

MUS 115 Syllabus
VOICE CLASS
Fall 2013

Instructor: Carlos Feliciano

E-mail:

Office:

Phone:

Classroom and Meeting Time: TBA, W/F 11:15-12:05

Office Hours: By Appointment

Purpose of Course

To develop vocal skills and apply them in songs to prepare you for a life as a music educator. There may also be emphasis on learning basic voice physiology, vocal health, or other related topics.

Textbook

The Singing Book, Second Edition, Meribeth Dayme and Cynthia Vaughn, published by W.W. Norton. Instructor may also provide other materials, as needed.

Practicing

You will learn vocal skills in class that will need to be reinforced *daily* in the practice room. As in any applied music skill, success in singing comes from focused repetition of the exercises that build your expertise; in singing, this work actually helps to build your instrument, too. We will discuss in class how you should practice. If you are having trouble with your singing outside of class, please contact your instructor for further help.

Grading

Attendance, preparation, active participation, and regular vocal progress will make up the majority of your grade. In addition, the feedback from your song performances will count toward the final grade.

70% Attendance/ Preparation/Active Participation/Vocal Progress

30% Three In-Class Song Performances

Preparation/Vocal Progress/Participation

You will be required to prepare three songs. **You must be prepared to sing every class.** Your mark will be based on accurately learning your song, acquiring vocal skills, showing evidence of integrating the instructor's suggestions into your performance and actively participating in class discussions/activities. A respectful and supportive class atmosphere is also expected.

Songs and In-Class Song Performances

You will work on and perform three songs over the course of the semester. The first song will be assigned. Songs 2 and 3 will be chosen early in the semester in consultation with the instructor (variety in repertoire is strongly encouraged). Repertoire may be changed during the semester, but only in consultation with the instructor. You will be required to memorize your songs quickly – preferably before working on them in class.

The song performances are opportunities to demonstrate preparation and vocal progress, and the grading of these experiences will be based on voice proficiency. In particular, grading will be based on (1) **Tone** (projection, vibrancy, vocal health, ability to access appropriate vocal registers, evenness throughout range), and (2) **Intonation** (ability to sing accurately in tune), but will also take into consideration (3) Presentation (professionalism in demeanor), (4) Breathing (breath management and breathing technique), (5) Posture (alignment and centering), (6) Accuracy/Memorization, (7) Diction (clarity of text and vowels) and (8) Interpretation (communication of the text, expressivity). See attached grading sheet for more specifics. Voice and/or music education professors will sometimes join the instructor in the grading and feedback for these performances.

In the event an accompanist needs to be hired for song tests, students will share the cost.

Tests and Assignments

Tests and/or assignments may be given at the discretion of each instructor. Tests will draw from the reading material, class-discussion, and other provided materials. Assignments will be based on observations and application of the material covered in the course. Assignments may include readings, preparing/leading vocal warm-ups, background research on your songs, an observation of a choral rehearsal, an observation of a voice lesson, and/or a review of a voice performance. Your instructors will only assign what they deem helpful to you as a future music educator.

(from the Music Education faculty)

Class Attendance Policy. In order to prepare you for the real world of teaching, the following attendance policy is used for all music education courses. You will encounter similar policies while student teaching and when you are employed as a teacher.

1. **Excused absences and excused tardies.** An absence or tardy will be considered excused if you have spoken with the instructor, or have left a message via phone or email, *prior* to class time, notifying him/her that you will be absent or late. Most school districts require that you call by a certain time in the morning so they can arrange for a substitute teacher or class coverage. If you are tardy because a class, lesson or appointment with a faculty member runs long and you are unable to contact the instructor prior to class, you must see the instructor *immediately after* class to be considered for an excused tardy. You are allotted a reasonable number of excused absences and tardies, but the instructor reserves the right to reduce your grade appropriately for what is deemed to be an excessive number of excused absences and tardies (grade will be lowered one level for every excessive excused absence or tardy - example: "B+" becomes a "B").
2. **Unexcused absences and unexcused tardies.** An absence will be considered unexcused if you have not notified the instructor prior to the class period in question; a tardy will be considered unexcused if you have not notified the instructor by the end of the class period in question. Your course grade will be lowered one level (example: "B+" becomes a "B") for every unexcused absence or tardy. Neither is acceptable by school districts; and undocumented lateness or absence can lead to termination.

3. Professional release time. Absences resulting from school-sponsored ensemble performances and/or attendance at professional conferences will be considered “professional release time” and will not be counted towards your allowed number of excused absences/tardies. However, you must inform the instructor *prior* to that class about your absence, and you should not assume that the instructor knows you will not be there. Most school districts will approve such release time for performances or conferences, if given enough advance notice.
4. Special circumstances. Any unusual circumstances that cause you to be late or absent, such as an extended illness or a death in the immediate family, must be discussed with the instructor and will be given separate consideration.

Tentative Class Schedule

Daily classes will include voice technique work in warm-ups and in song repertoire.

Week 1	Syllabus/Warm-ups/Practice Methods/Group Songs
Week 2, 3	Continued work on songs
Week 4	Song Performance #1
Week 5, 6, 7, 8	Work on Song 2
Week 9	Song Performance #2
Week 10, 11, 12	Work on Song 3
Week 13	Fall Break
Week 14	Work on Song 3
Week 15	Song Performance #3
Week 16	Individual Response/TBA

Academic Integrity

"Academic integrity is a basic guiding principle for all academic activity at Penn State University, allowing the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest, and responsible manner. In accordance with the University's Code of Conduct, I will practice integrity in regard to all academic assignments. I will not engage in or tolerate acts of falsification, misrepresentation or deception because such acts of dishonesty violate the fundamental ethical principles of the University community and compromise the worth of work completed by others."