

STUDIO VOICE SYLLABUS
MVV 1411, 2421, 3431, and 4441
Fall 2025

Instructor:

Dr. Brenda Smith

Office: 302 MUB

(352) 339-1008

gesang@ufl.edu

bsmith@arts.ufl.edu

Student/Office Hours

Student/Office hours, listed on the schedule posted by the door of Room 302 MUB, are opportunities to meet with your instructor outside of lesson times. If you are unavailable at the times listed, individual appointments are readily available. Student/Office hours allow you the chance to review your practice goals and methods, discuss your vocal health, or seek assistance with any aspect of your learning. Feel free to communicate by e-mail, text, or phone, as needed.

Individual and Class Sessions

Your private lesson time will be arranged with your instructor. You will also schedule a weekly rehearsal time with our collaborative pianist, Dr. Nansi Carroll. Voice studio classes meet on Wednesdays, 6th period (12:50 pm) in Room 142 (Monthly Combined Studio/Room 120). Prompt attendance at Studio Class is mandatory.

Attendance

- Lessons you miss due to illness, observance of religious holidays, field trips or other University of Florida approved activities will be excused if the instructor is notified a minimum of 24 hours before the lesson appointment.
- Lessons you miss due to lack of preparation, or you cancel without 24-hour notification will be made up at the discretion of your instructor.
- Lessons you miss because your instructor is absent for professional activities or illness will be rescheduled.
- Excused absences are those officially sanctioned by the University of Florida.
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

Grading Criteria

The criteria for grading in Studio Voice are Attendance, Initiative and Progress. It is a voice area policy that every voice student must learn at least 6 new works every semester. Repertoire you present at the jury will be selected in consultation with your instructor.

Course expectations and weekly assignments are provided below. Each of the following elements contribute points to your semester grade total of 100 points. (Points will be posted on Canvas.)

• Attendance (Lesson/Studio Class)	15 points
• Coachings with Collaborative Pianist	10
• Practice Log/Video	10
• Poetic Equivalent/IPA/Word-by-Word Translations	15
• Count Singing	15
• Memorization Deadlines	15
• Fact Sheet Assignments	15
• Studio Class and Jury Presentations	<u>5</u>
Total	100 points

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.

Course Expectations

You are expected to “count-sing” the melodic material, to chant the text in rhythm along with accurate diction, to insert IPA transcriptions, word-by-word translations and poetic texts into the musical score of each assigned selection. You are responsible for interpreting the poetic text/operatic libretto before working on the musical aspects of the song or aria. Your completion of practice logs/videos and self-reflection/assessments are important to our work together. Your performance of work-in-progress in Studio Class will also enhance your learning. Your final grade will depend upon your timely completion of all assignments.

Studio Class and Voice Recitals

Studio classes (combined and individual) are considered an integral part of voice study. Prompt attendance in studio class is required. Please support your studio peers by attending degree recitals or dress rehearsals as appropriate. Please mark your calendar and plan work/social obligations accordingly.

How to Learn New Repertoires

Because muscle memory is a crucial element in vocal technique, it helps to learn each song/aria systematically and carefully.

- Because the music came from the composer’s encounter with a text, it is very wise to begin your study by reading the text and analyzing its meaning. If you are unsure what a word or idiom means, please consult your instructor who is very happy to help you.
- Each new piece of music is a work you will be performing in front of your peers and later, an audience. You will want to know all there is to know about its poet/librettist, its composer, why it was written, and where it belongs in the history of vocal literature. Use the resources of the AFA library to determine the context and musical style of the song/aria. Jacob Mauldwin, the AFA Music Librarian, will be pleased to answer your questions. (This information will be collected on the Fact Sheet that is due when the new selection is addressed for the first time in your weekly lesson.)
- It will save you time (and frustration) if you highlight any expressive marks in your musical score (for ex. dynamics/tempo) and write in the IPA transcription along with the word-by-word translation. Please note: When you create a word-by-word translation, choosing a cognate that sounds a lot like the foreign word will assist you in memorization. You will boost your confidence and gain a sense of intentionality if you learn the word-by-word translation simultaneously with the music of each song/aria.
- If you count-sing the song/aria beginning with the piano introduction and include the interludes, you will always sense exactly where to breathe and when to begin. The first time you count-sing a new work, make note of difficult intervals that you wish to discuss with our collaborative pianist

during your rehearsal. Please be aware that you will be expected to count sing in your lesson whenever you are asked.

