



Vocal Studies Handbook

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GENERAL INFORMATION

LENGTH AND NUMBER OF LESSONS

- Lessons are at least 50 minutes in length (for two semester credits) or 25 minutes in length (for one semester credit);
- There will be a maximum of fifteen lessons per semester;
- Any student having fewer than the equivalent of ten lessons will receive a failing grade in voice;
- Lessons missed by a teacher due to illness or other reasons will be made up. Student absences may be made up at the discretion of the private teacher; however, the teacher has the prerogative *not* to grant a make-up lesson due to student absence.

STUDIO CLASS/STUDENT RECITAL

Although these classes are not taken for specific credit, it is required of all applied voice students to attend all studio classes as a part of Applied Voice. Studio classes will be arranged at the discretion of each individual teacher. Dates and times may be placed in the studio syllabus.

Studio Class

This group comprises those students studying with a particular teacher. The class is structured by the individual teacher and may include demonstrations, discussions, and performances. An accompanist is not provided.

Student Recital

This class allows students to experience performing before a large group comprised of all vocal and instrumental studios. Students who perform in this class are asked to exhibit appropriate performance behavior and dress. *Students in the audience are expected to be supportive and respectful, observing accepted concert etiquette.* All vocal students, regardless of degree or emphasis, are encouraged to perform. Depending upon the studio, students may be required to perform. Like Studio Class, this class is structure by the music faculty and may include demonstrations, discussions, and performances.

In order to sing during a Student Recital, the student should request a *Student Recital Request Form*. These forms may be obtained from the departmental bulletin board, the applied teacher, or Vocal/Choral Studies office (ETH 129). Once the form is completed and signed by the applied teacher, return all information to the Vocal/Choral Studies office. Please check the bulletin board for deadlines.

Attendance at these classes is required. In the event a student has an unavoidable conflict, the student should notify the teacher as early as possible. *The student should not assume absences will be allowed with notification.* All students are responsible to receive confirmation with their applied teacher prior to the date of the class. Any student who is absent may receive a lowering of the semester letter grade, or may be required to complete a project such as a paper, listening assignment, extra reading, or any task as assigned by the applied teacher.

CHANGING VOICE STUDIOS

If a student has problems with the studio assignment and wishes to change to another applied teacher, the procedure is as follows:

1. The student should speak to the applied teacher with any concerns;
2. The student should speak with the Vocal Studies Chair, who will offer counsel and act as a mediator if conflict arises;
3. If it is determined that a change should happen, the student must obtain a *Student Release Form* from the Vocal Studies Chair;
4. After discussing the concerns and the student's intentions, the teacher will sign the form, releasing the student from the studio at the end of the semester;
5. The student should arrange for an audition with another applied teacher prior to the beginning of the new semester;
6. At the audition, the prospective teacher may accept the student or suggest another teacher. Should the prospective teacher decline the student, the student is responsible to arrange another audition;
7. The new applied teacher will sign the release form and give it to the chair.

It is mandatory any studio change be completed by the end of the semester. Changing applied teachers during the semester is not possible.

Probationary Period

Students who fail to meet the minimum requirements of the studio may be placed into a probationary period by the teacher. Students will be notified in writing of any unsatisfactory item. Students who fail to meet the conditions of the writing may be removed from the studio.

CODE OF ETHICS

It is often considered unethical to study voice with more than one teacher concurrently. In support of this position, it is prohibited that any student study or perform off-campus where the student may receive vocal coaching without prior consultation with their applied voice teacher. Failure to consult with the voice teacher may result in removal from the studio.

CONCERT ATTENDANCE POLICY

All applied voice students are required to attend at least five (5) concerts each semester. Students must report this recital attendance to their voice teacher as required by studio policy. Compliance with the concert attendance policy will be a part of the student's semester grade.

AUDITION FOR A CHANGE OF DEGREE PROGRAM

Any student wishing to change degree programs or enter the music program may audition for the voice faculty at the end of any semester during the exam period. Those auditioning should prepare and perform at least two selections, preferably memorized. Students will be notified of acceptance into the degree program by mail.

