

**COURSE SYLLABUS**  
**Spring Semester 2008**

**ENS 119: Opera Workshop**  
**CID #2788**  
**1 Hour Credit**

**INSTRUCTOR:** Dr. Dawn M. Padula  
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**OFFICE:** School of Music, Rm. 326  
**OFFICE HOURS:** By appointment

**CLASS TIME/LOCATION:**

This class meets regularly Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:00-3:20PM in the Recital Hall (REC). Additional rehearsal times for this semester are necessary for a successful production and are mandatory. This includes your being available for Opera Workshop rehearsal during the Monday and Wednesday class periods which meets from 3:00-3:50PM in the Choir room (Rm. 202). Additional weekend and evening rehearsals will take place as production draws closer. Note that rarely are individuals ever called to every day of rehearsal in a given week. After the show concludes in early April, your time will be given back to you as we will not meet regularly for class.

For your convenience, you have also been provided with a calendar with all additional rehearsal dates. Production week rehearsals are mandatory. No absences are allowed. Production week and additional rehearsals are listed below:

Friday, February 22, 6-10PM  
Friday, February 29, 6-10PM  
Saturday, March 1 (Costume Fittings in Houston)  
Sunday, March 2, 2-10PM  
Sunday, March 30, 4-10PM  
Monday, March 31, 6-10PM  
Tuesday, April 1, 6-10PM  
Wednesday, April 2, 6-10PM  
Thursday, April 3, 6-10PM  
Friday, April 4, 6-10PM (Performance #1)  
Saturday, April 5, 6-10PM (Performance #2)

Additional dates and times may be added to this calendar for the purpose of set construction, or for development performances. Individual student schedules will be taken into account before anything is scheduled, and you will be informed of these dates as soon as they come up.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course is considered to be a performance ensemble known as The Opera Players. We will work toward producing an operatic performance of some type each semester. This might be a full opera, one-act operas, or a program of opera scenes depending on the class enrollment and experience.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

The most important goal in this course is to synthesize voice, character, movement and communication in the form of an operatic production. Goals are: character development, music and text study, stage movement, and coordination. The “process” will be our primary objective from which a “product” can evolve. It is important to remember that accomplishing this goal requires practice, patience, concentration, and a great deal of physical and mental energy on the part of the individual and the group.

**The success of an Opera Workshop program is dependent upon the dedication of each of the cast members regardless of how large or small the role. This course is your opportunity to glimpse what it is like in the “real world” of professional opera. It is a difficult profession, one in which each individual must take full responsibility for his/her own preparedness, motivation and improvement. It is my goal to help you all to understand how this works, so that you will be able to go into the world with ammunition for success.**

## **TEXTBOOK, REPERTOIRE, AND/OR SUPPLIES:**

### **Repertoire**

The combined Opera Workshop will present two performances of *The Pirates of Penzance* in the original English by W.S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan. Scores must be ordered individually from TIS Music, Amazon.com, JWPepper.com, or another online source carrying the correct score. We are using the G. Schirmer, Inc. piano/vocal score complete with dialogue—ISBN 0-7935-2586-1.

### **Other Supplies**

Please bring to each rehearsal:

- your score (appropriately highlighted with IPA where appropriate)
- pencils
- highlighters
- a recording device

Personal Make-Up Kit:

For sanitary purposes, you will also be required to purchase your own make-up and application supplies for the upcoming production. This kit is relatively inexpensive and many of the components can be used for additional productions. If needed, instructions will be given regarding what type of makeup you should use and how it should be applied.

A Production T-shirt (price approximately \$8-\$12):

This is not an option! If you are in this production, you are required to purchase a T-shirt... you, too, can be a walking advertisement! More information will be provided at a later date.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

### **Attendance**

Attendance at scheduled classes and rehearsals is vital to your growth as a performer and the success of the performance. You are counted as being in attendance when all of the following take effect: 1) you are physically present; 2) you have all materials necessary to perform the music required; 3) you are properly warmed-up; 4) you are attentive and ready to participate in

class; 5.) you present yourself with a professional attitude towards your director and your colleagues.

As this is an Ensemble, no absences are allowed. If you are ill, your absence will be excused only with a valid Doctor's note indicating illness that would prevent you from physically being present in rehearsal. If you are ill and absolutely cannot make it to rehearsal, you will need to contact me with a voicemail and e-mail before rehearsal. For your vocal health and safety, excessive and chronic illness may result in your being removed from the production.

**Please note that work-related absences will never be excused.** Unexcused absences will result in a letter-grade deduction from your final grade; two unexcused absences will result in a failing grade and in your being removed from the production. Being tardy two times will count as one unexcused absence. Each additional time you are tardy past that will result in another unexcused absence. During Production Week, there are no absences that are allowed, this includes church choir rehearsals or work conflicts. You are given ample notice of these rehearsal times and dates, and you must make arrangements with your employers to clear your calendars on these dates. Absence from a Production Week rehearsal will result in your final grade being lowered by two letter grades.

