

Vocal Studies Handbook 2021-2022

For Applied Voice Students
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Department of Music
Vocal Division

Vocal Faculty

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ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook serves as the general syllabus for all courses and sections of studio voice. Any requirements in the syllabi for individual teachers are in addition to those found in this document. This document is subject to revision; therefore the policies contained herein are considered applicable for the academic year. This document should in no way be construed to supersede Texas A&M University-Commerce or Department of Music policies.

Lessons

Students are required to schedule lessons no later than the first full week of classes, or risk being dropped from lessons for the semester. The Voice Department has established THIRTEEN as the normal number of lessons per semester, and TEN as the minimum number of lessons a student must attend to receive a passing grade. Therefore, students who have missed more than three lessons, either excused or unexcused, will be in jeopardy of receiving a failing grade for the semester.

Course Numbers for Applied Instruction

MUS 152/352/552 (2 credit hours) Vocal Music Majors
MUS 151/351/551 (1 credit hour) Music Minors and secondary instrument
MUS 149 (1 credit hour) all other students

Required number of semester hours (sh) of Applied Voice

Music majors should be registered for 2 sh of voice and **minors** and **non-majors** for 1 sh.

If you are a **Performance major** in upper level voice, 352, you should be registered for 3sh of voice.

If you are a **Music Ed major** singing a **Recital** this semester you should register for 1 sh of applied voice and 1 sh of applied voice recital.

If you are a **Performance major** singing a **Recital** this semester you should register for 3sh of voice and 1sh of recital for a **Half recital** and 2sh of recital for a **Full recital**.

Make-up Lesson Policy

If students must miss lessons for any reason, the teacher should be notified by phone, email, or by a note in the teacher's mailbox. The teacher will be diligent to make-up all lessons cancelled by the teacher, as well as lessons missed due to "University Excused Absences." As stated above, it is the intent of the department that each student receives THIRTEEN lessons each semester. Teachers are not required to make-up lessons missed by students or because of university holidays. Students should respond to offers of make-up lessons in a timely manner.

If two lessons are missed without notification, the student will receive an email informing them that they are in jeopardy of receiving a failing grade for the semester. If an additional lesson is missed without notification, the student will be in jeopardy of receiving a failing grade for the semester.

Teacher Assignments

Teacher assignments will be made no later than the first week of classes and will be posted on the voice board. Students who wish to study with a particular teacher must contact Dr. Randall Hooper and the respective teacher.

Voice Bulletin Boards

Current information and announcements for voice students will be posted on the division bulletin board outside the Vocal Activities Office and on the Bulletin Board located adjacent the Choir Room. Voice students are responsible for information posted on these boards. Announcements of job openings, competitions, recitals, etc., will be posted on these boards. Please check these boards frequently.

Studio Classes

Studio classes are scheduled on Mondays from 5:00-6:00 pm and Thursdays from 4:00-5:00 pm. While individual studio attendance policies may vary, students should not ask to be excused from these classes, as they are considered an essential component of voice training. Studio classes will meet in the choir room, 158 and the Recital Hall. Check the bulletin board for the studio Class Room rotation Schedule.

Practice

Voice students at all levels are expected to practice a minimum of three hours per week PER CREDIT HOUR of voice.

Repertoire

Repertoire requirements for the vocal majors (2sh) are as follows:

- FIRST YEAR MUS 152- Minimum of four selections, memorized each semester.
- SECOND YEAR-PLUS MUS 152- Minimum of five selections, memorized* each semester. (Except semester of JLPE, see further details under JLPE information)
- MUS 352 and 552 – Minimum of six selections, memorized* each semester.
- VOICE MINORS/SECONDARY INSTRUMENT/NON-MAJORS 151, 351, 551 and 149 – Minimum of three selections, memorized each semester.

Repertoire selections for First Year Voice Majors should be limited to Italian and English Art Songs and Arias. In the remaining years of study other languages may be added by the voice instructor. Opera Arias and Oratorio selections should be saved for students registered for MUS 352 and 552. Musical Selections can be considered through the consultation with your teacher.

*One solo from a major choral/orchestral work (oratorio, mass, etc.) may be sung with the score. This selection should NOT be the student's choice at the jury.

Students who do not meet the repertoire requirements will have their semester grade lowered by two full letter grades (i.e. grade of "A" becomes a "C").

Juries

All voice students are required to perform a jury at the end of the semester. The jury will be approximately 8 minutes in length. Students will sing one selection of their choice and at least one of the faculty's choice. Students are allowed to record their juries, provided that doing so is not disruptive. Juries may also be recorded by the faculty for archival purposes. Juries are closed to the public, including family and friends.

