Adapting Creative Aging Course Design for Remote Program Delivery

The following are a series of recommendations developed by the Education team at Lifetime Arts in order to assist organizations interested in engaging older adults with remote Creative Aging programs. This document will evolve. Remote programs will usually be conducted online, however, some might also be telephone-based for those without access to high-speed internet, computers, tablets, or smartphones.

1. While most senior serving organizations are stretched very thin and may not have the capacity to prioritize art programming, **leverage existing partnerships when possible.** Reach out to discuss ways in which your combined efforts might serve older adults in your community. Be patient and adaptive.

2. **Keep art form and class size in mind when developing remote class options**. Just because an online platform can accommodate 100 people, does not mean a Creative Aging class would be effective at that size. Class size should be appropriate to the art form, and manageable teacher-to-student ratios are important. Consider which art forms lend themselves to remote instruction, and then develop options with which to survey potential participants.

3. **Consult with and survey the older adults you want to serve** about the art forms they would like to study prior to finalizing which type of class might be offered.

4. **Assess Participants' Access to Technology**. Survey students on their technical capabilities, and confirm that they will be able to access the delivery format you plan to use.

5. **Consider using both asynchronous and synchronous activities** to facilitate skills mastery, support social engagement, and build community. Asynchronous activities are ones that students complete on their own time, between synchronous meetings. Examples might be: Watching a video to demonstrate an art form, going through a virtual museum tour, reading an article or poem, or working on an assignment.

6. **Keep Creative Aging's sequential-learning model in mind** when designing a class, but know there will **need to be adaptations** that are appropriate and beneficial to online learning environments. Below are some suggested adaptations:

	Live Program Best Practices	**Suggested Remote Program Adaptations**
# of Sessions	8+ consecutive sessions	4+ consecutive sessions + asynchronous assignments Virtual meet-ups between classes with TA or other students
Duration	90-minute minimum	**45 - 75 minute maximum for synchronous sessions** with the option of asynchronous opportunities to supplement
Class Size	10 person minimum	Keep student registration limits appropriate to the art form, and keep in mind the teaching artist's capacity to manage extra asynchronous work between class sessions.
Culminating Event	A live, in-person, public sharing	Live and recorded Zoom, Facebook, Instagram events; Social media or website gallery exhibits; Google Meetings and Google Sites to share work.

7. **Keep Adult Learning Principles and S.A.F.E. Planning in mind** when designing your class.

   Adult Learning Principles:
   a. Adults want to participate in how they are learning
   b. Experience and practice is key to mastery
   c. Adults are most interested in learning that has application to their life
   d. Adults are self-directed

   S.A.F.E. Planning:
   a. **S**kills: Build art skills over time. Go in depth in one art form.
   b. **A**ssessment: Assess each student's learning needs and adapt instruction, class lessons, and teaching style to meet those needs.
   c. **F**eedback: Develop protocols and strategies to allow participants to share work and receive feedback so that they grow as artists.
   d. **E**ngage Socially: The two key principles of the Creative Aging Lifelong Learning model are **mastery of skills** and intentional **social engagemen**t. Strategize ways you can encourage social engagement between students. Integrate intentionally-designed social engagement

activities into each class, and perhaps between classes. Be creative in accommodating any technology-related barriers.

8. Highlight approved, public digital **media and resources** (images, recordings, etc.) **from your collections,** and/or from the public domain, to enhance the participants' learning experience and connection to your institution and its mission.

9. **Prepare Participants and Support Staff for a Successful First Class**
   a. Send instructions and links to "how to" videos, when possible, to each student explaining how to access synchronous classes.
   b. Schedule tech set-up appointment(s) with each student prior to the first synchronous class meeting.
   c. If possible, assign a staff person as tech support for each class session. Provide each participant with the tech support phone number and email address.
   d. Invite participants to begin logging on 20 minutes prior to the start of a synchronous class.

10. **Establish Good "Remote Class" Protocols**
    a. Develop and communicate protocols for synchronous class etiquette, i.e., everyone is muted until called upon, web cameras "off" or "on," etc.
    b. Share these guidelines via email, and remind participants verbally during synchronous meetings.
    c. Distribute information and materials needed for class ahead of time, i.e.,:
       i. Upcoming plans
       ii. Syllabus
       iii. Resource links
       iv. Link to a brief weekly survey to understand what they are enjoying and what they need more help with
    d. Schedule one-on-one office hours (or tutorials) between the teaching artist and each participant
    e. Assign structured virtual or phone meet-ups with class partners/buddies

11. **Be transparent and foster a "shared learning" experience!** From the beginning, be clear with participants that this is a new adventure for your organization. Explain why their feedback throughout the process is important so that you can build the best learning experience together.