VOICE AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS AUDITIONS

Voice awards and scholarships auditions, which occur during the spring semester, are the sole means for identifying and recognizing qualified students for further study in voice. To be eligible for an award or scholarship, students must have at least a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.75 in all coursework, a minimum 3.0 GPA in music courses, and be a student in good standing with faculty and staff of the Visual & Performing Arts Department. Incoming students may qualify for an award to scholarship with an SAT score of at least 1000. Some awards require certain qualifications; make sure to discuss whether you qualify for an award or scholarship with your applied teacher or the Vocal Studies Chair before auditioning.

Notification of any award or scholarship offer will occur by mail. All awards and scholarships are applied toward payment of tuition for the following year and are divided equally between the two semesters.

Audition Process

Returning students should prepare and perform from memory two contrasting selections for the audition. An accompanist will be provided. Please provide an original copy of both selections for your accompanist and photocopied excerpts for the vocal faculty. Photocopied excerpts should not be more than one-third (1/3) of the length of the work. In addition to the prepared selections, students will be asked to sight-read, without accompaniment or assistance from a keyboard, before the vocal faculty. Students will be given a beginning pitch, time to study and evaluate the score, and a repeat of the beginning pitch. *Sight-reading will be 50% of the total score for the audition.* Following the singing portion of the audition, students may be asked a few general or musical questions by the faculty.

New students, transfer students, or high school seniors should prepare and perform two contrasting selections, preferably from memory. The first selection should be a work in a foreign language and the second selection may be of the student's choosing. An accompanist will be provided. Please provide an original copy of both selections for your accompanist and photocopied excerpts for the vocal faculty. Photocopied excerpts should not be more than one-third (1/3) of the length of the work. *Pre-recorded accompaniment or background performance tracks are not acceptable for the audition.* In addition to the prepared selections, students may be asked to sight-read a small excerpt from a choral work, hymn tune, or folk song. Students will be given sufficient time and assistance to sing the excerpt. Following the singing portion of the audition, students will have an opportunity to meet the faculty and ask any questions they may have.

VOICE LEVEL EXAMS AND PROCEDURES

Voice Level Exams are performance and repertoire outcomes every applied voice student must achieve to continue studying applied voice. There are two Voice Level Exams; the first exam must be completed by the end of the third semester of applied study, typically the middle of the second year of school; and the second exam must be completed by the end of the sixth semester of applied study, typically the end of the third year of school.

Procedure

1. Voice Level Exams occur at the end of the semester and may be completed concurrently with vocal juries.
2. Every student taking the exam must complete a *Repertoire List Form* prior to the end of the semester. The *Repertoire List Form* is available in the Choral/Vocal Studies office. This form is a cumulative list of all works studied in Applied Voice up to the time of the exam. It is the student's responsibility to have the applied teacher sign the form and notify the Vocal Studies Chair of the intent to complete the exam.
3. The tests are given one of the following grades by faculty vote:
 - Pass** The student may continue in Applied Voice and work toward the next exam or recital.
 - Conditional Pass** The student satisfied elements of the exam, but the faculty has concerns that are serious enough to merit a re-hearing at the next exam period. Any concerns or conditions of the re-hearing will be offered in writing and explained to the student by the applied teacher. If the concerns of the faculty are not addressed at the next hearing, the student may not proceed to the next exam or recital until the current exam is adequately satisfied.
 - Fail** The student must repeat the exam during the next exam period due to significant inadequacies in preparation. A second consecutive failure of the exam results in removal from Applied Voice until the student demonstrates significant improvement or re-auditions for the faculty.
4. Students will be notified of the results by mail. Decisions of the faculty are final.
5. A student may attempt any Voice Level Exam twice.
6. Students should be prepared to give translations from memory of foreign language texts as a part of the exam.

Grievance Process

Should the student fail the exam a second time a grievance may be filed with the Vocal Studies Chair. The grievance should be submitted in writing and include a justification why the student believes the exam was adequately completed, or a proposed solution to meet the conditions of the exam. The chair will meet with the student and the applied teacher separately. Upon agreement of the teacher and chair, the student will be permitted to re-take the exam at the next exam period.

Conditions for an Exam Re-Take

Students may be asked to re-take either Voice Level Exam due to the following reasons:

- Insufficient repertoire, either in quantity or quality;
- Vocal production as it relates to tone, resonance, breath support, placement, or posture;
- Musicianship, where the performance may lack in diction, interpretation, or memory;
- Basic musical skills, such as correct rhythm and pitch, or poor intonation

Voice Level Exam Requirements for Non-Majors

Students who are not majoring in music education or the fine arts degree do not need to complete the Voice Level Exams.

