

Applied Voice
Course Syllabus
Fall 2017/SPRING 2018

Sam Houston State University
Department of Theatre and Dance
MTV0 1101/3301
2 CREDIT HOURS

Coordinator – Dr. Laura Avery
Office – PAC 284D
Office hours – by appointment
Phone – 936.294.3404
E-mail – lka005@shsu.edu

I. DESCRIPTION

In studio time gives each student one on one instruction in the area of vocal technique (posture, breathing, phonation, resonance, articulation), song interpretation, repertoire building, musicianship, style/genre exploration and artist collaboration.

II. REPERTOIRE

Repertoire is selected each semester according to the pedagogical goals and type of each student. Your teacher will play a very active role in assigning appropriate repertoire for you based on your particular skills, character type and voice.

- *First semester freshman year:* 4-6 songs. Repertoire focused on early Broadway. Skill development- focus on identifying areas of improvement for vocal technique and basic song preparation.
- *Second semester freshman year:* 4-6 songs. Repertoire continued focus on early Broadway with addition of some standards. Skill development- continue building a functional technique and basic musicianship.
- *First semester sophomore year:* 5-6 songs. Repertoire focused on some jazz standards, beginning contemporary Broadway. Skill development- begin to integrate vocal approach and song interpretation. (Overall intention of song, dramatic beats, etc.)
- *Second semester sophomore year:* 5-6 songs. Repertoire continued focus on beginning contemporary Broadway with addition of commercial and Disney songs. Skill development- expand vocal versatility and dramatic intent.
- *First semester junior year:* 6-8 songs. Repertoire starts exploring more contemporary theatre songs, Sondheim and comic songs. Skill development- develop an understanding of various commercial music style signatures and polish song delivery.
- *Second semester junior year:* 6-8 songs. Repertoire continues to focus on contemporary theatre songs. In addition, students will research specific roles appropriate for their type and voice. Skill development- identify your marketability
- *First semester senior year:* 4-8 songs. Repertoire will come from existing audition book. This is a time to revisit pieces, solidify, 'clean house' and fill in missing pieces before graduation. In addition, students will focus on their NY Showcase audition.
- *Second semester senior year:* 4-8 songs. Repertoire continues to solidify current audition book. Students will also select 1-2 roles to study and prepare and/or focus on Senior Showcase show selections.

Our goal is to build a functional audition folder, versatile technique, and a strong familiarity with the musical theatre canon. You are encouraged to keep a repertoire list at the front of your audition book.

III. PRACTICE AND PREPARATION

Productive, consistent practice is assumed. Daily work is more important than lengthy practice. You must practice enough to securely prepare for your lessons, auditions, performances, mid-term and jury. Time spent studying interpretation, characterization and music is often your most effective preparation. Listening to your lesson recording each week will help identify your areas of focus. A guide to learning a song is provided as part of this document to assist you in making the most of your preparation time.

Students are expected to come prepared for each lesson. You should record of your lesson each week. Specific goals will be established for you during lessons. It is expected that you will work toward meeting those goals. Listening to your lesson recording will enable you to dialogue with your instructor about your progress from week to week.

Your music should be prepared and given to your accompanist at the beginning of the semester. Accompanists' music should be copied front to back and hole punched. Be sure all staves are legible as well as key signatures and the title of the song. Please see the Musical Theatre Program Handbook for the policies on accompanists.

IV. ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance at lessons is required. There are NO EXCUSES for missing lessons. Absences will result in an F grade for that day. Repeated absence from lessons will jeopardize your position in the musical theatre program. Excused absences for KCACTF participation will not be made up. Lessons missed by the student for purposes of professional development will not be made up. Lessons missed by your teacher due to illness or professional development will be made up. Should your teacher be absent, your lesson should be split between observation in another voice studio and working with your accompanist. When the University is officially closed (such as on holidays) the missed lessons will not be made up. Please see the Musical Theatre Program Handbook for attendance policies.

VI. PERFORMANCES

You will be assigned to sing on two of the six Cabaret performances. Please see the Musical Theatre Handbook for the policies regarding Cabaret.

It is always a good idea to seek your teacher's counsel regarding any gigs you do including auditions, roles, competitions, apprentice programs, critiques from judges and coaches, etc. Allow your teacher to exercise veto power to prevent vocal dilemmas.

VII. GRADES

Your final grade is divided as follows: 25% mid-term (half of your literature should be able to be sung from memory mid-semester. Memory means singing with correct pitches, rhythms and diction without looking at your music.); 25% jury (the Monday of finals week: four songs should be able to be sung from memory); 50% studio (which includes the completion of repertoire requirements, preparation, attendance, vocal health choices, singer/accompanist relationship, technical growth and successful completion of discussed goals).

Americans with Disabilities Act

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may adversely affect your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) and to talk to me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: no accommodation can be made until you register with:

SSD Office Location: Lee Drain Annex (next to the Farrington Building)

Telephone: 936-294-3512 / TDD: 936-294-3786

E-mail: disability@shsu.edu

Web Address: www.shsu.edu/disability

Learning a Song

Successful song learning should be done with systematic approach. The most efficient way to learn a song is to prepare each component separately until it is mastered independently.

- Begin by listening to the entire song either in live performance, on a recording or at a read through session with your accompanist. You will have a better understanding of the song if you learn what you can about the composer, the style and the textual source. A little research will reveal information concerning creative and historical aspects of the song, a practice that will increase your appreciation, interest and enthusiasm for songs.
- Your goal as a performer is to become independent musically in the areas of theory, sight-singing, ear training and piano. Take your music courses seriously and work toward proficiency with these skills. In any song you study, you should take time to examine the text, rhythm, meter, tempo, melody, form, harmony, dynamics, phrasing and musical articulation.
- When learning a song, use this sequence:
 1. **Text**- Study the text. Pay attention to your inflection, articulation, phrasing and meaning (write your lyrics out as a monologue).
 2. **Speak aloud**- Read it aloud with attention to word emphasis and expression. Numerous repetitions of the text will make you comfortable and secure with the text *before* voicing it to the rhythm of the song. Practice it as a monologue.
 3. **Speak in rhythm**- Start by clapping or tapping, in a slow tempo, the rhythm of each musical phrase until you have mastered the entire song. When you feel secure with the song's rhythm, clap it in the correct tempo. The important thing is accuracy, not speed.
 4. **Get the pitches in your ear**- Your piano skills should be proficient enough as a singer as to allow you to learn your pitches by playing your melody line. If they are not, you will need to have a pianist record your melody line for you. Learn your melody using your favorite vowel. Note: Using a recording to learn your melody limits your ability to digest and own a song, never allowing it to be truly your own.
 5. **Sing!**- Dive in and sing through your song at various tempos, discovering what your tempo and performance practice will be for the piece.

When working with your accompanist, listen to the accompaniment, how does it sound, what does it mean. The purpose of rehearsing is to work toward collaboration- where to breathe, phrasing, tempo, dynamic changes, etc. Be courteous and respectful when working with your accompanist.

Following these guidelines will ensure success in your learning process.