirements for schools of music. To establish what the current pedagogical offerings of institutions actually are, a survey was developed and distributed to the forty NASM-accredited schools that have over 400 music majors. In chapter one, the NASM survey results will be examined in relationship to the NASM requirements and recommendations. Chapter one will also discuss current trends regarding educator's opinions about the optimum manner in which to address pedagogy in degree curriculum offerings.

The second chapter examines the results of a survey created for string performers and educators.<sup>16</sup> The goal of the performers and educators survey was to ascertain respondents' retrospective opinions about their degree program experiences and what potential factors (both in and outside of their degree programs) had the most influence in shaping their preparedness for string teaching.

Subsequent chapters will discuss how to create a holistic curriculum for performance and

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<sup>14</sup> To be clear, offering pedagogy classes to string students is highly desirable. However, not every school offers pedagogy classes, and even at the schools that do, not every student is required to take them. As such, the mission of this document is to address how educators can ensure that performance students who may never take a pedagogy class will still receive high quality training that encompasses both performance and pedagogy skills.

<sup>15</sup> Both on the undergraduate and graduate degree levels.

<sup>16</sup> The respondent pool for this survey of string performers and educators was not bound to a specific control group because the goal was to obtain as many responses from as many people as possible. Thus, the answers represent a wider demographic than is represented in the first survey of NASM-accredited schools.

pedagogy that encompasses the three main areas of most string performance curricula, which are: 1) the private studio, 2) chamber music, and 3) orchestral studies. All discussions will be informed by the results from the first two surveys and will contextualize the curricular suggestions made as being examples of: modeling, guided thinking, overt instruction of pedagogy, and/or experience.

In the course of looking at pedagogy in the private studio, smaller arenas to be addressed will include: 1) the private lesson; 2) the studio seminar/master class; 3) other leadership opportunities in and beyond the studio; and 4) how to cultivate a studio environment.

A discussion of pedagogy in chamber music studies will encompass: 1) the fundamental principles of chamber music; 2) working with a collaborative pianist; 3) the chamber ensemble; and 4) community engagement.

An exploration of pedagogy through orchestral studies will consider: 1) how to prepare students to be section leaders; 2) the role and responsibilities of the concertmaster; 3) how section members can learn to exhibit leadership from the back of the section; 4) the pedagogy of orchestral playing and leadership; and 5) the relationship of the conductor with private studio instructors.

The overarching goal of this thesis is to build on the rich foundation of string playing and teaching that currently exists, and to inspire collegiate educators and students alike to creatively pursue a well-rounded education in both performance and pedagogy. At the heart of this matter is the need for fostering a “see one, do one, teach one” mentality in students through their core curriculum studies, such that they are not viewing the completion of their performance studies as excluding future opportunities as educators.

CHAPTER 2  
THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS OF MUSIC  
REQUIREMENTS FOR STRING PEDAGOGY

Accreditation through the National Association of Schools of Music is not a requirement for collegiate music degree programs. The guidelines presented by the organization, however, represent the standard for schools that seek accreditation for the purpose of developing a collegiate music curriculum that meets national standards. The handbook discusses requirements for the inclusion of pedagogy in the Bachelor of Music performance degree program. Under Section IX entitled “SPECIFIC PROFESSIONAL BACCALAUREATE DEGREES IN MUSIC,” and then subsequently Section A, “Bachelor of Music in Performance,” the NASM handbook discusses the curricular structure of the Bachelor of Music in Performance degree program. Sub-section “a.” is entitled “All Programs” and states the following:

**(1) Standard.** Curricular structure, content, and time requirements shall enable students to develop the range of knowledge, skills, and competencies expected of those holding a professional baccalaureate degree in performance as indicated below and in Section VIII.

**(2) Guidelines.** Curricula to accomplish this purpose that meet the standards just indicated normally adhere to the following structural guidelines: study in the major area of performance, including ensemble participation, pedagogy courses, independent study, and recitals, should comprise 25-35% of the total program; supportive courses in music, 25-35%; general studies, 25-35%. Studies in the major area and supportive courses in music normally total at least 65% of the curriculum. See Section III.C. regarding forms of instruction, requirements, and electives.<sup>17</sup>

From the wording in the guidelines it is clear that courses in pedagogy are to be included in the core curriculum. Also included in this section is a discussion of “Essential Competencies, Experiences, and Opportunities in addition to those stated for all degree programs.”<sup>18</sup> Subsection

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<sup>17</sup> National Association of Schools of Music, *Handbook - National Association of Schools of Music* (Reston: National Association of Schools of Music, 1974), 101.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 102.



“a” states the following: “Comprehensive capabilities in the major performing medium [include] ... orientation to and experience with the fundamentals of pedagogy.”<sup>19</sup> These statements clearly indicate that pedagogy is an expected component for an undergraduate performance degree track for NASM-accredited schools.

Section X, entitled “GRADUATE PROGRAMS IN MUSIC,” contains the recommendations<sup>20</sup> for the inclusion of pedagogy in a NASM-accredited graduate degree program. Under this category, Section A is entitled “Fundamental Purposes and Principles” and Number 7 is entitled “Preparation for the Professions.” This sub-section contains the following statements:

**a. Career Development.** Many of those who earn graduate degrees in music will be engaged for several decades in a variety of music and music-related professions. Students should be encouraged to acquire the career development and entrepreneurial techniques necessary to advance themselves according to their area of specialization and their own career objectives.

**b. Teaching.** Most of those who are in graduate degrees in music are or will be engaged in music teaching of some type during the course of their professional careers. Institutions are therefore strongly encouraged to give attention to the preparation of graduate students as teachers. Whenever possible, experiences should include teaching music to both music majors and non-music majors. Graduate students, particularly at the doctoral level, should have opportunities for direct teaching experiences appropriate to their major and minor areas under the supervision of master teachers. As appropriate to primary and secondary areas of concentration and to individual career objectives, preparation for teaching should include an introduction to the pedagogy of subject matter considered fundamental to curricula for undergraduate music majors, including composition and improvisation, music theory and history, music from a breadth of cultures, technology, and performance.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> This usage of “recommendation” versus “requirement” is important to note. While Bachelor of Music in performance degree programs are required to include pedagogy in the curriculum, graduate degree programs are only recommended to do so.

<sup>21</sup> National Association of Schools of Music, *Handbook - National Association of Schools of Music* (Reston: National Association of Schools of Music, 1974), 124.

There appears to be an increased emphasis on the importance of including pedagogy and teaching opportunities at the graduate level of the NASM curriculum, though these suggestions are only recommendations. Pedagogy is listed as a component to be included at both the undergraduate and graduate levels; thus some may find it interesting that some string players who have gone through degree programs (even pedagogy degree programs), did not feel that their degree studies, in part or in whole, adequately prepared them for string teaching.

In preparation for a more thorough discussion of the general trends regarding string performers/educators' feelings about the degree training they received as it related to preparing them for teaching, let us take a closer look at what educational institutions across the country are actually doing to incorporate pedagogy into their degree curriculums. For the purposes of this project, a survey was created and distributed to the forty schools<sup>22</sup> that are NASM-accredited, and have over 400 music majors. This survey was entitled, "National Association of Schools of Music, Requirements/Recommendations for String Pedagogy." As shown in the following graph, twenty-eight out of the forty schools responded, which is a 70% representation of the NASM-accredited schools with over 400 music majors.

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<sup>22</sup> Due to the structure of the institutional websites, the string faculties at Stephen F. Austin State University, the University of Southern Mississippi, and Western Michigan University could not be contacted to take part in this survey. The remaining thirty-seven NASM accredited schools with over 400 music majors were able to be contacted and the survey results reflect the responses from the faculty at these schools. See Appendix A for a complete list of the schools.

Table 1. Number of Respondents for Survey

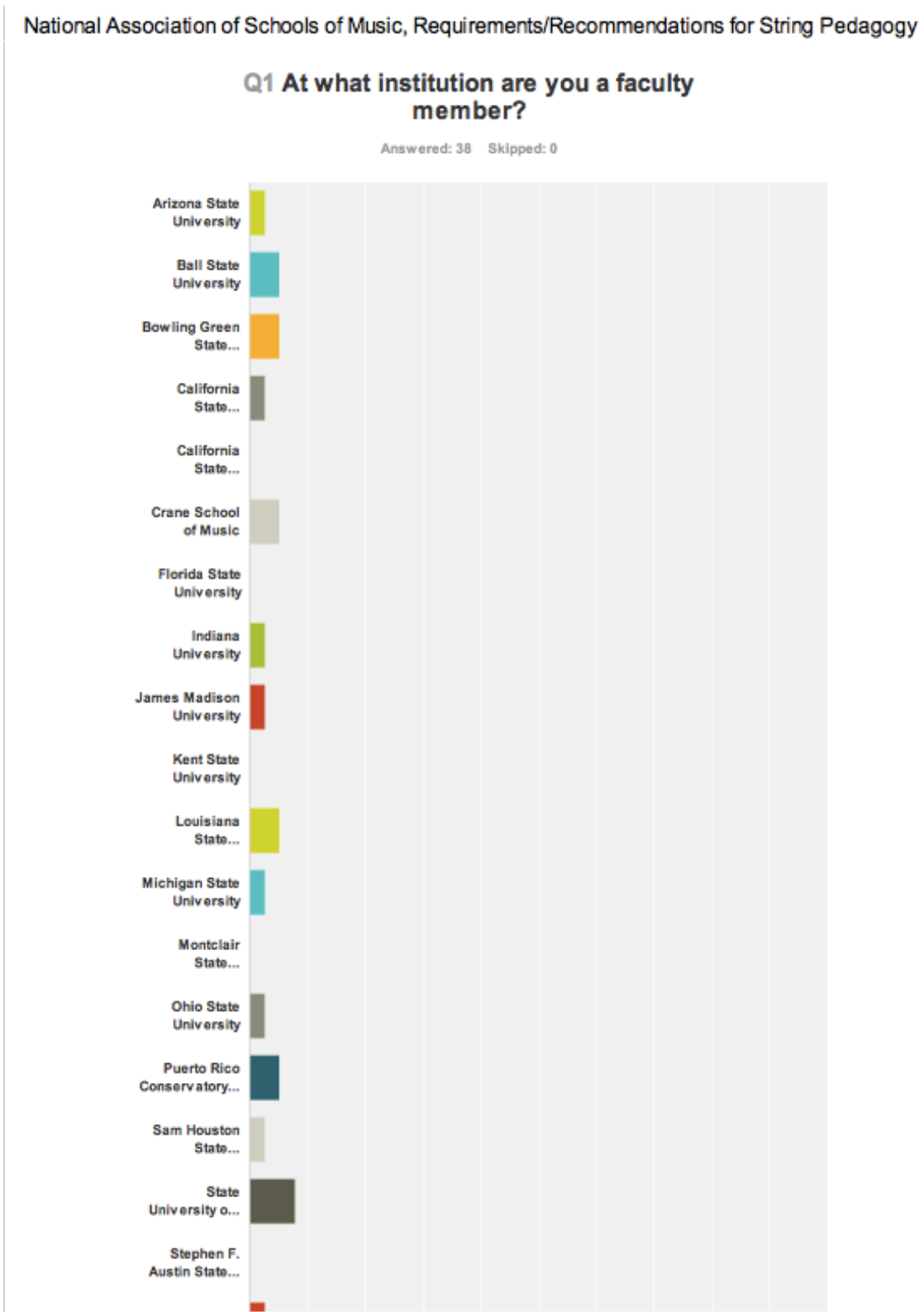




Table 1—continued

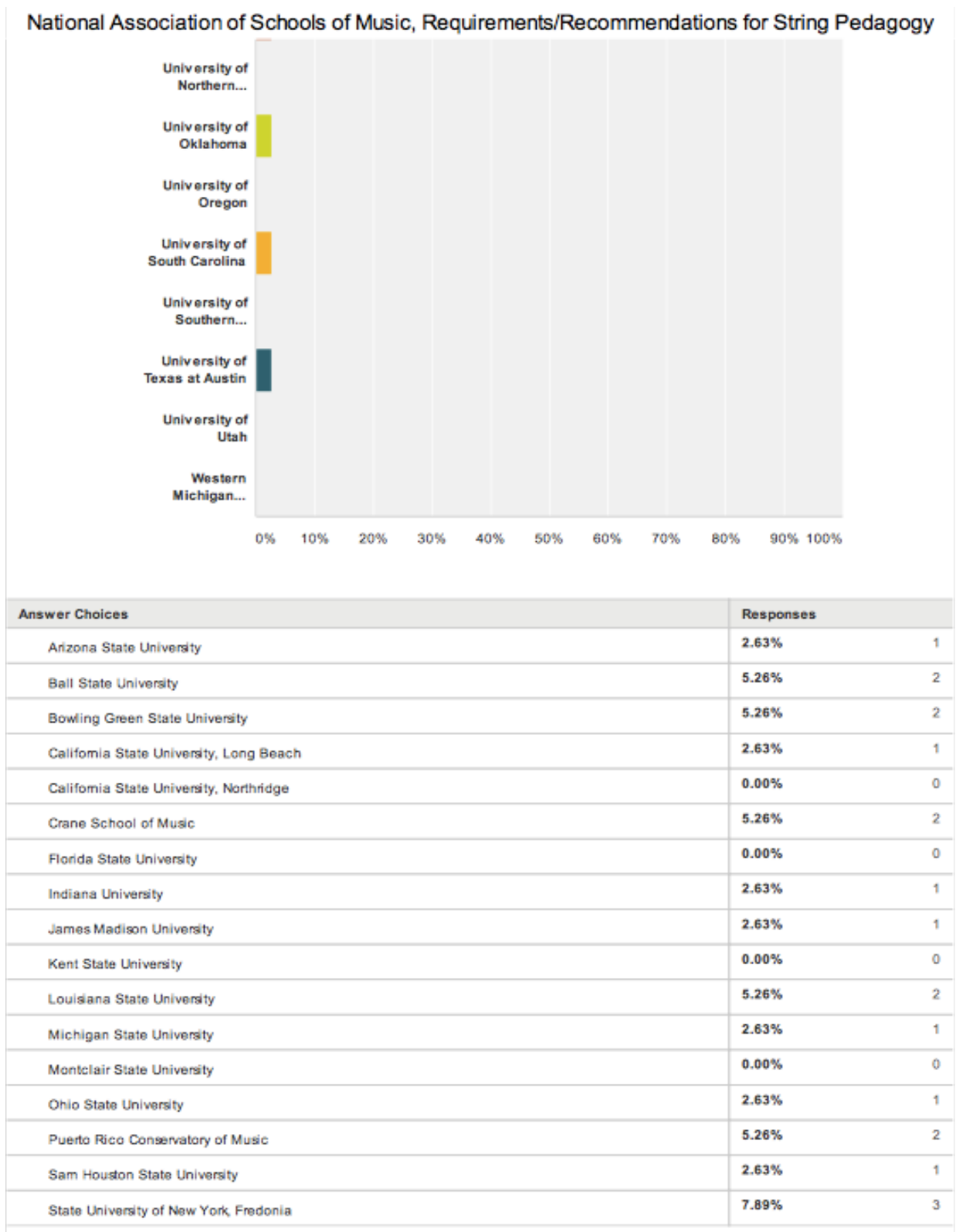


Table 1—continued

National Association of Schools of Music, Requirements/Recommendations for String Pedagogy		
Stephen F. Austin State University	0.00%	0
Temple University	2.63%	1
Texas State University - San Marcos	5.26%	2
Texas Tech University	2.63%	1
University of Arizona	0.00%	0
University of Cincinnati	0.00%	0
University of Colorado, Boulder	2.63%	1
University of Colorado, Denver	5.26%	2
University of Georgia	2.63%	1
University of Houston	0.00%	0
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	2.63%	1
University of Iowa	2.63%	1
University of Kansas	0.00%	0
University of Kentucky	2.63%	1
University of Maryland	5.26%	2
University of Massachusetts Lowell	0.00%	0
University of Michigan	2.63%	1
University of Minnesota, Twin Cities	0.00%	0
University of Missouri, Kansas City	0.00%	0
University of Nevada, Las Vegas	0.00%	0
University of North Carolina at Greensboro	0.00%	0
University of North Texas	2.63%	1
University of Northern Colorado	0.00%	0
University of Oklahoma	2.63%	1
University of Oregon	0.00%	0
University of South Carolina	2.63%	1
University of Southern Mississippi	0.00%	0
University of Texas at Austin	2.63%	1
University of Utah	0.00%	0
Western Michigan University	0.00%	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>38</b>

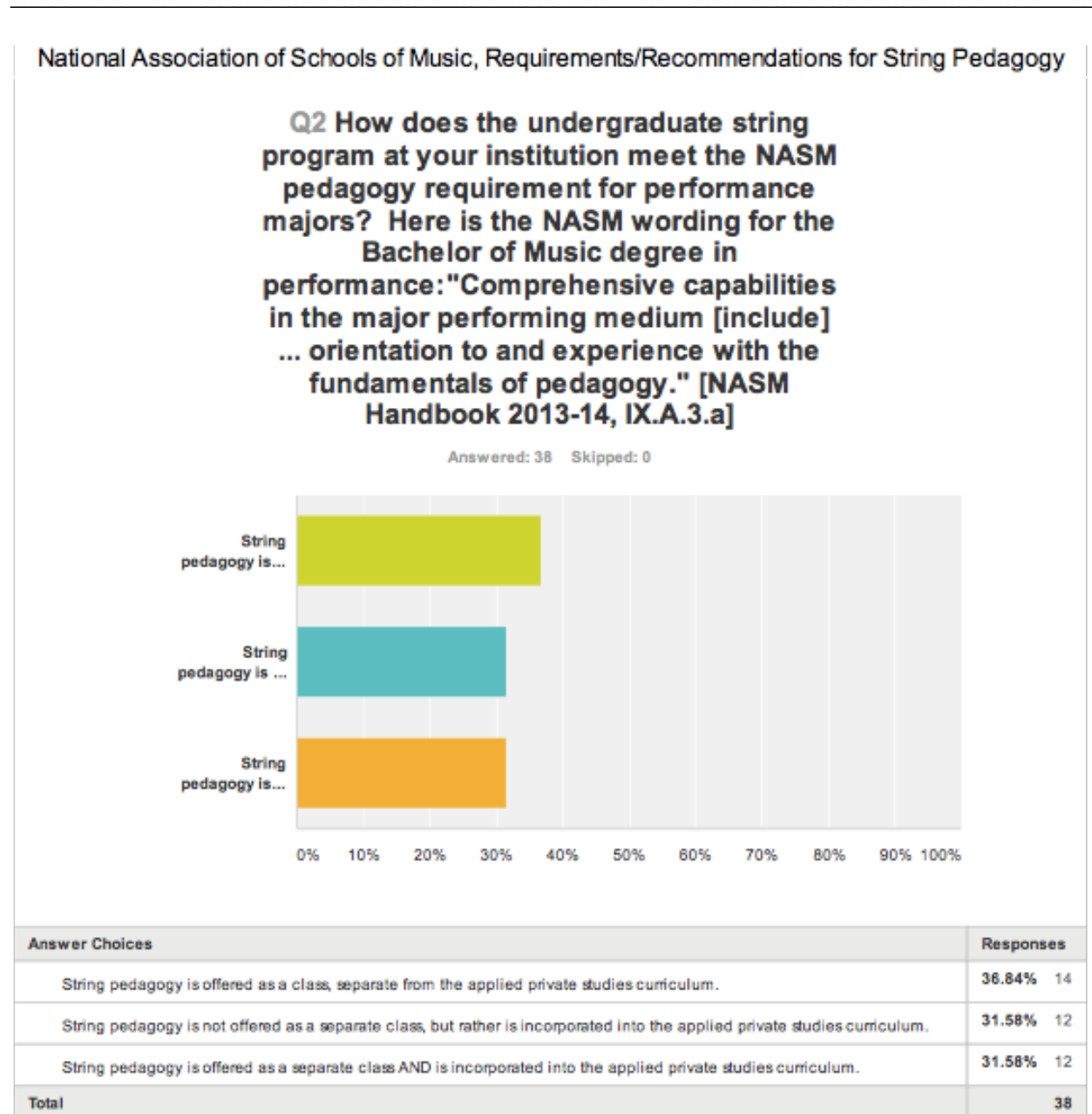
Schools including Ball State University, Bowling Green State University, the Crane School of Music at the State University of New York at Potsdam, Louisiana State University, the Puerto Rico Conservatory, the State University of New York at Fredonia, Texas State University - San Marcos, the University of Colorado at Denver, and the University of Maryland had more than one faculty member that filled out the survey, which helped to give a more complete landscape for these particular schools.<sup>23</sup>

The second question of this survey (see Table 2) was designed to determine how schools that offer a Bachelor of Music in performance degree are meeting the NASM requirement for the inclusion of pedagogy in the degree curriculum. Respondents were only able to select one answer choice. 36.84% of the respondents indicated that pedagogy is offered as a class separate from the applied private studies curriculum, and this represents the most common of the three answer choice options. The other two answer choices tied for number of responses at 31.58% each, indicating that roughly the same number of schools incorporate pedagogy into the applied private studies curriculum as those who teach pedagogy as a separate class in addition to incorporating it into the applied private studies curriculum. These two combined represent approximately 60% of the respondents, indicating some trend to including pedagogy in the applied private studies component of the curriculum.

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<sup>23</sup> This survey relied completely on the accuracy of the perceptions shared by the respondents, which opens the results up to a margin of error. In hindsight, it is recognized that it might have been more advisable to contact department secretaries for a more accurate description of course offerings.

Table 2. The NASM Requirement for the Inclusion of Pedagogy in the Bachelor of Music in Performance Degree Curriculum



The respondents for this question also had the option of writing comments in a comment box, and the responses shared were the following:



“A general pedagogy course is required.”

“String pedagogy is not offered as a class for undergraduate students-- there was no place to indicate this on the form.”<sup>24</sup>

“I checked the 3rd option because the survey forced me to do so. Shouldn’t “other” have had its own check box? The two separate courses are ‘Instrumental Repertoire and Pedagogy I and II.’ Each carried 2 credits. Each is taught as an independent studies project with the private studies teacher as mentor.”<sup>25</sup>

“Although there is a separate class, I also include pedagogy in the studio, in both private lessons and in studio class.”

“I was unable to just answer “other” on the surveys. My guess is that some but not all teachers do incorporate pedagogy in their applied lessons.”

“At [institution],<sup>26</sup> perf. majors do two terms of teaching non-music majors private lessons. They are checked up on mid term and end of term. But mostly this class is uninstructed.”

“String Pedagogy is offered as a graduate class but UGs<sup>27</sup> can take it.”

“Offered, and incorporated into some applied private studies - up to the teacher.”

The responses above indicate a wide array of curricula offerings. Of perhaps greatest interest is the respondent who indicated that pedagogy is taught as part of two separate courses entitled “Instrumental Repertoire and Pedagogy I and II,” with the private studio instructor. This

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<sup>24</sup> This survey was designed with a comment box so that respondents who did not feel any of the three given answers adequately described their current curricular offerings could expound upon this. However, it seems that there was not an “other” option to select in conjunction with the comment box as was intended.

<sup>25</sup> The applicable answer for this respondent would have been number one, “String pedagogy is offered as a class, separate from the private studies curriculum,” even though the students still complete this class with their private studio instructor.

<sup>26</sup> Names of individuals and institutions will not be included in the commentary shared in this thesis out of respect for privacy and the anonymity of the survey respondents.

<sup>27</sup> Abbreviation for “Undergraduates.”

type of independent study setup could be considered optimal because it would permit the instructor to devote the actual private lesson time to the technical and musical development of the student, while still allowing for one-on-one time with this same student to cover literature and pedagogical skills. It is also of note that one institution provides the opportunity for the undergraduate students in the Bachelor of Music in performance to be able to teach two terms of non-major lessons. Hands-on experience plays an invaluable role in the development of teaching skills, and it is encouraging to see that this learning environment is built into the curricula for undergraduate performance majors.

The third question of this survey was created for the institutions that indicated that pedagogy is offered as a separate class in the curriculum. The purpose was to discover how many semesters or quarters<sup>28</sup> of pedagogy are generally being offered. Only one of the institutions that responded currently offers more than two semesters or quarters of string pedagogy (see Table 3). The majority of the institutions that are offering pedagogy as a separate class only offer one term. For this pool of respondents, 34.21% indicate a current practice of one term of pedagogy; the other 28.95% of respondents<sup>29</sup> indicated that two terms of pedagogy are offered at their institution. One institution (representing 2.63% of the respondent pool), indicated it offers four terms of string pedagogy. In addition to these statistics, it is noteworthy that 34.21% of the respondents indicated that they are currently not offering pedagogy as a separate class in the course curriculum. In question two, 31.58% of the respondents indicated that pedagogy was not offered as a separate class, and so it is not clear why the responses in question three indicate a

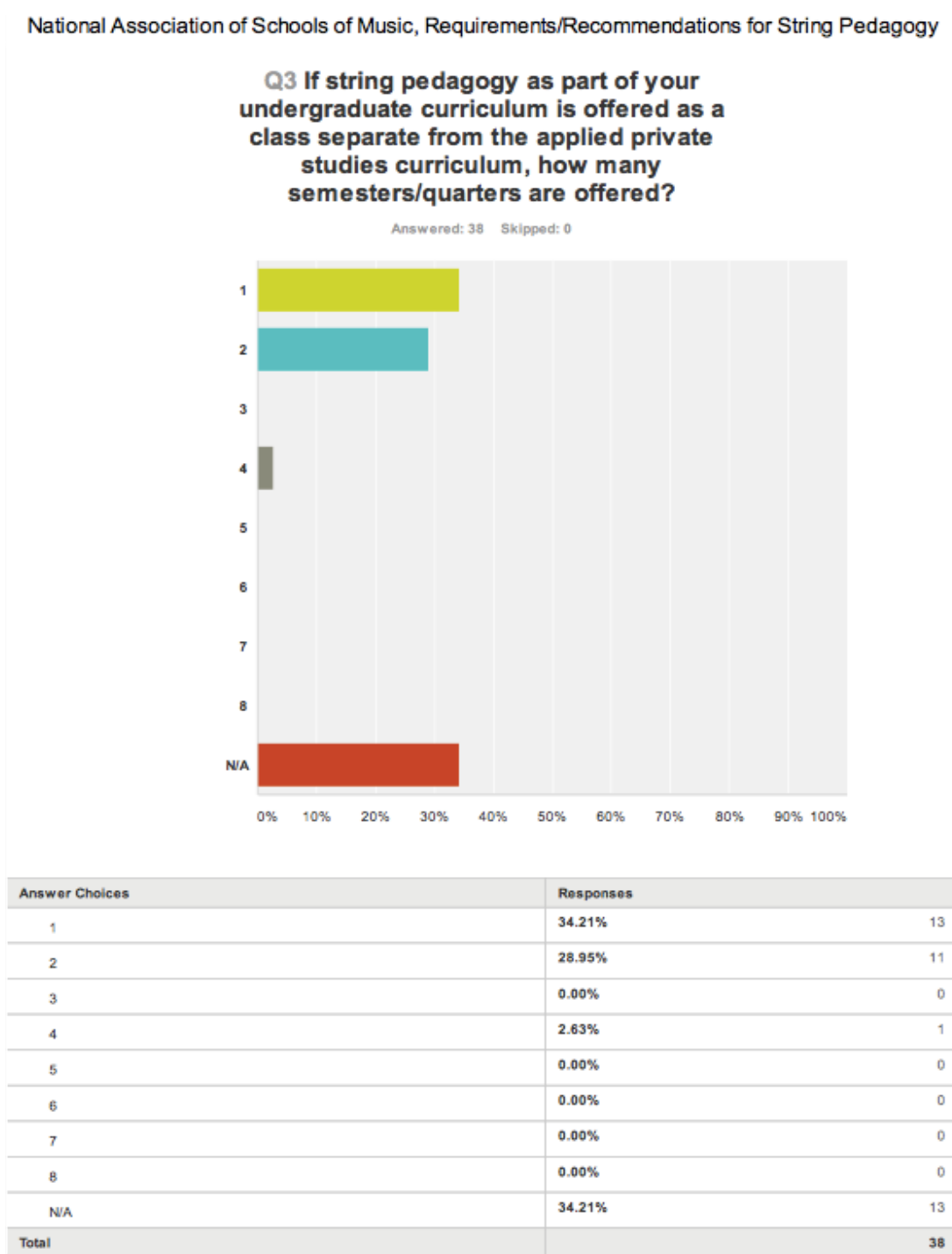
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<sup>28</sup> From here on out the word “term” will be used.

<sup>29</sup> 33.3% indicated that this question is not applicable to them because string pedagogy is not offered as a separate course at their institution.

slight increase in this percentage. The salient point is that a little over a third of the respondent pool indicated that they do not currently offer any pedagogical course offerings.

Table 3. Number of Semesters/Quarters of String Pedagogy as a Separate Class Currently Being Offered in the Bachelor of Music in Performance Degree Curriculum



To summarize, this survey indicates that the number of institutions that offer only one term of pedagogical training as a separate class is equal to those who offer none at all; a smaller percentage offer two terms, and one institution offers four. It is encouraging to see that 65.79% of the respondent pool include pedagogy as a course offering; the fact that almost a third of the respondent pool does not, however, indicates that there is still room for growth.

The fourth question of this survey was designed to determine how schools that offer graduate performance degrees are meeting the NASM recommendation for the inclusion of pedagogy in the curriculum. 36.84% of the respondents indicated that pedagogy is offered as a separate class and is incorporated into the applied private studies curriculum, and this answer represents the plurality. 34.21% of the respondent pool replied that they are not offering pedagogy as a separate class, but are integrating it into the applied private studies curriculum. Lastly, 28.95% of the respondents indicated that their institutions offer string pedagogy as a class separate from the applied private studies curriculum. Unlike the previous survey regarding the undergraduate degree curriculum, learning environments that incorporate string pedagogy into the curriculum both as a separate class and as an integral part of applied private studies represent the majority of graduate degree curricula. This survey demonstrates that pedagogy acquires a higher level of importance in graduate degree curricula. These findings were expected, given that graduate students often have teaching responsibilities and are preparing for collegiate teaching positions.

Table 4. The NASM Recommendation for the Inclusion of Pedagogy in Graduate Performance Degree Curriculum

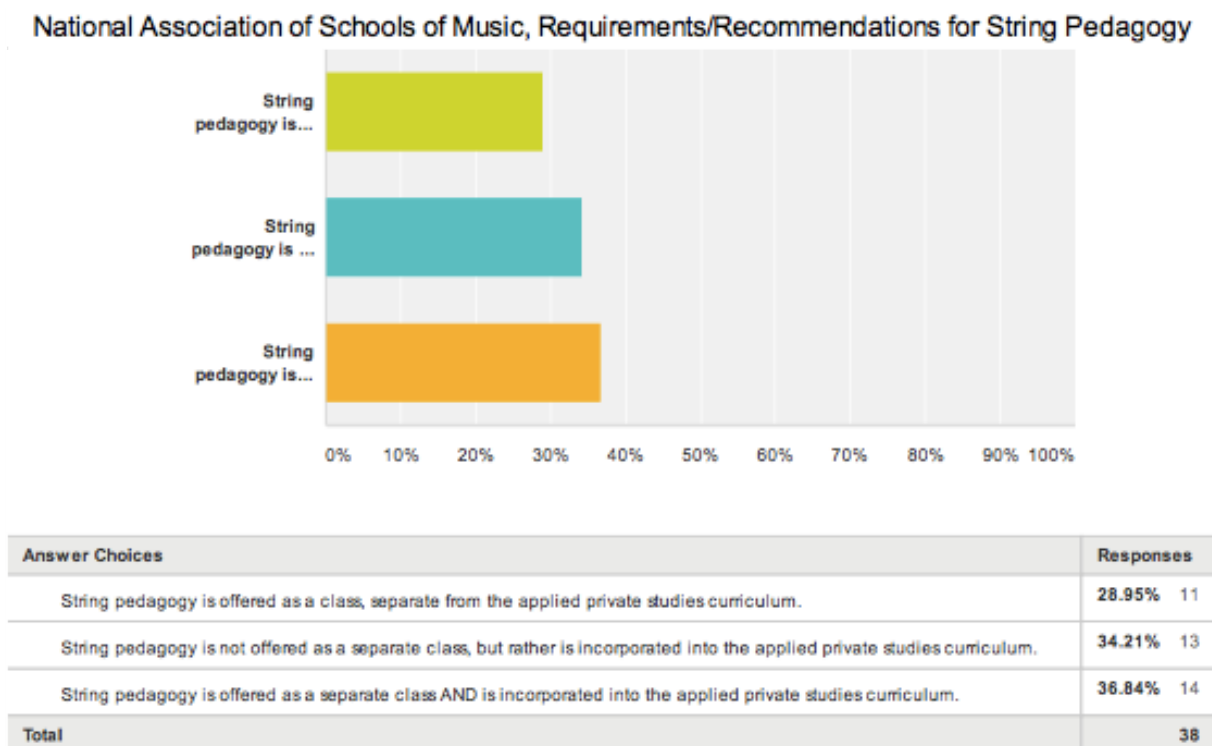
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National Association of Schools of Music, Requirements/Recommendations for String Pedagogy

**Q4 How does the graduate string program at your institution meet the NASM pedagogy recommendations for the curriculum? Here is the NASM wording for graduate music degrees: "Most of those who are in graduate degrees in music are or will be engaged in music teaching of some type during the course of their professional careers. Institutions are therefore strongly encouraged to give attention to the preparation of graduate students as teachers. Whenever possible, experiences should include teaching music to both music majors and non-music majors. Graduate students, particularly at the doctoral level, should have opportunities for direct teaching experiences appropriate to their major and minor areas under the supervision of master teachers. As appropriate to primary and secondary areas of concentration and to individual career objectives, preparation for teaching should include an introduction to the pedagogy of subject matter considered fundamental to curricula for undergraduate music majors, including composition and improvisation, music theory and history, music from a breadth of cultures, technology, and performance." [NASM Handbook 2013-14, X.A.7.b]**

Answered: 38 Skipped: 0

Table 4—continued



Question Four also had a comment box so that faculty could leave their thoughts. Responses included the following:

“There is no graduate string program.”

“Doctoral students teach applied lessons, coach chamber music, and are graduate assistants for courses including Research and Bibliography and Music Appreciation.”

“I checked the 3rd option because the survey forced me to do so. Shouldn’t “other” have had its own check box? ----<sup>30</sup> Literature and Pedagogy carries 2 credits. It is taught as an independent studies project with the private studies teacher as mentor.”<sup>31</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Dashes will be used in place of individuals’ names and other commentary that could make a respondent identifiable.

<sup>31</sup> This represents the same issue as seen in the previous survey, with the comment box unfortunately not linked to an “other” option as it was intended to be.

“We do not really have graduate string performance majors. I had to check one of these for the survey to submit, but it is not an applicable question.”

“My understanding is that there is a String Methods and Literature class that is offered to graduate students, but that it is not actually a true pedagogy course.”

“Most graduate students, especially doctoral students, are given the opportunity to be introduced to the above subject matter, and, as all are considered, on some level, assistants to the studio faculty, have opportunities for direct teaching experiences.”

“No real pedagogy offered to grad students.”

“See above answer, true also for graduates to the best of my knowledge, but I am a mere applied teacher, not in Music Ed at all.”

The second statement shared above represents a potentially ideal situation in that doctoral level students are given the opportunity not only to be a TA<sup>32</sup> for classes (which typically is a stipulation for their funding), but also to teach applied lessons and coach chamber music. The subsequent answer also gives an example of another very viable option for holistically teaching pedagogical skills via the private studio instructor. The fifth response indicates that graduate students at this particular institution receive exposure to pedagogical concepts and are allowed some opportunities for teaching, though it is not clear how the delivery of these concepts and teaching experiences is structured. The most concerning response is, “no real pedagogy offered to grad students,” as it is the graduate performance majors who frequently teach to support themselves during and/or after their degree programs.

The survey’s fifth question seeks discover how many terms of pedagogy are offered at the institutions that indicated that pedagogy is offered as a separate class in the curriculum for graduate performance degree programs. As the graph shows (see Table 5), only one of the

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<sup>32</sup> Abbreviation for “Teaching Assistant.”

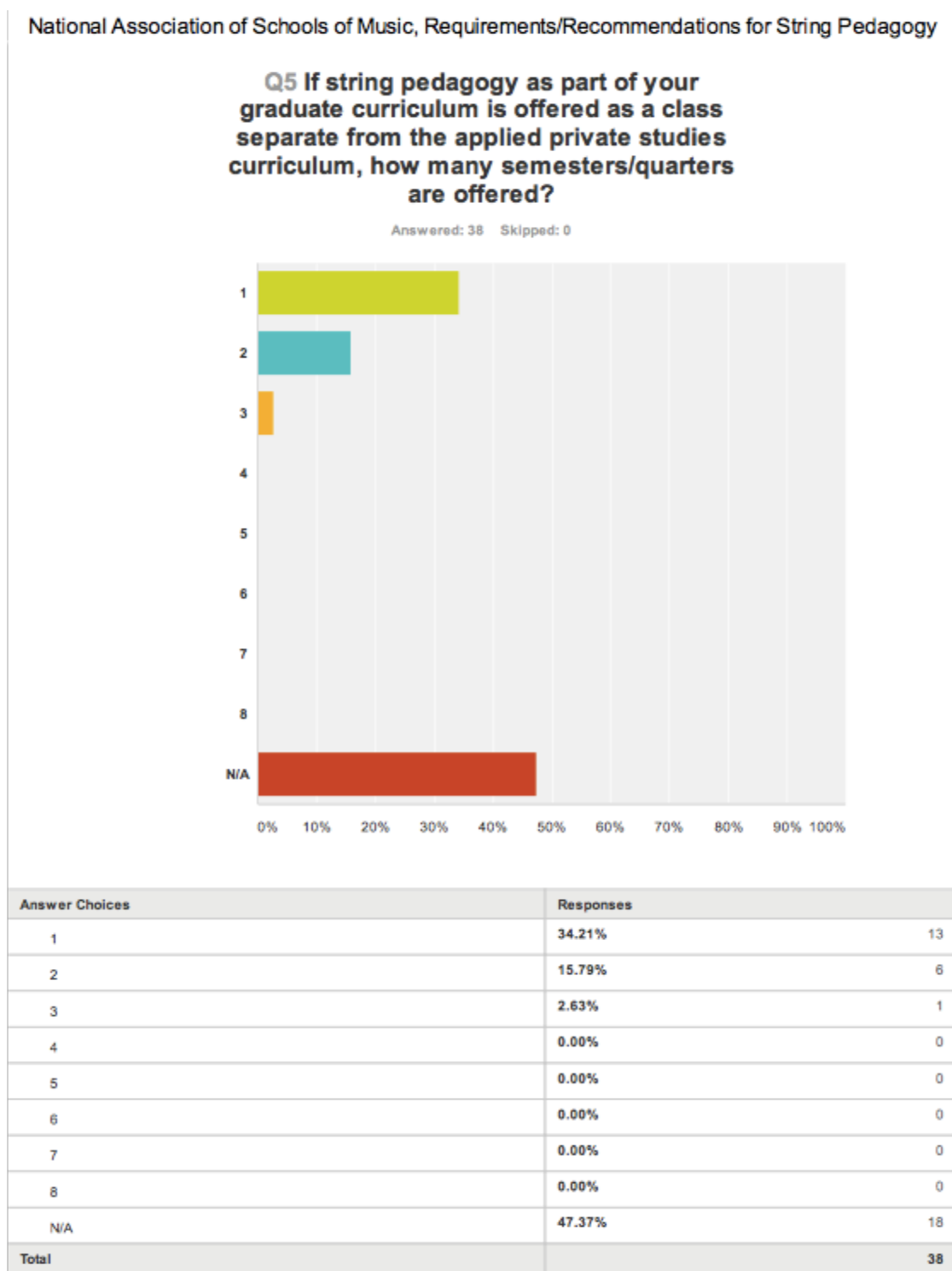


institutions that responded is currently offering more than three terms of string pedagogy. 34.21% of the institutions offer only one term of string pedagogy, 15.79% indicated that two terms are offered, and the one institution that offers three terms represents 2.63% of the respondent pool. This question did not specify which graduate programs offer these classes, and so it is impossible to know what number of pedagogy courses are being offered by institutions over the course of a Master of Music degree, an Artist Diploma, or a Doctor of Musical Arts Degree in performance. While only 31.58% of the undergraduate institutions that responded do not offer pedagogy as a separate course in their degree curricula, 34.21% of these same institutions indicated that they do not offer pedagogy as a separate course on the graduate level.<sup>33</sup> This indicates a slightly greater deficiency in pedagogical course offerings for graduate students, though they are the most important student group to target for pedagogical training. However, this statistic may be counter-balanced by the 5.26% increase in institutions who indicated that they teach pedagogy both as a separate class and as an integral part of the applied private studies curriculum on the graduate level.

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<sup>33</sup> It is also possible that some of these institutions do not have very many graduate students and perhaps do not see the need to offer pedagogy as a class on the graduate level.

Table 5. Number of Semesters/Quarters of String Pedagogy as a Separate Class Currently Being Offered in Graduate Music Performance Degree Curricula



This survey concluded by asking the string faculty members if they had any further thoughts to share. Their comments are as follows:

“Many of our students also receive string pedagogy instruction as part of the ---- String Project or through our student chapter of ASTA.”<sup>34</sup>

“This survey of yours comes at a time when we string and MUED<sup>35</sup> professors at [institution] are desperately in need of two tenure-track lines that have either been lost or never were in existence. One of them is a String Pedagogy line. We are proud that we have really top string teaching, but the flow of money toward teaching lines is all dependent on the administration. I wanted you to know that we are fighting the good fight here to expand our string resources.”

“Presently two credits—I would like three—but it will not fit.”

“Our course needs to be revamped and that will happen in the next few years.”

“The stems for questions 3 & 5 do not cover all cases, yet the survey requires them to be answered affirmatively. Considering that we have dedicated String Pedagogy faculty, our pattern (that goes back over 20 years) of having studio teacher oversee the projects is quite conservative. It makes most sense when you realize that many of our undergraduate performance majors are double majors in MusEd.<sup>36</sup> But for those who are not MuEd majors, having one of the 2 courses be under a string MusEd faculty would be a good step forward.”

“One semester required for MM.<sup>37</sup> Two semesters required for DMA.”<sup>38</sup>

“This class is repeatable for credit.”

“We have a very small number of graduate students in performance. They often assist in teaching a scale class or ensemble coaching.”

“Pedagogy majors also have to take Music Learning Theory or a general Learning Theory

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<sup>34</sup> Abbreviation for “American String Teachers Association.”

<sup>35</sup> Abbreviation for “Music Education.”

<sup>36</sup> Abbreviation for “Music Education.”

<sup>37</sup> Abbreviation for “Master of Music.”

<sup>38</sup> Abbreviation for “Doctor of Musical Arts.”

class from the School of Education.”

“Seems like a slightly odd sampling you are going to get, but best of luck!”<sup>39</sup>

This survey demonstrates that roughly a third of NASM-accredited institutions with over 400 music majors and both undergraduate and graduate degree programs are offering string pedagogy as a class separate from the applied private studio curriculum, on both the undergraduate and graduate degree levels. Roughly 32% of institutions on the undergraduate level and 34% of institutions on the graduate level report that they are incorporating string pedagogy into the applied private studio curriculum, but it remains to be determined to what degree and how effectively these strategies are being employed. These numbers only represent a specific pool of institutions, but if these numbers are any indication of the *general* trend regarding the inclusion of pedagogy in performance degree curricula for undergraduate and graduate degree institutions, they indicate room for improvement regarding the preparation of graduates for the teaching component of their careers.

There also seems to be a slight disconnect in the level of pedagogical preparation that undergraduate students receive, considering they will often be expected to teach in some capacity as part of their future graduate degree programs. It is reasonable to expect that graduate students receiving financial aid may earn it assisting in the education of undergraduates and non-majors, but have students always been prepared for these teaching responsibilities? This is one of the salient questions that deserves further thought and exploration, regardless of whether institutions are NASM-accredited or not.

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<sup>39</sup> The purpose of this survey was to assess NASM accredited institutions only, to compare what administration and faculty are doing to meet the NASM requirements and recommendations for inclusion of pedagogy in performance degree curricula.

### CHAPTER 3 A SURVEY OF STRING PERFORMERS AND EDUCATORS

Following this examination of how college administrators and professionals at NASM-accredited schools are incorporating the NASM guidelines for pedagogy into their teaching, there will be an exploration into the feelings of string performers and educators regarding how their degree studies prepared them for teaching. A survey of twenty-three questions was developed with the primary focus of identifying what elements string teachers feel played the most significant role in preparing them for string teaching. This survey was designed to evaluate the respondents' educational experiences and outside factors that may have been influential. Rather than using a control and experimental group, this survey was devised and distributed with the goal of reaching as many string teachers and performers as possible so that responses would represent a broad spectrum of perspectives. This survey was distributed to orchestral conductors; violin, viola, cello, string bass, guitar, and harp performers and educators; and members of the following associations:

American String Teachers Association

Suzuki Association of the Americas

International Suzuki Association

American Viola Society

Internet Cello Society

International Society of Bassists

American Harp Society

American Guitar Society

Responses were also solicited less formally from prior teachers, professors, mentors,

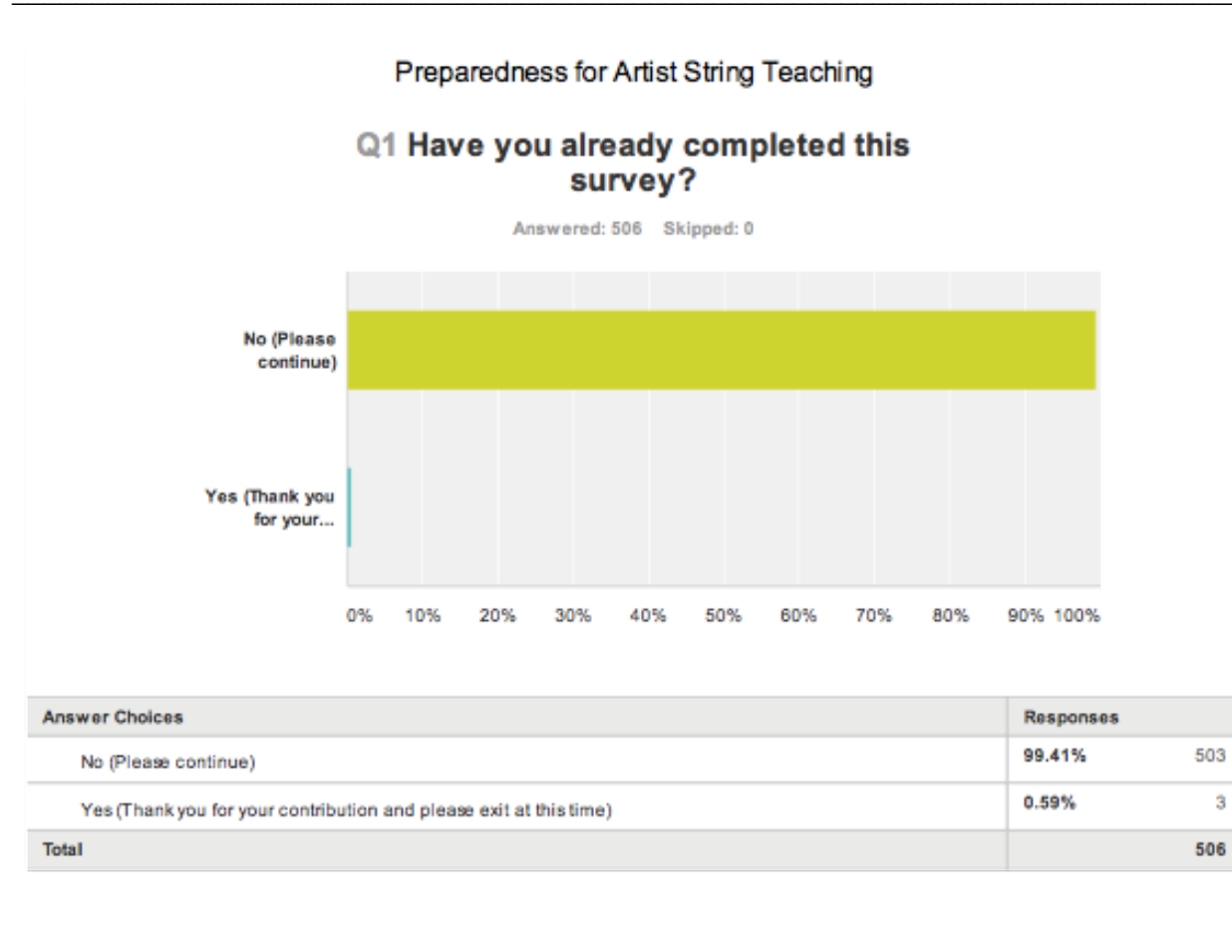
string colleagues, and friends who were asked to respond to the survey and share it with others in their musical spheres. The results of this survey will be shared more anecdotally than statistically because of the informal selection criteria. Survey statistics will be presented as well as commentary shared by respondents. As in the previous survey, the commentary presented will be edited in the following ways: punctuation has been added, names of individuals or other identifying factors have been replaced with hyphens, and names of institutions have been replaced with the marking [institution]. The commentary portion of this survey will be shared in the appendices; the array of responses is wide in nature and the survey results are not complete without this narrative component. The results from the survey and the methodology of constructing the survey questions will be discussed concurrently.

The first question was created to control for duplicate responses.<sup>40</sup> Table 6 below indicates of 506 respondents, three tried to come back and take it a second time.

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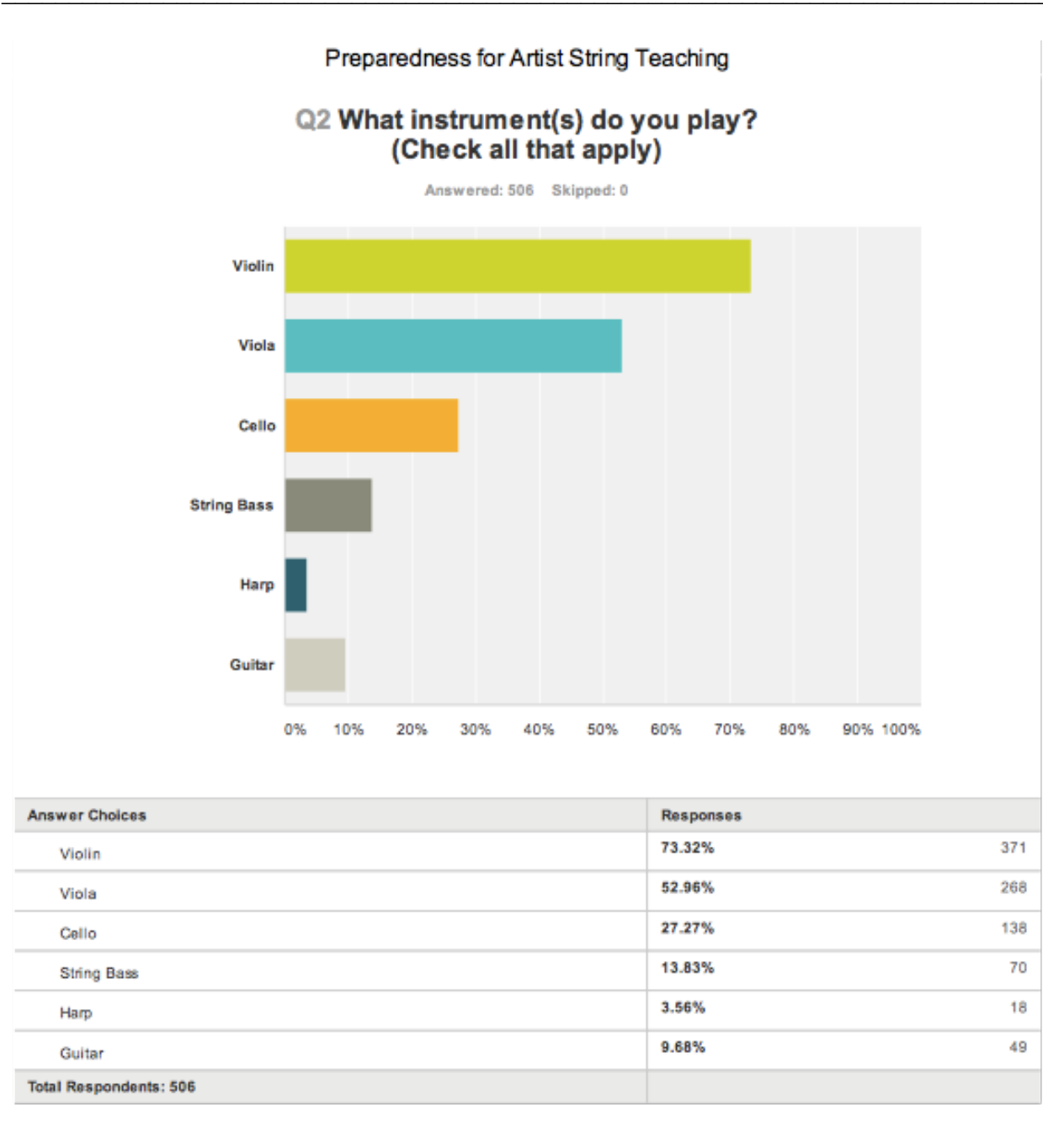
<sup>40</sup> According to the survey structure, in theory it should not be possible to take it more than once.

Table 6. Number of Respondents for Survey



The second survey question was designed to discover what instrument(s) the respondents play. This survey address the most commonly played and taught stringed instruments: violin, viola, cello, string bass, harp, and guitar. Violin is the leading instrument, played by 73.32% of respondents; with the viola following close behind at 52.96%. The cello accounts for 27.27%, the string bass 13.83%, the guitar 9.68%, and the harp 3.56%.

