

2024

Developing the 21st Century Piano Studio

Brianna Mae Eddy
West Virginia University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://researchrepository.wvu.edu/etd>



Part of the [Other Education Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Eddy, Brianna Mae, "Developing the 21st Century Piano Studio" (2024). *Graduate Theses, Dissertations, and Problem Reports*. 12411.

<https://researchrepository.wvu.edu/etd/12411>

This Problem/Project Report is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It has been brought to you by the The Research Repository @ WVU with permission from the rights-holder(s). You are free to use this Problem/Project Report in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses you must obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/ or on the work itself. This Problem/Project Report has been accepted for inclusion in WVU Graduate Theses, Dissertations, and Problem Reports collection by an authorized administrator of The Research Repository @ WVU. For more information, please contact researchrepository@mail.wvu.edu.

DEVELOPING THE 21ST-CENTURY PIANO STUDIO

Brianna Mae Eddy

A Doctoral Research Project submitted
to the College of Creative Arts
at West Virginia University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Musical Arts in
Piano Performance

Lucy Mauro, D.M.A., Chair and Research Advisor
Peter Amstutz, D.M.A.
William Koehler, D.M.A.
General Hambrick, M.F.A

School of Music

Morgantown, West Virginia
2024

Keywords: Piano Studio, Teaching Piano, Piano Pedagogy
Copyright 2024 Brianna M. Eddy

ABSTRACT

Developing the 21st-Century Piano Studio

Brianna M. Eddy

This study explores the needs of the contemporary piano studio, including business policies, the use of technologies, mental health and neurodivergence in students, and the influence and use of social media. Focused on the needs of both the private-studio piano teacher and traveling piano teacher, the paper offers insight into studio ownership and management with an emphasis on providing experiences that meet the needs of contemporary students. The paper includes a brief history of private piano instruction as well as information for developing studio policies, business issues related to current tax requirements and forms, and resources for financial and general studio business management.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. Lucy Mauro. Without her support and guidance, this project would not have been possible. My gratitude also goes to my committee members, Dr Peter Amstutz, Dr. William Koehler, and Prof. General Hambrick for their comments and encouragement throughout my doctoral degree.

I also thank Dr. Irene Bowling, Dr. John Pickett, Dr. John Thwaites, and Prof. Jan Loeffler. You have shaped me into the musician and pedagogue I am today. I owe everything I have learned and have been able to achieve to each of you.

Finally, my deepest gratitude also goes to my family. Because of you, I am able to write these words and achieve my dreams. I cannot thank you enough for the multitude of piano recitals you attended, the years of listening to practice sessions, and for the unending love and support.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION.....	1
Review of Related Literature.....	2
CHAPTER II: A BRIEF HISTORY OF KEYBOARD/PIANO INSTRUCTION.....	6
CHAPTER III: BUSINESS PRACTICES.....	12
Studio Teaching.....	12
Travel Teaching.....	14
Studio Policies.....	15
Teaching Philosophy.....	18
Tax Filing and Records.....	18
Billing Management and Records.....	20
CHAPTER IV: INCORPORATING TECHNOLOGIES and SOCIAL MEDIA.....	24
Social Media Platforms.....	24
Dangers of Technology.....	26
Online lessons.....	28
CHAPTER V: MENTAL HEALTH AND NEURODIVERGENCE.....	29
CONCLUSION.....	34
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	37

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study explores the needs of the contemporary piano studio, including the requirements for studio equipment, technologies, business practices, mental health and neurodivergence in students, and the influence of social media. This paper provides an insight into studio ownership and management.

The purpose of this study is to discuss business approaches and alternative techniques in private piano instruction needed to advance music education in the 21st century and help teachers adapt to the changing music world. Private piano teachers often follow the same model as their own teachers or information they learned in college pedagogy classes in previous decades. This study allows new graduates to understand the workplace they are about to enter and also provide a new perspective for veteran teachers.

The research encompasses journals, books, research papers, and articles from the past three decades. Also included is information from presentations at the 2023 National Conference of Keyboard Pedagogy as well as information from the Music Teachers National Association conferences. In addition, this research explores issues related to technology for online lessons as well as computer applications used for businesses such as QuickBooks, Flexbooker, and other software.

With the societal, cultural, and technological changes of the last two decades, it is imperative that piano teachers be able to adapt and expand their teaching and business styles. New college music graduates are often unaware of the financial aspects of running a successful music studio and risk failing if unprepared. Understanding mental health and neurodivergent

students can create a new generation of teachers that are equipped to teach any and all students, as well as gain important insight into cognitive function. Incorporating technologies is a relatively new idea in private piano instruction that is still being shaped and often experimented with in studios. Being aware of the difficulties and dangers that come with technology can affect not only a studio's outcome, but also help promote the business when used effectively and professionally. Adapting to a new or expanded pedagogical model can open a new path to developing well-rounded students that are prepared to move into the music business or higher education and enjoy music throughout their lives in a variety of capacities.

Review of Related Literature

There is a significant amount of literature related to piano teaching and current topics in piano study. Below are examples of some of the most current sources.

"Re-envisioning the Conservatory Style Music Studio: Towards a Pedagogy of Hope, Care, and Community"¹ by Sarah Stapleton and Kimberly Barber is an article written in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on music education. The authors discuss the impact of the pandemic on students' mental health, the need for self-reliance outside of the lesson, and an emphasis on the body as an instrument.

"Popular Music Education as a Technology of Access and Intervention: Tanglewood and Popular Music Education in the US"² by Noah Karvelis discusses how popular music is being incorporated into music education through music festivals and symposiums such as Tanglewood,

¹ Stapleton, Sarah, and Kimberly Barber. "Re-Envisioning the Conservatory Style Music Studio: Towards a Pedagogy of Hope, Care, and Community." *Canadian Music Educator / Musicien Educateur Au Canada*, vol. 65, no. 2, Jan. 2024, 20–28.

² Karvelis, Noah. "Popular Music Education as a Technology of Access and Intervention: Tanglewood and Popular Music Education in the US." *Action, Criticism & Theory for Music Education*, vol. 22, no. 3, Oct. 2023, 122–43.

a largely classical-based symposium. This article is from the journal *Action, Criticism & Theory for Music Education*, published in October of 2023. Karvelis discusses incorporating popular music into studio lessons and why this is important.

*The Savvy Music Teacher: Blueprint for Maximizing Income & Impact*³ by David Cutler and published in 2015, describes potential income ideas and how to maximize income within a private piano studio. It offers a step-by-step lesson for newly graduated students who have not been taught how to start and manage the business side of teaching. Cutler has included the potential shortcomings for teachers, as well as personal mistakes. The book does not focus on pedagogy, but rather on the financial aspect of studio management.

“Lesson Learned from COVID-19 and Pizza Chains”⁴ by Jonathan Scofield, was published in *American Music Teacher* during the COVID-19 pandemic. This article touches on the fact that during a global pandemic, independent music teachers were nonessential, but independent music teachers found a way to keep their businesses going with the help of Zoom and online lessons. It discusses the methods used by pizza companies through advertising and specials, and how they can be transferred to online lessons.

“Beyond the Website: Connecting with Students on Social Media”⁵ by Bryn Sowash is a 2019 article from *American Music Teacher* focusing on the influx of social media use and how it can benefit private music instructors. From Facebook pages, Instagram profiles, TikTok profiles, Sowash introduces the different platforms and how they can promote private studio teaching. With social media platforms, however, there are dangers of which instructors need to be aware.

³ Cutler, David. *The Savvy Music Teacher: Blueprint for Maximizing Income & Impact*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.

⁴ Scofield, Jonathan. “Lessons Learned from COVID-19 and Pizza Chains.” *American Music Teacher*, vol. 70, no. 1, 2020, 16–19.

