

Students Teaching Students:

How to be an Effective Private Lesson Teacher While Still Attending College

The 2011 Midwest Clinic
Clinician: Dr. Jeffrey Loeffert, Oklahoma State University
Friday, December 16, 2011 9:00 – 10:00 a.m.
Meeting Room W181

Teaching Experiences as a College Student

- **The Schools as a Model for Teaching**
- **Students Talk to Students Better than Teachers Talk to Students**
- **Teaching Private Lessons as a College Student**
- **Additional Teaching Strategies**

I. The Schools as a Model for Teaching

A. *“Nothing counts as much as the school.” – John Dewey*

1. Schools place the accomplishments and aspirations of previous generations at the disposal of future generations so that society can recreate itself while realizing its collective potential.
2. Schools provide the means for societies to preserve, transform, and transcend tradition.

B. *Progressive insight*

1. There is a clear responsibility to help progress our acquired collective knowledge.
2. Progress depends largely on effective and lasting teaching.
3. Future generations should be better prepared than previous generations for continued progress.

C. *Levels of teaching*

1. Teachers teach students.
2. Students teach teachers.
 - a) Reciprocal relationship
3. Students teach students; students teach themselves.

II. Students Talk to Students Better than Teachers Talk to Students.

A. *Students relate more closely to other students.*

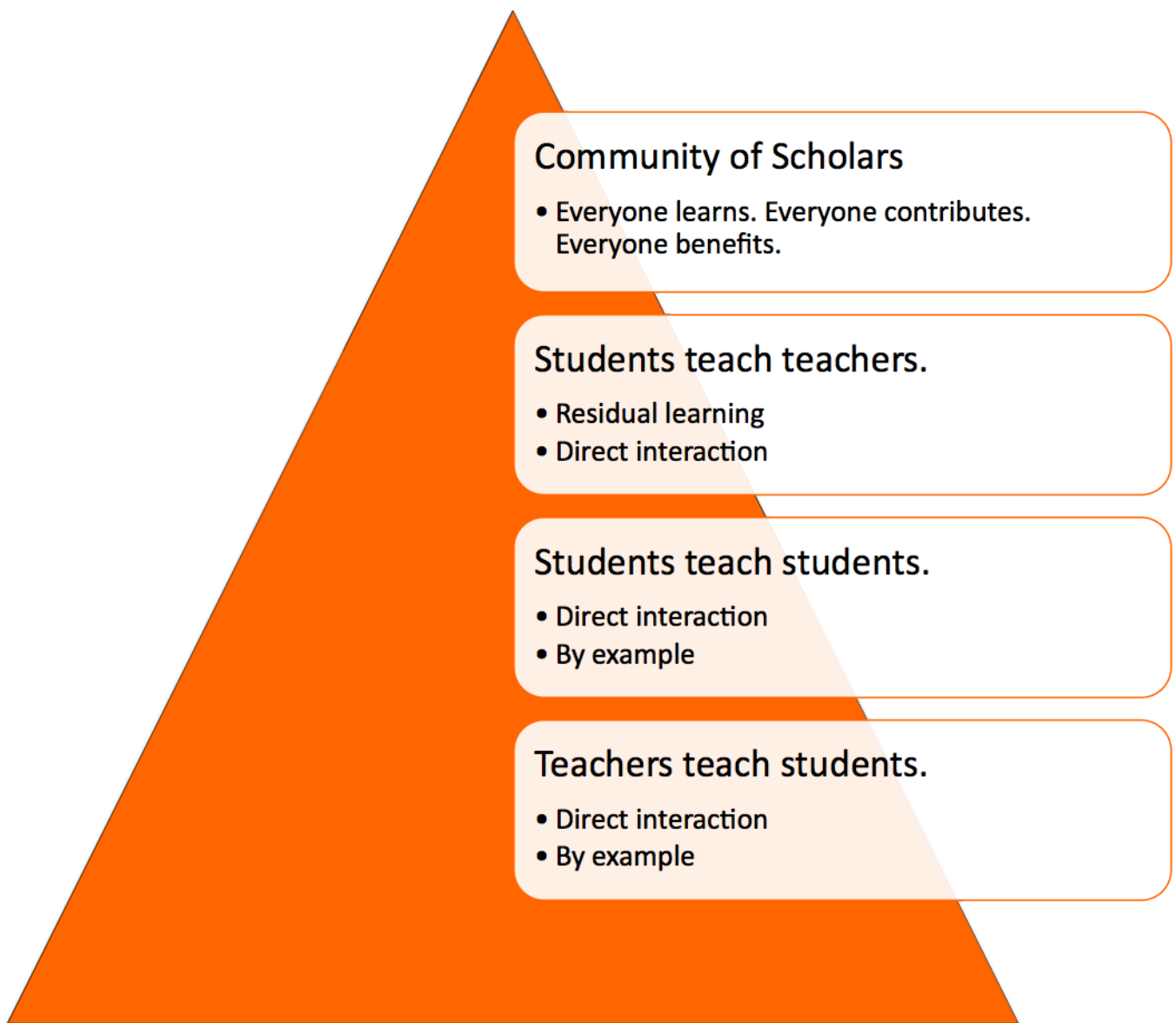
1. Teachers work to facilitate positive working environments.
 - a) Promoting a culture of excellence
 - (1) Students help to model quality work.
 - Students teach by example.
 - Students teach directly.
 - (2) Students help to uphold a performance standard.
 - Less experienced students emulate the work habits of more experienced students.

