

UTEP DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

OPERA WORKSHOP

Fall 2020 | MUSA 2253 CEL* (CRN 16125) | MW 3-4:20 & TR 10:30-11:50 (Recital Hall & Choir Room)
Prof. Cherry Duke | ccduke@utep.edu | Office hours by appointment
Available for graduate credit as MUSA 5101 (CRN 22787).



How do you create meaningful, engaging performances?

Why do you perform? What experience do you want your audience to have? Through games and play, master classes and group work, readings and research, performance and practice, this class will help you develop your stage skills so that you can express your songs and yourself more fully on stage.

(It'll be helpful if you can learn your music on your own; this class will teach you what to do with the music onstage.)

**See the Course Calendar
for important dates and
assignments**



**When you ask for help,
you show strength!
*Ask and ye shall receive!***




**Be on time!
Be prepared!
Communicate!**



What is this all about?

Course Description. In this CEL* class we will explore and practice the vocal, acting/communication, movement and analytical skills needed for success in performance of staged musical drama, culminating in at least one public performance per semester.

*The "CEL" designation for this course stands for "Community Engagement & Leadership" and is part of a new certificate program in the College of Liberal Arts (full details to be provided at the start of the course). The purpose of this CEL course is to strengthen students' understanding of their role in society as engaged citizens and to build the knowledge and competencies that will enable them to be socially responsible and participating community leaders. Accordingly, course assignments and assessments are developed in line with the CEL program mission in Liberal Arts, as well as within the broader framework and mission of UTEP's "Edge Advantages" goals.

Elements of this class that are relevant to the Community Engagement and Leadership Certificate Program are identified with this mark: .

Additional study and evaluation in the areas of audition preparation, role preparation, dance, technical aspects of theatre, and self- and peer evaluation. Professional behavior that will serve in any career choice is emphasized.

★ **See attached Syllabus Addendum** for this semester's performance details and extra rehearsals. As well, a detailed Daily Course Calendar will be posted on Blackboard and updated as needed. Refer to it daily!



Textbook

Actions: The Actor's Thesaurus by Marina Caldarone (available on Amazon.com)



How about other required materials?

- A journal or other notebook for character exploration, recording research, taking notes in rehearsals, during master classes, etc.
- Highlighter(s), pencil, water for every class or rehearsal.
- Printed repertoire, preferably in a 3-ring binder†.
- Voice recorder (i.e., the app on your smartphone) for recording rehearsals.
- Yoga mat (a few are available to borrow, but you can buy one for less than \$10).
- Character shoes for dance & performance (see info on Blackboard).
- Clothes you can move in appropriately for dance and yoga days.
- Regular access to a reliable computer (other than a phone or tablet) with Internet access. You may opt to use the ones on campus. There are many.
- I encourage you to buy published printed scores of the operas or shows in which you have significant scenes/solos. Go to www.classicalvocalrep.com or call them—tell the owner you're my student and he may give you a 10% discount.

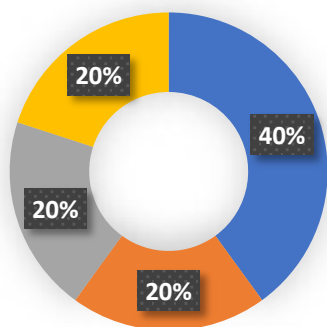


Piano love.

Dr. Meza (our class pianist) is a great sight-reader, but he also likes to be prepared. Every time you are scheduled to sing in class, in outreach, etc., make sure he gets a clean, complete copy of your music at least 2 business days before your performance.



How are you evaluated?



- Attendance and Participation
- Preparation
- Written & Other Assignments
- Final Exam (Sing-Out & Self-Evaluation)

† If you opt to use a tablet for reading your music, you must use a score-reading app such as ForScore (forscore.co -- highly recommended!) so that you may easily and readily take notes in and mark your music without slowing down rehearsals. If your device is a disruption to class or to your progress, you must switch to using paper sheet music.

How do I get a good grade?

Attendance & Participation

On-time attendance to ALL classes/rehearsals is required. "On time" means being *ready to work* when the session is scheduled to begin. To that end, arrive at least *5 minutes before* the start time if at all possible. If you are running late or unable to attend any class or rehearsal, notify me as soon as possible, knowing that lateness and absence negatively affects you, your scene partners and your grade.

★ There will be some days when you are not required to attend. Check the Daily Course Calendar every day.