⁵ Sowash, Bryn. “Beyond the Website: Connecting with Students on Social Media.” *American Music Teacher*, vol. 68, no. 6, 2019, 18–21.

Sowash comments as well on connecting with students and their abilities now to see into the instructors' private lives.

“Technology for Studio Safety: Online, Offline, and Everywhere in Between”⁶ by Shana Kirk discusses the rise of online lessons and the use of technology in studio lessons. Published in *American Music Teacher*, it discusses the safety measures needed to allow students to use handheld devices within the studio walls, as well as how to keep the studio safe from internet hackers, phishing sites, and bots that can infiltrate important documents.

“How to Keep Teaching: When the Sky Is Falling”⁷ by Paola Savvidou is an article from *American Music Teacher* published during the COVID-19 pandemic. Discussing mental health and burnout was at the forefront during the pandemic. Many articles discuss the students' mental health, but this article focuses on the mental health of the instructors. Savvidou discusses how to maintain a busy studio schedule while reminding teachers of the small things that can be done to help keep the effects of burnout at bay.

Piano Roles: A New History of the Piano was published in 2002.⁸ James Parakilas wrote and compiled this history of the piano, with discussion of its development, the history of instruction and its place in cultural history. This book provides an important overview of the history of piano instruction.

*Contemporary Piano Music: Performance and Creativity*⁹ by Madalena Soveral was published in 2021. This book focuses on the piano repertoire used to teach compositional techniques and performance practices within the 20th and 21st centuries. Instead of focusing on

⁶ Kirk, Shana. “Technology for Studio Safety: Online, Offline, and Everywhere in Between.” *American Music Teacher*, vol. 69, no. 5, 2020, 14–15.

⁷ Savvidou, Paola. “How to Keep Teaching: When the Sky Is Falling.” *American Music Teacher*, vol. 70, no. 2, 2020, 14–15.

⁸ Parakilas, James. *Piano Roles: A New History of the Piano*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002.

⁹ Soveral, Madalena, ed. *Contemporary Piano Music: Performance and Creativity*. Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2021.

the traditional western repertoire, it is focuses on new approaches to performance with experimental methods.

"Piano Instruction: Reframing the Master-Apprentice Model through the Integration of Dialogic Processes"¹⁰ is a dissertation written by Rebecca Williams in 2023. This dissertation focuses on the idea of a blended pedagogical approach, rather than the master-apprentice model of instruction. Analyzing the history of keyboard pedagogy, Williams includes several studies of students with varying ages and experience levels within the same piano studio.

"Popular Music and Piano Pedagogy: Case Studies in Individual Instruction"¹¹ by Katherine Acone is a dissertation published in 2023. This study researches the backgrounds and outcomes of students who were taught popular music as well as classical music. The study also analyzes the formative music experiences of the instructors and how these led them to teach popular music.

"Building an Online Piano Studio: Surveys and Interviews with Piano Pedagogues"¹² is a dissertation written by Hillary Santoso in 2023. This dissertation includes a survey of nine pedagogues and their steps taken to maintain a remote studio. This study also includes practice methods for fully remote piano education.

¹⁰Williams, Rebecca Holman. "Piano Instruction: Reframing the Master-Apprentice Model through the Integration of Dialogic Processes." Dissertation. Claremont Graduate University, 2023.

¹¹ Acone, Katherine Rose. "Popular Music and Piano Pedagogy: Case Studies in Individual Instruction." Dissertation. University of Toronto (Canada), 2023.

¹² Santoso, Hillary Lin. "Building an Online Piano Studio: Surveys and Interviews with Piano Pedagogues." Dissertation. University of Michigan, 2023.

CHAPTER II

A BRIEF HISTORY OF KEYBOARD/PIANO INSTRUCTION

By the early 1700's, there were multiple types of keyboard instruments. Spinets, virginals, clavichords, and harpsichords were commonly seen. With such a variety of instruments to choose from, questions arise regarding why a new keyboard instrument was invented and how these different keyboard instruments were taught over the past centuries.

The harpsichord was a predominant keyboard instrument as early as the 16th century. The sound of the harpsichord is created by the strings being plucked as the key is depressed. This mechanism produces a 'ping' sound with every pluck, with an unvarying force. Virginals and spinets are smaller instruments that had the plucking mechanisms seen in harpsichords. In *Early Keyboard Instruments: A Practical Guide*, David Rowland states that the name "virginal" is used generically for a variety of stringed keyboard instruments in England into the 17th century. A spinet is an instrument with strings that run diagonally from left to right. Any instrument that does not have this stringing is categorized as a virginal.¹³ Clavichords were different from other early keyboard instruments. Instead of being plucked, the strings were struck by small metal tangents, making the instrument more touch sensitive.¹⁴

With these early keyboard instruments, teachers began to write educational materials for instruction. One of the first treatises was written by Girolamo Diruta (1554-1610). Published in two parts, it distinguished the difference between organ and clavier playing.¹⁵ This treatise discusses hand position, finger position, fingering combinations, and rules for notating melodies.

¹³ Rowland, David. *Early Keyboard Instruments: A Practical Guide*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2001, 45.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 46.

¹⁵ Uszler, Marianne. *The Well-Tempered Keyboard Teacher*. New York, NY: Schirmer Books, 1995, 298.

Nearly a century later, François Couperin (1668-1733) published his treatise *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord*. Included in the treatise were exercises for warming up away from the keyboard, as well as patterns to play at the instrument. Couperin also devoted a large section to the proper execution of embellishments.¹⁶ Another well-known treatise was by Jean Philippe Rameau (1683-1764), *Method for Finger Mechanics at the Harpsichord*. This stressed independent finger action, regularity of action, and lifting the fingers during trill practice. Rameau focused on freedom and flexibility of the fingers. With these early method books, teachers found in them a resource for structuring lessons. Emphasis was on the rudiments of reading music and technical performance of the music of the time. In the 18th century, keyboard lessons were typically for the affluent, and practicing was often done in the presence of the teacher who would come to the student daily for instruction. François Couperin was known to lock the harpsichord at the end of the lesson to ensure that his students did not form any bad practice habits away from his supervision.¹⁷

In the early 18th century, the direction and instruction of keyboard instruments would see a radical change. The instrument maker of the crown prince Ferdinando Maria de' Medici (1663-1713) was Bartolomeo Cristofori (1655-1731). Around 1700, he invented the “Arpicembalo...di nuova invention, che fa’ il piano, e il forte’ (a harpsichord, of new invention, that plays soft and loud).”¹⁸ Cristofori replaced the plucking mechanism of the traditional harpsichord with hammers. This allowed the keyboard instrument to produce multiple dynamics with a range of quiet and loud sounds that was not possible on previous instruments. The early pianos went by several names, including “gravicembalo col pian e fort,” “clavicembalo col piano

¹⁶ Uszler, Marianne. *The Well-Tempered Keyboard Teacher*. New York, NY: Schirmer Books, 1995, 299.

¹⁷ Parakilas, James. *Piano Roles: A New History of the Piano*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002, 8.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 9.

e forte,” “fortepiano,” and eventually “pianoforte” and just “piano.” All the names signified the instrument’s most important feature: the ability to produce soft and loud sounds through the type of touch on the keys. Although the early pianos were used for solo and accompaniment work, they were less favored due to the harpsichord having a more powerful tone. By the end of the 18th century, however, the piano, with its continued improvements, had eclipsed the harpsichord as the favored keyboard instrument.

