

**The CONTEMPORARY ALEXANDER SCHOOL  
ALEXANDER ALLIANCE INTERNATIONAL / USA**

*A learning community furthering the work of FM Alexander*

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## **Contemporary Alexander Certification Programs**

Thank you for your interest in the CAS programs in Contemporary Alexander Work. We offer **self-paced, non-residential trainings** based in Santa Fe, NM, Portland OR, NYC, and in satellite cities throughout the US.

CAS offers 2 training programs:

Personal/Professional Enrichment in Contemporary Alexander Work

Alexander Technique Teacher Training

We are the only USA branch of the Alexander Alliance International, which has been offering immersion-based Alexander Training through a contemporary pedagogy since 1982.

Here is a basic overview of this uniquely flexible training program.

### **The Philosophy**

There is an underlying principle which guides the essence of the training, best expressed in a quote by philosopher Ram Dass:

*"The only thing we have to offer another being, ever, is our own state of being."*

At its core, the training is about you. Your state of being. It is a kinesthetic study of being. We notice, question, and transform our habitual ways of doing, thinking, and feeling. It is a profound study of making conscious choices about who and how you are. It is truly life-altering.

Expect to question everything. Expect to awaken to your full presence and potential. Then, and only then, will you be able to assist your students in their own transformation, without judgment, manipulation, or ego.

These unique training programs are specifically designed to be possible within the reality of people's busy lives. Each individual may design their own program according to their needs, and within their own time frame, following a basic format, detailed below.

## Certification Programs

CAS offers a contemporary style of both Alexander's Work and of the training process itself. Carrying the lineage of Marjorie Barstow, the first person F.M. Alexander trained to become a teacher of his Work, the CAS training program is unique in its self-paced, non-residential design.

### **2 Certification Programs**

CAS offers 2 Certification Programs, to support both those who want to deepen their understanding and embodiment of the Work, but do not necessarily want to become Certified Teachers, and those seeking full Teacher Training.

The 2 year Enrichment Program can be done alone, or as the pre-requisite for the additional 2 years required for Teacher Certification.

### **Personal & Professional Enrichment Program**

This 2 year program offers a deep exploration of the Principles of the Work, and practical experience in ways to embody those Principles to effect the quality of your life.

It is ideal for those who want to incorporate the essence of the Work into their personal and professional lives, but are not interested in becoming Certified Alexander Teachers.

This program also serves as the first half of the Teacher Training Program, providing the necessary foundation for learning the skills required to effectively teach the Work to individuals and groups.

Details:

2 Year Commitment

No Pre-requisites

Application Process: interview/lesson with CAS Director

Upon completion, trainees receive a Certificate of Completion

### **Teacher Training Program**

This 4 year program consists of the 2 year Enrichment Program plus an additional 2 years focused on the teaching skills necessary to become a Certified Alexander Technique Teacher.

At the end of the first 2 years, the trainee and CAS faculty will jointly evaluate whether the trainee is ready to move ahead on the Teacher Training track, and what commitments will be required to reach the necessary proficiency for Teacher Certification.

Details:

4 year commitment

Pre-requisites: Completion of the Enrichment Program, or previous training at another Alexander Course

Application Process: interview with CAS Director and faculty

Upon completion, trainees receive Certification as a Contemporary Alexander Technique Teacher, and are fully certified Alexander Technique Teachers, requiring no further qualifications or affiliations to practice.

## Highlights of the Curriculum

### **Personal Application: “USE”**

The foundation of both trainings is consistent, ongoing study on recognizing and changing your own personal habitual patterns (physical, mental, emotional, social, etc) – what we call your “use” – the quality of yourself. As with all Alexander studies, this personal embodiment of the Principles is fundamental – how you are *being* while you do whatever you are doing. You can only teach what you know.

### **Real Life Applications**

Whether you are in the Enrichment Program or the Teaching Program, you will learn to apply the Principles to your everyday life – living them, rather than learning about them.

### Working through Activities

We work with people *while* they are doing whatever they do – riding a horse, playing an instrument, working at a computer, rehearsing a play, walking their dog, cooking a meal, singing an aria – whatever. We focus on how to actually apply the Work in your life.

### Working through Situations

It is one thing to learn about your patterns of response while sitting or standing quietly, paying attention solely to what is happening inside of yourself. It is another thing entirely to notice yourself *while* performing, meeting a pressured deadline, having a challenging conversation, or acting as an ally for social justice.

Likely, no matter how much you practice choosing a new response in your lesson, the moment you are in the ‘real-life’ situation, it is almost impossible to not return to your habitual response. *That is why we learn to teach through situations.*

In the Teaching Program, *we go to wherever people do whatever they do* – to an artist’s studio, a horse-riding arena, a belly dancing class, to a rock climb, an office, or a rehearsal of the local symphony. We work with people *while* they do their activities. And if we can’t go to their real situation, we learn to help them re-create it in the lesson or class, so that they can practice noticing their responses and choosing new ones.

