

# **COURSE SYLLABUS Fall 2007: VOICE VOI 101 and VOI 301: 1-4 cr hrs**

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## **TEXT**

All music can be checked out from the library or bought. You should purchase at least one book a semester in order to gradually build your own musical library. Penders 1-800-952-7526

**COURSE DESCRIPTION** Voice meets three times a week – one private **50-minute session**, once on Monday from 4:00-5:00, and Monday (Vocal Forum) from 12:00-1:00. This course is designed for persons who demonstrate a working knowledge of music skills and have chosen voice as their primary instrument.

## **COURSE GOALS**

Each student will learn the principals of good posture, breath management and support, and healthy tone production for the singing voice. The emphasis is on developing the voice in a healthy way and with a view to sensitive communication and interpretation of the great classical song repertoire.

Each student will learn elements of good musicianship, including phrasing, dynamics, intonation, and rhythmic accuracy. Each student will learn and develop the technique for preparing a song or aria for performance giving their attention to diction, the text (properly translated when in a foreign language), style and interpretation.

The course is designed to enable each student to grow and develop their vocal and interpretive potential.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Each student will fulfill the course goals listed above as a means to preparing and performing the requisite number of pieces as stipulated by your level of study (requirements for each level of study are listed below).

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Please be considerate and professional and telephone me and let me know 24 hrs. in advance if you cannot make it to your lesson due to illness or family obligations. I will, in turn, do the same for you if it is necessary for me to miss one of your lessons. If I miss a lesson, I will make sure to give you the opportunity to make it up. **If you miss a lesson, you should not expect to receive a makeup lesson unless I have time. If you do not give appropriate notice or an acceptable excuse, you can expect to receive an F as your grade for that particular lesson.** You would not expect to be able to make up a missed class. The same is true for missed lessons. If I know that you cannot make a lesson, then I

can adjust my schedule appropriately. There can, of course, be situations that have been subject to extenuating circumstances. Such occasions will be treated with understanding. I do, however, expect you to treat me with respect and consideration and I will do the same with you. Please be aware that your vocal health is your responsibility. You must be sensible about looking after yourself and avoid overtiring your body or your voice. Common sense will go a long way in keeping you and your voice healthy.

**Please see attached the Rubric for your lessons. You will receive a grade for each lesson which will then be averaged at the end of the semester. If you have missed Studio Class, Forum or a Lesson without a valid excuse (you should have notified me IN ADVANCE), you will receive a 0 which will be averaged into the final studio grade. The only time that it is acceptable not to notify me 24 hours in advance is in the case of emergency or sudden illness.**

### **NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF SINGING CONFERENCE**

All students are strongly encouraged to attend the National Association of Teachers of Singing Texoma Regional and District Conference and Auditions in order to expand your knowledge of vocal repertoire and to add to your experience as performers. Those students who attend NATS will report in Studio Class on their experiences. The final jury will include performances of the music presented at the conference.

### **COLLABRATIVE ARTIST**

Each student is responsible for hiring a pianist for the semester. This is equivalent to the purchase of a textbook in any other class and is **non-negotiable**. You need to find a pianist who is available for the last half of your lesson. You should also organize a rehearsal time during the week (30 minutes) for the two of you to rehearse and prepare for your lesson. Respect your pianist! **If you are going to miss a lesson or practice time it is your responsibility to notify them. If you do not give proper lead-time you will be charged.** There is a list of freelance pianists that are available for the fall semester. See me if you do not have a copy.