Table 7. Instruments Played



This question included an “other” option that respondents could check and then specify



an instrument. The 100 responses to this question are listed directly below.<sup>41</sup>

**Keyboard:**

Piano (70)

Organ (2)

Harpsichord (1)

Keyboard (1)

**Strings:**

Mandolin (6)

Viola da Gamba (4)

Banjo (3)

Hammer Dulcimer (2)

Fiddle (1)

Nyckelharpa<sup>42</sup> (1)

Old-Time Northeastern Fiddle (1)

Viola d'Amore (1)

**Woodwinds:**

Clarinet (3)

Flute (1)

Saxophone (1)

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<sup>41</sup> Individual instruments are sorted by instrument family and are listed with a number in brackets indicating the amount of respondents that said they play the instrument. The instruments are ordered from most popular to least, and they are followed by prose responses that were shared.

<sup>42</sup> This is a traditional Swedish instrument whose name literally means “keyed fiddle.”

**Brass:**

French Horn (4)

Trombone (1)

Trumpet (1)

**Percussion: (2)****Voice: (8)****General:**

Chamber Music (1)

Conducting (2)

**Prose Comments:**

“Limited piano--basic I-IV-V-I chords with book 1 Suzuki<sup>43</sup> pieces.”

“A little piano.”

“Some piano.”

“Piano Accompanist for my soloing private string students.”

“Some violin for beginning string class.”

“Cello on a high school level, bass on a middle school level.”

“Also teach/play violin, viola, cello, harp, but at a much lower level.”

“Brass instruments.”

“Wind.”

“Mallet Percussion, Auxiliary Percussion.”

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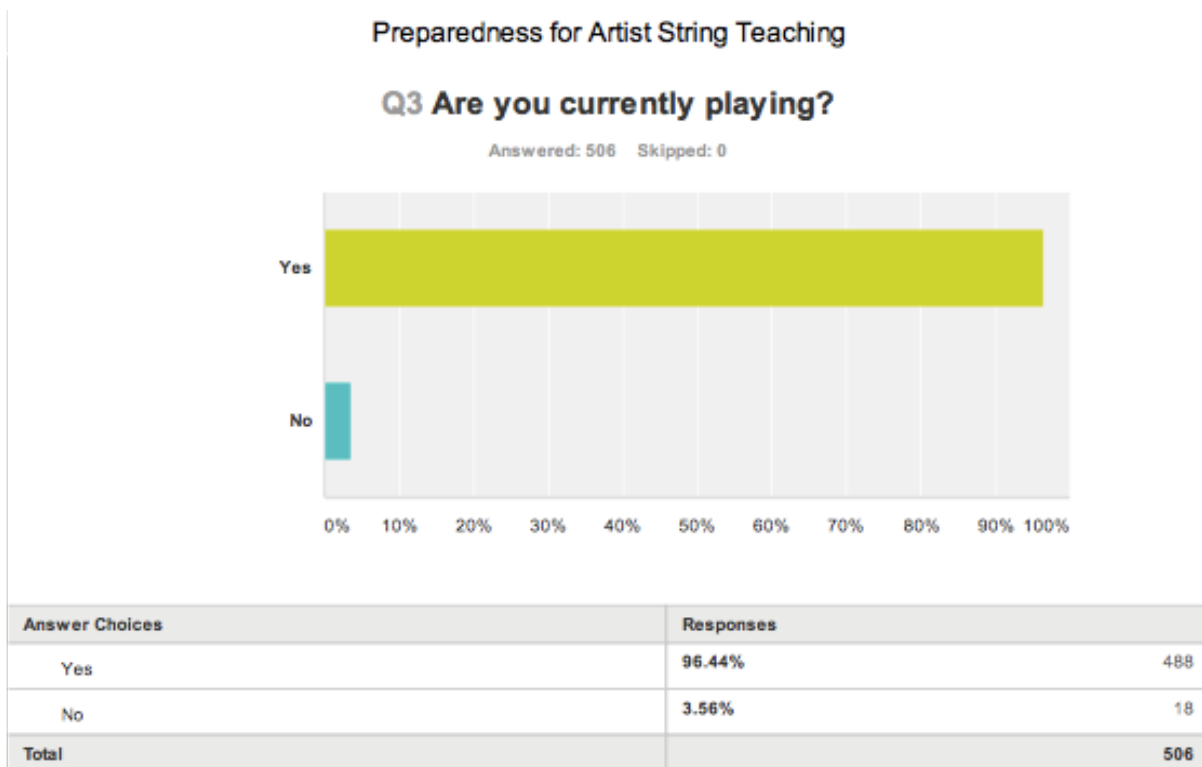
<sup>43</sup> The Suzuki Method of Talent Education was developed by Japanese violinist and educator Shinichi Suzuki in the 1940's. It is based on the way children learn language and is also known as the “Mother Tongue Method.”

“Tenor pan - in a steel band!”

Approximately one-fifth of the individuals in this survey who play the major stringed instruments also play at least one other secondary instrument, whether professionally or for personal enjoyment.

The survey’s third question establishes how many respondents are currently performing on the instruments that they know how to play. As shown below in Table 8, 96.44% of the respondents answered that they are currently playing, while 3.56% responded that they are not currently playing. The majority of the respondents for this survey are still active on their primary instruments.

Table 8. Currently Playing



This question included an optional comment box for respondents to detail reasons why they were not currently playing. The respondents did not, however, restrict their comments to those reasons, so the responses were sorted into three general categories: 1) Reason for not playing as much or at all, 2) type of playing that respondents are doing, and 3) instruments played.

**Reason for Not Playing as Much or at All:**

“I have a shoulder injury.”

“Only for my enjoyment, and not a whole lot. Mostly just practice, but not actively performing.”

“Although freshly retired from univ. position.”

“Infrequently. Working full time and I have two small children.”

“Not as much in the summer :)”

**Type of Playing that Respondents are Doing:**

“I play with many professional and semi-professional groups in the area.”

“Only at church services.”

“But do practice regularly.”

“I only play when teaching students.”

“Playing as part of teaching, but not playing for hire.”

“Substitute for local symphony; Wedding music professional.”

“Mostly with students.”

“I started a professional chamber ensemble and regularly gig.”

“Daily practicing and performance.”

“Wedding gigs, only about 7 per year.”

“Orchestra and Chamber music.”

“Right now, I only play while I teach or for my own enjoyment at home.”

“Contracts with two per service orchestras and sub with another two.”

### **Instruments Played:**

“Violin in the community symphony and 10 years as fiddler/vocals in a band.”

“Violin is my main instrument which I play all the time, I occasionally play viola.”

“Playing bass with the University Symphony.”

“A little violin at church occasionally, French horn once a year or so but am not able to stay in shape with current schedule.”

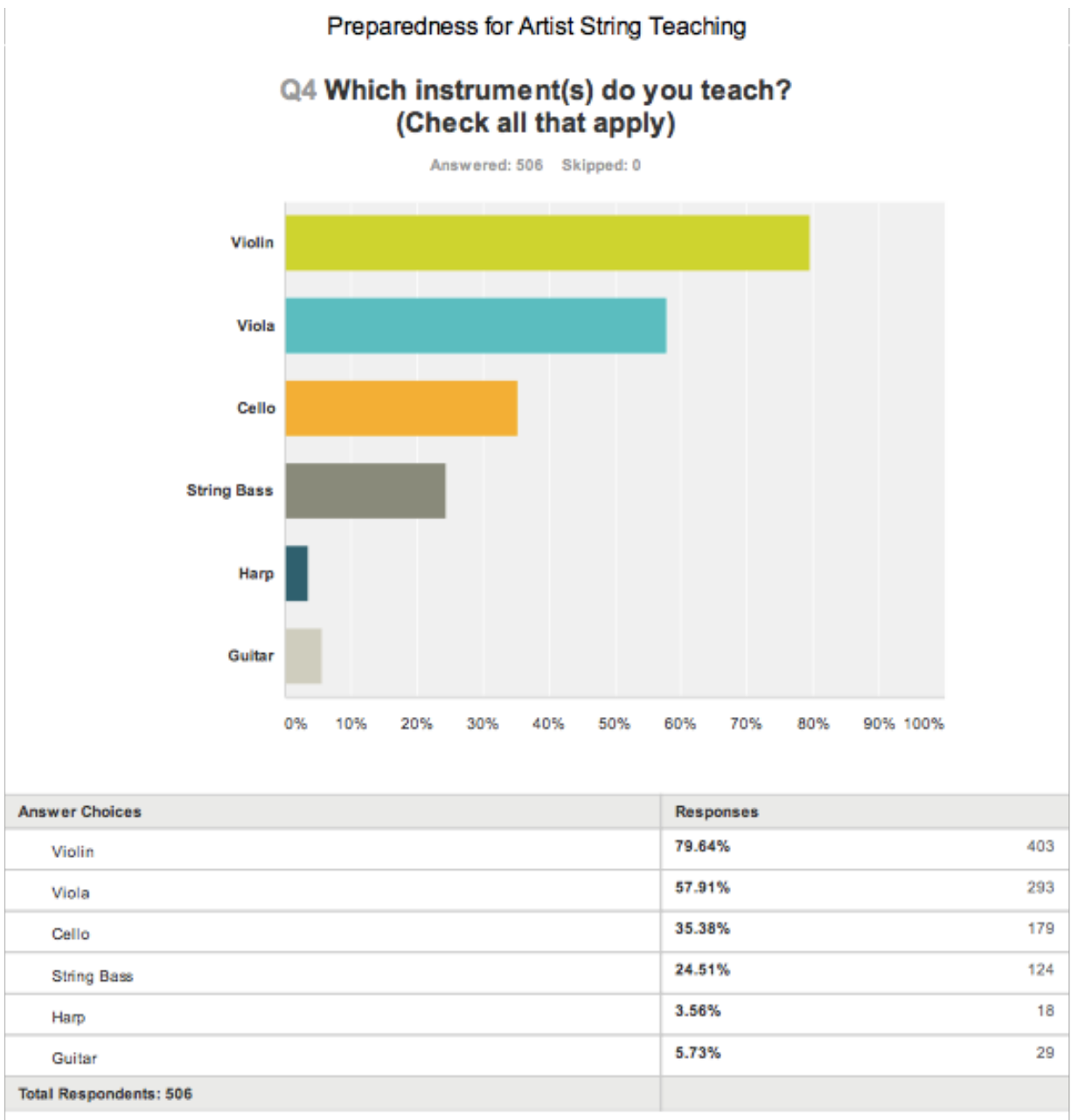
“I am playing viola, but not violin.”

“I regularly perform on viola, fiddle styles, banjo, mandolin, and guitar.”

Respondents who are not playing as much or at all include those who have an injury, those who are playing less due to a change in life or career, and those who simply enjoy a break during the summer. The type of playing that respondents are doing ranges from playing for personal enjoyment to contracting professionally. The instruments being played are primarily the instruments toward which this survey is directed—with the exception of vocals, the French horn, banjo, and the mandolin.

The fourth question establishes the difference, if any, between which instruments are being played and which instruments are actually being taught. As Table 9 demonstrates, 79.64% of respondents teach violin, 57.91% teach viola, 35.38% teach cello, 24.51% teach string bass, 5.73% teach guitar, and 3.56% teach harp.

Table 9. Instruments Taught



Comparing these percentages to those from Question Two regarding which instruments respondents play, it is evident that 73.32% of respondents expressed that they play the violin, and

yet 79.54% teach the instrument. Likewise, 52.96% of respondents said that they play the viola, while 57.91% indicated that they teach it; 27.27% of respondents play the cello, while 35.38% teach it; and 13.83% play the string bass, while 24.51% teach it. It is therefore concluded that more people teach the violin, viola, cello, and string bass than actually play it, at least as their primary instrument. The population that teaches violin, viola, cello, or string bass without actually having the skills to play them, may be educators who are involved in string orchestra programs in public schools, but this is not a proven fact. Notably, this trend does not apply to harp and actually reverses for guitar. The same percentage of people who play the harp (3.56%), also indicated that they teach it. Of the 9.68% of respondents that play the guitar, only 5.73% teach it.

The answer choices in the fourth question included an “other” option, with a comment box to specify the instrument. Sixty-three respondents indicated that they teach another instrument that was not listed, and the results are listed below.<sup>44</sup>

**Keyboard:**

Piano (35)

**Strings:**

Mandolin (4)

Banjo (1)

Guitar (1)

Viola da Gamba (1)

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<sup>44</sup> Individual instruments were sorted by instrument family and are listed with a number in brackets indicating the amount of respondents that said they teach the instrument. The results are ordered from most popular to least, and they are followed by prose responses that were shared.

**Woodwinds:**

Flute (1)

**Percussion:**

Drums (1)

**Voice: (3)****General:**

Chamber Music (4)

Conducting (3)

Orchestra (2)

Kindermusik<sup>45</sup> (1)

SECE<sup>46</sup> (1)

Theory (1)

**Prose Comments:**

“[Institution] allows harp students to participate in strings.”

“I direct El Sistema orchestra programs and develop curriculum/sequence for all orchestral instruments.”

“I’m teaching neither at this moment, although I was teaching both up to about 2 years ago.”

“I have an occasional bass student.”

“I teach both classical and fiddling to all of the above instruments.”

“Beginning strings groups.”

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<sup>45</sup> “Kindermusik,” as cited from [www.Kindermusik.com](http://www.Kindermusik.com), “offers music and movement classes for babies, toddlers, big kids, and families.”

<sup>46</sup> Abbreviation for “Suzuki Early Childhood Education.”



“Bass in private lessons. I also teach all instruments in orchestra.”

“Piano at intermediate levels.”

“Orchestra (retired).”

“I teach all string and band instruments, except guitar.”

“Old-Time and Northeastern style fiddle and banjo.”

“Orchestra (violin, viola, cello, and bass).”

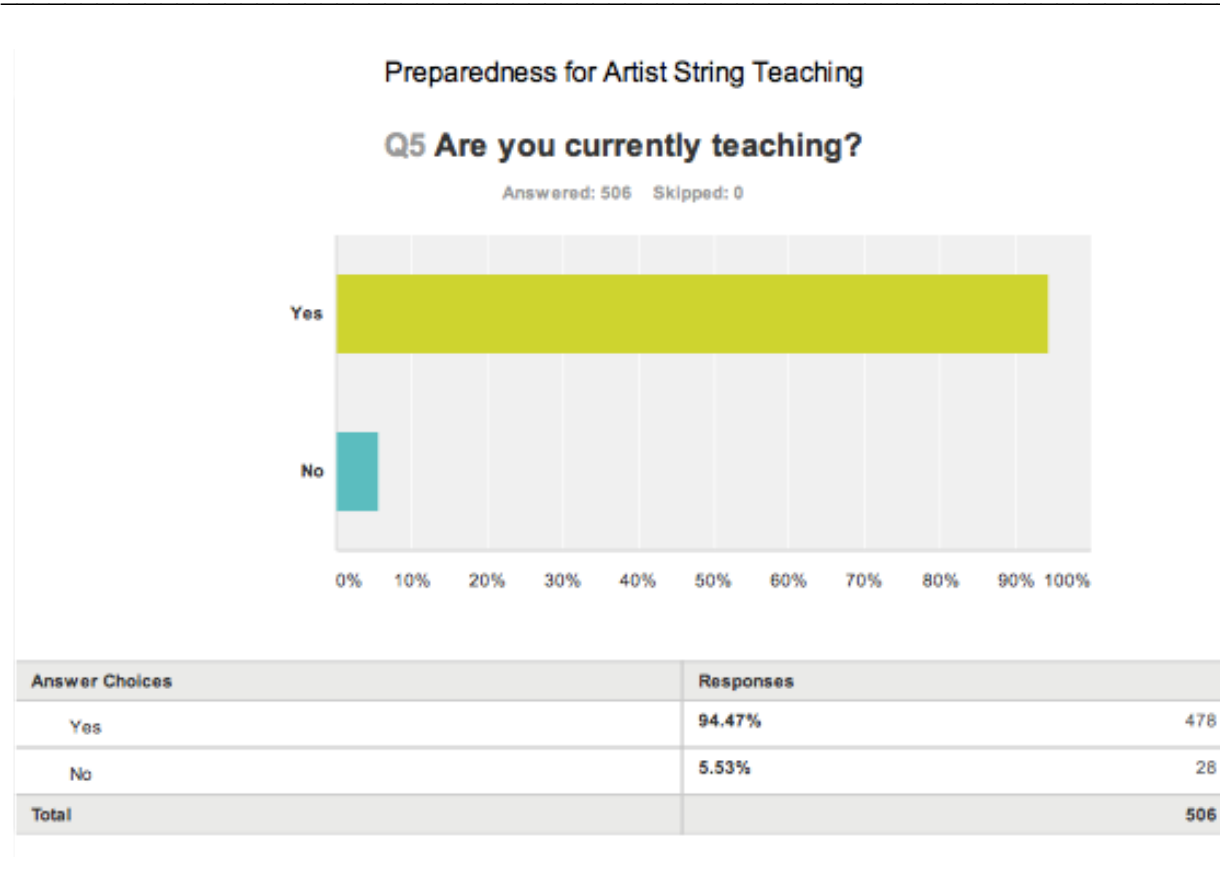
“Band instruments.”

“Used to teach violin, viola, cello & bass in public school.”

Of these responses, piano is the instrument most frequently taught outside of those options listed in Question Four. The sixty-three respondents who contributed comments are approximately 12% of the total number of respondents. In Question Four, the 506 respondents made 1,046 selections when asked to check the box of the instrument(s) they teach. The percentage of respondents who included comments, combined with the number of selections respondents claimed to teach, indicates significant diversity of teaching skills and subject matter among respondents.

The fifth question of the survey related to teaching and was similar to the question about whether or not the respondents were currently playing their instruments (Question Three). It is interesting to note how many people are also active pedagogically. As can be seen in Table 10, an overwhelming 94.47% of the respondents are currently teaching, with only 5.53% not currently teaching. The overwhelming majority of the respondents continue to play their instruments as well as teach.

Table 10. Currently Teaching



A comment box was included in the event that the respondents wanted to explain why they are not teaching anymore, or what type of teaching they currently do. The responses (see below) have been sorted into three general categories: 1) reason for not teaching as much or at all, 2) type of teaching being done, and 3) life/career stage.

**Reason for Not Playing as Much or at All:**

“Not much though.”

“Living abroad.”

“DMA keeps me busy!”

“Retired.”

**Type of Teaching Being Done:**

“I retired as a violin university professor. I teach very advanced pre-college students now.”

“I teach Suzuki harp.”

“I was a public school string teacher for 28 years, now I teach 5 - 85 year olds privately and run jams.”

“Part time.”

“I teach grades K-12.”

“Mostly off for summer but teaching at two string camps.”

“7-12th grade.”

“Retired orchestra, still teach piano.”

“I teach cello privately.”

“Suzuki in the Schools.”

“Private lessons on violin and viola and orchestra in a public school.”

“I have private studios in two cities (preschool through adult) and teach adjunct collegiate strings.”

**Life/Career Stage:**

“About to get Suzuki certified<sup>47</sup> and teach in the fall.”

“I’m teaching a small amount, heading toward retirement.”

Respondents who are not teaching much any more include those who are living abroad, busy with school, or are retired. Of those who are still active, the type of teaching they are doing

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<sup>47</sup> Technically, Suzuki training is considered to be “registered” with the Suzuki Association, rather than “certified.”

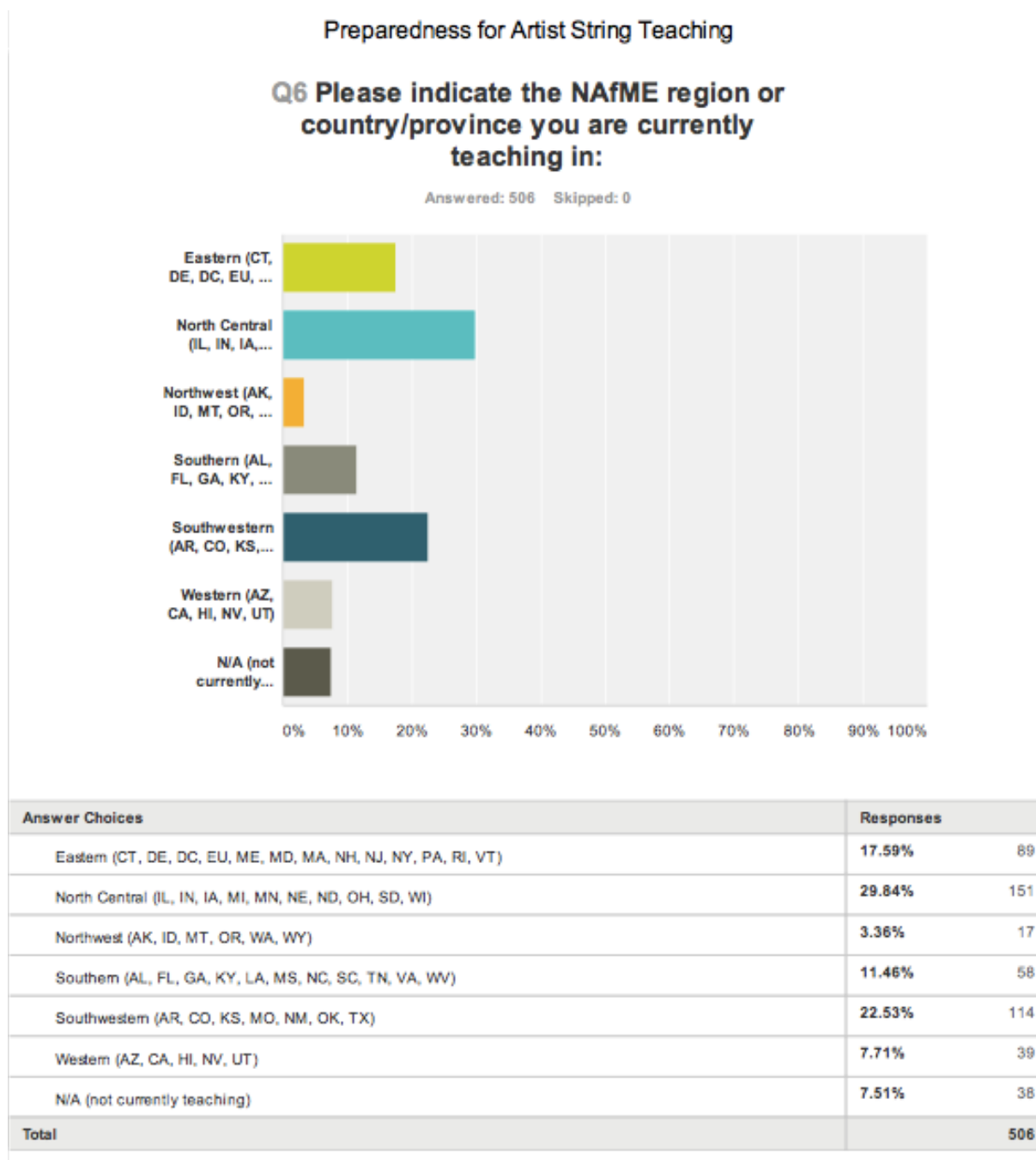
ranges from part-time teaching to full-time teaching at an institution, with perhaps a private studio on the side. There are some teachers who are in the process of completing pedagogical training with the goal to begin teaching soon, and also those who are at the stage in life where they are looking to pare down their teaching load for the purpose of retirement.

Table 11 reports geographic location of respondents. It shows that a plurality of respondents come from the North Central NAFME<sup>48</sup> region: 29.84%. The Southwestern NAFME region is second in representation with 22.53% of respondents, followed by the Eastern region at 17.59%, the Southern region at 11.46%, the Western region at 7.71%, and the Northwest at 3.36%. 7.51% of the respondents reported “N/A” because they are not currently teaching.

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<sup>48</sup> Abbreviation for “The National Association for Music Education.”

Table 11. Geographical Teaching Location



An “other” category was also included in this question because this survey was distributed internationally. Of the responses received, the countries represented are listed below

with the number of people living in those countries in parentheses.<sup>49</sup>

**Canada:**

Ontario (4)

Nova Scotia (2)

Manitoba (4)

British Columbia (1)

Saskatchewan (2)

Alberta (1)

No Province Specified (1)

**South America:**

Brazil (5)

Colombia (1)

Peru (1)

**The Caribbean:**

Bermuda (1)

**Europe:**

France (1)

Serbia (1)

Ireland (1)

United Kingdom (1)

---

<sup>49</sup> Provinces, states, or countries belonging to a larger continent or geographic area are listed in alphabetical order.

**Middle East:**

Lebanon (1)

Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (1)

**Africa:**

Kenya (1)

**Asia:**

South Korea (4)

China (1)

Taiwan (2)

**Australia:**

Perth (2)

The respondents are primarily located in North America, but there are others from around the world. One teacher even conducts Skype lessons to Australia and Japan.

Question Seven explores the type of teaching settings currently used by respondent. As seen in Table 12, 70.55% of the respondents teach in a private studio setting.

Table 12. Teaching Setting

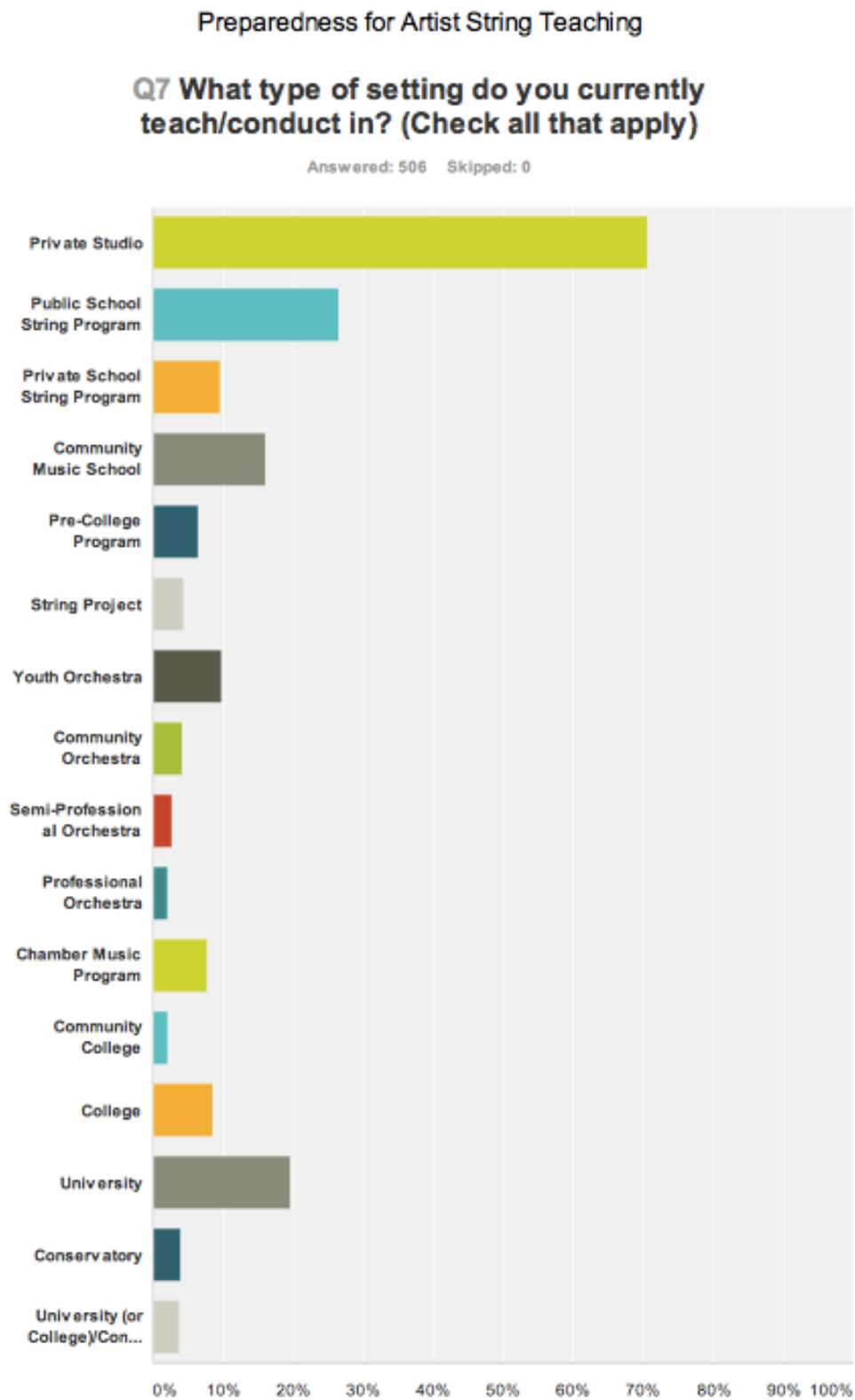




Table 12—continued

Private Studio	70.55%	357
Public School String Program	26.48%	134
Private School String Program	9.68%	49
Community Music School	16.01%	81
Pre-College Program	6.52%	33
String Project	4.35%	22
Youth Orchestra	9.88%	50
Community Orchestra	4.15%	21
Semi-Professional Orchestra	2.77%	14
Professional Orchestra	2.17%	11
Chamber Music Program	7.71%	39
Community College	2.17%	11
College	8.50%	43
University	19.57%	99
Conservatory	3.95%	20
University (or College)/Conservatory	3.75%	19
<b>Total Respondents: 506</b>		

The next most common teaching setting is the public school string program at 26.48%, followed by the university at 19.57%. Community music school settings are substantial at 16.01%, followed by teachers who work in a youth orchestra setting (9.88%), and those who work in a private school string program (9.68%). The remaining teaching settings all score at under 9% and include: college at 8.50%, chamber music program at 7.71%, pre-college program at 6.52%, string project at 4.35%, community orchestra at 4.15%, conservatory at 3.95%, university (or college)/conservatory at 3.75%, semi-professional orchestra at 2.77%, and lastly, community college and professional orchestra, both at 2.17%. In summary, the respondent pool primarily works in a private studio setting, though public school, university, and community music school

settings are also well represented. In addition to the answer choices provided, there was also the option of indicating a different setting. The fifty-one responses to this option are listed below, sorted broadly by the overall type of setting. The number of respondents who indicated that they teach in each of these settings is noted in parenthesis, and the responses are ordered from most popular to least, with general commentary included at the end.

**Professional Educational Setting:**

Music Academy (4)

Young Artist Program (1)

Teaching Assistant (1)

Suzuki/Community College Program (1)

Summer Graduate Music Education Course (1)

**Camp/Festival/Workshop:**

Workshop (5)

Institute (4)

Festival (2)

Summer Music Camp (2)

**Non-Profit:**

Church (2)

Outreach Programs (2)

Suzuki Program (1)

Refugee School (1)

**Miscellaneous:**

Inner City Orchestra Program (1)

Public Charter (1)

Substitute Teach (1)

String Sectionals (1)

In Students' Homes (1)

**General Commentary:**

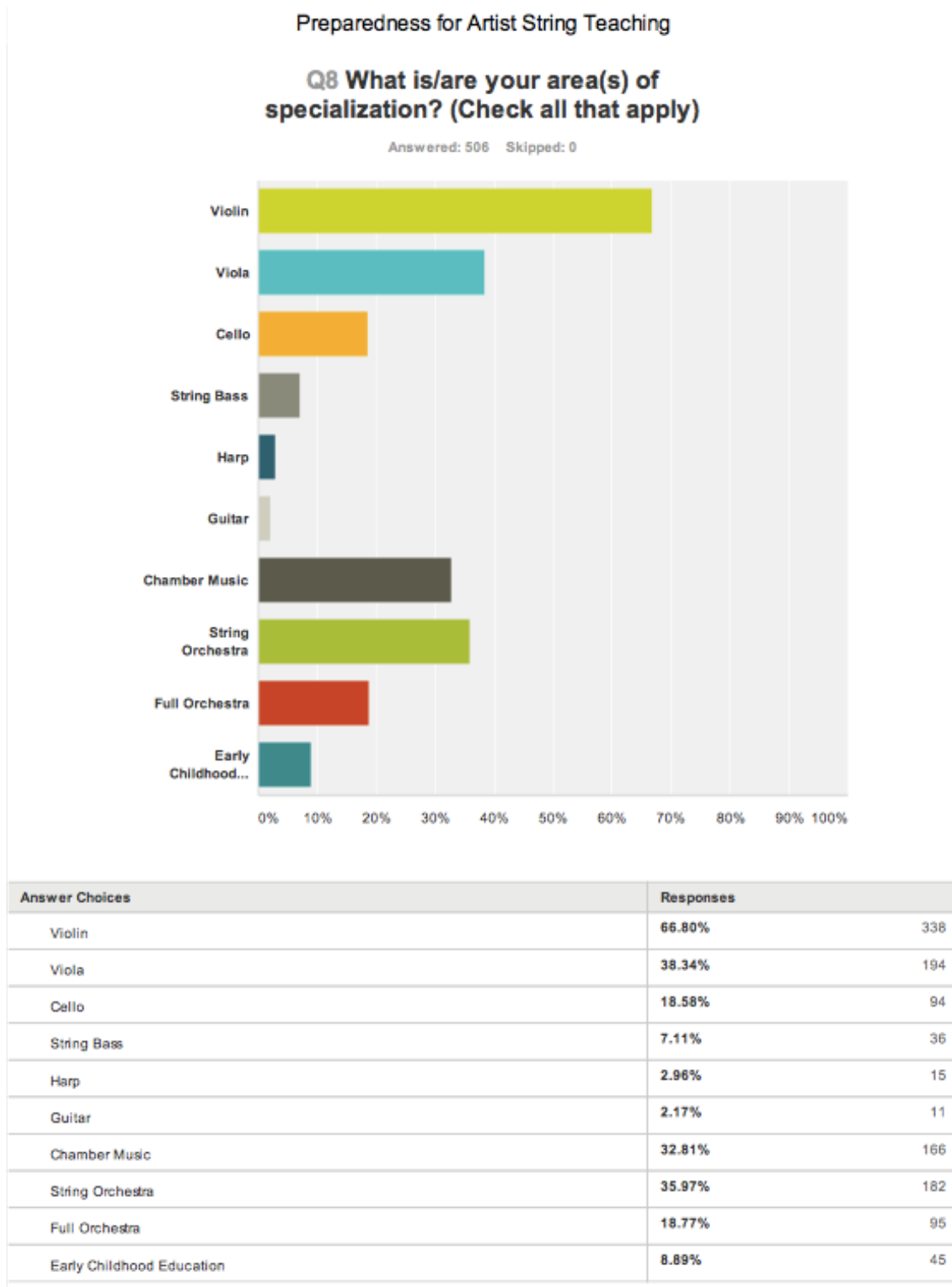
“Three groups (conduct) - Symphony, Chamber Orchestra, Opera Orchestra (three separate classes/ensembles).”

“Private school choral program.”

Every teaching setting listed as part of the original answer set is represented, plus those listed in the above commentary. But as previously discussed, the overwhelming majority of the respondents for Question Seven are private studio teachers.

After determining the type of teaching setting in which respondents currently work, the next goal was to look at the various areas of specialization, using Question Eight. The reported specializations are presented in Table 13 and show the following results: the majority, 66.80%, specialize in violin; 38.34% specialize in viola; 35.97% specialize in string orchestra; 32.81% specialize in chamber music; 18.77% specialize in full orchestra; 18.58% specialize in cello; 8.89% specialize in early childhood education; 7.11% specialize in string bass; 2.96% specialize in harp; and 2.17% specialize in guitar. In summary, the four areas of specialization represented by the greatest number of respondents are: violin, viola, string orchestra, and chamber music.

Table 13. Area(s) of Specialization



Question Eight also included the option to select “other” and specify a secondary instrument/pedagogical area. The “other” answers are listed in order of descending popularity, with the respective number of respondents noted adjacently. Brief general commentary follows.

**Instrument/Ensemble:**

Piano (5)

Choir (2)

Band (2)

Strings Bands (1)

Voice (1)

**Method/Pedagogy/Course:**

The Suzuki Method (7)

Suzuki Teacher Training (3)

Suzuki Pedagogy (1)

Long-Term Suzuki Pedagogy (1)

Traditional Harp Pedagogy (1)

Suzuki Harp Pedagogy (1)

String Methods (1)

String Pedagogy (1)

String Education (1)

Parent Education (1)

Intro to Music Theory/Reading for Children (1)

**Genre:**

Early Music (2)  
Fiddle Styles (2)  
Irish Fiddling (2)  
Celtic Fiddling (2)  
Baroque Performance (1)  
Classical Music (1)  
Contemporary Music (1)  
Bluegrass (1)  
Old Time Fiddling (1)  
Métis Fiddling<sup>50</sup> (1)  
Folk Music of the Eastern US (1)  
Various American Genres (1)  
Jazz (1)

**Academia:**

Music Theory (1)  
Music Education (1)  
Teacher Education (1)  
Philosophy of Music (1)  
Aesthetics (1)

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<sup>50</sup>This is a style of fiddling that has been developed by the Métis people of Canada and the northern United States. The bow is used percussively and the stringed instruments are often accompanied by percussive instruments.

**General Commentary:**

“Children. I volunteered to teach music at [institution], but realized very, very quickly that the basic skills to do music at all were missing. Listening skills, focus, coordination...WOW!”

“I’m certified in K-12<sup>51</sup> Music (general music, choir and orchestra).”

“I have my BA<sup>52</sup> in both violin and viola and am currently upgrading my skills on piano and cello.”

It is apparent from these answers that piano is a common secondary area for many respondents, albeit less so as an area of specialization.<sup>53</sup> String pedagogy, and specifically Suzuki pedagogy, are also well-represented within the pool of respondents who left comments.

Question Nine, the question regarding what level of students the respondents teach, was a challenge because when the survey was created, the researcher inadvertently missed checking the button that would allow the respondents to select more than one answer; once the survey was published, that could not be changed. Subsequently, a comment box was added and respondents were asked to list all the levels of students that they teach in the comment box. While the data were still collected, accurate percentages had to be computed manually. Some respondents, as directed, indicated all the levels that they taught in the comment box. Other respondents, however, checked one of the required multiple choice answers and then only listed the additional levels that they taught in the comment box (failing to list all levels in the comment box).

Accordingly, neither of the data collection methods (graph or manual calculations) are entirely representative of the full scope of the levels that respondents teach. This is unfortunate, but both

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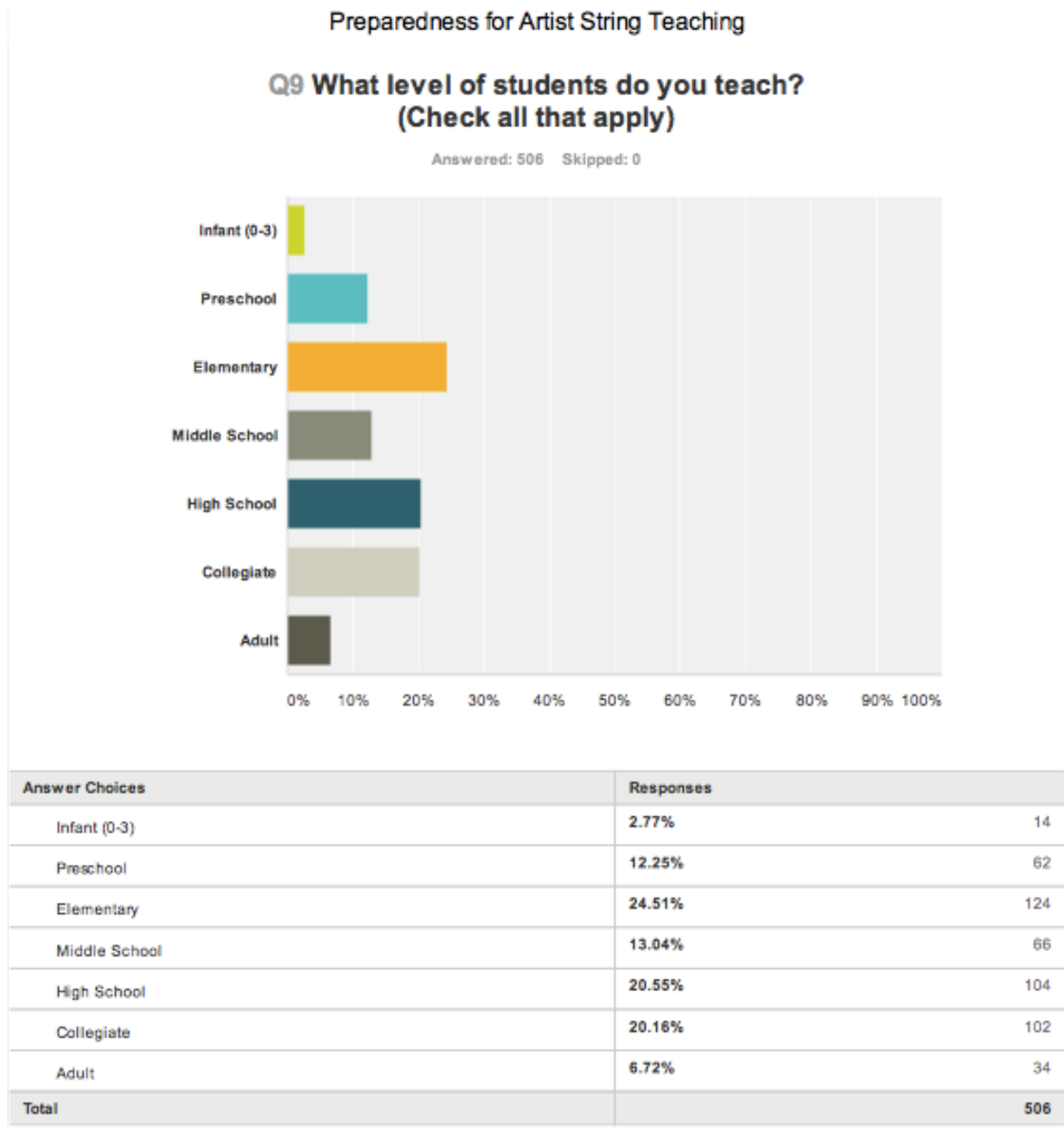
<sup>51</sup> Abbreviation for “Kindergarten through twelfth grade.”

<sup>52</sup> Abbreviation for “Bachelor of Arts.”

<sup>53</sup> See response data from Question Two.

have been included below for reference and I believe that the manually calculated numbers are the more accurate representation.

Table 14. Level of Students Taught





**Manual Calculations from Comment Box:**

Infant (age 0-3) (60)

Preschool (185)

Elementary (299)

Middle School (337)

High School (347)

Collegiate (176)

Adult (205)

It is being posited that the graph represents the primary level that each respondent teaches, since they were only allowed one response. The results from the manual calculations, however, indicate that most of the respondent pool teaches more than one level of students. Here is a side-by-side comparison of both sets of numbers for each answer choice:

<b><u>Answer Choice</u></b>	<b><u>Graph</u></b>	<b><u>Manual</u></b>
<b>Infant (0-3)</b>	14	60
<b>Preschool</b>	62	185
<b>Elementary</b>	124	299
<b>Middle School</b>	66	337
<b>High School</b>	104	347
<b>Collegiate</b>	102	176
<b>Adult</b>	34	205

Based on the manual calculations, the plurality of respondents teach high school level students, and teaching middle school students is nearly as common. Elementary school level

teaching also ranks quite highly, while the number of respondents teaching the next most common teaching level (Adult) drops by almost 100 respondents. In summary, the majority of the respondents teach from the elementary school through the high school level.

Question Ten evaluated how many years respondents have been teaching strings. The responses were written in the subsequent comment box. These numbers also had to be compiled manually. The responses for Question Ten are summarized below, with number of respondents in parenthesis.

**Number of Years Teaching Strings:**

0-10 Years (142)

11-20 Years (145)

21-30 Years (64)

31-40 Years (81)

41-50 Years (48)

51-60 Years (7)

**General Commentary:<sup>54</sup>**

“For several years. I did teach a little in high school and college, then I taught more officially/professionally right after finishing graduate school.”

“Since I was in high school.”

“Private lessons—30 years, Public school—8 years, University—6 years.”

“A total of 11 years (with a 7-year break in the middle while my own children were very young.)”

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<sup>54</sup> This commentary is being included either because the respondent did not indicate the number of years they have taught, or because their response does not indicate whether teaching in different settings was done separately or concurrently.

“A long time.”

“A few brief stints over the past ten years.”

“Private violin lessons - 23 years School Strings/Orchestra classes - 12 years.”

“Privately for 8 years, in a group setting for 13.”

“N/A.” (3)

“Privately—30 years, in a public school setting—15 years.”

“Private lessons—I started teaching in high school. Public school—I’ve been teaching for 5 years.”

“Private lessons—6 years, post college—2 years.”

“Bass 28 yrs., other strings 7 yrs.”

“7 years in the public schools. 12 years of private studio teaching.”

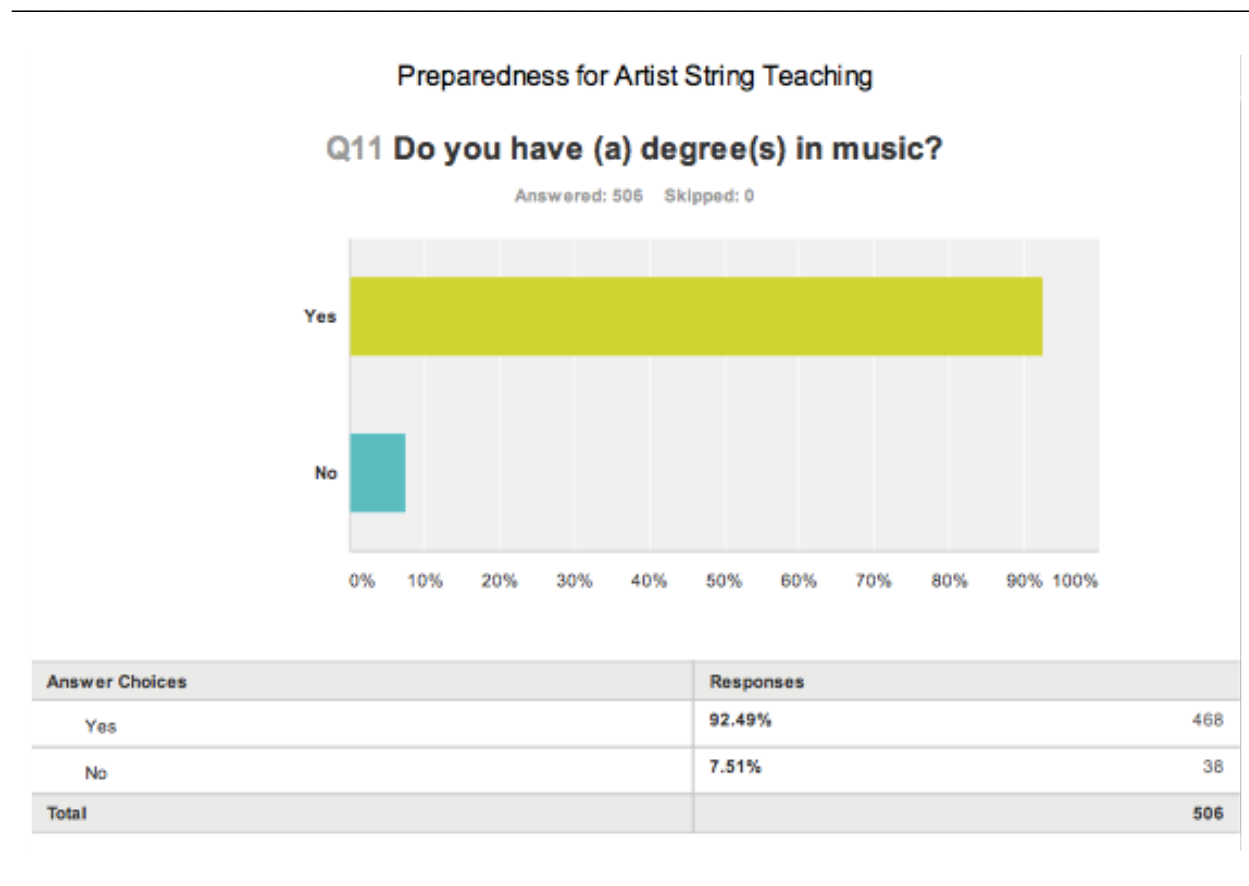
“10 years of private violin/viola teaching, 4 years of public school orchestra teaching.”

These calculated numbers show that the plurality of the respondents (145) are currently in the bracket of 11-20 years of teaching experience, with those that have 0-10 years of teaching experience (142 respondents), following closely behind. The remaining 200 responses fall into the 21-60 year category. The respondent with the most teaching experience has taught strings for more than 60 years. These results indicate that approximately three-fifths of the respondents have no more than twenty years of teaching experience, while the remaining two-fifths of the respondent pool have as much as sixty years of teaching experience. This demonstrates a greater representation of those who belong to the “younger” generation of string teachers in this survey.

Question Eleven in the survey signals a shift from collecting data about the respondents and their basic playing and teaching experience, to obtaining more specific information about

their collegiate training and the role that training played in their teacher preparedness. The question as to whether or not the respondents have a degree in music is important to establish a baseline for the remainder of the questions (see Table 15 below).

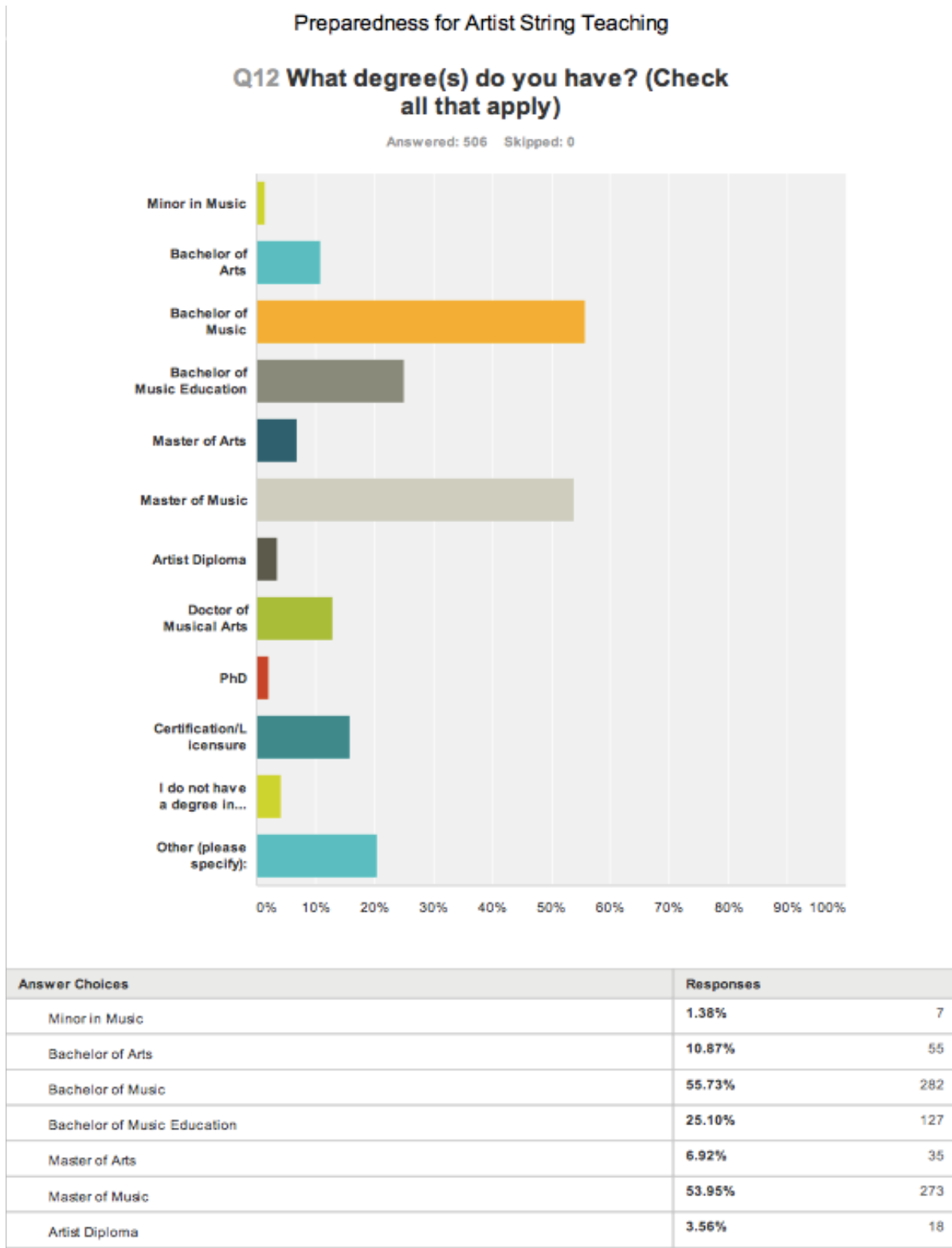
Table 15. How Many Respondents Have Degrees in Music



As is evident from the graph, 92.49% of the respondents have degrees in the music and 7.51% do not. The vast majority of respondents have obtained some level of formal degree training in music, indicating a level of qualification. The next question, Question Twelve, determined the exact degree qualifications of the respondent pool by asking respondents to

specifically detail the type of degree/training they have obtained (see Table 16).