As keyboards became more accessible and popular in homes, piano lessons became an important branch of learning music. In *Piano Roles: A New History of the Piano*, James Parakilas states that “taking piano, in other words, became an activity in itself rather than a part of – and means to – a broader achievement.”¹⁹ With the shift in how the piano was viewed, studying became more serious as well. The most influential method book of the late 18th century and early 19th century was the *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments* by Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714-1788). Published in two parts, this treatise greatly influenced keyboard teachers and students. Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) recommended the book, and it is still highly regarded today. Uszler states in *The Well-Tempered Keyboard Teacher* that the *Essay* is regarded as possibly the most important source for keyboard embellishments for its time.²⁰

With the rise of the middle class in the 19th century and the ability to have music in the home, piano lessons became broadly available and a significant part of a young person’s education. A teacher would often call on the students once a day. The teacher may not have been a keyboard specialist, but a general musician. For those who were studying for pleasure, practice required only a handful of hours per week. For the more serious students, practice was at least

¹⁹ Parakilas, James. *Piano Roles: A New History of the Piano*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002, 135.

²⁰ Uszler, Marianne. *The Well-Tempered Keyboard Teacher*. New York, NY: Schirmer Books, 1995, 301.

three to four hours per day, with the additional hour lesson.²¹ This did change within the 19th century as it was expected that all who studied were to practice equally.²²

The first modern conservatory was established in Paris in 1795, The Conservatoire National de Musique,²³ with piano instruction at the forefront. From this conservatory, music schools were developed throughout Europe in large numbers. As the elitism of these schools flourished, home instruction was the ideal way to prepare students for entry into the conservatory system.

Parakilas states that by the nineteenth century, the piano was viewed as a machine²⁴ and instruction focused on a uniform technique. The hands sat on the keys and should move in a mechanical way, eliminating the difference in length between fingers. The straightness of the wrist allowed for the fingers to move with uniform pressure. Piano pedagogue Johann Bernhard Logier (1774-1846) agreed with this idea, creating a device called the “chiroplast” in 1814.²⁵ The chiroplast was a mechanical device placed along the width of the keyboard which kept the hands in place and allowed for lateral movement up and down the keyboard. Friedrich Kalkbrenner (1784-1849) also supported a similar device, the hand guide, which he promoted in his treatise.²⁶ The title of Kalkbrenner’s ca. 1832 popular treatise, *A Complete Course of Instruction for the Pianoforte, with the Assistance of Hand Guides: Containing the Principles of Music, a Complete System of Fingering, with Rules on Expression and Musical Punctuation, and a Classification of Authors, Proper to be Studied, Followed by a Study for Three Fingers, a*

²¹ Parakilas, James. *Piano Roles: A New History of the Piano*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002, 137.

²² Ibid., 137.

²³ Ibid., 153.

²⁴ Ibid., 137.

²⁵ Rainbow, Bernarr. “Johann Bernhard Logier and the Chiroplast Controversy.” *The Musical Times* 131, no. 1766 (1990): 193.

²⁶ Dekeyser, Paul. "Kalkbrenner, Frédéric." Grove Music Online. 2001.

<https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000014623>. Accessed 24 Feb. 2023.

Toccata, a Fugue of Four Parts for the Left Hand Alone, and Several Studies in Thirds, Sixths, and Octaves, is a good example of the detailed approach to piano study and marketing of the time. It was during this time also that piano manufacturers were working to create a uniform sound quality throughout the range of the keyboard. Combining the necessary technique with the changing instrument allowed for full control over the instrument. Lessons within the 19th century changed to more focus being put on technique and hours spent at the piano. Students were expected to hold notes for their full duration, practice scales and études prior to pieces, and spend a minimum of three hours practicing each day.²⁷ This was considered the great age of étude writing, with Carl Czerny (1791-1857), Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849), Muzio Clementi (1752-1832), and Johann Baptist Cramer (1771-1858) all writing what are considered the cornerstones of piano teaching. The invention of the metronome by Johann Maelzel (1772-1838) in 1815 significantly changed practice and teaching as well. Teachers were now able to set the tempo for works and exercises, teaching students to hold a tempo for the duration of a piece or passage.

From the start of piano lessons in the 18th century, the focus was on female accomplishment. It was a highly gender-specific activity. The difference between educating the genders was extreme. Girls were taught to provide a “dignified and appropriate amusement”²⁸ for themselves and family, whereas boys were taught to perform on stage. Female students greatly outnumbered male students in conservatories, although the faculty of piano instructors were almost exclusively male. Females were not expected to teach, as females of the time were typically from wealthy families and were not expected to work or provide income to the household. Women who gave lessons on their own preferred to seek students privately, through

²⁷ Parakilas, James. *Piano Roles: A New History of the Piano*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002, 140.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 148.

family friends, relations, or neighbors. However, women looked to teach as a temporary measure, not as a lifelong means of support. Due to the conservatory focus, lessons were typically diminished to once a week, with students expected to practice and prepare on their own. In the 20th century private lessons were often seen in churches, even moving to the teacher's home instead of the teacher going to the student's house. With a variety of method books becoming regularly available, in-home teaching was much more common and accessible to the general public. Because of this, piano pedagogy instruction developed within higher education, with courses and degrees in both undergraduate and graduate programs.

Teaching within the 21st century has progressed beyond the typical piano lesson focused on note-reading, technique, and standard repertoire. Pedagogical innovations have expanded with the rise of technology. Incorporating games into lessons to keep the focus of younger students, as well as multi-cultural competency has increased. Understanding the backgrounds of the students and sensitivity to the specific needs of each student has become more prominent. Electronic keyboards have significantly replaced acoustic pianos in the home. The 21st-century teacher faces these and other challenges and must be able to meet the needs of students in a broad capacity. The following chapters discuss the needs of the 21st-century piano teacher.

CHAPTER III

BUSINESS PRACTICES

The majority of private piano studios are independently owned and managed. A studio may be registered as a school, but there are multiple different laws and regulations in place for those establishments. The focus of this research study is the independent piano teacher, whether in a privately-owned and managed studio in the piano teacher's home or as a traveling teacher. This chapter will discuss the differences between studio teaching and travel teaching, studio policies, teaching philosophies, financial issues with record-keeping and tax filing, and programs for billing and scheduling lessons.

Studio Teaching

For this research study, a studio teacher is defined as a teacher that teaches out of a personal home. A travel teacher is defined as an independent teacher who travels to a student's home to teach. For the teacher who establishes a studio in a personal home, as discussed in *Fourth Finger on B-flat*,²⁹ zoning laws must be adhered to as certain housing communities do not allow for a private business to be established. The potential piano teacher must first be certain of permission to operate a business. This may include contacting homeowners' organizations, city offices, or departments of licensing.

In the book *How to Teach Piano Successfully*, third edition, by James W. Bastien, the teaching space is described as "a neat, attractive, well-equipped studio that will provide a pleasant atmosphere in which to work, and students will look forward to their lessons in such

²⁹ Haroutounian, Joanne. *Fourth Finger on B-flat: Effective Strategies for Teaching Piano*. San Diego, CA: Neil A. Kjos Music Company, 2012, 36-37.

surroundings.”³⁰ Continuing into specifics, Bastien states the difference between studio sizes depends on the number of students, as well as stating what equipment each studio should have. According to Bastien, the following items are required for studio teaching: pianos, piano bench, pedal extensions, keyboards if pianos are not possible, metronome, writing utensils, and additional music books.³¹

Not included in Bastien’s list but required for the 21st-century piano studio are as follows:

- **Internet Access:** Whether this is an ethernet cable connected to an internet router or a wi-fi router within the studio space, internet access is required for virtual lessons and the ability to quickly access a variety of teaching needs such as recordings, special scores, or videos of performances for students. Internet access is necessary for 21st-century communication with students and parents. Creating a studio website and ease of accessing and updating online student and teacher portals is efficient and allows for easy access for parents and students.
- **Charger Cables:** It is imperative to keep all devices charged and prepared for lessons.
- **Proper lighting:** a properly lit room is necessary to see the music clearly and correctly. If the room is not fitted with proper overhead lighting, lamps and other lighting devices can be brought in to give the space the lighting needed.
- **Seating for parents/guardian in studio:** as specified in the studio policy, parents/guardians are asked to sit in the lessons. Providing a seating space for parents either behind the piano or out of the student’s direct eyesight is imperative for them to understand what the student will need to practice at home.

