

2nd Teacher Training Summit

May 13 & 14, 2011
The Lodge at Vail, Vail, CO

Report Structure:

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Overview

On May 13 & 14, 2011, the PMA held the second 'Teacher Training Summit' in Vail, Colorado, where approximately 60 teacher trainers and administrators from a wide range of Pilates teacher training programs and lineages got together with PMA leadership to discuss the components of comprehensive Pilates education programs. This Summit's investigation was one that had never been undertaken before. It promised to be an exciting adventure that would lead to unprecedented understanding and development.

Present from the PMA governors and staff:

Trent McEntire, Board President
Deborah Lessen, Certification Commission Chair
Elizabeth Anderson, Executive Director
Ray Infante, Communication Coordinator
Amy Bloom, Certification Specialist
Anna Alvarez, Continuing Education Specialist

This report should be read alongside the Pilates Teacher Training Summit booklet, entitled '*Survey Results for Comprehensive Pilates Teacher Training Programs*'. A copy can be found on the PMA website on the Teacher Training Summit page.

The Presentation & The Summit Booklet

Trent McEntire, PMA Board President, made opening remarks, during which he identified the Summit weekend as Step 2 in a 4-step process outlined below.

The 4 Step Process:

Step 1: Collect data about comprehensive Pilates teacher training programs by means of a survey in early 2011. (Complete)

Step 2: Hold the 2nd Teacher Training Summit in May 2011, in order to present the data and reveal structural similarities and differences among Pilates teacher training programs. Ask delegates to work on refining the survey questions from Step 1, in preparation for a second survey to more schools. Some questions in the first survey were found to be imprecise and therefore the answers were too subjective. (Complete)

Step 3: Send a second survey with more detailed questions as crafted by delegates at the 2nd Summit, and ask more schools to respond to the survey. Hold a 3rd Summit, and work with delegates to establish the minimum essential components of a comprehensive Pilates teacher training program, based on the more refined data from a greater number of schools.

Step 4: Establish the PMA's *recommendation* for the minimum essential components of a comprehensive Pilates teacher training program.

Elizabeth Anderson, PMA Executive Director, talked delegates through the Summit Booklet. First, Anderson presented the data from the 2011 survey. She also provided information to assist delegates in understanding some key terms, as well as how the PMA Pilates Certification Exam was constructed.

Anderson explained that the PMA's Pilates Role Delineation (2005) defined among other things, the tasks that a Pilates teacher should be able to perform. This outline of tasks formed the basis for the survey that was sent out to Pilates schools prior to the Summit.

She explained the following with regard to the 2011 survey:

The source of our data

- * PMA received 25 responses to the survey, of which 20 were usable
- * 20 schools represented classical, contemporary, and post-rehabilitation programs with teaching sites throughout the world

- * Large international, as well as small, local schools
- * Program Directors, many with over 20 years experience
- * Programs varied in length:
 - 400 – 504 hours (11 schools)
 - 572 – 700 hours (5 schools)
 - 800 – 950 hours (4 schools)

Key definitions:

NCCA (National Commission for Certifying Agencies). The PMA is applying to the NCCA to have its certification program accredited. The application is scheduled to be submitted by mid-July 2011

Psychometrician: A psychometrician is a person who practices the science of measurement, or psychometrics. The term psychometrics refers to the measurement of an individual's psychological attributes, including the knowledge, skills, and abilities a professional might need to work in a particular job or profession. The psychometrician who worked on the PMA Pilates Certification Exam is Dr. James Penny from CASTLE Worldwide, Inc. Dr. Penny has a PhD in Education Research Methodology from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Anderson gave a brief overview of how the PMA Pilates Certification Exam was constructed (see below, Building the Exam). She stressed that the methodology used was that which is required by the NCCA. As the PMA intends to have the certification program accredited, the PMA has always adhered strictly to NCCA guidelines. It was made clear to the delegates that these systems and guidelines were not invented by the PMA. CASTLE Worldwide, Inc., (the PMA's test administration company), implements NCCA procedures with the PMA in order to ensure that the certification program will be eligible for accreditation.

Exam Development – Building the Exam (booklet p. 3):

Step 1: Role Delineation Panel of 12.

Supervised by the psychometrician in 2004, the PMA convened a group of 12 experts in the Pilates field representing a wide range of styles and lineages. The 12 experts worked together to identify the role of a Pilates teacher, specifically the required skills, knowledge and abilities as well as their scope of practice. This work resulted in the *'Role Delineation Study of the PMA Certified Pilates Teacher'*, which forms the foundation for the PMA exam.