Table 16. Degrees Earned



Doctor of Musical Arts	12.85%	65
PhD	2.17%	11
Certification/Licensure	15.81%	80
I do not have a degree in music.	4.15%	21
Other (please specify):	20.36%	103
<b>Total Respondents: 506</b>		

The results of Question Twelve are as follows: Bachelor of Music, 55.73%; Master of Music, 53.95%; Bachelor of Music Education, 25.10%; and 20.36% other. Those that have a specific certification/licensure constitute 15.81%, followed by those who have a Doctor of Musical Arts degree (12.85%). 10.87% have a Bachelor of Arts degree; 6.92% have a Master of Arts degree; 4.15% do not hold a degree in music; and another 3.56% have an Artist Diploma. 2.17% indicated hold a PhD degree, and 1.38% have a minor in music. The majority of survey respondents hold a Bachelor of Music degree and/or a Master of Music degree. For the “other (please specify)” option, 103 respondents listed a variety of degrees, all of which can be seen in Appendix B (divided by degree level, with the number of respondents for each noted in parentheses).

Examining the music-related degree tracks respondents listed in the comment box, the prevalence of certain responses suggests the original survey choices should also have included the Associates degree in Music, Bachelor of Fine Arts, Master of Music Education degree, Master of Science in Music Education, and the Master of Fine Arts.

The goal of Question Thirteen (see Table 17) was to determine in greater detail which degrees respondents hold related to string performance and education, and the distribution of

those degrees. As can be seen from the graph, the majority of the respondents (55.53%) hold a degree in string performance.

Table 17. Type of Degree

Preparedness for Artist String Teaching		
Q13 Is your degree/are your degrees in music education, string pedagogy, string performance, or a combination?		
Answered: 506 Skipped: 0		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes – Music Education (please indicate which degree):	33.40%	169
Yes – String Pedagogy (please indicate which degree):	9.09%	46
Yes – String Performance (please indicate which degree):	55.53%	281
Yes – Combination (please indicate which degree):	15.22%	77
No, none of the above. My degrees are in (please indicate which degree):	11.46%	58
I do not have a degree in music.	5.14%	26

The specific degrees of respondents who hold degrees and the number of respondents who hold those performance degrees are as follows:

**Bachelors:**

Bachelors (30)

Bachelor of Music (113)

Bachelor of Arts (11)

Bachelor of Fine Arts (1)



Bachelor of Science (2)

**Masters:**

Masters (26)

Master of Music (114)

Master of Arts (9)

Master of Fine Arts (2)

**Diploma:**

Artist Diploma (5)

Performance Diploma (1)

Diploma and Certificate in Performance in Musical Arts (1)

Music Education Certificate (1)

Aufbaustudium<sup>55</sup> in Performance (1)

**Doctoral:**

Doctorate (1)

Doctor of Musical Arts (31)

**Other:**

Cello Performance (6)

Chamber Music Performance (1)

Double Bass (7)

Guitar Performance (1)

Harp Performance (1)

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<sup>55</sup>Postgraduate studies.

Viola Performance (11)

Violin Performance (26)

Following the performance degrees, 33.40% of the respondents hold a degree in Music Education. The distinct degrees of these respondents, in addition to the number of individuals who hold those degrees are as follows:

**Bachelors:**

Bachelors (25)

Bachelor of Music (25)

Bachelor of Music Education (38)

Bachelor of School Music (1)

Bachelor of Arts (6)

Bachelor of Science (14)

**Masters:**

Masters (13)

Master of Music (9)

Master of Music with an emphasis in Music Education (1)

Master of Arts (4)

Master of Arts with an emphasis in Music Education, and specifically Kódaly<sup>56</sup> (1)

Master of Fine Arts (1)

Master of Education (1)

Master of Music Education (12)

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<sup>56</sup> A method of music education that encompasses singing, folk music, solfège, and an emphasis on the development of the complete musician.

Master of Music Education with an emphasis in Suzuki Pedagogy (1)

Master of Science (1)

**Diploma/Certification:**

K-12 Certification (6)

Suzuki Pedagogy Certificate (1)

Advanced Certificate (1)

Post-Baccalaureate Certificate (1)

Musik Erziehung Diplom<sup>57</sup> (1)

Education Certificate (1)

Level III Orff<sup>58</sup> (1)

**Doctoral:**

Doctor of Musical Arts (1)

Doctor of Music Education (1)

PhD<sup>59</sup> (6)

**Other:**

Instrumental Music Education (4)

Music, Education Minor with Licensure (1)

Music Education (10)

Music Education with String Emphasis (1)

Elementary and Secondary (1)

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<sup>57</sup> German for “Music Education Diploma.”

<sup>58</sup> According to website of the American Orff-Schulwerk Association, the Orff method is “an approach to building musicianship in every learner through the integration of music, movement, speech, and drama.”

<sup>59</sup> Abbreviation for “Doctor of Philosophy.”

Music Ed Secondary (1)

Instrumental Major, Choral Minor (1)

Choral Music Education, Piano Pedagogy (1)

From these results, the majority of respondents who hold a degree in Music Education have either a: Bachelor of Music Education, a Bachelor of Music, or simply a Bachelor<sup>60</sup> degree.

15.22% of respondents indicated they have some combination of these degrees. The degrees of the pool who responded, in addition to the number of respondents who hold those specific degrees encompass the following:

**Bachelors:**

Bachelor of Music in Performance and Education (7)

Bachelor of Music in Performance, Teaching Certification (1)

Bachelor of Music in Performance, Emphasis in Pedagogy (1)

Bachelor of Music in Performance, Suzuki Teaching Certificate (1)

**Bachelors/Masters:**

Bachelor and Masters/String Specialist (1)

**Masters:**

Master of Music in Performance and Pedagogy (4)

Master of Music in Performance and Suzuki Pedagogy (3)

Master of Music in Performance, Emphasis in Suzuki Pedagogy (2)

Master of Music in Performance, Dalcroze Certificate (1)

Master of Music in String Pedagogy and Performance (1)

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<sup>60</sup> Type unspecified.

Master of Music Education and String Pedagogy (2)

Master of Music Education and Suzuki Pedagogy (1)

Master of Arts in Performance and Suzuki Pedagogy (1)

**Doctoral:**

Doctor of Musical Arts in Performance and Pedagogy (3)

Doctor of Musical Arts in Performance, Emphasis in String Pedagogy and Music Education Research (1)

Doctor of Musical Arts in Orchestral Conducting, Music Pedagogy and Literature (1)

**Other:**

Violin Performance degree<sup>61</sup> with a Suzuki Pedagogy emphasis (2)

Violin Performance, Music Education, Suzuki Pedagogy.<sup>62</sup> (1)

Violin Performance and Suzuki Pedagogy.<sup>63</sup> (1)

Violin Performance and Pedagogy.<sup>64</sup> (1)

Music Education and Performance<sup>65</sup> (4)

Certification from Talent Education Institute, Japan (1)

**Prose Commentary:**

“Harp Performance, Music History, and Composition.”

“String (guitar) Composition.”

“Music Education, String Pedagogy, String Performance.”

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<sup>61</sup> Degree level unspecified.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

“Performance, Music Theory.”

“Cello Performance and Music Theory.”

“Violin and Viola Performances and long-term training.”

This data indicates that the majority of those who hold some type of combined degree, hold a Bachelor of Music in Performance and Education degree. Also well represented is the Master of Music in Performance and Pedagogy degree, in addition to unspecified degrees in Music Education and Performance.

Immediately following is the 9.12% of respondents who indicated that they hold a degree in string pedagogy. The degrees of the pool who responded, in addition to the number of individuals who hold these degrees consist of the following:

**Bachelors:**

Bachelors (2)

Bachelor of Music (3)

Bachelor of Science (2)

Bachelor of Music Education (1)

**Masters:**

Masters (5)

Master of Music (8)

Master of Arts (2)

Master of Music Education (3)

Masters Minor Area (1)

**Doctoral:**

Doctorate (1)

DMA Minor Area (1)

**Other:**

Certificate (1)

Certification (2)

Certificate for Long-Term Suzuki Training (1)

ARCM<sup>66</sup>(1)

The majority of respondents who hold a degree in string pedagogy have a Master of Music degree. It appears that pedagogy degrees are more common on the graduate degree level.

12.77% of the respondents indicated that they did hold a degree, but not in any of the options that were listed for answer choices. The degrees of this pool of respondents, in addition to the number of individuals who hold these degrees can be seen in Appendix C: Respondent Degrees Beyond Answer Options.

Lastly, 5.47% of the respondents indicated that they do not hold any type of a degree in music. Responses, including different degrees held degree completion status, are as follows:

**Other Degrees Held:**

Bachelor of Arts (1)

Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy (1)

Bachelor of Arts in English (1)

Bachelor of Science in Biology (1)

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<sup>66</sup> Abbreviation for Associate of the Royal College of Music.

**General Areas of Study:**

Education (1)

Religion (1)

**Degree Completion Status:**

“My degree will be in Music Composition with concentrations in double bass and vocal performance.”

“I started out with music performance major but switched majors.”

“Bachelor in Music Education in progress.”

“Working on my B.S.<sup>67</sup> Music Performance.”

“Working on it!!”

“I studied cello performance but got degree in other field.”

“No degree yet.”

“No degree.” (6)

“No degree completed.”

“Will soon.”

In summary, Question Thirteen demonstrates five important findings: the majority of respondents who hold a performance degree have either a Bachelor of Music or a Master of Music; the majority of respondents who hold a degree in Music Education have either a Bachelor of Music Education, a Bachelor of Music, or simply an unspecified Bachelor<sup>68</sup> degree; the majority of respondents who have obtained a combined degree completed their studies in Music

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<sup>67</sup> Abbreviation for “Bachelor of Science.”

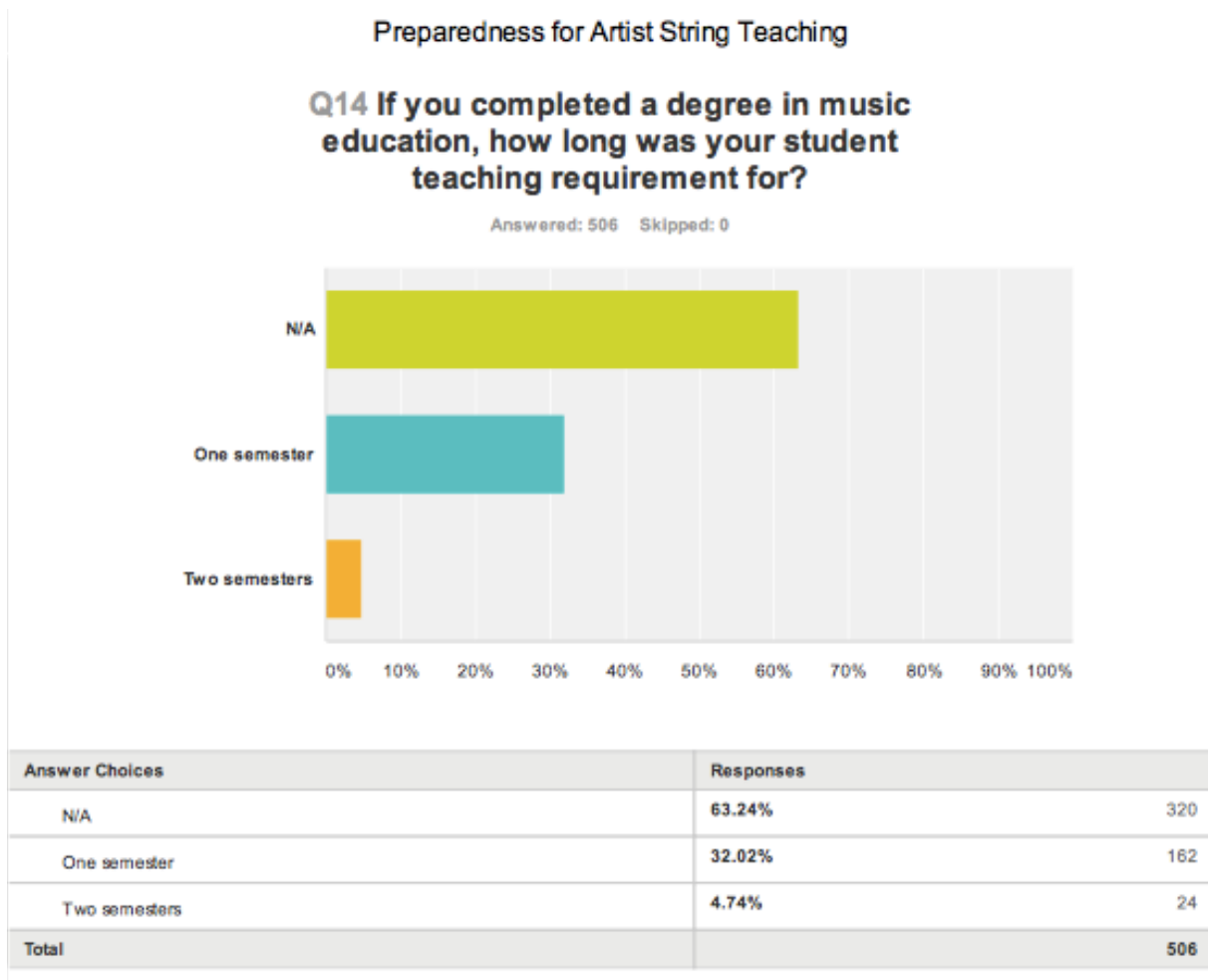
<sup>68</sup> It is interesting to note that the majority of respondents who have a Music Education degree also have one from the undergraduate level.



Performance and Education; the majority of respondents who hold a degree in string pedagogy have a Master of Music degree; and the responses are quite varied among those who have no degree or a degree in a different area.

The fourteenth question of the survey determined the length of the student teaching requirement for those who had completed a Music Education degree (see Table 18). This question is important because it indicates the length of time that the respondents honed their teaching skills under the guidance and supervision of mentors. Of course, not all respondents have completed a Music Education degree with a student teaching requirement, as is evident in the 63.24% of respondents who selected “N/A” from the answer choices.

Table 18. Length of Student Teaching Requirement



Of respondents who completed a Music Education degree with a student teaching requirement, 32.02% had one semester to complete their student teaching; only 4.74% of respondents had two semesters; and 63.24% indicated this question did not apply to them. These results indicate that an overwhelming majority of those that finished this degree track only had to complete one semester of student teaching. Question Fourteen included an option to comment, and respondents shared the following:

**Length of Student Teaching:**

“One semester in the classroom full time, plus field experience to a lesser extent in prior semesters.”

“One year (Junior) and one summer (Junior/Senior).”

“One 10 week term.”

“2 years student teaching while working full time in the public schools - called teaching intern.”

“Three quarters.”

“Not two Semesters, Two Quarters. We were on the quarter system.”

“Six semesters.”

“No circle check mark for other - the real answer is 9 weeks.”<sup>69</sup>

“Two Quarters, 10 weeks each.”

“9 weeks.”

“One semester of student teaching in performance MM.”

“1/2 semester in string teaching, 1/2 semester in general music teaching.”

“3 years (2 semesters x 3 years, each year focused on higher level students).”

**General Comments:**

“I studied for music ed. Did not finish, but it would’ve been 1 semester.”

“I was a performer that took over another teacher’s position “temporarily” then they gave me a year to get a Mus. Ed Masters while I taught.”

“In ----, student teaching occurs in a Bachelor of Ed program that is required to teach in the public schools.”

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<sup>69</sup> No “other” checkmark option was included because in the United States, the student teaching requirement for a Music Education degree is typically one semester/quarter, or at most, two.

“I had to student teach in order to complete certification requirements for the Bachelor of Education and it was for one semester.”

“I did not student teach, instead teaching with an alternative license.”

“Plus campus school experience every year from sophomore on.”

“Will happen soon.”

“I was certified under an alternative certification process. I was employed as a string teacher before certification.”

“I had taught in private school for two years, so I did not have to complete student teaching.”

“My degree wasn't in music education, but I did get certification.”

“Teaching/Classroom experiences beginning in my sophomore year. Degree required student teaching officially in the senior year.”

As is evident from these alternative responses, there are some respondents whose student teaching experience was actually extended far beyond the typical expectation for a student teaching practicum in a Music Education degree. There are also those who also obtained teaching licensure through a separate certification process, and/or did not need the student teaching requirement to be completed before obtaining a job teaching strings. These general comments are not necessarily the standard for most Music Education degrees in North America, but they are indicative of interesting alternative requirements or options for students to obtain their teaching licenses.

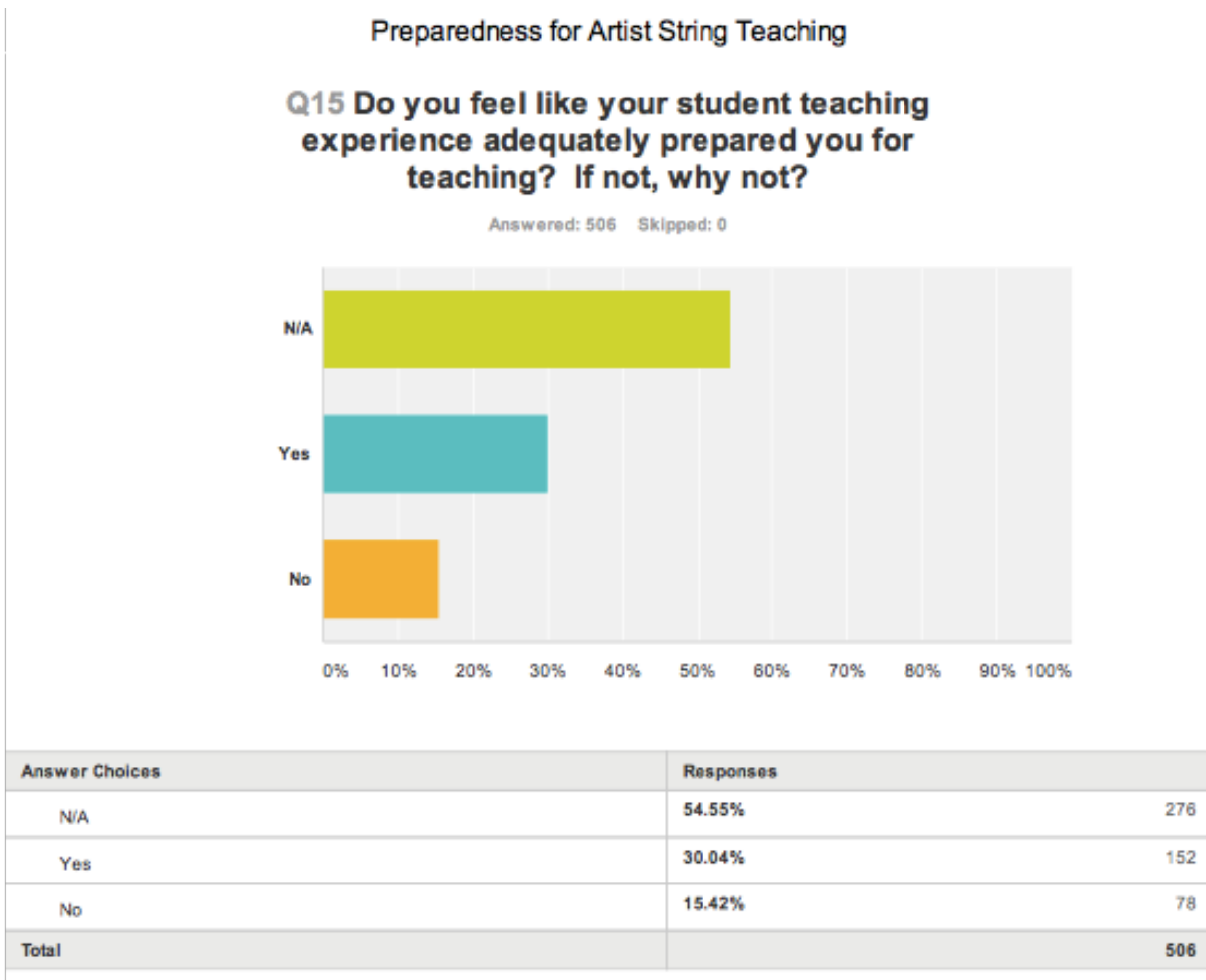
Question Fifteen of this survey was targeted at the same group of Music Education degree-holding respondents as the previous question, and it determined how effectively the student teaching experience<sup>70</sup> prepared respondents for string teaching. Respondents were to

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<sup>70</sup>As part of a degree track.

asked to indicate specifically whether or not they felt like their student teaching experience adequately prepared them for string teaching—and if not, why not.

Table 19. Student Teaching as a Factor in Preparedness for Actual Teaching



As shown in the Table 19, 54.55% of respondents checked “N/A,” 30.04% said “yes,” while 15.42% responded “no.” A comment box was included in case the respondents wanted to share further thoughts about what made their student teaching experience successful, and the

answers for this option can be read in Appendix D: Comments on Successful Student Teaching.

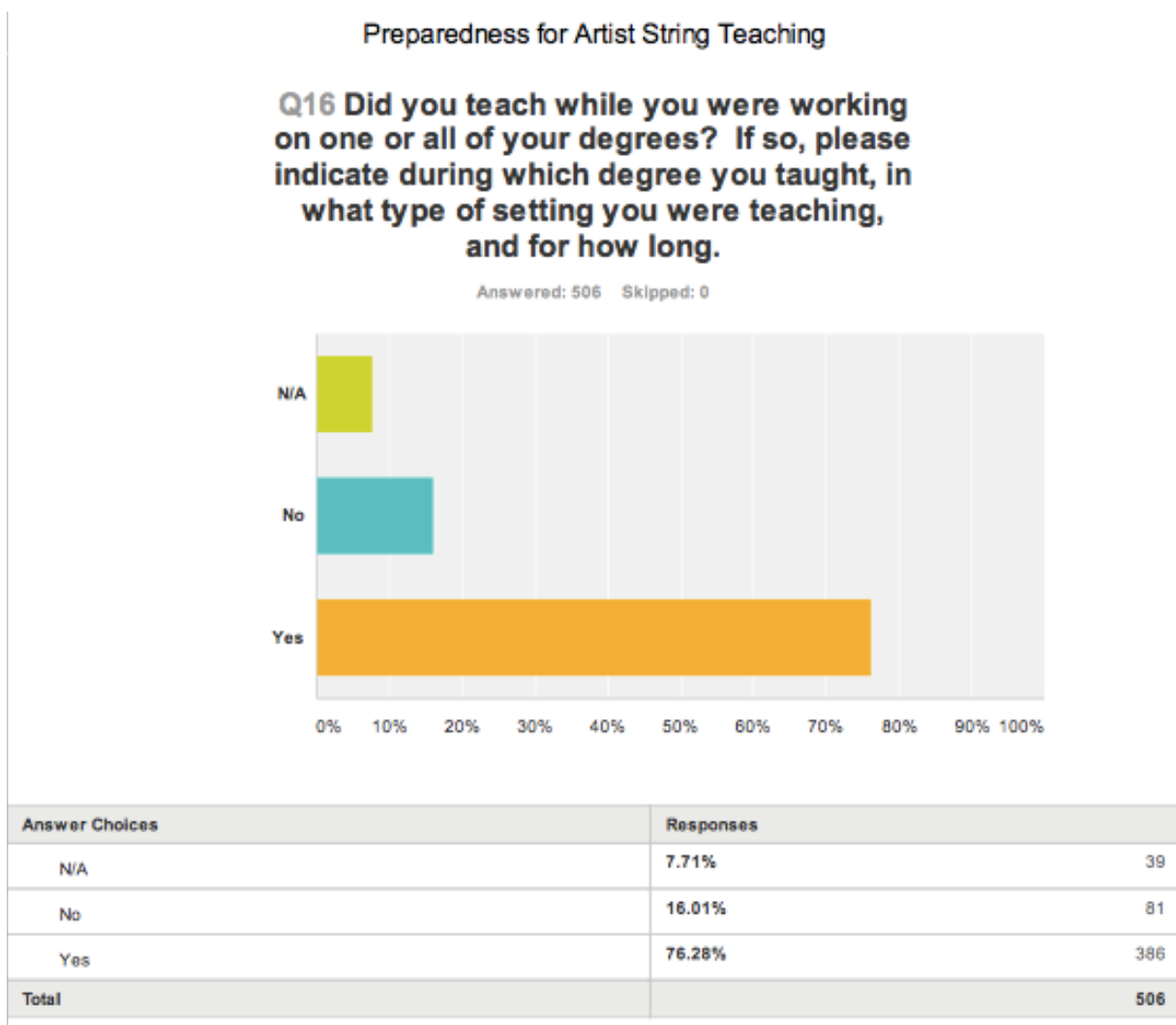
Interestingly, 15.42% of the respondents did not feel that their student teaching experience adequately prepared them for teaching. This is a fairly significant number of respondents that hold a Music Education degree (who represent 45.46% of total respondents), as it represents about a third of those respondents who hold a Music Education degree. A comment box was also included for respondents to indicate why they felt their student teaching experience did not help to adequately prepare them for teaching. These responses can be read in Appendix E: Comments on Inadequate Student Teaching.

Based on the feedback from these comments, respondents attributed unsatisfactory teaching experiences to the following four issues: not enough time to student teach; not the applicable (post graduation) teaching setting; a negative experience with the supervising teacher; and/or a student teaching experience that did not address the administration or the logistics of setting up a classroom at the beginning of the year. In spite of these experiences, respondents still went on to teach. The scope of this project does not address those who might have left the profession because they felt inadequately prepared; it would be interesting to know how many have left the profession who might have continued if they believed that they had received adequate preparation.

Following the responses of Music Education degree holders seen in Question Fifteen, Question Sixteen assesses the teaching experience accrued by respondents who have not obtained a Music Education degree. As seen in Table 20 below, 7.71% of respondents indicated that this question was not applicable to them, most likely because they did not complete a degree. Of those that did complete a degree, 16.01% state that they did not teach at all during their

degree studies, and 76.28% of the respondents indicate that they did teach at some point during their degree studies. Those who did teach during their degree studies were asked to indicate in what type of setting they taught and for how long, but these answers will not be shared due to a flaw in the question response design.

Table 20. Teaching During Degree

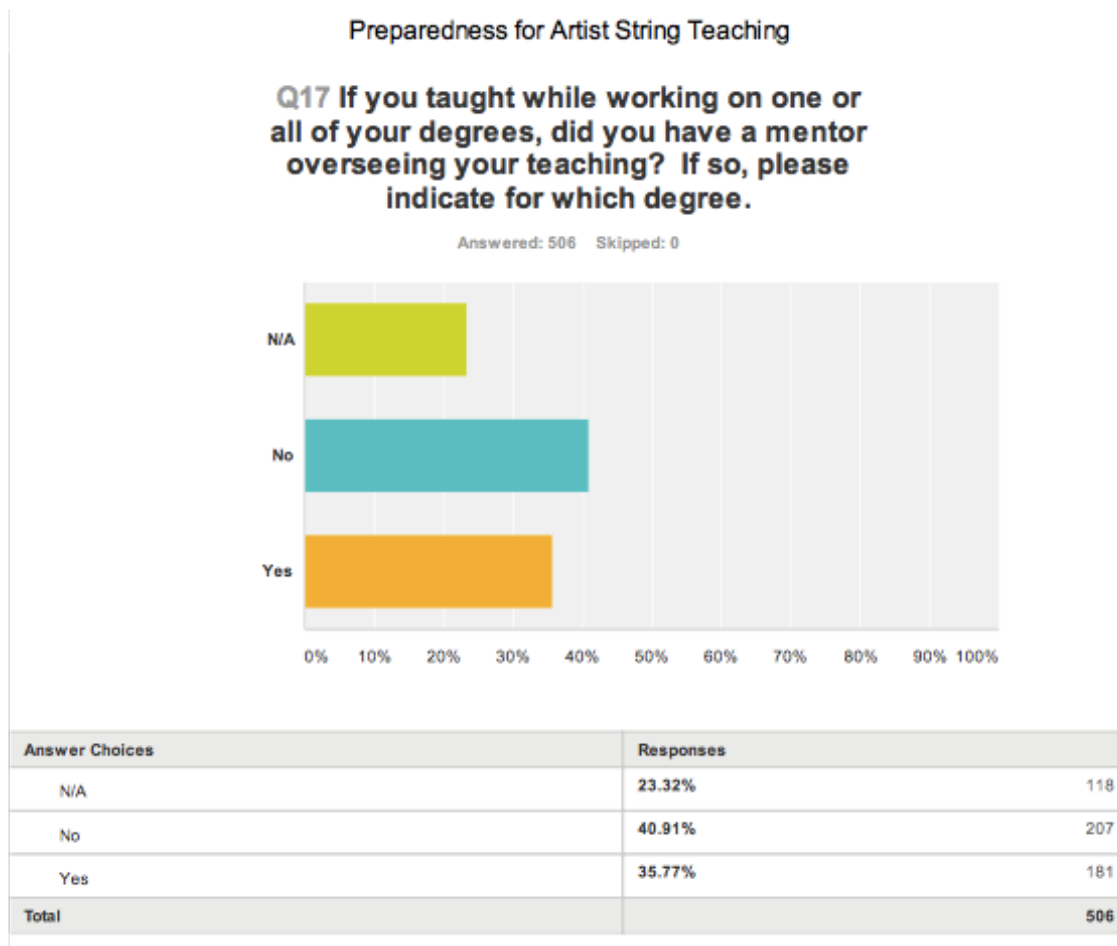


Question Seventeen of the survey was designed to take the previous question a step

further, by examining whether or not the respondents had mentors overseeing their teaching experience during their degree. When this was the case, respondents were asked to indicate during which degree(s) the mentorship occurred. The data in Table 21 indicate that the plurality of students who taught during their degree, 40.91%, did not have a mentor, while 35.77% of the respondent pool did have a mentor to oversee their teaching while they were working on their degree. 23.32% selected "N/A," perhaps because they did not teach at all during their degree studies.



Table 21. Mentorship During Degree



The option to include commentary was available for respondents to indicate which degrees included mentorship. Responses can be read in Appendix F: Degrees With Mentorship.

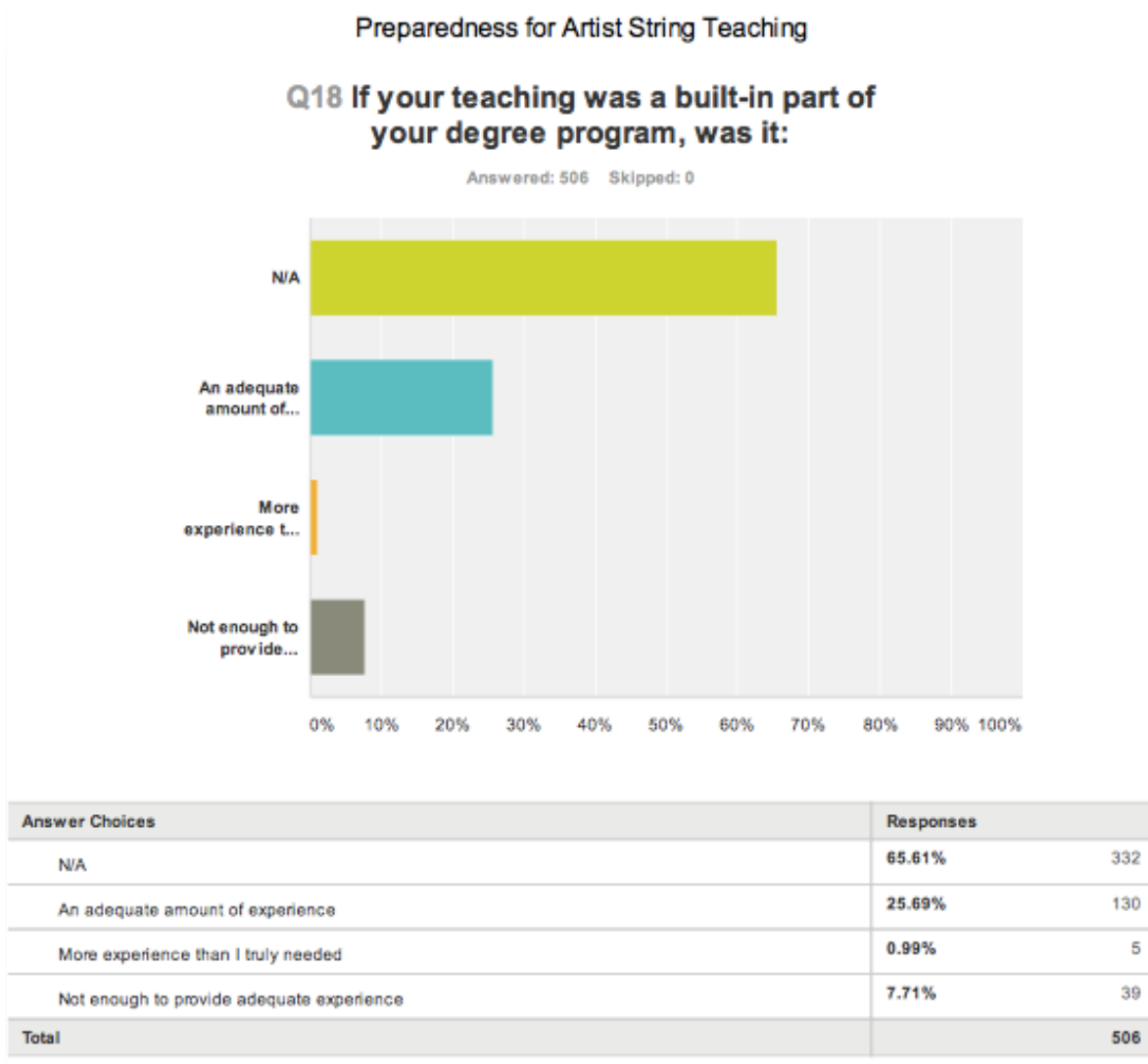
Of those who had a mentor overseeing their teaching during their degree studies (35.77% of all respondents), the majority had a mentor during their Masters degree studies, many had a mentor during their Bachelor degree studies, and only a handful had a mentor during their Doctoral degree studies. Reviewing the comments not specifically regarding a particular degree,

some teachers clearly did not feel the need for a mentor due to their age and/or already established teaching experience, and others had mentors but had to seek them out instead of being assigned to them. Several other individuals had a mentor for teacher training experiences (i.e. an Ed certification process or Suzuki pedagogy training) that were separate from any degree track. Out of the 477 respondents to this survey, 181 (or approximately 38%) shared comments. Of this 38%, it appears that most of these respondents had some type of mentorship for their teaching during one or all of their degree programs, which is consistent with the statistic that 35.77% of the entire respondent pool had a mentor during their degree studies. It is a welcome result that a little over a third of the respondent pool had a mentor that oversaw their teaching during their degree studies. Hands-on experience plays an invaluable role in the pedagogical learning process, and this cycle of learning is enhanced when there is a mentor present who is able to give constructive feedback. An interesting follow-up question would have been to try and ascertain to what level those who had mentors during their degree studies were actually being mentored. The fact that 40.91% of the respondent pool did not have a mentor overseeing their teaching during their degree studies calls for additional consideration. This might be because students were teaching in a setting that was totally un-related to their degree studies (and therefore outside the immediate purview of the private studio and/or pedagogy instructor). Alternatively, this statistic could also be indicative of room for improvement regarding the level of mentorship that students receive when they are honing their pedagogical skills during their degree studies. The latter is likely, given that the following question shows that 34.39% of the respondent pool actually did have teaching built into their degree track studies.

Question Eighteen in the survey (see Table 22) determined how the respondents who had

teaching built-in to their degree programs felt about the time they were given to develop their pedagogical skills through these lab experiences.

Table 22. Adequacy of Teaching Experience Built into Degree Program



The option for further comment was also included with this question, and the responses have been sorted by category. These comments can be read in Appendix G: Adequacy of

### Teaching Experience Built into Degree Program.

The commentary is enlightening to read, but of greatest interest with this question was the fact that 65.61% of the respondents indicated that there was not any type of a teaching experience built in to their degree programs. This number represents a majority of the respondents, and so the data show that more than half of the individuals who took this survey were unable to participate in some type of a teaching lab or string project experience prior to graduation. Of the remaining pool of respondents, 25.69% felt that the amount of experience that they received was adequate; 7.71% felt that the opportunities they had were not enough to provide adequate teaching experience; and five people (representing 0.99% of the respondents) indicated that the experience they had was truly more than they needed. Opportunities for the practice and presentation of performance in a variety of settings are an integral part of a music student's educational experience; if students are also expected to be prepared for teaching, the survey results for this question suggest there is room to expand the teaching opportunities available to students concurrent with their degree studies.

Question Nineteen of this survey was designed to assess enrichment activities that may have augmented the respondents' professional development and teacher training. As can be seen from Table 23, almost sixty percent of the respondents indicated that they have participated in at least one such event outside of their degree program(s). Specifically, about three-fifths of the respondent pool (58.59%) have had at least one teacher training experience outside of their degree program; approximately two-fifths (37.75%) have had two such experiences, and about a fifth of the pool of respondents (20.55%) have participated in at least three such events. The answers of the respondents will not be shared in the form of prose commentary due to the fact

that they contain too many names and other information that would violate the respondents' privacy. Many of the answers encompassed Suzuki teacher training, teacher training for the Sassmannshaus<sup>71</sup> and Mark O'Connor Methods,<sup>72</sup> workshops and retreats for string teaching, attendance at state and national conferences, and short/long-term apprenticeships with various educators.

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<sup>71</sup> A method of string instruction developed by the internationally recognized German string pedagogues, Kurt Sassmannshaus and Egon Sassmannshaus (Kurt's father).

<sup>72</sup> A method of string instruction developed by the acclaimed American violinist and composer, Mark O'Connor.

Table 23. Teacher Training Outside of Degree

**Preparedness for Artist String Teaching**

**Q19 Have you ever participated in short-term, long-term, apprenticeship, and/or workshop teacher training outside of a degree? If so, please indicate what type of training you did, through what institution/program, and with whom.**

Answered: 506 Skipped: 0

Answer Choices	Responses	
N/A	42.69%	216
#1	58.89%	298
#2	37.75%	191
#3	20.55%	104
#4	12.65%	64
#5	8.70%	44
#6	6.52%	33
#7	4.55%	23
#8	2.17%	11
#9	1.78%	9
#10	1.58%	8

Question Twenty of this survey (see Table 24) was designed to ascertain which of the degree tracks available to string players best prepare students for string teaching post-graduation. A close examination of the answer choice “I was extremely well prepared for string teaching” reveals that those who hold a degree in string performance and pedagogy (17.95% of the respondent pool) are the demographic that feels they were the best prepared for string teaching. Those who hold degrees in string performance were close behind at 16.28%. These two top answer choices represent an interesting result as they both are performance-related degrees.

Table 24. Role of Degree in String Teaching Preparedness

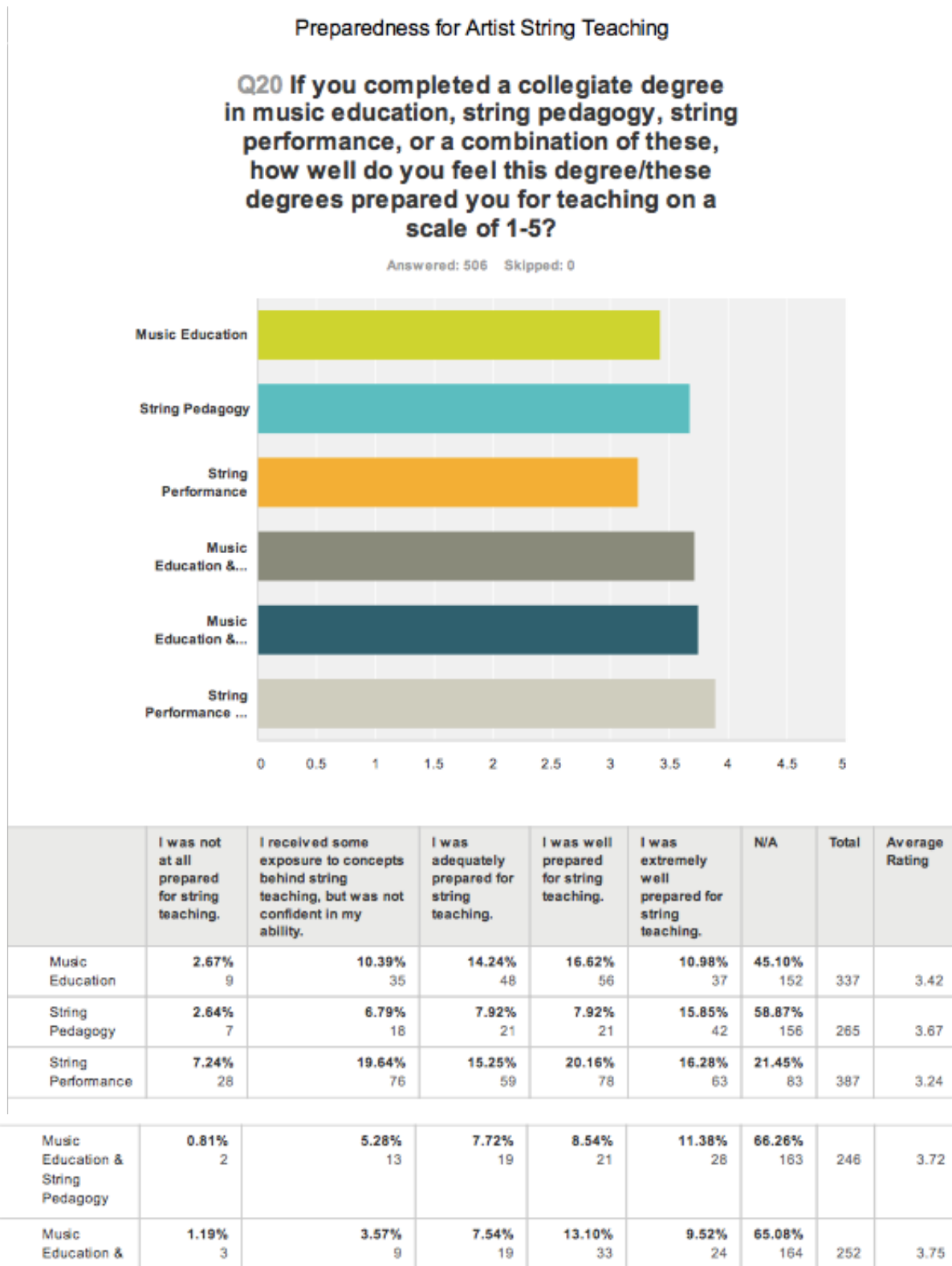


Table 24—continued

String Performance								
String Performance & Pedagogy	1.10%	5.49%	8.42%	12.09%	17.95%	54.95%	273	3.89
	3	15	23	33	49	150		

The data for this question are very intriguing and have been organized by degree track and summarized below for greater clarity.

#### Music Education

**41.84%** -- adequately to extremely well prepared

**13.06%** -- lack confidence or unprepared

**45.10%** -- N/A

#### String Pedagogy

**31.69%** -- adequately to extremely well prepared

**9.43%** -- lack confidence or unprepared

**58.87%** -- N/A

#### String Performance

**51.69%** -- adequately to extremely well prepared

**26.88%** -- lack confidence or unprepared

**21.45%** -- N/A

#### Music Education and Pedagogy

**27.64%** -- adequately to extremely well prepared

**6.09%** -- lack confidence or unprepared



**66.26%** -- N/A

#### Music Education and String Performance

**30.16%** -- adequately to extremely well prepared

**4.76%** -- lack confidence or unprepared

**65.08%** -- N/A

#### String Performance and Pedagogy

**38.46%** -- adequately to extremely well prepared

**6.59%** -- lack confidence or unprepared

**54.95%** -- N/A

Of the degree tracks listed above, those who feel that their degree studies best prepared them for teaching are the respondents who hold a degree in string performance or music education. This is a fascinating statistic, because performance degrees do not necessarily contain course offerings in the pedagogy of teaching, and this same degree track also represents the highest number of respondents (26.88%) who did *not* feel adequately prepared for string teaching. An interesting follow up question would have been to ask exactly what type of teaching each of the respondents for these degree tracks felt prepared for. One possibility is that those with performance degrees who felt extremely well prepared for teaching were referring to teaching in academia (the setting they were educated in), or in a private studio setting (a setting that is inherently molded around the instructor's knowledge and training, and which does not necessarily involve classroom management skills).

None of the degree track options inclusive of string pedagogy were in the top two categories that indicated successful preparation for teaching, even when combined with Music

Education. The “N/A” responses may represent those who did not complete the degree track listed or even any degree. In addition to examining the preparedness percentages by individual degree track, also of interest is the ratio within each degree track of those who felt well prepared to those who did not. This was calculated by adding the percentages together for those who completed a particular degree track, and then dividing the percentage of those who did not feel prepared by the total. The results are as follows:

#### Music Education

**76%** -- adequately to extremely well prepared

**24%** -- lack confidence or unprepared

#### String Pedagogy

**77%** -- adequately to to extremely well prepared

**23%** -- lack confidence or unprepared

#### String Performance

**66%** -- adequately to extremely well prepared

**34%** -- lack confidence or unprepared

#### Music Education and Pedagogy

**82%** -- adequately to extremely well prepared

**18%** -- lack confidence or unprepared

#### Music Education and String Performance

**86%** -- adequately to extremely well prepared

**14%** -- lack confidence or unprepared

## String Performance and Pedagogy

**85%** -- adequately to extremely well prepared

**15%** -- lack confidence or unprepared

These statistics are perhaps the most revealing set of data because they indicate, for each degree track, the ratio of perceived preparedness for teaching among those who actually completed the degree. In the previous set of percentages, those who completed degrees in string performance and music education seemed to be the ones who felt the most prepared for teaching. However, taking a closer look at the ratio within each individual degree track, the string performance degree track represents the lowest ratio of satisfaction. Ironically, music education rates barely ahead string performance. Out of the three single-degree tracks (music education, string pedagogy, and string performance), string pedagogy presents the highest ratio of satisfaction in preparedness for string teaching. What is even more exciting to see, however, are the ratios for the degrees of music education and pedagogy, music education and string performance, and string performance and pedagogy. These three combined-degree tracks (and especially the latter two including performance) present the highest ratios of satisfaction in preparedness for teaching; that finding supports this thesis' theory that a degree curriculum combining performance and pedagogy will best serve students preparing for artistry in both performing and teaching after graduation.

Question Twenty-one in this survey finally reaches the heart of this research (see Table 25). When reimagining a collegiate curriculum, concrete feedback as to what individuals feel has been working and what hasn't is indispensable. This feedback encompasses respondents' educational experiences both inside and outside degree track studies.

Table 25. Factors That Most Effectively Prepared Respondents for String Teaching

Preparedness for Artist String Teaching	
Q21 Which of the following, in your opinion, most effectively prepared you for string teaching? (Indicate all that apply)	
Answered: 481 Skipped: 25	
Answer Choices	Responses
My degree studies as a whole (please indicate which degree):	47.61% 229
(A) particular class(es) during my degree studies (please indicate which class/es):	34.93% 168
A mentor during my degree studies (if you are comfortable, please indicate whom):	45.11% 217
A mentor outside of my degree studies (if you are comfortable, please indicate whom):	26.61% 128
A teaching job during my degree studies (please indicate where and in what setting):	28.07% 135
A teaching job outside of my degree studies (please indicate where in what setting):	23.28% 112
A short-term teacher training course during my degree studies (please indicate the course, where it took place, and with whom):	9.15% 44
A short-term teacher training course outside my degree studies (please indicate the course, where it took place, and with whom):	26.40% 127
A long-term teacher training course during my degree studies (please indicate the course, where it took place, and with whom):	11.23% 54
A long-term teacher training course outside my degree studies (please indicate the course, where it took place, and with whom):	6.65% 32
An apprenticeship during my degree studies (please indicate the course, where it took place, and with whom):	4.78% 23
An apprenticeship outside my degree studies (please indicate the course, where it took place, and with whom):	3.33% 16
A teacher from my youth (Pre-school through highschool; if you are comfortable, please indicate who the person was and what position they had in your life):	31.60% 152
Other (please indicate):	13.93% 67

These results show that degree track leads the way in terms of the respondents' perceived

preparation for string teaching. Mentorship during and leading up to one's degree studies also plays a crucial role. Every answer choice for this question contained the option for comment. The comments respondents shared are collected in Appendix H: Respondents' Comments on Most Effective Preparation for String Teaching.<sup>73</sup>

The answers for this component of the question indicate that about as many respondents felt that their bachelor degree studies played a role in their preparedness for artist string teaching as did those who completed a masters degree. There was significantly less indication that doctoral level degrees play a significant role in preparedness for teaching, but this might also be due to the fact that the completion of this type of degree track is not as common. In total, those who indicated that their degree played a significant role in preparing them for teaching was 47.61% of all respondents.

The second answer choice asked respondents to indicate what, if any, specific classes during their degree studies prepared them for teaching. Those responses can be read in Appendix I: Particular Classes Effective in String Teaching Preparation. The responses for this answer choice vary widely and they encompass courses of the following subject matter: applied studies, chamber coachings, master classes/seminars, orchestra, conducting, literature, pedagogy, theory, and educational management strategies. 34.93% of the respondent pool indicated that a specific class played a role in effectively preparing them for teaching.

As mentioned previously, the comments for answer choices two through twelve will not be shared in order to respect respondents' privacy. However, answer choices two through twelve are summarized below, ordered from greatest to least effectiveness according to respondents.

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<sup>73</sup> Comments are sorted by answer choice. The comment responses for answer choices two through twelve will not be shared because they contain information that could identify the respondents.

1. A mentor during my degree studies -- **45.11%**
2. A teacher from my youth -- **31.60%**
3. A teaching job during my degree studies -- **28.07%**
4. A short-term teacher training course outside my degree studies -- **26.40%**
5. A mentor outside of my degree studies -- **25.61%**
6. A teaching job outside of my degree studies -- **23.28%**
7. A long-term teacher training course during my degree studies -- **11.23%**
8. A short-term teacher training course during my degree studies -- **9.15%**
9. A long-term teacher training course outside my degree studies -- **6.65%**
10. An apprenticeship during my degree studies -- **4.78%**
11. An apprenticeship outside my degree studies -- **3.33%**

These results demonstrate that mentorship plays a key role in the development of students' pedagogical skills and their level of confidence. Among the top three most common responses, respondents also indicated that a teaching job during one's degree studies played a significant role in their preparedness for teaching post-graduation. This is indicative of the role that hands-on experience plays in the synthesis and maturation of didactic skills.

Lastly, there was the option for the respondents to indicate an answer that might not have been explicitly included in the question's available answer choices. These responses covered a wide range of topics and people, and are listed in Appendix J: Other Effective Preparation for String Teaching. The commentary from the aforementioned answer choices for Question Twenty-one provide an informative view of the individual thoughts of the respondents regarding what role each of the components played in their preparedness for artist string teaching. However,

one's degree studies as a whole and mentors both before and during degree studies seem to have played the most significant role in preparing the respondents for teaching.

The last question of the survey made an attempt to distill the previous answers even further. In Question Twenty-two, respondents were asked to determine which one or two people and/or experiences that most prepared them for string teaching (see Table 26).

Table 26. Single Most Influential Person/Factor in Preparedness for Artist String Teaching

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Preparedness for Artist String Teaching

**Q22 Out of your answers selected from the previous question, if you had to distill your answer down to one or two people and/or experiences that you feel MOST prepared you for string teaching, who/what would those be?**

Answered: 456 Skipped: 96

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The responses for this question encompass a wide variety of people and situations and they are listed in Appendix K: Most Effective Preparation for String Teaching.<sup>74</sup> These responses regarding which factor potentially played the greatest role in preparing the respondents for artist string teaching include: individual mentors, a particular degree track or course, hands-on experience, continued professional development, and self-directed learning. There is not one particular trend that necessarily leads the rest.

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<sup>74</sup> Comments with identifying information have again been omitted unless it was possible to save most of the comment simply by using a hyphen in place of the name.

At the very end of the survey, respondents were invited to share any further thoughts that they might have regarding this research. 166 respondents very generously shared their thoughts, which are recorded in Appendix L: Final Comments from Respondents.

The results of this survey have provided an informative view into the general statistics regarding string teacher demographics, as well as the various facets of degree studies and additional training/experiences/mentors that play a role in the respondents' pedagogical preparedness. Several trends were observed in this research, and they will be presented in conjunction with the conclusions drawn from the data and respondents' commentary.

First, it is important to re-establish that the majority of the respondents who took this survey are currently active both as performers (96.44%) and as teachers (94.47%). 70.55% of the respondents teach in a private studio setting, and this represents a 44% lead over any other teaching setting. Those who teach in a public school environment ranked second at 26.48%, and university instructors came in third at 19.57%. Of the 506 total respondents, 145 indicated that they have been teaching for 11-20 years, and 142 have been teaching for 0-10 years. These numbers represent the majority of responses for that question, indicating that the majority of those who took the survey belong to a fairly "young" teaching demographic. In regards to the actual degree qualifications of the respondents, 92.49% indicated that they have a degree in music. This statistic shows that the overwhelming majority of the respondents are educated musicians. 55.73% of the respondents indicated that they have a Bachelor of Music degree, and 53.95% specified that they hold a Master of Music degree. Also of note is the fact that 55.53% of the respondents hold a degree in string performance; followed by 33.40% of respondents who hold a degree in music education.



After establishing the initial demographics of the respondent pool regarding their experience and qualifications, the middle portion of the survey shifted to a focus on ascertaining the teaching experience that occurred during degree studies. The teaching experience that is most often built-in to a degree program is the student teaching requirement for music education students. The survey asked the average length of this student teaching requirement, and 32.02% of the music education degree recipients indicated that they were only required to do one term of student teaching. 4.74% indicated that they had to complete two terms, and the remaining 36.76% of the respondent pool marked “N/A” because they did not complete a degree in music education. This question did not specify whether the music education degree recipients received their degrees on the undergraduate and/or graduate level, and so the responses indicate a mixture of both degree levels. It is not apparent as to whether or not the respondents who completed a music education degree acquired other teaching experiences during their studies, but what is apparent is that an overwhelming majority were only required to complete one term of actual teaching experience.

