

Singer's Diction
English/MUS 2211
Fall 2021

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Student Hours

Student hours in person or virtual 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 at 5th period (11:45 a.m.) in Room 142 of the Music Building. The course ends Friday, October 15, 2021.

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 our 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 seven-week term.

Textbook and Materials

The required textbook for the course is *Diction in Context: Singing in English, Italian, German, and French* by Brenda Smith, (San Diego, CA: Plural Publishing 2021). A copy of the textbook is always available on the reference shelf of the Architecture and Fine Arts library. The textbook can be purchased in the campus bookstore or online. (*Diction in Context* is the textbook for the entire year's course.) Another English diction book entitled *Communicating in English: A Singer's Guide to English Diction* by Kathryn LaBouff (New York NY: Oxford University Press, 2008) is recommended as a reference but not required for purchase.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of course, students will be able to recognize the phonemes for the English language and to transcribe the symbols for them, 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.) attendance and class participation b.) quizzes, class activities and homework assignments, c.) class presentations d.) final exercise and e.) a final project.

Quizzes, Class Activities, Final Exercise and Listening Log

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 of anticipated absences and provide documentation for verification. Throughout the course, the class will engage in comparative listening. Please maintain a log of your reflections on the listening and related discussions. Your listening log is the basis for your final project.

Attendance and Class Participation

Singer's diction prepares 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 expected. Lateness is at times unavoidable. Please text or call the instructor's cellphone before 11:45 am. Be careful to deal with anticipated absence or lateness in the manner described above. There are no discretionary absences in the course. Excused absences are those officially sanctioned by the University of Florida.

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academicregulations/attendance-policies>.

Class Presentations

Each student will investigate poetic British and American English texts in spoken and sung form and present the work in class. There are two class presentations during the term. The first presentation is a pass/fail exercise that will prepare each student for the graded final class presentation. The assessment form is posted on Canvas. The form can be accessed from the beginning of the course and applies to both presentations. Each student will prepare and perform the presentation repertoire with the course collaborative pianist. Students should perform on their assigned day. In case of extenuating circumstances, please notify the instructor at least 24 hours prior to the day of the scheduled presentation. The grading criteria for class presentations are musical and textual preparation, IPA and diction accuracy, poetic, and historical score study. Each student will receive constructive feedback from peers and the instructor.

Final Project

Details of the Final Project topic, preparation and due date will be discussed in class and posted in Canvas.

Dates for Class Presentations

First Class Presentations (graded S/U): September 20, 22, 24 (Rehearsals TBA)

Final Class Presentations (25% of final grade): October 4, 6, 8 (Rehearsals TBA)

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%
Final Project	35%
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Total	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 text or cellphone as indicated above. Given prior notice, accommodations can be made.

*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 by Points & GPA equivalent:

A	93.4 - 100
A-	90.0 - 93.3
B+	86.7 – 89.9
B	83.4 – 86.6
B-	80.0 – 83.3
C+	76.7 – 79.9
C	73.4 – 76.6
C-	70.0 – 73.3
D+	66.7 – 69.9
D	63.4 – 66.6
D-	60.0 – 63.3
E	0 – 59.9

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.

Note: The syllabus is subject to change. Stay in touch with the progress of our course by reading email (ufl.edu listserv) and checking Canvas regularly.

Keys to Success

Phonetic Transcriptions

Because many symbols have similar shapes, it is important to be distinct in your IPA penmanship. Make phonetic transcriptions that are neat and clearly legible. It is wise to use pencil. Transcriptions should be original work from your hand. It is recommended that you consult published sources (online or print) as you create your phonetic transcriptions. Always cite those sources. It is **not** acceptable to submit a published source instead of your own work.

Poetic Interpretations

Please present poetic interpretations in your own words.

Research Citations: Please cite your sources for all class presentations requiring research. A field trip to the Architecture and Fine Arts Library will provide you the tools for research sources and citations.

Quizzes

You will know the date of a quiz one week prior to the class period in which it occurs.

Flashcards, group study, and practice exercises will help you prepare for the quizzes.

Final Exercise

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

Weekly Plan

<p>August 23-27</p>	<p>Monday – Introductions, Syllabus and Class Orientation</p> <p>Wednesday – Discussion of Singer’s “Diction in Context”</p> <p>Friday – Oral Quiz on Syllabus Discussion and Practice of Diction Tools</p>	<p>Acquire the Textbook Read pg. xi-xiv Introduction and Message to Students for Wednesday</p> <p>Read pg. 1 – 15 “Gathering the Tools” for Friday. Be prepared to discuss your answers to the paragraph heading questions.</p>
<p>August 30-September 3</p>	<p>Monday – Introduction of IPA</p> <p>Wednesday – Review IPA and English Vowels (Announcement of first quiz)</p> <p>Friday – Prevention is the Cure Anatomy and Physiology of the Singing Voice, Vocal Hygiene</p>	<p>Read for Monday pg. 26-27 (IPA History and Use)</p> <p>Read for Wednesday pg. 45-47 (The Sounds of English and English Vowels: The Cornerstones of Singer’s Diction)</p> <p>For Friday, prepare two discussion questions about vocal health and hygiene.</p>