NOTE: Each student will pay me \$30.00 for the Studio Pianist. This is due at the first studio class. You need to understand that if you do not pay your studio accompanist at that time, that each subsequent week that you do not pay, you will receive a 0 for studio class. **It is completely unacceptable not to pay your accompanist or the studio accompanist.**

### **PRACTICE PROCEDURES**

Singing is a combination of several different skills which require development through consistent and intelligent practice. It is just as demanding as any sport and your voice will only improve if you work regularly on developing the correct muscular techniques. There is a right way and a wrong way to practice. The right way requires you to think before you sing! You are trying to learn the proper way to sing. It is **VERY** important for you to attempt to do as I have instructed -at least to the best of your ability. Don't forget to warm up your mind as well as your voice! Your vocal warm up will require a minimum of 30 min. of vocal exercise a day. Assigned pieces or other activities will require additional time. Consistency is everything! If you do not pay attention to what I am trying to teach you, then we are wasting our time. You are here to learn to sing better and that requires that you change and evolve as a singer. I have a great deal of experience as both a singer and a teacher and I will always give you the very best that I have to offer. I will try to be both creative and clear in my instruction and problem

solving. You **MUST** pay attention and work on those ideas and techniques during the week. There is no other way to succeed. It does not happen by magic. Singers develop and improve exponentially when they practice intelligently and diligently.

The development of a singing technique is one of the most exciting pursuits that you can undertake. It is a bit like unwrapping a package. We have an idea of what is there but not until we unwrap that package can we get a really clear idea of what kind of an instrument it is. You should feel excited and challenged by this process! Use your time to work creatively. Try to think outside of the box and play with the sounds that we are discovering in your lessons. This is an exciting process for us both and I want to hear your thoughts on what you have learned from your practice during the week. Your feedback will help me. So think and take notes during your practice sessions. You will be surprised by what becomes clearer to you as you work. So write that down and let's discuss it in your lesson! We are in this developmental process together. I cannot do it for you but I can help you to learn to use your instrument better and the results will be very exciting!!

**WARM UP YOUR MIND FIRST!!!** Please, please make sure that you are ready to practice before you start. You have to think before you sing and while you sing. Don't just hope for the best because you won't get it! There is a reason for the exercises that I give you and you need to be aware of that. Warming up just to warm up the voice is not good enough. You need to prepare your voice to work at its best and that means that you have to warm up intelligently. Your practice is only as good as you make it. Don't waste your time. Singing uses so many aspects of our selves and that requires that we engage both physically, mentally and emotionally whenever we sing.

**Minimum required practice time for an applied voice course depends upon the number of hours credit.**

**3 or 4 hours credit: 10 hours of individual practice each week.**

**2 hours credit: 8 hours of individual practice each week.**

1 hour credit: 5 hours of individual practice each week.

### **ADDITIONAL ASSIGNMENTS**

You will keep a Voice Notebook, which will be turned in at the end of the semester.

#### **Contents:**

##### **1) Music**

2) **Translations/background Info.** Singing is about communication. You cannot communicate if you do not know what you are singing about. You have to do quite a bit of work **BEFORE** you bring a song to your lesson. The poetry must be looked at in detail. If it is in a foreign language, then you must translate the text (word for word) and also prepare an IPA transcription so that you are sure about the pronunciation of the text. Ultimately, you will need to be able to recite the text as a poem in its own right. It should be correctly pronounced and expressively recited. You can only do that when you have spent the time getting to grips with the poem. Do your research! Find out about the poet, the composer and the period. This is a part of your practice and I expect you to do this. You will need to write all of this out in your notebook. You will then make copies so that the members of the Studio can look at it when you sing the song in class. We are all here to learn from one another. **THIS IS IMPORTANT** and I expect it to be done. When you come into a lesson, you should be prepared to

give me a copy of the IPA transcription and the translation for the piece that you are going to work on. It should also be in your notebook.

**Foreign Language Pieces:** You will all have at least one piece in a foreign language. For those pieces that are not in English, you will be required to make an English translation, as I noted above. Find a good and comprehensive dictionary and translate the song word for word. **AFTER** (and not before!) you have translated the piece, then source a recording of the piece and check your translation against the one provided in the CD jacket. There are also resource books with translations with which you can check your work. These can be found in the library. (See the vocal handbook appendices for a list of reference works.) SEE ABOVE.