The survey took the exploration of the student teaching experience one step further and asked the respondents who completed a degree in music education if they felt like their student teaching experience prepared them adequately for teaching. 30.04% said that they did feel like this hands-on learning experience did prepare them adequately for teaching, and 15.42% said that they did not feel that it adequately prepared them for teaching. The latter statistic represents 34% of the respondent pool that did complete a music education degree. The third of the respondent pool that did not find their student teaching experience satisfactory attributed this to the following factors:

- Not enough time to student teach
- Not the right or applicable (post-graduation) teaching setting
- Negative experience with supervising teacher
- No experience with logistics of setting up classroom, administrative duties, etc.

Once the student teaching component for the music education degree students was examined, the survey shifted focus to find out how many of the total respondent pool taught at some point during their degree studies. 76.28% of respondents indicated that they did teach at some point during their degree studies, but 40.91% did not have a mentor overseeing this teaching. The remaining 35.77% did have a mentor overseeing their teaching, and it is possible that these were the students who completed a student teaching requirement or taught in a string project or pre-college program associated with their institution.

Perhaps the most important statistic to make note of is the 65.61% of respondents who indicated that there was no type of teaching experience built into their degree program(s). Considering that 51.35% of respondents indicated that actual teaching experience was one of the most effective tools in preparing them for teaching, it would seem that more could be being done to incorporate these types of opportunities into degree programs. As was mentioned previously, for students to develop their pedagogical skills alongside their performance skills, they need to have the practical experiences built into their degree programs that will facilitate the development of both.

The latter portion of the survey shifted its focus once more, to hone in on what degrees seem to have prepared the respondents most effectively for teaching, as well as the specific factors that may have played the most significant role in a respondent's pedagogical development

and level of preparedness. If the highest percentages for the graph answer choices are examined at face value, they reveal the following:

- “I was not at all prepared for string teaching.” -- **String performance** degree recipients (7.24%)
- “I received some exposure to concepts behind string teaching, but was not confident in my ability.” -- **String performance** degree recipients (19.64%)
- “I was adequately prepared for string teaching.” -- **String performance** degree recipients (15.25%)
- “I was well prepared for string teaching.” -- **String performance** degree recipients (20.16%)
- “I was extremely well prepared for string teaching.” -- **String performance and pedagogy** degree recipients (17.95%)

The string performance degree track appears to dominate almost all of the highest statistics across the board. However, the truest levels of satisfaction versus dissatisfaction are revealed when the ratios within the pool of respondents who hold each degree are determined. As the data show, even though it initially seems like string performance degree-track recipients represented the demographic that felt the most prepared for string teaching, this was not actually the case when each degree was examined in turn. The ratio of those who felt that they were well prepared for teaching versus not adequately prepared for string teaching was the poorest for string performance degree track respondents. Those who completed degrees that combined some form of performance and pedagogy/music education felt the most prepared for string teaching. This result is inspiring because it supports the theory that a holistic approach to string education that integrates both performance and pedagogy will best prepare string students for both facets of their careers post-graduation.

Lastly, the question “Which of the following, in your opinion, most effectively prepared

you for string teaching?” revealed the following answers (representing the highest percentages):

- Degree studies as a whole (**47.61%**)
- Mentor during degree studies (**45.11%**)
- (A) particular class(es) during my degree studies (**34.54%**)
- Teacher from youth (**31.60%**)
- A teaching job during my degree studies (**27.89%**)
- A mentor outside of my degree studies (**26.76%**)
- A short-term teacher training course outside my degree studies (**25.62%**)
- A teaching job outside of my degree studies (**23.53%**)

The results generated through the graphs and percentages have been very interesting to see, but the narrative component of this survey has been almost more informative. Individuals shared their thoughts very candidly (especially toward the latter part of the survey), and if nothing else, it is apparent that this profession consists of a body of people who care very much about what they do and how their learning experiences impacted their current teaching efficacy.

## CHAPTER 4 THE PRIVATE STUDIO

*How can music educators develop a long-term plan to help students become skilled artist-teachers themselves?*

### **The Private Lesson**

The private lesson forms the heart of the music student's collegiate educational experience, and this weekly appointment for one-on-one time is the professor's best opportunity to mold their students; not just into successful musicians and pedagogues, but also into thoughtful human beings who recognize the importance of character development, integrity, and having a heart for service. It is, therefore, essential that every applied instructor take the time to thoughtfully consider what kind of setting they want to create in their studio—this is the necessary first step in the process of setting up a vibrant teaching and learning environment. These creative deliberations should include: the scope of the educator's responsibilities both as instructor and role model; what kind of vision will be cast for students' personal and professional growth trajectories through a particular degree program; what tools will be used to help students accomplish their goals; and how the interpersonal facets of the student-teacher relationship will be handled.

In a book co-authored by Cornelia Watkins and Laurie Scott, *From the Stage to the Studio: How Fine Musicians Become Great Teachers*, they put forth twenty-two teaching principles that they believe are core to both a successful teaching environment and also to a teacher's relationship with their students. This list constitutes a valuable foundation for thought on this topic and the principles are as follows:

1. Care about your students as individuals.

2. Infect your students with your passion for making music.
3. Develop teacher-student relationships based on trust.
4. Teach the person in front of you.
5. Teach students to listen, to move, and to sing.
6. Validate the expressive musician in the student.
7. Give your students honest feedback.
8. Fix fundamental problems.
9. Vary your teaching approach.
10. Give students specific instructions for practicing.
11. Give students a chance to play.
12. Define artistic standards.
13. Foster the potential of every student.
14. Approach each student with optimism.
15. Do no harm.
16. Keep a balance between personal involvement and objectivity.
17. Cultivate thinking, independent musicians.
18. Foster confidence in students.
19. Keep students motivated.
20. Take responsibility for your students' progress.
21. Make short- and long-term plans that support a vision for each student.
22. Demonstrate your integrity.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Cornelia Watkins and Laurie Scott, *From the Stage to the Studio: How Fine Musicians Become Great Teachers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 90-97.

The twenty-two aforementioned principles cover everything from facets of successful teaching to music making, to how to handle the student-teacher relationship. As such, they encompass an approach that would be an excellent charge for each and every teacher regardless of the type of teaching situation. This list could be taken as and is used as a reference for studio teachers. Instructors might find these principles more personally relevant, however, if the time is taken to put them into their own words. A useful approach for organizing thoughts regarding the instructor's role and responsibilities then might be to: take this list, add any additional thoughts, re-phrase or customize the vocabulary as appropriate, and then put the list in order according to what the instructor feels their priorities are. This list could be posted in the studio, and could then potentially serve as a pedagogical talking point with students. However, if instructors are not comfortable with sharing these thoughts openly, then it is enough to simply have them down on paper for their own reference.

Once educators have taken the time to map out what they believe to be their own personal responsibilities as the applied studio instructor, it is important to explore the connection between the realization of these responsibilities and the actual creation of the learning environment through the development of a teaching philosophy document.

### **Teaching Philosophy**

As was mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, one of the four instructional strategies that comprise an integrated approach to a holistic learning environment is modeling. In Eric Booth's book, *The Music Teaching Artist's Bible: Becoming a Virtuoso Educator*, he makes the assertion that "eighty percent of what you teach is who you are."<sup>76</sup> This thought coupled with the

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<sup>76</sup> Eric Booth, *The Music Teaching Artist's Bible: Becoming a Virtuoso Educator* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 37.

knowledge that a major portion of communication is non-verbal, serves as a reminder that students will eventually absorb from the instructor much more than musical skills during their lessons (i.e. teaching tone and methods, sense of humor, code of ethics, manner of interacting with other people, likes and dislikes, and overall worldview). When educators are cognizant of this insight, it can assist in developing a high level of self awareness that will inform interactions with students. The development of a teaching philosophy document can facilitate this process of heightened self-awareness by providing a forum for instructors to spend time, energy, and thought defining who they are as an educator, why they do what they do, and what the goals will be for students who have completed a degree track in their studio. Though this may seem like a time-intensive process, it is a crucial step in the structuring of a studio and should not be bypassed, as it will inform everything that the instructor does with a student. Items to consider when crafting a teaching philosophy could include:

- Why the instructor feels music education is important
- What kind of a studio environment the instructor is striving to create
- What the specific skills are that the instructor will be focusing on passing on to students
- What the goals are that the instructor has for students, both professionally and personally
- What the instructor's "over-arching" goal is for their students, no matter what level the students are at, either when they enter the studio, or when they leave (every teacher usually has such a goal, whether they are cognizant of it or not)
- How the instructor will go about achieving these goals with students in a manner that will allow for their individuality, and yet will accomplish both the learning and life-learning goals that the instructor has for them

Equally as important as knowing what to incorporate into a teaching philosophy, is knowing what not to mention. Examples of things not to mention could include:



- Specific books or methods to be used unless a methodology is utilized that is integral to the philosophy; in the case of the latter, explain clearly why this approach resonates with the ideals outlined
- What instrument or discipline is being taught, unless it is integral to the philosophy. The more that musicians teach and listen to students of varying degrees of sophistication and development, the more they are aware that high standards of musicianship are transferable to instrumentalist at any stage of development
- Expectations of students (these can go into the studio policy document)
- What other teachers think, or do, or should do--only personal beliefs and how those inform instruction should be included

Once the teaching philosophy is detailed on paper, the benefits become obvious as the instructor now has:

- A clear and clarified viewpoint on personal values and beliefs, both as an individual and as a professional
- The opportunity to observe whether actual teaching is in alignment with the deepest values and beliefs, and then be able to make adjustments as appropriate
- An energized sense of purpose that will help to maintain focus and avoid distractive influences
- Preparedness for job applications and interviews

The teaching philosophy may or may not be something that will be shared overtly with students,<sup>77</sup> but that should not be a problem if the principles espoused on paper are embodied in the instructor's interactions with students and colleagues. The key is simply to ensure that this unity between word and action has been developed into a genuine way of life.

As students progress through their development in a particular studio, provided that the instructor is encouraging and providing opportunities for students to develop their pedagogical

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<sup>77</sup> If the instructor has a professional website for their teaching and performing activities, this might be a useful item to include.

aptitudes, it would also be useful for the students to be asked to develop a teaching philosophy document of their own. Ideally, this would be done in conjunction with observation and teaching opportunities that the students are experiencing themselves. However, even if students are not yet teaching, they can be prompted to begin thinking about the relationship between teaching and learning as it relates to their own worldview, learning processes, and the learning environment that they might someday like to create for their own students. If a student does not have teaching experience and is not currently teaching (i.e. perhaps a freshman student), this assignment could be modified. Instructors might consider asking these students to think about what teacher has played the most influential role in their life up until this point and why. Specifically, it would be useful for them to outline what personality/character traits, teaching strategies, and communication skills of the teacher they feel may have played a role in their positive learning experience. Pedagogically, the creation of either this document or a teaching philosophy will facilitate the instructor's ability to guide the thought processes of each student as they relate to the study of teaching and learning; they will also serve as a catalyst that initiates the habit of thinking pedagogically for each student.

Figure 1. Sample Teaching Philosophy

*Lucy Lewis*, Violinist, Violist, Chamber Musician, Conductor, & Pedagogue

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## Teaching Philosophy

As an educator, my belief is that the uniqueness of every individual is something to be treasured, and an education is a gift that everyone deserves to have. With these thoughts in mind, I approach every student that I work with, with sensitivity to their background and individual needs, a caring spirit that desires only the best for my students, and standards of excellence that assist my students in achieving their goals successfully.

Because I want my students to have the freedom to play their best, I facilitate step-by-step mastery of skill development in my studio and I make sure that students receive a solid foundation in technique, balance, posture, listening and self-assessment skills, and tone production right from the very first lesson. Servicing the music is always the overarching goal for anything technical that I address in a lesson, and my approach works from the perspective of combining the musical, technical, analytical, and historical influences to achieve an informed and communicative, artistic performance. Ultimately, my goal is to foster an inquisitive spirit, and to teach my students how to teach themselves so that they are able to draw upon their own knowledge base to know how to face challenges and solve them efficiently, truly enabling them to be competent musicians.

In addition to the artistic learning goals that I have for my students, I also place great emphasis on: 1) character development, 2) fostering the symbiotic relationship between becoming both a great teacher and performer, 3) collaborative skills and mentorship, and 4) creative career planning that assists students in developing their unique interests and skill sets with the goal of giving back in a meaningful way to both the local and global communities to which they belong.

Teaching is truly a privilege and not a responsibility that I take lightly. As a life-long learner myself, I am thrilled to have the opportunity to help my students continue their development into fine human beings through the study of music. It is a joy to watch students blossom and excel, and I am thankful for the chance that I have to learn and grow as well.

***“I am not so interested in teaching, as I am in learning.” -Dorothy DeLay***

## **Vision for Growth**

Before a student ever walks through the door of a studio, in addition to a thoughtfully constructed teaching philosophy, educators would do well to have in mind the over-arching goals for their students, regardless of level. These goals, accompanied by specific didactic strategies, will provide a framework for all instruction, and they will model to the studio what a thoughtful, organized approach to teaching looks like. A list of said goals for performance-related issues could potentially include:

- Balanced, “pain-free” setup and posture
- The development of a beautiful tone that maximizes the natural resonance of the instrument
- Pristine intonation
- A vibrato that has various shades of expressivity
- Comfort with shifting and various positions
- A steady inner sense of pulse and rhythm
- Honed listening skills and the ability to accurately self-assess
- A knowledge of the different musical periods and how the historical and cultural trends of the day should inform our concept of style for music from these various time periods
- The ability to accurately identify key signatures, key areas, and various harmonies, for the purpose of constructing a musical interpretation that is harmonically informed and led
- The ability to identify the structure of a work, in addition to musical lines and phrasing within the larger form
- The development of a confident, respectful, and expressive stage presence
- An enlightened knowledge of how to breathe and move in a manner that organically supports the musical lines, and in no way detracts either visually or aurally from the performance

All of these performance-related goals are items that the instructor will ideally be modeling themselves for their students. The ability to listen and accurately self-assess is something that will be addressed at greater length in the sections regarding musicianship and assessment, but it is worth mentioning now that the acquisition of this skill presents the most fertile opportunity for instructors to guide students' thinking so that they are able to develop their pedagogical skills by learning how to teach themselves.

After establishing a list of performance-related goals, it would be helpful to have in mind the overarching goals for pedagogy-related topics. This list could potentially include:

- The development of an understanding and respect for the role that effective teaching plays in a student's learning process
- The development of an understanding of how important it is to begin the process of teacher training and gaining teaching experience right from the inception of one's degree, if not before (regardless of whether it is an undergraduate or graduate degree, but especially if it is a graduate degree program)
- The implementation of the habit of observing master teachers of all levels, in a variety of teaching settings
- The ability to assess where a student is at in their development, identify their strengths and weaknesses, and create an effective plan for moving forward that will include goals for technique, repertoire, listening, self-assessment, a plan for how to structure practice, and target performances
- A knowledge of how to construct an effective teaching segment, and the development of the skills needed to be able to implement this knowledge with an actual student
- A knowledge for how to create a plan for teaching the development of a particular skill, starting with a beginning student, all the way through to an advanced level student (i.e. one who is playing standard concerto repertoire)
- The development of a teaching philosophy

These goals primarily encompass the instructional strategies of guided thinking, the overt

instruction of pedagogy, and experience. At the most fundamental level, students need to be guided by the instructor to think about the pedagogy of instruction. When a student enters a performance degree program, the primary emphasis is inherently on the acquisition and development of a student's technical and musical faculties. However, if the instructor introduces the topic of pedagogy and its importance right from the first lesson and seminar/master class, students will approach their studies with a mindset that is constantly evaluating the "cause and effect" relationship between instruction and the learning process.

In addition to what students are learning from their instructor through discussions in their lessons and the weekly seminar/master class, it is important that students are being encouraged to observe other master teachers, and to put the pedagogy knowledge they are acquiring into practice. An actual pedagogy course would be the ideal forum for implementing a more extensive plan for observations, but a private studio instructor could recommend that students pursue one to two teaching observations per term.<sup>78</sup>

To ensure that observations are also a meaningful pedagogical experience, instructors might consider giving students an observation form<sup>79</sup> that will be an aid in structuring their thought processes as they are watching a lesson/class (see Figure 2). Perhaps the two most important items for students to be able to recognize are: 1) the focus of the lesson, and 2) what an effective teaching segment looks like. Knowing how to construct an effective teaching segment is key to being able to scaffold a student's learning. When given the opportunity to observe this process occurring in real time, students will begin to grasp how their own instructors are

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<sup>78</sup> It is important to know the rules and regulations of any institution of higher education, and the cooperating schools regarding procedures for observing.

<sup>79</sup> This form could be turned in to the private studio instructor after the observation is completed.

sequencing learning for them, how they themselves can sequence their own learning during personal practice, and they will commence the process of thinking about how they might sequence the instruction of particular tasks for their own students someday. Dr. Robert Duke<sup>80</sup> talks at great length in his book *Intelligent Music Teaching*, about how to construct an effective teaching segment. There are five principles that guide this process and they are as follows:<sup>81</sup>

**1. Identify a desired change.**

- This should be something achievable within the available lesson time: time management skills are important when choosing an appropriate change to be made.

**2. Implement strategies to effect the change.**

- Give instructions
- Use a variety of strategies as needed
- Match tasks to student ability
- Take small steps

**3. Evaluate whether the change is taking place and give feedback.**

- Assess student and parent understanding
- Give frequent and specific feedback
- Balance positive and corrective feedback

**4. Adjust the strategies as needed and repeat implementation (leap back).**

- Productive teaching segments depend upon the teacher's ability to know if and when a "leap back" is required.
- It may be necessary to make the task smaller and easier, breaking it down into achievable segments and building back up to the larger goal.
- Returning to a review piece to show the student that s/he has in fact already done preparatory work for the desired change can often build the confidence necessary for dealing successfully with the new challenge.

**5. When the change is observable in repetitions of the task, give assignment for home practice.**

- Make assignments clear and specific

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<sup>80</sup> Marlene and Morton Meyerson Centennial Professor in Music and Human Learning, University Distinguished Teaching Professor, Elizabeth Shatto Massey Distinguished Fellow in Teacher Education, and Director of the Center for Music Learning at the University of Texas at Austin.

<sup>81</sup> *Suzuki Principles in Action Course Manual*, Boulder, CO: Suzuki Association of the Americas, Inc., 2010, revised 2011, 35-39. Used with permission.

Figure 2. Observation Form

**Observation Form**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher Observed: \_\_\_\_\_

Program: \_\_\_\_\_ Teaching Setting: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name (if private lesson): \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Repertoire: \_\_\_\_\_

**Environment**

What is the atmosphere like?

Are parents present? Y/N

If parents are present, how are they being engaged and what is their level of attentiveness?

**Lesson Structure**

What is the focus of the lesson/class?

How was this communicated with the student(s)?

What strategies did the instructor use to achieve their goal?

Describe one particularly effective teaching segment:

What was the pacing like?

Other comments (*can be continued on back*):



Before leaving the topic of observations, it is also worth mentioning that students should be encouraged to diversify their observational experiences. This is especially true if students are not sure as to what they might like to do for a career post-graduation, as the experience of observing in a variety of different teaching settings (i.e. university, private studio, public school, community music school, etc.) can facilitate their ability to hone in on what type of teaching they might really enjoy. It is not logical to expect that students will be able to confidently develop an idea of what they would like to do for a career unless they have prior experience with a particular situation and/or are given opportunities within their degree studies to explore options. Therefore, it would be extremely useful for private studio instructors to forge reciprocal relationships<sup>82</sup> with music instructors in the community such that their students have opportunities to develop the first-hand experience that they will need to make better informed decisions about a possible career track.

Observations are a valuable component in the pedagogical learning process, and the import of what students are learning will deepen if they have opportunities to put into practice what they are learning by teaching students of their own. In Chapter Two, the survey reported that 65.61% of respondents did not have exposure to teaching opportunities built into their degree studies. This is unfortunate and indicates that there might be room for institutions to consider the implementation of a pre-college program or string project that would allow students to have observational and teaching opportunities while they are in school. However, even if such a program does not exist, students can be encouraged to develop a private studio of their own. Having the forum to implement the pedagogical knowledge they are acquiring through their own

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<sup>82</sup> By being proactive about offering their services to teachers, programs, and schools in the community, instructors can forge a partnership with these entities, who will in turn be much more likely to welcome students who might like to observe.

learning and observations will provide students with the invaluable opportunity to hone their pedagogical skills with actual students of their own. As was mentioned in several of the comments in the survey from Chapter Two, there is no substitute for hands-on experience; the sooner students can start gaining this, the more thoroughly prepared they will be for their own careers.

Once the goals for the pedagogical development of the students have been articulated, instructors might do well to consider how they will identify and assist in the development of each student's career goals. A list of goals for the arena of career development could potentially include:

- The identification of a student's potential career interests; this conversation could take place between the professor and student within the first week of study, and then be revisited as appropriate throughout the student's degree studies and trajectory of professional development activities
- The immediate creation of a résumé and/or curriculum vitae (if the student does not already have one), and the implementation of an plan for its development
- The creation of a cover letter that can be developed further as a student hones their specific career and job application interests
- The development of marketing, audience, and community engagement skills

These items will be discussed at greater length toward the end of this chapter, but it is relevant to note that these goals encompass the instructional strategies of guided thinking and experience.

Not only do students need to be coached in their journey to become self-aware as musicians, but they also need to be shepherded in the arena of professional development. The process of professional development starts while a student is in school. The creation of a résumé, for example, can assist students in staying accountable regarding their pursuit of learning

experiences that will broaden their horizons and help them be prepared for their careers.

Finally, a list of goals for the personal development of every student would be valuable to have in hand. A list of said goals could include:

- An overarching focus on character development; a person's level of integrity will inform all other areas of their life, and how they approach their work and interactions with others
- A respect and enthusiasm for collaborating with others<sup>83</sup>
- The development of a teamwork mentality and peer mentorship skills<sup>84</sup>

The second and third items on this list will be addressed in greater detail later in this chapter. The first item, however, is something that instructors might find helpful to discuss with the entire studio in the very first seminar/master class of the year as they are preparing to embark on their educational pursuits and interactions with others for the year. Doing so would hopefully put students in a frame of mind to be aware of their attitudes and choices, so that they will be able to experience success and satisfaction both in the work that they do, and in their interactions with others.

While by no means comprehensive, these lists provide an example for what a holistic vision for student's personal and professional growth might entail. To engage students in the pedagogical process of having a vision for growth, it would be a very practical exercise to ask them to create one as well. Initially, as an outgrowth of the collaborative planning conversations that an instructor and student typically have at the start of their time together, the instructor could have a student develop a vision for their own personal growth through their degree track studies. This would be a useful place to start; the student could also be asked by the end of their first year

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<sup>83</sup> See page 146 under heading "Collaboration."

<sup>84</sup> See page 145 under heading "Peer Mentorship."

of study to create a vision for growth that includes the acquisition of pedagogical abilities, in addition to a document that details a vision for the growth of their own future students. What is vital to remember is that the most effective music educators are teaching to an entire individual, and not just to that individual's musical development.

### **Technique, Repertoire, and Musicianship**

Once the role and responsibilities of the instructor have been outlined, in addition to the philosophical and instructional goals and strategies for the studio, the next logical step is to develop an instructional plan for the three main components necessary for the acquisition of solid performance skills: technique, repertoire, and musicianship. The development of facile technique, a grasp of standard literature, and the ability to effectively express emotions while interacting with an audience form the basis for the “nuts and bolts” work that an instructor and student will be striving to achieve during their time together. These skills will be modeled by the instructor throughout the course of study, but will be even further reinforced if the instructor consistently takes the time to discuss with the student “the why and the how” behind the instructor's pedagogical choices and recommendations. When instructors are intentional about involving students in the pedagogy of their own learning processes, students will not just be learning how to become excellent musicians, but they will also be mindfully developing the pedagogical skills of: diagnosing where a student is in their development; deciding what to prescribe and why; recognizing and being able to replicate an effective learning segment; and knowing how to sequence learning in an individualized manner. This approach facilitates students' growth both as performers and as teachers, and it is the instructional lens through which a holistic approach to teaching technique, repertoire, and musicianship is being recommended.

Therefore, all of the following thoughts regarding the instruction of technique, repertoire, and musicianship should be contextualized within the framework of this approach.

### **Technique**

A successful performance cannot occur without good technique being in place, and the pursuit of stellar technique should always occur within the context of servicing the music and the composer's intentions. Many technical issues can be addressed within the repertoire itself, but exercises such as scales, etudes, caprices, and excerpts also play an invaluable supportive role in a student's technical development. The goal for any technical exercise is to aid the student in their pursuit of being able to fully express themselves with ease through the music they are creating on their instrument, and it is important for students to understand this. This knowledge implicates their physical dexterity on the instrument in addition to facilitating sight-reading skills. When a student joins an instructor's studio, one of the immediate responsibilities of the instructor is to ascertain the technical strengths and deficiencies a student has in the context of their overall playing level, so that these can be intentionally and consistently addressed to the point that they have been remedied and the newly achieved technical skill has become a habit.

Educators might find it useful to have a skill map that lists various scales, exercises, etudes and excerpts according to the skill that they are focusing on, and use this tool to know what to prescribe when a student plays in their first lesson. Once the instructor has identified what technical skills need to be developed further in a student's playing, as mentioned previously, it is pedagogically important to talk with the student about what the instructor is observing, what assignments they will be making to help the student overcome these deficiencies, and the reasons behind these choices. An enormous learning opportunity is missed

when educators do not take the time to discuss with their students the “why” behind their instructional choices. When a private studio instructor does in fact take the time to do this, these discussions pave the way for a student’s own pedagogical thought processes to develop in relationship to their own learning, not to mention in relationship to the growth process that they will observe taking place in their studio colleagues and, eventually, their own students. As students begin to explore the theory of pedagogy behind the technical instruction of music, it is also important for them to develop their own ability to evaluate the technical skills in someone else and to know what they might prescribe to resolve the issues they observe. This ability can be initiated through the process of self-evaluation during lessons and practice, and can be cultivated further in the weekly studio seminar/masterclass, where students have the opportunity to interact with their peers in an environment of evaluation and constructive criticism. Additionally, students might find it advantageous to understand the foundational arc of technical skill development and how each particular skill matures from the start of a person’s musical studies through the most advanced levels of playing. A useful exercise for reinforcing this knowledge might be to have a student pick one skill that they are working on and trace its development through their own educational experience. Questions to consider for this exercise might include:

How and when was this skill initially introduced?

What exercises and/or repertoire were used to teach this skill?

How did this skill continue to be developed over the years and through the repertoire that was played?

This exercise might initially seem to be very time-consuming for a student, but it should demonstrate to them the long-ranging scope of the development of a skill, and also the importance of a teacher knowing right from the start what steps to take, and what order to take

them in to prepare students for playing with technique and artistry, no matter what stage they might be at in their musical development.

In the end, it is crucial that students realize the importance of developing skills into habits. It is not enough to practice something until a student finally gets it right. In front of that correct repetition are perhaps scores of incorrect repetitions and the brain will need just as many, if not more, correct repetitions for the new skill to be truly internalized. When students realize this and begin to adapt their practice habits accordingly, cementing newly-developed skills will occur more quickly, and both the student and the teacher will experience deeper levels of satisfaction with the progress that the student is making both in their technical development and also in their pedagogical understanding.

## **Repertoire**

Choice of repertoire is perhaps one of, if not the most exciting aspect of private study for a student, and it is a process that the instructor should guide within the context of making selections that are relevant to the student's technical, musical, and emotional needs in the broader context of their interests. A graded repertoire list can be a useful tool when assessing options, and it could include concerti, sonatas, unaccompanied works, solo pieces with piano/orchestra, 20th century and contemporary works, chamber music, orchestral excerpts, and etudes/caprices. Figure 2 shows such a list that Dorothy DeLay created for her studio at the Juilliard School of Music, although this particular list only includes violin concerti and etudes/caprices.

Figure 3. Dorothy Delay's Concerto and Etude Sequence

## DOROTHY DELAY'S CONCERTO SEQUENCE

## GROUP 1

Bach a minor, E major  
 Haydn G Major, C Major  
 Kabalevsky  
 Mozart #2, #3, #4, #5  
 Conus  
 Bruch g minor  
 Mendelssohn  
 Khatchaturian  
 Barber  
 Wieniawski d minor and F# minor  
 Lalo  
 Dvorak  
 Vieuxtemps #2, #4, #5  
 Saint-Saens #1, #3  
 Paganini #1

## Group 2

Tchaikovsky  
 Sibelius Brahms  
 Prokofiev d minor, g minor  
 Bartok  
 Glazunov  
 Beethoven

## Group 3

Walton  
 Elgar  
 Stravinsky  
 Shostakowitsch  
 other 20th Century composers

## SEQUENCE OF ETUDES

Wohlfahrt op. 45 Book 1  
 Schradiek School of Violin Technique  
 Whistler Introducing the Positions  
 Flesch Scales  
 Wohlfahrt op.45 Book 2  
 Trott Melodious Double Stops  
 Whistler Preparing for Kreutzer Book 1  
 Whistler Preparing for Kreutzer Book 2  
 Sevcik Double Stop op.9  
 Kreutzer Etudes  
 Sitt  
 Dont op.37  
 Dancla  
 Fiorillo Etudes  
 Sevcik op.8 Shifting  
 Rode Etudes  
 Ševčík Book 1 Part 4 Double Stops  
 Dont op. 35  
 Gavinies  
 Paganini Caprices  
 Dounis, School of Violin technique  
 Wieniawski, L'Ecole moderne Op.10  
 Ernst

With such a list in hand (preferably expanded to include all of the aforementioned



categories), a private studio instructor will be well equipped to talk with a student about planning repertoire for the year. If students already have a repertoire list, they can bring that to their lesson; and if they do not have one constructed, this is the perfect opportunity for the instructor to discuss the importance of maintaining an ongoing document that will be consistently updated for the rest of the student's professional career. Not only does this provide a visual for what the student has already accomplished, but it is also a useful tool for ascertaining where the current gaps in repertoire are and what the next logical steps might be for building the student's familiarity with the standard canon of repertoire for their instrument.

It is recommended that repertoire choices be made after the instructor has heard the student play, and instructors may find it valuable to include the student in this decision-making process. Even before sharing with the student what the instructor feels would be appropriate, it might be wise to ask the student if they have a "wish list" of pieces that they are really hoping to be able to play. Even if the instructor is not able to agree to what the student currently wants to work on, hearing what the student has to say will enlighten the instructor as to where the student's interests lie and can be a clue as to where the student might be in their emotional development. If it is possible to accommodate some of the student's repertoire choices, that is ideal as this primes the pump for high levels of motivation. Alternatively, if the student's repertoire choices are far above and beyond what is appropriate for them at that point in time, it is still possible to suggest more appropriate repertoire selections that are within the same genre or style as the repertoire that the student is eventually hoping to play, and to explain to the student that these pieces are stepping stones that will lead them to being prepared to tackle the repertoire that is on their wish list. The salient goal, pedagogically, is to ensure that students

understand why the instructor is making the recommended choices, and to make certain that the students are set up to experience success through repertoire that is interesting to them, meets their needs, and is enough of a challenge to push them to expand their technical and musical skill development on all fronts.

### **Musicianship**

The teaching of musicianship can often seem to be the most difficult task of all, especially if a student does not seem to inherently feel or know how to communicate the “soul” of the music effectively through their instrument. As a precursor to spending copious amounts of time developing musicianship, it would be helpful for the instructor to first address any technical issues—that might encompass setup and posture, tone, intonation, shifting, vibrato, double stops, articulations, and/or style—such that students will have the tools they need to be able to confidently and effectively express themselves on their instrument. Provided this is being done and the repertoire that has been assigned does not pose insurmountable technical challenges for the student, the instructor can then concurrently explore with the student the varied skills that are necessary to develop a high level of emotive musicianship. These skills encompass 1) listening and self-assessment; 2) study of the work, time period, and composer; 3) the maturation of a student’s expressive capabilities; and 4) the refinement of stage presence, performance behaviors, and audience interaction skills.

### **Listening Skills and Self-Assessment**

One of the best ways to help students to develop an ear that is able to listen critically, is to have them listen to many recordings, and also record themselves. Audio recording is sufficient, but video recording adds a dimension of awareness that is often very valuable for a student’s

self-perception. A practice journal can be a useful tool to use in conjunction with recording and the potential use of both could be structured as follows: students should document their weekly assignments immediately after their lesson and decide how much time they are going to spend on each assignment every day. When in practice, the student can approach each assignment by reviewing the teacher's instructions, recording an initial run-through of the assignment, watching the recording to assess what they did well and what needs improvement, making a plan for how to remedy the issues present in the first run-through, implementing this plan, and then re-recording at the end of the allotted time for said assignment. This last step allows the opportunity to make a note of what to continue working on in the following day's practice session, and will chart improvement over time. When practice is approached in such an organized and thoughtful way, the time and results are maximized, and the student develops the pedagogical skill of learning how to teach themselves.<sup>85</sup>

### **Study of the Work, Time Period, and Composer**

A truly artistic conceptualization and realization of a work is rarely possible without having spent time to study the score, the composer, and any historical and/or cultural influences that may play a role in the style and execution of the work. This is a component of the learning process that is far too often over-looked in a private studio environment, generally because there is so much to accomplish in such a short amount of time. This pedagogical oversight does students no service because there simply is no substitute for a working knowledge of the mechanics of the score in addition to the different musical periods and how the historical and cultural trends of these time periods inform the concept of style. When approaching a work for

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<sup>85</sup> This topic will be addressed in more detail in the following section regarding assessment.

the very first time in lessons, educators might find the following suggestions useful for guiding the thought processes of students regarding the works they are playing:

- Have students research the composer, the circumstances surrounding the composition of the work, historical and/or cultural influences that may have played a role, and any information available regarding the premiere performance and initial audience reception of the work. To demonstrate that students have done this research, they can be asked to get in the habit of submitting a one to two page paper that summarizes what they have learned within the first week of beginning a new work.
- Have students to listen to at least five reputable recordings of the piece that they are working on, and to document tempi and any expressive or stylistic choices that they find of interest. In addition to listening to the piece that they are working on, it is recommended that students listen to as many other works by the same composer as they are able to find, so as to develop a larger artistic grasp of a composer's compositional style, character, palette of expressivity, and incorporative programmatic choices.
- Students should also be expected to use what they are learning in their music theory classes to analyze the pieces that they are playing. Specifically, they need to have the ability to accurately identify key signatures, key areas, and various harmonies, for the purpose of constructing a musical interpretation that is harmonically informed and led. They should also be able to identify the structure of a work, in addition to musical lines and phrasing within the larger form. Not every single harmony needs to be marked, but key areas, modulations, and cadential points are important. When listening to the piece, the instructor might also suggest that the student circle any harmonies that they find particularly moving, and then go back and figure out what those are when they do their score study; these moments are important as they are typically indicative of an expressive opportunity that the composer built into the score.

An instructor may need to guide a student's initial foray into score study and analysis, and it would be helpful to the student for the instructor to take the time to check the specific assignments regarding score study and listening in lessons. While it might seem that an in depth examination of the score during the lesson (when a student could be playing), is perhaps not the most efficient use of time, it is posited that an instructor who implements these pedagogical tools into the beginning stages of a student's learning trajectory and throughout a piece will find the results to be most rewarding. Students who have been taken through this process will have an

informed understanding of the piece they are working on from a historical, artistic, and theoretical standpoint, and they will also have developed the skills necessary for approaching the study of any work that they will encounter in the future.

### **The Maturation of a Student's Expressive Capabilities**

The cultivation and maturation of a student's expressive capabilities can sometimes prove to be one of the most challenging instructional aspects of a student's musical development that an instructor will encounter. This can be the case with a student who is by nature overtly expressive, in that they will need to be taught how to synchronize their emotions with thoughtful decisions that reflect style and taste. Or, a teacher may find themselves faced with a student who has a wealth of expression inside of them, but is either shy or simply does not know how to make the transference of their musical ideas into their actual playing. There are many students who would fall somewhere in between these two extremes, but, whatever the tendency, instructors may find the following suggestions useful in unlocking or refining a student's individual artistic expressive capabilities:

- For the purposes of delving deeper into the realm of musical choices, students can be asked to take the previously mentioned listening assignment one step further. As they listen to various recordings of the piece they are working on, the instructor might prompt them to think about which recording they liked the best, and why. Who is the artist that is playing for each recording and what are the various characters that they exude throughout the performance? If a student wants to work towards achieving a similar "affect" in certain sections, how would they technically go about doing so?
- It might also be useful to have students come up with a storyline for the piece(s) that they are working on. They can share this verbally, through drawings, paintings, photos/images, etc. (i.e. in whatever manner would most effectively communicate their ideas).
- The instructor might require students to attend at least one concert a month of a soloist playing their instrument (if possible), and report back to the instructor on their perception of the artist's stage presence, musicality, interaction with the audience, and their overall impression of the artistic experience.

- Last, but not least: it is important to ask lots of questions. Instead of being in the business of always giving answers, whenever possible, try to answer a student's question with another question that will help them to reflect and arrive at the answer through their own deductive reasoning. This is guided thinking at its best. Pedagogically, this strategy teaches students the value of an inquisitive spirit, and it cultivates their confidence in being able to think creatively and intellectually in the pursuit of understanding and skill development.

When students realize that the studio is a safe environment for exploration, creativity, and self-discovery, they will develop a delight for learning and a reinforced sense of self-esteem. Every student should know beyond the shadow of a doubt that they are valued for who they are as individuals, and that the instructor will do everything in their power to help them find and develop their artistic voice through the technique and repertoire goals that have been set.

### **The Refinement of Stage Presence, Performance Behaviors, and Audience Interaction Skills**

The last objective that will be discussed regarding musicianship is that of instructors helping their students to develop a confident, respectful, and expressive stage presence. The end goal of all the hours spent in a practice room and in lessons is of course a successful and powerful performance. Learning the notes and playing them well, however, is only half the battle. Students will find their performances more deeply rewarding if they know how to command the attention of an audience in a humble, inviting, and captivating manner. A certain level of body awareness is also key as this will assist in the students' expressive ability to use their physiology to support their musicality and technical prowess. It is not advisable to wait until a performance is imminent to discuss these issues with a student. To proactively prepare one's students for being successful performers on stage, instructors might consider addressing this topic in one of the first studio seminar classes of the year, and then use this as a platform for further discussions as students perform throughout the year. Subjects to include in an initial

introduction to this topic could potentially be comprised of the following:

- Posture and specifically how a performer walks on and off stage; this visual immediately sets the tone for an audience's perception of the musician and the performance.
- Bowing: how to do it and what the communicative significance of it is.
- Facial expressions and the role that they play in communicating with an audience, both when a performer walks out on the stage, and also during performance. Tension in the face and jaw as they relate to issues of concentration and staying in a mode of release physiologically would also be helpful to address.
- An enlightened knowledge of how to breathe and move during performance in a manner that organically supports the musical lines, and in no way detracts either visually or aurally from the performance.
- The importance of having an overall awareness of one's body and the ability to sense and identify points of tension or rigidity.

When the instructor is sharing these thoughts with the studio, it might also be useful to incorporate demonstrations and activities that the students can participate in, so that students are learning both through the modeling and direct instruction of the teacher, but also through experience. Additionally, educators may also find it useful to invite guest speakers to present talks and/or workshops on dealing with performance anxiety issues: Alexander Technique, Laban Movement, yoga, etc. The pedagogy of how a performer conducts themselves both on and off stage is vital to a student's understanding of how the personal management of their physique and mental faculties affects their musicianship; thoughtful integration of these topics into the private studies curriculum may therefore prove very useful to students, both in their immediate studies, but also in their long-ranging development as performers who are comfortable on stage.

### **Assessment**

Once the instructor has taken the time to map out a plan for the instructional strategies

that will be used in the teaching of technique, repertoire, and musicianship, the question then remains, how will a student's progress in these areas be assessed? Assessment has often been viewed as a "dirty word" in some educational circles, and yet it must always be done on some level to ensure that students are progressing towards the learning goals that have been set for them to achieve. The question then becomes, how can individuals who may have completely different learning styles, thought processes, and opinions be accurately and fairly assessed? The better question might be, how can teaching be tailored to students so that individual needs are met while respecting various learning styles and fostering an inquisitive spirit, within the context of working towards the learning objectives?

First, there needs to be a vision for what assessment will look like in the studio. There are already formal built-in opportunities for assessment in a collegiate music curriculum via end-of-the-semester juries and degree recitals. However, there are also several opportunities for assessment on a smaller scale via the private lesson and weekly seminars/masterclasses, the latter of which facilitates a student receiving feedback from both peers and the professor. This discussion will focus on assessment as a tool in the private lesson to: 1) help students be more self-aware for the purpose of becoming their own best teacher; and 2) better prepare students mentally, physically, and emotionally for the larger assessments that they will face as a natural and required part of their curriculum.

To assist students in developing the pedagogical skill of self-assessment, instructors might find it useful to be in the habit of asking students questions in their lessons that will direct their thought processes toward discovering answers for themselves. This instructional strategy of guided thinking has been mentioned before, and it merits further discussion. It is often much



easier to tell a student what to do when the instructor knows what strategy would fix the problem that their student is facing. There is certainly a time and a place for direct instruction, but when this is the primary method of informational delivery, the student is not being asked to learn to think for themselves. Educators who are mindful of this will work to cultivate the latter within the weekly private lesson, and they will also talk with their students about how to structure weekly practice, keeping in mind that this is where the bulk of a student's effort toward progress is being made. Jonah Sirota<sup>86</sup> is a pedagogue who has spent a significant amount of time reflecting on the importance of a structured practice environment as a didactic tool, and he has created a guide for students entitled "A Practice Self-Audit." This document in its full form is included in the following pages and is being used with the express permission of Mr. Sirota. This guided process of self-evaluation encompasses the opportunity for students to: 1) assess their perceived strengths and weakness and general attitude(s) toward practicing before they start; 2) outline goals they have for practice; 3) record themselves in a structured manner; and 4) analyze and reflect upon what they heard in their practice session recording.

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<sup>86</sup> Violist of the Chiara String Quartet and Assistant Research Professor/Artist-In-Residence at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Figure 4. Jonah Sirota's Practice Self-Audit

**A Practice Self-Audit  
(Version 1.1)  
by Jonah Sirota**

I. PRE-AUDIT INVENTORY

a. *Today's date:*

b. *Assess your own current playing ability in the following areas (relative to one another):*

	(strongest) 5	4	3	2	1 (least strong)
<b>Set-up</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Sustain</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>L.H. Facility</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>L.H./R.H.</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Coordination</b>					
<b>Memory</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Inner Ear</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Relaxation</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Articulation</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Intonation</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Rhythm – Pulse</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Phrasing</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Sound Production</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Vibrato</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Posture</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Efficiency</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Character</b>	5	4	3	2	1

c. *Look at the following statements about practicing and decide whether you agree or disagree (and how much):*

	(strongly agree) 5	4	3	2	1 (strongly disagree)
I practice enough	5	4	3	2	1
I practice well	5	4	3	2	1
My practicing is creative	5	4	3	2	1
I can hear how I want my playing to sound	5	4	3	2	1
I can actually imagine the sensations of playing at my best	5	4	3	2	1
I feel stuck in my progress	5	4	3	2	1
I sound good in the practice room, but not on stage	5	4	3	2	1
I dread practicing	5	4	3	2	1
I know what my playing sounds like	5	4	3	2	1
I am comfortable trying new	5	4	3	2	1

Figure 4—continued

Practice self-audit, page 2 of 6. Date:

things in the practice room					
I often find myself trying to "unlearn" mistakes	5	4	3	2	1
I look for opportunities to play for others	5	4	3	2	1
I get bored while practicing	5	4	3	2	1
I practice a lot, but I don't feel that I get a corresponding amount of improvement	5	4	3	2	1
I like to improvise on my instrument	5	4	3	2	1
My instrument feels like a foreign object	5	4	3	2	1
I am looking forward to "mastering" technique, so that then I can start to be musical	5	4	3	2	1
I have a warm-up routine that I must do, or else I can't play well	5	4	3	2	1
I practice scales consistently	5	4	3	2	1
I try to practice things that are harder than what I need, to make the other things easier	5	4	3	2	1
I sing melodies and/or speak rhythms in the practice room	5	4	3	2	1
I use the piano as a practice tool	5	4	3	2	1
I have a system in place for thinking about pitch and intonation	5	4	3	2	1
I dedicate time to my bow arm on a regular basis	5	4	3	2	1
I feel that playing my instrument is causing my body to feel "out of alignment"	5	4	3	2	1
In my experience, slow practice makes fast playing easier	5	4	3	2	1

*d. Briefly complete the following statements (write the first thing you think of):*

One obvious strength in my playing is:

I believe that my most noticeable problem in performance is:

## Figure 4—continued

Practice self-audit, page 3 of 6. Date:

One thing I hope to develop in my practicing in the immediate future is:

- e. List below what a typical day of practice looks like (list activity then time – for example: practicing scales-10 minutes):*

## II. RECORDING

*To prepare for the self-audit, find a quiet practice space and set aside about an hour for the recording. You will need a recording device, one that can realistically reproduce the sound of your instrument. Before beginning the following sections, get settled in the room, position and test the recording device, and then start the recording. You want the machine going while you get your instrument ready, tune, etc. This is so that you have a chance to get comfortable and almost "forget" that the machine is there. Then, once you are ready, start going through the practice assignments below:*

- a. Warm-up – 5 minutes: Do whatever warm-up routine you are accustomed to.*
- b. Scales – 10 minutes: Practice scales as you usually do.*
- c. Etude – 10 minutes: Practice an etude that you have been working on.*
- d. Bach – 10 minutes: Do practice work on a single movement of unaccompanied Bach.*
- e. Sonata or Concerto – 10 minutes: Work on a single movement of either a sonata or concerto currently in your repertoire.*
- f. Orchestral or chamber music excerpt – 5 minutes: Work on an excerpt from a piece of orchestral or chamber music. This can be an audition excerpt, or it can be an excerpt from a piece you are currently studying in ensemble.*
- g. Short break (pause the machine if you would like) – 5 minutes*
- h. Performance – 10 minutes: Pick either one large movement of music, or several shorter ones (including etudes or excerpts, if desired), and*

## Figure 4—continued

Practice self-audit, page 4 of 6. Date:

*perform them through. Do not practice them during this performance.  
Treat this as a real performance for an audience.*

### III. SELF-AUDIT

*Wait at least 24 hours (and no more than 48) after recording yourself, and then listen back to your recording. Find a quiet space with good playback equipment. Do not rewind or fast-forward through the practice session, but listen to it straight through. Use the spaces below to take notes on what you hear and notice, both in the playing and in the practicing*

Warm-up:

Scales:

Etude:

Bach:

Sonata/Concerto:

## Figure 4—continued

Practice self-audit, page 5 of 6. Date:

Excerpt:

Performance:

IV. ANALYSIS/OBSERVATIONS:

- a. *What surprised you the most about listening to your own practice?:*
- b. *What were you the most proud of in your playing and work?:*
- c. *Going back to the first section of the pre-audit inventory, which items on that list (1b) would you change after hearing yourself practice?:*
- d. *List three things you could start doing immediately to make your practice more effective:*
- e. *Did the performance at the conclusion of your practice reflect the quality of practice work you are doing?*

## Figure 4—continued

Practice self-audit, page 6 of 6. Date:

*f. Analyze your performance (final section) for artistry, technique, ease, and focus:*

*g. Anything more you would like to remember from this experience:*

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This self-audit provides instruction for how one can direct their own learning through all the stages of a learning segment—the preparatory stage, the active learning/implementation stage, and the final stage of evaluation and reflection. Not only are students guided through the process of developing the invaluable skills of thoughtfulness, watching, listening, evaluation, and reflection, but they are also provided with a concrete visual aid that demonstrates the intentionality and care that students should be putting into the bookends of their learning experiences: the preparation and the reflection. The importance of the latter cannot be underestimated as instructors approach the topic of practice with their students. Most students have the innate tendency to direct most of their energies toward the actual component of playing in practice and this is understandable. However, the effectiveness of any given practice session is

questionable if the student does not approach this time with thoughtfulness and a plan, and the learning segment is not complete without the capstone of reflection. It is also of note that the four didactic approaches to a holistic approach that were mentioned in the introduction to this thesis are encapsulated in this one exercise. Students will be basing their practice on the suggestions that were modeled by their teacher in the lesson; their thought processes will be guided as they meticulously work through each phase of this self-audit; they will be able to put into practice the pedagogical tools that were overtly shared by the instructor in the lesson; and they will do this all within the context of the experience of practicing. Thus, this resource that Mr. Sirota has developed is an invaluable pedagogical tool for any musician to have in their practice toolkit.

To better prepare students mentally, physically, and emotionally for the larger assessments that they will face as a natural and required part of their curriculum (i.e. juries, recital hearings, and recitals), instructors would do well to carefully craft preparatory opportunities that can be woven into the fabric of the private studies curriculum for each term of study. At the most basic level, students need to be given a syllabus at the beginning of each academic year that details what skills are going to be assessed throughout the year, what the instructor's goals are regarding the time frame for the development of these skills, and when the actual assessments will take place. An example of a possible basic list of skills to be assessed could include:

- Three octave scales and arpeggios in all the major and minor keys learned and memorized
- An artistic preparation of an etude or caprice<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> The word "artistic" was used purposefully as many students are often not required to prepare an etude or caprice to the level that would facilitate them achieving the technical purpose of the study within a time frame that would also allow for time to polish the technical study and present it musically.



- Memorization of a movement of solo Bach and a concerto

Once the list has been fleshed out by the instructor, they will then want to decide what the time frame will be for assessments throughout the year. For example, it would be a viable goal for an instructor to expect that by the end of one year of study, students will have learned and memorized all of their major and minor key three octave scales and arpeggios. This goal can be outlined in the syllabus, and then the instructor will map out smaller assessment landmarks that will occur at specified points to keep a student on track for achieving this goal. In the case of the three octave scales and arpeggios in all major and minor keys, the instructor might indicate that at the end of the year each student will be expected to play all of these scales in their last lesson (culminating assessment), and to prepare for this goal students will be expected to:

- Play one scale at the beginning of each of their lessons on a schedule that will rotate them through all of the keys by the end of the term
- Play all of the major and minor scales and arpeggios through four sharps and flats mid-term in a studio technique jury<sup>88</sup>
- Play all of the major and minor scales and arpeggios through seven sharps and flats at the end of the term in a studio technique jury<sup>89</sup>
- Be prepared to play a scale and arpeggio in whatever key the music faculty request in an end of the semester performance jury

When an instructor has taken the time to thoughtfully craft a syllabus that outlines all of the expectations and assessment points that will occur throughout a student's year of study with that instructor, students will be poised to be much better prepared for these assessments on all fronts. Mentally, they will have an awareness of what the expectations are and how these will fit

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<sup>88</sup> The first term these can be with music; the second term they should be memorized.

<sup>89</sup> The first term these can be with music; the second term they should be memorized.

into the flow of their studies; physically, they will be able to map out a plan for their time management that will allow them to pace themselves; and emotionally, they will have the time and space to talk with the instructor about any uncertainties or fears that they are feeling such that strategies can be put into place in a timely way to constructively deal with any such concerns. Pedagogically, the students will also have a model for what sequenced learning might look like as it relates to assessment, and this will be an invaluable resource to them as they are thinking about the sequence of instruction and learning goals that they are developing for their own (future) students.

Assessment as a pedagogical tool is very beneficial because it teaches students the importance of evaluation and its place within the scope of the learning trajectory. Evaluative moments are not something to fear unless one has simply not prepared. Provided instructors have been clear about their expectations and the timeline for assessment (and have been consistent about preparing students in their private lessons), evaluations can be something to embrace as they inherently celebrate the work that a student has accomplished, and also provide opportunities for further goal-setting.

### **Studio Seminar/Master Class: Learning Lab**

Next to the private lesson, the studio seminar class has the potential to be the most important forum that an instructor can use for the development of both their students' performance and pedagogical skills. With this in mind, it is important that the instructor take the time to outline what their goals are for this instructional time and to establish a structure and routine for the class that will lay the foundation for enthusiastic and collegial interaction.

Potential goals for this class time could be:

- To provide students with a safe and professional environment for performing their repertoire and receiving peer feedback.
- To provide students with the opportunity to learn how to cultivate their thoughtful, pedagogical voice through giving constructive feedback (i.e. addressing the positives, and how one sees those being achieved, in addition to areas for improvement and how those could potentially be addressed).

This instructional forum is ripe with growth opportunities because all four of the didactic strategies that constitute a holistic approach to the instruction of performance and pedagogy are present as tools that can be used by *both* the instructor and the students. The instructor will naturally model both teaching and playing to his/her students throughout the class, and students can also be asked to model best practices in teaching and performing when they are giving comments to their colleagues.

After a student has given a performance and the instructor is facilitating dialogue between the performer and the rest of the studio, there is also the opportunity to guide the thought processes of all present so that they are able to actively engage in analysis, diagnosing, and the deliverance of constructive feedback. Students also have the opportunity to practice leading another person through guided thinking by the way they construct their feedback to the colleague who has just performed. There is nothing wrong with simply stating observations, but if the studio instructor is able to encourage students to develop the ability to ask leading questions, they will be that much farther ahead when they are working on the art of self-assessment with their own students.

The overt instruction of pedagogy is also a strategy that is quite appropriate for a studio seminar/master class. This can be done in a variety of ways, but one example would be for the professor to talk about strategies for structuring constructive feedback, and then to follow up by

sharing thoughts with students regarding the effectiveness of their approach when they are giving advice to their colleagues. Students who have taken pedagogy and/or teacher training courses can also be involved in the overt instruction of pedagogy through presenting specific teaching strategies that they have learned and are currently putting into practice with their own students. A discussion of said strategies and their effectiveness can be a catalyst for creating dialogue surrounding various teaching tools, methods, training opportunities, etc., and can be a motivator for students who are not currently pursuing training or teaching experiences, to begin looking into these opportunities. Lastly, the studio seminar/master class provides an invaluable forum for students to gain experience, both as performers, and as teachers.