- Students help to define a culture in attitude, work ethic, and musicianship.

b) Promoting a culture of creativity

(1) Student collaboration

- Students work together to realize common goals.
- Studies become more autodidactic.
- Students work under the framework of synergy.



III. Teaching Private Lessons as a College Student

A. The inherent learning experiences in teaching

1. Gain ownership of the information

a) People do not work like calculators.

(1) Approaching and delivering information to best suit the needs of students

- The same information does not mean the same thing to different students.
- Students respond to criticism and praise in different ways.
- Teachers must be elastic to elicit the best out of each student.

(2) Process reflection: tonal modeling, fundamental approach

- Demonstrate tonal modeling to address short-term objectives.
- Demonstrate (and explain) tonal modeling to address long-term and advanced objectives.
- Embed fundamentals into other objectives to maintain the interest of your students.
- Demonstrate and insist on consistency in the fundamental routine.

b) Greater sense of urgency to improve and provide accurate information to students

(1) Opportunity to recognize our own deficiencies

- Younger students often encounter the same issues with which more advanced students struggle.
- Advanced students can benefit by addressing these issues with younger students.

(2) Greater ownership of technical and musical concepts

- Though the information may remain the same, teachers must often be flexible to address to same concepts to different students.
- Approaching the same information in a different way allows for greater command of that information.

B. Professional Benefits to Teaching

a) Developing a C.V.

(1) Increased potential for networking

- Teaching while a student provides an opportunity for interaction with other professionals and young professionals.

(2) Increased potential for greater visibility

- Teaching allows for the possibility of developing a reputation prior to entering the job market.

(3) Opportunity to make a significant impact for others

- Students have the opportunity to significantly alter the lives of younger students through mentorship.

(4) Blurred line between student and professional

- The line between professional and college student is often obscured.
- College students have the same responsibility to their students as professionals.
- College students have the necessary tools to impact lives in the same way as professionals.

C. Teaching Strategies

1. “Our lives at every turn have become the property of experts, through whom our experience is to be mediated. We have experts to tell us we are sick, and to tell us when we are well again...how to educate our young, experts to paint our pictures and compose and perform our music for us.” – Christopher Small

- a) Students must be taught to make their own informed decisions.
 - Often, students are capable of making informed decisions for themselves and should be encouraged to do so.
 - Students must learn to think independently and not depend on a teacher for critical decision-making.
- b) Applied study increasingly becomes a mentorship.
 - Applied study becomes more of an exchange of ideas.
 - Students ultimately learn to inspire ideas in their teachers.

2. Instilling a culture of expectations and accountability

a) Lesson Partners / Lesson Blocks

(1) Working in lesson partners can maximize instructional time.

- A 30-minute lesson for one student can become a 60-minute lesson for two students.
- Instruction can often be as efficient for two students as it is for one student.

(2) Older students set positive examples.

- Students take more ownership of the studio.
- Students take more ownership of their education by helping to improve their learning environment and collaborators.

(3) Older students have an opportunity to mentor younger students.

- Older students benefit more from the experience through process reflection.

(4) Younger students have an opportunity to learn directly and indirectly from older students.

- Younger students have a greater opportunity to learn skills and repertoire from their older counterparts.

b) Levels of Learning within Lesson Blocks

(1) Traditional Lesson: students learn primarily from their teacher.

(2) Lesson Partners: students learn from the teacher as well from each other.

- Older student / younger student reciprocal relationship
- Students of the same ability can work together, be accountable to one another, and inspire each other.
- Students have an opportunity and incentive to work together outside of lessons.

3. Creating a studio environment

a) Studio performances and activities

- Studio events can help to develop camaraderie within the studio.
- Studio performance can help embed tonal concepts and performance standards.

