



detail from F-Pn vma ms 1068 | hand of violinist Pierre Baillot | photo by Michael Vincent

# History of Opera

MUH 6665

Thursday, Periods 9–11 • MUB 146 • Fall 2019

[Dr. Michael Vincent](#) • [michaelvincent@ufl.edu](mailto:michaelvincent@ufl.edu) • MUB 351 • Thursday & Friday period 5

Please visit me during my office hours. I'm available to discuss our course or issues of professional development.

## Overview

We will explore critical approaches to opera in historical and cultural context. The course is structured around social issues, genres, and musical style. By taking a synchronic approach to opera, we devote time to learning about opera from a humanistic perspective rather than notions of development or progress.

## Expectations

### ❖ *Reading*

You're expected to come to class having completed all reading and activities on the syllabus for that week. You must be ready to engage with the materials. Have a hard copy or digital copy available. Take thorough notes for each assigned text so you can easily reference arguments, course themes, and striking details.

You can access all course materials without commercial services. While many texts are available digitally through UF's library, some are limited to hard copies. Check at least one week in advance. Use the [VPN service](#) to access library materials off-campus. Some materials will be available on [ares](#), the automated reserve system. If necessary, order books several weeks in advance through UBorrow or Inter-Library-Loan.

### ❖ *Writing*

Starting with Week 2, each week you will write a short response paper (500–700 words). It will be due before class on Tuesday. This is not a research paper. Its purpose is twofold:

(1) to help you organize your thoughts (2) for the instructor to keep tabs on your preparation. You should treat the response paper like a candid reaction to the readings, addressing salient issues as you see fit. Each paper will be assigned a letter grade. The professor may occasionally assign alternatives to response papers.

In the final week, members will share a 10-minute presentation about their final project. This project will result in a final paper approximately 10–15 pages long.

❖ *Class meetings*

Our meetings will be devoted to discussion and deep reading of course material. Each person will take turns leading discussions for weekly meetings. The leader is exempted from that week's response paper.

The leader must make a supplemental aid to share with the class: PowerPoint, handout, list of terms, annotated bibliography, musical performance, visual art, or any other aid as your creativity guides you. The leader and the professor will collaborate to make class time meaningful. The discussions need not follow a specific format. You could play media (recorded or live music, film scenes), ask questions, direct us to passages, or prepare worksheets. Class members not leading the discussion are expected to participate meaningfully.

## Evaluation

Weekly response papers: 40%

Final project: 25%

Final presentation: 10%

Participation and preparation: 25%

## Course Objectives

Students should gain:

- Familiarity with contemporary issues in opera
- Ability to express critical perspectives in writing
- Understanding of genre conventions in a variety of operas and time periods
- Knowledge of various methodologies commonly deployed in musicological scholarship

## University & Course Policies

The course will deal with issues of identity, gender, race, and politics. Students are expected to be respectful of each other when divergent opinions arise. If the student expects that course material will agitate trauma, PTSD, or an unwanted psychological state, the student may propose alternate readings for themselves that week.

Class attendance and makeup work conforms with [university policy](#).

Accommodations for students with disabilities conforms with [university policy](#). Contact the [Disability Resource Center](#) for more information. If your disability impedes your access to course material, the professor will make alternate arrangements.

Students with obligations such as child care, elder care, or infirm loved ones are invited to work with the professor on balancing course objectives with personal life.

Grading conforms with [university policy](#).

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations [here](#). Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner can be found [here](#). Summary results of these assessments are available [here](#).

All violations of academic honesty will be referred to the Dean of Students Office for disciplinary action without exception. The Honor Code is available [here](#).

The professor reserves the right to amend the syllabus.

## Campus Resources

Resources are available on campus to make your life easier:

- [Counseling and Wellness Center](#) for personal and group counseling: (352) 392-1575
- [Mind and Body Center](#) for reducing stress and improving well-being
- [BAM! Best Allyship Movement](#) for social justice and multicultural competency
- [Field and Fork Pantry](#) for food insecurity
- [Writing Studio](#) for help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers
- [UF Police Department](#): 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies

## Course Schedule

Schedule subject to change. A list of topics, readings, and due dates will be distributed during the first meeting.