### **Rehearsal Schedule**

Though you have been provided with a general rehearsal schedule for the semester, a weekly schedule will be posted on the OPERA BULLETIN BOARD each Friday which will detail the schedule for the following week. Note that you **MUST** check the board **DAILY** for any adjustments to the schedule. **It is YOUR responsibility to check the rehearsal schedule; missing a rehearsal because you did not think you had to be there is NOT an acceptable excuse and will count as an unexcused absence. It is expected that you will practice/rehearse or work on technical/set-construction projects during class time when you are not "called" for rehearsal.** You may not schedule anything during the class time on any day of the week (this includes private voice lessons). The time is exclusively reserved for opera practice, study or rehearsal.

### **Practice**

You are expected to learn your music **outside the rehearsal just as you are in your Applied Voice lessons.** Rehearsal time is at a premium and cannot be spent teaching notes. A certain amount of time may be spent during rehearsals to coordinate ensembles musically but the majority of time will be spent on interpreting the music, not learning it. **Translations of any foreign language text for your role and for the other roles in the scene must be written in your score no later than the first day you are called to rehearse that scene. THIS IS A MUST SO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE SINGING ABOUT!** You may use the translations provided in the CD-liner of commercial recordings for this purpose as a starting point. You are encouraged to read the source material from which this opera comes, or any background information about the piece or the composer for the purpose of understanding the style of the piece. The more research you put into your role/performance, the better your performance will be, ultimately.

### **Notes Quiz and Memory Test**

There will be a **NOTES QUIZ and MEMORY TEST over the score.** The Notes Quiz will take place during the first week of school until the score has been completely performed by both casts. All participants will be expected to sing his or her assigned roles for the semester with music without difficulty. The Memory Test will be the week of February 4<sup>th</sup>. All participants must sing his or her assigned role for the semester from memory (without using music) without difficulty.

Your ability to achieve this task will greatly affect your grade for the semester, and your further participation in the production. Failure to successfully execute the memory test will result in your being removed from the production, and will cause you to receive a failing grade for the semester.

### **Technical/Set-Construction Duties**

In addition to learning individual roles, each class member will be expected to participate in technical/set-construction duties. A theatrical performance depends on several diverse functions in order to run smoothly and it is important to you in terms of your knowledge of theatrical production. The weekly rehearsal schedule will include technical assignments. Read carefully for times and assignments.

### **Communication**

You must check your e-mail on a daily basis! It is a requirement for this course (and I imagine, several other courses you are taking!). I will be using BlackBoard (located on the shsu.edu website homepage) to upload class information, assignments, announcements, etc. You must check this every day, as well as your shsu.edu e-mail account. If you choose to use a different e-mail account, be sure that you have your shsu.edu account forwarded to that e-mail so that I can get in touch with you. No excuses! This campus is loaded with public computers, so I will not accept any excuse that your e-mail was down or that you could not check BlackBoard on the web. The Opera Workshop Bulletin Board will also contain important information. Remember to check this at least once a day.

### **Live Performance Attendance**

You should plan on going to see a live opera performance sometime this semester. The Houston Grand Opera (HGO) is world renowned and just an hour away! Student tickets are usually available at discounted prices. Their performance calendar is available online at:

<http://www.houstongrandopera.org/OtherDisplay.aspx?PageID=9>

The Opera in the Heights performance calendar is also available online at:

<http://www.operaintheheights.org/>

Information regarding the University of Houston Moores Opera Center (my alma mater) is available online at:

<http://www.music.uh.edu/events/calendar.pdf>

### **GRADES:**

Grades are based on memorization (See "PRACTICE" and "NOTES QUIZ AND MEMORY TEST"), participation, and attendance (See "ATTENDANCE"). Participation includes preparation, proper attitude, mastery of music, mastery of character, and involvement in technical duties. Rehearsals and performances are the equivalent of quizzes and exams:

Participation:           50%  
Memorization:         50%

\*Deductions for Attendance will be taken from your final semester grade as indicated above.

## **MISCELLANEOUS:**

### **Academic Honesty:**

*The Faculty Handbook states that the University expects all students to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. Furthermore, the University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to cheating on an examination of other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials.*

### **Proper Classroom Demeanor/Rules of Conduct:**

*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 newspaper, 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, minimally, a directive to leave class or being reported to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action in accordance with university policy.*

### **Americans with Disabilities Act:**

*SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may affect adversely your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. **NOTE: no accommodation can be made until you register with 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 a religious holy day, 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 holy day(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 absence(s) will occur. The instructor will complete a form notifying the student of a reasonable timeframe in which the missed assignments and/or examinations are to be completed.*

### **Visitors in the Classroom:**

*Unannounced visitors to class must present a current, official SHSU identification card to be permitted in the classroom. They must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance.*

*If the visitor is not a registered student, it is at the instructor's discretion whether or not the visitor will be allowed to remain in the classroom.*