Jury repertoire lists must reflect repertoire assigned and prepared that semester. The student's voice teacher must approve the list and sign the jury form prior to the jury. Students whose repertoire list is not so certified will not be allowed to do their jury for the semester. Any falsification of the jury repertoire list is grounds for a failing grade ("F") in voice for the semester.

Faculty members will write comments and give a grade based on the jury performance. The jury comment sheets must be distributed to students before the end of the semester. In the case of a "negative result" (such as failure of the jury or barrier exam) the teacher must retain the original comment sheets and have them placed in the student's file in the Department of Music office. Copies may be given to Students.

The semester grade will be determined by the following formula: Jury Grade 40% + the teacher's studio grade 50% + Required Attendance Grade 10%.

A grade of "X" (Incomplete) will only be given for verified medical reasons. Students should provide official documentation to their teacher. Make-up juries will be scheduled on a case by case basis by the Department Faculty. Juries will be held during exam week of each semester.

Junior Level Proficiency Exam

Every music student must pass the Junior Level Proficiency Exam and pass theory III and ear training III with a C or higher to be admitted into upper division applied voice (352) and upper division courses. The student must attempt the JLPE during their fourth semester of applied voice. All transfer students must attempt the JLPE during their second semester of applied voice. If this attempt fails, the student will have one more opportunity to pass the JLPE during following semester. If this attempt fails, the student will be directed to another field of study. The JLPE will take place during vocal juries each semester. After the JLPE has been passed, the student may move into upper division applied voice after he/she has passed theory III and ear training III with a grade of a C or higher.

For the vocal JLPE, students must successfully perform a varied and challenging repertoire that includes one piece from each of the following categories: an Italian art song, a German *Lied*, a French *melodie*, and an English art song. All four pieces will be performed to demonstrate mastery of all four languages and the ability to sing in various styles of music. All Literature must be performed by memory. In addition to the repertoire performance requirement, students must 1) demonstrate competency sight-singing using solfeg, the text, or a neutral syllable, 2) speak a sentence written from the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) in Italian and French, and transliterate words from English into IPA. German diction will be evaluated as part of the German *Lied* "prepared" piece performance 3) learn on their own and expressively perform an assigned German *Lied*. Students will be responsible for picking up their prepared piece two weeks before their JLPE from Dr. Brock Johnson.

How Jury Grades are assessed

Each voice faculty member will assess the student in the following categories: Correct rhythm and pitch, Tone/Technique/Intonation, Diction, Musicianship/Interpretation/Artistry. Refer to the vocal jury grading rubric for more information about scoring of the jury grade.

Minimum undergraduate degree repertoire requirements

These requirements should be met by the end of voice study at Texas A&M University- Commerce. A complete typed repertoire list must be presented at the student's final jury to be placed in the student's official file in the Vocal Division office.

42 selections total: minimum of 6 pieces each in English, Italian, German, and French.

Recital and Hearing Policies

Recitals:

Voice majors, regardless of their degree program, must perform a half recital. Voice Performance majors, in addition, must perform a full recital.

A half hour recital consists of 25 minutes of music with a representation of English, French, German, Italian/Spanish, with a reasonable equal representation of each language and representing various styles and historic periods.

An hour recital consists of 50 minutes of music with a representation of English, French, German, Italian/Spanish, with a reasonable equal representation of each language and representing various styles and historic periods.

Any deviation from the requirements above (such as performing a single major song cycle) must be approved in advance by the recital committee. No more than 25% of the program may be operatic arias and/or ensembles.

Scheduling:

Students should consult with Shelbie Blackstone in the Music office to determine a recital date and dress rehearsal date. All voice recitals and dress rehearsals are scheduled in the recital hall.

Department Set recital times are:

3:00 pm (Sun only)

4:30 pm (Sun only)

6:00 pm (Sun-Fri)

7:30 pm (Sun-Fri)

At times, two half recitals may be scheduled during one recital time block.

Once a recital date and dress rehearsal date has been determined, the student should complete the **Masterclass/Recital Scheduling Form** and type a recital repertoire list in performance order with timings to attach to the Scheduling Form.

Then the student should get all three committee members' signatures on the Scheduling Form and turn in the completed form and the recital fees to Shelbie Blackstone in the Music Office. Recital committees will consist of the student's applied lesson professor and Dr. Stanley, Dr. Johnson or Dr. Radziun. **All of this should be scheduled no later than 60 days prior to the recital date.**

Finally, the student should schedule a recital hearing with his/her applied lesson professor **no less than 30 days prior to the recital date.** Recital hearings are generally scheduled on Monday and Thursdays after voice studio class.

