

MUA 8440: Graduate Applied Voice Syllabus

Voice Majors and Minors

Fall 2018

Mississippi State University
Department of Music

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Office:	Music Building B 101	Course Name: Applied Voice – Majors and Minors
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College of Education Conceptual Framework:



The faculty in the College of Education at Mississippi State University are committed to assuring the success of students and graduates by providing superior learning opportunities that are continually improved as society, schools, and technology change. The organizing theme for the conceptual framework for the College of Education at Mississippi State University is educational professionals - dedicated to continual improvement of all students' educational experiences. The beliefs that guide program development are as follows:

1. **KNOWLEDGE** - Educational professionals must have a deep understanding of the organizing concepts, processes, and attitudes that comprise their chosen disciplinary knowledge base, the pedagogical knowledge base, and the pedagogical content knowledge base. They must also know how to complement these knowledge bases with the appropriate use of technology.
2. **COLLABORATION** - Educational professionals must continually seek opportunities to work together, learn from one another, forge partnerships, and assume positions of responsibility.
3. **REFLECTION** - Educational professionals must be willing to assess their own strengths and weaknesses through reflection. They must also possess the skills, behaviors, and attitudes necessary to learn, change, and grow as life-long learners.
4. **PRACTICE** - Educational professionals must have a rich repertoire of research-based strategies for instruction, assessment, and the use of technologies. They must be able to focus that array of skills on promoting authentic learning by all students or clients, while exhibiting an appreciation and commitment to the value and role of diversity.

Course Description:

This course is designed to impart to students the fundamentals of a healthy vocal technique. Students will learn the essential elements of posture, breathing, resonance, coordination of vocal registers, diction, and overall vocal health. As a student of voice you will gain an understanding of style and genre as well as essential elements of musicianship including artistry, interpretation, and performance skills. Singer musicianship will be achieved through weekly lessons, individual practice, and through your participation in performance opportunities.

Course Objectives:

In accordance with the objectives of InTASC and CFPO, the following objectives are met in this class:

InTASC and CFPO Numbers

1. We will work together to identify your best learning styles, and to explore methods for having an appropriately challenging environment. (InTASC #1: Learner Development; CFPO #2 Understanding Learners)
4. Concepts of vocal technique and content regarding stylistic features of historical periods and individual composer traits will be examined. Additionally, musical concepts and skills will be developed. (InTASC #4: Content Knowledge; CFPO #3 Knowledge of Content)
9. As each singer is unique, we will work together to discover the most effective ways you learn in your lesson, and the most efficient ways for you to practice. (InTASC # 9: Reflection and Continuous Growth)
10. Not only will teacher and student collaborate, but also we will be collaborating with your pianist and, possibly, other singers on duets and other small ensembles. (InTASC #10: Collaboration)

CFPO # 4: Assessment/Evaluation – see this syllabus under Evaluation below

Requirements:

1. **Vocal Technique and Daily Practice** – It is important that the student maintain a regular practice schedule. Practice time should include vocal exercises for development and application of vocal concepts to repertoire in a focused “cell phone-free” environment. This time is important for both technical and artistic progress. Several items that might prove handy include: mirror, journal, pencil, and metronome. (20 hours)
2. **Performance Skills** – Expressivity of the vocal line in collaboration with the accompanying instrument (usually, piano), interpretation of the text, gestures, acting, and performance presentational skills are developed. Performance skills are often integrated into repertoire study, and the remaining time of lessons will be used to improve these skills. (5 hours)
3. **Repertoire** – Reference the Voice Manual for detailed repertoire guidelines. Teacher and student will work together to finalize selections each semester. Language requirements, historical periods, and exploration of genres, styles, etc. are all addressed. It is up to the student to learn and memorize all assigned repertoire. (10 hours)

First semester students – three (3) songs, at least one in Italian (no musical theatre)

Second semester students – three (3) songs, at least one in Italian (no musical theatre)

Third semester students – four (4) songs, at least one in Italian or Latin and at least one in German or French (from this point forward, one musical theatre selection may be included toward the jury)

Fourth semester students (UDPE) – five (5) songs, representing four major musical eras (Baroque, Classical, Romantic, 20th Century/Contemporary) and four major languages (English, Italian, German, French); if the student is not ready to take the UDPE, see third semester students requirements above