(The final Role Delineation document can be found on the PMA website on the Certification page as a download. The Role Delineation must be revised every 5 – 7 years. The next revision is scheduled for early November 2011 at the PMA conference.)

Step 2: The Role Delineation document, as established by the panel, was validated by 352 Pilates professionals in the field, by means of a survey.

Step 3: The validation process from Step 2 established:

- That the Role Delineation Document was valid
- The 3 performance domains of the Pilates teacher are:
 - Domain 1: Assessment & Evaluation
 - Domain 2: Teaching
 - Domain 3: Reassessment

Step 4: Item writing panels led by psychometrician.

In the field of testing, an 'item' means a 'question' and possible answers to the question. Panels of Pilates teachers were convened to write questions for the exam under the strict supervision and guidance of the psychometrician. Each question had to relate to the skills, knowledge and abilities identified under each performance domain, and each question had to have two academic references.

Anderson then focused on 'tasks', in a deeper exploration of the first phase of the Role Delineation, (page 3, slide 2) which is:

- **I. Initial Development and Validation.** The role delineation panel identified the domains, **tasks**, knowledge, and skills essential to the performance of a PMA Certified Pilates Teacher.
- **Tasks** in the Role Delineation were evaluated according to their importance, frequency, and criticality, and given a numerical weight expressed as a percentage of questions on the exam (which were correlated to a percentage of time spent in teacher training on that task)

In preparation for the Summit, these percentages (of time spent in teacher training on a given task – page 4, top slide, column 3) were compared to extrapolated percentages from the responses of the 20 schools (page 4, top slide, column 2) in order determine whether there was congruence between the two. There was significant congruence.

Anderson referred the delegates to pages 19 and 20 in their booklets, which listed the tasks in each domain in detail, (as the tasks were truncated in the slides she presented).

She also referred delegates to note where the raw data collected in the survey was located in their booklets:

Pages 21, 22, 23 – lists the data for all 20 programs

Pages 24, 25, 26 – lists data for the 400 – 504 hour programs only

Pages 27, 28, 29 – lists data for the 572 – 700 hour programs only

Pages 30, 31, 32 – lists data for the 800 – 950 hour programs only

Anderson then proceeded to display the slide titled:

Role Delineation Task Comparison (booklet p.4)

Taking the first 4 columns which represent data for all 20 schools, she pointed out that:

- Column 1: Lists the average number of hours all 20 schools spent on Task 1
- Column 2: Expresses the hours as a percentage of time out of the entire training program
- Column 3: Lists the percentage of time the PMA Role Delineation Document specifies should be spent on Task 1 by a practitioner
- Column 4: Shows the difference between Column 2 and 3

Conclusions:

- The variance between what the Role Delineation document outlines and what is taught in comprehensive teacher training programs is minimal.
- This congruency could be one of the reasons why the PMA exam enjoys a high pass rate. Another reason could be the fact that the educational requirement for a PMA exam candidate is high (compared to other certification programs where there are few, if any, educational requirements).

General Information (booklet p. 4)

(Ray Infante joined Anderson on the stage at this point to assist in explaining the graphs on page 4 – 18.) This slide displays findings in answer to Yes/No questions. The group felt that when the percentages fell below 80%, there was cause for concern and that more investigation was warranted. For example under Self Practice, the understanding of the terms Monitoring, Supervising and Assessing were found to need more detailed definition.

Program Comparison Breakdown (booklet p. 5)

This slide showed an analysis of the average and median number of hours spent by the different length training programs on the areas of study listed down the left side.

Proposed Minimum Template (booklet p. 5)

This slide showed the figures from the slide above for the 400 – 504 hour programs. There were 11 schools in this category, which represented the majority of schools that took part in the survey. As 450 hours is the minimum length of training program where graduates are eligible to take the PMA exam, these figures were suggested as a starting point for discussing the minimum template. **Note:** The Summit booklet was compiled some weeks

prior to the Summit, and as the rest of the booklet was being finished it became clear that additional work would be needed to further refine the survey questions in order to achieve a more accurate template. The template shown here was a draft for discussion only.

Slides on booklet pages 6 – 18

The dots on these graphs plot the hours spent by the 20 different schools on these areas of study. Some graphs show that the schools are relatively in accord (for example Exercise Analysis, p. 14) and some show that schools differed wildly (Reformer, p. 9).