Forms:

All forms can be found on the Music Department Webpage under "Current Student Resources"

1. [Masterclass/Recital Scheduling Form](#)
2. [Student Recital Program Information Form](#)
3. [Vocal Recital Evaluation Form](#)

Hearing Procedures:

At the recital hearing, students should be prepared to **sing the entire recital from memory.**

For a half recital, the student will be asked to perform 15 minutes of music from their recital program during the recital hearing. For a full recital, the student will be asked to perform 25 minutes of music from their recital program during the recital hearing. Students should bring three copies of the completed recital form and recital repertoire list in performance order with timings to the recital hearing. The student will choose the first selection to be sung with the remaining selections to be chosen by the recital committee, not including the student's applied voice professor.

Grading Procedure:

At the conclusion of the hearing, the committee will give a pass/fail grade for the hearing. If the student fails the recital hearing, or individual pieces at the hearing, one additional hearing may be scheduled (during the same semester) at the discretion of the committee, or the recital may be cancelled or postponed. If the recital is cancelled/postponed the student will receive a grade of F in the Principal Applied Recital course. The student will have one additional semester in which to successfully pass the recital and remain a music major. This additional attempt must be during the next consecutive long semester.

The primary instructor may cancel a student recital at any time for the following reasons:

1. Lack of progress/preparation
2. Failure to schedule a recital hearing, for degree recitals
3. Failure to turn in the proper scheduling paperwork on time
4. Failure to submit program or program notes (when applicable)
5. Failure to pay accompanist fees (when applicable)

Individual faculty members can define the recital grading procedures for the course in their syllabi, as well as requirements for program notes. The scheduled dress rehearsal is merely a rehearsal and will not be graded by the committee.

If the student passes the recital hearing, the recital will be given at the scheduled date and time and will receive a letter grade by each committee member at the conclusion of the recital.

At the conclusion of the recital hearing, the applied voice professor will collect the recital forms from the recital committee. The applied voice professor will return the forms to the committee members on the recital date. After the recital, the applied lessons professor will collect the recital forms and turn them into the Vocal Division office to remain in the Vocal Division files.

Recital Registration Requirements:

The Music Department mandates that the student register for 1-2 sh of MUS 352 Principal Applied Voice (Performance majors should register for 2 sh) and 1 sh of MUS 352 Principal Applied Recital for the semester that a required recital is to take place.

Recital Class MUS 100R Grade Policy

Recital/Convocation Attendance Policy

- 9 Wednesday meetings/recitals (EVERYTHING on Wed at 4:00 counts)
 - 1 "Outside" evening performance*
 - 7 Evening performances (can substitute an additional Outside)*
- *Turn in signed programs to the Music office to get credit

Music majors must perform at least once in Convocation per semester, except first semester freshman.

Recital Attendance

All voice majors are REQUIRED to go to all voice faculty and student recitals. This attendance is 10% of the student's semester grade.

Collaborative Pianists

Students are required to hire an accompanist. It is the student's responsibility to pay their accompanist on time and communicate with the accompanist about lessons and rehearsals in a timely manner. The accompanist fee is the equivalent of purchasing a text book for an academic course. See the accompanist policy for more details..

Purchasing Music

Purchasing music for lessons is required and should be planned for each semester. Students should expect to purchase at least one or two new anthologies each semester. Specific music selections will be chosen by the student's voice teacher.

Main Stage Productions

Each year the Vocal Division will produce a Main Stage production. All performance majors are required to participate in the main stage production and the scenes program.

Changing Voice Teacher

The Department of Music recognizes the individual rights of all students to act independently in the pursuit of knowledge and to seek varying points of view.

Students have the right to change teachers for the types of study listed above, but should follow the recommended procedure, i.e., the present teacher should be notified in a timely fashion, no later than the final day of the semester before the change is to occur. A student may notify his/her teacher solely in writing, if desired. Faculty are requested to wait until this notification has taken place before promising acceptance. It is understood that students shall suffer no negative repercussions as a result of changing teachers.

Faculty members are expected to respect extant major professor relationships and thus are not permitted to solicit a student directly or through any other person for the purpose of influencing a change of major professor.

The relationship between teacher and student should be established, maintained, and terminated in a professional manner. Faculty members should respect the personal integrity and privacy of students at all times, while recognizing their responsibility to promote principles of ethical and professional conduct throughout the Department of Music community.