VOCAL JURIES

During the exam period at the end of each semester, all students are required to complete a Vocal Jury, which serves as a culmination of the applied study. Students should prepare and perform selections from memory during juries. The number of prepared pieces required for a jury is dependent upon major and number of enrolled credit hours for the semester. (See Applied Voice Requirements for further information.) Students should complete a *Jury Sheet* and have the applied teacher sign before the completion of the semester. This form is available from the teacher. An accompanist will be provided. All written comments and critiques will be returned at the beginning of the following semester. Vocal Juries comprise 10% of the semester grade.

Make-up Juries

Students should not miss juries without previous permission of the applied teacher and all incomplete juries must be made up. Students who do not complete the jury at the end of the semester will receive an incomplete and must follow the university's policy for incomplete grades. Once the new semester begins, students have one week to fulfill the requirements of the jury. The student must confer with both the teacher and Vocal Studies Chair before the jury can be completed. *Students who do not complete the jury will have a failing grade for the semester.*

APPLIED VOICE REQUIREMENTS

MUSIC EDUCATION MAJORS

Repertoire

The minimum repertoire requirements per semester for two (2) credit hours:

First year	Three (3) selections learned or introduced Two (2) selections memorized and prepared for juries
Second year	Five (5) selections learned or introduced Four (4) selections memorized Three (3) selections prepared for juries
Third year	Five (5) selections learned or introduced Four (4) selections memorized Three (3) selections prepared for juries
Fourth year	Seven (7) selections learned or introduced Five (5) selections memorized Three (3) selections prepared for juries

The minimum repertoire requirements per semester for one (1) credit hour:

First year	Three (3) selections learned or introduced One (1) selection memorized and prepared for juries
Each successive semester:	Four (4) selections learned or introduced Two (2) selections memorized

Voice Level Exam I

Requirements for the Voice Level Exam I are:

1. Four (4) songs or arias in Italian must have been learned or introduced; two (2) selections should be performed from memory during the examination;
2. Four (4) songs or arias in English must have been learned or introduced; two (2) selections should be performed from memory during the examination;
3. Knowledge of all major and minor scales; students will be asked to demonstrate one major scale, one natural minor scale, and one harmonic minor scale;
4. Knowledge of all perfect, major, minor, augmented, and diminished intervals; students will be asked to demonstrate both ascending and descending intervals at the discretion of the faculty.

Criteria for Successful Completion of Level I

Students should be able to demonstrate the following technical and musical accomplishments:

- Ability to sing the required repertoire from memory;
- Satisfactory ability to sing with good intonation and rhythmic accuracy;
- Demonstrate the beginning of good vocal technique;
- Musical interpretations of the music;
- Proper diction and understanding of the translations of foreign texts.

Voice Level Exam II

Requirements of the Voice Level Exam II are:

1. Four (4) German lieder must have been learned or introduced; two (2) selections should be performed from memory during the examination;
2. Four (4) French chansons must have been learned or introduced; two (2) selections should be performed from memory during the examination;
3. Ability to read at sight an excerpt of choral music; students will be asked to demonstrate to the best of their ability two parts of a four-part octavo;
4. Ability to read at sight an excerpt of solo repertoire; students will be given a page of music and asked to perform with accompaniment.

Criteria for Successful Completion of Level II

Students should be able to demonstrate the following technical and musical accomplishments:

- Ability to sing the required repertoire from memory;
- Ability to sing with good intonation and rhythmic accuracy;
- Demonstrate good vocal technique;
- Musical interpretations of the music;
- Proper diction and understanding of the translations of foreign texts.

Repertoire for Level II must represent work done after the successful completion of the Level I test.