Once the goals and instructional strategies for the seminar/master class have been clearly delineated, it would be useful for the instructor to take the time to consider how they will structure the class time to fit within the context of these goals. Questions to consider when formatting the structure of the studio seminar/masterclass could include:

- How many students should be scheduled per class?
- Will they be scheduled ahead of time or will the instructor do it on a weekly basis according to who is prepared?
- Should a sign-up sheet be posted or should instructor be the sole determiner of who gets to play?
- How much time should be allowed for feedback?
- How will the instructor set the stage for an environment where students feel safe to play and receive feedback in such a public way (i.e. both from the professor and their peers)?
- How should the delivery of the feedback itself be structured? Will students just give their comments verbally? Will they be asked to write their thoughts down on paper (either with their name printed or anonymously)? Will the instructor hand those papers directly to the student or will the instructor read them first and then share them with the student, etc.

No matter what format the instructor chooses, once the expectations for the class have been established and shared with the studio, perhaps the most critical learning objective to emphasize with students is the importance of staying engaged through positive and proactive participation during this class. Students will reap the benefits of increased comfort with performing and teaching according to the level of effort that they put in, and so it would be helpful for instructors to encourage the students to always be mindful of this fact.

### **Other Leadership Opportunities In and Beyond the Studio**

Aside from the direct instructional opportunities that present themselves through the standard curriculum for applied private studies, there are also additional opportunities for developing leadership skills in the studio that are either available through the department structure or could be cultivated by the instructor. These include teaching assistants, peer mentorship, and collaboration. Each of these will be examined in turn.

#### **The Teaching Assistant**

If an instructor is presented with the opportunity to have a teaching assistant, it is important to determine what their role will be in the studio, and then to set up an initial meeting to discuss the instructor's expectations so that the teaching assistant will know how to conduct themselves accordingly and successfully. Potential expectations for a teaching assistant could include:

- Being responsible for teaching the non-majors
- Giving extra lessons to the students in the instructor's studio, on an as-needed or recommended basis, or according to a weekly or bi-weekly schedule; some teachers designate their teaching assistants to be the ones who will hear all the scales and technical exercises so that the professor can focus on the repertoire in the lesson--this is not necessarily being presented as the ideal format, but it is a thought if one finds that they

feel they are running out of time to cover everything in a lesson

- Teaching studio and running the weekly seminar/master class when the professor is either out of town or sick
- Coordinating studio events

Regardless of what the responsibilities of a teaching assistant are determined to be, it would be wise for instructors to be mindful of the fact that this position is the prime opportunity for a student to develop their pedagogical abilities to very high levels. Many students who hold a teaching assistantship often desire to have a college teaching position someday, and so anything the instructor can do to provide these students with teaching opportunities that will expose them to a variety of the responsibilities and learning experiences that go along with such a position (i.e. crafting a syllabus, teaching private lessons, running a seminar class, organizing studio events, etc.), would be most helpful for these students as they pursue their long-term career goals.

### **Peer Mentorship**

The opportunity for peer mentorship in a studio is a wonderful possibility, but one that is unfortunately often overlooked. Students have a built-in opportunity for pedagogical mentorship through the feedback that they give each other in the weekly studio seminar/masterclass. However, other opportunities for mentorship are present as well, and perhaps one of the most meaningful ones would be the mentoring of the youngest and least experienced students (i.e. freshman) by the older, senior members of the studio. To cultivate this type of mentorship, an instructor might consider setting up a buddy system whereby all the freshman (and perhaps even the sophomore students), are paired with an older member of the studio who can check in with them on a weekly basis to see: how their practice is coming, whether or not they have any

questions that could potentially be answered by the older student, or if there is anything else that they might need help with.

In a very basic way, these younger students often just need someone to be there for them, and this is a need that could very easily be met through structured mentorship in a private studio setting. The instructor might also consider encouraging all of the students to seek out other members of the studio to play for before they have to perform in a seminar or guest master class. This would be beneficial for the students who would like more feedback as they are preparing, and it would also be beneficial for the peer that they would ask for help from as this person would be provided with experience to practice and hone their pedagogical skills (specifically modeling through their own playing, and guided thinking as they give constructive feedback). Regardless of what forms of peer mentorship an instructor decides to pursue and encourage within their own studio environment, it would simply be useful to remember that peer mentorship is a very easy way to provide students not only with additional pedagogical opportunities, but also relationships that will be with them for life.

### **Collaboration**

Collaboration is a topic that will be addressed at greater length within the chapter on chamber music, but one would be remiss not to make mention of this in the arena of the private studio. The mindset that educators adopt toward collaborating with other musicians and artists is one that students will quickly pick up on and absorb themselves, which is why it is important for instructors to be very intentional in this regard. Ideally, all musicians would be excited about the potential for collaborating with another artist provided there is time allotted to successfully do so. Music is inherently a collaborative art, and as artist-teachers are reflecting on their own

career opportunities for partnership, it would be useful for them to be thinking about how to model an enthusiasm for shared art that will set the tone for the studio.

### **Cultivating a Studio**

Most of an instructor's vision for their studio should have been established when the teaching philosophy document was developed, but this is a topic that is worthy of further exploration. All of the items that have been addressed thus far in this chapter are crucial components that go into the process of crafting a studio that meets the needs of students both professionally and personally. There are, however, many things an instructor can do outside of the applied studies curriculum requirements to support their students' growth into competent professionals and compassionate artist-citizens.

Before an instructor can work toward the goal of helping students develop their own artistic voice both as a performer and a pedagogue, it is essential to have a grasp of who they are as individuals, in addition to what their personal goals and aspirations are both personally and professionally. There is no substitute for the time that a teacher and a student take to get to know each other over the course of study. An informal questionnaire<sup>90</sup> given to new students entering the studio might prove to be extremely helpful as an instructor is initially getting to know a student. Ideally, this form would be brought to the first lesson filled out and then would serve as a jumping off point for further discussion regarding the student's hopes, dreams, and both personal and professional life goals. Once the instructor has a more complete picture of who their students are as individuals, then they can be more mindful of providing and/or supporting experiences and opportunities for unique outlets of expression, whether through performance or

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<sup>90</sup> See Figure Five.



professional development activities, that would be in line with a student's specific long-term goals for themselves.

Figure 5. Student Information Form

**Welcome to the Studio!**

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Course of Study and Year: \_\_\_\_\_

# of Years Studying Instrument: \_\_\_\_\_

Previous Private Teachers: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Previous Chamber Music Experience: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Previous Orchestral Experience: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Hobbies: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Career Goals: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Anything else you would like to share: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

No matter where a particular student's interests may lie, it is important that the instructor be proactive about exposing their students to a broad spectrum of opportunities to observe and interact with a variety of artists and educators, and to develop their own leadership and professional development skills. Ways that this could be accomplished could include:

- Inviting guests artists to present concerts, workshops, and/or teacher training for the studio
- Planning studio field trips to concerts or other artistic/educational events that might not be able to come to the school
- Encouraging membership in professional associations such as the American String Teachers Association, the Music Teachers National Association, the Suzuki Association of the Americas, etc.
- Setting up a student chapter at the school for any of the aforementioned professional associations
- Facilitating attendance at professional conferences through scholarship and/or grant funding
- Arranging for students to observe a variety of teaching/artistic<sup>91</sup> settings

When students are able to attend concerts, workshops, teacher training, and/or other artistic/educational events, the benefit is that they are being exposed to models other than the private studio instructor. Positions for students in a school chapter also provide them with the opportunity to develop their leadership, organizational, marketing, fundraising, and service skill sets. All of these items play a role in forming an educational experience that is the complete package for a student. As such, it would be advisable to cultivate these opportunities within the studio whenever possible. Additionally, whether or not the students take advantage of opportunities as they are presented with them, the instructor would do well to be modeling an

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<sup>91</sup> I.e. a rehearsal for a professional orchestra.

investment in artistic and professional development themselves through regularly attending concerts, holding memberships in professional associations, attending and presenting scholarly work at conferences, publishing articles, and taking the time out of their schedules to observe their colleagues, as appropriate. Learning is a lifelong pursuit, and one that has to be continually and intentionally cultivated once students have completed their degree studies and are in the work force.

In addition to exposing students to a variety of situations and professionals within the field that will broaden their worldview, it would also be advantageous for students to be mentored in the development of their professional materials and writing skills. Rather than waiting until a student is looking to apply for jobs to assist them in developing a résumé, curriculum vitae, sample cover letter, repertoire list, teaching philosophy, and studio policy document—drafts of these items would ideally be created within the first year of study (if the student does not already have them), and subsequently revised at the end of each term of study. Students can also be encouraged to develop their writing skills through the creation of a studio blog or article submissions for journals. In the case of the former, students could be asked to contribute one blog post per year on any topic that might be of interest to them. Possible suggested topics could include:

- Concert reviews<sup>92</sup>
- Special events
- Studio projects
- Teacher training or professional development activities

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<sup>92</sup> Guidelines for appropriate remarks will need to be shared with students so that they are cognizant of the reflection that their writing has on themselves, their instructor, and the institution.

- Student chapter activities
- Composers
- Works
- Self/growth reflections, etc.

Writing is a skill that students will need to use in many forms throughout both their personal and professional endeavors, and so the more opportunities they are given to cultivate and refine this skill set while they are in school, the better equipped they will be to effectively communicate with the world at large once they graduate.

Finally, to help students develop a vision for the importance of character development, collegiality, and ways in which they can use their professional skills for service, educators might find it useful to talk with students about the over-arching value of these items at the beginning of the year and how they should put everything else in perspective. Being a person of integrity, valuing and making time for relationships with other people, and finding ways to use one's skill sets for service are more important than any other professional endeavors that one might embark upon. With this in mind, educators would do well to be looking for ways to help students cultivate each of these during their time in the studio.

Two specific ways educators can nurture the value of relationships with their students are to emphasize support for one's colleagues and the importance of a teamwork mentality. The latter can be reinforced with students by stating that students are expected to attend all of their studio colleagues' recitals unless they have a serious conflict,<sup>93</sup> in which case they need to write their colleague and the instructor ahead of time (if at all possible) to send their good wishes and

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<sup>93</sup> I.e. family emergency, final exam, etc.

let them know why they will not be in attendance. This might seem like a small gesture, but it is one that sets the tone for a student's entire approach to their interactions with their peers, mentors, the guest artists that visit the university, and their future interactions with other professionals.

Actual service opportunities that give back to the community or a specific target audience are easy enough to incorporate into the schedule of studio events, and some ideas for these types of studio service projects could include the following:

- A studio holiday outreach concert at a local nursing home, assisted living facility, or hospital
- Volunteering the students'/studio's services to a local public school music teacher; per what the music teacher's stated needs might be, the studio could potentially perform a mini-concert or demonstration, give a master class, give individual lessons to the students (perhaps in prep for All-State auditions), etc.
- Planning a studio concert that will fundraise<sup>94</sup> for a specific cause (and allowing students the opportunity to work together to come up with the idea for what type of cause they would like to fundraise for, thus giving them ownership)

This is by no means a complete list, but can serve as a starting point for brainstorming within the studio about ways in which the students would like to take initiative to use their talents to serve others. The instructor can also be an inspiration to students in this arena by actively finding ways to use their professional platform as a means for service. This modeling might not initially seem very significant, but it is an influence that will stay with students for the rest of their lives.

As has been evidenced by the topics addressed in this chapter, the private studio is an environment that provides a unique mixture of one-on-one and group learning opportunities that many students in other departments/fields of study likely never get to experience. There are

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<sup>94</sup> The instructor will need to make sure that any fundraising efforts follow the specific institutional guidelines.

myriad ways in which students can take the development of their performance and pedagogical skills to a deeper level, and the instructor's primary job is simply to be a guide and facilitator. As this process unfolds, the instructor will have the privilege of watching students blossom into competent and compassionate individuals, and the students themselves will be able to experience the joy and satisfaction that comes from learning how to be one's own best teacher.

## CHAPTER 5 CHAMBER MUSIC

*What role does chamber music play in helping students develop both as musicians and as pedagogues?*

### **Fundamental Principles of Chamber Music**

#### **The Art of Collaboration**

The art of collaboration is a gift that is not unique to music, but it is one that musicians indulge in, perhaps more often and, to a deeper degree, than many other professionals in their various fields are able to experience. The reason for this is because the enactment of music inherently involves collaboration, whether it is one individual working with another to create a shared artistic outcome, or whether it is a single musician simply inviting an audience to be a part of the performance experience. Students in a collegiate music degree program will have ample opportunity to take part in a variety of shared experiences in a mixture of settings. The genre of chamber music is uniquely poised to offer a learning environment that will assist students in deepening the maturation of very specific skill sets. These skill sets include:

- The development of both the solo and supportive artistic voices of a student within a small group setting
- The expansion of interpersonal and problem-solving capacities
- A chance for immersion in detailed score study
- The pursuit of an understanding of how all the various instruments work together to create a whole
- The opportunity to work in a setting that facilitates the evolution of a group sound that requires the refinement of pitch, rhythm, tone, color, watching, listening, breathing, and cueing skills
- A heightened familiarity with and exposure to the string chamber music repertoire



- A special opportunity to develop pedagogical skills

Regarding the latter, the didactic skills that can be cultivated specifically through the study of chamber music include:

- The ability to constructively self-assess both as an individual and as a group
- The development of coaching, rehearsal, and basic time management strategies and skills.

All of these competencies would be an invaluable asset to any music student's repertoire of abilities, both as a performer and as a teacher. Additionally, the occasion to collaborate with another musician and to create a shared vision that will culminate in a work of art is an absolute gift, and one that chamber music provides a unique vehicle for achieving. With this in mind, it is important for educators to be looking for ways to continually incorporate chamber music into students' degree curricula, while nurturing the ongoing, individual growth of each student through their participation in and involvement with chamber music. Before continuing a discussion developing these skill sets, however, it would be useful to contextualize the inclusion of chamber music as part of a performance degree program track within the National Association for Schools of Music guidelines.

### **The NASM Requirements/Recommendations for Chamber Music**

The requirements for the inclusion of chamber music in the curricula for a particular degree track vary widely from school to school. The National Association for Schools of Music does not have overt requirements for the inclusion of chamber music in the undergraduate and graduate performance curricula, but does include language about "ensemble participation."

Under Section IX entitled, "SPECIFIC PROFESSIONAL BACCALAUREATE DEGREES IN

MUSIC,” and then subsequently Section A, which is entitled “Bachelor of Music in Performance,” is a discussion of the curricular structure of the Bachelor of Music in Performance degree program. Sub-section “a.” is entitled “All Programs” and states the following:

**(1) Standard.** Curricular structure, content, and time requirements shall enable students to develop the range of knowledge, skills, and competencies expected of those holding a professional baccalaureate degree in performance as indicated below and in Section VIII.

**(2) Guidelines.** Curricula to accomplish this purpose that meet the standards just indicated normally adhere to the following structural guidelines: study in the major area of performance, including ensemble participation, pedagogy courses, independent study, and recitals, should comprise 25-35% of the total program; supportive courses in music, 25-35%; general studies, 25-35%. Studies in the major area and supportive courses in music normally total at least 65% of the curriculum. See Section III.C. regarding forms of instruction, requirements, and electives.<sup>95</sup>

While the mention of ensemble participation for this degree track is non-specific in the second section regarding the guidelines, it is nonetheless listed as a requirement. Thus, determining the ratio between large and small ensemble participation is left to the discretion of each individual institution. Also under Section A, “Bachelor of Music in Performance,” is a discussion of “Essential Competencies, Experiences, and Opportunities (in addition to those stated for all degree programs)”<sup>96</sup> that states the following in subsection “a.”:

Comprehensive capabilities in the major performing medium including the ability to work independently to prepare performance at the highest possible level; knowledge of applicable solo and ensemble literature; and orientation to and experience with the fundamentals of pedagogy.<sup>97</sup>

Subsection “c.” of this same section states that another requirement is “solo and ensemble performance in a variety of formal and informal settings.” The NASM guidelines for the

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<sup>95</sup> National Association of Schools of Music, *Handbook - National Association of Schools of Music* (Reston: National Association of Schools of Music, 1974), 101.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, 102.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*

curricular structure for a Bachelor of Music program in performance expect that ensemble participation, familiarity with relevant ensemble repertoire, and ensemble performance experience in a range of settings are components for this undergraduate degree track.

For a masters degree in performance, there is no specific NASM requirement or recommendation regarding the inclusion of ensemble participation in the curriculum. The standard that possibly encompasses chamber music (XIV.B.6.a) is quite general and states the following: “Students demonstrate advanced competencies in performance. Studies in this area comprise as much as two-thirds or at least one-third of the total curriculum.”<sup>98</sup> It is apparent from this statement that there is definitely room for the inclusion of chamber music in the curriculum for this degree track, but the level of requirement (if any) has the potential to be quite fluid. For a doctoral degree in instrumental performance, there is also no specific NASM requirement for ensemble participation. The descriptor for the Doctorate in Instrumental Performance (XVI.D.g.1) is as follows:

**(1) Instrumental or Vocal Performance.** The doctoral degree program in performance emphasizes presentation in a specific performing medium. Performance competence is at the highest professional level with historical and theoretical knowledge supportive of the development of individualized interpretations. Competencies also include a broad knowledge of repertory and literature. Additional studies in pedagogy are recommended.”<sup>99</sup>

As is evidenced from this statement, the highest levels of performing artistry are expected, but again, specific requirements for ensemble participation are not present. However, it is interesting to note that pedagogical studies are recommended concurrent with the student’s performance degree requirements.

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid., 130.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., 137.

In the NASM Handbook for degrees that are performance specific, it is apparent that there is room for the inclusion of chamber music, and in the case of the Bachelor of Music degree in performance, ensemble participation is even listed as a requirement. An institution's level of commitment to students' artistic development through chamber music, however, is one that varies from school to school and does not necessarily carry with it a general standard for implementation; there is often further variation depending on the type of institution (i.e. university, conservatory, liberal arts college, etc.). As an example, the University of Iowa requires four semesters of chamber music for students who are pursuing a Bachelor of Music degree. However, for the Master of Arts and the Doctor of Musical Arts degrees, two semesters of string chamber music are required. The Master of Fine Arts degree carries the most time intensive requirement, with the expectation of four semesters of string chamber music study to be completed. Grinnell College, which is a liberal arts college with a reputable Bachelor of Arts degree about an hour away from the University of Iowa, offers chamber music as a course, but it does not count toward the thirty-six core credits that students need to have completed their degree track. The closest independent conservatory to the University of Iowa is the Cleveland Institute of Music and this school has a rich history of chamber music. Bachelor of Music students at CIM are required to take fourteen credits of ensemble over the course of their degree, and the cello, viola, and violin students are specifically required to take four semesters of chamber music. CIM's Master of Music degree track students are required to take six credits of an ensemble<sup>100</sup> (students have to take the CIM Symphony Orchestra for one credit each semester that they are enrolled full-time, which might theoretically take up four of the afore-mentioned

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<sup>100</sup> Harp students actually have to take eight credits.

credits), and Doctor of Musical Arts students are required to take four credits of ensemble, two of which are to be String/Piano Chamber Music. In addition to the chamber music requirements that are integrated into the performance degree programs, the Cleveland Institute of Music also offers training and degree programs that are specific to chamber music. These include:

Sonata Classes

String & Piano Chamber Music

The Intensive Quartet Seminar

The Apprentice Quartet Program

The Art of Engagement: Connecting to Audiences of All Ages

These three examples paint a small picture of what a cross-section of music schools across the United States are doing to incorporate chamber music into their curricula, and as is apparent, the incorporation of chamber music into various levels of degree curricula ranges widely. This is completely acceptable due to the fact that NASM does not have specific requirements regarding chamber music as a required part of the curriculum, but it would be useful for schools to require at least one year of chamber music (regardless of degree track), so that students at least have the opportunity to be introduced to chamber music and the skill sets it teaches.

### **Benefits of an Artistic Commitment to Interpersonal Growth**

Because chamber music is inherently a shared art, one of the greatest outcomes of fully immersing oneself in the creation of chamber music is the level of interpersonal growth that occurs. On the most fundamental level, the benefits of an artistic commitment to interpersonal growth through chamber music include the opportunity to collaborate with other artists to create

something beautiful while being given the opportunity to hone one's aptitudes for effective communication and problem-solving. The ability to work and communicate efficaciously with others is a desirable attribute by most people's standards, regardless of the professional field. Yet, the intentional development of this skill set is not always a distinguishable part of a student's degree curriculum. This is not the case with chamber music, however, as it is virtually impossible to conduct rehearsals and assemble a meaningful performance without cooperatively working through the myriad choices that will present themselves, in addition to differences of opinion, communication styles, personality, and time management. Faced with participating in this type of a learning environment, a student might not initially be feeling eager to acquiesce to such a commitment if they are not already enamored with the repertoire. Whether or not this is the case, it would be helpful for educators to have, on hand and in mind, the specific skills that they would like to see their students develop through chamber music. Such a list might include the following character traits and skills:

- Integrity
- A Positive Attitude
- A Teamwork Mentality
- Open-Mindedness
- Listening Skills
- Proactive Conflict Management and Resolution Skills
- Creative Thought
- Discipline
- Leadership

- Self-Confidence
- Time Management Skills

Once created, this list can serve as a talking point for recruiting students to chamber music, and it should also serve as a reminder that these skills are not chamber music specific, but are rather life skills that will be applicable to any situation within work and personal spheres. The more time students spend working within the environment of a chamber ensemble, the more time is spent bolstering this set of life skills.

Pedagogically, it is also worth making note that the development of self-confidence through chamber music often encompasses a willingness to receive peer feedback, and also the ability to give constructive feedback to peers. Chamber music can initially pose a challenge for those students who are not very verbal, but this is also a wonderful opportunity for them to develop the communication skills that they need to be able to express themselves clearly and effectively as they work with others. This competency for being able to talk constructively and specifically, to articulate a point of view, explain the reasoning behind this point of view, and to work together to achieve a shared outcome, helps students not only to become better musicians, but also uniquely poises them to be excellent teachers as well.

### **Proactive Conflict Management and Resolution**

Over the course of an ensemble's time together, and throughout the course of each member's efforts to communicate and constructively problem solve, conflict will eventually appear. However, the chamber coach would not be advised to wait for conflict to arise within an ensemble to address the possibility of this occurring, ways to handle the variables in group dynamics, and share strategies for how to deal with issues as they surface. Rather, in the first

coaching (and especially if this is the first time a group has come together to play chamber music), the chamber coach might consider presenting guidelines for how to proactively implement strategies for dealing with differences of opinion and personality so that conflict can be addressed positively, and amenable solutions can be generated as quickly as possible. When the chamber coach takes the time to do this with a group, they are implementing the didactic approach of modeling desirable behavior, communication skills, and the ability to creatively problem-solve. Additionally, the presentation of these guidelines and strategies is a prime example of the overt instruction of pedagogical skills: teaching students how to teach themselves and solve their own problems. This is something that can be discussed openly with the students so that they have a deeper level of pedagogical awareness when they approach rehearsals.

The first and potentially most helpful guideline<sup>101</sup> to share with the group is the importance of always keeping an open mind. A chamber ensemble cannot thrive if one or more individuals are not receptive to being imaginative and creatively exploring the interpretive musical landscape. A good general rule of thumb is for the group to always be willing to try someone's suggestion (no matter what they think of it), before deciding whether or not to incorporate it, either in whole or in part. This way the entire group, including the person who put forth their idea, can hear what it actually sounds like. Then it will either become apparent that the suggestion needs some modification or will not work; or, the group might be pleasantly surprised and it can be adopted.

The next guideline that will be critical to an ensemble's success is the willingness to

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<sup>101</sup> The guidelines that are listed for "Proactive Conflict Management & Resolution," and "Principles for Structuring Effective Rehearsals & Coachings," are derived from prior experience, studies with Elizabeth Oakes (lecturer at the University of Iowa and director of the University of Iowa String Quartet Residency Program), and also in part from interactions with the guest quartets that have been in residence at the University of Iowa.



actually listen to what others in the group are saying. Heightened listening abilities will hopefully develop naturally as a result of the chamber music experience, but they are just as important when a group is not playing as they are when a group is playing. Specifically, the skill of reflective listening during a conversation is one that, when used properly, can diffuse tensions and speed the communicative process along to a positive solution. An added benefit is that implementing this tool is fairly easy. To do this, when someone is speaking during a conversation, the other individual simply has to say to them, “so what I hear you saying is...” and then that person sits quietly and listens while the person either affirms this statement and/or adds to it. This process should be repeated as many times as is necessary for the individual that was speaking to feel as though they have been able to share everything that was on their mind, and also to feel as though they have truly been heard. Then, once they have finished sharing their thoughts, a foundation of mutual respect will hopefully have been established, and there will likely be a renewed receptivity on the part of the individual who was speaking to hear what the other person has to say. Pedagogically, this idea of being an effective and empathetic teacher requires that a person have the skills to be able to listen and hear what is being said and/or what is being played first, and then be able to offer constructive ideas, thoughts, and/or solutions. Both ends of the spectrum have to be cultivated, and once again, chamber music is uniquely poised to offer a fertile learning environment for refining these skills.

In general, there should be a precedent for respectful, diplomatic communication within a chamber ensemble. The old adage, “Is it true? Is it kind? Is it necessary?” is one that every individual would do well to keep in mind before choosing to say something, and especially when preparing to offer feedback. Assessments should be directed toward the performance product,

and not toward any particular individual.

Students involved in chamber music ensembles may also find it useful to be aware of the basic statistic regarding the ratio between introverts versus extroverts in the general population. According to a study<sup>102</sup> done by the Myers-Briggs organization in 1998, 49.3% of the total population is extroverted, and 50.7% of the population is introverted. Within the male population for this study, 45.9% were shown to be extroverted, while the other 54.1% were identified as being introverted. These statistics varied slightly for the female population as 52.5% were shown to be extroverted, while the other 47.5% were identified as being introverted. These statistics are relevant to the study of chamber music because they demonstrate that there is approximately a fifty percent chance that students will be paired up with people in a chamber music group who have personalities and communication styles that are inherently the antithesis of what their own might be. Solo playing facilitates the tendency that artists often have to become absorbed in their own introverted or extroverted manner of viewing and interacting with the world, as the case may be. Chamber music, however, forces people to learn to work with others, and to expand their way of viewing the world to include artistic possibilities that are presented and co-created with individuals who may be of a completely opposite temperament. Those groups who learn to proactively deal with differences in personality and communication in a team setting will realize this, and will work to find common ground that allows for everyone's voices to be heard, valued, and respected.

Finally, it can be very beneficial and healthy for ensembles to take the opportunity to spend time together outside of rehearsals and coachings. This gives the group a chance to get to

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<sup>102</sup> Isabel Briggs Myers, *MBTI Manual: A Guide to the Development and Use of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator* (Palo Alto, Calif: Consulting Psychologists Press, 1998).

know each other on a more personal level and it is also a good way to have some fun and de-stress. However, it is also important to be aware that not every group dynamic will easily facilitate this social aspect of chamber music. Some individuals prefer to keep their personal lives separate from their professional endeavors, and so it is essential to honor this desire when present within a group dynamic, and to find other ways to achieve a balance for the remaining members between work and play.

### **Principles for Structuring Effective Coachings and Rehearsals**

Once strategies and tools have been shared for dealing with the challenges that allow interpersonal growth within an ensemble, instructors might find it useful to review the syllabus and highlight the learning objectives and goals for the chamber music course, in addition to any other expectations and/or grading policies that will be especially pertinent to the students. Depending on the age and/or level of the students in the ensemble, it might also be helpful to review proper etiquette for how the students should approach coachings. These things might seem very basic, but when instructors take the time to discuss the pedagogical reasoning behind their course requirements (in addition to behavioral expectations), they are modeling a mindful approach to the study of chamber music that sets a high standard of professionalism. Specific guidelines to share with the students could potentially include the following:

- Students must be on time. This means arriving five to ten minutes early so that each individual can have their instrument unpacked, set up, and ready to go with music and pencil in hand by the coaching time.
- Each student must have a score, along with their own part for personal reference, and bring an additional score for the coach as well.
- Measures in all parts should be numbered ahead of time so as to save valuable time both in the coachings and also in rehearsals.
- When the coach says something, it is the responsibility of the student to write it in their

music. Students should also make sure that they clearly understand the assignments and/or expectations for the following coaching so that they are able to rehearse efficiently and effectively.

- Unless absolutely necessary, students are not to schedule commitments immediately before or after a coaching such that they would need to arrive late to a coaching and/or leave early.
- Each student is expected to respond to email and/or phone communications from the chamber coach in a timely manner.
- Out of respect for the instructor, students are not to call them by their first name unless they introduce themselves as such and/or the student is invited to do so.
- Students must always make an effort to be engaged! The coach is the expert and they are there to share their wisdom with the ensemble. However, music is a very “personal” art, and chamber music an even more intimate one. With this in mind, students will be expected to come to coachings with their own thoughts and ideas ready to share as appropriate.

It may seem obvious, but it is important to remember that all of the expectations that an instructor has for a student should be modeled by the instructors themselves. Similar to the dynamic between a child and their parents, students will typically mirror the behavior that they observe in the authority figures in their lives. Thus, every instructor should be mindful of setting an excellent example; students will learn to emulate the behavior of the chamber coach and, for better or for worse, this will carry over into their approach to both coachings and rehearsals.

Once the syllabus and guidelines for behavior have been communicated, then the coach can discuss what the routine will be for coachings throughout the term of study. Having a set routine establishes a precedent for the organized structure of a learning environment, and thus serves as a pedagogical model for the students. Such a routine might look like the following:

#### Beginning of the Coaching

- Tune.

- Take care of any “to-do” items such as scheduling, performance planning, etc.
- Ensemble plays run-through of section(s)/movement(s) assigned -- coach lightly takes notes on score.

### Instructional Part of the Coaching

- Coach has choice of strategies for working with group:
  - Coach can make general comments, verbally go through all the notes in the score and give them to the group, and then go back and work through each of the comments one by one.
  - Coach can make general comments, and then tackle each note in the score in a detailed way by sharing it with the group and immediately having them implement a strategy for improvement.
- The type of pacing that a coach chooses should reflect where the chamber ensemble is in the trajectory of their learning arc. As a general rule of thumb, very detailed work should be done in the initial stages of learning a work, and the closer an ensemble gets to a performance, the more important it is for the coach to take a “big picture” approach that encompasses comments that give an overview, “quick fix” solutions, and detailed work only as necessary to address trouble spots.
- The pacing of a coaching also depends on the group dynamic and will require nuancing from the coach. When working “one on one” with a student, it is often very easy to discover the “happy working zone” of the student. However, in a chamber ensemble that involves different personalities and learning styles, it is important that the coach be able to “take the temperature” of the room and shift approaches when necessary so as to keep everyone engaged.

### End of the Coaching

- If a section has been worked on intensively in detail, it is helpful to end the coaching with a run-through of the section/movement such that the ensemble can hear and experience the difference that the coach’s suggestions have made.
- Assignments, rehearsal suggestions, etc. should be summarized at the end of the coaching.

A structured coaching routine will streamline effective time management during the coaching, establish guidelines that facilitate the student’s ability to know what to expect week to

week, and serve as a pedagogical model for how to structure rehearsals.

The coach might be an expert at directing an ensemble's development during a coaching, but what about when the group ventures to rehearse on their own? The rehearsal is the ensemble's lab for developing their ability to pedagogically self-direct their learning. With this in mind, and to ensure that the rehearsal will be a successful one, the coach would do well to be proactive about offering suggestions for effective rehearsal strategies so that the chamber group will have tools in their toolbox for structuring a constructive and enjoyable rehearsal. This overt instruction of the pedagogy for structuring effective rehearsals will be even more important to a group that is comprised of "first timers," but the didactic behavioral guidelines and tools that the instructor shares can serve as a valuable set of guidelines for any group, no matter the level of chamber experience. Several of these guidelines will overlap with the expectations that were given regarding weekly coachings (reinforcement never hurts), and they could potentially encompass the following:

- Be on time. This means arriving 5-10 minutes early so that each individual can have their instrument unpacked, set up, and ready to go with music and pencil by the start of the rehearsal.
- Each individual must have a score along with their own part, and measures should be numbered.
- It is every individual's responsibility to know their part and practice it in between every rehearsal. Strategies for helping students to become better acquainted with their parts should include:
  - Listening to and/or watching several different recordings of the piece. It is also recommended that students become acquainted with other works by the same composer so as to develop a working knowledge of the composer's compositional style, harmonic language, expressive palette, etc.
  - **Score study:**
    - Students should first mark the presence of melodic material in their part, both when it belongs to them and also when it is happening in another part (in which

- case it is also important to mark who has it).
- Tutti moments are especially important to indicate, although it is also recommended that students identify places where they are sharing the same rhythm as another part at any given time.
  - Equally as important as marking places where members of the ensemble are sharing tutti moments or concurrently playing the same rhythm, is the practice of marking the conversational aspects in the music. This could be a rhythmic/melodic motive that is being passed back and forth, or it could simply be the presence of a countermelody.
  - Group silences should be circled or highlighted in the part as they tend to be few and far between.
  - Marking in rhythmic cues can be very helpful either so that a person can have extra assistance in knowing how/when to make an entrance, or so that they can see what else is going on concurrent with their part.
  - Major key areas, modulations, and cadential points should be identified both structurally and harmonically. It can also be fun/informative to circle the harmonies that a student finds particularly moving when listening to the piece with a score, and then to go back and identify the exact harmonic language of these spots.
  - Students should have a grasp of the dynamic landscape of the work/movement. Not everyone will be playing at the same dynamic level at the same time, and so it is important for issues of balance that each individual be aware of their role at any given time (i.e. primary or supportive), which is often indicated by the dynamic structure. It is also useful to look for the loudest and the softest dynamics marked in the score as these typically denote climactic and/or expressive moments.
  - Tessitura can also be an interesting item to make note of as it is interesting to see whether the composer puts instruments in approximately the same range/register or opposing ranges/registers, when this occurs throughout a movement, and in conjunction with what other notable characteristics, etc.
  - Attending live performances whenever possible so as to be able to experience the music viscerally from an audience perspective.
- The ensemble should have a plan for the rehearsal, based on the recommendations of the coach in addition to taking into account the timeline for scheduled performances and/or outreach programs. A sample rehearsal structure should encompass the following:
    - Tuning procedure
    - A play-through of a movement or large section that the group is currently working on
    - An overall balance between talking and playing with an emphasis on the latter
    - The opportunity for each individual within the group to share their thoughts and have an assigned portion of time to address a spot that they would like to spend

time working on

- A portion of time allotted for discussion regarding:
  - The composer in addition to historical and cultural influences relevant to the time period, style, and composition of the work
  - The characters and story-line of the piece
  - Other art forms that influence each individual's perception of the work
  - Decisions to be made regarding bowings, articulations, phrasing, dynamics, and overall interpretation
  
- Each individual and the group as a whole is expected to do their utmost to create and maintain a positive environment. Specifically, some things to be mindful of include the following:
  - It is important to be respectful of one's peers and colleagues. In chamber music, every individual is on equal footing with the others, and as such -- every person's voice and opinions should be valued.
  - How one talks to people matters. If there is a disagreement, it is the responsibility of the individuals involved to still do their utmost to stay calm and diffuse the situation respectfully.
  - Every person should always say something positive before giving a suggestion.
  - Each member of the group is expected to come with ideas to share, and to keep an open mind.
  - Before rejecting another person's idea, the ensemble is expected to try it. And not just once, but at least two or three times, with full energy. This way, if the group does not end up adopting the suggestion, at least everyone was able to try something new, and the individual whose idea it was will feel as though their artistic ideas are something that the group is willing to invest in, (and vice versa).
  - Sometimes it is worthwhile to simply agree to disagree.<sup>103</sup> Specific options for how to handle a situation like this could include:
    - Shelving the dispute until the next rehearsal.
    - Taking a vote.
    - Agreeing to keep trying the spot both ways, either in performance and/or rehearsal.
  - Members of the ensemble should always remain engaged, even when they are not playing.
  
- The ensemble is encouraged to spend time together outside of rehearsals and coachings for the purpose of getting to know each other, if members of the group are comfortable with doing so.
  
- Perhaps more important than any of the aforementioned guidelines is to enjoy the

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<sup>103</sup> This particular bullet point is derived from a handout that was designed by the Maia String Quartet and used with permission.



music-making process and each other.

The ability to productively study a score both as an individual and as an ensemble is worthy of further mention. One of the unique benefits of studying within a chamber ensemble is that a student will be presented with the opportunity to develop *both* their solo and their supportive artistic voices. However, the hierarchy of ensemble's voicing at any given point will not shine through clearly if students have not taken the time to study the score, both individually and as a group. This is not necessarily a skill that students will bring with them to the table, and so instructors would be advised to devote a portion of one of the initial coachings to discuss with students the importance of score study, and to walk the group through the various steps (mentioned above) for completing an analysis. The basic principles for score study, in addition to the interpretive element that is always present, also provide the perfect forum for the chamber coach to guide the thought processes of the ensemble in terms of how they might approach expressive choices and, ultimately, their own interpretation of the work they are studying. The discovery and realization of an ensemble's interpretation of a work is often one aspect of playing chamber music, if not the most exciting one. As students begin to take more and more ownership over their artistic choices, the chamber coach will have the pleasure of simply becoming a facilitator as the ensemble blossoms into a cohesive, self-directed, artistic unit.

### **A Word About Repertoire Choice and the Formation of Groups**

When putting together chamber music groups that involve students from other studios (and/or if the instructor is not familiar with the student and their playing level), it is important to remember to speak with the individual studio professors first before assigning repertoire. The chamber music coach will want to make sure that the experience is a positive one for everyone

involved, and the selection of repertoire that would overwhelm a student and/or detract from their ability to focus on what they are doing in their private lessons for their studio instructors, would run counter to this goal. To ensure this never happens, chamber coaches would be wise to communicate in a timely and transparent manner with the private studio instructors, and to defer to their recommendations. Chamber coaches might also find it useful to see if it is possible to sit in on the (orchestra) auditions at the beginning of the year. Doing so will give the coach a first-hand opportunity to meet and listen to students in person, and the possibility of a student's participation in chamber music could be discussed with the pertinent studio faculty if they are present.

If it is not possible for the coach to be present at auditions, it might then be advisable to contact interested students directly to set up a live audition. This will provide the coach with the forum for meeting the student, hearing them play, and being able to assess their maturity and communication skills. Because college students will theoretically be very self-directed regarding their practicing and rehearsing, knowing their maturity level and ability to communicate in a timely manner is actually very important. When putting students together in groups, a general rule of thumb is to try to strike an equilibrium between age and ability level. If a student who plays at a high level is placed into a group with students that are not at the same level, it can be a frustrating and de-motivating scenario. Alternatively, if a student is placed within a group that consists of peers who are at a much higher playing level, there is the very real possibility that this student will become overwhelmed and not want to participate. Both of these situations should be avoided if at all possible, as the goal is to motivate students to fall in love with both the canon of chamber repertoire, and also the collegial experience of making music with peers in a small

ensemble setting.

When planning repertoire for student ensembles of various levels, chamber coaches may also find it useful to have a list of resources that can be referenced. The following list is by no means close to being comprehensive, but it does include resources for repertoire selection that may prove helpful:

**“The Literature of Chamber Music” by Arthur Cohn**

This four volume series contains perhaps the most comprehensive encyclopedic listing of chamber music to date. The entries encompass chamber music for stringed instruments, woodwinds, brass, and percussion, and are organized by composer in alphabetical order. Within the listings by composer, the chamber music is sorted by required personnel from least to most (i.e. duo to octet), and each piece entry includes a description of typically one to three paragraphs that gives an overview of the work and its salient characteristics. The first volume encompasses composers from Evaristo Felice dall’ Abaco to Arne Eggen; the second volume, composers from Fritz Eggermann to Krasimir Kyurkchiisky; the third volume, composers from Marcel Labey to John Richard Ronsheim; and the last volume encompasses composers from Johannes Röntgen to Ellen Taaffe Zwilich.

**“Selected String Quartet Movements” by Sally O’Reilly**

“...another great resource which includes selections from great quartet literature and excellent direction in the preface under ‘rehearsal tips.’ Biographies of the composers are also included in these volumes (published by Neil A. Kjos Music Company).”<sup>104</sup>

**“String Quartet Literature: An Annotated and Graded List of Selected String Quartets” by Carol Dallinger, Nancy Jackson, Robin Kearton, and Kathryn Reiswig (string consultants), edited by Nancy Jackson**

This resource includes a grading system with information regarding positions, key signatures, bowings, and clef reading, along with a numbering system that represents overall level of difficulty and brief commentary.

**“FindChamberMusic.com”**

This website represents a joint project brought about by The American Composers Forum and ACMP - The Chamber Music Network. The goal of this website is to provide easy access to chamber music that has been written by contemporary composers, in addition to standard repertoire from the traditional canon of chamber music. Users may search for a piece of music by exact or partial title, composer, instrumentation, specific keywords,

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<sup>104</sup> “Cultivating Musicianship,” Texas Music Educators Association, accessed June 30, 2014, [http://www.tmea.org/assets/pdf/southwestern\\_musician/CultivatingMusicianshipNov-2011.pdf](http://www.tmea.org/assets/pdf/southwestern_musician/CultivatingMusicianshipNov-2011.pdf).

level of difficulty, duration, and/or via audio and score examples.

**“High School String Chamber Music List” prepared by the Colden String Quartet, shared by Kevin Miller, Director of Orchestral Activities (Eastern Michigan University)**

This resource contains a list of string trios, string quartets, and string chamber music with bass that is organized by beginner, intermediate, and advanced level labeling. Short commentary accompanies each entry and the title of this resource should not mislead the reader to believe that the chamber music pieces included should only be relegated to performance by high school students. Many if not most are considered to be part of the standard canon of literature, and the list of chamber music that includes string bass is an especially useful component of this resource.

Unless students enter into their chamber music studies with a pre-formed ensemble and/or a strong opinion about what they would like to play, a useful rule of thumb is to pick repertoire from the standard canon for the ensemble formation, such that students are deliberately being exposed to the masterworks of this genre. Alternatively, students can also be guided to be thinking about what their ensemble “wish list” might be, and to present the instructor with reasons as to why they think a particular piece would be good for their development. Involving students in the pedagogy of repertoire choice will allow them to have a role in scaffolding their own learning, thereby reinforcing the didactic skill of being able to assess the ensemble’s strengths and weaknesses for the purpose of developing a group plan for growth.

**The Chamber Seminar as a Pedagogical Tool**

In addition to the coaching and rehearsal time that are built in to a chamber music course of study, a weekly seminar/chamber master class can also serve as a valuable forum for the development of both performance and pedagogical skills. Not all chamber music course offerings include the instructional time and space for a weekly seminar/master class, but it would be advisable that this be included in the curriculum if at all possible. The benefits of including such a class include the opportunity that students will have to observe coachings outside of their own

weekly coaching experience, in addition to experiencing a learning environment that has the potential to foster interactive pedagogical skills. If the chamber instructor is intentional about expecting all students to participate in the class through evaluating peer performances and giving constructive feedback, this forum can become an invaluable tool for furthering the development of students' didactic skills through their study of chamber music.

Similar to the private studio seminar/master class, students can be asked to model best practices in teaching when they are giving comments to their colleagues.<sup>105</sup> After an ensemble has given a performance and the instructor is facilitating dialogue between the performers and the rest of the chamber music students, there is the opportunity to guide the thought processes of all present so that they are able to actively engage in analysis, diagnosis, and delivering constructive feedback. The chamber seminar/master class also facilitates a platform for the chamber instructor to impart a knowledge of skills and techniques that are chamber specific, via the overt instruction of the pedagogy behind the development of these skill sets. A list of said skills that are especially pertinent to chamber music could encompass: the refinement of pitch, rhythm, tone, color, watching, listening, breathing, and cueing skills. The pursuit of all of these skill sets would of course be within the context of working toward a blend that will facilitate the development of a unified group sound. The development of said sound is the ever-present overarching challenge that a chamber group faces, and so it would be very useful to have additional reinforcement of the skills needed through feedback from both the chamber instructor and peers. In sum, the chamber seminar/master class, much like the private studio seminar/master class, provides an invaluable forum for students to gain experience both as performers

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<sup>105</sup> Principles for how to structure and format a weekly seminar/chamber master class can also be modeled after those presented in the chapter on the private studio.

and as teachers, and students will become increasingly more comfortable with performing and teaching according to the level that they are engaged in the class.

### **Working with a Collaborative Pianist**

When an audience is prompted to think about string chamber music, most often the ensemble setup of a string quartet, trio, quintet, etc. will come to mind. However, there is a chamber setup that virtually every musician will have to deal with at multiple points (if not on a continual basis) throughout their musical journey, and that is the chamber experience of collaborating with a pianist. This experience as part of a student's musical development might fall under the purview of either the private studio instructor and/or the chamber coach. However, it is being mentioned in the chapter on chamber music because it is firmly believed that students will experience deeper levels of satisfaction through this collaboration if they are mentored to view their work with a pianist as an inherently reciprocal endeavor.

### **The Difference Between Accompanying and Collaborating**

The idea that when a pianist collaborates with another instrumentalist, this automatically makes them an “accompanist,” is unfortunately perpetuated quite widely among instrumental music students. Studio instructors and chamber coaches alike can work to dispel this notion through modeling a healthy respect for pianists, and also through guiding students to thoughtfully consider what the difference is between an accompanist and a collaborator. A useful starting point for this discussion might be to ask the question: is there really a difference? Technically, the term “accompanying” most often refers to a pianist who plays an orchestral reduction for a work that features a soloist, and the term “collaborating” frequently implies a cooperative approach to a piece of music that features each instrument equally. However, it could

be posited that no matter what repertoire students are playing, they would do well to approach it with a collaborative mindset because both instruments (regardless of whether one is more soloistic and one is more accompanimental), are crucial to the success of the artistic outcome.

### **Preparing Students for Working With a Collaborative Pianist**

The process for preparing students to work with a collaborative pianist is very similar to what they would do to prepare themselves for participation in any other chamber ensemble. Of primary importance is a knowledge of the score. If students have not been exposed to score study previously, either through their studies in the private studio or through participation in another chamber ensemble, the instructor will want to take the time to explain the importance of score study to the student and guide their initial thought processes as they are approaching a cursory analysis of the score. Essential elements to identify would include:

- Who has the melody and where
- Places where tutti moments occur either rhythmically, melodically, or in combination
- Conversational passages that exhibit the passing back and forth of a melodic line and/or rhythmic motive
- Presence of a countermelody

It is also recommended that instructors discuss with their students, prior to the actual rehearsal, issues of balance that they will have to face when working with a pianist. This discussion will depend on the quality and characteristics of each of the individual instruments; however, because the piano is larger than any of the instruments in the traditional string family, it presents a unique set of challenges regarding balance that one does not find with other instrumental combinations. It is therefore wise to approach issues of balance with humility and flexibility. Pianists will not enjoy being continually told that they need to play less, and so

private studio instructors and chamber coaches alike would do well to educate themselves regarding the idiosyncrasies and expressive capabilities of the piano, so that they can share this knowledge with their students. This working knowledge will lay the foundation for an informed and thoughtful approach to balance that will facilitate a sense of equality and mutual respect as the student and pianist work together throughout this learning experience to shape their individual artistic voices into a cohesive whole.

Last, but certainly not least, it is important for chamber and studio instructors to talk with their students about how to handle the financial aspect of working with a collaborative pianist. Whether or not this is the case within the current learning context,<sup>106</sup> this is a skill that students need to have. Many a collegial relationship has been disrupted over the handling of finances and this is not a lesson that instructors will want to leave to their students to learn the hard way. Before entering a formal collaborative endeavor with a pianist, be they a peer or a contracted professional, both parties need to be clear on what the hourly rate is for rehearsals, coachings, seminar/master class performances, and/or degree recitals; what the timeline is for payment; and what the expectations will be if the pianist is being paid. The latter is slightly more important if the pianist is not a peer taking chamber music as a class with the instrumental student, as this does not create an environment of equality where both parties are expecting to be evaluated and receiving a grade. It is certainly ideal if both musicians can enter the collaborative experience on equal footing, but even if this is not the case, this should not pose a problem so long as the mutual expectations are clear and responsibilities are being fulfilled according to the timeline that was decided upon by the student, the pianist, and the private studio instructor. By addressing

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<sup>106</sup> Some educational institutions facilitate pianists that collaborate with other students as part of their Graduate Assistant or Teaching Assistant duties, thus bypassing the need for a student to pay the pianist they are working with.



this issue proactively with students, the instructor is modeling professionalism and a mindfulness for one's colleagues that students will hopefully learn to emulate.

### **How to Create An Environment That Fosters Equality**

There are several things that chamber coaches and applied music educators can do to ensure that when a pianist walks into the studio, they feel as if they are being treated with respect and as an equal, artistic voice. This list could potentially include:

- Making sure that the instructor does not have all sorts of items covering the piano lid, (if it is a grand piano), such that the lid cannot be opened. It is important to respect the pianist by allowing them to play their instrument to full capacity. Additionally, issues of balance cannot be effectively addressed if the lid is never able to be raised.
- Having a score ready to look at so that the instructor can address both their student and the pianist.
- Being in communication with the pianist's teacher (if they are a student), so that both instructors can have the same level of awareness regarding the dynamic between both parties involved. This also allows the instructors to be on the same page in terms of approach in the event that an issue might arise.

At first glance these items might seem like non-essentials, but if the instructor is mindful of them and consciously models a courteous approach to working with pianists, the end result will be a healthy environment characterized by mutual respect.

## **The Chamber Ensemble**

### **The String Quartet as a Model**

The string quartet serves as both a pedagogical model and also the perfect vehicle for a discussion of how the principles of chamber music playing are assimilated into an ensemble formation that has been in existence for over 200 years. The canon of repertoire for string quartet playing includes works by almost every single major composer, thus making it a

wonderful vehicle for introducing students to the “masters.” Students typically begin their foray into the literature of chamber music through Haydn and Mozart string quartets (both of which essentially mark the beginning of serious writing for the string quartet ensemble), and continue their trajectory through the various time periods, a journey that often coincides with level of difficulty. It is therefore possible for students to experience a wide range of musical styles and genres through the string quartet repertoire, which is often a very satisfying benefit of studying this literature.

Pedagogically, it would be useful for chamber music instructors to discuss with students the development of the canon of string quartet literature over the centuries as it relates to level of difficulty within the context of compositional style and cultural influences. Repertoire choice plays a crucial role in laying the groundwork for the facile development of basic ensemble skills, and so it is important for groups to understand why the chamber coach is making certain recommendations for repertoire.

In general, the compositional writing for earlier string quartets does not feature a very dense texture. In fact, as is often the case with Haydn string quartets, the lower three voices are primarily supportive, while the melody rests primarily in the first violin part. This clear stratification of parts makes it easier to address issues of breathing, cueing, watching, listening, balance, harmonic voice leading, rhythmic character, etc.; thus making these early string quartets ideal for introducing the basic ensemble skills that will need to be developed to a group that is new to playing chamber music. As the quartet literature moves into the Romantic period, the melodic line begins to appear in other parts with more frequency, the accompanying textures develop a higher level of intricacy, and the harmonies feature more dissonances. Much of this

repertoire is still very accessible for groups that are not very experienced chamber musicians, but selections should still be guided by the chamber coach so that they are in line with balance between the group's abilities and goals for growth. Lastly, as the repertoire moves toward the twentieth-century, a new level of complexity is introduced that should, as a general rule, only be attempted by groups who have prior chamber music experience, and who ideally have been playing together for at least one semester.<sup>107</sup> When the instructor takes the time to discuss the arc of the string quartet repertoire as it relates to the pedagogical stratification of learning goals for an ensemble, students will gain a working knowledge of the repertoire that will inform their rehearsal strategies and also their ability to effectively structure learning goals for their own chamber music students someday.

An inherent characteristic of the string quartet that makes it an ideal platform for the development of interpersonal skills is the even number of players. Because the string quartet is made up of four musicians (versus an odd number), this minimizes the likelihood that one person would be able to feel as though the structure of the ensemble facilitates an unfair vote when it comes to decision-making and problem-solving. Individuals in chamber ensembles will always be working to refine communication and problem-solving skills for the purpose of achieving a mutually satisfactory artistic outcome. Having an inherent ensemble structure that sets the stage for fair and evenly spread feedback lays the foundation for a healthy working environment, thus making the string quartet a most desirable vehicle for facilitating the maturation of communication and problem-solving skills that will serve students in all facets of their life and

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<sup>107</sup> The one common exception to this rule would be the Ravel *String Quartet in F major*. It presents challenges with intonation and rhythmic complexity, but is generally fairly accessible by groups who are in the intermediate stages of their growth as an ensemble (provided all members have the playing ability that will facilitate successfully learning this piece).

careers.

Due to its size, the string quartet also has the advantage of being quite mobile. Because this instrumentation does not rely on performance spaces to provide any of the instruments (as is the case with chamber music involving piano), there is an inherent flexibility that allows for performance virtually anywhere (so long as the performers have chairs and stands, the latter of which they often also bring with them). This high degree of mobility allows for performance opportunities that other chamber formations might not be able to experience due to their logistical needs, thus providing ensemble members with a wider breadth of explorative options regarding concert programming and audience development.