³⁰ Bastien, James W. *How to Teach Piano Successfully*, third edition. San Diego, CA: Neil A. Kjos Music Company, 1995, 17-20.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 18,

With studio teaching, there are several requirements for the general public, the first being parking. Correct parking and safety on and around the property is important. If the piano teacher's home is on a busy street then precautions must be taken to ensure safety and ease. A waiting or sitting room with comfortable seating for parents and students is imperative. The student and parent should not be left waiting outside for their lessons, and a parent should not be expected to stand for the length of the lesson. Bathroom facilities are also required and should be kept fully stocked. Internet access in the waiting room is also expected for parents that may not be able to sit in the physical lesson but are expected to wait on the premises for the duration of the lesson.

Travel Teaching

Contrary to private studio teaching, a popular choice particularly for first-time teachers is to be a traveling piano teacher. This is appealing to parents that may have multiple children or busy work schedules. Teachers who travel using their own vehicle (or public transportation) to the students' homes may include the mileage or other transportation costs in their lesson fees. The number of lessons a teacher can do in a day can be limited due to travel distances and any delays that may occur. It is possible, however, to arrange travel lessons so that several students in a neighborhood may be taught consecutively.

One issue with travel teaching is that the instrument quality is not guaranteed, and the teacher is forced to teach on whatever the student provides. Haroutounian states several guidelines for travel teachers:

- Be certain to charge enough for services.
- Establish a professional relationship through a clearly-defined written policy and respectful interpersonal communications.
- Manage the lessons so that an appropriate level of respect is established and maintained.
- Have adequate "decompression" time between lessons.

Organize lesson plans and curriculum as all materials must be brought. Technology may be used at the lessons. This is not necessary for all travel teachers, but can be useful. Students should be prepared for lessons with books, pencils, and any recording devices at the piano. The teaching area must have good light and a chair for the teacher. Family and others in the home must be aware of the importance of no noise during lesson times. Lessons should begin and end promptly at the appointed times.³²

Teachers who are adept at this type of teaching learn how to work with materials that can be brought to and from lessons. This includes any technology, music, flash cards, theory books, or music games. Travel teachers should prioritize students within the same neighborhoods as they are easiest to schedule to take advantage of time, as well as avoiding driving further than they are comfortable to teach. Teachers should be aware of liability insurance and should have coverage on their vehicle for any additional needs. As the vehicle is their personal office, teachers should track the mileage driven between lessons on a notepad or through an application such as the ‘Notes’ application on a phone; QuickBooks³³ or Mileage Expense Log and Tracker³⁴ for tax purposes.

Studio Policy

When creating a studio, one of the most important aspects of establishing the business is the studio policy. This policy is a set of rules and expectations that should be read and signed by both the parents and students. Along with explaining the expectations and responsibilities of the teacher, parent, and student, this can be a legally binding document that can save the studio from any issues that may arise. In *The Well-Tempered Keyboard Teacher* by Marianne Uszler, Stewart

³² Haroutounian, Joanne. *Fourth Finger on B-flat: Effective Strategies for Teaching Piano*. San Diego, CA: Neil A. Kjos Music Company, 2012, 38-39.

³³ QuickBooks. <https://quickbooks.intuit.com>. Accessed March 26, 2024

³⁴ Mileage Expense Log and Tracker. <https://mileiq.com>. Accessed March 26, 2024.

Gordon, and Elyse Mach, it is stated that the hallmark of the professional teacher is clearly defined in the studio policy. A studio policy does not need to be lengthy but does need to be clear and precise. According to Uszler, the policy should include the following:

- Instructional Schedule: the start and end of terms, if summer instruction is offered, and which holidays will be observed
- Tuition Rates: varied for lesson lengths and terms
- Billing/payment procedures and regulations
- Telephone times/number(s): when teachers are and are not available for questions or contact
- Policies for missed and/or late lessons
- Recital Policies
- Instrument requirements
- Practice expectations
- Parental Involvement: specifics for what the involvement should be, attendance of lessons, control of the practice environment
- Importance and value of support for music in the home, concert attendance, and music appreciation
- Teacher's professional background and current professional affiliations
- Teaching philosophy and/or mission statement of the studio³⁵

At the National Conference of Keyboard Pedagogy in Chicago, 2023³⁶, other studio policies were discussed including:

- Social Media Waivers
- Lesson lengths with the length of lesson depending on level of students
- Termination Requirements: for the students and for the teacher
- Exam/material fees and expectations
- Personal Hygiene: attendance after sporting events, illness, overall health of student and parent
- Communication via text/email: what is appropriate and what times the teacher is available for communication

³⁵ Uszler, Marianne, et al. *The Well-Tempered Keyboard Teacher*. New York, NY: Schirmer Books, 1995. 18.

³⁶ NCKP: "From Solo to School," Clinton Pratt.

Social media policies, websites, and other online-presence information should also be part of the studio policy. The use of social-media waivers is an important subject with the rise of piano teachers using platforms to promote their studios online. Having the parents decide and sign a form stating they that are or are not allowing the use of photography or videography of their children online can protect the studio from any legal implications.

At the 2024 National Conference of Keyboard Pedagogy, personal hygiene was a topic, primarily due to the COVID-19 pandemic; however, it was also discussed more generally.³⁷ Students that participate in athletics before or after lessons may come in their uniforms or practice clothes. These sports may include footwear such as cleats, which can add unnecessary wear and tear on the studio floors or piano pedals. These students may also bring dirt and bodily fluids into the studio and may not have washed their hands prior to touching the keys. This can spread germs to other students, as well as to the teacher. Implementing a handwashing and studio dress policy may prevent illness from spreading and can keep the studio clean for the next student.

The majority of parents/guardians may appreciate a studio policy; however, discussing and signing the policy together is necessary for the contract to be legally binding. The lessons should not commence or continue without the signature of the parent, and a copy of the policy should be given to the parents, as well as a second copy kept by the teacher. The studio policy should be easily accessible on the studio website, available for reference whenever a dispute arises.

³⁷ NCKP: "From Solo to School," Clinton Pratt.

Teaching Philosophy

In the studio policy, teachers often include a statement describing their teaching philosophy. A teaching philosophy is ‘why’ the instructor teaches and the goals set forth for students. In the book *Fourth Finger on B-flat: Effective Strategies for Teaching Piano* by Joanne Haroutounian, there are several main points that should be covered in the teaching philosophy:

- What is unique to you as a musician and a teacher?
- What is important for students to learn in their music study and why?
- What are the specific goals for students to attain during their musical training?
- What is the plan to achieve these goals?³⁸

Outlining these points within the teaching philosophy can determine if the student is the right fit for the teacher and the studio, as well as reminding the teacher of the ‘why’ in difficult situations. To establish this philosophy, Haroutounian offers an exercise for teachers to complete: teachers may reflect on their own experiences as a student which can become the core of developing a teaching philosophy. Writing these experiences down can form the goals behind the piano studio. Condensing these ideas into one paragraph and stating objectives leads to a clear statement that can be understood by all involved.³⁹

Tax Filing and Records

In the United States, there are different tax filing options for the independent piano teacher including if the teacher chooses to be an LLC or simply file a Schedule C for Business Income. An LLC, a Limited Liability Company, is a business structure that combines the

³⁸ Haroutounian, Joanne. *Fourth Finger on B-flat: Effective Strategies for Teaching Piano*. San Diego, CA: Neil A. Kjos Music Company, 2012, 16-18.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 17.

taxation of a partnership or sole proprietorship with the limited liability of a corporation.⁴⁰ This may be the filing of choice for private studios because it avoids the double taxation that is associated with corporations and protects the owners' assets. There is also flexibility in filing taxes, with the owner of the LLC only needing to file once each year for taxes instead of multiple times as a corporation.