Fifth semester students – five (5) songs, representing a variety of eras and languages

Sixth semester students (Recital) – 25 minutes of music representing the four major musical eras and four major languages; if the student is not ready to give a recital or has already completed a recital, see fifth semester students requirements above

Voice minors – three (3) songs, at least one of these should be a foreign language song

4. Texts and Materials –

- a. For all semesters following the first semester of voice study, it is the responsibility of the student to acquire the scores containing assigned music. Some selections may be downloaded and printed free of charge from websites such as www.imslp.org if they are public domain. Others may be located in the music section of the Mitchell Memorial Library. In some cases, the student may have to purchase music online from companies such as: www.amazon.com, www.classicalvocalreprints.com, www.halleonard.com, or www.sheetmusicplus.com. **You must turn in a CPR form with all printed music attached to your applied instructor no later than 2 weeks from the first day of classes.**
- b. Students are required to bring pencils and music (printed scores or a binder containing assigned music) to each lesson. A pencil is an invaluable and necessary tool for any musician. Musicians mark their music!
- c. Voice majors must have a new or blank SD card for juries to record and critique their performance.
- d. I encourage you to reference foreign language dictionaries for song and aria translations which can be found in the library. Eventually voice majors should invest in their own dictionaries, preferably those that use IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet). Italian, German, and French language dictionaries are essential tools for any singer, as well as a reputable English language dictionary – such as American Heritage or Webster's.
- e. The instructor may assign occasional readings throughout the semester excerpted from various sources (singer biographies, pedagogy texts, etc.). These readings provide excellent and pertinent information and should be read thoroughly.

5. Weekly Lesson Grade: Your grade each week will be based on 3 factors—

- a. The instructor's assessment of your preparation(4 Points)
 - i. Musical Preparation (Memorization, Expression and Musicianship, Rhythm and Pitches) (2)
 - ii. Material Preparation (Diction, Language and Translation Work, Characterization) (2)
- b. Showing vocal progress and improvement (3 Points)
 - i. Providing instructor with completed practice log (2)
 - ii. Tone Quality and Resonance, Intonation, Relaxation, Posture, and Breathing (1)
- c. Bringing your music and materials (1 Point)

6. Listening: Listening to recordings is an integral part of this course. The instructor will occasionally play recordings in the lesson and give listening assignments. Students should access the Naxos Listening Library available through the MSU library website, as well as YouTube and Spotify.

7. Pianist: It is the student's responsibility to contact the assigned pianist and arrange rehearsals. If time allows, the pianist should attend one voice lesson so that the applied instructor may coach the voice student in collaborative performance.

8. Voice Notebook: All voice majors (except those giving a recital or completing their UDPE) and voice minors will maintain a Voice Notebook in a three-ring binder or spiral notebook. The notebook will be collected and graded for completeness and detail. Notebooks are due by Thursday, October 5th and should include the following:

- a. Detailed character sketches of all repertoire studied during the semester.
- b. IPA, original texts, and word-for-word translations of all foreign language songs.
- c. List of the exercises/vocalises assigned by the instructor throughout the semester, as well as explanations as to how the exercises helped the student to progress.
- d. Inclusion of weekly practice logs.

- 9. Midterm Jury/Voice Contract:** The student will fill out a voice contract at the beginning of the semester which sets deadlines for learning and memorizing music. Students will sing a portion of their repertoire from memory for the applied instructor at midterm. The midterm jury and voice contract will constitute 10% of their final grade.
- 10. Final Jury:** Students will sing a jury for a faculty panel at the end of each semester. The final jury will constitute 25% of their final grade.

Voice Major Juries: Monday, December 7th for all lower division and UDPE majors and Tuesday, December 10th for all upper division majors. (Check the Voice Bulletin Board in Music Building B to sign up for a time.)

Attendance Policy: You have a scheduled and reserved time for your lesson every week. This is your time, and you are expected to make every effort to honor it. If you are sick, please contact me *before* the lesson or it will be considered unexcused. If you have a departmental conflict (e.g. concert trip), please let me know at the beginning of the semester in order to reschedule. **Unexcused, missed lessons result in lowered grades.** I will attempt to make up *excused* absences if possible, but will not always be able to do so. *If you miss a make up lesson, it will not be rescheduled.*

Studio Class: Studio Class meets Mondays from 2-2:50pm or 3-3:50pm (check with your applied instructor). *Voice Majors are required to attend Studio Class each week.* The group format provides students the opportunity to perform in front of their peers and receive feedback, to set learning and memorization goals for repertoire, to have in-class discussions about technique and performance, and to listen to performances by professional singers. Repertoire performed in Studio Class should be “performance ready”—this means all music is memorized with an understanding of the character and text. Studio Class attendance is optional for voice minors.