**Arias:** When you are working on an aria, it is imperative that you research the opera so that you know who your character is, what the plot involves and why and to whom they are singing.

3) **Lesson Journal:** Bring a **CD for music** to each lesson. This is **VERY** important. You will find that you cannot really digest everything that we work on during the lesson and it is invaluable to have a recording of the lesson for reference during the week. None of us can hear ourselves accurately and it is extremely valuable to be able to listen to that lesson with more objective ears. You are expected to write down your thoughts and the ideas that you have gleaned from your lesson in your journal each week. It will help you and provide you with a record which you can refer to in the weeks and months ahead. Often you will find that you will gain perspective with the passage of time. I still have lesson tapes from 15 years ago and I still use them and learn from them!

4) **Practice Journal:** As I mentioned earlier, you need to keep a practice log. It should note the amount of time that you spent practicing every day. You should note what exercises you did and why and what you learned from them, noting questions that you might want to raise at the next lesson. Be mindful of the practice requirements that we noted earlier.

5) **Listening Journal:** Unfortunately, we are not in London, New York, Paris or Vienna. You need to make sure that you are exposing yourself to as much good singing as possible and the way to do that is to **LISTEN**. You all have so many ways that you can listen now, so take advantage of that and use those CD players, computers and iPods!! There is no excuse for not hearing as many great artists as possible singing the pieces that you are working on, as well as exploring repertoire that you would like to sing in the future. I will give you specific listening assignments and you are to write a written report using the template at the end of this syllabus. I expect you to also take an active part in researching repertoire that you would like to study during the next semester. You will need to include a list of suggested repertoire with your notebook.

6) **Notes:** Keep all handouts from studio for future reference.

**FORUMS and STUDIOS.** Forum is held on Monday from 12:00-1:00. Please see the schedule that is hanging on the Studio bulletin board and make sure that you are there for each and every one! Singing on Forum offers you the opportunity to sing a solo for your peers. This is enormously important. The more that you have the opportunity to sing in public, the better. Majors and vocal concentrates are **required** to attend all scheduled vocal forums and to perform on one forum each semester. **It is now departmental policy**

**that you MUST attend forum and will hand in a signed copy of the program to me at the end of the Forum to prove that you were there for the whole Forum. For EACH Forum that you miss, you will receive a 0 to be averaged with your weekly studio grades.**

**Studio** is held each Monday from 4:00 until 5:00. You are required to attend this performance class. Each class that is missed (**Forum and/or Studio**) without a proper excuse will receive an F which will be averaged into your studio grade. Studio Class will be held in the Jazz Room and the Recital Hall (alternating days) this semester.

**Each student is expected to attend all faculty or guest recitals and recitals given by studiomembers.**

### **REPERTOIRE AND JURY REQUIREMENTS**

Your repertoire will be based on the departmental requirements but will also take into consideration your individual needs as a student. The general guidelines for freshmen include 18th and 19th century Italian songs and possibly arias, English and American songs from the 19th and 20th century, with possibly a German song from the standard repertoire if the student is vocally ready. Sophomores continue with Italian and English songs, will add German songs, and may learn some of the easier French mélodies or bergerettes. Junior and senior students will be learning music chosen in conjunction with their teachers and which suits the vocal and educational needs of the individual student. Operatic arias will be assigned when it is deemed that the student is vocally ready.

