



Randy Potter School of Piano Technology, Inc. Training Competent Piano Technicians for the 21st Century

Course Cost and Registration Form

- Complete Home Study Course
- Keyboard Magazine Comments
- Seminars
- News
- Products
- Industry Links
- Interests

Beginning Intermediate and Advanced Hands-On Seminars

2011 Beginning, Intermediate & Advanced Training Seminars
To Be Held At Montana State University
Bozeman, Montana, January 2-9, 2011

You may also download this seminar brochure and registration form from our web site,
[2011 Seminar Brochure](#) / [Beginning, Intermediate, and Advanced Training Seminar Registration Form](#)
(click on the PDF links above)

[Click Here for printable version of this page \(PDF 209KB\).](#)

Introduction:

Since we started our home-study school in 1986, our goal has been to provide the training requested by our students. We have had many requests from students for advanced training in high level tuning and regulating. Others have stated they wish to get personal, in-depth, hands-on training to hone and upgrade their skills. Quite frankly, we know this is difficult to find.



Retworking a flange with Carolyn from North Dakota

We have always encouraged our students to take advantage of the classes offered through their local Piano Technicians Guild chapter, at regional and international PTG conventions, and through the factory training offered by manufacturers, both at dealerships in cities around the U.S. and Canada and at their facilities. But many technicians do not have access to these resources, and it can take years to get into just one of the manufacturer's courses. Space is so limited you seldom get to attend unless you are doing work for one of their dealers. The Baldwin course, which I attended at their factories in Conway, Arkansas, in 1979, is no longer being offered. Neither is Kimball University, which I attended at their French Lick, Indiana, factory in 1990. I had been tuning over seven years before I was able to attend Yamaha's Little Red Schoolhouse in 1983, and over ten years before I was able to attend Steinway's Factory Technicians Training Course. (In each case, I was doing dealer work at the time, and with the exception of Kimball, who no longer makes pianos, still do.) In 1990 I was privileged to train with Franz Mohr (Horowitz' technician for 34 years) at Steinway's Concerts and Artists Division at Steinway Hall in Manhattan (I do most of the concert work in our

On Stage This Week



Can you really learn...



[read more...](#)

Randy Potter
Registered Piano Technician
Member Piano Technicians Guild

61592 S.E. Orion Drive
Bend, Oregon 97702-2402
Phone: 541-382-5411
Fax: 541-382-5400
Email:

randy@pianotuning.com

© 2006 pianotuning.com
all right reserved



Michelle from Texas practicing string installation

area), and in 1992 attended Steinway's Tone Regulation Seminar at the factory on Long Island, and in 2010 the Concert Seminar. In 1991 I attended Yamaha's Disklavier Piano Service Seminar and in 1996 PianoDisc's Service Seminar. And I have had the opportunity to visit, and get training at, more than a dozen piano factories around the world. In my home PTG chapter, Portland, Oregon, less than ten technicians have been able to attend even one factory training school. Sixty other Portland chapter members, and three thousand of our students, have yet to get into any of them, though some have been trying for a number of years. We have technicians taking our Continuing Education course who have been tuning 25 and 30 years - but have not been able to attend even one manufacturer's factory training seminar!

"So where can we get some in-depth, personal training?" students regularly ask. "And where can we get personal help to prepare to take our PTG Exams?"

After getting so many requests, we developed our own hands-on course. I have tried to incorporate the best of the factory seminars I have attended, and training I have received over the years, plus additional training not taught by those programs.

Our co-instructors are well-known teaching technicians from around the country.

And our seminar is open to all technicians - whether or not they have taken our home study course.

January 2011, we will again hold our annual Beginning Training Seminar (BTS), Intermediate Training Seminar (ITS), and Advanced Training Seminar (ATS), now held at Montana State University School of Music in Bozeman.