Recital Hour Performance: Majors will attend and participate in Recital Hour Wednesdays at 2pm, which is held in Harrison Auditorium in the Giles School of Architecture Building. You are required to attend this every week, and to perform on it once each semester if you are a voice major. (Only first semester voice majors are exempted from performing.) Voice students must perform an art song, opera aria, oratorio aria or other sacred work. *If you fail to perform in Recital Hour at least once during the semester, your final grade will be lowered by 10%.* Performance on Recital Hour is optional for voice minors.

Required Event Attendance: A list will be provided of all required music department voice events such as faculty and student recitals, master classes, concerts, etc. It is mandatory that you attend these events and you are encouraged to attend as many other music concerts as possible. Attendance will be taken at all required events if the applied instructor is present. If the instructor is not present, it is the student’s responsibility to have a faculty member or performer sign the program and show the program to the applied instructor within one week of the performance.

Evaluation of Student Progress:

Attendance and Weekly Lesson Grade:	30%
Jury:	25%
Midterm Jury/Voice Contract:	10%
*Voice Notebook:	10%
Recital Hour Performance:	10%
Studio Class:	10%
<u>Required Event Attendance:</u>	<u>5%</u>
	100%

*If student is taking the UDPE or giving a recital, the 10% from the voice notebook will be added to the weekly lesson grade.

Suggested Student Activities:

1. **Listening:** In addition to listening assignments and attendance at all vocal events, students should play a proactive role in listening to repertoire. Use the many resources available to you to do your own musical research.
2. **Record Lessons:** Whenever possible, record your lessons and use those recordings to re-visit your lesson during your practice times throughout the week.

Field Component:

1. Participation in voice conferences and competitions is encouraged. Particularly, students should consider attending state or regional NATS (National Association of Teachers of Singing) auditions and the MMTA (Mississippi Music Teachers Association) conference and collegiate competition. We will discuss these options in your lesson.
2. Students should try to stay informed of voice performances in the state and region. Companies such as Mississippi Opera, Opera Birmingham, and Memphis Opera all offer student rates for opera performances.

Honor Code

The honor code states: "As a Mississippi State University student I will conduct myself with honor and integrity at all times. I will not lie, cheat, or steal, nor will I accept the actions of those who do."

Upon accepting admission to Mississippi State University, a student immediately assumes a commitment to uphold the honor code, to accept responsibility for learning, and to follow the philosophy and rules of the honor code. Ignorance of the rules does not exclude any member of the MSU community from the requirements or consequences of the honor code.

For additional information please visit: <http://www.honorcode.msstate.edu>

Technology:

In addition to recordings and the use of Naxos Listening Library, the Voice Area now uses *VoceVista*, software designed for real-time visual representations (spectrograms, power spectrums, waveforms) of your acoustic output (your sound!). This technology is a tool that will help you see the evenness (or lack thereof) of your vibrato, quality of onsets and vowels, presence of formants (resonance boosts), length of consonants, etc. Each student may acquire this software by bringing a flash-drive to lessons.

Diversity:

The study of voice is one of great diversity. As each person's vocal instrument is unique, it is a process of discovery on the part of student and teacher to develop and reveal the beauty of the individual instrument. Culturally, styles from Western European art music (British, German, Italian, French, Spanish, American – Northern, Central, and Southern) is emphasized with other cultures and languages represented at times (Czech, Russian, African, etc.).

Disability:

Mississippi State University is committed to providing equal educational opportunities to all students and assisting students in making their college experiences successful and positive. MSU complies with the provisions set forth in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, offering reasonable accommodations to qualified students with documented disabilities. If you have a documented disability that may require accommodations, you will need to contact Student Support Services for the coordination of services. For more information, please see <http://www.msstate.edu/dept/ssd/disabilities/>.

Please see me for any concerns about disabilities, or learning issues you may have. We will work together for success if I understand your needs.

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