Additionally, the string quartet provides an unparalleled illustration of how playing in a chamber ensemble made up of instruments from same family presents a certain type of blend not seen with an ensemble formation that includes an instrument from a different family. For example, whenever a piano is involved in any type of chamber ensemble, this immediately means that the concept of pitch is going to be fixed. However, with an ensemble that is made up of all traditional stringed instruments (i.e. violin, viola, cello and/or string bass), the concept of pitch is more fluid due to the myriad options regarding intonation. Ensembles of the latter type (to which the string quartet belongs), will find it necessary to spend copious amounts of time exploring decisions regarding pitch, tone color, articulation, and projection because these factors are of primary importance when working toward a blended, homogenous group sound. The chamber coach would do well to emphasize to the student ensemble the important role that listening plays in being able to accurately self-assess as a group. This guided awareness will lay the foundation for the ensemble to have one of the primary tools that will be most useful in the

group's self-directed pedagogical process of assessment and decision-making within the rehearsal time.

Lastly, the string quartet as a model for chamber ensembles presents a unique opportunity for developing high levels of leadership and supportive playing through the inner voices: the second violin and viola parts. These two instrumental parts have arguably the most difficult job within the string quartet because string quartet writing often necessitates that they be able to move back and forth between supportive and soloistic playing very fluidly, always assessing what is going on around them and linking everything together. The second violinist in particular holds the keys to the success of the string quartet ensemble and is often considered to be the "concertmaster" of the quartet. The second violinist is the leader that supports the first violinist such that they are able to float on top of the group, and yet at the same time, the second violinist is positioned perfectly to always be clued in to what is going on in the other inner voice (viola), and the bass part (cello) of the quartet. Students who have the opportunity to play in a string quartet, and particularly those who play one of the inner voice parts, are poised in a singular way to be able to develop the pedagogical skills of knowing both how to lead and how to follow, and how to switch from one to the other with ease.

As has been evidenced, the string quartet has a rich tradition of repertoire that facilitates structured learning goals and the development of chamber ensemble skills. It serves as a viable model for an ensemble structure that is balanced in numbers (thereby facilitating a foundation of fairness when dealing with interpersonal communications and problem-solving). It is very mobile and presents unique opportunities for the exploration and development of a group sound, and students are also presented with opportunities to develop the skill of learning how to be both

an excellent leader, and an excellent follower. As such, it provides a wonderful pedagogical model for how all the various tenets and principles of chamber music can be integrated into the growth trajectory of a chamber ensemble.

### **Community Engagement**

Community engagement is the art of using one's skill set to reach, educate, and entertain audiences that may or may not have a knowledge of the presenter's content area.

#### **Why is it Important?**

Community engagement is important because it provides students with experiences that teach them how to practically use the performance and pedagogical skills that they are learning in a holistic manner, for the purpose of sharing their art with the broader world community. Additionally, the ability to adapt one's skill sets for the purpose of community engagement is incredibly valuable because it provides students with the potential to explore innovative career development and outreach opportunities.

#### **When to Introduce**

It is ideal for community engagement skills to be introduced as soon as possible in the student's musical experience. The instructor will want to make sure that the learning experiences that they are creating for students coincide with the depth of experience that they have with chamber music, in addition to their maturity level. Over the course of studying community engagement, it would also be helpful for students to be given the opportunity to acquire skills that encompass: planning outreach concerts on a small scale (i.e. at a nursing home or hospital), developing pre-concert talks, creating educational outreach programs for children, and taking all of these skills on a tour that couples them with performance opportunities on a larger scale.

However, it is not recommended that these skills be introduced all at once. Instructors might find it useful to develop a curriculum for community engagement skills that coincides with a student's/ensemble's level of commitment to the study of chamber music, and this could potentially be structured as follows:

**1st Semester of Chamber Music Studies**

Instructor facilitates the opportunity for the ensemble to perform in a low-pressure outreach setting such as a hospital or a nursing home.

**2nd Semester of Chamber Music Studies**

Instructor works with same chamber group to develop a pre-concert lecture. Ideally, this would be for a concert that they are planning to give at the end of the year that would encompass all the repertoire that has been studied.

**3rd Semester of Chamber Music Studies**

The instructor, with the same ensemble, develops an educational outreach program for children. This is much more challenging than a pre-concert lecture and will require that students script their presentation, memorize it, and spend time refining tone of voice, facial expressions, pacing, and delivery.

**4th Semester of Chamber Music Studies**

The instructor will facilitate the opportunity for this same ensemble to take all of the skills that they have learned to go on tour. This experience is the equivalent of what many professional string quartets do and requires a certain level of maturity, responsibility, and commitment to the highest levels of artistic preparation.

Whether or not chamber music is a required part of any particular degree track curriculum, this two-year track for the development of community engagement skills is recommended because it provides an added incentive for students to commit to their own personal development through chamber music. Those who are only interested in or required to have an introductory experience with chamber music, can still become acquainted with the value of community engagement through low-pressure performance opportunities. However, those who desire to develop their community engagement skill sets to a very high level will also

need to demonstrate their commitment to long-term growth through the study of chamber music.

### **How Are These Skills Taught?**

The skill sets required for developing expertise in the art of community development will ideally be taught as an integrative part of the chamber music curriculum. The chamber music coach can use the weekly seminar/master class as a forum for discussing and modeling the general principles for the development of these skills with all the chamber music students that are involved in the course. Then, depending on the requisite level of experience of each of the groups, the coach can portion out time within the framework of the weekly private coachings to assist groups in developing the skills that they will need to realize the community engagement performance goal toward which they are working.<sup>108</sup>

The chamber music coach might also find it valuable to spend the time to create handouts with guidelines for how to construct each of the afore-mentioned community engagement performance opportunities that will include instructions for creating interactive educational sessions for a variety of target audiences, (i.e. K-4, 5-8 or high school programs, senior centers, etc.) These handouts will serve as tools for the overt instruction of the pedagogy behind community engagement, and they can be given to each group at the beginning of the semester. In turn, these pedagogical tools will help to save valuable time in the coaching by providing students with a framework of knowledge that will serve as a foundation for the development of the skills they need to achieve for their specific community engagement performance goal for the semester. It is also crucial that the instructor make the time to go over any scripting that students need to do with them, and to have the ensemble practice doing their presentation in front of the

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<sup>108</sup> This would be one of the four previously mentioned on pg. 254.



instructor before they take it out into the community. Through doing this, the chamber coach will be able to guide the ensemble's thought processes toward segments of their presentation that they might want to refine, and students are provided with the opportunity to experience what it actually feels like to enact their presentation. Students who are inexperienced with community engagement need this time to become comfortable, and there is no substitute for dress rehearsals that will allow an ensemble to work out any bumps that may present themselves over the course of an initial presentation of a program.

Pedagogically, the development of skills within the realm of community engagement presents special opportunities for students to be able to present the art form that they love to people who most likely will be outside the discipline of music. Specifically, students will need to be able to articulate why they are passionate about what they do, and they will need to learn to distill these thoughts into their simplest form so as to communicate with a wide demographic sphere ranging from very small children to senior citizens. The key is to learn to stratify language and method of delivery so as to be able to connect with audiences of all ages and backgrounds. The development of this competency will entail a lot of modeling, guided thinking, and direct pedagogical instruction on the part of the chamber coach. Once mastered, however, this skill will teach students how to be mobile, personal, and engaging.

The development of community engagement skills also presents the instructor with a unique opportunity to model for students how to become professionals. Some educators espouse the philosophy that students are "in school to learn," and therefore should not be paid for the work that they do outside school grounds. A valuable opportunity to teach students how to make a living for themselves is missed when educators do not treat students as professionals in

training. Not every community engagement activity is something that a student should be paid for, especially if the instructor is emphasizing the importance of cultivating opportunities for service as a gift. However, students who are committing their time to go above and beyond the call of duty (i.e. those who have committed to four semesters of chamber music study and who have agreed to go on tour), should be paid for the work that they are doing, and it is up to the instructor to be an advocate for their students and to model professionalism.

### **Fostering Initiative and Creative Career Planning**

Lastly, for chamber music instructors to be able to foster initiative and creative career planning, they need in the most basic way, to be aware of what students' interests are, and to encourage students to pursue these lines of interest. Common fears that often get in the way of doing this might include fear of the unknown, and/or the worry that they "don't know how to do this." However, if chamber coaches are working to equip students with the skills that they will need (either by instructing them directly or by referring them to other professionals that can help them), then they should concurrently be doing their best to allay students' fears and to encourage them to simply take the first step in the direction of their dreams. Practical tools that can also be useful to students would include bringing in guest artists/ensembles who will provide students with exposure to the highest levels of musicianship and artistry, and who will also be able to present talks and/or workshops for students on many of the practical issues related to career development in the arts, i.e. ensemble formation, marketing, innovative concert programming, audience development, etc.

As has been evidenced through this chapter, chamber music provides a unique forum for the holistic development of both a students' performance and their pedagogical skills. The

maturation of these skills is specifically facilitated through the acquisition of interpersonal, communication, decision-making, and problem-solving skills, as it is impossible for a group to develop a unified artistic approach without dealing with these issues. The development of community engagement skills also adds a unique dimension to the chamber music experience as this particular skill set requires that students be able to clearly articulate why they are passionate about their art in a manner that folks from all walks of life (i.e. young children to senior citizens) can understand. An overarching holistic approach to performance and pedagogy is interwoven throughout the fabric of chamber music, and when students fully engage in this art form, they are developing several skill sets that will serve them both in their personal lives, and in their careers as both performers and educators.

## CHAPTER 6 ORCHESTRA

*How can educators help students to develop responsible leadership when they are part of a large ensemble?*

The instruction of performance *and* pedagogy within the sphere of orchestral studies is not something that is often addressed. One could easily wonder what, if anything, pedagogy has to do with orchestral studies, as it might seem that all of the skills that are learned within this instructional arena fall under the realm of performance practice within the idiom. Upon closer examination however, there are myriad opportunities for both personal and musical growth within the pursuit of orchestral studies that would be better facilitated through a holistic approach to the instruction of the performance and pedagogy of orchestral playing. The pedagogy of orchestral playing resides mainly in two components: 1) the development of every musician's personal sense of responsibility through the role that they play in the orchestra, and 2) the didactic instruction of skills that are necessary and specific to orchestral playing and leadership. When private studio instructors and conductors are proactive about working together to make sure that students are adequately prepared in both of these areas, students will experience deeper levels of satisfaction through their participation in this particular learning environment; the private studio instructor can rest assured in the knowledge that his or her students have been adequately prepped in the pedagogy of orchestral playing and leadership; and the conductor will reap the reward of having an ensemble that is more unified in its artistic approach and attitude.

### **The Section Leader: Preparing for the Role**

The role of being a section leader is one that carries great responsibility. This would perhaps indicate that educators are in the habit of preparing their students in their pursuit of

achieving such a position and carrying out its responsibilities. However, there often seems to be no significant mentorship aside from the work that educators do to prepare their students for the actual orchestral audition. The particular skill sets that a student/musician needs to have for orchestral leadership are often learned by osmosis versus intentional instruction. Learning on the job is not necessarily an unsatisfactory teaching tool; in fact, there is quite often no better instructor than experience. Nonetheless, educators could facilitate a student's ability to experience more immediate success and satisfaction in the area of orchestral playing if time was taken to review the unique skills and responsibilities they will face as a section leader.

### **Role of Private Instructor in Preparing Student**

The conductor is the head of the orchestral ensemble. In the collegiate setting, this is the professor in charge of the class, instruction, and assigning grades. One could make the assumption that they are also responsible for the development of the leaders in their ensemble. The conductor can cultivate an optimal, healthy environment by personally connecting with each person in the orchestra, and by assisting and mentoring the individuals who are section leaders. However, the inherent class structure of a large ensemble is such that the class period is run as a rehearsal and, due to the number of people involved and the repertoire and performance goals, the conductor typically does not have the time within class to assist students individually for more than a few seconds at a time. In the rehearsal setting, it is imperative that valuable time not be wasted on issues or questions that can and should be addressed outside of the rehearsal. These questions will often arise if the section leader has not taken the time to communicate with the conductor and/or the other section leaders, and thus is not prepared. Or they might arise if there are members within the section who are not experienced with the protocol for watching and

copying bowings, articulations, dynamics, and/or phrasing into their part, or are simply not familiar with the procedure and chain of command for asking questions. Any of these instances can be extremely disruptive to the plan and flow for a rehearsal, and so the salient point is: a significant amount of work and organization needs to be handled before a rehearsal.

This is where the preparatory role of the private studio instructor becomes invaluable. As mentioned already, if every instructor took the time with their students at the beginning of each academic year to review what the expectations and responsibilities are for those who are *both* section members and section leaders, students would be positioned to experience significantly higher levels of satisfaction, enjoyment, and success through their orchestral experiences. This overt instruction of the pedagogy of orchestral roles and leadership will establish a framework of reference for the students, and this will include the instructor's ability to guide the students' thinking regarding the protocols and procedures for responsible and respectful behavior within a large ensemble setting.

### **Responsibilities of Ensemble Members**

What are the orchestral responsibilities, expectations, protocols and procedures that a private studio instructor might find useful to cover? Such a list might potentially encompass:

- The importance of thoroughly preparing one's part ahead of the rehearsal. There is no substitute for knowing the part.
- A knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of the "inside" versus "outside" player on a stand.
  - Inside player responsibilities include: turning pages and marking items in the part.
  - Outside player responsibilities include: continuing to carry the part by playing when a page is turned, and also marking items in the part if they are not noticed by the inside player.
- Copying any bowing changes as communicated by the concertmaster into the part quickly, and remembering to pass them back.

- Being respectful of the conductor and the section leader (if a student is not the latter).
- A knowledge of what appropriate rehearsal behavior is. This might include:
  - Not talking unless necessary. Ensemble members should save questions until the rehearsal is over unless absolutely necessary to ask it in the moment. And if it is absolutely necessary, one should pass the question up to the section leader discretely (if it is a section member with the question). A section member should never “talk over” the section leader by speaking directly to the conductor.
  - Not engaging in off-task and/or distracting behavior. Students are there to play great repertoire and the social aspect of a large ensemble environment is secondary to this. Cell phones should be turned on silent and stowed with care and/or other personal effects; they should not be used during the rehearsal.
  - Not continuing to play when the ensemble has stopped, and especially not when the conductor is speaking.
  - Having instrument ready to go so that one is not scrambling to get set up when the conductor begins.
  - Continually paying attention to both the conductor and the section leader -- every student should watch, listen, and emulate to the best of their ability.
- Researching the repertoire so that the student will have an understanding of what it is that they are playing: i.e. who the composer is, when the piece was written, what occasion it was composed for, what the storyline is, etc.

This list of guidelines, when shared and discussed with the students by the private studio instructor, will both set the bar high for behavioral expectations, and will also set the stage for more effective and enjoyable rehearsals.

### **Characteristics of a Great Section Leader**

The previous section reviewed the responsibilities of each individual member of the orchestral ensemble, and these principles are applicable regardless of whether a student is a section leader or not. However, there is also a specific set of expectations, responsibilities, and skills that a section leader needs to have. It is crucial that private studio instructors take the time to go over these with the students who have been selected to be section leaders. Most educators desire a successful and positive experience for their students who are designated as section

leaders, and they need to be prepared for this to occur. Being a section leader in a large ensemble setting is inherently a pedagogical role because this person is responsible for unifying their section. This can be a delicate balance to navigate when a student is leading their peers, but when given the proper tools, it should prove to be an achievable goal. Respectful behavior as a leader is of great importance to a student's success, as it sets the stage for them to be treated with respect by other section leaders and the entire ensemble. Here are some specific thoughts and guidelines that, if intuited and put into practice, should assist in a student's development into a strong section leader:

- Preparation is the key to commanding respect as a section leader. The section leader should come to the first rehearsal with their part meticulously prepared.
- If a student is the concertmaster, bowing decisions should be made and then confirmed in consultation with the conductor, and then subsequently distributed to the other string section leaders before the first rehearsal (via a clean, photocopied part).
- If a student is a leader of a different string section, they should check with the concertmaster prior to the first rehearsal to obtain a copy of the concertmaster's bowed part, to coordinate their sections bowings, have enough time to discuss any differences with the concertmaster and/or conductor, and be able to distribute bowed parts before the first rehearsal.
- Responsibilities for all students assigned to be leaders include:
  - Asking for the part right away. Each section leader should take the time to research the work, listen to it, and gather a general sense for tempi.
  - Learning the notes and coordinating with the other string section leaders to make sure that bowings are in agreement.
  - Cleaning up the part, photocopying it, and posting it where all section members will have access to it so they can check their own bowings against their section leader's part.
- It is important to remember that an egocentric attitude is not becoming. Each section leader should lead their section confidently, and should not be afraid to communicate with clarity and finality. However, it is unfortunate but true that the orchestra often provides a potential "breeding-ground" for hard feelings, jealousies, and grudges to develop. This is obviously not desirable, and so to avoid this, section leaders must make



certain they are just as respectful towards their colleagues as they would want their colleagues to be towards them.

- A respected section leader will never be too proud to admit when they have made a mistake; it is helpful to remember that gentle humor is often a wonderful vehicle for delivering an apology, and for diffusing any tension.
- A great section leader will be passionate about making music and will not be apprehensive about letting it show!

Students who can incorporate these guidelines into their approach to being a section leader prior to the first rehearsal will be exceptionally well positioned to experience success, and to minimize any unnecessary angst. Inevitably however, even those who are well prepared to be section leaders will run into problems, and will need the advice and support of their mentors to constructively deal with issues that arise and/or are ongoing.

### **The Concertmaster**

Next to the conductor, the concertmaster is the most high profile member of the orchestra, and they have perhaps the most challenging and demanding job of any member in the ensemble. The responsibilities of the concertmaster are myriad and encompass:

- Being the conductor's mouthpiece.
- Being the model of posture and preparedness as leader of the orchestra.
- Tuning the orchestra at the beginning of rehearsals and concerts.
- Leading concert etiquette (i.e. standing when the conductor comes out on stage).
- Studying the score so as to have an in depth knowledge of the work, the individual parts, and how everything works together to achieve an artistic whole.
- Coordinating the bowings and articulations of all the string sections.
- Communicating any changes quickly and effectively during rehearsals.
- Demonstrating any bowings and/or articulations as necessary.

- Playing any solos as required in the music.
- Always having a keen awareness of what is occurring throughout the entire ensemble at any given point, and the ability to step in and cue/lead another section if the conductor and/or section leader gets lost.
- Setting a sterling example for musicianship and leadership.

A musician who is aspiring to such a position in the orchestra needs to model and embody the following characteristics:

- The highest levels of musicianship
- The capabilities needed for translating the artistic ideals of another individual into part preparation and performance
- A dedication to the study of musical works in depth
- The pedagogical and communicative skills necessary for imparting instructions to various sections and the entire orchestra
- A teamwork mentality coupled with the ability to be a respected, firm, and decisive leader
- Heightened senses
- A keen awareness
- The ability to coordinate several items at once
- A commanding stage presence

It is unlikely in an educational setting that a student will have all of these skills fully developed, but that is acceptable because they are in an institutional environment to learn. Some conductors prefer to hold auditions and maintain seating placement for the entire year; it can also be a useful pedagogical tool to rotate the seating throughout the year by concert cycle so that more students are given the opportunity to experience being section leaders. When this didactic

approach of allowing experience to be a student's teacher is employed, everyone in a section has the opportunity to sit in various positions (i.e. inside/outside), and levels of proximity to the inner circle of stands, and students are given the opportunity to work with various different peers in a variety of roles.

In an article in *The New York Times* entitled, "The Role of a Concertmaster," author Roberta Hershenson interviewed Lillian Eisenberg<sup>109</sup> who was currently serving as concertmaster of the Ossining Chorale Orchestra and the Ridgefield (Conn.) Orchestra. In commenting on the responsibilities of the concertmaster, Mrs. Eisenberg shared the following:

"The concertmaster's job involves several paradoxes," said Mrs. Eisenberg. "On the one hand, I must play with the discipline of an orchestra member and strive to blend with the other first violins. Yet when a passage arises for violin alone, I must play with the freedom and brilliance of a soloist."

"It is my responsibility to see that the strings play as one voice," she continued. "I must study each score thoroughly and exert my authority in matters of bowing, articulation and phrasing. Yet at the same time, I must be totally subservient to the conductor, and convey his ideas about the music to the rest of the orchestra. Understanding and passing on the conductor's concept and inspiration is the concertmaster's greatest challenge."<sup>110</sup>

Mrs. Eisenberg touches on many of the aforementioned responsibilities of the concertmaster through the thoughts that she shares, and the concertmaster's relationship to the conductor, to the section, and to the orchestra will now be examined in greater detail.

### **Relationship to the Conductor, Their Section, and to the Entire Orchestra**

As mentioned previously, the concertmaster is the conductor's mouthpiece, and it is their

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<sup>109</sup> Ms. Eisenberg is a graduate of the Juilliard School of Music and has also served as concertmaster for the Connecticut Symphony Orchestra, the Scarsdale Symphony and the Putname Symphony. Additionally, she has played as a member of the New York Pops Orchestra and, at the time of this article (1985), was also a member of the chamber music ensemble *Musique Vivante*.

<sup>110</sup> Roberta Hershenson, "The Role of a Concertmaster," *New York Times*, June 30, 1985, accessed June 16, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/1985/06/30/nyregion/the-role-of-a-concertmaster.html>.

job to communicate clearly to the orchestra either verbally or through demonstration, what the artistic ideals and goals of the conductor are. This indicates the highest levels of pedagogical leadership in a large ensemble, and so it is the responsibility of the concertmaster to be studying and practicing the works to be performed in just as great a detail as the conductor is, so as to facilitate a shared depth of knowledge that will lay the foundation for the facile communication of the conductor's artistic ideas. The concertmaster's role also encompasses being the leader of the first violin section, all the string sections, and of the entire orchestra. Among the string sections it is the concertmaster's job to ensure that bowings have been communicated (i.e. checked with conductor's score, passed on to other string section leaders, and then communicated clearly with their own section), to answer any questions that might that might arise, and to be alert for any discrepancies that are occurring within the string sections. With this in mind, the concertmaster would do well to make a point of meeting with the conductor well in advance of the first rehearsal to review any bowing, articulation, dynamic, and/or phrasing issues, so that they can make sure that they are tailoring their technical interpretation of the part to match the conductor's artistic concept. More on the subject from Ms. Eisenberg:

“Most of the specifics of playing a piece are worked out at rehearsals or before,” Mrs. Eisenberg said. Because each bowing technique creates a different effect, she must mark the music in advance “to translate into sound what the conductor wants to hear.”

The players depend on the concertmaster, who is appointed by the conductor, to solve technical problems and confer with the conductor about any difficulties they may have in carrying out his wishes. The conductor, on the other hand, depends on the concertmaster to be “on his wavelength,” said Mrs. Eisenberg.

“A conductor has to be very comfortable with you,” she explained. “He has to feel free to let his imagination take flight, knowing that you will come along with him, and bring

the rest of the orchestra with you.”<sup>111</sup>

Mrs. Eisenberg’s comments speak to the fact that the entire orchestra relies on the concertmaster not only to lead them, but also to interpretively shape the ensemble’s sound. In a recent interview<sup>112</sup> for the *New York Times*, Glenn Dicterow<sup>113</sup> and Alan Gilbert<sup>114</sup> also shared their thoughts on the topic of the concertmaster’s role:

Even when conductors do not get lost, they can sometimes be less than clear in communicating their wishes, so many players in the orchestra will rely on the concertmaster for their musical cues. “You lead like the first violinist in a string quartet,” Mr. Dicterow said.

Alan Gilbert, the Philharmonic’s music director, said in a recent interview that Mr. Dicterow had played a major role in molding the orchestra’s sound, and that replacing him would be the most important personnel decision he would make.

“The concertmaster is the single most important person in terms of being able to guide the flow of the music, and affecting the sound of the entire orchestra,” Mr. Gilbert said, adding that Mr. Dicterow was “unusually brilliant” at transmitting the wishes of conductors.

In addition to the collaboration and preparation that occurs between the concertmaster and conductor before the first rehearsal, what happens during the actual rehearsals and performance is equally as important. The concertmaster will ideally have their own part as memorized as possible so they can be out of their part, be aware of what is going on in other sections, and be prepared to assert their leadership, if and when necessary, to maintain the cohesion of the orchestra if something goes wrong.

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<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Michael Cooper, “Mediations and Mutiny Backstage: Glenn Dicterow Discusses Leaving New York Philharmonic,” *New York Times*, June 24, 2014, accessed July 1, 2014, [http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/25/arts/music/glenn-dicterow-discusses-leaving-new-york-philharmonic.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/25/arts/music/glenn-dicterow-discusses-leaving-new-york-philharmonic.html?_r=0).

<sup>113</sup> Concertmaster of the New York Philharmonic.

<sup>114</sup> Music director and conductor of the New York Philharmonic.

There are occasions, Mrs. Eisenberg noted, when the concertmaster can “right wrongs” and “come to the rescue” of a conductor. This may happen if a principal player comes in a bar too early or late, and the strings must cover up the mistake. A strong concertmaster can also help a nervous or inexperienced conductor by maintaining a steady tempo, Mrs. Eisenberg said. In an emergency, when one conductor must substitute for another without a rehearsal (as happened in one orchestra last winter), the concertmaster becomes a spokesman, explaining the new conductor’s instructions to the rest of the players.<sup>115</sup>

The benefit to having a long-term relationship with a particular orchestra and/or conductor is that the concertmaster will develop a strong working relationship with both entities, and will subsequently be able to develop a system of communication that will expedite the artistic creative process between the ensemble and the conductor. However, it is also beneficial for a concertmaster to have the experience of working with a variety of conductors because these experiences will further the expansion of the interpretive palette and capabilities of the concertmaster, both communicatively and musically.

“Working with a variety of conductors and adapting to their different styles, personalities and interpretations of the same works demands a great deal of flexibility on the part of a concertmaster,” said Mrs. Eisenberg.<sup>116</sup>

Consequently, both the experience of having a long-term relationship with a conductor, which is facilitated through a degree program, and also having the experience of working with a variety of conductors, which may be facilitated through guest conductors and perhaps summer music festival experiences, are desirable and invaluable instructional learning opportunities for young orchestral musicians, and particularly concertmasters in training.

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<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

**The Section Member:  
Exhibiting Leadership from the Back of the Section**

**Responsibilities of Section Members**

It is unfortunate but true that many instrumentalists (and string players in particular), feel that if they are not sitting in a principal chair position, they do not really matter as much in the grand scheme of the orchestra; however, nothing could be further from the truth. The number of string players to a part versus the number of wind, brass or percussion players to a part has to do with the timbre and overall balance and blend of the orchestra. The timbre of woodwind, brass and percussion instruments tends to be more incisive and loud, making it easier to overpower a string player. Thus, to balance the entire blend of the orchestra, it is necessary for there to be several string players to a part instead of the one to two player assignments present in other instrument families. These numbers unify the balance between the blending of sections, and each ratio is crucial to the success of the whole. Thus every member of a section is vital to the success of the ensemble sound. The orchestra is only able to thrive when there is a unity of vision and approach, and for this to occur, every member has to be intentionally proactive about preparing their parts, watching their section leaders, and communicating with the other people in the section. It's true that there is a leader for each section, but the health (of the sound) of an orchestra is never at its best when the members of a section are passively warming seats in the sections. Every section member must recognize that they are a vital member of the orchestra, and therefore approach this responsibility with integrity and enthusiasm. Students can be guided in their thinking to embrace this mindset toward orchestral playing if the instructor and/or conductor are intentional about discussing this issue at the beginning of the year. As with the instruction of many other facets of orchestral playing, time simply needs to be taken to talk about

the structure of the orchestra and how this informs the pedagogy of developing the skills and attitudes necessary to successfully participate in this ensemble experience.

### **Balancing Respect for Section Leader With Personal Leadership**

In practically any large ensemble that one might encounter, an interesting balance is often found between the people who have been selected to be section leaders and those who would like to be the section leader. While it is a lofty goal to always aspire to be the best that one can be, and be rewarded by the highest placement in an ensemble, the fact remains that at some point or another every musician will most likely be sitting beside or behind someone else who has been seated ahead. It is therefore important that educators find a way to help students reconcile their own personal desires and aspirations with the reality of a conductor's (and perhaps a committee's) decision. This is where modeling the development of a teamwork mindset and philosophy is so crucial. Musicians must be able to recognize that everyone is working together for a common artistic goal and there is no place for pettiness or jealousy among friends and colleagues. It might also be useful to remind students that it is likely that they may someday be a section leader and with this thought in mind: how would they like to be treated? If it is different than they are currently treating their section leader, then changes ought to occur immediately. No matter whether or not one likes the person who is leading the section or what is thought of their decisions (provided they are made in collaboration with the conductor), the golden rule applies. When educators take the time to guide the thought processes of students regarding this issue, there is often an observable improvement in the culture of the orchestra. Students ought to be treating their colleagues as they would like to be treated, both for the health of the section, and also for the purpose of achieving the end goal of being able to play together as a cohesive unit to



deliver a meaningful performance.

## **The Pedagogy of Orchestral Playing and Leadership**

### **Solo Versus Orchestral Playing**

There is a fundamental difference between solo playing and orchestral playing that pedagogically instructors might find useful to expand upon with students. The goal in orchestral playing is for sections to be unified, and for this to happen, specific items need to be taken into consideration.

Often in soloistic playing, bowings are used that simply cannot be imposed upon an orchestral section. This is one of the primary challenges that inexperienced section leaders face as there is often the tendency to use bowings that would work for an individual, but would not facilitate a section being able to successfully execute the articulation and delivery of a passage. The more people that are involved in having to execute something together in unison, the more mindful a string section leader must be of which specific bowings and articulations should be implemented to achieve an artistic outcome characterized by clarity. Other considerations for string section leaders should be the part of the bow that they choose to play in and sounding point placement. Decisions regarding these two components of bow technique are factors that the section leader must consider carefully, as they occur during playing whether an individual is aware of the choices that they are making or not.<sup>117</sup> These principles of bow management as they relate to the sculpting of sound are not unique to orchestral playing; they do, however, become of primary importance when the goal is precision of stroke and unity of interpretation within an

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<sup>117</sup> Choices regarding weight and speed are also important, but are more frequently dictated by the tempo of a piece, the note values being played, and the dynamics notated in the part. They therefore do not typically require as much overt instruction for appropriate execution.

ensemble.

An additional issue that relates to bow technique is the interpretation of the dynamics in the orchestra part. It is a common mistake for inexperienced orchestral players to see a dynamic marked in the score and to think that this means that they should play that dynamic as they normally would if they were playing by themselves. However, dynamics in an orchestral part are indicative of the group dynamic level, and not any individual's personal conception of the dynamic level. For instance, if a section sees a *piano* marking in the score and they each play what would be their own individual *piano* dynamic, this would most likely equal a group dynamic of *mezzo forte*. Therefore, instructors and conductors alike would do well to educate students to understand that when they see a dynamic marking in their part, this means that they will need to play an individual dynamic that is one to two levels less so that the group dynamic level can equal what is actually notated in the part.

A matter that concerns both right hand and left hand technique is that of deciding whether to shift on an old bow or the new bow. To determine whether one should shift on an old bow or a new bow, it is important to understand what the effect of each technique would be. Shifting on the old bow occurs when the left hand lightens up and shifts to the new pitch before the end of the initial stroke. This type of shift is often desirable as it can be hidden through the release of bow pressure during the shift. Shifting on the new bow is most often done with the new finger and this is the type of shift that one would employ if they desire to hear a slide or glissando. Many students who do not have a refined level of shifting technique are not aware of how they shift concurrent with a bow change, which produces an "accidental" slide or smear in between notes/bow strokes. This is an issue that has to be addressed in solo playing, but it becomes even

more critical within an ensemble setting, where the goal is to unify a section's sound. The concertmaster will therefore want to proactively address this by letting the string sections know that as a general rule, they need to make sure that they are shifting on the old bow and hiding the shift with lightened bow pressure, unless the conductor specifically lets the ensemble know that he/she wants an expressive slide (in which case the latter type of shift is appropriate).

Throughout the examination of each of these inherent differences between solo and orchestral playing, the primary goal has been to understand the difference in pedagogical approach that instructors need to employ with their students as they prepare them to be both competent soloists and members of an orchestra. All of these items can be modeled by the instructor for the student, using various excerpts from the standard literature. Students can also be guided by the instructor to carefully analyze the difference in technical and artistic choices that they will be asked to make in orchestra; a knowledge of the reasoning behind these choices is especially important if students are preparing to be section leaders. Students will be poised for success if they have the ability to view general concepts that are applicable in both arenas of playing (i.e. bowings, articulations, dynamics, etc.), from a different vantage point, and also be able to appropriately and fluidly integrate them into their playing according to the context. In orchestral playing, the goal is always to follow what the section leader is doing so that the sound and interpretation of an entire section can be unified and clearly delivered. In an interview for Ovation Press String Visions, former concertmaster of the Minnesota Orchestra, Jorja Fleezanis, shares her thoughts on the importance of the section leader's meticulous part preparation, and how this encompasses the afore-mentioned concepts as follows:

**Ovation Press:** Looking at your markings, bowings and fingerings for your edited orchestral parts published by Ovation Press, it is clear that you are incredibly specific,

articulate, and very detailed. Can you share with us some of the concepts and ideas that are behind your decision-making process when marking orchestra parts?

**Jorja Fleezanis:** Most of what I add to any bowed part deals with matters of unifying a section's execution of a passage.

For instance, specifics on how to articulate a passage that from experience I know is ambiguous, either because there is nothing in the part to suggest spiccato or on the string, or when moments when it is necessary to retake the bow to get the right character or weight on a pulse because of how the bow distribution works out. In some cases a word like *sostenuto* over a long melodic line is meant to underscore the strength of support I believe the passage warrants, as it all too easy to drop the line at the bow changes. For younger inexperienced professional players I prefer to put in such indications in hopes that they pick up on my cue of what will help to make the musical moment clearer and expressively unified. I am a fan of commas to indicate specifically how to release the end of note or to get off a suspension in time to grab the next note with clarity as a whole section. Most of what I write is based on my values in bringing about a high level of ensemble execution. The operative word here is clarity.<sup>118</sup>

### **Orchestral Excerpts Class**

In addition to the individual work that a private studio instructor and conductor will be doing in an educational setting to prepare students for successful orchestral playing, the pedagogical value of having a class specifically dealing with orchestral excerpts should not be underestimated. Ideally, individual classes would be offered for every instrument by private studio instructors who have experience in a professional orchestra, and these would provide a forum for instruction that could encompass: 1) advice for specific excerpts regarding bowings, phrasing, articulation, and style; 2) time in the class set aside to play excerpts both individually and as a group; 3) discussions regarding behavioral expectations, protocols, and procedures in orchestra; and 4) an overview of standard orchestral literature. This instructional time would also facilitate the instructor's ability to implement all four of the basic didactic approaches that were

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<sup>118</sup> Hans Jørgen Jensen, "Interview with Jorja Fleezanis, Part 1," *Ovation Press String Visions*, June 10, 2013, accessed July 1, 2014, <http://stringvisions.ovationpress.com/2013/06/interview-jorja-fleezanis-part-1/>.

discussed at the beginning of this thesis, thus making it an ideal learning environment. Within the construct of an orchestral excerpts class, the instructor would be able to model desirable versus undesirable technical and musical choices; the thought processes of the students can be guided for the purpose of honing their listening and analytical skills; there is the obvious opportunity for the overt instruction of the pedagogy of orchestral playing and leadership; and this unique setting also provides students with the experience of being able to physically experiment with the concepts being introduced through playing in the class.

After retiring from her position as concertmaster of the Minnesota Orchestra, Jorja Fleezanis accepted the position of Henry A. Upper Chair in Orchestral Studies at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, where she currently teaches several orchestral repertoire classes. In the same interview with Hans Jørgen Jensen as mentioned previously, she elaborates on the value of these classes and the instructional content included:

...I offer a rep class to all the freshman violinists, a sort of boot camp that includes using excerpts to study control of tempo (the Beethoven Third Symphony Scherzo is a candidate for this skill), strength of short strokes in extended passages (the Rachmaninoff Second Symphony, second violin fugue in the Scherzo is perfect for this skill) and on it goes, using many of the standard excerpts to train specific technical demands.

I also discuss etiquette in orchestra, how to sit, how to write in the parts, defining the many foreign words used to describe character that are essential to being a competent musician, to listening to recordings and discussing issues of style and tempi and how they relate. I love these classes because they allow this part of the school community to bond right off the bat. Once they are in the orchestra with lots of advanced peers all around them they feel that much more ahead of the game. I also teach an advanced rep class as does my colleague Alex Kerr.<sup>119</sup>

The thoughts that Ms. Fleezanis shares demonstrate not only the instructional value of these skills that pertain to orchestral playing, but also the role that they have in developing the

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<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

social skills and relationships of the students during their degree studies. Pedagogically, the latter are important because they facilitate the cultivation of teamwork and communication skills, and students acquire colleagues for life. Mr. Jensen went on to ask a question that provides insight into the most common issues on the forefront of students' orchestral playing as they are pursuing the development of their skills, and Ms. Fleezanis very candidly shared her thoughts:

**Ovation Press:** Your teaching career has been long and wide-ranging—are there any issues with students or teaching today that surprise you? Are there aspects of violin-playing or music in general that you find yourself needing to spend more time on than you would expect?

**Jorja Fleezanis:** There are two areas that are high on my radar and that are essential core items: strong, vibrant rhythmic skills, and knowledge of the score and what it contains that inform us of the composers' intentions. I am not surprised that these two areas are weak in students, but without these in place I feel that their musical boat is quite lost, and they play in a self-indulgent manner. The one other gap that is both a technical and musical one is an appreciation for the interval, any interval, and how it holds so much expressivity in the way melodic lines are made. A minor sixth going upwards can be yearning or urgently reaching for the climactic moment, or possibly it is there to relax the end of a phrase, all depending on the context of the text. If you don't see the intervals as holding these possibilities you are more likely to be a mono toned player. I would add that intervals are the basis for the geography of any phrase.<sup>120</sup>

In addition to the development of strong rhythmic skills and an understanding of how intervals play an expressive role in the interpretation of a phrase, Ms. Fleezanis touches on an important skill that students at various levels have often not been asked to develop (unless they have experience with chamber music), and that is score study. In the private studio, instructors can be facilitating the cultivation of this skill by requesting that students study the concerti they are working on from a full score versus simply their own parts. If asked to do this in their private lessons and personal practice, students will have a better understanding of how to approach a score when they then encounter the need for score study in chamber music or in an orchestral

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<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

setting as a section leader; they will also be introduced to the value of comprehending how all parts in a piece of music work together to create an artistic whole.

Often one of the primary goals of an orchestral repertoire class is to prepare students for taking auditions. This process of preparation has immense pedagogical value due to its inherent emphasis on self-assessment, and Ms. Fleezanis shares her thoughts on how students can better prepare themselves for this evaluative professional experience:

**Ovation Press:** Can you share with us some helpful concepts or tips for people taking orchestra auditions? What is really important to do? What are the most common “don’ts” you see at auditions (and how can an auditioning player avoid them)?

**Jorja Fleezanis:** Get scores to all the excerpts, listen to a number of recordings with the score in hand to see how your line sits inside the context of the whole. Hear the entire passage as you learn excerpts that are new to you and that you have never performed. Work with a metronome to teach you where your weak rhythmic spots are. Dotted rhythms are famously weak in many players, like the ones in the opening theme of the Mozart Symphony 39 second movement Andante. The skill of subdivision cannot be underscored enough in my book. In the early stages of learning this excerpt you should be able to feel every 16th note in the opening theme so it is clearly present in your awareness for the passage that begins after the first double bar and the violas are playing a whole series of them while you enter every other bar. Nothing gives away a player’s lack of pulse than this simple matter of feeling the subdivision that rules such a movement. Take dynamics seriously. Do not just turn the decibel dial up and down, void of energy in softer dynamics, like the pianissimos in Mendelssohn’s Scherzo to the *Midsummer Night’s Dream*, or disregarding what Brahms means in the *Second Symphony*, first movement excerpt after letter E when he writes in bar 137 poco forte, and don’t play on in the same fortissimo you ended with in bar 134. Do not think that playing mechanistically exact is enough. You are a musician making music happen, not only auditioning for a car assembly job. Play the excerpts for people often to feel the adrenaline that will be present when you play for a committee. Ask for comments, if only to confirm what you already heard, or be told something you possibly did not hear. Toughen your grip on maintaining a consistent tempo through any given passage of music. Have a clear idea of what the tempo and dramatic language of the passage is WAY before you put the bow to the string. Lastly, love the work.<sup>121</sup>

As has already been mentioned, preparing for a successful audition requires that students

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<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

hone their listening, self-assessment, and score study skills to a very high level. While audition preparation is typically covered in orchestral repertoire classes and addressed in private lesson as needed, students will also spend copious amounts of time preparing in the practice room, during which time they have to be able to assess and remedy the problems that they hear and observe in their own playing. This process will be easier for the student if the orchestral excerpts class instructor is able to take the time to discuss with students the audition preparation strategies that Ms. Fleezanis mentioned, thus maximizing the orchestral excerpts class as the pedagogical tool it has the potential to be.

### **The Sectional as a Teaching Tool**

An additional instructional opportunity that presents itself through the course of orchestral studies is the sectional. Sometimes these sectionals are led by the conductor or perhaps by one of his or her graduate assistants. More often than not they are led by the section leaders themselves, with the conductor perhaps stopping by for a few minutes as he or she rotates through all of the sectionals that are occurring simultaneously. The experience of leading a sectional is valuable in and of itself for students, but its value could be enhanced if time was taken by either the conductor and/or the private studio instructor to first model how to lead a sectional (i.e. at the very beginning of the year). This could then be followed by a discussion of how student section leaders can structure and lead this time with their peers when they are presented with the opportunity to do so. This preparation for pedagogical leadership would be further maximized if the private studio instructor were able to observe a portion (if not all) of the sectional being led by their student, so that they could provide feedback on how the student handled the instructional aspect of this leadership opportunity.



## **The Relationship of the Conductor with Private Studio Instructors**

### **Communication**

This chapter has discussed many attributes of successful orchestral players and section leaders—and how the private studio instructor can assist their students in being prepared to step in to these roles. However, one would be remiss not to mention that the single most important thing a private studio instructor can do to facilitate a successful orchestral experience for their students would be to stay in active communication with the conductor. This might seem obvious, but there are so many programs across the country where there seems to be a mindset of, “This is my studio and I teach you your instrument. Orchestra is the responsibility of Professor ----, and I don’t have anything to do with that.” What an opportunity educators are missing if this approach is taken; the opportunity to connect and develop a relationship with a colleague is lost, but students also miss out if educators are unwilling to share in their opportunities and responsibilities in other arenas. Instructors would do well to support the latter as needed through their personal and educational interactions with both students and colleagues. When the private studio instructor is proactive about communicating with the conductor—asking how their students are doing, stepping in on rehearsals now and then to observe, attending dress rehearsals to assist with issues such as balance, and being present at the performances themselves to show support for the hard work and dedication of both the students and the instructor’s colleagues—they stay connected, collaborative and, compassionate in their pedagogical approach.

As has been evidenced through the discussions in this chapter, there is a specific pedagogy that is unique to orchestral playing and the development of leadership skills. Students who are prepared for this experience by both the private studio instructor and the conductor will

be uniquely poised to take full advantage of both the performance and the pedagogical opportunities that this ensemble experience provides, and will find deeper levels of satisfaction through their participation in this teamwork.

## CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSIONS

Throughout the course of conducting the surveys for this research, it has become apparent that many institutions of higher education offer a curriculum to performance degree students that encompasses valuable opportunities for acquiring performance skills, and to some degree pedagogical skills. As was especially evidenced through the narrative commentary throughout the surveys, string educators are deeply thoughtful individuals who are passionate about their art and the methods of delivery that they use to share their knowledge with students. However, education is an ever-evolving process, and so it is recommended that collegiate instructors and administrators together examine their institutional degree curricular offerings on a consistent basis. When this is being done, the curriculum will stay fresh and up-to-date, and educators and students alike can rest easy in the knowledge that students are receiving the best possible instruction. Embracing a holistic approach for the instruction of performance and pedagogy takes curriculum development one step further by ensuring that, even if students do not have the opportunity to take a pedagogy course through their institution, they will still be prepared for a variety of potential career options that might present themselves within the realm of performance, pedagogy, or as is most often the case, some combination of the two.

It has been the goal of this research to assist educators and administrators as they endeavor to refine curricular offerings for string students. It is hoped that educators and administrators alike will use the information presented however it is most applicable to their own instructional situations—taking from it what is useful, setting aside what is not pertinent, or embracing the whole of this research, as the case may be. Many observable trends and potential strategies for improvement have presented themselves throughout the course of this research, and

they have resulted in the following conclusions.

1. For students to truly develop both their performance and their pedagogical abilities to the *highest* levels of excellence, pedagogy should be holistically incorporated into all facets of string teaching and performing, in addition to being taught as a separate class. Students will naturally absorb pedagogical skills (both what to do and perhaps the knowledge of what not to do), from their applied private studio instructors, and will further benefit from opportunities for: discussion; guided observations; the intentional instruction and maturation of pedagogical skills; peer mentorship; exposure to guest artists and educators; the development of professional writing skills and materials; and guided opportunities to cultivate hearts for service. All of these instructional learning opportunities can be woven into the fabric of a standard private studio curriculum, which includes both a weekly private lesson and, typically, a studio seminar or master class. Further one-on-one attention for the purpose of cultivating every student's individual pedagogical abilities could perhaps include an independent study course offering with the private studio instructor, as was the model presented by one of the respondents in response to question two of the NASM survey.<sup>122</sup> This could be especially useful in conjunction with the recommendation that students cultivate their own private studios, as it would give them the opportunity to be mentored in their teaching.

An actual string pedagogy class curriculum could viably encompass all stringed instruments, which would be useful for those who are planning to teach in a group setting, i.e. a public school elementary or high school orchestra, or for those who simply want a deeper knowledge of the basic pedagogy for the entire family of stringed instruments. However, it is

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<sup>122</sup> See page nineteen.

equally, if not more, important for students to also have pedagogical instruction that is specific to their instrument. With this in mind, it would seem reasonable to propose a two-year track of string pedagogy classes that would be structured as follows:

### **Year One**

**Group String Pedagogy.** Students from the entire string department would participate together in this class that would cover the basics of pedagogy and group (chamber and orchestral) instruction for violin, viola, cello, string bass, harp, and guitar.<sup>123</sup> Observations and practical teaching/conducting experiences would be incorporated as appropriate.

### **Year Two**

**Applied String Pedagogy.** Every student would have the opportunity to take a year of string pedagogy that is specific to their instrument, either through an independent study with the private studio instructor, or in a group class setting with other instrumentalists from the same area/studio. Observations and practical teaching experiences would be incorporated as appropriate. It would also be ideal for students to have a small private studio of their own so that issues could be discussed that they are currently encountering in their own teaching.

Having a two-year track of string pedagogy classes that is divided up into group string pedagogy and applied string pedagogy would be ideal, because it would allow for ample time to introduce students to the pedagogy and skill sets needed for both group and private instruction.

2. If at all possible, it is recommended that teaching experiences and/or labs be built into degree programs at all levels. The results from the second survey showed that 65.61% of the respondents did not have exposure to any type of a built-in teaching opportunity while they were completing their degree studies. This is a statistic that will hopefully motivate educators and institutions to consider a more balanced approach regarding opportunities for performance *and* teaching in collegiate curriculums, as there is simply no substitute for hands-on teaching experience. The more students can obtain before they step outside their degree programs, the

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<sup>123</sup> It might be useful for harp and guitar group pedagogy and instruction to be taught for those students separately, as these instruments are not commonly present in a string orchestra setting or group class.

better prepared they will be to handle a private studio and/or classroom of their own. Teaching opportunities become easier to facilitate for students if there is some type of pre-college or string project program associated with the college or university. However, if such a program does not yet exist, educators can still be encouraging students to cultivate a private studio of their own, and opportunities to observe and possibly be mentored in local pre-college/public/private music programs could also potentially be facilitated. If an institution is considering the creation and implementation of a music program that would provide teaching opportunities for degree-track students, it would also be advisable to be mindful and respectful of programs that might already exist in the area. Especially in smaller communities, healthy relationships with area colleagues are of the utmost importance, and yet have the potential for being more easily disrupted. It would therefore be prudent for collegiate educators to ensure that they have a complete understanding of the history and demographics of the music education systems in their community before pursuing such an endeavor. If or when a decision is made to follow through with plans to implement a pre-college program that is attached to the university, procedures for moving forward should prioritize open lines of communications with area programs and teachers that seek to affirm the work currently being done and to build stronger connections between the institution and said individuals/programs while developing win-win strategies for working together.

**3.** Placement of students for observations or teaching experience in area programs is important. Similar to how medical school students do rotations through a variety of medical specialties during medical school to help them ascertain what they would like to specialize in during their residency, it would be ideal for students to be given the opportunity to do rotations

through different types of teaching situations during their degree studies. This could be the case for students regardless of their degree track, because these opportunities for observation will provide students with hands on learning experiences that will give them a chance to figure out what kind of career and/or teaching they might be interested in. Once students have had these opportunities and gain a better idea of where their teaching interests lie, then the supervising educator can steer music education degree track students toward a student teaching placement<sup>124</sup> that would best meet their needs and interests, and/or they can provide performance degree track students with teaching lab experiences<sup>125</sup> as part of their degree coursework<sup>126</sup> that will give them more hands on experience in their area(s) of interest.

4. Mentorship is incredibly important, although its form might look different depending on the level and experience of the individual student. When asked in Question Twenty-one of the second survey, “Which of the following, in your opinion, most effectively prepared you for string teaching?,” 45.11% of respondents indicated that a mentor during their degree studies played a significant role in their preparedness for teaching, 26.61% indicated that a mentor outside their degree studies played a similar role, and 31.60% indicated that a teacher from their youth was a key influence in facilitating and supporting their preparedness for a career in teaching. These statistics are indicative of the weight of the responsibility that an educator carries to give students the very best instruction possible, and to be continually nurturing their dreams within their instructional sphere. In the private studio setting, it is crucial that instructors take the time to get

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<sup>124</sup> In a program outside the institution.

<sup>125</sup> Perhaps in part within the scope of the degree program; experience(s) with outside programs would also be highly recommended.

<sup>126</sup> These opportunities for rotation through a variety of teaching settings could very easily be paired with the two-year track of pedagogy classes.

to know students as individuals. If this has been done, the instructor can direct students toward learning opportunities and professional development activities that will assist them in their personal career development goals; however, it is also important to make sure that every student is receiving exposure to a wide variety of artists and educational experiences, whether these appear to be of special interest to them or not. The pedagogical value of teaching students to think for themselves also cannot be underestimated. This can be achieved in the private lessons when the instructor is in the habit of asking students questions that will point them toward a path of self-discovery. This skill can also be reinforced if the instructor has taken the time during weekly lessons to give students tools for their practice that will teach them to structure their time effectively and provide built-in opportunities for self-assessment. A worthy goal for all teachers would be to teach students how to become their own best teachers; this is the philosophical context within which all holistic instruction occurs.

**5.** Chamber music provides an excellent forum for developing both performance and pedagogical capabilities via the maturation of communication and problem solving skill sets. More specifically, students are asked learn to think for themselves and form artistic opinions; they learn how to express these opinions and their reasoning behind their artistic and analytical hypotheses in a thoughtful and gracious manner; they are challenged to be flexible problem-solvers; they are required to refine their technical and musical skills to a very high level within a cooperative group context; and they have to learn to do all of these items within what is often an independent learning environment.

**6.** The orchestral studies program plays an important role in students' performance and pedagogical development because this learning environment, by its essential nature, teaches the



acquisition of skills to both leaders and followers within a larger group setting. When instructors and conductors work together to prepare students for successfully participating in this instructional ensemble experience, students will be asked to develop an awareness of their role and responsibilities with the ensemble, in addition to a knowledge of the pedagogy behind orchestral playing and leadership skills. In sum, students will be provided with the opportunity to hone their ability to implement the conductor's artistic ideas through a unified group sound, and they will learn both how to lead and to follow with competence, grace, humility, and a mutual respect for their colleagues.

7. Lastly, an inquisitive spirit that proactively seeks out new ideas, methods, and learning opportunities is an invaluable asset—and one that the best educators intentionally cultivate within their spheres of influence. The commitment to growth and the resilience to stick with the artistry path are key ingredients to both successful teaching and performing. Educators who model this inquisitive spirit are able to temper the cynicism that too often comes with age, and they stay connected with the idealism of their students while concurrently modeling character, integrity, and responsibility with the time, talents, and influence that they have been given. Balance, passion, and compassion are key.

This research represents a beginning point but not the end. The holistic educational concepts presented here are offered in the hopes that string music educators and institutions of higher learning will be able to use them to enhance their current programs, and to continue to nurture the next generation of string performers and pedagogues. An important topic for future discussion might be the effect that the economy has on education in general and string education in particular. The suspicion exists that in some cases, the choice for how to structure a program

might be driven more by finances than by what is best for the students. Program development may therefore make grant writing skills highly desirable. In the meantime, this research offers food for thought that will hopefully prompt a new look at existing programs. A next step would be to examine what can be done within the current education and fiscal structures to embrace holistic strategies in music education in order to effectively equip string students to make a lasting and meaningful difference through their careers and future students.

