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9-2014

MUSI 551.21: Major Performance - Voice

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Recommended Citation

James, Kimberly G., "MUSI 551.21: Major Performance - Voice" (2014). *University of Montana Course Syllabi*. 2055.

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COURSE OBJECTIVES

To acquire and develop sound technical, musical, and artistic skills as they are applied to the voice; to develop a base for evaluating healthy and efficient singing as well as correct vocal technical flaws; to learn a variety of repertoire from the Western classical tradition and/or contemporary commercial music; to improve vocal technique and musicality through weekly lessons, daily practice, and assigned repertoire and vocal exercises; and to acquire analytical skills necessary for successful performances and/or teaching

COURSE DESCRIPTION

You will meet with me for 50 minutes a week every week of the semester minus holidays and official breaks. The course will consist of technical and musical work within the studio, and daily practice and performance opportunities outside of the studio. Students will attend recital hours, studio class, and area master class when applicable as well as attend voice recitals of colleagues, faculty, and other professionals from the field. Students will demonstrate skills learned and objectives met by memorizing the required amount of repertoire for their degree plan. Please consult me should you have questions or concerns regarding your degree plan requirements.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

Attend all master classes & special seminar events

Area master classes now take place weekly on Tuesdays at 3:10pm. Please plan to attend and participate. These events – and others like them - are important for you not only as aspiring professional performers but also as potential teachers and directors. Please discuss potential conflicts with me in advance.

Attend voice recitals and other UM vocal events

Because course objectives include learning a variety of repertoire and learning to evaluate singing, you will be expected to attend all student and faculty voice recitals. Please discuss conflicts with me ahead of time.

Come to assigned lesson time weekly

Be here and ready to sing (already warmed up) at your scheduled time. Please notify me by phone the night before or the morning of your lesson if you are ill. Leave a message on my voicemail as soon as you suspect you might need to miss your lesson. (See below for more information on absences.)

Be prepared

Voice lesson time will be dedicated to the study of vocal technique and musical interpretation - not note reading. Students are expected to know correct pitches and rhythms before presenting pieces for lessons. Please let me know if you have concerns regarding preparation for lesson time.

You will need the following materials for lessons:

- Notebook for recording exercises and other information
- Pencil
- Assigned music & music for your pianist
- Recorder (if possible): I strongly recommend that you record your lessons (suggested formats include mp3, mini-disc, tape – not voice activated for speech)

Practice daily

You should keep a written journal of your lessons to help remind you of exercises covered. I also strongly recommend recording and listening to your practice sessions as reinforcement of what we are working on in your lessons. You may also find it helpful to keep a written journal of your practice sessions. Be sure to practice vocal exercises in addition to repertoire. Recommended practice time is one or one-and-a-half hours a day for five to six days a week which may be split into smaller sessions within the course of the day. Practice sessions should never exceed 1½ hours, and studies show that learning improves with shorter sessions done throughout the day. Recommended practice time does not include musical preparation, such as diction, translation, and other scholarly preparations. Plan on spending at least five hours a week outside of the practice room on these elements.

Be prepared for juries and recitals

Part of our work will be to prepare you for juries, master classes, auditions, recitals, and other performances. You are responsible for knowing departmental requirements for your degree program. Before bringing in repertoire to lessons, be sure that musical preparation and scholarly preparations are under way. Under no circumstances is it acceptable for a masters level student to publicly present repertoire that is not musically, linguistically, technically, and dramatically prepared.

Find an accompanist

You must find an accompanist at the beginning of the semester. Please keep your pianist informed of schedule changes and cancellations. Plan to work with your pianist once a week during your practice time so that you will be prepared for your upcoming performances. Professional accompanists are available for hire, or you may consult the piano area board in the main hall for lists of student accompanists.

Notify me of auditions and outside performances

If you are doing outside auditions or performances (this includes solos in choir and opera scenes), please let me know ahead of time. We should prepare this repertoire together during lesson time.

