

LEADERSHIP COUNCIL MEETING

The Role of Online Learning
in ISMETA Approved Training Programs

March 13, 2024

PRIMARY QUESTIONS

During the COVID19 pandemic, training programs decided how to transition to virtual learning.

Now that the world is returning to in-person activities on a more regular basis, we need to revisit these questions:

To what extent does online learning in

- synchronous (live, interactive)
- asynchronous (pre-recorded video) formats

play a role in your programs/organizations now?

To what extent will online learning play a role in your programs and in our profession moving forward?

MORE BACKGROUND

- ISMETA's Professional Standards Committee recently received its first proposal for a totally asynchronous program (consisting of all pre-recorded sessions without any live interaction) program.
- We declined their application and they asked what guidelines ISMETA has about online learning for potential programs to consider.
- The question of how much virtual training is appropriate for your programs and for our profession is a rich inquiry that will continue for months and probably years.
- However, we wanted to get a snapshot of where your programs/organizations are now, and how you foresee this issue evolving in the near future.

SURVEY RESULTS

The Leadership Council consists of

- 42 Approved Training Programs (ATPs)
 - 7 Affiliated Professional Organizations
 - 9 current members of the Board of Directors
 - Some past Presidents of ISMETA's Board of Directors
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- We received 35 responses
 - 90% were from Approved Training Programs: 500-hour, 250-hour, and a few with both program formats

HANDS-ON WORK

For ATPs, what approximate percentage of your training currently focuses on hands-on touch work?

- 0% of the curriculum ~ 2 out of 31 programs
- 5 – 15% of the curriculum ~ 8 out of 31 programs
- 20 – 30% of the curriculum ~ 9 out of 31 programs
- 35 – 50 % of the curriculum ~ 10 out of 31 programs
- 55 – 75% of the curriculum ~ 1 out of 31 programs
- 80 – 100% of the curriculum ~ 1 out of 31 programs

IN-PERSON LEARNING NOW

What approximate percentage of your training program(s) occurs in-person now?

- 0 % ~ 2 out of 31 programs
- 5 – 15% ~ 1 out of 31 programs
- 20 – 30% ~ 4 out of 31 programs
- 35 – 50% ~ 4 out of 31 programs
- 55 – 75% ~ 5 out of 31 programs
- 80 – 100% ~ 15 out of 31 programs

LIVE ONLINE LEARNING NOW

- What approximate percentage of your training program(s) occurs through live, interactive online sessions now?
 - 0% ~ 8 out of 31 programs
 - 5 – 15% ~ 6 out of 31 programs
 - 20 – 30% ~ 4 out of 31 programs
 - 35 – 50% ~ 5 out of 31 programs
 - 55 – 75% ~ 1 out of 31 programs
 - 80 – 100% ~ 7 out of 31 programs

PRE-RECORDED VIDEO LEARNING

What approximate percentage of your training program(s) currently occurs through pre-recorded videos?

- 0% ~ 24 out of 31 programs
- 5 – 15% ~ 6 out of 31 programs
- 20 – 30% ~ 1 out of 31 programs

LEARNING SUPPORT FOR ASYNCHRONOUS SESSIONS

Do you provide any kind of follow-up or supervision to aid the students in learning the material?

- Video learning occurs during our class time together, usually followed by a discussion or movement exploration.
- Students submit reflection writings about the video material.
- I use the pre-recorded to address theory or information that is worthwhile delivering this way - as students can always reference it over and over. I then use the live online (synchronous) to explore some concepts more deeply or ones that I feel need to be interactive for students questions and experiences.
- When videos are used occasionally, they occur with follow up discussion and demonstrations.
- The material is introduced in person first, then they engage with the videos so they are exposed to other facilitators.
- We do offer recorded versions of live sessions for those who miss a main webinar due to illness or personal conflict but have limits of 4 hours in a 3 month period without additional required faculty contact that the student pays for.

RECOMMENDED IN-PERSON LEARNING

- Approximately what minimum percentage of a training program's hours should be recommended to occur in person?
 - 0% ~ 1 out of 35 responses
 - 5 – 15% ~ 1 out of 35 responses
 - 20 – 30% ~ 3 out of 35 responses
 - 35 – 50% ~ 7 out of 35 responses
 - 55 – 75% ~ 19 out of 35 responses
 - 80 – 100% ~ 4 out of 35 responses

RECOMMENDED LIVE, ONLINE LEARNING

- Approximately what maximum percentage of a training program's hours should be recommended to occur in live, interactive online sessions?
 - 5 – 15% ~ 8 out of 35 responses
 - 20 – 30% ~ 12 out of 35 responses
 - 35 – 50% ~ 9 out of 35 responses
 - 55 – 75% ~ 2 out of 35 responses
 - 80 – 100% ~ 4 out of 35 responses

RECOMMENDED PRE-RECORDED VIDEO LEARNING

- What approximate maximum percentage of a training program's hours should be recommended to occur through pre-recorded videos?
 - 0% ~ 5 out of 35 responses
 - 5 – 15% ~ 23 out of 35 responses
 - 20 – 30% ~ 7 out of 35 responses

The range of 5-15% could potentially be a suggested guideline.

EFFECTS OF ONLINE LEARNING GUIDELINES ON YOUR PROGRAMS

- In-person sessions are the foundation in all of the practices. People need to attend live, feel the movement live, and interact as a group live.
- Most people receiving training online are in a domestic space, which does not provide the same holding, container and focus that a professional studio space offers. In-person training, in a studio/professional space, enables much more creative, embodied and relational learning. It is essential for the demonstration and practice of hands-on work.
- We need to offer online alternatives. We reach more people that way. Since some teachers live in isolated areas, our program would be greatly affected if we are required to teach 100% live.
- We have experienced remarkable success in the effective transmission of our somatic-expressive arts trainings online.
- It's of concern to us that if ISMETA were to require us to increase our percentage of in-person and decrease the percentage online, it would be a severe detriment to the quality of our program and our fiscal viability and also a significant deterrent to our enrollment.

EFFECTS OF ONLINE LEARNING GUIDELINES ON OUR PROFESSION

- I think it will keep us attuned to the ways technology serves society and our needs.
- I believe it would de-value the somatic profession. The relational quality of in-person training is critical to the material being embodied, the student supported in this way and the integrity of the practice.
- We are in a field that is still not offering solid, full-time employment with benefits to the majority of our graduates. In order to bring in people who already have a career that pays their bills, or others who strive toward full-time employment but aren't endowed with ample savings, we believe we need as much flexibility in learning styles and methods and venues as possible.
- As it is, there is a so-called 'somatic' boom happening in online offerings, a lot of which are pre-recorded. I think we should keep our ATP hours including largely in person meetings, to differentiate ourselves from those somatic learnings, if possible.

OTHER COMMENTS FROM THE LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

- It feels important that ISMETA respects each program's capacity to determine the format (online vs. in person) that best supports the delivery and integration of their learning material.
- I do not believe we should require minimum and maximum limits. Each program is different and changes over time.
- There does need to be guidance and clarity, so I welcome ISMETA creating guidelines.
- Guidelines can be helpful to give form. Rules and regulations, however, can be limiting. I am in favor of the individual trainings taking responsibility for their own form, structure, and gestalting of their own programs.

THANK YOU!

- Your input is invaluable.
- Clearly, there are diverse perspectives on this topic and we intend to respect them all.
- All responses will be shared with the Professional Standards Committee so they can keep them in mind they continue to field new training program applications.
- We will share drafts of any suggested guidelines that ISMETA may create in the coming months.
- We will continue to ask for your feedback so that we move into this new landscape of online learning together, collaboratively!