Our first seminar was held in 1991 at Baylor University in Waco, Texas. It was such a success we decided to continue it. Since then we have had Advanced Training Seminars (and Beginning and Intermediate Training Seminars for technicians with less experience, or are still taking our course, but still want to get personal, one-on-one tuning and regulating training) at Baylor, Northwestern, the PTG Home Office in Kansas City. We moved the seminar to MSU in 2006.

This year's seminar will be limited to 30 students, and there will be five full-time instructors, including myself. "Full-time" is an understatement, because we will work with students about 12+ hours per day, Monday through Saturday. Instructor-to-student ratio is about 1-to-6.

This year's seminar will be limited to 30 students, and there will be five full-time instructors, including myself. "Full-time" is an understatement, because we will work with students about 12+ hours per day, Monday through Saturday. Instructor-to-student ratio is about 1-to-6.

The six-day, 60+hour seminar will include group lectures and private one-on-one hands-on training in high level tuning and regulating techniques, utilizing Montana State University's School of Music facilities. Students will work with a variety of pianos; consoles, several grands and even a brand new Steinway D, including the school's fleet of new Kawai studio upright and grand pianos.

One of the goals of the seminar is to prepare technicians to take and pass their Piano Technicians Guild Registered Piano Technician Exams, and many students do so after they return home.

2011 Beginning and Intermediate Training Seminars:



Randy teaching a tuning class up close and personal to the Beginning and Intermediate Students

Many technicians have said they would like to get personal, one-on-one, hands-on training in tuning and regulating, but feared their skill level was not high enough to attend our Advanced seminar; so we developed a Beginning and Intermediate Training Seminar to meet that need.

Beginning in 1995 we began offering both programs during the same week. We are scheduling class and individual sessions to allow students maximum opportunity to get the training and personal attention - regardless of their current skill level. A technician with advanced level tuning skills but lower regulating skills, for example, will be able to receive advanced personal training to hone their tuning skills yet study regulating techniques at the level they are comfortable with.

2011 Advanced Action Rebuilding and Voicing Training Seminar:

Each year we tailor out Advanced Seminar to meet the specific needs of individual advanced students. In recent years many have asked for an advanced hands-on action rebuilding seminar - and this year we will do that. Working in conjunction with Montana State University, the Advanced Class will be rebuilding the grand action of a 9' Baldwin SF-10- concert grand piano, under the direction and leadership of instructor Dave Swartz, RPT, and will be replacing all of the wippens, hammers, shanks and flanges with the new Wessell, Nickel & Gross composite action parts. See the separate sheet, below, for more information.

Technical Exam Preparation Day:

One of the goals of the seminar is to prepare technicians to take and pass their Piano Technicians Guild Registered Piano Technician (RPT) Exams, and many students do so after they return home. This year we will be having a hands-on "Technical Exam Preparation Day" at the college that is specifically designed around the PTG's Technical Exam.

The PTG Written Exam:

The local PTG chapter will offer the PTG Written Exam some time during the week. You must be a PTG member, and have your membership number, in order to take the exam.

European Piano Factories Movies

When time permits we show videos of factories in Europe, depending on which factory videos students would like to see. Randy has toured a number of European piano factories, including Bechstein, Blüthner, Schimmel, Hamburg Steinway and Steingraeber in Germany, Egtved in Denmark, Kemble in England, Bösendorfer in Austria, Petrof in the Czech Republic, plus Renner's vertical action factory in Seitz, Germany. Video segments of factory visits will be available to seminar participants to watch as time permits.

Pre-Seminar Seminar (and Skiing)

Several years ago students began asking if they could arrive early, and spend extra time with our instructors before the seminar started, to work on specific areas of interest to them. Some were so new they wanted to make sure they understood the basic action part names and functions of vertical and grand pianos, and how they worked. Others had specific tuning, repairing or regulating questions they wanted to work out. Others wanted some one-on-one tuning help before the seminar started.