REQUIREMENTS FOR FINE ARTS – MUSIC

Repertoire

The minimum repertoire requirements per semester for two (2) credit hours:

First year	Three (3) selections learned or introduced Two (2) selections memorized and prepared for juries
Second year	Five (5) selections learned or introduced Four (4) selections memorized Three (3) selections prepared for juries
Third year	Five (5) selections learned or introduced Four (4) selections memorized Three (3) selections prepared for juries
Fourth year	Seven (7) selections learned or introduced Five (5) selections memorized Three (3) selections prepared for juries

The minimum repertoire requirements per semester for one (1) credit hour:

First year	Three (3) selections learned or introduced One (1) selection memorized and prepared for juries
Each successive semester:	Four (4) selections learned or introduced Two (2) selections memorized

Voice Level Exam I

Requirements for the Voice Level Exam I are:

1. Four (4) songs or arias in Italian must have been learned or introduced; two (2) selections should be performed from memory during the examination;
2. Four (4) songs or arias in English must have been learned or introduced; two (2) selections should be performed from memory during the examination;
3. Knowledge of all major and minor scales; students will be asked to demonstrate one major scale, one natural minor scale, and one harmonic minor scale;
4. Knowledge of all perfect, major, minor, augmented, and diminished intervals; students will be asked to demonstrate both ascending and descending intervals at the discretion of the faculty.

Criteria for Successful Completion of Level I

Students should be able to demonstrate the following technical and musical accomplishments:

- Ability to sing the required repertoire from memory;
- Satisfactory ability to sing with good intonation and rhythmic accuracy;
- Demonstrate the beginning of good vocal technique;
- Musical interpretations of the music;
- Proper diction and understanding of the translations of foreign texts.

Voice Level Exam II

Requirements of the Voice Level Exam II are:

1. Four (4) German lieder must have been learned or introduced; two (2) selections should be performed from memory during the examination;
2. Four (4) French chansons must have been learned or introduced; two (2) selections should be performed from memory during the examination;
3. Ability to read at sight an excerpt of choral music; students will be asked to demonstrate to the best of their ability two parts of a four-part octavo;
4. Ability to read at sight an excerpt of solo repertoire; students will be given a page of music and asked to perform with accompaniment.

Criteria for Successful Completion of Level II

Students should be able to demonstrate the following technical and musical accomplishments:

- Ability to sing the required repertoire from memory;
- Ability to sing with good intonation and rhythmic accuracy;
- Demonstrate good vocal technique;
- Musical interpretations of the music;
- Proper diction and understanding of the translations of foreign texts.

REQUIREMENTS FOR FINE ARTS – THEATRE

Repertoire

The minimum repertoire requirements per semester for two (2) credit hours:

First year Three (3) selections learned or introduced
 Two (2) selections memorized and prepared for juries

Each successive semester:

Five (5) selections learned or introduced
Three (3) selections memorized
Two (2) selections prepared for juries

The minimum repertoire requirements per semester for one (1) credit hour:

First year Three (3) selections learned or introduced
 One (1) selection memorized and prepared for juries

Each successive semester:

Four (4) selections learned or introduced
Two (2) selections memorized

Voice Level Exam I

Requirements for the Voice Level Exam I are:

1. Two (2) songs or arias in Italian must have been learned or introduced; one (1) selection should be performed from memory during the examination;
2. Two (2) songs or arias in English must have been learned or introduced; one (1) selection should be performed from memory during the examination;
3. Four (4) songs from the musical theatre repertory, two (2) composed before 1970, two (2) composed after 1970; two (2) songs should be performed from memory during the examination.

Criteria for Successful Completion of Level I

Students should be able to demonstrate the following technical and musical accomplishments:

- Ability to sing the required repertoire from memory;
- Satisfactory ability to sing on pitch with rhythmic accuracy;
- Demonstrate the beginning of good vocal technique;
- Musical interpretations of the music;
- Proper diction and understanding of the translations of foreign texts.

Voice Level Exam II

Requirements of the Voice Level Exam II are:

1. Two (2) songs or arias in either German or French must have been learned or introduced; one (1) selection should be performed from memory during the examination;
2. Two (2) songs or arias in English must have been learned or introduced; one (1) selection should be performed from memory during the examination;
3. Four (4) songs from the musical theatre repertory, two (2) composed before 1970, two (2) composed after 1970; two (2) songs should be performed from memory during the examination.

Criteria for Successful Completion of Level II

Students should be able to demonstrate the following technical and musical accomplishments:

- Ability to sing the required repertoire from memory;
- Ability to sing on pitch with rhythmic accuracy;
- Demonstrate good vocal technique;
- Musical interpretations of the music;
- Proper diction and understanding of the translations of foreign texts.