Private piano studio teachers often choose to teach out of their personal homes. This requires different tax filings as they are able to deduct select expenses, depending on the home size and percentage used. A Form 8829 Business Use of Your Home is the form that will need to be completed by the teacher. This includes the square footage allotted for the business as well as any additional expenses. These expenses may include partial coverage of the internet billing, as well as a percentage of other utilities. Although some teachers may choose to file for an LLC, filing taxes under a Schedule C can be more accessible. The Schedule C (with Form 1040) is used to report income or loss from a business operated as a sole proprietor.⁴¹ Along with Schedule C, a Schedule SE must also be filed to report any self-employment tax due on the net earnings. This information is used to figure out benefits under the Social Security program.⁴²

Typical expenses for travel teachers can include mileage, parking, tolls, and books needed for teaching. As most studio teachers choose to teach out of their home, the cost of the piano will be the largest expense. As this piano is used in a business setting, there is a possibility to file it as a tax expense, along with any purchases made for the piano studio, upkeep, supplies, and

⁴⁰ United State IRS. "Limited Liability Company". [https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/limited-liability-company-llc#:~:text=A%20Limited%20Liability%20Company%20\(LLC,an%20LLC%20are%20called%20members](https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/limited-liability-company-llc#:~:text=A%20Limited%20Liability%20Company%20(LLC,an%20LLC%20are%20called%20members). Accessed February 8, 2024.

⁴¹ IRS. [https://www.irs.gov/forms-pubs/about-schedule-c-form-1040#:~:text=Use%20Schedule%20C%20\(Form%201040,is%20for%20income%20or%20profit.%20](https://www.irs.gov/forms-pubs/about-schedule-c-form-1040#:~:text=Use%20Schedule%20C%20(Form%201040,is%20for%20income%20or%20profit.%20). Accessed March 24, 2024.

⁴² IRS. <https://www.irs.gov/forms-pubs/about-schedule-se-form-1040>. Accessed March 24, 2024.

professional development. For both studio and travel teachers there is a possibility to receive a tax deduction for mileage related to business use. Using a mileage tracker application on a mobile device can be the most efficient way to track mileage. The Mileage Expense Log and Tracker⁴³ is a user-friendly application that is free of charge to download. If the teacher does not want to use the application, keeping accurate records in a notebook or writing them in the Notes application on a phone or other mobile device are also possibilities.

Billing Management and Records

There are many different billing and overall financial management options for the private piano teacher. Teachers must devote time each week to proper record-keeping and billing and determine which program is best for the studio. Although these programs are not necessary, they greatly lower the chance of incorrect filing or inadvertently missing possible deductions and expenses. As soon as a teacher earns more than \$600, the teacher is required to report it on the tax forms. All tuition and payments received by the teacher must be recorded. Each purchase made must be recorded in a clear bookkeeping format. These records must be kept for a minimum of ten years and must be accessible at any time. They can be electronic records (with backups) or (perhaps more easily for the teacher) simple written ledgers. If studio teachers or travel teachers do not choose to use bookkeeping programs, hiring a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) can benefit the business.

Because many studio and travel teachers do not have financial and bookkeeping training, the following computer software programs for billing and record-keeping may be helpful. There

⁴³ Mileage Expense Log and Tracker. <https://mileiq.com>. Accessed March 26, 2024.

are advantages and disadvantages with these programs, including ease of use for the studio teacher.

Fons by makemusic⁴⁴ is a very popular and simple program to use. The software was designed by a studio teacher who was frustrated with the loss of income from students each month. Boasting \$52 million+ in instructor payouts a year with zero unpaid invoices, this is a large claim to make, but using three different package options makes it easier to customize what will work best for parents. The first package option is a per-appointment billing. This is convenient for students who take lessons every other week, but may not be on the same day of the week each lesson; students who need different lengths for lessons; or students that can only have lessons whenever it works in their schedules. The second package option, which is claimed as the most popular, is the subscription billing. This is as it sounds: a subscription-based billing that occurs on the same day, with the same amount each month, depending on how many lessons happen that month. This is the most popular for private studios. The last package is a flexible option. The package allows for a specific number of sessions paid for upfront that can be used over any length of time. It allows for autofill when the sessions run out, and can be changed whenever the studio teacher requires it. Fons states that this option is perfect for those who want the structure of subscriptions with the flexibility of per-appointment billing. One large benefit of Fons is that it has an automatic cancellation policy enforcement program. The program will send the patrons appointment reminders and late notices, increasing in amount over time. Fons will also work to make sure the late invoices are covered while keeping the studio owner in control. Along with payment packages, Fons offers an online calendar for parents and teachers to view, and even offers an online zoom room for the studio.

⁴⁴ Fons.com. "Inspired Business Software for Music Teachers and Studios." <https://fons.com>. Accessed February 8, 2024.

Flexbooker⁴⁵ is an online option with a relatively simple learning curve. Using an email login and password, it is accessible via laptop or cellphone web browsers, although it can be more difficult to use on smaller screens. This program makes it simple to schedule and manage students. One helpful feature is the lesson reminders automatically sent to students and parents 48 hours before the lesson time. This allows for any cancellation notices before the lesson and helps to avoid cancellation fees or missed lessons. This program gives the option for the studio to store credit cards on file for billing, which can be the easiest way to bill parents. However, this can also be seen as a downfall if the credit card is lost, needs replacing, does not have enough funding, or the parent is uncomfortable with the card being in the studio's records. There is an option not to have the credit card stored, but the parent would have to have a different payment solution. One significant downfall of Flexbooker is that it does not have a way to track who has paid and who has not paid for lessons. Once the payment has processed, the parents receive a confirmation email, but the studio does not. This requires an additional level of accountability from the teachers, often in the form of a Google document that the teachers fill out and submit weekly to whoever is in charge of bookkeeping. It does not necessarily need to be a Google document, but must be a document that is a manageable spreadsheet with all the information needed. This spreadsheet is not difficult to manage, but can be tedious to check each week.

My Music Staff⁴⁶ is built and designed for all types of studios including private teachers and travelling teachers. This program was designed as an "all in one" for music teachers. It includes a student portal, as well as a portal to share files directly with students, rather than contacting them outside of the program. The billing is very similar to Fons, in that it can be customized to the exact needs of the student. There is a business management section where the

⁴⁵ Flexbooker.com. <https://www.flexbooker.com>. Accessed February 8, 2024.

⁴⁶ My Music Staff. <https://www.mymusicstaff.com>. Accessed February 11, 2024.

program can monitor business expenses, enroll new students, record mileage for travelling teachers, as well as creating websites. As the other programs do, My Music Staff does send reminders to students up to 48 hours before the lesson, but does need to be set up individually. Unlike in the other programs, teachers are able to post notes within the student portal for parents to view, as well as saving information for the next week's lesson.

Although these programs are designed to supplement the piano studio, not all teachers prefer to use them. Bookkeeping records are necessary for tax purposes, teacher records, and for any questions the parents might have. As some parents are not comfortable with submitting credit card information online, or would rather do in-person payments, teachers may prefer to accept checks or cash payments. If they choose to accept these other methods of payments, they must provide a written receipt or invoice to the parents for the studio records. There are several payment methods through software applications that can be used as well. A popular and safe choice is Zelle which works through a bank account. The account owner sends the funds directly from their account to the receiver's account, safely and securely. Another application that is similar to Zelle is Venmo; however, Venmo is not instant.