So we started by adding two additional days at the beginning of the seminar, before the seminar starts. Over the past dozen years we have experimented with having just one extra day, or two. This year we will be having one extra, Pre-Seminar Seminar day, which will be on Sunday, January 2nd. The Pre-Seminar Seminar (PSS) is almost entirely student directed. By that I mean that while we have a list of subjects and topics, and many props, ready based on what students have asked for in previous years, and we are prepared to use some, all or none of them, depending on what the students attending wish to cover.

Students attending the Pre-Seminar Seminar day, January 2nd, will need to arrive on Saturday, January 1st. Then on Sunday the 2nd, while the rest of the students are still flying or driving in, those who came early for the Pre-Seminar Seminar will spend the day with our instructors in a small group question and answer session, and doing other hands-on topics of their choosing as requested.

Most of our instructors will be arriving on Friday the 31st, and skiing at Bridger Bowl Ski Resort on the Saturday the 1st. Students are invited to come early and ski with us, or sit and talk in the lodge .

Yellowstone Snow Coach Trip:

Because we are so close to Yellowstone National Park, many students have decided to take an extra day and visit Yellowstone National Park either before, or after, the seminar. In the past we have offered a group tour on Sunday after the seminar ends, but are not doing that this year. However, you can rent a car and go on your own, with other students, or join a group for a tour.

The park is virtually empty during the winter, and all vehicles stay on the main roads, the animals are undisturbed, and you can see wildlife in their natural habitat in great numbers, up close, in a way not seen in the summer months. This past year we saw everything from bison (buffalo), elk, moose, deer, coyotes, trumpeter swans, bald eagles, golden eagles, ravens, hawks, rabbits, and much, much more. I think we saw over 200 geysers, including Old Faithful, blow off steam.

You can see some photos www.daveswartzphotography.com, then click on the Galleries link, then Yellowstone, and see some for the awesome photos Dave has taken during our prior trips.

Seminar Instructors:

Tom Cobble, R.P.T.



Tom Cobble, RPT, doing one-on-one tuning with Paul from Idaho

Tom is a teaching piano technician-rebuilder, who had his business in Richmond, Virginia, for over 25 years, where he also served as piano technician to the Virginia Commonwealth University, the University of Richmond, and worked for Jordan Kitts, one of the largest Steinway dealers in the U.S. He moved to Melbourne, Florida, a few years ago. Tom was the major impetus behind the writing the course, is one of our school's Technical Advisors, has instructed at many of our Advanced Training Seminars, and taught classes at PTG local, regional and national conventions. Tom has attended Yamaha's Little Red Schoolhouse (which, in fact, is where we met in 1983, and became lifelong friends), Steinway's Factory Technicians Service Seminar and Steinway's Tone Regulation Seminar. He has also served in all capacities in his local PTG chapter and is a regular, and well-known, instructor at local, regional and international PTG conventions and institutes.

Ward Guthrie, R.P.T.



Ward Guthrie teaching a regulating class to Beginning and Intermediate Seminar students

Ward is a teaching piano technician-rebuilder in Bozeman, Montana, where he services pianos for private clients, schools, colleges and universities over a wide area. Before learning piano technology Ward earned

his Masters degree in Music Education from Oberlin Conservatory of Music.

He is one of our school's Technical Advisors, and has had experience training piano technicians, several of whom (including two daughters) have taken our course.

Ward has taught at numerous Piano Technicians Guild local, state, regional and national conventions and institutes, has served as chairman of PTG's Test Standards Tuning Sub Committee, as Pacific Northwest Regional Vice President of PTG, Director of PTG's Technical Institute Committee, and has been one of our instructors since 1998.

Randy Potter, R.P.T.

Randy is the founder and president of the school, author of three published books, numerous technical articles, and has produced over a dozen technical training videos/DVDs. He performs concert service for the local college and for several concert associations, for both piano and harpsichord. Randy is a rebuilder and has a complete rebuilding shop in Central Oregon. He has served in all capacities in his local PTG chapter and is a well-known instructor at local, regional and national PTG conventions and institutes in the U.S. and Canada, Pianoforte Tuners' Association conventions in Great Britain, IAPBT conventions in Europe and Japan, PTGNZ in New Zealand and APTTA in Australia, served on many PTG international committees and as president of the PTG Foundation.