#### **Repertoire**

##### **Requirements Education/T**

**SEMESTERS 1, 2, & 3:** 2 Hours Credit VOI 101 4 of these songs are prepared for the jury (you will sing 2) **SEMESTER 4** 2 Hours Credit VOI 101 7 songs are learned and memorized 4 songs are prepared and sung for jury proficiency (all 4 are sung) **SEMESTERS 5, 6, 7, & 8** 2 Hours Credit VOI 301 8 songs, all memorized 6 of these songs are prepared for the jury (you will sing 2)

#### **Performance**

**SEMESTER 1:** 2 Hours Credit VOI 101 6 songs, all memorized 4 of these songs are prepared for the jury (you will sing 2) **SEMESTER 2:** 2 Hours Credit VOI 101 8 songs, all memorized 6 of these songs are prepared for the jury (you will sing 2) **SEMESTER 3:** 2 Hours Credit VOI 101 9 songs, all memorized 6 of these songs are prepared for the jury (you will sing 2) **SEMESTER 4** 2 Hours Credit VOI 101 9 songs, all memorized 4 songs are prepared and sung for jury proficiency (all 4 are sung)

SEMESTERS 5, 6, 7, & 8 4 Hours Credit VOI 301

12 songs are learned and memorized

9 of these songs are prepared for the jury (you will sing 2) **If you do not learn your required repertoire, your jury grade will be lowered 8 points per piece. In other words, if you don't memorize 2 of your pieces, each vocal faculty member will start your jury grade at an 84 rather than 100. See the vocal handbook for further detail.**

**GRADING PERFORMANCE 50% Studio 50% Jury ALL OTHER MAJORS 66%  
Studio 33% Jury**

**IMPORTANT NOTE: For each section of your notebook missing or incomplete you will take a 5 point deduction from your FINAL grade!**

### **STUDIO GRADE**

Lessons are graded based on the number of hours documented on your Practice Log as well as the amount of work displayed through your singing. If you say that you have practiced 8 hours and do not know your repertoire, i.e. wrong notes, rhythms, poor grasp of the language, no IPA transcription or translation, then you will NOT receive an A. 8 hours practice required a week=12.5 points per hour of practice 10 hours practice required a week=10 points per hour of practice This equation reflects how very important it is that you practice. Take this seriously!

**Please note that you are supposed to doing your work based on an honor system. I expect you to do what you are required to do and, if you do not, then I expect you to be honest when you come to your lesson and report on how much work you have done.**

### **JURY GRADE**

Average of each professor's grade

### **OTHER NECESSARY INFORMATION**

*Americans with Disabilities Act: According to University policy requests for accommodations must be initiated by the student. A student seeking accommodations should go to the Counseling Center and Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) in a timely manner. Every semester that the student desires accommodations, it is the student's responsibility to complete a Classroom Accommodation Request Form at the SSD office and follow the stated procedure in notifying faculty. Accommodations for disabled students are decided based upon documentation and need on a case-by-case basis by the Counseling Center*

*Student Absences on Religious Holy Days Policy: Section 51.911 (b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of religious holyday, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence.*

*University policy 861001 provides the procedures to be followed by the student and instructor. A student desiring to absent himself/herself from a scheduled class in order to observe (a) religious holyday (s) shall present to each instructor involved a written statement concerning the religious holy day (s). This request must be made in the first fifteen days of the semester or the first seven days of a summer session in which the absences (s) will occur. The instructor will complete a form notifying the student of a reasonable timeframe in which the missed assignments and/or examination are to be completed.*

*Academic Honesty: Your policy must, at minimum, be compatible with stated university policy set forth in (§§5.3-5.32) of the Faculty Handbook (see italicized section below). The Faculty handbook sets forth in great detail examples and definitions of dishonest behavior; the faculty members' discretion in determining when dishonesty occurs and rendering penalties; procedures for discipline; and suggested wording for the individual professor's policy.*

*Proper Classroom Demeanor/Rules of Conduct: According to university policy and §5 of the Student Handbook, students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning*

*" Students will refrain from behavior in the classroom that intentionally or unintentionally disrupts the learning process and, thus, impedes the mission of the university. Please turn off or mute your cellular phone and/or pager before class begins. Students are prohibited from eating in class, using tobacco products, making offensive remarks, reading newspapers, sleeping, talking among each other at inappropriate times, wearing inappropriate clothing, or engaging in any other form of distraction. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result in a, minimally, a directive to leave class or being reported to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action in accordance with university policy."*