Computer software for bookkeeping records includes QuickBooks, which is a very user-friendly and popular choice, as it does not require extensive training. Many teachers are moving away from paper invoices, in part because the online applications catch mistakes that could be made in bookkeeping. The studio teacher will need to make payments simple for parents and adult students and be flexible with the different needs of the current generation.

CHAPTER IV

INCORPORATING TECHNOLOGIES AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Incorporating technologies into piano studios has seen an increase throughout the early 21st century. With wi-fi and the proliferation of e-commerce, there are great benefits to creating a digital footprint for studios. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok allow for creativity and marketing platforms that were inaccessible in previous decades. Lessons can now be provided online, which in some cases will be preferred for parents and students; there is also an abundance of software applications that can be used within in-person lessons. However, these benefits do come with caveats. This chapter explores the benefits and the risks of using technologies and social media, including exposure to hackers, phishers, and bots, as well as the potential risks of online marketing.

Social Media Platforms

Social media is a new communications tool that has been introduced within the last twenty years. These platforms allow for further connections between students and teachers, and can allow for new marketing for studios. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok have become a significant medium to connect with the general public. With proper training and understanding of these platforms, there are many benefits to their use. However, they can also pose great risks for the private piano teacher.

Facebook

Facebook is one of the original social media platforms. This website was created on the idea that people from around the world may connect using profiles of themselves. Boasting over 3 billion users, this platform is the most used social media on the internet. Facebook allows for

businesses to create a sharable page that can be accessed by anyone, regardless of ‘friendship’ or membership status. This platform is user friendly with little help needed to set up a profile or a page. The advanced safety measures aid with security, often having multiple back-ups in case a password is forgotten. The platform does have crashes, seemingly without warning. They happen occasionally and typically do not last long. Facebook may be used on a desktop, laptop, or any personal device.

Instagram

Much like Facebook, Instagram is a platform that is photo based. This platform is connected with Facebook so the user can post a photo on one app, and have it transferred to the other. This platform has settings for both public and private profiles, with business pages often choosing public for a greater reach. Using hashtags allows for a greater search pool if used correctly. This platform is quite user-friendly but has had several updates that change the overall look of the app, which can be confusing. It cannot be used on a desktop, but rather must be used on a phone or a tablet. At times it can be frustrating to understand how to increase views or likes, but it is possible to develop a following.

TikTok

TikTok is a relatively new platform that gained popularity during the Covid-19 pandemic. This platform is video based, allowing for a more personal connection to the viewers. This platform can be used to create short videos of students in lessons or performances, as well as practice tips that can be shared with viewers. This is the newest platform and does have a learning curve. Understanding how to edit videos can be complicated, along with finding the right audience. This platform is mostly used by the younger audience and has the opportunity to

promote the business in a fun and new way. It allows for the most creativity and offers the most interaction with followers.

All these platforms, when used correctly, can increase the popularity of a studio. Having students excited to participate in creating content, or brainstorming ideas for videos, is a great way to build a community within the studio, as well as promoting the business online. In *Beyond the Website: Connecting with Students on Social-Media*, Bryn Sowash outlines the use of social media and the importance of creating the teacher's personal online brand. Some ideas Sowash shares are to create weekly fun-themed posts, showcasing students, creating competitions, or even going live to interact with an online audience.⁴⁷ While creating an online presence is important to connect with people and market a studio, using social media can also provide the students with an inside look at the teacher's private life. Setting strict boundaries with students is necessary to keep the professional lines between teacher and student clear. A solution to this issue is for the teacher to create a profile designed specifically for students to interact with online, while keeping it separate from personal use. Should students find the teacher's personal profile, the teacher can explain about not accepting follow or friend requests, but that the student is more than welcome to connect via the professional studio page.

Dangers of Technology

Among the main dangers of incorporating technology into the studio are the safety of students and the safety of any important documents that could potentially be accessed by hackers. Hackers are people that are technologically advanced and are able to bypass firewalls or safety measures put in place, in order to access important information stored on the computer. These hackers can also access any webcams that may be on a laptop or desktop computer or may

⁴⁷ Sowash, Bryn. "Beyond the Website: Connecting with Students on Social Media." *American Music Teacher* 68, no. 6 (2019): 18–19.

enter through the wi-fi. Monitoring accounts and changing passwords on a regular basis can help add a layer of security within the studio. In the article *Technology for Studio Safety: Online, Offline, and Everywhere in Between*, Shana Kirk discusses some of the common scams that can infiltrate the studio. The first safety measure that Kirk discusses is the use of a virtual studio entry.⁴⁸ With so many people coming and going from the studio, using a video recorded doorbell or wi-fi enabled lock can help secure the entry. These devices allow for the owner to access the video feed at any point of the day, communicate through the speaker, and lock or unlock the door from the owners' phone. It is important to note that these devices can be accessed by hackers, so changing the password and not giving out any codes is imperative to the success of the devices. Kirk continues to discuss different safety measures for iPad users and password security. Turning on iPad Guided Access Mode is a feature that hides everything except for specific apps that are approved for use. Apple ScreenTime, Google Safety Center, and Windows Parental Controls enable custom limits for apps and settings. This includes any notifications that might appear and can be managed outside of the device. Some further safety measures Kirk discusses are different password combinations – adding a combination of numbers, non-numeric symbols, capitalized letters, etc. - to passwords helps them be more difficult to guess. Strong passwords, along with using a two-factor authentication can make it nearly impossible for hackers to bypass security. Scams, Phishers and Bots are some of the most common forms that people can experience. Kirk suggests never responding to communication that requests any information, keeping software updated at all times, and steering clear of chain letters to enhance security.⁴⁹ These safety measures are just a few that can be taken, with hackers becoming savvier each day. Hovering

⁴⁸ Sowash, Bryn. "Beyond the Website: Connecting with Students on Social Media." *American Music Teacher* 68, no. 6 (2019): 20.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 21.

over the email to see if the address was from a contact or is a legitimate email is another way to double check before responding. Unfortunately, these dangers do exist and can harm a studio or a person if they are overlooked.

Online Lessons

During the Covid-19 pandemic, Zoom became one of the best applications for online music lessons. Zoom was able to create advanced settings specifically for music lessons, allowing for the microphones to handle the volume levels and distribute the sound quality so both the high and low frequencies could be heard. The article *Lessons Learned from Covid-19 and Pizza Chains*, by Jonathan Scofield, was written in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. In it, Scofield describes how to create a teaching studio that works, even when the world seemingly stops. Using a pizza website as an example, Scofield offers comparisons between the two.⁵⁰ The best websites he found for pizza were simple, straightforward, and required few steps to put together the desired order. He states that this is the same as an online lesson: simple directions, assignment sheets, and no extensive equipment. Similar to pizza, which sometimes might not be the greatest meal, online lessons provide the important parts with convenience. He states that consumers expect convenience from every business and asks if teachers should offer the same to students. Online lessons are not the same as in-person lessons, but this does not mean that the students are less likely to succeed.

⁵⁰ Scofield, Jonathan. "Lesson Learned from COVID-19 and Pizza Chains." *American Music Teacher* 70, no. 1 (2020): 16.

CHAPTER V

MENTAL HEALTH AND NEURODIVERGENCE

Awareness of mental health and mental illness is becoming more prevalent within educational settings. Understanding students with extra needs based on mental issues is different from understanding students with other special needs. This chapter focuses on the main illnesses that students are diagnosed with – ADHD, depression, and anxiety – and how to teach students that are studying piano with these challenges. This chapter also discusses teacher burnout and how this can be avoided, and how teachers may continue to teach through similar mental illness.