### **Sophisticated Hands-on Skills.**

The pedagogical style is primarily hands-on and experiential. We learn through experience and playful repetition. Trainees use their hands from the first day on, because it is a primary way of connecting with the world around us, and therefore offers unending opportunities for personal study and practice.

As Teachers, you will learn how to see, feel, and understand how and why people are moving, organizing, and behaving as they do. You will be able to offer them new alternatives for accessing non-habitual responses. You will be able to communicate sensitively and accurately with your hands.

Trainees learn to use their hands not only to feel, but also to ‘see’, ‘hear’, and ‘sense’, what is happening within another person’s being. Trainees are introduced to a multitude of intuitive skills as they increase their ‘ways of knowing’. They learn to discern and transform the patterns and belief systems which create stress, tension, injury and limit life choices. They become proficient at working both on the table and in activities; and equally skilled at working with both individuals and groups.

## Learn by Experience – Teaching Practicums

We learn by doing – we try something, evaluate how it went, make different choices, try again, and so on, over the course of hundreds of mini-practice moments.

In the training, you will have thousands of chances to practice your new craft – through words and metaphors, through your hands, and through observing and teaching actual lessons and group classes.

### Introductory Workshops

Teacher Trainees observe and co-teach introductory workshops for all types of groups - choirs, runners, dentists, rehabilitation, performing artists, equestrians, senior citizens – any population that they choose. These intro workshops are often integrated into the training events.

### Immersion Residencies

CAS currently hosts 2 annual month-long residencies at leading music programs in the US. In the summer we are at the renowned Meadowmount School of Music, teaching some of the world's top young musicians; in the winter we are at the Oberlin Conservatory, teaching singers, instrumentalists, actors and dancers.

These longer immersions allow trainees to learn how to build content over many lessons and small group classes, an essential skill for creating a lively private practice.

### Complimentary Studies

There are courses included in the curriculum which offer additional and essential skills:

- **Living in a Body™**, an experiential body mapping course;
- **Body, Breath & Sound™**, offering a deeper understanding of the use of your own breath and speech;
- **DART Procedures**, offering an experiential understanding of our developmental process.

Trainees are also introduced to complimentary skills through basic study of Cranial Sacral, Visceral Unwinding, Deep Imagery, Reality Creation®, Matrix Energetics®, and other studies of transformation.

### J.E.D.I. Initiatives (Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion)

At CAS, we believe that the embodiment of the Principles of the Work is fundamentally connected to our collective ability to create Belonging and Equity for all people. To take on the role of 'educator' necessitates having skill and awareness in the principles and practices of Social Justice; and therefore, CAS has Equity professionals on the Faculty, and includes JEDI studies in the curriculum.

## The Training Events

There are a variety of Training Events offered throughout the year, through a blend of live and virtual learning opportunities.

### **Self-Paced Study**

This Work is at the most sophisticated end of all somatic and touch-based modalities. There are times for taking in tons of new information. There are times for integration, self-inquiry, and re-patterning. There are times for practice with others. There are times when other events in your life take precedence. The CAS self-paced design allows you to follow the natural ebb and flow of your life and your personal educative process.

It takes time to master the skills. It takes rigorous practice. It takes compassion.  
*Everyone does it at their own pace, in their own way.*

### **In-Person Events**

Following the 4 Seasons, there are 4 **Long Events**, (5 – 10 days), which, generally, all trainees attend, as they offer the core training material. The Long Events offer the opportunity to introduce themes of study which will carry through the shorter training events, as well as study groups and personal practice.

These Long Events are held in beautiful, inspiring places, often right on the ocean or high in the mountains, often in New Mexico or Oregon. We usually rent a large group house, or sometimes go to a retreat center, and spend the week totally together. We cook our meals communally, we work, play, rest, socialize, and just hang out - together - inside a container of profound questioning and deep study. We go hiking and kayaking, we read and have lively debates, we play ping pong and make music together.

Spread between the Long Events, there are **Short Events**, (3 or 4 days). Pedagogically, the Short Events allow trainees to focus in depth on a particular skill or theme. They can happen wherever trainees choose to gather – often being hosted by a trainee in their city.

While all trainees are welcome, these short events are often comprised of the ‘locals’; eg, those living in southern states, or those on the East or West Coast.

Between the Short and Long Events, there are sometimes **One Day Events**, which are intended to address particular themes from the Long Events, or specific applications (like spending a day hiking and overnight camping, or at a horse barn, or at an artist’s commune). These are usually attended by locals in a particular city or region.

**Study Groups** are organized by local trainees and faculty as a space for informally exploring the training material with each other. Trainees are encouraged to participate on a weekly basis, either in-person or online.