If you are sick and contagious, DO NOT ATTEND. Your teacher and your colleagues need to stay healthy. Contact me immediately to let me know you will not be in class. You are responsible for making up any work or assignments you may miss. You may request extra credit to make up for unexpected absences.

Participation will be evaluated daily. Be present (physically and mentally!), on-time (early!), alert and engaged and give your best effort all the time. As Tom Hanks said in his Golden Globes acceptance speech,

"Show up on time with a head full of ideas and ready to work!"

Written & Other Assignments

Throughout the semester you may be given a variety of written assignments and assessments including but not limited to: character analysis, reports/reviews of live and online performances, scene mapping, etc. All assignments must be turned in by the stated due date. You will not always receive a reminder.

★ If you miss a class or rehearsal, it is your responsibility to determine if an assignment was given and get the applicable materials. Some assignments may require using Blackboard or another online tool.

★ If you miss a graded assessment, test, quiz or date to turn in an assignment, it is your responsibility to ask for a makeup in a timely manner.

 Additional assignments may include:

- Planning and coordination of outreach programs for schools, retirement communities and/or community concerts.
- Communication and coordination with our community partners (i.e., the schools, retirement communities, El Paso Opera, El Paso Symphony Youth Orchestras, El Paso Museum of Art, etc.)

Preparation

Prepare and execute every assignment *completely* to the best of your ability, and bring to class the appropriate tools, materials, music, etc. If you are not able to learn your translations, notes, rhythms, diction, etc. on your own, get help. This may mean hiring a pianist/coach, tutor, teaming up with friends, buying accompaniment tracks, etc. If you don't know what to do, let's chat.

★ Especially if you have a sizeable solo, please **work on your assigned music with your voice teacher.**

You will be given a grade based on the *completeness* of your preparation. For example: if on the day you are to be fully memorized, you are only about 75% memorized/prepared, you will be given a grade of 75.

**"Show up
on time with a
head full of ideas
& ready to work!"**

Final Exam

The final evaluation of the class will consist of a mock audition, or “Sing-Out,” similar to the “Sing-In” held at the beginning of the semester. This performance and the self-evaluation which follows represent the course’s final exam. You should demonstrate your ability to present yourself professionally, with your piece prepared to the best of your ability, musically and dramatically. You will also be graded on your active participation in the viewing and commenting on your peers’ performances.

★ Prepare for this final performance well in advance (remember that you will likely have many other exams during this time!) so that you will demonstrate improvement from your Sing-In.

Course Policies



CELE **Citizenship** has to do with attendance as well as how you treat others. Most wars, fights, retaliations, and insults happen when people feel their dignity has been assaulted. So please, respect each individual's opinions and beliefs—even if you disagree.

Walking out of class (even for a few moments) in the middle of a class, workshop, presentation, performance, lecture or other focused activity is disruptive and may be perceived as disrespectful. Please get your water and use the restroom *between* classes so that you may give your full attention and respect during class. Arriving to class after it has begun is similarly distracting. Be on time every day. This is especially important when we have guests.



Cell phones. Please keep your cell phones on silent (or take it outside for emergencies) so that we can all focus! Again, it's a dignity/respect thing. We all know that feeling when you're talking to a friend and his or her attention is on the phone...



Attendance. 80% of life is showing up. In OpShop, we work together, as a team. And 40% of your grade is about showing up! So show up on time (that means early!), prepared, ready to work and you'll do great in this class!

Everyone gets one “free” absence. After that, every absence will lower your grade.

But stay home if you're truly sick. You'll get well faster and you'll keep those germs to yourself. And let me know if you're not coming! Otherwise, I worry. Really.

Yes, stuff happens. Real emergencies will be taken into consideration. Failure to plan or staying out late the night before doesn't count. It all comes back to dignity/respect, for yourself, and your teammates.

If you miss class for any reason, figure out what you missed, and make it up. Talk to me if you need help.



Readings & Homework. The homework forms the core of our class rehearsals and discussions, so please come prepared. I expect each of you to contribute!







Penny for your thoughts. If/when you need help, I will make time for you. It's my job and my honor to be there for you and to help you toward success. If you're struggling, tell me. We'll figure it out together!



Like brushing your teeth... Check your UTEP email account morning and evening. As well, I encourage you to check and respond to text and Facebook messages at least once a day and in general to respond to my messages within 12 hours, if not sooner. If your contact information changes (email, phone number, home address, etc.), let me know immediately.

There is a Facebook Messenger group for quick class communications. If you would like to be a part of this group, please ask another member to add you.

How will we spend our time together?

