

Making Online Applied Lessons Meaningful and Effective

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Have a plan, manage your time and your students time.

- Set reasonable goals (my first on-line lesson was my most challenging).
- Remember that your presence is reassuring and inspiring to your students.
- Balance lesson content just as you would an in-person lesson (except for playing together).
- Keep track of time so you can run to your in-home Java's.
- Explore functionality of your video-conferencing platform before starting.

Have materials at your fingertips and easily emailed or 'screen-shared' to your student.

- Create a desktop folder for often used files
- PDF'S, Electronic Copies of Scores
- Self created and Youtube videos
- Audio links to relevant performances
- Staff Paper
- Encourage your student to have materials handy as well



Audio, Media and the Metronome!

- If your student is playing a passage or etude with a metronome, let them set the metronome. You will hear it on your end. If you set the metronome on your end, it won't be in sync for the student. Same if your student is playing with a recording.
- If you plug in external speakers, the ambient sound of the room can feel more natural.
- You can play Mp3's, iTunes, YouTube and the audio will transmit. This works better with desktop computer and laptops.
- Check your mic input level(in "settings" or "preferences" if your instrument overdrives the signal. Some external mic's have "gain" knobs.

File Sharing During and After an online lesson

- [box.com](https://www.box.com), Dropbox, Google Drive are all very reliable and safe for file sharing.
- Keep your file sharing platform open in a browser or mobile App during your lesson.
- Properly labeling folders and files helps you find things more quickly.
- Avoid sending videos, and audio recordings by email. Your phone or computer memory will fill up.



Zoom functions that enhance online lessons

- “Chat”: I use this frequently for communicating proper spellings of repertoire/composers/texts. In addition, you can comment in the text box while the student is performing without interruption.
- “Share” allows you to share your desktop with your student.
- “Record” is an amazing tool. If using Zoom, use the “record” feature to capture lesson highlights. When your session ends you’ll see an mp4 file appear in your Zoom folder. That is your compressed video(less memory space). Label it right away. “varon.rob.3.16.20” Upload to file sharing platform and share the link with the student. I often record examples after the lesson as well. Upload and send via email.

- If you mark-up a paper score(fingerings/articulations), scanning app's on your smart phone or tablet are quite handy (Scannable, Tiny Scanner). The DropBox Mobile App has an excellent scanner built in.
- Always label your documents! In many cases, what you write up for one student can be reused. In addition, you'll have it on your screen while you're teaching. I have a catalog of 250+ arrangements that are the work product of online teaching. Another platform I'm considering is the Apple Pen and writing on an iPad and having instant easy-to-read documents whether it's guitar fret board diagrams or staff.

- Manage your time!!!
- My initial online lessons left me with several hours of content creation (videos, voice memos, and hand drawn examples and exercises.
- Be patient with yourself and your students will be as well.

Your teaching and learning environments

- For portable instruments, be certain that you and the student are visible to one another. Seeing hands and posture is more important than seeing each other face-to-face.
- Experiment changing the angle of your camera or moving your position to demonstrate technique.
- Some instruments might be easier to teach if you have a flexible clip for a webcam. Similar to a flexible reading lamp that clips to your book or bed.

Technical Tips

- Wifi signal on both student / teacher environments impacts picture and sound.
- Being directly plugged into an ethernet port (looks a larger phone jack) or operating in a WiFi area with a strong signal and fast upload/download speeds vastly improves the experience.

- Call me or email if you need any help! 585-410-9064 / bsneider@esm.rochester.edu
- Reach out to our amazing technology staff.
- Ask your students for help during a lesson if they have a particular technical expertise.
- Be patient with yourself. Remember that our students need us musically and as a connection to normal times.

A Resource and Some Helpful Hardware

- FaceBook Group “Higher Ed Music Lessons in the Time of Covid-19”
- External USB Microphones (Samson, Blue, Yeti)
- WebCams with Stereo Microphones
- Device positioning tools (WebCam/Phone/iPad holders that mount to music stands or microphone stands, flexible WebCam clips, laptop carts, or just a spare music stand!)