- When putting the words to the music, it will be helpful to you if you chant the words in rhythm phrase by phrase. As you chant, try to “rhyme” the vowel sounds. Having every vowel maintain its integrity every time it is sung will help you tune exquisitely and assist your listener in understanding your text. Once the chanting is second nature, add your singing voice to the process.
 - a. Useful Practice Tool: Try singing your selection on the vowels only (without the consonants). This method of practice ensures a perfect legato for your singing in all languages.
 - b. Helpful Tip: When you add the consonants, do so quickly and efficiently. This practice maintains the rhythmic integrity of the music and the vowel purity of the text. More importantly, it increases the intelligibility of the text for your listener.
- Challenge yourself to memorize with intention. Use flashcards, recitation, and rhyme schemes to assist you in memorizing words and music. Avoid mindless repetition. It is a waste of your time and only enhances anxiety.

Note: A work is deemed “completed” when each of the above steps has been accomplished.

Course Expectations and Assignments

Course expectations/assignments are subject to change based on student’s vocal health and development. Students enrolled in MVV 1411 will participate in the following plan where appropriate. Students enrolled in MVV 2421, 3431, and 4441 should use the following plan to shape weekly practice and performance goals.

First Day of Classes for Fall Semester: Thursday, August 21, 2025

Week of August 25, 2025

At this lesson, we will select the repertoire for the semester and create a study schedule.

Wednesday, August 27, 2025 is our first Studio Class at 12:50 (6th period.) It is likely that the class will begin with a combined session in MUB 120 before we move to our usual meeting space in MUB Room 142.

Week of September 1, 2025 (No lessons on Monday, 9/1/25 Labor Day Holiday)

Assignment: Preparation of Song/Aria I of your semester repertoire.

- Begin by reading the poem to yourself and then aloud. What does it mean? What are the important words or phrases? (If the selection is in a foreign language, please write the IPA and word-by-word translation in your score.)
- Download a Fact Sheet and complete it.
- Practice count singing the music with your collaborative pianist.

Lesson Focus: Preparation of Song/Aria I and Selection of Song/Aria II.

- We will verify the breath marks and discuss poetic/musical challenges.
- You will count sing the music of Song/Aria I.
- We will determine your second selection (Song/Aria II) and create a plan.

Week of September 8, 2025

Assignment: Continuation of Song/Aria I and Preparation of Song/Aria II.

- You will complete your fact sheet for Song/Aria II, read and analyze the poem, speak it aloud, and count-sing at least the first page.
- Count sing Song/Aria II with your collaborative pianist.
- Fact Sheet II, Weekly Practice Log/Video are due at the lesson.

Lesson Focus: Vocal and musical issues in Song/Aria I and II.

- Attention to difficult spots in Song/Aria I.
- Breath marks, challenges, and count singing of Song/Aria II.
- Selection of Song/Aria III.

Week of September 15, 2025

Assignment: Polish Song/Aria I. Continue with study of Song/Aria II.

- Prepare Song/Aria III score. Read and analyze the poem. Complete your Fact Sheet and listen critically to at least two performances of the work.
- Fact Sheet III, Weekly Practice Log/Video are due at the lesson.

Lesson Focus: Interpretation of Song/Aria I and II.

- We will spend time on the difficult spots in Song/Aria II.
- Let's verify breath marks and musical challenges in Song/Aria III.
- We will discuss memorization strategies for Song/Aria I and II.

Week of September 22, 2025

Assignment: Aim to complete Song/Aria I and II. Continue to study Song/Aria III.

- Be sure to work on memorization of Song/Aria I and II in coaching.
- Try to count sing Song/Aria III in coaching also.
- Your Weekly Practice Log/Video is due at the lesson.

Lesson Focus: Memorization of Song/Aria I and II. Study of Song/Aria III.

- We will address difficult spots in Song/Aria III.
- Let's discuss the interpretation and context for Song/Aria III.
- Can you sing Song/Aria I and II as memorized work?
- Which Song/Aria will you address next? Let's talk about it.

Week of September 29, 2025

Assignment: Introduce yourself to Song/Aria IV. Read the poem, create fact sheet, and prepare the score.

- Identify memorization problems in Song/Aria I, II to address in coaching.
- Work toward memorization of Song/Aria III.
- Count sing Song/Aria IV in coaching.
- Complete your Fact Sheet IV and Weekly Practice Log/Video for lesson.

Lesson Focus: Trouble spots in all songs/arias to date.

- Performance of Song/Aria II and III.
- Count sing Song/Aria IV.
- Attention to difficult spots in Song/Aria IV.
- Which work will be Song/Aria V?

Week of October 6, 2025

Assignment: Review of Song/Aria I – IV.