Check your e-mail daily

E-mail has quickly become the most efficient and direct way to communicate in academic settings. You are responsible for keeping up with announcements sent by UM faculty and administration. You are also required to either check your University of Montana e-mail account daily or set up that account to forward to your regular address.

Check the voice area bulletin board & my office door

Look there for information on voice area policies, procedures, master classes, jury lists, and auditions. You are responsible for posted information.

Be responsible for your vocal health

Ask me for a copy of my handouts and for links to websites with excellent information regarding vocal health. Wash your hands regularly to reduce the likelihood of acquiring the illnesses that go around at school.

Assigned projects

Students will be expected to complete research reports and other projects as assigned.

GRADING POLICY

Your grade will be based on both your work during the semester (as outlined above) as well as your final jury performance. You are expected to know the requirements for your level and program. Please remember that you are ultimately responsible for memorizing the appropriate number of pieces.

Your semester grade is based on the following:

- Preparation (following expectations as outlined above)
- Potential (often the difference between an A- and an A for instance is your ability to demonstrate during the semester in lessons and performances that you are honoring your potential)
- Student recital hour and master class attendance and participation
- Recital and musical events attendance
- Final jury performance or recital

More on grading: keep in mind that the assignment of an A for your final grade would indicate that you had done superior work in all categories. Grades in the A and B range mean that you are doing good or excellent work; grades in the C range are marginal in my studio and indicate that much improvement is needed to continue in applied voice.

MAKE-UP POLICY: Please read carefully!

- Because the voice is a very delicate instrument, you may need to cancel a lesson for reasons of illness, fatigue, or other inhibiting conditions.
- **Make-up lessons due to illness** may be granted to those who cancel their lessons with at least one full day's notice (not just the night before) and who present appropriate documentation. You may have up to two make-up lessons per semester.
- **For those canceling for other reasons**, you will be expected to arrange your own rescheduling by arranging to switch lessons with someone for that week (and notifying me). Excused absences include documented illness, required university events, and professional engagements or auditions.
- **Lessons missed without notification will not be made up.** If you wake up in the morning and do not feel well, please cancel your lesson. Coming to your lesson will not be productive or good for your voice. To avoid putting others at risk, kindly call to let me know that you will not be coming as opposed to coming by the studio. If I must cancel your lesson for reasons other than official holidays and meetings called by the administration, I will always reschedule it.
- **It is your responsibility to inform your accompanist as soon as possible of all changes and cancellations.**
- To cancel a lesson for any reason, please call my cell phone and leave a message on voice mail if you miss me; you should also send me e-mail.

REQUIRED MUSICAL EVENTS

Most required events are in the Music Recital Hall at 7:30pm unless otherwise stated.

All voice student recitals, voice faculty recitals, and choral concerts are required events. Check the music department door on a weekly basis for the most up-to-date list of events! Your next priority should be to attend as many faculty and guest artist recitals as possible. Most of these are scheduled for Tuesdays and Fridays at 7:30pm. I also recommend that you go to as many instrumental recitals and ensemble concerts as possible. These performances will greatly enhance your musical education by exposing you to repertoire by composers you don't know,

reinforcing elements of compositional and musical style, advancing you with regard to aural perception for classical music, and much more!

ADDITIONAL POLICIES

Academic Misconduct and the Student Conduct Code

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at www.umt.edu/SA/VP/SA/Index.cfm/page/1321.

Students with disabilities and/or special needs should see the instructor at his or her earliest convenience and contact Disabilities Services for Students, <http://www.umt.edu/dss/> or x2243.

Undergraduate Voice Syllabus (please be familiar with this more expansive document and understand that you are held to those requirements, in most cases, in addition to the graduate-level specifics of this syllabus. See Moodle.)

Recital Attendance Policy (See Moodle.)

Voice Area Master Class Syllabus (See Moodle.)