## APPENDIX A: NASM-ACCREDITED SCHOOLS WITH OVER 400 MUSIC MAJORS

Arizona State University

Ball State University

Bowling Green State University

California State University, Long Beach

California State University, Northridge

Crane School of Music

Florida State University

Indiana University

James Madison University

Kent State University

Louisiana State University

Michigan State University

Montclair State University

Ohio State University

Puerto Rico Conservatory of Music

Sam Houston State University

State University of New York, Fredonia

Stephen F. Austin State University

Temple University

Texas State University - San Marcos

Texas Tech University

University of Arizona

University of Cincinnati

University of Colorado, Boulder

University of Colorado, Denver

University of Georgia

University of Houston

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

University of Iowa

University of Kansas

University of Kentucky

University of Maryland

University of Massachusetts Lowell

University of Michigan

University of Minnesota, Twin Cities

University of Missouri, Kansas City

University of Nevada, Las Vegas

University of North Carolina at Greensboro

University of North Texas

University of Northern Colorado

University of Oklahoma

University of Oregon

University of South Carolina

University of Southern Mississippi

University of Texas at Austin

University of Utah

Western Michigan University

## APPENDIX B: SPECIFICATION OF “OTHER” DEGREES

**Bachelor (Level) Degree:**

Associate of Science in Music (1)

Bachelor of Science in Music (1)

Bachelor of Science in Music Theory (1)

Bachelor of Science in Music Education (2)

Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education (1)

Bachelor of Science in Business Education (1)

Bachelor of Science in Literature (1)

Bachelor of Science in Nursing (1)

Bachelor of Arts in Psychology (Child Development) (1)

Bachelor of Arts in Political Science (1)

Bachelor of Arts in Economics (1)

Bachelor of Arts in Social Work (1)

Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy (1)

Bachelor of Fine Arts (1)

Bachelor of University Studies (Concentration in Music History/Theory, Performance, Ed) (1)

**Masters (Level) Degree:**

Master of Music Education (9)

Master of Music Education/Cognate in String Pedagogy (1)

Master of Science in Music Education (2)

Masters in Education (2)

Masters in Teaching (1)

Masters in Social Work (1)

Master of Fine Arts (1)

Master of Arts in Music Teaching in Professional Practice (1)

Master of Arts in Secondary Education (1)

Master of Arts in Social Work (1)

Master of Arts in Islamic and Arabic Studies (1)

Master of Arts in Economics (1)

Master of Science in Arts Administration (1)

Master of Science in Secondary Education (1)

Master of Business Administration (1)

Masters in Social Work (1)

Masters in Public Health (1)

**Doctoral (Level) Degree:**

Doctor of Arts (1)

Doctoral Fellowship (1)

Honorary Doctor of Music (1)

M.D. (1)

**Other:**

Diploma of Arts in Music (1)

Performance Diploma (4)

Post-Graduate Diploma (2)

ARCT (Associate of the Royal Conservatory) (2)

Musik Erziehung<sup>127</sup> (Stuttgart) (1)

Kuensterliche Diplom<sup>128</sup> (Stuttgart) (1)

Education Certificate (1)

Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Music Education (1)

Graduate certificate in ASD<sup>129</sup> (1)

Advanced Certificate in Music Education (1)

Advanced Certificate in Educational Administration (1)

Apprenticeship with Dr. Suzuki in Japan (1)

Suzuki Teacher Training (10)

Certified Suzuki Teacher Trainer (5)

Teacher Certificate from Talent Education Institute, Matsumoto, Japan (2)

Dalcroze<sup>130</sup> Certificate (1)

Canadian Registered Music Teacher (1)

NBPTS<sup>131</sup> Certification (1)

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<sup>127</sup> German for “Music Education.”

<sup>128</sup> The English translation for this is unclear.

<sup>129</sup> Abbreviation for “Autism Spectrum Disorders.”

<sup>130</sup> The website of the Dalcroze Society of America defines this method as follows: “The Dalcroze approach to music education teaches an understanding of music – its fundamental concepts, its expressive meanings, and its deep connections to other arts and human activities – through ground breaking techniques incorporating rhythmic movement, aural training, and physical, vocal and instrumental improvisation.”

<sup>131</sup> Abbreviation for “National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.”



**Prose Commentary:**<sup>132</sup>

“Currently working towards a Bachelor of Music which is why I’m taking a break from teaching.”

“I finished four years of a six year music education degree.”

“Current music student working toward degree.”

“In a year I’ll have a BM<sup>133</sup> in Jazz Studies.”

“Currently ABD<sup>134</sup> in a DMA program; will be completed by June 2015.”

“I’m in the process of obtaining a degree in music.”

“I started my DMA in September of 2013 and plan to graduate in December of 2014 or May 2015.”

“The Certificate is the Certificate of Achievement, Level One, sponsored by the Suzuki Association of the Americas.”

“Doctor of Music candidate.”

“In process of Bachelor of Music Education.”

“Working Towards a DME.”<sup>135</sup>

“I am working to obtain a bachelor of music and a bachelor of music education.”

“I am currently working on a doctoral degree in music performance.”

“Not quite finished with DMA yet.”

“Currently one year through my masters in orchestral conducting.”

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<sup>132</sup> The majority of these comments are regarding degree studies in progress and/or additional coursework or pedagogical training that has been completed.

<sup>133</sup> Abbreviation for “Bachelor of Music.”

<sup>134</sup> Abbreviation for “All But Dissertation.”

<sup>135</sup> Abbreviation for “Doctor of Musical Education.”

“Doctor of Musical Arts - All but dissertation (ABD).”

“I did a year of graduate studies in violin. I also have a distinguished high honors diploma.”

“DMA in progress.”

“Working towards teaching certification and a masters in music education.”

“Half done with a MM.”<sup>136</sup>

“Currently in a Master of Music program for violin performance with additional Dalcroze Certificate.”

“I made Abitur<sup>137</sup> with music in Germany. So it’s similar to an AA.”<sup>138</sup>

“Some grad classes toward MME.”<sup>139</sup>

“To be completed in April 2015.”

“Many graduate hours in music ed.”

“Curriculum and Instruction.”

“I have completed master level courses in special education.”

“Master of Music/ all but thesis.”

“Will receive degree in Violin Performance and Music Education.”

“Working on Master’s of Music Education (will finish July 2014).”

“Currently starting Masters of Music - Conducting Emphasis.”

“Pedagogy training with ---- and Suzuki; currently pursuing DMA.”

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<sup>136</sup> Abbreviation for “Master of Music” degree.

<sup>137</sup> Exams taken at the end of secondary education.

<sup>138</sup> Abbreviation for “Associates degree.”

<sup>139</sup> Abbreviation for “Master of Music Education.”

“4 years towards DMA.”

“Working on a Master of Music.”

## APPENDIX C: RESPONDENT DEGREES BEYOND ANSWER OPTIONS

**Bachelors:**

- Bachelor of Music in Music Theory (1)
- Bachelors in Music Theory and Composition (1)
- Bachelor of Arts in Music (1)
- Bachelor of Arts in Music History (1)
- Bachelor of Arts in English (1)
- Bachelor of Arts in History (2)
- Bachelor of Arts in History and Classics (1)
- Bachelor of Arts in Classics (1)
- Bachelor of Arts in Business Economics (1)
- Bachelor of Arts in Neuroscience (1)
- Bachelor of Arts and Sciences, English (1)
- Bachelor of Science in Librarianship (1)
- Bachelors in Business Administration (1)

**Masters:**

- Masters in Theory (1)
- Masters in Technology Education (1)
- Masters in Appalachian Studies (1)
- Masters in Conducting (1)
- Master of Music in Computer Music (1)
- Master of Music in Music Composition (1)

Master of Music in Orchestral Conducting (1)

Master of Arts in Early Performance Practice (1)

Master of Arts in Music, Theory Emphasis (1)

Master of Arts in Musicology (1)

Master of Arts in Economics (1)

MFA in Orchestral Conducting (1)

**Doctoral:**

DMA in Orchestral Conducting (1)

Ph.D. in Music Theory & Conducting (1)

Ph.D. in Fine Arts (1)

D.D.S.<sup>140</sup> (1)

**Minor/Certification:**

Minor in Music (1)

Certificate of Music Education (1)

Certification in Music and Business (1)

Diploma from Dr. Suzuki (1)

**General:**

Music Theory (2)

Composition (4)

General Music (1)

Piano Performance (2)

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<sup>140</sup> Abbreviation for “Doctor of Dental Surgery.”

Vocal music with a minor in strings (1)

Chamber Music (1)

Jazz Studies (1)

Orchestral Conducting (1)

Conducting (1)

Music Therapy (1)

Music Business (1)

Elementary Education (1)

Literature (1)

Psychology (1)

General Studies (1)

## APPENDIX D: COMMENTS ON SUCCESSFUL STUDENT TEACHING

### Program Requirements:

“Yes, student teaching was a total of 15 weeks divided evenly between elementary and secondary. I learned more during student teaching than in my 4 years at [institution]. There are great teachers in the neighboring counties, and it was a blessing to be able to learn from the best.”

“Each university has different requirements for student teaching or field experience. I attended [institution] and did classroom or hands on experience in several classes before I did my one semester of student teaching.”

“The university I attended required the Education/Music Majors to teach various kinds of music at elementary and secondary schools during the entire time we were at the university.”

“My M.Ed program placed me in a year long internship in which I had the opportunity to begin a comprehensive chamber music program for high school students as well as teach at the middle school level. I was observed by someone from the Education faculty once a week for an entire year. I am appalled at how little guidance supervising teachers are given in helping the student teacher be ready for a classroom and how little practical help is given by the universities in my area. I can’t believe they charge full tuition for it.”

“It was definitely an eye-opening experience, and I enjoyed it, even though it was difficult sometimes. I would have felt more comfortable if my student-teaching experience was 2 semesters long.”

“We had to observe conservatoire teachers, attend master classes, prepare lesson plans, record our teaching practices; our tutors came and observed us and we got detailed feedback on how to improve. We were also trained step by step how to teach techniques and develop students’ performances through the years commencing with beginners grades 1-3, senior grades, and music college level. This was for conventional teaching in college. This process also occurred in my Suzuki teacher training.”

### Type of Teaching/Setting:

“It prepared me for public school teaching. For private teaching I worked with John Kendall<sup>141</sup> for more specifics on how to teach and what order skills are developed in.”

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<sup>141</sup> John Kendall (1917-2011) is deceased and so including his name in these survey results does not pose a breach of privacy. Mr. Kendall was an internationally recognized string pedagogue and was an influential contributor in bringing the Suzuki Method to the United States.

“I did most of my teaching at a junior HS where I worked with an excellent supervising teacher. Not much hands on work at the high school.”

“It was in a high school with a well developed music program. I helped with all of the orchestras and a couple of bands too.”

“I student taught in a high school orchestra classroom and completed many clinical hours in a variety of middle school orchestra classrooms. These experiences prepared me for success in my teaching career.”

“We had a lab school at [institution].”

**Mentor Teacher(s):**

“It allowed me the opportunity to practice teaching and conducting in the real world for an entire year in the public schools... an opportunity that is hard to come by. It also paired me up with mentors who I learned from: what to do and what not to do.”

“I was placed in a program that had an excellent orchestra program that was well established. My mentor teacher was also outstanding.”

“My full time student teaching mentor immediately allowed me to begin teaching her classes which gave me lot of experience. I was even able to substitute for her two or three days when she was out of town. I’m not sure that my part time student teaching the next quarter would have prepared me enough because I observed him more than I actually taught and was only there part time. I also took a year long violin pedagogy course while I was getting my undergrad Performance degree. We learned, observed, and taught students privately as part of the course. I would definitely say that it prepared me to teach privately. We learned how to teach students from beginner to advanced levels, were able to observe a specific child’s lesson at each level and teach that same child on a weekly basis. We also were able to observe group lessons, which was not as helpful, probably because we were not able to teach during the group lessons.”

“I had amazing mentors who helped me reflect on my teaching so that I could become better. They were wonderful models of what to do and what works.”

“Though student teaching can never fully prepare you for a teaching job, I feel like I got exposed to many different situations, and worked with some very good teachers. I learned a lot from them, which is what I consider to be most important.”

“I had three collaborating teachers that helped me prepare in different ways. First year was overwhelming, but I was prepared.”



“Yes, I was able to choose my teacher.”

**General Comments:**

“I also had extensive private teaching experience, and taught during 3 years of college at the university lab school.”

“Yes and no, but you can never stop learning.”

“Teaching is a whole other skill, it something new that takes time and practice and an acumen that’s separate from what you need to play music.”

“Nothing like running your own program. Differences between urban and suburban school districts are vast.”

“As much as a program such as that could. So many variables and components of teaching like budgets, etc, can’t be taught because of variations between districts.”

“Especially the Masters degree since it was specialized in Suzuki.”

“It was in ----, and though it was a wonderful experience, learning how to teach is a very long process. One degree is the beginning, personal private lessons to develop ones own skills, finding mentors to learn skills was important and continuing education at several different colleges and Universities was on going for many years. This combination helped in the acquiring of the knowledge and skill needed to be successful.”

“I am Suzuki trained in all of the books and I have taken the practicum as well. This training is very thorough and I felt well prepared to teach.”

“I think I was prepared as well as is possible without actually having a full time job.”

“My student teaching experience exposed me to Suzuki students for the first time and I decided to get a Master’s degree in Suzuki as a result.”

“Suzuki teacher training is very hands on: one must observe classes, and record your own classes for teacher evaluation. Also, it is recommended that you watch other teachers and discuss their teaching and your teaching with them all the time! It is a long process, which allows you to evaluate your own teaching, as well as to talk to your advisors (teacher trainers), share experience with your colleagues. The auto-evaluation is also done through recording your own classes, which on their own is very instructive!”

“Teaching is a journey that I started and directed myself along from my student days.

There's always more to learn about teaching!"

"I completed my Suzuki certification with John Kendall and he offered/always gave a lot of helpful and beautiful information. I believe that all teachers must be open to the idea of continuing to learn forever. I believe that is one of the most important parts of being a good teacher."

"While not seeking a BME<sup>142</sup> degree, I did take classes and teach through a pedagogy program for 2 semesters, which helped me tremendously to get started comfortably on my own."

"While I don't have a degree in Music Education, I've done extensive work in the public schools, and certainly consider myself to be a completely capable string educator. Haven't been through the 'classes' - but certainly have had the experience working with strings at ALL levels over an extended period of time."

"Only my middle school orchestra student teaching was good preparation."

"Nothing I believe prepares you for being in a "real world" teaching environment, with your own students. I am very much in favor of doing as much student teaching as possible, but, the intensity of having your own position and program requires its own set of experiences."

"What DID prepare me was my extensive Suzuki training through the Suzuki Association of the Americas."

"I interned in teaching and then had experience before I actually went for my credential."

"HA! Each of my students have taught me a curriculum beyond description. The more difficult the student, the more I learned."

"Yes and No... I never used my degree to teach in a school music education program. But I did have a very WIDE range of levels that I taught. In 3 elementary schools I taught violin, cello, flute and percussion. In the high school I worked with 2 orchestras, the highest leveled one playing Pines of Rome!"

"Leaning yes - but I did A LOT before my student teaching to prepare me also. Student teaching was my first chance to put into place the ideas and practices I prepared during my degree (and mostly outside of my degree)."

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<sup>142</sup> Abbreviation for "Bachelor of Music Education."

“Although I answered yes, I don’t believe that there is any class or student teaching placement that can adequately prepare you for being on your own in the classroom, dealing with parent and student needs both inside and outside the classroom, administrative duties, interpersonal relationships with administrators and colleagues, etc. An individual’s student teaching placement can have a large impact on their success post-graduation, but there are so many variables that no two people can have the same experience including, but not limited to, time allowed to instruct with the co-operating teacher in the room, parent communications, etc. Learning to be a teacher, I believe, is a combination of preparation and information gained from college classes and students teaching, and experience in the classroom. I feel that the only way one can truly prepare to be a teacher is to get out there and do it. You have to be able to access the knowledge and skills that you gained as a student and have the ability to learn from trial and error, LOTS of reflection, and continued learning from mentors in the field and attending professional conferences.”

“I think I had to get into the classroom to see what kind of teacher I was going to be. I evolve all the time and keep learning.”

“I think I had taught for so long before I got certified that the subject of student teaching didn’t even come up. So I got plenty of practice on my own which is probably the best way to do it anyway.”

“I earned my teaching license while I was employed at a public school. I had on the job teacher training!”

“Yes in the vocal music program but I did not have a track to orchestral, which is another area of interest for my teaching.”

“I had a great deal of teaching experience before I did student teaching. Also, I did not go into a traditional public school job afterwards, so if you are referencing public school or classroom teaching specifically, I don’t think my experience applies.”

“Yes, because I was able to work with all levels of students for the entire semester. I would sometimes teach all grade levels in a single day, which taught me to adapt quickly to make my teaching style age appropriate. Also, my cooperating teachers had completely different styles of teaching so I was able to see different approaches and philosophies.”

“I think it kind-of did prepare me for teaching in the public schools. Had it been “one semester of student teaching” alone, then I might say no. But, I taught at a summer music camp for several weeks each summer for several years. And I had a private studio of 10 violins and 20 or so cellists for 10+ years. And I had been teaching college-level

music appreciation for 5 years. And then I decided to substitute teach in the public schools- only for band, orchestra, and choir classes. All of that combined with “normal” student teaching: Yes, I felt prepared.”

“Gave me the experience.”

“There is really nothing that can completely prepare you for the classroom. Teaching environments are very different from school to school, and job descriptions (especially in music) vary widely. Given this, I thought my student teaching experience was very valuable, and I picked up many insights and tips from my mentor teachers. My first couple years would have been considerably more difficult without it.”

“I think it is such a small amount of time and there are many variables. It is kind of ‘pseudo’ experience because it is not your program. I love the model in ---- where student teaching is for two years with some pay and with a supervising teacher. My sister in law teaches middle school English in ----. This sounds more realistic - with built in problem solving/discussion between new teacher and supervising teacher; kind of an internship model. Many other occupations/careers do this.”

“I learned a lot of good strategies for improving students’ playing and classroom management, which I use daily. I was in a setting that was very different, however, from the one in which I currently teach. I had to learn about recruiting, field trips, applying the state standards, integrating technology, and event planning all on my own, and it was very overwhelming at first.”

“Student teaching prepared me as well as it could. Many aspects (the organization/administration of running a program, responsibility, and communication with so many people) are things you have to learn by doing them.”

“My student teaching and National String Project experience prepared me very well to teach strings. That being said, some things about teaching are impossible to understand unless you actually do them in the profession (creating budgets, interacting with parents, scheduling, work/life balance, etc.)”

“I am licensed to teach K-12 music and my experiences leading up to student teaching and my actual student teaching experience provided me with opportunities to teach at different levels and in different specialties.”

“Yes, BUT, I don’t feel that any student teaching experience can accurately prepare anyone for their teaching. I took over for the teacher I student taught with and things were IMMENSELY different when I was the one in charge. Student teaching (and undergrad) taught me the skills of guiding myself so when I had problems I would be

able to find the answers I needed. Each teaching situation is vastly different; the best I think anyone can ever be prepared for is to be able to answer their own questions, and if not, be able to create the questions to find answers to.”

“It gave me the basics of what I needed. The rest is all on the job training.”

“For STRING teaching specifically, I do believe I was prepared.”

“It prepared me as much as a student teaching experience could. My Suzuki workshops during the summers also helped. I was fortunate that I had had teaching experience during high school, as I helped my mother, who was also an orchestra teacher. I knew I wanted to be a string teacher from elementary school and the teaching experience during high school solidified my goal. Teaching string music is one of my passions.”

“It did as well as possible! There is nothing like being the ‘real’ teacher, but my cooperating teachers gave me a lot of independence and I thought it was an extremely helpful experience.”

## APPENDIX E: COMMENTS ON INADEQUATE STUDENT TEACHING

### **Program Requirements:**

“Not enough individual podium time, not enough time to implement trouble-shooting strategies, too short of a time to get acquainted to working as a music teacher.”

“There was no hands on teaching experience as part of my pedagogical course at the conservatory I attended. But, my general education and my ability to synthesize my experiences as artist and teacher has enabled me to continuously solve problems and move my students forward. I have also created content as part of my pedagogical activities, rather than hew to some pre-existing (and often ineffectual) method or graded repertoire series.”

“Yes, but primarily for teaching in a school music program which I did in ---- and only for one year. I really didn’t have much other than a pedagogy class during my masters program that prepared me for private teaching.”

“Huge number of subjects were never covered, dealing with parents, repertoire selection, class management, and I should add that I student taught under one of the best teachers in the state.”

“Too short, too isolated of an experience. It wet my feet to teaching strings. Most of what I learned was on-the-job, over the course of many years. And still going.”

“Suzuki method and early string ed. were not part of performance degrees. MM did allow me to teach college-level private lessons and chamber music.”

“It was a very long time ago, a very good experience, but not enough.”

“More music specific classroom organizational ideas needed. More proactive and preventative classroom management ideas would have been useful. More assessment strategies needed. More music information from various cultures, especially those specific to the demographics of our country/region.”

“The type of program that I started teaching in was very different from the program where I student taught. The experience was helpful, but I had a lot to learn on the job. This problem would have been made less difficult had the coursework been more relevant to public school teaching.”

“I don’t feel like one semester can even come close to encompassing the teaching experience. I feel like having more observation and practicum experience throughout the

four years of an Ed. degree would be much more beneficial than an intensive semester.”

“I don’t think I was really ready to go into the public schools and participate in teaching when I did it. I think some time of observation would have been really helpful. I felt some what just thrown in. I loved teaching even at that early stage, but I didn’t do a great job for the kids that first semester. By second semester, I was doing better. Don’t know how more time could be provided for, considering that one needs coursework and practice time to get a degree, but observation of beginning students would have been very helpful. If they don’t get a good start, repair work on string students can be horrendous!!”

“I did three books of Suzuki training before going back to school and was extremely glad I did... I felt like the one-year course in pedagogy tried to include too many things and was basically the bare minimum of preparation for teaching. I am worried about my colleagues who have had only that preparation.”

“It wasn’t long enough, and I did not get any experience dealing with parents or administrators.”

“Needed more detailed instruction on how to set-up beginners with posture, technique, etc. The education classes needed to involve more actual string pedagogy?”

“Not enough time in each area. I did Elementary. And Middle with a month and half in each.”

“One semester could never cover what public school teachers are expected to know.”

“25 years ago, there was very little preparation for the student teaching.”

“Should have been longer.”

“It was not long enough - I would have benefited from having a whole school year. I would have also liked having multiple levels of students. My student teaching only gave me the HS<sup>143</sup> level.”

### **Type of Teaching/Setting:**

“Student teaching was in general classroom music and elementary/middle school orchestra. 18 years later, I started a public school violin program from scratch and nothing was applicable.”

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<sup>143</sup> Abbreviation for “High School.”

“I did half the semester teaching elementary general music, the other half which was supposed to be my string placement was really only two periods a day of strings.”

“First Quarter, I worked with elementary and high school choir, and filling in the choir library. Second Quarter, I worked with high school orchestra. I remember conducting only a few times.”

“The assignment was primarily band.”

“I was a gopher. Ineffective use of murine and ability, totally unstructured.”

“I had a good student-teaching experience with lots of control of one class. It prepared me more than the college curriculum had. However, it was only at the MS<sup>144</sup> level and there were many things not addressed. I would not describe myself as ‘adequately prepared’ by the time I graduated from college.”

“I was only high school, and my first job was elem. and middle school.”

“I had one semester in which I student taught MS and HS choral; elem. MS and HS strings; and general elementary classroom (I have a double major- elementary ed and music ed.). Back in those days, the late 70’s, we didn’t get to spend nearly enough time in the classroom before student teaching and weren’t allowed to do much as a student teacher.”

“I was placed teaching band and general music.”

“I was split between multiple schools and multiple teachers. Part of the experience was in classroom general music, rather than in strings teaching, so the amount of time was inadequate.”

“The school environment and demographics I was in for student teaching were pretty close to being the exact opposite of where I taught for the first three years of my career.”

“I student taught in large schools with well established programs. I then taught in a very small district with no time in the schedule, no place in the buildings, little acceptance of the addition of a string program to the curriculum (except for the superintendent, who hired me, and the school board), and the active opposition of the band and choir directors, who (in most cases correctly) felt that every string student would otherwise be in one of their programs, and the coaches, who felt that all out-of-school time should be spent on athletics.”

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<sup>144</sup> Abbreviation for “Middle School.”



### **Supervising Teacher(s):**

“He used me as a private (free) teacher to prepare his students for solo competition and a free accompanist.”

“I had no string teaching mentor provided by my program. My district provided one, but they were not always available as they were teaching full time as well. I found my own mentors when I had questions. A lot of my experience came from crashing, burning, and changing. Two years working full time and going to school full time really took it out of me. I am looking forward to just being able to teach my students and see what I can come up with.”

“Though it was many years ago, my practice teaching experience was not ideal. The elementary teacher I worked with was imaginative and helped my education, but the high school director had me spend almost all my time in a practice room giving private lessons to students on their orchestra music.”

“As with any training program, there are pros and cons. For me, my cooperating teacher and I had differences of opinion. She didn’t really let me have control of the classroom and would constantly ‘correct’ me in front of the students. That said, I did learn what not to do in certain situations and how I would run my own classroom, if given the chance. So, although I had a not so great experience in my student teaching, I would have to say that it did prepare me to teach.”

“I have been a Cooperating teacher for about 15 years with at least one Student teacher a year. I hear about a lot of other student experiences. By in large there is no curriculum for the cooperating teacher to follow and the student teaching experience is quite varied. Do you really get to teach? How soon? Do you choose a piece, work it to performance, and conduct at the concert? In our area I think cooperating string teachers are not that plentiful, and I think some of the students’ experiences may not be that worthwhile.”

“At the high school level, the master teacher did not allow me to work with the orchestra. Instead, I was responsible for teaching two beginning guitar classes. My middle school and elementary master teachers were excellent and provided many opportunities for me to create my own lesson plans and conduct the classes on my own with their supervision.”

“I don’t think my supervising teachers were very good. I often felt they were just interested in having someone take some of their work, not preparing me.”

“I was placed with a teacher who needed to retire. It was an experience of what not to do. The basis of my teaching is a combination of what I learned from my private and ensemble teachers.”

“I was unable to ‘take control’ of the class. My mentors allowed me less than half their time with the classes. I believe it was because they felt pressured due to spring performances and didn’t want me to waste time.”

“Inadequate cooperating teacher.”

“I did not care for the style & methods of the mentor teachers I was placed with. I imagine their methods were stale, outdated, and ineffective compared to what I was learning in pedagogy classes with my major professors.”

“My student teaching experience focused primarily on the musical aspects of teaching since that was what my cooperating teacher focused on. I don’t think that a second semester in the same setting would have been different. It would have been nice to get to work with the elementary strings teacher for a semester instead of just observing a few days. There are always going to be more things to learn and figure out when you have your own classroom. I wish I had known more about ways to get groups to work together in the social aspects.”

“My student teaching experience was horrible!!! My master teacher met me on the first day, gave me a list of his schedule and took off. There was no support from him, the university, or the other music teachers in that middle school. I nearly quit, but met John Kendall at an MENC<sup>145</sup> convention. He offered me a graduate assistantship and that changed my life!! I learned more about string playing and teaching than I had ever learned up to that point. That bad experience changed how I teach!”

“Poor supervising teacher, and indifference on the part of the education faculty at the university.”

“High school was not part of the experience, did not connect with cooperating/supervising teachers, overall lack of direction from supervising teacher.”

“Mostly because my leading teacher was an ----.”

“Elementary student teaching was excellent, high school not as much. All was in the quality of the cooperating teacher.”

“Not enough time, teacher was not interested in mentoring.”

“It only teaches you about a very finite possibility. There are so many kinds of teaching

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<sup>145</sup> Old abbreviation for “NAfME: the National Association for Music Education.”

and also environments. Also if your mentor is not the best you might have to retrain yourself.”

**General Comments:**

“My pedagogy studies primarily covered the very basics of guitar playing (nail preparation, proper sitting position, proper left and right hand position, etc). This approach was effective for teaching students starting from the high school level. Unfortunately, I discovered that it was difficult to teach younger students because of their difficulty to grasp technical concepts, to play a solo instrument, and in finding appropriate repertoire.”

“I had a great Suzuki Teacher Trainer, but it is my own personal feeling of inadequacy I couldn’t get over.”

“I feel I should have been more prepared for the student teaching experience before going in. Then I would have gotten more out of it.”

“Lack of thriving orchestra programs in the area.”

“When I was a student (for the first time), there was very little discussion about teaching, and no mentoring. The teaching diplomas I obtained did not prepare me for actually teaching, and the style of tuition I received was very dictatorial. I found myself teaching in the same way!”

“I feel that I need more sources to help me helping my students that are experiencing the difficulty that I never had.”

“I took only one pedagogy unit which was more philosophical than practical. I learned more later on from my mother, who is a violin teacher.”

“I needed more classroom management skills--how to teach rather than just what to teach.”

“I felt prepared to teach but not because of my student teaching experience.”

“The actual teaching was most helpful. However the experience did not prepare me to coordinate and organize my own program later on.”

“Before student teaching I had over 180 hours logged in the public schools, which made student teaching not my first time working with students.”

“[Institution] had no string pedagogy program.”

“I do not remember having adequate time with the high school students.”

“It did not give a complete overview of the school year. Teaching and observing during a full year would be much better in order to cover the scope of the curriculum as well as the non-curricular duties required of a classroom teacher. Also, it did little to cover the pedagogy and business side of studio teaching which also should be required of all prospective music majors.”

“Experience can never be taught and I just didn’t get enough classroom time.”

“The classroom experience was great, but the administrative side was completely left out.”

“Prepared me for schools with upper middle income students coming from well educated families. Did not prepare me for my first PS<sup>146</sup> job.”

“No introduction to the business and organization of running an instrumental music program. Band teachers were much better prepared.”

“Student teaching can never fully prepare you for the dynamics of the workplace. Examples include parents interactions, behavioral problems, students with special needs, etc. Nor can it prepare you for the politics of the school district or even an administration.”

“There are many things that I don’t think student teaching could ever quite cover, especially if the student teaching doesn’t cover before school actually starts and/or all the summer pack up work that takes place the last week of school or so including the wrap-up time after students are finished with school.”

“I did my student teaching in the spring, so I felt unprepared in starting up a school year, including setting routines and behavior management. I wish I would have either done student teaching in the spring, or have done a whole year (though a whole year would have been a financial hardship with no pay).”

“I did my student teaching in the spring. It would have been nice to experience the beginning of school procedures.”

“I was never really in charge of the class.”

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<sup>146</sup> Abbreviation for “Public School.”

“My degree work did not adequately prepare me, but the Suzuki training I took set me up very well. I followed through with that training to the point of achieving Teacher Trainer status.”

“Geographic and socio-economic differences were far too apart for an adequate prep.”

“My student teaching only briefly opened to me the world of public school orchestras (to which I had never been exposed before then). It did next to nothing to teach me about running a studio, or building a new program within a school setting.”

“I student taught at the end of the year (Spring semester), so I really did not know how to start the year, develop a budget and a good lesson schedule. I was also surprised to know that schools run by committees. Thirty-four years later I find students are no better prepared than I was. Things have not improved. Upper education needs help in these areas of teacher preparation. “

## APPENDIX F: DEGREES WITH MENTORSHIP:

**Bachelors:**

“Some supervision and guidance in choosing materials was provided under both degrees. I was also officially taking violin pedagogy for a quarter during my bachelor studies but most other guidance was informal from my violin professors.”

“Undergrad, supervised by ----, the director of the Suzuki program.”

“BM - ---- worked very closely with me and eventually hired me for the ---- Suzuki Program he ran.”

“Bachelor.” (7)

“Bachelor of Music Degree.” (2)

“Undergraduate.” (2)

“BM.” (10)

“Mus. Bac.”

“B.A. - my music advisor was my mentor. Also one of the music education professors.”

“BM Music Education.” (2)

“Public school teaching during BM.”

“Undergraduate (only for elementary strings project).”

“B.Mus The person who was overseeing my work was an organist.”

“During BM: I was mentored during my first year of Suzuki teaching, mentored teaching private lessons to younger undergrads in viola ped. class during teaching cert, mentored at all times while working with students (approximately two semesters).”

“BM - Violin Performance.”

“Bachelor Degree for Nursing.”

“Bachelor of Arts in Music.”

“When I had a cello studio during undergrad I did not have an assigned mentor. I always find mentor figures (not assigned) because I know there is always so much you can learn from others in the teaching field. My student teaching mentor did nothing to help me and obviously she was assigned. My first year teacher mentor helped me, though, and she was assigned by the district.”

“Bachelor of Music Education.” (3)

“B.A. in Music.”

“Largely during the latter part of my student teaching experience, I had a mentor during my undergraduate degree.

“Bachelor of Arts degree.” (2)

“For some of my private teaching my own cello professor mentored me during the time I was earning my BME.”

“I had a mentor for my bachelor’s in music education - he observed two days that I taught.”

“Undergraduate degree, during string project - our Master Teacher, ----, oversaw group classes and occasionally looked in during private lessons as well.”

“In my undergraduate degree for pedagogy there was teaching review.”

“BMusEd; (private teaching was unsupervised).”

### **Masters:**

“The MA course had a module which required one to find an experience teacher to act as mentor for one semester. (A very useful experience.)”

“MM in Violin Performance.” (2)

“MAT<sup>147</sup> degree.”

“Masters degree with pedagogue John Kendall and I would bring public school students and teach them in one of my class with Mr. Kendall and he would give me feedback.”

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<sup>147</sup> Abbreviation for “Master of Arts in Teaching.”

“Masters.” (19)

“MA - mentor teacher/professor.”

“MM.” (14)

“MM in Harp Performance.”

“Master of Music.” (4)

“Only for the Masters Degree.”

“Unofficially for while obtaining my Masters.”

“MS.”<sup>148</sup>

“Master of Music: DME.”

“Masters TA job Internship.”

“MM had teaching assitantships.”

“Masters in music education.”

“Suzuki training during master degree.”

“Master’s degree included long term Suzuki training so I worked closely with ---- and got her input when I brought her questions about my students.”

“Master of Music- Suzuki Pedagogy.”

“Masters in viola performance.”

“Had mentor during Master’s degree.”

“MA.”

“Pedagogy setting Master of Music”

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<sup>148</sup> Abbreviation for “Master of Science.”



“During my Master in violin Pedagogy I was supervised by ----.”

“M. Ed.”

“Master of Music -- professors with whom I was working as a GTA<sup>149</sup> in the university music department were mentors -- not teaching at the K-12 level however.

“In my master’s degree, only for 1 semester did I have a mentor, and that was for a single student they chose, for me to give 4 or 5 lessons to in front of the video camera. (It was a less-than-encouraging situation, as I felt I was a pretty good teacher, and the feedback I received did not agree.)”

“Master. Worked directly with a Suzuki teacher trainer.”

“Master’s degree. I was already an established teacher at that point, having started my Master’s in my 30s.”

“I had a mentor while I was a rehearsal assistant (masters).

“For the first year of my Master’s.”

**Doctoral:**

“Had already had 11 years’ experience at the college level when I went back to do the DMA. Didn’t need a ‘mentor.’”

“During PhD.”

“DMA.” (5)

“Only during my DMA.”

“DMA. School of Music chair.”

“PhD.”

“I currently have a mentor overseeing my teaching while I am working on my PhD.”

“DMA (pedagogy certification).”

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<sup>149</sup> Abbreviation for “Graduate Teaching Assistant.”

**Other/General Comments:**

“Possibly - my Mum, and the student’s mother (they were both school teachers!! - of maths, but Mum taught the piano and would accompany the student).”

“College.”

“Both.”

“Classroom vocal teacher was my mentor.”

“My applied instructors during my M.M. and D.M.A. observed my teaching occasionally and attended my students’ jury or recital performances.”

“I had a departmental chair/advisor serving as a mentor during these degrees.”

“Suzuki certification and ----.”

“My graduate advisor oversaw the beginning violin course.”

“My Mentor was ----, who was the unofficial head of the ---- program. Look her up. She is famous. She was an amazing teacher of other teachers, as well as her students.”

“All.” (6)

“Both degrees included mentored teaching.”

“Didn’t matter, it was not part of my degree requirement.”

“Music Education.”

“Partially.”

“Yes in grad school Not in undergrad.”

“I had a mentor in the public school during my licensure training.”

“Had a supervisor mentor from after school program.”

“I had two cooperating teachers who were with me the entire time that I was student teaching. I also had a center coordinator and a music educator who observed me on

occasion.”

“During certification process. Also, I was assigned a mentor during my first year teaching public school. The mentor was required to be someone at my school. She was very nice, but taught English and French. The orchestra teacher whose job I took ad retired. She was my mentor during my student teaching. She became my unofficial mentor during my first year of teaching.”

“In the B. Mus. Ed. Degree there was a mentor. During the M. Music degree there was no official mentor. Feeling the need for mentors, I sought them myself. My first teacher and youth orchestra director gave valuable insights into teaching classes. My violin/viola professor patiently answered many questions regarding pedagogy, mentoring me in private teaching. I also took private cello lessons from the cello professor with the an emphasis on learning to teach and gained another valuable low strings mentor.”

“Some of my teaching was through a Practicum course, in which my main professor/ adviser from my degree program observed my private teaching several times a semester. I also worked as an assistant group lesson teacher for two different full time faculty.”

“I had a mentor for my first year of teaching at each district. These years were before I started on Master’s degree. I always seek out people to learn from and share ideas with.”

“I only had a mentor oversee my teaching when teaching in a school.”

“I was on my own, but taking a pedagogy class at the time.”

“My pedagogy classes were experiential not theoretical, in that I taught private lessons under the direct supervision of our artist teacher for two years.”

“Yes!!! That was the beauty of the plan! We learned how to teach at the same time we were putting that education into practice. It was ideal!”

“I often received teaching advice from my private violin instructor and would present issues to him for critique.”

“Oversight from studio professor as a teaching assistant.”

“Sort of...my mom helped in accompanying...she was the ----. My violin teacher just recommended me, but later on the book we studied, by Galamian,<sup>150</sup> helped.”

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<sup>150</sup> Ivan Galamian (1903-1981) was an Persian-born violinist who taught at the Juilliard School of Music and established himself as one of the most eminent string pedagogues of the twentieth century.

“Not really, but I knew I had my harp professor to ask questions of, if needed. My prior harp instructor was also a resource I accessed, along with other professionals in the region, on an ongoing basis in my quest to become the best teacher possible. This perspective has not changed since earning my degrees.”

“After Bachelors, I did extensive Suzuki training while teaching in a private studio and a community music school. I had a Suzuki teacher trainer mentor.”

“For my BA, my college violin professor was the head of the program. For my MSW,<sup>151</sup> I was already in my 30’s and had been teaching for over ten years.”

“My own violin teacher provided comments on three of my ten Practicum lessons; we continued to have Pedagogy class during the practicum; my co-teacher at the orchestra program has been kind of a peer mentor (we could both use a real mentor).

“For my teaching license.”

“During my second degree in violin performance I “sort of” had my violin professor overseeing my teaching--she asked me how it was going and gave me suggestions, and I student taught for a one-semester long violin/viola methods class, but that professor never actually got to see me working with a student or see my students’ performance, sadly.”

“During my time at String Project, I had a professor watch my teaching very closely. It was stressful at times, but helpful in the long run.”

“I ran my own private studio during college.”

Chamber music setting (string quartet).”

“Primary instructor.”

“I already was a highly qualified teacher. I was working on my graduate degree while teaching.”

“Informal, but helpful! My past violin teachers, as well as some supportive school teachers. I would video tape lesson for critique.”

“Consistent mentoring during both BM and MM (starting in year 3 during BM).”

“Music theory pedagogy.”

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<sup>151</sup> Abbreviation for “Master of Social Work.”

“During my undergraduate degree program, [institution] teachers were all supervised. Now in my PhD, my teaching is supervised by my university faculty.”

“My summer teaching was overseen by a faculty member where I was working on my BM degree. My string methods teaching was overseen by a faculty member where I was working on my MM degree.”

“Certification process after BM and MM.”

“This degree did not focus on the teaching aspects.”

“If you mean a cooperating teacher, then yes.”

“Only slightly - I was doing Suzuki Training during the time and was encouraged to bring in videos of myself teaching for comments.”

“Professors.”

“Both bachelor’s (my violin teacher was my mentor) and my master’s (my Suzuki pedagogy teacher was my mentor).”

“There was a director of the String Project giving some supervision.”

“In a way, because I was hired to teach beginners where I had studied as a pre-college student. I had access to both my high school and college private teachers for guidance, if not exactly oversight.”

“I had an excellent mentor whom I worked with/for while completing my school building leader certificate. (Advanced Certificate.) I also had a mentor while completing my school district leader certificate.”

“Only a little bit in the youth orchestra - I was one of several assistants.”

APPENDIX G: ADEQUACY OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE  
BUILT INTO DEGREE PROGRAM

**N/A:**

“Teaching was not part of my degree program.”

“The teaching was not a built-in part of the degree program.”

**An Adequate Amount of Experience:**

“This was very well done at the Masters level.”

“I have always maintained a private studio of violin students alongside whatever academic tasks in which I am involved. Specifically speaking of the teaching included as part of my degree programs as a Bachelor’s student in Music Education, I feel that the experience was adequate -- if perhaps only minimally adequate -- for my preparation toward the career of school music teacher.”

“Adequate for teaching in a Private Studio Music Setting.”

“Currently working towards a Masters in Music Education and teaching certification. Teaching is very much part of the degree, through the university’s String Project, through many of my classes, and I am also coached and mentored about my private studio, and my orchestra sectionals job.”

“Even the most demanding programs simply do not allow for the volume discrepancy between student teaching and “career” teaching. In addition, significant demographic and regional change cannot be predicted or (ever) adequately simulated. However, I feel that I had significantly more teaching opportunities than many of my colleagues. I was more than prepared for technical and organizational challenges. Regional changes were the great challenge.”

“It was adequate, but I would have appreciated more experience. I believe that most schools do a better job with providing pre-service teaching experiences than they did thirty years ago.”

“It was great! That’s why I chose that program.”

**More Experience Than Truly Needed:**

“More than adequate—wonderful.”

**Not Enough to Provide Adequate Experience:**

“I would have preferred a more in depth approach with more observation and more input from other professors than just my own violin professor. However, at the time I did not have that desire as I was focused more on playing the violin than teaching it.”

“While I was free to explore and develop my own teaching style, I feel that I would have benefited from more guided structure in regard to my pedagogical approach. A clearer pedagogical model in the early stages would have helped me to develop my style with the benefit of existing pedagogical methods.”

**General Comments:**

“The only teaching that was built into any of my programs was one semester of practice teaching.”

“It would have been great to have more opportunities to teach outside the conservatory setting to music students of all ages and backgrounds.”

“More feedback and direction would have been much more helpful!”

“I think I should have done more time observing other teachers in the field. The most that I have learned from others is through observation.”

“In grad school I did tons more observing than required, which made me an optimal candidate when hired.”

“If I hadn’t done a lot of song leading/choral conducting as a Girl Scout, I probably wouldn’t have had enough time during student teaching.”

“It wasn’t built in exactly, but some circumstances (limited schedules) required a TA to teach undergrad chamber music sometimes. I also taught private undergrad/grad viola lessons during my teacher’s absence.”

“...given all the other teaching I had done.”

“While my teaching was not part of the degree program, it was required by the type of scholarship I had.”

“For private teaching, yes. For orchestral conducting and teaching, yes. For general string teaching, no.”

“For my master’s degree, it was perfect. For my bachelor’s degree, not adequate by a long shot.

“I did my student teaching as a masters student so I had lots more conducting experience.”

“It was not built in. Just work for stipend.”

“I chose to take a pedagogy class which continued privately between me and my teacher for another year after I graduated.”

“Since I was a performance major, I was only required to teach while taking the violin/viola methods class, and to observe teaching during the cello/bass methods class. I started the performance degree after being counseled that it was the best choice for me since I wanted to teach privately (and already was teaching prior to starting my violin performance program) and I was also asked to take the Suzuki Pedagogy classes where I would have had more experience teaching... but I have to say that just the methods classes would NOT have prepared me nearly enough for teaching privately. I did a ton of research, work, and observation on my own for years which prepared me for teaching.”

“My teaching experience was invaluable.”

“Being a GTA was not required, as the Master of Music program with an emphasis in music education expected us to already be teachers.”

“It was up to myself to get my own students.”



APPENDIX H: RESPONDENTS' COMMENTS ON MOST EFFECTIVE PREPARATION  
FOR STRING TEACHING

**My Degree Studies as a Whole:**

**Bachelor:**

“Bachelor’s of Music Education.” (5)

“BM.” (30)

“Bachelors.” (7)

“B.S. in Music Education.” (3)

“BA.” (5)

“Bachelor of Music Degree at [institution].”

“BME.” (7)

“Bachelor in Applied Double Bass.”

“Bachelor of Music.” (7)

“B.S. Music Performance.”

“Bachelor Violin Performance.”

“Bachelor of Music (Performance).”

“My Bachelor’s especially; I am still processing what I learned with that teacher.”

“BM in Music Ed.” (4)

“Bachelor of Arts in Music.”

“BMA.”<sup>152</sup>

“BA Music Education.”

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<sup>152</sup> Abbreviation for “Bachelor of Musical Arts.”

“BM in Violin Performance.” (2)

“B.A. in Music Degree.” (2)

“Bachelor of Music Ed and Performance.”

“Undergraduate - [institution].”

“Bach. of music: Not adequate preparation, but still I learned a great deal.”

“Bachelors of Music: Music Education Instrumental. (K-12)”

“Bachelor of Music plus certification process.”

“Bachelor of Arts in Cello Performance.”

“BA in violin and viola performance.”

“BS.” (2)

“BM Performance.”

“BA in violin performance.”

“Violin performance, bachelors of music, [institution].”

“My Bachelor of Music.”

“BM Viola Performance.”

**Master:**

“MM.” (33)

“Master in Music Education with Suzuki Emphasis.”

“MA.” (3)

“Masters degree.” (11)

“Masters Degree in Violin Performance, emphasis string ped.”

“The Master’s, as that is when I did some pedagogy.”

“MMed.”<sup>153</sup>

“Masters in Music Ed / String Pedagogy.”

“Master of Music.”

“MM with ---- (very analytical man).”

“Masters in Suzuki pedagogy.” (2)

“Masters degree (the portion I did).”

“MM in Suzuki Pedagogy.”

“My MM degree was worthless as a way to improve my teaching skills. I did it so I could move up the pay scale.”

“Masters in Social Work.”

“MM in violin performance.”

“MM in violin pedagogy.”

“MAT music education at [institution].”

“Masters Performance.”

“MM performance.”

“Masters of music in performance and Suzuki pedagogy.”

“Master of Music w/ Suzuki Emphasis.”

“Master of Cello Performance.”

“M Ed.”

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<sup>153</sup> Abbreviation for “Master of Music Education.”

**Doctoral:**

“DMA.” (16)

“PhD.”

“Especially the DME.”

“Doctor.”

“DMA (in progress).”

“PhD in Mus. Ed.”

“DMA - I did not take any classes for string pedagogy, but I listed my string classes below.”

“DMA with ----.”

**Other:**

“Artist Diploma.”

“My studies at [institution] were excellent.”

“Both the ---- and [institution], for so many aspects of my musical development.”

“Suzuki teacher training.”

“Harp performance.”

“Early childhood education with great string teachers, appropriate and wonderful private teachers for undergraduate and master’s degrees.”

“ALL - plus my own interests and intellectual capacity.”

“All degrees.” (7)

“Yes - Cello Performance.”

“My philosophy studies helped me learn how to think critically.”

“Learned from my own experiences.”

“Music Performance.”

“Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in performance.”

“Teaching philosophy.”

“Music education string emphasis.”

“Music Education.” (6)

“Cello performance.”

“All options listed below.”

“Viola Performance.”

“My university violin teacher was very effective in preparing me.”

“Nursing is also teaching so there was a lot of focus on teaching.”

“Instrumental Music Education.”

“Music therapy.”

“Teaching during my string studies.”

“Good overall preparation in both BM and MM.”

“Music performance.”

“BM & MM - business coursework in BM too, for self-employment...”

“Undergraduate degree and short-term trainings.”

“The combination of Bachelors in Music Ed and masters in cello performance.”

“The teaching experience itself, reading.”

“Both degrees: the education degree gave me a broad overview of the classroom, and the performance degree let me deal more with string technique.”

“Both of my degrees have proven essential to my teaching career.”

“High degree.”

“Pedagogy class.”

“Absolutely. We had great training at [institution].”

“Both undergrad and graduate degrees.”

“After graduating undergrad.”

“My college violin teacher was an EXCELLENT pedagogue.”

“Instrumental studies during my BM, MM, and DMA.”

“My experiences as a professional musician.”

“I had fantastic teachers from the very beginning. I learned how to teach by being well taught and playing at a very high level.”

“Masters and undergrad.”

“BM and MM (mostly MM).”

“My private studies taught me a great deal about how I would like to teach and also illustrated clear examples of how not to teach.”

“Viola performance.”

“Both degrees. My undergrad school. I did not offer a degree in Music Education so I was a Performance major...but the education classes I had to take for certification were really good.”

APPENDIX I: PARTICULAR CLASSES EFFECTIVE IN  
STRING TEACHING PREPARATION

**(A) particular class(es) during my degree studies (please indicate which class/es):**

“Conducting I and II, Instrumental Music Methods, Management and Administration.”

“Eurythmics was the best course I have ever taken.”

“Suzuki Seminar Classes.”

“Grad course in String Ped. at [institution] where all string faculty as a panel discussed string techniques with students.”

“Ensembles, private lessons.”

“Experiences as a teaching assistant.”

“Student teaching.”

“Double bass pedagogy.”

“Suzuki Pedagogy program.”

“Private lessons.” (2)

“Chamber music classes; vocal ensemble and classes.”

“String repertoire and string pedagogy.”

“String pedagogy (offered and taken in M.M. and D.M.A.).”

“String Pedagogy.” (13)

“Suzuki course with ---- during master’s degree.”

“String Ped., Suzuki Cello Pedagogy, Music Education seminars.”

“Pedagogy class.”

“Pedagogy.”

“Life.”

“Studies with Shin’ichi Suzuki and other teachers in Japan.”

“String methods - Not a lot of help.”

“String pedagogy in my MM.”

“All.”

“MM.”

“Pedagogy class, slightly.”

“Pedagogy Class and my own individual instruction.”

“String ped, ----.”

“Suzuki courses with ----.”

“---- String Methods.”

“Private lessons/Applied music, String Pedagogy, Music Philosophy.”

“Orchestral Bowings, All my string academy technique courses.”

“Figured-bass.”

“Violin lesson, chamber, and orchestra.”

“String Pedagogy class (1 year) at [institution].”

“String Pedagogy classes during Masters degree.”

“Violin Pedagogy with ----.”

“Elementary and Secondary Methods Classes.”

“Violin Pedagogy with ---- (DME).”

“BM.”



“Pedagogy, conducting, string literature, orchestra, lessons.”

“Studio classes and master classes (observing my teachers teaching others).”

“Class management.”

“Violin lesson.” (2)

“Suzuki training, string pedagogy sequences as cognates.”

“Suzuki Pedagogy.” (4)

“Viola Studio—I learned how to diagnose problems here.”

“Technique classes.”

“Cello lessons, cello repertoire class.”

“Materials Seminar in Music Education, ----.”

“My 12 years of teaching at the [institution].”

“Teaching Music in Higher Education (MM).”

“Long term Suzuki Training in both BM and MM.”

“My private lessons at university.”

“Suzuki Pedagogy Classes with ---- (long term training).”

“Elementary instrumental methods, high school string methods, elementary general music.”

“Music & Analysis, teaching string class.”

“Conducting, class piano, string pedagogy.”

“Conducting.”

“String Pedagogy with ----.”

“Long term Suzuki training.”

“Pedagogy, private lessons, string class.”

“String pedagogy classes taken during each of the three degrees mentioned above.”

“Pedagogy and orchestra.”

“Conducting, orchestra.”

“Music theory.”

“String pedagogy by ----.”

“Private Violin Lessons/Private Piano Lessons and Participation in the ----.”

“Private lessons with violin, viola, and bass faculty.”

“String techniques, 1 semester at [institution]. Private violin/viola study, 3 semesters.”

“Cello Lessons, Orchestra, Chamber Music.”

“Methods classes and repertoire classes.”

“Conducting, instrumental methods classes.”

“Pedagogy classes.” (2)

“MM, Applied Lessons and Violin/Viola Pedagogy.”

“Bachelors.”

“Private lessons--this really gave me the technique needed. The string methods class was also helpful in getting started.”

“Violin tech.”

“Principles of String Playing and Teaching course.”

“Music Analysis while working on MM.”

“Bachelor of Music Ed and Performance.”

“Teaching methods.”

“Behavior Management.”

“Dalcroze pedagogy classes.”

“Strings Methods classes, and Practicum class.”

“String Ped., Music Lit, Mus. Ed.”

“Practicum.”

“---- various classes.”

“Studio classes.”

“Cello Pedagogy.”

“String Pedagogy, private lessons, chamber ensemble, orchestra.”

“Elementary Music Ed. class, string pedagogy, private lessons.”

“Suzuki training and the training I received at [institution], definitely.”

“String Pedagogy course in my BM.”

“Music pedagogy. String/Suzuki/Kodaly.”

“Applied studio lessons.”

“----’s pedagogy class.”

“String Methods; Fundamentals of Music Education (Kodaly emphasis).”

“Classroom management.”

“String techniques.”

“Teaching the university string project.”

“Instrument practicum. All of the method classes, one semester each.”

“All of them actually.”

“Career skills.”

“Violin, and conducting.”

“String techniques and secondary instrument orchestra.”

“---, general music methods, and advanced instrumental methods.”

“You may be interested in knowing that the Suzuki method was never mentioned in my string pedagogy class. I discovered it after I had already been teaching public school orchestra for 1 1/2 years.”

“Violin Pedagogy Undergraduate Class (1 semester).”

“Psychology of learning, special studies in string pedagogy.”

“String methods.” (2)

“Lessons on secondary instruments, conducting, small and large ensemble.”