ADHD is attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.⁵¹ This disorder causes a loss of blood flow to the frontal cortex of the brain, making it difficult for the person to focus on one subject at a time. Other symptoms of ADHD include:

- Inability to sit still, especially in calm or quiet surroundings.
- Constant fidgeting
- Inability to focus on tasks
- Excessive physical movement
- Excessive talking
- Inability to wait one's turn
- Acting without thinking
- Interrupting conversations
- Appearing forgetful or losing things
- Constantly changing activity or tasks
- Appearing to be unable to listen⁵²

There are many more symptoms of ADHD as it is presented differently in different genders, and it is still being understood. Students that are diagnosed with ADHD are also considered “neurodivergent,” an umbrella term that includes medical disorders, learning

⁵¹ NHS. Accessed March 16, 2024. <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/attention-deficit-hyperactivity-disorder-adhd/symptoms/>.

⁵² NHS. Accessed March 16, 2024. <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/attention-deficit-hyperactivity-disorder-adhd/symptoms/>.

disabilities, and other conditions where students behave in atypical ways. Teaching neurodivergent students can pose challenges that are not discussed in pedagogy classes. There are medications that can significantly improve the day-to-day life of people diagnosed with ADHD, but as forgetfulness is part of the symptoms, not all persons are able to take the medications correctly.

Teaching students with ADHD can be challenging. The one-on-one private teaching environment can be helpful, especially if it is approached as a personal mentoring relationship. In *Fourth Finger on B-flat*, Haroutounian discusses several effective teaching strategies for students that have been diagnosed with ADHD. The strategies include:

- Identifying the particular learning styles of the student. One student may have trouble starting a task, while another has a problem finishing a task. The teaching must be individualized for these needs.
- Clear rules, routines, and schedules.
- Set specific time frames and expectations for tasks and assignments.
- Demonstrate how to use assignment books and instill study skills with specific instructions, goals, and explanations.
- Channel physical activity positively through musical rhythm activities and movement. Provide “breaks” during the lesson as needed.
- Use step-by-step instruction during lessons, both written and verbal.
- Encourage computer work for theory and listening activities.
- Work closely with parents to map out an individualized plan for instruction and practice at home.
- Be patient and flexible in trying new ways to do things with these students.
- Maximize possibilities for success in a comfortable learning environment.⁵³

Students that struggle with ADHD have a need for routine and stability within lessons.

Understanding that fidgeting and attention loss is part of their behavior is imperative for the

⁵³ Haroutounian, Joanne. *Fourth Finger on B-flat: Effective Strategies for Teaching Piano*. San Diego, CA: Kjos Music Press, Neil A. Kjos Music Company, 2012, 95-96.

success of the lessons. Providing a break every few minutes to let such students play what they would like on the piano, tell a story, or walk around the room can help. These students may have more “off” days than other students but can still benefit from lessons. Using colored pencils to coordinate which hand is playing or for learning notes can help draw attention to new ideas. Taking the time to understand the needs of the specific students can be the best way to set them up for a successful learning experience.

Depression and anxiety are mental illnesses that have a variety of symptoms and can vary depending on the person. Similar to ADHD, depression and anxiety fall on a spectrum. These two illnesses are not intertwined, but often present together. The basic symptoms of depression can range from mild to debilitating and can be dangerous if left untreated.⁵⁴ Teachers work quite closely with students and are often more likely to be alerted to symptoms before parents. A shift in mood or a sudden change in performance are clear indicators that the student is struggling. Symptoms include but are not limited to:

- Persistent sad, anxious, or “empty” mood
- Feelings of hopelessness or pessimism
- Feelings of irritability, frustration or restlessness
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, or helplessness
- Loss of interest or pleasure in hobbies and activities
- Decreased energy and fatigue.
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions.
- Difficulty sleeping or waking up.
- Changes in appetite or unplanned weight changes
- Physical aches or pains that do not have a clear cause or do not go away with treatment⁵⁵

These symptoms are not experienced by all and can be regarded dismissively in stressful situations or as “teenage angst.” Understanding the student’s life outside of lessons can help give

⁵⁴ National Institute of Mental Health. <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/depression>. Accessed March 21, 2024.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

an insight into the student's thoughts and behavior. These symptoms present differently between genders. It can seem as if the symptoms come and go in waves, but other symptoms that can help distinguish depression from everyday stress are:

Increased anger or irritability
Feeling restless or on edge
Becoming withdrawn, negative, or detached
Increased engagement in high-risk activities
Greater impulsivity
Isolation⁵⁶

Teaching students who struggle with depression and anxiety can be quite difficult. These students are more prone to anxiety attacks, often cancel lessons more than other students, and can seem uninterested in learning. In her article *Teach them to Believe: 12 Strategies for Promoting Self-Efficiency Beliefs in Piano Students* Lynn Worcester Jones highlights several ways to counteract the self-doubt that students instill in themselves. This article discusses the difficulties and setbacks in music that can challenge a student's perception of their abilities. A few ideas that Jones highlights are to create frequent high- and low-stakes performance tasks such as exams, mastering one piece before moving to another, taking students to competitions, even if they are not competing, encouraging students over good performance experiences, and being open and honest with students in advance, especially when it comes to performances.⁵⁷

Although students may be the focus of teachers, it is imperative for the teachers to be aware of their own mental health. Understanding personal struggles and challenges can create a better learning experience for all parties involved. The term 'burnout' was prevalent during the Covid-19 pandemic. Balancing a personal life while teaching students can create mental

⁵⁶ National Institute of Mental Health. <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/depression>. Accessed March 21, 2024.

⁵⁷ Jones, Lynn Worcester. "Teach Them to Believe: 12 Strategies for Promoting Self- Efficacy Beliefs in Piano Students." *American Music Teacher*, vol. 69, no. 6, 2020, 31-32.

exhaustion. Burnout is a state of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion. It can be brought on by excessive and prolonged stress and can feel as if every day is a bad day. In the article *How to Keep Teaching When the Sky is Falling* by Paola Savvidou, the subject of burnout is discussed, along with how to avoid it. Some suggestions by Savvidou for managing anxiety and avoiding burnout are to put away the technology, find a way to ground the senses, participate in yoga, and consciously slow down movement.⁵⁸

Teaching can be overwhelming. Other ideas to maintain stability include scheduling at least one day a week off from lessons and allowing for that personal day to be a day away from the studio or music. Taking a step away from the studio can bring the mind back into focus. Another helpful idea is to select a hobby outside of music that can be enjoyed after teaching. Many musicians have chosen crocheting as it works finger dexterity while being somewhat mindless as a task. Finding a hobby that distracts the mind from the cycle of everyday work helps to distract one from overthinking about students and subjects, while allowing for personal time away from teaching. This in return can provide a refreshed mind. Mental health will continue to be at the forefront of education as it continues to be studied and understood.

⁵⁸ Savvidou, Paola. "How to Keep Teaching: When the Sky Is Falling." *American Music Teacher* 70, no. 2 (2020): 14–15.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

This document provides a resource for requirements in developing a piano studio in the 21st century. Since the beginning of piano instruction, which paralleled the development of the instrument in the early 18th century, teachers have continued to adapt and develop their pedagogical approaches.

Looking back on how teaching has developed, there are similarities in the 21st century to the earliest instruction. In the 17th century and following, for example, travel teaching has been a significant means of teaching. Students were expected to practice what was taught in lessons with a focus on technique and developing correct musicianship, which remains standard to this day in lessons. There are far more resources readily available for teachers and students today, inspired by the early treatises from previous centuries. The gender roles and biases have become closer, but there is still a large gap between female and male students within schools. The conservatory has expanded and changed, with state schools offering music education and lessons as well.