## CAS Road Trips - Satellite Cities

The CAS/AAI faculty travel to the communities of the Trainees and Graduates, offering them an opportunity to introduce their community/town/city to the Work, and begin to generate future students, if they plan on teaching. CAS has supported trainees and graduates in many places worldwide, including New Mexico, Colorado, Oregon, Ohio, Iowa, Alaska, Hawaii, Oklahoma, Texas, NYC, Switzerland, France, UK, Germany, Austria, Latvia, Japan, and South Korea.

In this model, everybody wins: the local trainee gets a chance to observe/assist at lessons and workshops, receive direct mentoring, and learn how to organize and advertise a workshop. A faculty member, usually joined by some graduates, has a chance to teach introductory workshops, mentor the trainee, and build their resume and experience. And, importantly, the local community is becoming educated about the Work and often supports the trainee by becoming 'practice students'. By the time a person graduates, they usually already have a practice in place.

Every few years there is an **Alexander Alliance International Retreat**, bringing all of the Directors and many of the faculty of the Alliance schools worldwide together for 10 days to Team Teach, a pedagogical form which we have crafted over decades.

Every Alliance International school has trainees and graduates represented at the Summer Retreat. It is a time for students from Europe, Japan, and the US to form friendships, study together, and create the 'webbing' which bonds the larger Alliance community and supports future generations of teachers working together.

Please visit the summer website for more detailed information: [www.alexandersummerretreat.com](http://www.alexandersummerretreat.com). The AAI Retreats travel from the US, to Europe, to Asia. (*Note – this Retreat is on hold due to Covid*)

Since the Alexander Alliance is an international collective of schools, there are ample opportunities for **International Study** throughout your training. Trainees may study at *Alexander Alliance* schools worldwide (US, Japan, Europe) for no additional tuition cost.

## Online Events

In addition to the in-person events, there are also weekly **online classes** throughout the year. These weekly classes form the 'glue' of the program, allowing for ongoing community discussion, practice, and integration. There are generally 2 classes each week, one more pedagogically oriented and one more experientially oriented. There are also online study exchanges offered each week, for continued practice.

While you are encouraged to attend live, the classes are recorded for later viewing, if needed.

## Graduation

Graduation from the **Personal/Professional Enrichment Program** occurs upon payment of the full tuition cost and completion of 2 years of study, with a minimum of 6 in-person Events/year and participation in the online weekly classes. Students may study at all CAS Events during their 2 year program, as well as participate in the International Study program.

Graduates receive a Certificate of Completion in the Contemporary Alexander Enrichment Program.

Graduation from the **Teacher Training Program** occurs upon payment of the full tuition cost and completion of an additional 2 years of study, (with a minimum of 6 in-person Events/year and participation in the online weekly classes), and ***is dependent on proficiency***. Proficiency is determined by mutual decision between the international *Alliance* faculty and the individual trainee, and occurs at the Annual Summer Event.

At the end of the 2 year Enrichment Program, those wishing to continue towards the Teaching Certificate will work with CAS Director and Faculty to design a realistic plan of study, enabling the trainee to accomplish the necessary practice and skill-building to achieve proficiency within the 2 year period. Students may study at all CAS Events during their 2 year Teacher Training program, as well as participate in the International Study program.

Graduates are Certified Alexander Technique Teachers, requiring no additional certification by AT professional organizations. As a 'hand's-on' practitioner, teachers need to check their State for legal requirements to practice. In most States, Alexander Teachers are exempt from massage therapy regulations, as we are fundamentally an *educative* somatic field.

If the trainee does not reach proficiency by the end of 2 years, they will work with CAS Director to evaluate what additional skill or practice is needed. *There may be additional tuition costs for extending the training period.*

## Tuition

Contact us directly for the current tuition costs: [kavalonCAS@gmail.com](mailto:kavalonCAS@gmail.com)

Each trainee works with the CAS Financial Officer to design a payment schedule that best suits your needs.

*(FYI - All NM-based Events are subject to NM tax)*

Tuition includes :

- unlimited 'home-based' CAS training events (virtual & in person in Portland, Santa Fe, NYC, and satellite cities)
- apprentice opportunities in private lessons, group classes, and workshops
- Living in a Body™ and Body, Breath & Sound™ courses
- opportunity for study at *Alexander Alliance Europe* and *Japan* trainings
- tuition-free apprenticeship opportunities following your graduation
- substantial trainee discounts for the Annual Summer Retreat and Alexander Alliance International Retreats, as well as Special Events (those hosted in places other than the 'home' locations)

## The Next Step

Contact us! Come visit us! Whether you want to explore the Enrichment Program or the Teacher Training, I look forward to hearing about your dreams and desires.

I am available for questions and 'wonderings' at [robyn@contemporaryalexander.com](mailto:robyn@contemporaryalexander.com) or 505-670-2596.

Please consider attending one of the Events as a guest, as this is the best way to experience our style and perspective on the Work.

This information and much more is available on our website:  
[www.contemporaryalexander.com](http://www.contemporaryalexander.com)

Be in touch,

Robyn