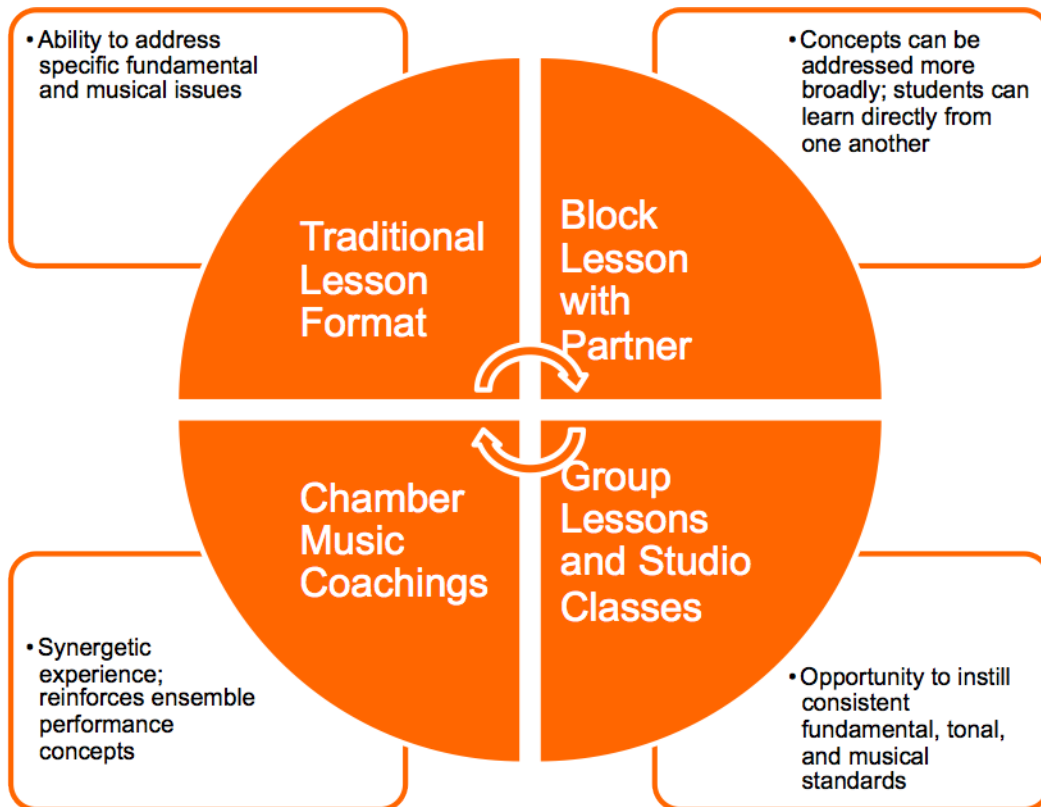
b) Emphasis on chamber music

- Students can directly define their studio culture through direct collaboration in chamber music.
- Chamber music is an interdependent activity.

c) Recitals

- Recitals give students a platform to share their musical ideals.
- Recitals can showcase the more advanced players and inspire the younger students.

Implementing a working lesson format



Implicit community of scholars – everyone teaches, everyone benefits

4. Working for improvement at the top of the studio first as a model
 - a) Competitions
 - (1) Emphasize the process of preparation rather than the results.
 - (2) Competitions can help students learn to listen more critically.
 - b) Assignments to inspire creativity
 - c) Working for consistent musical, tonal, and technical ideals

IV. Additional Teaching Strategies

A. Developing Pedagogical and Musical Intuition

1. “Intuition is knowledge that comes to a person without conscious remembering or reasoning.” – Bruce Benward

B. Recording Lessons and Lesson Reports

1. Recording lessons allows students to better internalize the concepts covered in lessons.
2. Students can evaluate their progress and lesson preparation and can summarize this in a written lesson report.
3. Students have an opportunity to accurately gauge their long term progress through a weekly record of events.
4. Can help the students learn to think critically

C. Creative, Enrichment, and Research Projects

1. Research projects allow students an opportunity to take ownership of their own education.
2. Creative projects can help students keep their studies fresh and inspiring.

D. Semantics Matter!

1. Working vs. practicing
2. All-state etudes vs. all-region etudes
3. Weekly assignments / homework assignments

Dr. Jeffrey Loeffert
Assistant Professor of Saxophone and Music Theory
Oklahoma State University
132 Seretean Center; Stillwater, OK 74078
Email: jeff.loeffert@okstate.edu
Tel: 405.269.1693
www.jeffloeffert.com www.h2quartet.com

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How to be an Effective Private Lesson Teacher While Still Attending College (Brief Handout)

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