Dave Swartz, R.P.T.

Dave lives in Rosemont, Minnesota, where he serves as piano technician for Northwestern College in St. Paul and has a nationally-known rebuilding shop. Dave is a graduate of our school, and also of our first Advanced Training Seminar, and has been one of our ATS instructors ever since. Dave is a well-known conference instructor, and has taught at numerous local, regional and PTG Annual Conventions and Technical Institutes. He is also one of our school's Technical Advisors. One of Dave's specialties is smoke damage restoration, and he teaches a segment on that subject during the week.

All instructors are Registered Piano Technician (RPT) members of the Piano Technicians Guild. In addition to being very competent at tuning, repairing and regulating, concert piano preparation, and rebuilding, all are experienced at teaching both beginning, intermediate and advanced technicians, and are experienced both in giving PTG Exams as well as helping technicians prepare for them.

Our guaranteed registration cut-off date will be November 1, 2010. Students are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis, and you will be accepted after November 1 only on a space-available basis - but since we usually fill the seminar earlier than November 1, we will discontinue accepting more students when it fills, even if it is earlier than November 1. To insure your spot we recommend you register early. (Every year we have to turn away students who want to attend.)

Enrollment Requirements:

Enrollment is open both to technicians who have taken, or are currently taking, either our Beginning or Continuing Education training program - as well as to technicians who have not taken our course.

In order to assure maximum benefit to each student, students registering for the Beginning and Intermediate Training Seminar should have a basic understanding of tuning, repairing and regulating which you can gain from studying our home study course. Beginning and intermediate students are not expected to have much hands-on experience in either of these areas when they arrive - you will get that during the seminar. (And we have had students attend the Beginning seminar who are just starting out, and have no experience at all.)

Registration for the Advanced Grand Action Rebuilding Seminar is open to all technicians, but priority registration spots will be given to technicians who have already taken the Beginning or Intermediate Hands-On Training Seminar. Technicians registering for the Advanced Training Seminar should have intermediate skills in these areas; tuning, action repairing, and vertical and grand regulating. Students who have not take our Beginning or Intermediate Hands-On Training Seminar are required to have been a practicing tuner for at least five (5) years, tuned at least 1,000 pianos, and taken and passed the PTG Written Examination prior to being accepted into the Advanced Grand Action Rebuilding Seminar.

This is an intermediate and high level training program, and is intended to build on and refine the basic knowledge, skills and techniques you have when you arrive - to the point that you can pass your PTG Exams, and be prepared to do concert quality tuning and regulating work. In order to receive the most benefit from participating, Advanced Students need to have a minimum of 250 tunings for clients prior to attending this seminar, and to have passed the Piano Technicians Guild Written Examination prior to registering. Persons requesting a waiver of any of these requirements must talk to Randy personally.

Lodging and Meals:

This year all students will be staying at the Comfort Inn & Suites in Bozeman, Montana. We have put together a room and board package that includes transportation to and from the airport, lodging at the Comfort Inn starting Sunday, and breakfast, lunch and dinner, beginning Monday morning and ending Sunday morning. It also includes transportation to and from the hotel to the college, lunches and dinners, and other events we hold during the week.

Students who live in the Bozeman area, or who have family to stay with in the Bozeman area, and not staying at the Comfort Inn with us, will pay the \$225 Lunch and Dinner Supplement in addition to the Registration Fee, and will need to provide their own transportation to and from the university each day.

Classes are scheduled to begin at 8:00 AM each day, and will continue until 9:00 PM Monday-Friday, and until 5:00 PM on Saturday, with one-hour breaks for lunch and dinner.

There will be a closing, Graduation Banquet on Saturday night.