Today, travel teaching and private studio teaching are two of the main professional paths that teachers may choose. Understanding the implications of both can have a great effect on the teacher's career. Maintaining accurate records correctly for tax purposes and filing can impact a teacher's financial wellbeing. In order to maintain the necessary information, a teacher may choose to use an online resource or keep traditional written records. In any case, teachers must be aware of the forms needed and resources available. Other necessities for both studio teachers and travel teachers are a studio policy, teaching philosophy, appropriate technology, flash cards, theory books, music games, a music library with the books that the students are currently using,

along with reference books for the teacher, writing utensils, and both a physical and computer-application metronome.

Technology allows students to listen and view performances online with ease, offering influences that may or may not be beneficial. Online lessons can provide monetary benefits to a teacher's studio and convenience for families and students. Zoom can be a positive educational path in teaching, if formatted correctly. Social media has taken the world by storm. Teachers that are able to learn and adapt can create an online footprint and promote their business and music study and performance in general. The communal aspects of social media allow teachers and students to interact with like-minded people in and outside of their studio.

Mental illness is continuously being studied and understood. Its effect on music study is particularly important for the piano teacher's knowledge and ability to work effectively. Students are being diagnosed with conditions that affect the way they learn. Understanding the terminology and the conditions has the potential to change the way students are being taught and how they succeed in lessons. Often, ADHD, depression and anxiety are illnesses that do not fit under one description. These conditions require adaptation for both the teacher and the student, typically learning as they progress. This study provides background on the basic symptoms, as well as ideas on how to inspire and educate the students that may deal with these conditions on a daily basis. This area also encompasses one of the prominent societal themes of the early 21st century, that of inclusion, equity, and diversity. Incorporating works by composers from underrepresented groups is more common today, and it is relatively easy to find repertoire at all levels of piano study. Although this is an important issue in 21st-century teaching, diversifying the music in piano lessons poses questions about the teacher's competency in teaching different

musical styles such as jazz, popular, ragtime, contemporary, etc. While beyond the scope of this paper, this is one of the areas of study that invites further research.

It is hoped that this study provides a foundation for developing the 21st-century piano studio, helping teachers to work effectively in both the business and teaching sides of the profession. With organization and current information, the private and traveling piano teacher can inspire musicians of all ages and continue the legacy of piano pedagogy.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Acone, Katherine Rose. "Popular Music and Piano Pedagogy: Case Studies in Individual Instruction." Dissertation. University of Toronto (Canada), 2023.
- Armstrong, Asher. "You're Grounded!: Surviving Advanced Piano Repertoire." *American Music Teacher*, vol. 70, no. 1, 2020.
- Bastien, James W. *How to Teach Piano Successfully*, third edition. San Diego, CA: Neil A. Kjos Music Company, 1995.
- Beckerman, Michael, and Paul Boghossian. *Classical Music: Contemporary Perspectives and Challenges*. Cambridge, UK: Open Book Publishers, 2021.
- Cotik, Tomas, and Patricia Jancova. "Planning and Assessment of the Instrumental Lesson." *American Music Teacher*, vol. 70, no. 2, 2020.
- Cutler, David. *The Savvy Music Teacher: Blueprint for Maximizing Income & Impact*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Dekeyser, Paul. "Kalkbrenner, Frédéric." Grove Music Online. 2001.
<https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000014623>. Accessed 24 Feb. 2023.
- Fons.com. "Inspired Business Software for Music Teachers and Studios." February 8, 2024.
- Flexbooker.com. February 8, 2024. <https://www.flexbooker.com>.
- Haroutounian, Joanne. *Fourth Finger on B-flat: Effective Strategies for Teaching Piano*. San Diego, CA: Neil A. Kjos Music Company, 2012.
- IRS. <[https://www.irs.gov/forms-pubs/about-schedule-c-form-1040#:~:text=Use%20Schedule%20C%20\(Form%201040,is%20for%20income%20or%20profit](https://www.irs.gov/forms-pubs/about-schedule-c-form-1040#:~:text=Use%20Schedule%20C%20(Form%201040,is%20for%20income%20or%20profit)>.
- Jones, Lynn Worcester. "Teach Them to Believe: 12 Strategies for Promoting Self- Efficacy Beliefs in Piano Students." *American Music Teacher*, vol. 69, no. 6, 2020.
- Karvelis, Noah. "Popular Music Education as a Technology of Access and Intervention: Tanglewood and Popular Music Education in the US." *Action, Criticism & Theory for Music Education*, vol. 22, no. 3, Oct. 2023.
- Kirk, Shana. "Technology for Studio Safety: Online, Offline, and Everywhere in Between." *American Music Teacher*, vol. 69, no. 5, 2020.

- Masters, Richard, et al. "Develop Dexterity: How Do You Develop Dexterity in Older Students?" *American Music Teacher*, vol. 70, no. 2, 2020.
- Michele Kaschub, and Janice Smith. *Promising Practices in 21st Century Music Teacher Education*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Mileage Expense Log and Tracker. Accessed March 26, 2024. <https://mileiq.com>.
- My Music Staff. February 11, 2024. <https://www.mymusicstaff.com>.
- NHS. Accessed March 16, 2024. <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/attention-deficit-hyperactivity-disorder-adhd/symptoms/>.
- National Institute of Mental Health. March 21, 2024. <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/depression>.
- Nowakowski, Mark. "MIDIots No More: The Leveling Power of Music Technology in the Small School Environment." *Sacred Music*, vol. 148, no. 4, Jan. 2021.
- Parakilas, James. *Piano Roles: A New History of the Piano*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002.
- Rainbow, Bernarr. "Johann Bernhard Logier and the Chiroprast Controversy." *The Musical Times* 131, no. 1766 (1990): 193–96. <https://doi.org/10.2307/966259>. Accessed April 4, 2024.
- Randles, Clint. *Music Education: Navigating the Future*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2015.
- Santoso, Hillary Lin. "Building an Online Piano Studio: Surveys and Interviews with Piano Pedagogues." Dissertation. University of Michigan, 2023.
- Savvidou, Paola. "How to Keep Teaching: When the Sky Is Falling." *American Music Teacher*, vol. 70, no. 2, 2020.
- Seals, Spring B., et al. "Deal with Low Summer Enrollment?" *American Music Teacher*, vol. 69, no. 6, 2020.
- Scofield, Jonathan. "Lesson Learned from COVID-19 and Pizza Chains." *American Music Teacher*, vol. 70, no. 1, 2020.
- Soveral, Madalena, ed. *Contemporary Piano Music: Performance and Creativity*. Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2021.
- Stapleton, Sarah, and Kimberly Barber. "Re-Envisioning the Conservatory Style Music Studio: Towards a Pedagogy of Hope, Care, and Community." *Canadian Music Educator / Musicien Educateur Au Canada*, vol. 65, no. 2, Jan. 2024.

Sowash, Bryn. "Beyond the Website: Connecting with Students On Social Media." *American Music Teacher*, vol. 68, no. 6, 2019.

Thickstun, Karen. "A Bias for Action." *American Music Teacher*, vol. 69, no. 3, 2019.

Thickstun, Karen. "Studio Strategic Planning." *American Music Teacher*, vol. 69, no. 1, 2019.

Thickstun, Karen. "It's All Your Business: Money Matters: Tuition FAQs." *American Music Teacher*, vol. 68, no. 3, 2018.

United State IRS. "Limited Liability Company". Irs.gov, February 8, 2024.

[https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/limited-liability-company-llc#:~:text=A%20Limited%20Liability%20Company%20\(LLC,an%20LLC%20are%20called%20members.](https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/limited-liability-company-llc#:~:text=A%20Limited%20Liability%20Company%20(LLC,an%20LLC%20are%20called%20members.)

Uszler, Marianne. *The Well-Tempered Keyboard Teacher*. New York, NY: Schirmer Books, 1995.

Williams, Rebecca Holman. "Piano Instruction: Reframing the Master-Apprentice Model through the Integration of Dialogic Processes." Dissertation. Claremont Graduate University, 2023.