- Work on problem spots in Song/Aria IV in coaching.
- Review Song/Aria I-III to check memory.
- Begin preparation of Song/Aria V.
- Your Fact Sheet V and Weekly Practice Log/Video are due at the lesson.

Lesson Focus: Development of performance goals for Song/Aria I-IV

- Review poetic, musical elements, transitions in all songs/arias.
- Perform Song/Aria IV with music. Consider memorization strategies.

Week of October 13, 2025 (Note: Homecoming is Friday, October 17, 2025.)

Assignment: Preparation of Song/Aria V. Read poem, create Fact Sheet, and prepare score.

- Count sing Song/Aria V with collaborative pianist in coaching.
- Begin memorization of Song/Aria IV.
- Bring Weekly Practice Log/Video to lesson.

Lesson Focus: Establishment of good skills for Song/Aria V.

- Count sing Song/Aria V and determine problem spots.
- Sing Song/Aria IV by memory in lesson.
- Review problem spots in Song/Aria I-III.
- Let's look at Song/Aria VI and make plans for preparing it.

Week of October 20, 2025

Assignment: Polishing of Song/Aria V and Review of Song/Aria I-IV.

- Read poem, create Fact Sheet, and prepare score for Song/Aria VI.
- Count sing Song/Aria VI with collaborative pianist in coaching.
- Polish Song/Aria V and begin memorization.
- Review Song/Aria I-IV.
- Bring Completed Fact Sheet VI and Practice Log/Video to lesson.

Lesson Focus: Vocal color and style elements in Songs/Arias I-V.

- Count sing/vowel sing Song/Aria VI.
- Determine problem spots in Song/Aria VI and discuss strategies.
- Review Songs/Arias I-V for note/rhythm/diction issues.
- Plan to Perform Song/Aria V with music to check accuracy.

Week of October 27, 2025

Assignment: Complete learning of Song/Aria VI. Review Songs/Arias I-V.

- Prepare a list of trouble spots for your coaching session.
- Verify your memorization of Song/Aria V.
- Polish Song/Aria VI and begin to memorize.
- Bring Completed Practice Log/Video to lesson.

Lesson Focus: Address preparation and performance issues in all selections.

- Plan to perform Song/Aria V by memory.
- Perform Song/Aria VI and discuss strategies for memorization.
- Review any trouble spots in Songs/Arias I-IV.

Week of November 3, 2025

Assignment: Concentrate on Songs/Arias I – III.

- Sing Songs/Arias I-III with collaborative pianist at coaching session.
- Check accuracy, interpretation, and memorization.
- Review poetic meaning and word-by-word translation for all three works.
- Don't forget to bring completed Practice Log/Video to your lesson.

Lesson Focus: Final Preparation of Songs/Arias I-III.

- Perform Songs/Arias I-III by memory in lesson.
- Plan to discuss your interpretation and check diction and musical accuracy.
- Let's discuss any remaining issues in Songs/Arias IV-VI.

Week of November 10, 2025 (Note: Veteran's Day is Tuesday, November 11, 2025.)

Assignment: Concentrate on Songs/Arias IV – VI.

- Sing Songs/Arias IV-VI with collaborative pianist at coaching session.
- Check accuracy and memorization for Songs/Arias IV-VI.
- Review poetic meaning and word-by-word translation for Songs/Arias IV-VI.
- Bring Completed Weekly Practice Log/Video to lesson.

Lesson Focus: Final Preparation of Songs/Arias IV-VI.

- Try to perform Songs/Arias IV-VI by memory in lesson.
- Review poetic meaning, diction, and accuracy.
- Discuss any issues of concern in Songs/Arias I-VI.

Week of November 17, 2025

Assignment: Completion of all jury selections.

- Plan coaching and practice time to ensure all jury selections are ready.

Lesson Focus: Jury Preparation

- All selections for the jury will be sung by memory in the lesson.

Week of November 24, 2025

ENJOY THANKSGIVING BREAK!

Week of December 1, 2025 (Classes end on Wednesday, December 3, 2025)

- Preparation of Jury Forms
- Be sure to have all repertoire memorized completely.
- Don't forget to sign up for Voice Jury with Nansi Carroll's approval.

VOICE JURIES ARE ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2025

(Please consult with your collaborative pianist regarding the time of your hearing. Also, be sure you have paid your collaborative pianist in full before 5 pm on Wednesday, December 3, 2025.)

HAPPY WINTER BREAK!

Vocal Health

Please do not hesitate to write or call if you have any discomfort with your voice.

<https://go.ufl.edu/syllabuspolicies>