- Group activities to develop performance, acting and movement skills, including improvisation, dance, movement, body awareness and facial and physical expression.
- Written and reading assignments on character preparation, role preparation and theatrical terms.
-  Preparation, rehearsal, and performance of staged opera, shows and/or scenes as scheduled.
-  Collaborations with El Paso Opera, El Paso Symphony Youth Orchestras, El Paso Museum of Art, UTEP Center for Arts Entrepreneurship, OLLI and other community organizations are possible.
-  Production assignments, including but not limited to: building and moving scenery, costuming, makeup, set up and strike of stage, creating and posting publicity materials, promotion of performances on social media, creation of supertitles.
-  Community outreach performances. All students will participate in at least one outreach performance (i.e., concerts at retirement homes, schools, online, etc.).
- Readings from course textbook(s), assigned articles, other books online or in the library.
- Research as well as written and verbal reporting on various shows and characters.
- Private and group coaching of assigned scenes as well as songs and arias from applied studio repertoire.
- Study and practice of music theatre/opera audition techniques and best practices, including dramatic presentation of songs and arias, appropriate attire, résumé writing, monologue preparation, etc.
- Master classes, coachings and/or workshops with teacher(s) and guest artists.
- Utilize technology (YouTube, Vimeo, Spotify, Apple Music, etc.) as an evaluative and research tool.

In-Class Performances

Sing-In and Sing-Out

During the first week or two of the semester, each student in the class will perform a solo with piano accompaniment. This performance will be video recorded. You should dress up and sing a song from memory that demonstrates your current level of vocal development. Repertoire ideally should be classical. Musical theater selections may be allowed in certain circumstances.


At the end of the semester, a corresponding "Sing-Out" will occur. See "Final Exam," above.

Master Classes

In a master class, you sing a piece in front of the class and the instructor or guest artist works with you to improve your performance while the rest of the class observes. Master classes are most effective when you are fully memorized and know the complete translation of the song. As an observer in a master class, take full advantage of the teaching being offered by taking notes, and asking questions when appropriate.

Crews (Technical/Production/Publicity Assignments)


You will assist with technical aspects of productions as necessary, including sets, costumes, stage management and lighting construction and operation as well as publicity and audience development for performances.

 You will be assigned to a team, called a "crew," and will be expected to help as-needed with jobs specific to your crew.

Crews may include (but are not limited to):

- Publicity & Communications
- Community Engagement & Hospitality
- Sets & Locations
- Costumes & Makeup
- Technical Needs (mics, video, livestream)
- Supertitles
- Stage Management

Public Performances, including Main Production & Outreach

 Full preparation and best effort are required. This includes professionalism, responsiveness, clear and prompt communication and responsibility toward all assigned crew duties, colleagues and scene partners.
WE WORK AS A TEAM.

Course Outcomes

At the completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Behave professionally in rehearsals, auditions and performances.
- Independently prepare selections from the operatic and/or musical theater repertory.
- Perform assigned selections with accuracy of pitch, rhythm, and dramatic expression.
- Prepare and perform assigned repertoire to a level acceptable for public performance.
- Evaluate self and peer performances with constructive commentary.
- Introduce yourself and your piece clearly and effectively in front of an audience.
- Identify, understand and use theatrical terminology.

Skills & Knowledge Equivalents

- Teamwork and interpersonal skills
- Initiative and responsibility
- Initiative and responsibility
- Build communication skills
- Build communication skills
- Self-driven and change-making skills
- Build communication skills
- Develop critical thinking skills
- Self-driven and change-making skills
- Build communication skills

TECHNICAL STUFF...



Incompletes/Withdrawals

No automatic withdrawals or incompletes will be given.

Academic Integrity

Cheating and plagiarism is dishonest, unethical and not acceptable. Refer to <http://sa.utep.edu/osccr/academic-integrity> for further information.

Accommodations

The Center for Accommodations (CASS) can help you if you need accommodations in class. Go see them, and/or visit their web site: www.sa.utep.edu/cass. Notify me ASAP of any accommodations you may need. It's your right to have what you need.

Sexual Discrimination & Harassment (Title IX)

For concerns related to sexual harassment or violence, visit <https://www.utep.edu/titleix/> for more information.

Graduate Credit

- For Graduate level ensemble credit, students should consult their Graduate Advisor for Music and enroll in CRN 22787, MUSA 5101.
- Additional coursework beyond the requirements of the undergraduate students enrolled in the course may include additional assignments, technical work, and/or performances.
- Graduate students may also be expected to assist with research, coachings and leadership of undergraduate students.