

## Executive Summary

### NATS Survey on Pedagogy Instruction, Fall 2021

#### **What is the state of voice pedagogy instruction in the US and Canada?**

- What formats of content delivery are being used?
- What topics are being taught?
- How does instruction vary from the undergraduate to graduate level?

These questions drove the leaders of the NATS Voice Pedagogy Subcommittee to survey members of the Association who teach voice pedagogy in institutions of higher education. Through the use of e-mail invitations and social media notices, the committee received detailed responses from 191 pedagogy teachers. This report summarizes the survey's findings.

#### **What formats of content delivery are being used?**

A key finding of the survey was that voice pedagogy is typically delivered as a one term course at both the undergraduate and master's level. 70% of the teachers said pedagogy was a 1 term class at the undergraduate level, while a plurality (40%) said it was a 1 term class at the graduate level.

Pedagogy courses are most often 2 credit hour classes that meet for 2 or 2 ½ hours per week

Courses are most often taught on an every-other-year rotation.

Master's level classes are cross-listed with undergraduate courses at a majority of schools.

66% of the teachers responded that a major update to the syllabi and course materials for voice pedagogy courses at their school had occurred in the last two years.

#### **What topics are being taught?**

It depends on the course model used.

Those schools using a 1 term course cover the anatomy, physiology, and acoustics of the singing voice; vocal health; lifespan development of the voice; some sort of teaching practicum; exercise design, and repertoire selection. However, the same teachers noted they are NOT teaching voice classification, a philosophy of teaching, ethics and standards, body work (Alexander, Tai Chi, etc), choral applications, the business of running a studio, and, ironically, students are not able to do observations of experienced teachers.

Those using a two-course model are able to cover a much richer series of topics, including the teaching of different singing styles, the structuring of practice, the use of technology in the studio, ethical teaching, teaching trans voices, psychology and voice, observation of experienced teachers, and an expanded practicum component where students are able to teach in a supervised situation.

## **How does instruction vary from the undergraduate to graduate level?**

Those on the one course model resemble the undergraduate courses in terms of the scope of the topics

The two course models are able to cover a greater breadth of topics and seem to do so in greater depth as well.

A few elite programs at the graduate level have as many as seven graduate pedagogy courses.

## **Takeaways from this survey**

While the one course model may be the norm at most institutions, the advantages of having two courses are evident. More topics can be covered, and in greater detail, and more teacher mentoring can occur through supervised teaching and lesson observations.

**Based on the evidence from this survey and the two prior pedagogy summits at Ohio State and USC, the Pedagogy Subcommittee strongly recommends that the two-course model of content delivery be implemented at all institutions.**

Please see the attached pdf file, "Survey Results" for more details on the survey responses.