“String pedagogy classes in BM degree and Performance Diploma.”

“Orchestra and violin/cello lessons.”

“String Pedagogy Seminar.”

“Classroom management courses at [institution].”

“Orchestral Techniques, String Pedagogy.”

“Private violin lessons, violin audition repertoire class, studio violin class.”

“Suzuki teacher training.”

“Violin lessons, violin pedagogy.”

“Working as teaching assistant with high-level students.”

“Yes - Suzuki Pedagogy Levels 1-4, 5-10.”

“Pedagogy and Ensembles/Coaching.”

“Violin lessons.”

“Cello pedagogy I, with ----.”

“Violin lessons, Suzuki training, Orchestra.”

“Suzuki training (taken during and after my degree); String Materials Class.”

“A viola pedagogy class I took with ----.”

“Lessons, studio class.”

“Observing ---- at [institution].”

“String Ped. with ----.”

“String Pedagogy with ---- (MM).”

“Pedagogy classes at both undergrad/graduate levels.”

“Master classes with artist teachers had a very strong impact on my teaching.”

“Private lessons with ----, chamber music seminar with the ---- Quartet.”

“Lessons/Orchestra.”

“String Pedagogy during my Masters.”

“Pedagogy Class (1 sem.).”

“Theory Pedagogy course during Doctorate.”

## APPENDIX J: OTHER EFFECTIVE PREPARATION FOR STRING TEACHING

**Other:**<sup>154</sup>

“Shinichi Suzuki, his teaching and philosophy.”

“Self-learned as I got more experience.”

“Playing for Colleagues/Mock Auditions.”

“Informal discussions with my orchestra colleagues.”

“Past lessons, experience.”

“Observations at Suzuki Institutes.”

“Other college professors in music education.”

“Various mentors and life experience along the way.”

“My own desire, curiosity, and problem solving skills.”

“Trial and error in the studio.”

“My colleagues in my chamber group and at the conservatories where I teach.”

“All experience.”

“Kindermusik training & certification shaped me significantly...understanding young children and meaningful music interaction.”

“Interactions with other string teachers while performing in community orchestras, many hours spent on my own time observing violin teachers at [institution] - ---- studio and ----, participating in master classes and studio classes while in school.”

“A fantastic colleague with whom I had endless hours of discussion about teaching.”

“Cello lessons after I completed my degree at the [institution] and privately in New York.”

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<sup>154</sup> Several comments with names have been omitted. Other quotations had more context surrounding a name and so hyphens were used in place of names so that the comment could still be included.

“All my training and practice.”

“I felt like my personal teaching and experience playing in orchestra made me feel confident in my abilities to teach string.”

“Homeschooling my children through elementary school (they are now in public school, grades 4-9).”

“The many years of private lessons I received myself from excellent teachers.”

“Observing my own teachers and either emulating them or thinking what i would do differently.”

“The actual experience of teaching.”

“A good teacher during student teaching session.”

“30+ years of performing.”

“Participating in the University Symphony and Suzuki teacher training.”

“The sum total of my own learning experiences, select teachers along the way and the short term teacher training or outside classes I took.”

“Hours of observations during long term training and summers observing at Suzuki institutes.”

“Studying how my teachers taught.”

“Youth Orchestra experiences.”

“Montessori experience.”

“Youtube, master classes, and performances.”

“---- (teacher when I was a senior in high school and at the ----). His teaching is my role model.”

“All of the short-term teaching courses were helpful. Observation of fine teachers is the most critical element that helped me as I searched for my own style in teaching.”

“I did extensive study on my own of pedagogical literature. If it wasn't for Professor ----, though, I would not be adequately prepared by the ---- to teach strings.”

“I am a brass player (that also played violin) who took a strings job. I learned on the fly what worked and didn't work. I had a great deal of help from my colleagues. I loved that job!”

“Student teaching experience.”

“----, violin and Alexander Technique teacher (studied with her after high school and concurrently with my degree program to address injury).”

“Having my own children, and working with their discipline and education.”

“My own private research, as spurred on by my feelings of inadequacy and unpreparedness at my first teaching job.”

“Informal private teaching.”

“My dad's advice - he ran an incredibly successful public school band and orchestra program and he offers advice often about literature and rehearsal technique.”

“I started teaching because there wasn't a string program in my area for my children to participate in.”

“My ability to teach grew out of my own experience of having had an active teaching studio throughout the years of my masters and doctorate programs. I also have had wonderful teachers in the past, including ----.”

“Summer Festival with ----.”

“Doing research for my thesis on string pedagogy.”

“Private teachers I've had throughout life.”

“Conferences, literature, online resources.”

“A guest clinician that gave fantastic advice on how to teach instruments that are not your specialty.”

“Personal studies of the teachings and methods of ----, ----, and other pedagogues once I started to teach.”

“Studying all available violin methods, books on child psychology, development of talent, performance anxiety, etc.”



“X, I feel I learned mostly by doing.”

“Total life experience combined.”

“Mentor/boss in my first real teaching job, ----”

“Experience of just doing it.”

“Dalcroze as part of my degree program and as random classes here and there.”

“Personal study and research.”

“Teaching language skill in a foreign country: ESL<sup>155</sup> helped me make better weekly assignments for my music students.”

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<sup>155</sup> Abbreviation for “English as a Second Language.”

## APPENDIX K: MOST EFFECTIVE PREPARATION FOR STRING TEACHING

**COMMENTS:**

“Observing effective problem solving techniques in chamber groups, large ensembles, and lessons.”

“I felt most prepared to approach teaching by learning from my teachers and their teaching methods while they were teaching me.”

“Informal discussions with my orchestra colleagues and insights from my own private teachers.”

“Practicum course and Suzuki Teacher Trainer mentors were my best preparation!”

“Previous teachers.”

“Knowing that I wanted to provide a better experience for others led me to think about and find out a better way to teach and give others the tools needed to learn an instrument.”

“Evaluating my own videos with many different Suzuki teacher trainers is also a central part of my teacher education!”

“Student teaching.”

“The research I carried out for my MA forced me to think about and reflect on my teaching in a far deeper way than previously. This has carried on to the present day.”

“College teaching.”

“It's really the sum of many parts. I started to teach guitar when I was 13 after only playing for a year myself.”

“My grad school professor had the most profound impact on my preparation as a private teacher and performer.”

“Private Teachers, experience, observation.”

“Japan study and observation.”

“Suzuki Pedagogy (long-term at [institution]).”

“Teacher training courses I attend.”

“Suzuki training and---- was the best preparation for me for teaching, and my college cello teacher, ----, who always built pedagogy into lessons.”

“Shinichi Suzuki, ----, all my Suzuki training and observing.”

“My study and relationship with ---- was the most beneficial aspect of my preparation for string teaching.”

“John Kendall and my 2 year study at ---- program. I never received a degree from there, just post graduate study.”

“John Kendall's pedagogy classes and as his coordinator for his Suzuki program for ten years, getting to observe his master classes.”

“Suzuki Training and On-the-Job Middle School Training.”

“Observation of work done with Dr. Suzuki by ----. Work with Dr. Suzuki.”

“Combination.”

“In all, I would say that I gained a great deal of people experience from my high school private instructor, and pedagogy experience during my undergraduate years and time in public schools.”

“Each teacher I studied with influenced my ideas of teaching, from the really great teachers to the not terrific ones.”

“Although I value and appreciate all of the wonderful help and support I have received from all teachers and current colleagues, I feel very grateful that I worked with John Kendall from about age 4 on.”

“Suzuki training.”

“Sassmannshaus certification and String Pedagogy Class.”

“Self-motivation, reflectiveness, and practical experience.”

“Watching other people teach at Suzuki institutes.”

“Suzuki Cello Teacher Training courses - all.”

“My mother and my university professors.”

“Listening to other teachers' students at [institution].”

“Suzuki teacher training courses.”

“Can't do this - as I took something (through a sorting process) from everyone I studied with at every level.”

“My Suzuki teacher training is where I gained the most valuable information about how to play the instrument and how to teach it.”

“Really it is the totality, plus actual teaching experience.”

“My college teacher was an inspirational as well as pragmatic teacher, even though he did not spend time teaching me to teach.”

“General education in critical thinking and creative thought.”

“Long-term (one year) plus summers in Japan observing teaching.”

“My Cello teacher.”

“Self education -- workshops, master classes, reading.”

“Best learning experience: spending my summers as a teenager attending master classes in Europe and across US.”

“Private teachers from my youth.”

“I have learned from all of the musicians with whom I have worked. I have been fortunate to have studied and worked with dedicated musicians and teachers.”

“My parents.”

“My first year of teaching and substitute teaching for a semester before my graduate work.”

“All my teachers.”

“---- taught me the most about music and cello playing.”

“Being a really good player (really understanding technique and music) was the best

preparation I had to teach. Learning to teach was easy ... and yet a lifelong pursuit, but identifying myself as a real musician gave me the passion to want to teach.”

“Teaching over 40 students per year continuously for the last 8 years has prepared me to teach more than anything else.”

“My student teaching experience was the best preparation.”

“Paul Rolland.”<sup>156</sup>

“My Violin Professor in college and other violinists/mentors following college.”

“Suzuki Courses offer by the SAA.”

“Receiving good teaching myself.”

“Just learning to play helped tremendously. Being really analytical by nature helped. Knowing exactly what I wanted to hear and not accepting anything less made me successful.”

“My own good teachers (that were teaching and coaching me).”

“Suzuki Teacher Training and observations.”

“Suzuki teacher training.”

“Observing other Suzuki Teachers.”

“Short-term SAA teacher training, subsequent observation of established teachers/studios.”

“My preparation for teaching came primarily from the lessons of my own private teacher.”

“---- as my mentor and the fact that I had time during the academic year to practice what I was learning during long-term training in the summer.”

“Foundation.”

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<sup>156</sup> A Hungarian born (1911-1978) internationally renowned string pedagogue who made major contributions to teaching the fundamentals to string students. He was a faculty member at Simpson College and the University of Illinois.

“My music education/methods classes, and my job/internship in a teaching setting ----.”

“----. She helped me refine my own technique, and also regularly discussed with me why she taught things the way she did. (For instance why she taught her students to use a shoulder rest vs. no shoulder rest). I've carried a lot of her suggestions with me into my own teaching.”

“Long term mentorship and training from my two top and long standing teachers.”

“Suzuki Association of the Americas trainings.”

“High school music teacher. A colleague in music.”

“Mentors outside of my degree program.”

“Co-operative teacher and the string camp that I worked at.”

“Music Education professors.”

“A strong focus on keyboard harmony and figured-bass in combination with literature from the time period under study.”

“The two private teachers mentioned above. They taught me that good teachers come from good teachers.”

“Suzuki teacher training.”

“Fantastic colleagues who like to talk about teaching.”

“My student teaching.”

“My studio teacher in college who also taught a string pedagogy class which included a practicum experience String practices class in undergrad.”

“Bachelor of music (performance) and experience teaching privately and in a community music program.”

“My private teacher from age 12-17 was instrumental in my development as a teacher. He was always available for questions.”

“Watching others teach and learning from them.”

“My experience at [institution] as a whole and the help from my high school orchestra teacher.”

“High school teacher.”

“My teachers who knew how to teach technique and musical growth well.”

“College bass professor.”

“Former Suzuki teachers.”

“Assisting with training class for music ed. majors.”

“My degree program and my college/grad. school violin teacher, ----.”

“Observing master teachers teaching in the studio class/master class setting.”

“Kind, good teachers I had.”

“String pedagogy classes, conducting classes and student teaching followed by experience in the field.”

“My experience teaching at [institution] with ---- prepared me generally for my work in string teaching, but most specifically my wonderful experiences at ---- have done the most to mold me into the teacher I am today.”

“---- was the best teacher anyone could ever have. All the rest was puffle.”

“----: she had the courage and patience to address adequately the bad habits that I had developed. ----: his superb playing was immensely inspiring and I learned that seeking beauty should remain in the forefront of my work with a student.”

“Observing other teachers.”

“My university violin teacher, ---- My Suzuki Teacher Trainers from Books 1-9.”

“My high school teacher and then college private lesson teacher.”

“----, simply from taking lessons from him. He was great at explaining everything that it has helped me with explaining it to others.”

“On-the-job experience has been the most valuable—the more I teach, the more prepared/confident/effective I become.”

“My first school orchestra teacher as a child.”

“Homeschooling my children.”

“1) By far the most important thing that prepared me for teaching was being taught myself by excellent teachers and trying to mimic what they did. 2) Second most important was the experience of teaching itself. In a large part, I believe you have to learn to teach by teaching. A mentor can get you started in the right direction, but you don't figure it out until you sit with a student and struggle through the process of putting into words what it is you do with your instrument. Just as you can't learn to drive without a car, I don't think you can learn to teach without a student.”

“My violin teacher taught me that I had to understand WHY a technique works, and then be able to explain it many different ways. He showed me how to identify a problem, how to figure out what was causing the problem, showed me how to fix it, and then showed me how to practice it. He was harder on education majors, because we had to teach. Performance majors only had to play.”

“The more you teach the better you get.”

“Technique classes that taught what was important.”

“Watching and being with my Suzuki colleagues ---- at ASTA conferences.”

“My music therapy degree, my college violin professor, my college jazz professor, and 30+ years of performance.”

“My performing in orchestras throughout the years kept my skills strong.”

“Experience! The deepest learning is in doing!”

“My Suzuki trainer.”

“----’s influence as a private teacher and orchestra director laid the foundation then later became and continues to be my primary mentor. ---- instilled a high standard for orchestral teaching and taught us invaluable lessons about people, cultures, and the role of music in lives through international travel with the orchestra. ---- instilled high standards for the teacher's personal musicianship as a necessity for effective teaching.”

“Growing up, my mother was an active piano teacher and was an important role model for me; having some hands on experience teaching during college; as well as a short pedagogy course after college were both very helpful.”

“1. University symphony conductor, 2. Conductor of a community chamber orchestra, 3. A large church-sponsored symphony orchestra.”



“DMA and ----.”

“Teaching to non-majors.”

“I have to say all above answers were so important! But having mentors ---- in a practicum setting for so long was probably the most helpful.”

“My teachers.”

“Working as a teacher and performer professionally during my degree studies.”

“Suzuki teacher training.”

“It's cumulative.”

“BA in Music Ed and orchestra teachers growing up.”

“First year teaching job.”

“Suzuki Trainings and mentors who believed in me.”

“Long term training gave me the skills to get started. Once you get started you learn mostly by teaching and gain insights along the way from those you encounter and from ongoing training each year.”

“Suzuki teacher trainers, my private cello teachers.”

“My Suzuki teacher training has been the only ‘formal’ training I have received and has given me a firm base upon which to build my own teaching style.”

“This is a hard one... If I were to pick one person then it might be unfair for others since I think I've learned a lot from different people at different stages in my life.”

“I don't want to answer this because it takes many experiences to help prepare someone to be an effective string teacher. I am going to say ---- only because of the type of class it was. She was able to watch my teaching and give me very specific feedback. Though this class would not have been effective if I didn't have all of the prior experiences.”

“John Kendall.”

“Two years with John Kendall.”

“Apprenticeship from ----; Suzuki training.”

“Professor ----’s precision in diagnosing technical and musical problems is what provided me with the pedagogical repertoire for teaching my own students. Because of him, I know exactly which exercises and etudes out of hundreds to utilize in correcting specific technical problems. My knowledge of early string pedagogical repertoire and teaching structure comes from memories of teaching methods used by my high school music director and private lessons teachers.”

“Getting in there and actually doing it.”

“My primary teachers were my role models. Each of them gave instruction that gave me new insight that I have incorporated, but also the written material they shared...Galamian, DeLay,<sup>157</sup> Suzuki etc.”

“Another Suzuki teacher and the Suzuki literature and parent connect videos online.”

“Childhood cello teacher. She had workshops for her students to learn music theory and technique. She also pushed us to go to theory/performance camps.”

“Teaching in a string project and a mentor.”

“Workshops with experts constantly refresh and improve my skills.”

“Studying the workings of music (theory, history) while in school, as well as my individual teachers.”

“My applied violin professor ---- was able to communicate how to combine artistry and technique through every lesson, studio class, scale class, and etude class that has helped me both in playing and teaching. ----'s short teacher training program was such a great reinforcer after having taken String Pedagogy as a class in terms of how to teach group classes and setting up beginners.”

“My student teaching experience with ---- prepared me better than anything else I did.”

“---- prepared me the most, without question! But the richness of my teaching and the depth of understanding I have for the literature, to help bring the music to life in a more organic way is due to ----.”

“Probably my high school orchestra/band teachers and my undergraduate viola teacher.”

“Teaching experience.”

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<sup>157</sup> An American violin teacher who taught at the Juilliard School of Music. She was one of the most influential string teachers of the twentieth century and lived from 1917 to 2002.

“It all combines - and also I have learned by teaching. I am still learning.”

“---- and my first Teacher Training experience were the most influential. She was excellent at communicating the need for a good beginning, how to set up a child for that good beginning, and what expectations were reasonable. A lot to deliver in a short period of time, but she did it.”

“I learned a great deal about sequencing of skills and what those skills are from Shin'ichi Suzuki and from other Suzuki teachers. However, I had difficulty imparting those ideas to parents and children because I didn't understand parents and children. The MSW<sup>158</sup> I completed at [institution] and my studies in the Child Development Program at [institution] gave me the skills to be effective as a violin teacher.”

“Substitute teaching in my area of expertise helped to convince me that I was doing a good thing.”

“For strings specifically, ----'s classes and then actually doing it; for teaching generally and teaching music/musicianship, my Dalcroze teachers.”

“It would probably be my professors at the Universities and the teachers who I worked with who prepared me most for the job.”

“Getting the Suzuki training plus all of the required observation and continued trainings and observations were the best preparations for my teachings. I believe any instrument teacher would benefit from taking at least book 1 and philosophy of the Suzuki method, even if they don't teach Suzuki.”

“---- orchestra/opera during teen years. Music Lit in DMA. Pro-level ---- orchestra/chorus TV, CD and Radio production and performance.”

“My violin professor Dr. ---- and my private teacher ---- taught me the most about violin technique and how to solve playing problems.”

“My own Suzuki teacher and my favorite teacher trainer, ----.”

“Student teaching, working with ----, and watching other string teachers work (learning tips and tricks).”

“My private violin teacher in High School Mr. ---- who taught me the skills I needed to play and Mr ---- a chemistry teacher in High School who showed me the love of teaching.”

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<sup>158</sup> Abbreviation for “Master of Social Work.”

“Teaching experience and reading pedagogy books.”

“----, my private teacher, through private lessons.”

“My private teachers and then my own reading and research of methods and education ideas.”

“My masters cello professor, who had students of a wide variety of levels and allowed his students to observe others' lessons, and who would offer to teach my students once/month while I observed.”

“My cooperating teacher.”

“My music education professors were the most helpful. They gave me valuable information and helped shape me into the musician and teacher that I am.”

“The items that most prepared me for string teaching were mentors during my degree programs, observing and working with master teachers, and student teaching experiences.”

“I think the things that most prepared me for teaching were observing great performing and teaching artists (some in Suzuki Teacher Training), my actual experience teaching, and my own study outside of college of pedagogical works.”

“My own experiences best prepared me.”

“John Kendall Dr. Suzuki.”

“Private instructors, pedagogy mentors.”

“Exposure to many styles of teaching.”

“My experiences teaching outside of my undergraduate education.”

“Teaching private students and being mentored by ----.”

“The advice I received first from my Dad about teaching orchestra when I felt completely out of my league when I got handed an orchestra directing job out of the blue was incredibly helpful and important. The advice I have received from ---- over the past 7 years has made all my teaching go from below average to a place where most of my students find success in their playing.”

“Private teacher from childhood; Supervising teacher during student teaching.”

“String technique class.”

“I have a love for orchestra music. My classes and teachers helped me to learn more about music and be prepared for teaching. I wanted to share that love of music with others.”

“Being in a teaching environment as a Masters student, teaching assistant to ----.”

“Substitute teaching all subjects for classroom management, and string project teaching which was closely monitored by the string quartet in residence at the time.”

“Student Teaching as part of Masters work.”

“My string techniques teacher.”

“Through experiences with mentors, I developed my own teaching enthusiasm and style.”

“Suzuki trainings with ---- consultation with my past teachers - video taping lessons for critique with expert teachers.”

“High school orchestra teacher.”

“I have often felt that the summer I spent at ---- was VERY helpful.”

“College band instructor and high school private bass teacher.”

“Being my children's practice partner and observing the journey from Twinkle to college 3 times was the MOST beneficial in training me to be a string teacher.”

“My short term Suzuki training classes because they were so specific and detailed and required a lot of observation hours of excellent teachers.”

“I really feel that my degree preparations (both undergrad and grad) set me up for excellence in being a music teacher including that of string teacher, although I have taught more than just strings/orchestra throughout my career.”

“My individual instructors on my instrument.”

“My violin professor in college.”

“Observation of more experienced teachers at my first jobs at community arts schools.”

“My mother, who taught alongside me, and invited me to discuss each day's lessons with

her for advice. ----, as I watched her teach my son, and also as she provided a one-on-one training session for Book 1.”

“The voices of all of my teachers.”

“The example set by my teachers.”

“Studying pedagogy with ---- was the single most useful thing I did to prepare myself for later string teaching. I was able to gain useful classroom experience through working with her in the String Project setting, and I also learned how to work with students in any level from completely new beginners to moderate and advanced high school students.”

“Lessons on secondary instruments. Not group classes but lessons with a professor.”

“During my bachelor's training, a local orchestra director visited and shared his experience and advice with us. He recommended that playing through each part - no matter how bad you did it - would give you insight into the struggles of the students. This he pointed out was most important on instruments that you feel less qualified to teach. This also helped me to learn more about the pedagogy for these instruments.”

“---- conference with sessions for band teachers who happened to teach strings.”

“Learned by Experience.”

“My first year of teaching at the Suzuki School of ----. My boss accompanied and critiqued my teaching for the first year, and I learned a ton through her criticism and encouragement.”

“My violin professor.”

“Honestly, the best teacher for me has simply been experience, and getting better at my own instrument. I also have learned a lot from other professional string players simply from playing in orchestras with them, or conducting orchestras they have been in.”

“My beginning teacher.”

“Youth Orchestra. I was hired to learn to teach at a young age and had an amazing mentor.”

“Hands on experience teaching while I was a student in college starting with undergraduate. This helped me get on the job learning and not be afraid to make mistakes. Specific experience includes teaching/conducting/directing the women's choir and string ensemble during my undergraduate studies, working as assistant opera

conducting during my masters studies, and all my DMA TA experience.”

“Working with a teacher trainer and teaching at the lab school.”

“All my individual lesson experience mattered, but perhaps ---- the most.”

“Teaching privately and having a good ensemble experience in my bachelor's degree studies.”

“Student teaching in high school setting Bass studio lessons as secondary instrument.”

“Taking private lessons for 20 years. Working as a professional musician, in chamber music, solo work, gigging, orchestra playing, teaching.”

“The whole of my experiences with the Suzuki philosophy, and my own observations made during my degree programs.”

“Supervising teacher for student teaching.”

“The long term Suzuki training M.M. degree, combined with teaching string methods during my Ph.D. work.”

“My private lesson instruction from ----. She was also one of my mentors while I was a rehearsal assistant during my masters degree.”

“My early childhood experience as a Suzuki student with ---- as my first teacher and mentor.”

“My first teacher and her teacher (a highly respected and known Suzuki teacher).”

“All private violin lessons with various teachers; Playing chamber music as an adult.”

“Community Outreach Programs because I team taught and was able to get a lot of feedback.”

“Suzuki training with ----.”

“My mother/string teacher who facilitated my teaching experience during high school & my close relationship w/the teachers named above. Suzuki workshops & masters degree w/Suzuki emphasis.”

“Experience teaching has helped the most; any extra training since then has helped to clarify and reinforce better teaching techniques, however without the experience of

teaching, my training experience most likely would not have been as beneficial.”

“My high school orchestra director.”

“John Kendall.”

“My college private instructor, college orch. directors, and after that, field experience.”

“College professor was excellent at explaining the ‘why’ behind technical points; that has been extremely beneficial.”

“My Suzuki Teacher Training courses.”

“Multiple Suzuki workshops.”

“Performance experience and student teaching supervisor.”

“Suzuki Training.”

“Simply teaching experience - the first year was rough, the second year was better, but by the third year I felt I was much more able to read my students and know what path to take them on. It is a continual learning process, but actually teaching was the best way for me to learn.”

“Growing up as a teacher's kid (very actively participating in my parents' jobs) gave me teaching skills. My performance degrees gave me the technique to apply those skills specifically to strings.”

“Aside from the Suzuki training, I never had any formal teaching training, but I did a lot of observing of my teachers and how they related to students. From ---- and ---- I learned strong fundamentals of string technique, and from ---- I learned to always look for ways to connect with students more effectively (and also some more string technique).”

“John Kendall.”

“Teaching in the primary school (job outside of my degree program) AND my fiancée both helped me more than anything else.”

“Teaching 36 hours at community music school.”

“Undergraduate violin teacher -- concise instruction and explanation of sequence of methods/etudes/repertoire.”



“What I've come to find in my teacher training courses is that my early foundation in the Suzuki philosophy has shaped the way I view music and life. I think taking lessons from them showed me how to teach myself, which has informed how I teach others. My work in college reinforced this approach.”

“The parents and students I taught. The experience of teaching itself.”

“DEFINITELY my entire Masters degree experience. I had very relevant training, constant and immediate feedback on my teaching, lots of students to practice teaching with, a chance to work with group classes and orchestras. It was enormously helpful.”

“Suzuki teacher training through the SAA.”

“My cello teacher during my MM studies was also my pedagogy teacher, through this class I learned most of what I know about teaching.”

“Private teachers.”

“Nothing nor none, actually, it was more the hands on experience and learning very fast once on the job.”

“Learning by experience/observation of my teachers/ Suzuki training.”

## APPENDIX L: FINAL COMMENTS FROM RESPONDENTS

**COMMENTS:**

“I was raised to care deeply about music and indeed all forms of great art. My family regularly attended several concerts per week, plays, and art exhibits... as well as studying our instruments. As a teacher-trainer myself I do sometimes encounter young teachers who would greatly benefit from more mentorship and teaching supervision. It could be helpful if this was part of their degree program. However, many of us learned to teach by having good teachers ourselves and immersing ourselves in the study of our art-form. Also, remember that becoming a fine teacher is a long range project, and good teachers learn from their mistakes as well as their successes. For this reason I particularly like the SAA approach of viewing teacher education as a life-long process.”

“As we consider increasing time in some areas of teacher training, we should not forget to consider coursework that does not effectively help prepare prospective teachers, and eliminate those.”

“I feel very lucky to have had access to the resources and experiences that I've had to prepare me for teaching. I have too many colleagues and friends who did not receive these opportunities or benefits and I would love to see the the level of preparation and mentorship that I had be the standard for music education.”

“Degrees did not prepare me for being a successful teacher. Knowing that I didn't want to replicate my experiences led me to discover how to be a great teacher.”

“I do find that there is a mismatch between the level of 'artistry' I was engaging in as a performer (30 years ago) and the teaching I have engaged in, which, most of the time, is anything but 'artistic'! In many ways, most of the teaching I do, even with the more advanced players, is light years away from the teaching I received as a young player. This is perhaps what has made the teaching experience particularly difficult, as I had such high expectations of both myself and my students! Only experience has helped bridge this gap.”

“The harder you work on your own playing, the more you have to offer future students. Pay attention during studio class!”

“I am not a fan of the separation of music students early on into "performers" and "teachers" - most performers end up teaching (some great, some not at all well) and there are also teachers out there who can't perform and aren't great role models for learning an instrument. Teachers need to continue to network and develop, and it's important to do this, and contribute back to the community to support growth in excellent music education. All the best with your research!”

“My two private bass teachers, ---- and ----, are primarily responsible for my success in teaching. They modeled what excellent teaching was each week during my own lessons by teaching me with skill, creativity, and care. They provided me with knowledge, guidance, and inspiration, and I will be forever grateful to both of them for essentially making me the teacher I am today.”

“My string education, by that I mean my lower string education was pretty non-existent. But that's because my undergraduate school was in the midst of hiring and rehiring teachers. But that doesn't really approach the topic of incorporating pedagogy into the orchestral classroom, which I think encompasses most string music education people. If they didn't, half of the programs wouldn't get off the ground as a lot of schools don't do pull-out lessons. It'd be interesting to see a survey done on teachers who have the opportunity to teach their string students privately and then have a group class, as compared to those that don't have the opportunity to teach their students privately.”

“There are two sides to the pedagogical coin: the benefits of a system that is in touch with the most current understanding of humanity as a race/the loss of personal distinction through system or method.”

“I feel that I was an adequate teacher when I first began teaching, but the Suzuki method and my work with John Kendall changed my life. I became a much stronger teacher and violin player.”

“I feel that life-long learning is a very important and beneficial process for all.”

“I like to teach violin. I love this job.”

“There's nothing like learning from one's mistakes to make a good teacher.”

“None of my degrees required pedagogy courses, though colleges usually do now. I took the Suzuki course during my master's degree as an elective, and it was immensely helpful. The institutes provided me with the opportunity to learn both from great teachers and from bad ones, and I was able to hone my skills in my private studio. That foundation helped me become a much better college teacher.”

“I don't think one can replace or replicate experience. At [institution], we try to provide a setting in which students who are interested in teaching can teach peers or young students with guidance. I find that this is a very valuable experience.”

“I'm not sure of the focus of your study based on the questions you have asked. Are you trying to find out if outside work or coursework best prepares people for string teaching? I would say both do. Excellent teacher trainers and observation opportunities are the best preparation in my opinion. Studying teaching/pedagogy is essential in our field whether a

performance major or education major.”

“My degrees taught me how to learn. My most valuable learning experiences began after graduation when I was able to design my own curriculum.”

“In traditional performance studies, students mostly learn to teach by being taught. IMO<sup>159</sup> this is adequate (barely), and can produce good teachers, but some structured supplementation (e.g. Suzuki training) is desirable.”

“My goals, as outlined to me by my teacher, were to become the strongest player I could become, and the rest would follow.”

“My current teacher education comes from attendance at SAA and ASTA Conferences, plus the sharing of ideas with other colleagues.”

“I hope my preparation for teaching is somewhat irregular. I feel that I am a good teacher, but was not well prepared. Am still learning.”

“All of my schooling contributed to my development as a musician immensely. It just happens my best teachers were those I had before college.”

“I think it is very important to maintain a balance of playing and teaching so that you can put your own teaching ideas into practice and see if they work in your own playing. Never be afraid of what you don't know, and keep learning from your students and your colleagues.”

“Learning is a lifetime accumulation of experiences. It is difficult to pinpoint one thing or time. Best wishes.”

“My inherent scientifically-oriented world view led me to study and critically analyze playing and teaching.”

“I am concerned that some of the young people that I have worked with don't have good technique on their instrument. They don't understand technique and haven't played with good orchestras and chamber groups. On the other hand, I am super impressed with how many of my own former students are now excellent string teachers who are not only great violinists (violists, cellists, bassists), but are great improvisers, as well, and can teach that to their students!”

“These course are also highly recommended to string teachers who may not anticipate teaching Suzuki (e.g. school music teachers).”

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<sup>159</sup> Abbreviation for “In my opinion.”

“I was in college a LONG time ago and since then, programs have changed dramatically. I feel that colleges are taking pedagogy much more seriously, but in my experience teaching cello pedagogy for a few years at [institution], it was very difficult for performance majors to realize that they would not make their living solely on performing. Teaching is a lifelong learning experience and it is extremely hard to compact and streamline pedagogy. Plus, the most successful teachers are the ones who really truly love doing it.”

“I have had many Suzuki workshops, read much about string pedagogy, and taught numerous students taking them from beginning stages to major concertos. My formal training was focused on performance and not pedagogy, though as a teacher of pedagogy at this point, I think this is important.”

“Though I had a degree in Performance, I really feel that taking training in Suzuki units not only helped my teaching, but also significantly developed my own playing abilities.”

“My first job out of college was as a harp instructor for an inner city school program. I feel that learning by doing in such a unique situation helped prepare me for future teaching endeavors.”

“No preparation can completely prepare you for simply being in the trenches and doing it. Tons of degrees and hoops to jump through do not make a good teacher.”

“In the 70's Suzuki Training was at workshops and not a specific level. It was Pre-Twinkle through Book 10 all at once! It was traveling and tons of observation that really helped train me for what I do now.”

“Most definitely continued to develop teaching skills in maintaining contact with fellow teachers.”

“Ask questions about experiences from retired music teachers.”

“A lot of influence also came from colleagues, and fellow musicians that I interacted with throughout my undergrad, masters degree, and beyond. It's hard to qualify the value of hours spent talking shop with these individuals, but that interaction is and has been so valuable to my teaching. I should also mention I am married to a violinist (performer and teacher) who also has a degree in string pedagogy.”

“Learning how to teach is not enough, you have to be given a chance to actually try out what you've been taught in a safe environment. And even being given the chance to teach on your own without the safety net available, such as when I was able to substitute for my mentor teaching in her absence. I also feel that my Pedagogy course was most important in learning how to teach the technique, but that my student teaching was most important

in learning how to run a program and teach a group of students.”

“I feel very strongly that for me, focusing on my instrument (violin) in performance degrees was the best way to prepare for teaching. The in-depth study, combined with wonderful teachers, helped me to understand my instrument in a way that best prepared me to work with my own students. To me, in the end, it is about knowing your craft (playing violin), and about the student-teacher relationship, and I think I learned this best by experiencing it.”

“I feel my combination of Ed degree, short-term and long-term training makes me more versatile than if I had only one of the above. From the Ed degree I learned invaluable classroom management skills which are discussed only peripherally in Suzuki training, plus some child development stuff also covered more scientifically/extensively, and from my short-term training I gained insights from teachers I wouldn't have been able to train with long-term. From my long-term training I received in-depth mentorship and comprehension of skills, teaching techniques, history, and chronology. I sincerely wish everyone could have the same array of resources, and I feel very lucky to have had the background I have.”

“I learned a lot by example, both how to and how not to teach. Probably more of the latter plus learning from experience.”

“I did much of a degree in music education, as well as violin performance, during my undergrad (almost 3 years of coursework and practicum teaching), but did not finish the degree as I found a large number of my professors generally ineffective and not particularly knowledgeable -- and found the program itself to be rather useless as a training tool. And this was at one of the "best" MusEd programs in the country. For what it's worth.”

“In many ways, the fact that I had poor training as a child and had to re-do everything as an adult, led me to be a very analytical and organized teacher.”

“Even more than playing an instrument, I feel as though teaching is something I'm always learning how to do. Whenever I feel like I have it figured out, another student comes along who challenges my assumptions and necessitates finding a new approach.”

“I am having a hard time filling out this survey. The questions refer to 'string teaching,' but in my experience, public school string teaching, private lesson string teaching, and collegiate string teaching require overlapping but often unique skill sets. My answers are unique depending on which kind of teaching we are talking about. Also, are we talking about teaching a skill to students, or do you also include dealing with school administrators, parents, scheduling recital space, etc.? I'm not sure what information you are looking for.”

“I felt like my education-related coursework during my degrees was largely unhelpful and disorganized, and most of what I learned about teaching was through experiences away from the university (student-teaching, Suzuki training).”

“My violin lessons were the most instrumental in how I teach technique. Now I am one of the best teachers for technique in my area. My ensemble directors modeled what to do in a group situation. My music education teachers were much less helpful. I learned most by application through my years of teaching.”

“Actually, although I know I'm somewhat effective, I've never felt very equipped. To this point, I've always had a full-time job elsewhere and never tried to build a studio; all my teaching has been at the request of parents with whom I was acquainted. But I do like teaching, and as I head to graduate school this fall, observing teachers (especially teachers working with beginners) and getting formal Suzuki teacher training are high priorities.”

“I have a very successful guitar teaching studio and was asked by my instructor (who taught at the university level) to teach a class every other year, which involved skills in teaching children. This class was offered only every other year, and I believe I was the only one that taught them about children (in a one-hour lecture). I think that a class on the stages of growth & development for children and adults would provide an excellent foundation for all string students. This class could be taken in another department of a university such as psychology. From there, if students were required to run a class for a full semester or year at a boys and girls club along with a mentor, the theory would be followed up by practical experience. I have a sense that would be more than enough experience for a graduating student at the bachelor level to feel very prepared to work with children. The other aspect is that the students need preparation in running a business, so they can successfully market their teaching. One thing to keep in mind however, is that a guitarist must have a passion to teach - if not, there will be no success.”

“I appreciated doing my teacher-training outside of a degree program - I was able to continue once my degree was finished and apply it to my private studios. My MM in education helped to prepare me to teach at the college level through experience, and also my teacher's guidance and example. My BM at a conservatory did not offer much in the way of pedagogy, but helped me to learn how to get myself to a high level - and thus to get my own students to as well.”

“All college students who want to teach should be highly encouraged to "practice teaching" through private tutoring, summer camp jobs, anything, before they officially student teach. Mentorships for first and second year teachers should be open, conversational, and free of bureaucratic paperwork. (Mine were excellent, but I know other teachers who hated their employer-required mentorships because of all the paperwork.)”

“Knowing how to run a class. Step-by-step strategies for everything.”

“No preparation for teaching in my college years. Later, have spent many years learning and teaching with the Suzuki method. Now teach pedagogy at [institution] and at many workshops.”

“Most of my learning to teach violin has come via Suzuki Institutes (Teacher Training, Teacher Observation). The Suzuki Method has created a vehicle for teachers to come together, learn, and share ideas.”

“In my undergraduate degree I felt ill-prepared for strings classes. By the time I finished my graduate degree I felt well-prepared and entered the field confidently.”

“I have also learned a great deal from my colleagues at the [institution] where I have taught for the past 10 years. I have worked on curriculum, listened to ----, and seen students develop over many years. This has given me my strongest understanding of how students should develop.”

“Continued teacher training while teaching is the best way to go!”

“Teaching my own children in a Suzuki orchestra, and observing experienced Suzuki teachers at my own children's private strings lessons prepared me to teach my own studio, and in our youth orchestra program.”

“I am doing a DMA because I prefer to teach older kids. The most important teachers in my life have been professors and I want to be like them. I teach beginning piano because I firmly believe that it helps to learn about reading music and finding notes before tackling the balance and coordination of violin.”

“Student teaching should be at least a year-long requirement.”

“Philosophy of education and application are both so important to learning. That's one reason I think having the guided start into the teaching world was so important for me. However, I think being required to spend so many hours observing other teachers really helped to bridge the philosophical learning and practical learning. It allowed me to see so many different creative ways of applying the coursework into every day life. The more I watched other teachers and students, the more I had an idea of how to handle technical problems according to each child's hand/arm size, personality, mood, etc.”

As a studio teacher of music ed and performance students (collegiate level), I feel it is my job to try to prepare my students to be good teachers and players--beyond what my own violin teachers did. I firmly believe in a holistic approach to teacher/performer training through the private studio! As a student, I had to take the initiative to 'fill in the blanks' of



my own education as a teacher/performer. Now, I try to make sure I do this for my own students. I wish more violin/viola teachers would do this as it is a disservice to their students to not adequately prepare them to both teach and perform. The two go hand in hand!”

“They taught with explanations as to how things were done and how to practice them, and achieve them. Perfect for teaching and applying it all to students.”

“Training for the administrative/management side of operating a large secondary instrumental music program is inadequate. Classroom management techniques are also inadequate. I believe these to be the two greatest factors affecting teacher loss in our field.”

“I would say the Suzuki training was the most influential in my teaching method, today.”

“A wealth of different experiences is very useful.”

“Different ways of learning for everyone. For me hands-on works best and that is why I learned the most while on my first job, where I had to apply concepts.”

“I do some kind of training at least once a year. I find it very important to continue to learn and distill new ideas. Earlier on when I could not afford to do this yearly, it was tough to keep teaching fresh, though I did keep learning from my colleagues (and in running a mostly strings school I came in contact with string teachers a lot ), and from just doing the teaching each day. Nothing teaches you more than just doing it.”

“Personally, I feel like performance degrees should have more pedagogy training. I took a violin pedagogy class during my BM with ---- and it was one of the most beneficial classes of my undergrad. If I would change anything in my degrees, it would be taking more pedagogy classes!”

“I am indebted to my mentors and students.”

“It is important to continue to learn and grow as a teacher. Workshops, etc., are essential to revitalizing a person. When a teacher stops growing, it is time to quit.”

“I feel that my BM prepared me exceptionally well for teaching, but that this was primarily due to my private lesson instructor. Without his guidance, I would be severely lacking in know-how on the basis of the rest of the degree program. As it stands now, however, I am teaching an increasing studio of 20 students for a major pre-collegiate school of music in ----. I definitely have Prof. ---- to thank for preparing me.”

“I have been listed in ---- in each successive year from 2005 to the present year, for my

continued educational experiences in musical pedagogy; and for my longtime experience as a private/studio-teacher along with several of my private-students' successes; and for my continued freelance- performance work; in my field of music. Keep on being passionate about music and music pedagogy; and it all need never stop!”

“[Institution] had a fabulous program (developed by violinist ----). Philosophy was to learn to play your instrument as well as you could, so be a performance major. Combine this with studying all the string instruments with university professors, and take education courses to learn how to teach. This gave me a wonderful background for all kinds of string teaching and conducting.”

“Private study on violin and viola study, even briefly.”

“I came to become a music educator in a round-about way, as I didn't get my teaching certificate until I began grad school, and was able to start teaching in a private school while my certification was pending. I never student taught, so my private and school teachers were my mentors. Good teaching is good teaching, and I tried to have them be mentors in my mind, since they weren't actually present.”

“No training can substitute for experience. Performance is very important to learning to teach.”

“My own struggles as a teacher who was thrust into teaching after college were the most effective tool for learning what works and what doesn't. It was the hard way, but I learn best when confronted with problems and challenges and have to find my own solution. I've always had a do-it-your-selfer mentality which was a trait handed down by my hard working ---- immigrant parents. I think that was also more a generational trait, as ---- also possessed this. When I took over the String Chair position at [institution], I also had to reinvent the wheel with very little help from courses like we have today.”

“Teaching is just as much learning..."we teach what we want to learn" and it is important to always remember that each student is unique. So study in psychology helps in dealing with different personalities and learning styles.”

“Online resources are great for sharing ideas.”

“I would recommend a course in program organization and budgets, How to deal with large classes. Instrument inventories. Scope of festivals and their requirements. Band directors are so much better prepared in this area.”

“Another element that has truly helped me with teaching is my research in understanding the development of the brain and learning styles. I took a class in music therapy on the brain, as part of my thesis research, and I read extensively. Knowing what is reasonable

for a student based on brain development, as well as discovering their unique learning styles and adapting the lessons accordingly, was empowering for both me and my students!”

“I felt that my high school and collegiate experiences with my directors and teachers, really prepared me the most for the classroom. Those teachers and directors shared a lot of great methods and exercises that I still use in my classroom today. I felt that the method courses in my undergraduate program were not sufficient in preparing me for an orchestra teaching position.”

“Each student is different - and if one is lucky enough to teach privately, you can flexibly adjust your teaching methods to work best for each student. This is not so easily done in a larger group setting. Good methods work well for beginners to get them started correctly and with positive group camaraderie. After those initial years, nothing can replace the individual attention and inspiration of a private teacher.”

“It is hard to point out one class or person specifically. Both trainings were crucial to my teaching, but in different ways. Also I think it was the combination of all my other classes that made me comfortable and prepared to teach.”

“Although teaching was not emphasized in my performance degree, I use much of what I learned from my viola teachers in my own teaching.”

“I think that business education is lacking in music teacher training but very useful.”

“I do not believe you actually learn to teach until you begin teaching and you are a culmination of all of your experiences. The teacher who wants to be good will always go observe other outstanding teachers and programs but observation will not be effective unless you have already had some experience teaching and are continuing to study and read everything you can get your hands on.”

“I had two other mentors for whom I worked as assistant conductor and string coach in near professional situations, but they had nothing to do with my degrees and a great deal to do with my career.”

“Classroom management is not really covered during college training, and was the hardest lesson to learn in terms of what will work in the real world, which is different for each class/school. I feel it is not necessary to teach me how to teach band and choir, if I never plan to teach those.”

“During different times in my teaching, I taught very different levels. Teaching young children requires knowledge of childhood development, which is not what I got from the mentors I mentioned. But when I taught more advanced students, I relied on what I

learned from those mentors.”

“Private lessons are where almost all the growth in a musician takes place. There is absolutely no substitute for one-on-one teaching with somebody that is invested in you and willing to share anything that you need to know.”

“My professional symphony colleagues often shared ideas/strategies as we talked about the ‘teaching life.’ This was also very helpful.”

“I did the coursework for a BME after receiving my BM/MM. I was horrified at the lack of pedagogical integrity in my strings ed program, which was supposed to be a very strong program. I learned most of what I use today in my teaching through my own private lessons and hours of practice, in addition to observing great teacher/artists. Good luck with your thesis!”

“I feel that the students now in college are getting MUCH greater training than I ever did! Much progress has been made to get them in the classroom early and often - that is so important.”

“I believe so much of the learning about teaching takes place through the actual act of teaching. We continue to expand our knowledge of techniques and creative solutions as we encounter challenges.”

“Read extensively. Learned from articles in the ASTA magazine and from ---- conferences.”

“My early music experience with regard to teaching was very exploratory as my degree was in performance. However, when I was asked to teach violin and piano for a community organization, I agreed and that opened up my eyes to this desire to teach. Though I was not yet trained, I hesitated but it was something that was natural to me. I interviewed for and received a position with an organization that taught in the public schools and they paid for my Suzuki training at ----. This opened doors which later landed me for seven years teaching at [institution]. From all this experience, plus the inclusion of conducting a youth orchestra, I have grown. I took one conducting class when in college and that was so long ago. But it is amazing what you can do when you put your mind to it, when you have mentors and resources around you, despite not having the higher degrees or pieces of paper that supposedly give you an edge. While I still desire to go after a Master's degree, I continue to embrace Suzuki Education, and will go back for more training in the fall.”

“My degree is a BME but I was close to having a performance degree also. I played difficult recitals, was in the orchestra playing very challenging literature, and I played in many chamber ensembles. I also played in an excellent community chamber orchestra

while getting my degree. I believe all the playing I have done in college and during my teaching made me a better string teacher than some of my colleagues who did not play as much in college or after. Playing is the best way to help kids be more proficient through their instrument.”

“Since all string performance majors inevitably teach someone, pedagogy classes should be a must for all of these students.”

“I live in Rural ----. When we moved here I was appalled there wasn't a string program in the public schools. I was determined to have my children go to schools where string orchestra was taught. My own children have driven my passion for teaching and creating a program.”

“I teach Elementary strings, band, and general music, as well as Middle School strings and band. Although my Music Education degree was helpful in mastering my primary instrument (percussion), it did not prepare me with the skills needed for teaching music. Looking back, I needed less focus on my own instrument and more training on all the other instruments - especially stringed instruments, for which my college provided very little instruction.”

“Training for life-not training for work, is the key for younger generations. Let's face the hard realization that accountability is on the decline in the United States. In addition, the last thirteen years of conflict and war have only created a generation greatly sheltered by parents and many teachers. Any Suzuki teacher will recognize that sometimes the child should not be punished for the good natured, but nonetheless recognizable mistakes of their parents. Help others feel the obligation we have to mentor and guide youth. Especially those from targeted demographics. Create welcoming professional communities and always keep its theme pointed at the common goal: education through music.”

“It is my strong opinion that teachers should also continue to play professionally as much as possible, and that standards in music ed programs for performance level need to be raised considerably.”

“At neither my undergrad or grad institution were there any string pedagogy or string music education professors. I got to work with outstanding music education faculty who were sympathetic to the needs of string players as well as string/orchestra faculty members who provided additional mentoring to the string music education students.”

“I now direct a 3-semester String Pedagogy course which I designed at a state university. It includes mentored practicum lessons in each semester, which I think is essential (not having had this experience myself before teaching).”

“I feel that all string teachers should be given lessons in tone production. I never had

problems producing a good tone, so never thought about it. However, getting students to produce good tone was very difficult! Teachers should be armed with knowledge about the basic physics of the string, and basic anatomy/kinesiology so that they understand how to move properly in order to produce the optimal tone.”

“In college, String Methods was the only pedagogy class I took in my field. It did help, in getting acquainted with instruments, but did nothing to prepare me to teach students! I would dearly love to see more \*teacher\*-training going on in our colleges and universities!”

“I truly believe the best way to learn how to teach is to DO it... it took me well over 100 hours to start to figure out how to teach. Mentor or no mentor, we each have to find our own way and learn by doing.”

“My music teacher training was not specialized to any specific area. This was a disadvantage at first, but has allowed me to become a more confident and more well rounded music educator.”

“SAA teacher training, especially long-term, has been extremely beneficial to my teaching.”

“Preparation for one-on-one studio teaching has almost no relationship to preparation for teaching in a group situation. Knowing how to guide someone as they learn the instrument doesn't give you any tools for rehearsal technique, crowd control, other classroom management, conducting technique, dealing with parents, score reading, evaluating suitability of repertoire for your particular group...”

“The one pedagogy class I took as an undergraduate gave me some introduction to some of the philosophies behind different methods, but I needed much more, and more hands on experience to gain benefit from what I had been exposed to. Also, as a student, the importance of learning teaching skills was not at all stressed, only the skills of performance.”

“I think it's important to make a distinction between private teaching and teaching in a classroom. Teaching in a classroom requires a very different skill set than teaching privately. At least anecdotally, I've noticed that students with Ed degrees veer towards public school classroom jobs, and students with performance degrees are more comfortable in a private teaching setting. I think it's also important to avoid using participation in "teacher training" courses, such as Suzuki courses, etc., as something that necessarily transforms average teachers into above average teachers. Training courses, like degrees, are merely credentials, and sometimes crutches. From my experience, truly great teachers have tremendous amounts of knowledge to impart, but also understand the importance of critical thinking and dialogue. High-level private teaching also relies in

some part on an ability to create a culture of great string playing, and to attract students with high growth potential. I was surprised to not see any questions regarding professional performance experience, or about development outside of training courses. I can see that there may be a potential for the results of this survey to be somewhat biased.”

“Subsequent research, workshops and contacts were most useful. My education degree was too general to be helpful to teach strings, and the performance degree geared toward performance. I learned more from colleagues and first-hand experience than in the classroom.”

“I wish there were more pedagogy for non-ed majors courses offered at the conservatory level.”

“While Suzuki training helped a lot, I truly did not learn how to teach until I was doing it myself after school. Having to do it to make a living means solving all your own problems, or losing the student and the income. You get much more creative, less dogmatic, more compassionate and respectful. I don't think I could have learned any of that in a training program, or if I had been in a personal position to make a living other than teaching.”

“I am still learning every day I teach from my students, their families and my cumulative experience from playing violin in string quartet and orchestra, singing in choirs, attending concerts and other musical and non-musical educational experiences. My teaching has evolved and continues to evolve through the years. I taught twenty-nine years in the public schools and now have been teaching privately for the last four years. I had two student teachers and there was very little communication from the college for the sponsor teachers. One supervising teacher was great, but the second one was problematic, so that affected both the student teacher and my experiences. I think the communication should have been much clearer. Also, the state changed many regulations and that was not clearly communicated to the student or me, so that was very stressful for the second student.”

“In my opinion, experience teaching before taking a great deal of training courses helped me to be a better teacher; forming my own opinion of what is important and how to go about it (albeit through some experimentation) allowed me to utilize the pedagogically important concepts from teacher training, and better investigate what seemed less technically/pedagogically sound, instead of just blindly teaching exactly what I had been taught, which seems to (unfortunately), happen frequently.”

“For me good pedagogy can only come from a master player. It is important to continue on my journey to mastery in order to feel the kids have an adequate teacher. I disapprove of many public programs that start a big group of kids out at the same time- they don't get individual attention to their basic technique and often from a person that doesn't play at

the highest level. That can get kids to learn music, but not a great start to mastering it.”

“I would have appreciated greater opportunities to learn HOW to teach even while I was myself still working to be a better player. I really learned on the fly my first two years teaching after grad school, and only the sheer luck of having a highly talented class that first year saved me from some pretty hideous screw-ups.”

“To be a good teacher you have to know how to play your instrument as well as how to teach it.”

“Perform under a lot of directors.”

“This is a great project. I hope you will be able to impact upper education to help better prepare string educators.”

“I was fortunate enough to have ample training through my family and friends (a very large percentage of whom are excellent teachers). I find the lack of degrees available to teaching pedagogy disturbing. If I hadn't had an extraordinary amount of self-sought training outside my degrees, I wouldn't be nearly as skilled at my craft. I was also very frustrated in "shopping" for a doctoral degree focusing on pedagogy. I found the options ridiculously limited or frequently non-existent. I also think body mechanics needs to be an integral part of any performance and/or pedagogy degree.”

“I am probably atypical in that I have always been interested in teaching (privately, not in classrooms), while doing all performance degrees.”

“(It would help to know exactly what the focus of your research is). I attended three of the top music schools and pursued teaching and pedagogy at all three. I found that teacher-training was not part of that educational experience. My real pedagogical expertise is self-taught.”

“Although I have not taken any Music Education courses, being surrounded by others in that degree program helped me to become a better teacher since pedagogy was a major part of the school.”

“I have always been interested in how things work or why things work the way they do, even before I touched a viola. I think my brain naturally enjoys picking things apart and putting them back together. I think this probably has an impact on the way I teach. Also, my family is made up of college professors, so there is a strong academic/education background that I was raised in, which I'm sure impacts the way I approach teaching and life.”

“Being part of a network of teachers now is what influences me the most.



Communicating with my colleagues and observing are the best ways to learn how to achieve good teaching.”

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