September 6 - 10	<p>No Class on Monday (Labor Day)</p> <p>Wednesday – – First Quiz (IPA for English vowels) Discussion: How is Poetry Defined? Who writes poetry, why and how? How does a poem become a song? Why is important for a singer to understand the parts of speech?</p> <p>Friday – Comparative Text Settings Hume “Fain would I change” and Quilter “Fair House of Joy”</p>	<p>Prepare for Quiz</p> <p>Read for Wednesday, pg. 15-23 (Singer’s Diction: Poetry in Song through “Come again, sweet love”</p> <p>For Friday Complete comparative listening assignment described on pg. 23 (Alfred Deller and Barbara Bonney) for in class discussion. Review IPA spellings for vowel sounds.</p>
September 14-18	<p>Monday – Comparative listening and Close Reading, Why and How “Sleep” by Peter Warlock First Dictation Practice (Vowels only)</p> <p>Wednesday Symbolism in Poetry and Song/ Diphthongs & Triphthongs (pg. 48-49) and Consonants (pg. 50)</p> <p>Friday – Analysis and Critical Listening of “Go Lovely Rose” in solo and choral settings</p> <p>Rehearsals for First Presentations will occur TBD outside of class.</p>	<p>Read for Monday pg. 23-26 and answer the discussion questions on pg. 26.</p> <p>Read for Wednesday, pg. 56-59 (Shakespeare and Early English Song)</p> <p>Read for Friday pg.60-63 “Go, Lovely Rose” Be prepared to discuss questions on pg. 61</p> <p>Materials for First Presentations Due in Class (Text and legible IPA transcription)</p>
September 20-24	<p>First Class Presentations S/U <i>Instructor provides program note regarding poet, composer, and musical style.</i> <i>Student completes and reads the poem as it will be sung using the IPA transcription, gives a brief poetic analysis and sings the selection.</i></p>	<p>Be prepared to share with the class your reflections on the poetry and musical settings.</p> <p>Listen attentively to the performances of your peers. You will be asked to respond with constructive feedback.</p> <p>Note: Attendance is mandatory.</p>

<p>September 27 – October 1</p>	<p>Monday - Blake, the Brownings, and the Rossetts: English Poetry and Music in the early 19th century In Class Graded Dictation Practice</p> <p>Wednesday – Ivor Gurney, poet/composer and A. E. Housman, the singer’s poet</p> <p>Friday- Dickinson and Whitman, American Song in the 19th and 20th centuries</p> <p>Rehearsals for Final Class Presentations will occur TBD outside of class</p>	<p>Read for Monday, pg. 76-85, Be prepared to respond to discussion question 2 on pg. 80 in class. Create an IPA transcription of “How do I love thee” on pg. 81, Be sure the vowels “rhyme”. Due in class.</p> <p>Read for Wednesday, pg. 86 -93, Write a brief reflection on discussion questions 1 and 3 on pg. 93, Due in class.</p> <p>Read for Friday, pg. 94 -101. Be prepared to answer the discussion questions on pg. 101.</p> <p>Materials for Final Presentations Due in Class (Text and legible IPA transcription.)</p>
<p>October 4 – 6</p> <p>October 8 Friday</p>	<p>Monday and Wednesday - Final Class Presentations Graded <i>Student presents program note regarding poet, composer, and musical style. Student will read the poem as it will be sung using the IPA transcription and sing the selection. Sources should be cited fully.</i></p> <p><u>No Class (Homecoming)</u></p>	<p>Be prepared to share with the class essential information about the composer, poet, and musical setting. Feel free to reflect on the poetry and your experience as a singer. Listen attentively to the performances of your peers. You will be asked to respond with constructive feedback. Attendance is mandatory.</p>
<p>October 11-15</p>	<p>Monday – Final Class Presentations Continued</p> <p>Wednesday Dictation Final Exam</p> <p>Friday - Final Exercise An Open Book, In-Class Event</p> <p>Program Note from Final Presentation and Final Project Due in Class</p>	<p>Same as October 4-6/Attendance is mandatory.</p> <p>For Wednesday, Bring a pencil with a good eraser. Be sure to write legibly.</p> <p>For Friday: Bring Textbook and all Class Notes to assist you in completing the exercise.</p> <p>Completed Program Note from Final Presentation and Final Project Due in Class. (Be sure to cite all sources.)</p>

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/publicresults/>.

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/sccr/process/student-conducthonor-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.