

1999

## STUDIO POLICIES

Martha Beth Lewis, Ph.D.

**Studio Closure.** When the studio is closed, no make up lessons are given and no tuition payment is necessary. I do not expect you to pay for my vacations. The studio is closed an average of 8 weeks annually. When the studio is open, tuition is due for lessons.

**Make-Ups Lessons.** Please give me at least 24 hours' notice if you wish a make-up lesson. Otherwise, you must pay for the lesson without taking it because your time is reserved specifically for you. Make-ups are not available for last minute changes (less than 24 hours' notice) such as car trouble, heavy homework, orthodontic appointments, rescheduled soccer games, other illness in the family, etc. I adhere to this policy firmly.

**Exception:** If you/your child becomes ill overnight or comes home sick, call me right away. We will schedule a make-up.

**Tardiness.** The student has a time reserved in my schedule. I will honor this appointment conscientiously. In order that other students be given the same consideration, I cannot allow a lesson to extend into another time period. Therefore, if the student arrives late, the lesson will end at the usual time without adjustment in fee.

**Payment.** Lessons may be paid for weekly or at the beginning of the month. I do not charge registration fees, materials fees, or recital fees. Any fees for "non-sufficient funds" checks will be charged back to the student, however. Extra fees for teachers' association recitals, master classes, and so on are the student's responsibility; checks should be made payable directly to the sponsoring organization.

**Holidays and vacations.**

No lessons will be given on Thanksgiving Day, Memorial Day, and Labor Day. Lessons falling on these days will be rescheduled for another time that week.

I will notify you as to timing of studio closing during Christmas and school breaks. If the studio closes, there will be no make-up lessons scheduled. If the studio does not close, there is flexibility should you need to reschedule.

For parent-teacher conference days, professional days, Veterans' Day, and other vacation days on the school or federal calendar, the studio will be open and the regular lesson schedule observed.

**Logistics.** The front door will be unlocked. Do not ring the bell or knock. Please come right in and go quietly to the family room until your lesson time arrives.

I welcome parental attendance at lessons if the student does not object. Siblings, however, are a distraction. Please make arrangements for them to be elsewhere.

**Recitals.** I hold an annual recital on Mother's Day weekend. Please mark your calendars and do not schedule business trips and vacations for this weekend. Grandparents are especially invited. I will give each student a recital information packet in late April.

**Materials.** Please purchase the items requested promptly, as delay interrupts the student's progress.

I will specify the edition I wish you to purchase. There is great variation in accuracy of the scholarship and clarity of the layout, so please do not substitute, even if the music store clerk assures you the editions are "the same" or "nearly identical." Music stores will not allow returns; if there is a problem, please call me before you buy.

Music purchases can mount up quickly, so I attempt to keep requested materials to a minimum. I will choose inexpensive editions unless scholarship suffers. A low-cost edition which is poorly prepared is not a bargain if I must spend precious lesson time to re-do it.

I will use as many of a transfer student's old books as I deem beneficial for the student.

Metronome. A metronome is an important practice aid and is an investment the student will use forever. Each student needs a working metronome.

A mechanical metronome ticks more loudly than electric or electronic metronomes, and therefore I recommend this type. Electric or electronic metronomes are also usually significantly more expensive. If you are buying a metronome at this time, I highly recommend a mechanical one.

Piano maintenance. Your piano should be tuned at least once a year; twice a year is better. The technician also can adjust sticking keys, squeaking pedals, etc. Playing on a poorly-regulated and poorly-tuned instrument is a detriment to developing good skills, as well as a nuisance. I can provide you with the names of reputable tuner/technicians.

If you are considering the purchase of a used piano, it is worth the small appraisal fee (usually about \$75) to have a technician look over the piano for cracks in the soundboard, water damage, broken parts, etc. He/she also can advise you whether the price asked is appropriate and how much you probably will have to spend in the next five years in extra repairs because it is a used instrument.

Communication. Please feel free to contact me at any time about your or your child's progress or about difficulties.

With children, parental involvement is the best insurance of success. If a child knows the parent is interested in what he does, he is more willing to shoulder daily responsibilities. I will be happy to pass on to you tricks other parents have used to encourage practice on a daily basis or to spark input from other family members. The combined efforts of student-parent-teacher always produce a superior result.

At all times, the student's best interests come first--musical and otherwise.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to teach you/your child.

## PHILOSOPHIES OF TEACHING

The foundations of my teaching philosophy are:

My primary goal is to teach students how to learn.

Teaching must be matched to the student's learning style, not learning matched to the teacher's teaching style. Therefore, teaching style, curriculum, and approach must be flexible, varied, and individual.

Empowerment is the key to motivation. Motivation is not something the teacher does to a student; it is something the student does to himself. The teacher's part is to introduce possibilities.

~~~

These maxims guide my interaction with students:

I'll never be angry if you ask a question.

I'll never be angry if you make a mistake.

I'll be upset only if you don't try. If you won't try, I can't teach you.

If you don't understand, it's my fault, not yours. It's my job to teach you in a way you understand.

Attempting is often more important than succeeding.

~~~

These other ideas are also paramount in my teaching:

Music is a joy.

Music lessons should be fun. They are a privilege, not a punishment or a requirement. If we're not having fun, something is wrong.

Piano study isn't always going to be easy, but it always should be satisfying.

I emphasize initiative and self-direction.

I encourage exploration and creativity.

I show the student respect and affection.

#### TECHNICAL MATERIALS

- \_\_\_ Hanon: The Virtuoso Pianist (either Schirmer or Alfred)
- \_\_\_ Schaum: Finger Power \_\_\_ Primer \_\_\_ Level One (Schaum)
- \_\_\_ Schmitt: Preparatory Exercises for Piano, Op. 16 (Alfred or Schirmer)
- \_\_\_ Herz: Studies, Scales, and Passages (Schirmer)
- \_\_\_ Philipp: Studies for Independence of Fingers \_\_\_ I \_\_\_ II (Schirmer)
- \_\_\_ Dohnányi: Essential Finger Exercises (Editio Musica Budapest)
- \_\_\_ Czerny: Little Pianist, Op. 823 (Kalmus)
- \_\_\_ Czerny: 160 Eight-Measure Exercises, Op. 821 (Kalmus)
- \_\_\_ Czerny: Preparatory School of Velocity, Op. 636 (Kalmus)
- \_\_\_ Czerny: School of Velocity, Op. 299 (Kalmus)
- \_\_\_ The Brown Scale Book (Harris)

#### LITERATURE BOOKS

- \_\_\_ Small, ed.: The Very First Piano Solo Book (Alfred)
- \_\_\_ Small, ed.: Teacher's Choice (Alfred)
- \_\_\_ Small, ed.: Student's Choice (Alfred)
- \_\_\_ Lewis, ed.: Diabelli: Duets from Opus 149 \_\_\_ I \_\_\_ II (ECS)
- \_\_\_ Olson, ed.: Essential Keyboard Repertoire \_\_\_ I \_\_\_ II (Alfred)
- \_\_\_ Hinson, ed.: Repertoire with a Span of One Octave or Less (Alfred)

#### OTHER

- \_\_\_ steno pad (standard size, please: 6" x 9")
- \_\_\_ two 3-ring binders (at least 1" rings; 1 1/2" is better)
- \_\_\_ metronome (Taktell Piccolo recommended)
- \_\_\_ other: \_\_\_\_\_