Transportation:

Students are responsible to provide their own transportation to and from Bozeman, Montana

For those who are flying in, you may book your airfare any way you wish. However, if you are not used to doing your own reservations we recommend you contact our favorite travel agent, Lois Richardson at AAA, 800-464-1303, or direct at 541-598-3731. Tickets may be charged to your credit card, or paid for by check. Lois has a 100% track record of getting our students in and out appropriately, and at the best prices. (A common thing to do today is to book your own tickets over the internet. If you lack experience find someone experienced to help you. While it might be useful to use the "discount ticket" sellers to see what flights and company you might want to use - always book your ticket either through a travel agent, or directly through the airline itself. These days the airlines always have the lowest prices, and the tickets you get from the "discount" agents lack important benefits, such as being able to change your ticket if an emergency arises, and frequent flier miles. Four major airlines fly into Bozeman, and all offer competitive prices. Buying your tickets three or four months out is as much as half the cost of buying them one or two months out - another reason to register early, then book your flight early.

Please arrange to arrive at the Bozeman Airport no later than 5:00 PM on Sunday, January 2nd, and leave on Sunday, January 9th, for the regular seminar. Students arriving at the airport after 5 PM Sunday may miss dinner with the group and maybe part of the opening session, which is 6:30 pm Sunday.

After getting settled into our rooms, we will leave about 5:00 PM for dinner near the Comfort Inn.

What is Included:

- Tuition cost includes all instructional fees, including about 60 hours of private and small group advanced tuning and regulating training at MSU during the week, Advanced Training Seminar syllabus and notebook, supplies and use of MSU's School of Music facilities. A wide variety of pianos are available at the School of Music, including Baldwin and Steinway concert grands and a large number of new Kawai pianos. In order to give students as much variety as possible, students will have different practice pianos, including grands and verticals, each day.
- Student-to-teacher ratio will be about 6-to-1. There is a limit of 30 students for this seminar.
- Room and Board cost includes double occupancy room at the Comfort Inn and Suites, plus three meals a day Monday breakfast through Sunday breakfast. Private rooms are available for an additional charge (of about \$275, more details later).
- Saturday evening graduation banquet and Certificate of Completion.
- Transfer to and from airport to hotel, and to and from the college each day for seminar classes.

Intermediate or Advanced Training Seminar Certificate:

Students completing the program will receive an Intermediate or Advanced Training Seminar Certificate of Completion, as appropriate

What to Bring:

Specific list of recommended tools to bring will be sent to you (via email) after your enrollment form is received and accepted

Registration:

Registration is on a first received basis, so we recommend you register as early as possible. Our seminar is in January, and most years all seminar spots are filled by September, though we will accept registrations up to November 1 (if spaces are still available).

If you are planning to register, but for some reason cannot do so at this moment, please contact the school and discuss it with Randy or Lynne.

If you are planning to register, but for some reason cannot do so at this moment, please contact the school and discuss it with Randy or Lynne.

Tuition & Room and Board Costs:

\$850.00 Technicians enrolled as either a Beginning Student or Continuing Education (Intermediate) Student with our school. This includes both current and former students

and graduates. (Includes \$100 non-refundable Registration Fee. No refund after November 15, 2010.)

- \$950.00 Technicians not enrolled as either a Beginning Student or Continuing Education (Intermediate) Student with our school. Includes additional training material, which will be sent prior to the start of the ATS/ITS, to assist you in your pre-seminar study. \$100 credit will be given to ITS/ATS registrants who later enroll as students of the school. (Includes \$100 non-refundable ATS Registration Fee. No refund after November 15, 2010.)
- \$525.00 Room and Board at seminar hotel, including seven nights lodging, Sunday January 2nd through Sunday morning January 9th, and three meals daily, Monday through Saturday, and breakfast Sunday morning. Fly-out will be Sunday, January 9th.
- \$475.00 Room and Board for spouse, if they are coming with you and plan to stay at the seminar hotel.
Includes graduation banquet dinner. Does not include lunches for spouse.
- \$275.00 Single Room Supplement, for those who wish to have a single room.
- \$225.00 Lunch and Dinner Supplement, Monday - Saturday, for local students staying at home, with relatives, etc., but eating lunches and dinners with the group.
- \$75.00 Registration for Pre-Seminar Seminar, January 2nd (students arrive on January 1st)
- \$50.00 Additional hotel cost for students arriving January 1st for Pre-Seminar and sharing a room.
- \$95.00 Additional hotel cost for students arriving January 1st for Pre-Seminar in private room.