Entrance Requirements, booklet p. 33

This page shows everything written in the Comments section of the survey on this topic. Interestingly, the final example depicts a school that is far along in the process of being licensed as a post-secondary vocational school.

Prerequisites, booklet p. 34

This page shows everything written in the Comments section of the survey on this topic.

Who Supervises, Monitors, or Assesses Self-Practice, booklet p. 35

This page shows everything written in the Comments section of the survey on this topic.

Comments, booklet p. 36 - 37

This page shows all remaining general comments.

Work of the Delegates

Following the presentation of the booklet, Deborah Lessen orchestrated the main work of the delegates that comprised the majority of the weekend. She asked the group to break in to 3 groups to discuss and debate basic definitions that would lead to more refined questions for the second survey. Each group had a chance to discuss each question and share their findings with the other groups. (The groups each wrote their conclusions on large post-it pages, which were later collected and compiled by Amy Bloom and Anna Alvarez.) The topics examined and debated were:

Observation (a detailed analysis of the value of observation; followed by lists of questions examining what sort of observation is allowed or required, how it is measured and verified, what opportunities for what types of observation are provided, whether there are

observation directives, and whether there are opportunities for students to ask questions about what they've observed, etc.)

Periodic Assessment (an exploration of the purpose of assessment; how to track it, how to create feedback loops, options for students not meeting the required standard, how to define the required standards, ways to assess [practical, written]; assessing 'Can you do it? Can you teach it?', assessment of theoretical understanding and the ability to articulate it; how to assess, how often, what to assess? what are measureable objective standards; assessing to encourage progress [informational]; assessing to determine competency [pass/fail], etc.)

Self-Practice (Self-led practice: applying learned information to daily practice, observing and creating change, being your own teacher, embodying as a pathway to teaching, gaining appreciation for difficulty and discipline, experiencing nuance, reinforcing your understanding, revealing your questions. Instructor-led practice: what is the qualification of the instructor, evaluating for competency and progress, periodic assessment with feedback, being monitored/taught in the moment, etc.)

Special Populations (this topic included discussion of contraindications, modifications, precautions and scope of practice; does the training program address all of those, are trainees given resources regarding addressing specific physical limitations, do you teach scope of practice regarding special populations, investigating modifications and progress for each special population, etc.)

Discussion of Registry of Schools Criteria

The group engaged in a detailed discussion of the criteria for inclusion in the PMA's Registry of Schools. After much discussion it was agreed that an additional criteria would be added which is:

- ***By June 1, 2013, all teacher trainers working for a school wishing to be part of the Registry, must have a minimum of 5 years Pilates teaching experience, and be PMA certified.***

Conclusion

- In the process of collecting the findings from the survey, we discovered that some of the questions were not specific enough, and therefore responses were too subjective to give clear enough data
- A second survey to a larger number of schools is needed

- Summit delegates worked in small groups to explore and suggest a range of clearer questions that could be asked about the most challenging areas of the survey, which concerned observation, periodic assessment, self-practice, and special populations
- Delegates found the experience of working in small groups to be educational, inclusive, stimulating and creative. Many commented about the positive aspects of working collaboratively with others from a range of different schools and lineages for a common cause
- It became apparent that delegates achieved a clearer understanding of what the PMA is, what it is not, how it functions, and the fact that they “are” the PMA
- Delegates came to understand more about how the PMA certification exam was created, and achieved greater clarity about the terms certification, accreditation and licensure
- Many schools expressed interest in, or intention to, become licensed by their state as a post-secondary vocational training school in order to operate legally
- It was clarified that whether an organization calls itself a school, program, company, academy, or institute, any organization that receives money from students in exchange for what the organization positions as vocational training (for a career from which the student will earn their living), is functioning as school, and as such, is required to comply with the laws of the state or country with regard to operating legally in a given jurisdiction.

The weekend was comprised of roughly ¼ lecture and ¾ group discussion and debate. It was deemed a success by delegates who valued the time to work on issues of interest to those involved in teacher training with others from different backgrounds. The work of this Summit was demanding and required focus and stamina. Participants reported finding the process rewarding and inspiring. They felt ownership of their work the results they produced in a participatory manner with their colleagues from inside and outside the US. They reported on the value of face-to-face contact with their colleagues as well as PMA board members and staff.

The PMA is committed to the development of the second survey and the 3rd Teacher Training Summit. The location will be Miami, Florida, and the date is to be confirmed.

End.