

**Singer's Diction
English, MUS 2211
Fall 2019**

Dr. Brenda Smith, DMA
302 Music Building
Office: (352) 273-3174
Email: gesang@ufl.edu or bsmith@arts.ufl.edu

Office Hours

Office hours are posted on the door, MUB 302. Additional office hours are available by appointment as well. Feel free to communicate by e-mail or phone, if needed.

Class Meetings

The class meets Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays promptly at 5th period (11:45 a.m.) in Room 142 of the Music Building. The course ends with a capstone in-class activity on **Monday, October 14, 2019.**

Course Description

The course is an interactive workshop that develops lyric diction skills in the English language. The International Phonetic Alphabet, the standard tool for proper pronunciation in all languages, serves as the basis for study. The principles shall be applied to the delivery of text in vocal repertoire (including song, musical theater, opera and oratorio) of the British Isles and America. Classroom activities provide students practical procedures for achieving a confident performance of texts to be sung in English. Aspects of vocal health will be discussed throughout the eight-week term.

Textbook and Materials

The required textbook for the course is *Singing and Communicating in English: A Singer's Guide to English Diction* by Kathryn LaBouff (New York NY: Oxford University Press, 2008). *The Singer's Manual of English Diction* by Madeleine Marshall (New York NY: Schirmer Books, 1953) is a recommended resource available in the bookstore, for online purchase, or in the UF libraries.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of course, students will be able to recognize the phonemes and transcribe the symbols for English language words, using the International Phonetic Alphabet. Students will be able to enunciate clearly in English both in speech and song. Students will have skills to evaluate poetic meaning and historical context for texts set by British and American composers. The acquired skills are applicable for further study of vocal repertoire in foreign languages.

Measurement Tools

Attendance, initiative and progress are the main criteria for grading. The measurement tools for these criteria are: a.) quizzes, class activities and homework assignments, b.) final

exercise, c.) attendance and class participation, d.) class presentations and e.) singer's notebook project.

Quizzes, Class Activities and Final Exercise

Quizzes, class activities and homework assignments are intended to evaluate a student's command of newly introduced material. The final exercise is comprehensive in scope, demanding knowledge of the International Phonetic Alphabet and its application to written and oral texts in English. The exercise includes a dictation and a survey of rules and historical data. Prompt attendance for any quizzes and the final exercise is required. Under extenuating circumstances, please notify the instructor and provide documentation.

Attendance and Class Participation

Singer's diction helps to prepare students for a professional life in music. Because of the brevity of the course (8 weeks) and its importance to students in the limited access majors of music or musical theatre, prompt class attendance is mandatory. Lateness is at times unavoidable. Please call the instructor's office phone before 11:30 am. After 11:30 am, please text a classmate to report your anticipated arrival. Excused absences are those officially sanctioned by the University of Florida. <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/> Discretionary, unexcused absences are unacceptable in this brief course. Unexcused absences or unreported lateness will result in a deduction of two (2) points against the course grade the first time, and three (3) points for each subsequent occurrence. Be careful to deal with anticipated absence or lateness in the manner described above.

Class Presentations

Each student will present poetic English texts in spoken and sung form. Students should perform on the assigned day. In case of extenuating circumstances, students must notify the instructor at least 24 hours prior to the day of the scheduled presentation. Students must prepare the presentation repertoire with the course accompanist. The grading criteria for class presentations are musical and textual preparation, IPA and diction accuracy, poetic and historical score study. An assessment sheet will be distributed early in the term. Each student will receive feedback from peers and instructor.

Dates for Class Presentations

First Class Presentations (graded S/U): September 23 and 25 (Rehearsals 9/20)

Final Class Presentations (25% of final grade): October 7, 9, and 11 (Rehearsals TBA)

Singer's Notebook

Each student will gather all materials from the course into a **3-ring binder organized with clearly defined dividers** to be submitted at the conclusion of the course. (The notebook represents 35% of the semester grade. An assignment sheet and a grading rubric will be distributed early in the term. The materials will include quizzes (graded/corrected), all daily handouts, all homework assignments, all daily class notes, all presentation materials and extra credit work. The notebook should be carefully ordered and reflect its future use as a resource in subsequent performance preparation situations.

Grading

Using the plus/minus scale, the course grade will be calculated in the following way:

| | |
|---------------------|-------|
| Attendance* | 10% |
| Participation* | 15% |
| Final Exercise | 15% |
| Class Presentations | 25% |
| Singer's Notebook | 35% |
| | ===== |
| | 100% |

***Attendance is an essential element for success in this course. As stated above, there are no discretionary, unexcused absences. Should extenuating circumstances arise that prevent your prompt attendance, please notify the instructor by email or phone as indicated above. Given prior notice, accommodations can be made. As a courtesy to others, please notify the instructor or a classmate prior to class if you anticipate arriving late.**

***Participation is evaluated through in-class activities that include quizzes, dictation practices and daily discussion. Because the course activity is interactive, please set all cell phones and other comparable devices on "off." In case of an emergency, please inform the instructor prior to class and adjust your equipment to "vibrate."**

Grading Scale & GPA equivalent:

| Percent | Grade | Grade Points |
|-----------|-------|--------------|
| 93.4-100 | A | 4.00 |
| 90.0-93.3 | A- | 3.67 |
| 86.7-89.9 | B+ | 3.33 |
| 83.4-86.6 | B | 3.00 |
| 80.0-83.3 | B- | 2.67 |
| 76.7-79.9 | C+ | 2.33 |
| 73.4-76.6 | C | 2.00 |
| 70.0-73.3 | C- | 1.67 |
| 66.7-69.9 | D+ | 1.33 |
| 63.4-66.6 | D | 1.00 |
| 60.0-63.3 | D- | 0.67 |
| 0-59.9 | E | 0.00 |

More information on grades and grading policies is here:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Please feel free to consult with the instructor at any time regarding your status in the course.

Points of Order and Expectations:

Phonetic readings must be neat and legible. Because many symbols have similar shapes, it is important to be distinct in your penmanship. Please do not print phonetic readings or poetic interpretations directly from Internet or published sources when transcriptions are poetic interpretations. Present the poetic interpretation in your own words. All assigned transcriptions should be original work from your hand. It is wise to use pencil.

For all assignments requiring research, you must cite your sources. A field trip to the Architecture and Fine Arts Library will provide you the tools for research sources and citations.

All work should be submitted on time. In case of an excused, documented absence, please consult with the instructor regarding alternative assignments.

From time to time, quizzes occur in class. You will know the date of a quiz one week prior to the class period in which it occurs. Should you need to be absent for an excused, documented reason, please consult with the instructor regarding an alternative assignment.

The final exercise is an in-class, open book activity requiring access to a textbook and your completed notebook. Prepare accordingly.

In the voice area, the dress code for class performances does not include shorts or jeans.





Students Requiring Accommodation

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, <https://disability.ufl.edu/>) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

UF Evaluations Process

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals.

Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/scsr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Counseling and Wellness Center

**Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center:
<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 392-1575; and the University Police
Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.**

The Writing Studio

The writing studio is committed to helping University of Florida students meet their academic and professional goals by becoming better writers. Visit the writing studio online at <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/> or in 2215 Turlington Hall for one-on-one consultations.