Questions:

If you have any further questions, or require additional information, please feel free to call the school during normal business hours: Monday-Thursday, 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM and Friday 9-noon, Pacific Time.

Licensed by the Department of Education:

The Randy Potter School of Piano Technology, Inc. is licensed by the Oregon State Department of Education. Any inquiry about the school or its programs may be made in writing to the Randy Potter School of Piano Technology, Inc., 61592 S.E. Orion Drive, Bend, Oregon 97702, or to the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Department of Education, 700 Pringle Parkway SE, Salem, Oregon 97310-0290. [ORS 345.117).

2011 Advanced Action Rebuilding Seminar

Each year for the past 20 years we have had week-long, very intensive Beginning, Intermediate and Advanced Hands-On Training Seminars.

Some years we have more Beginners, some years more Intermediates, and sometimes we have a good number of Advanced students attend the seminar. This allows us to customize the seminar each year to better match the individual needs of each student.

The Beginning/Intermediate Training Seminar is a pre-planned seminar designed to help beginning and intermediate tuners gain the skills they need to provide competent piano service for their clients in the areas of tuning, basic and intermediate repairs, and basic and intermediate regulating skills. We have group tuning lectures followed by one-on-one hands-on work with a competent instructor in individual tuning booths in real pianos. We have a whole day of demonstration followed by hands-on practice of the most common repairs technicians see in clients' homes. And we study vertical and grand regulating, using action models and real pianos.

The Advanced Training Seminar varies from year depending on what the students want to achieve, and to some extent the needs and requests of the college, with whom we have a good working relationship. Some years we have had a group of Advanced students who are all preparing for the PTG Tuning Exam, and most of the tuning instruction and practice is centered on exam prep skills. (They still do some repair work, and regulate one of the instructor's performance grand pianos.)

Other years we have had special seminars on different subjects - and this is one of those years.

Normally we regulate, and do some voicing, on one of the instructor's teaching and/or performance pianos - but this year the Advanced students will be doing a complete action rebuild, regulation and voicing on one of the university's 9' concert grand pianos!

You will be replacing all of the wippens, hammers, shanks and flanges on a Baldwin 9" grand piano with the

new Wessell, Nickel & Gross composite action parts. The hammers will be Brooks, Ltd Encore hammers made by Abel Hammer of Germany. The class will replace all the action parts, learn to travel and optimize them, and then do a complete regulation and voicing during the week.

Advanced students will still have tuning training, practice and evaluation by an instructor during the week. On Saturday Advanced students will each tune two or three pianos - often with Beginning and Intermediate students watching. Instructors will evaluate the tunings when complete.

Dave Swartz, RPT, and nationally known rebuildler, will teach about action geometry, and guide the students in the action rebuild and regulating process, and demonstrate voicing of new hammers.

Students may be students or graduates of the Randy Potter School, but *is open to all technicians who want to get competent experience rebuilding grand actions, and also in high level regulating and voicing of newly installed hammers.*

Registration in this seminar is limited, and only 8 technicians will be accepted. First choice goes to students who have already taken the Beginning and/or Intermediate Hands-On Training Seminar, as this course is designed to build on training previously learned and experience already gained.

If you are interested in this seminar we recommend you contact the school soon, because we expect this Advanced Action Rebuilding seminar to fill up long before the Basic and Intermediate seminar fills this year.

[Course](#)

[Magazine](#)

[Seminars](#)

[News](#)

[Products](#)

[Links](#)

[Interests](#)