REQUIREMENTS FOR NON-MUSIC MAJORS

Repertoire

The minimum repertoire requirements per semester for two (2) credit hours:

First year Three (3) selections learned or introduced
 Two (2) selections memorized and prepared for juries

Each successive semester:

Five (5) selections learned or introduced
Two (2) selections memorized and prepared for juries

The minimum repertoire requirements per semester for one (1) credit hour:

First year Three (3) selections learned or introduced
 One (1) selection memorized and prepared for juries

Each successive semester:

 Four (4) selections learned or introduced
 Two (2) selections memorized

The Voice Level Exams are not required for non-music majors.

REQUIREMENTS FOR VOCAL JURIES

The student will choose one song to begin the hearing. The faculty may request at least one additional selection from the list on the *Jury Sheet*.

RECITAL REQUIREMENTS

All music education majors are required to complete at least one solo recital prior to Internship placement by the School of Education. Recitals must be at least thirty minutes in duration of solo literature. All solo music will be programmed in consultation with your applied instructor. Additional music may be programmed, such as duets, ensemble numbers, etc. with the approval of the teacher. While Fine Arts – Music are not required to complete a solo recital, it is strongly encouraged nonetheless.

RECITAL COMMITTEE

Every solo student recital must have a recital committee comprised of three faculty members; the applied teacher, the Vocal Studies Chair, and one faculty member of the student's choosing. The committee will be present for a recital hearing and final recital.

RECITAL PROGRAMS

Programs should include the following information:

- Student name and voice part;
- Name of accompanist and any assisting instrumentalists;
- Date, time, and place;
- Repertoire, composer, and arranger (if necessary);
- Program notes;
- The degree program for which the student is a candidate;
- The name of the student's voice teacher.

Program notes should include translations of the foreign language selections performed. The translations should be poetic or literal translations. Except in unusual circumstances, printed texts are not necessary for English compositions. Historical information about each composer and work is also a part of the included program notes. The historical information need not be longer than one or two paragraphs in length. The student must present the notes to Vocal Studies Chair and teacher well in advance of the time when programs are printed.

SECURING A RECITAL DATE

Students are responsible for planning a recital date in consultation with the applied teacher and members of the recital committee. If the recital is to be held on campus, the student must also secure a date on the school calendar. This may be done by scheduling an appointment with Jane Schumacher, director of the Etherredge Center.

FINDING AND SECURING AN ACCOMPANIST

Accompanists are not provided for solo student recitals; it is the responsibility of every student to secure a pianist well in advance of the proposed recital date. Your applied teacher may be acquainted with specific pianists in the area or have a preferred pianist for you to use. It is suggested to use a student accompanist whenever feasible. It is also common courtesy to pay pianists for performing on the recital; make sure to ask your teacher for a standard fee to offer, but also ask the pianist when you first discuss the recital if the suggested fee is acceptable. Make sure both the pianist and you are in agreement on how much rehearsal time is involved, all pertinent dates are written down and understood, and payment amount and schedule is agreed upon.

RECITAL REVIEW

Students must complete and pass a recital review prior to the recital. The recital review must be passed before the recital can become official. Approximately two months prior to the proposed recital, complete a *Recital Request Form*, have your applied teacher sign the form, and return it to the Vocal Studies Chair. This form may be obtained from the Vocal/Choral Studies office.

During the recital review, the student will be asked to perform as if it were the actual recital. The recital committee may choose to hear the entire recital, excerpts of selected works, or particular selections. Upon completion of the review, the committee will confer and accept or decline the proposed recital.

RECITAL PROCEDURES

The following information is an outline and checklist of activities, research, and consultations that will help to ensure a successful recital.

1. **As early as one year in advance, begin to plan repertoire for your recital.** Discuss with your applied instructor what literature would be suitable for your voice, what foreign languages, styles, etc.
2. **Plan a recital date at least one semester in advance.** Consult with your applied instructor when and where your recital should occur.
3. **Organize a recital committee.** For your recital, there must be three professors to grade your performance. As a common courtesy, ask (or remind) each of the three committee members in person – do not send an e-mail or wait until the last minute. Secure members of your recital committee the semester prior to your proposed recital.
4. **Hire an accompanist.** Discuss with your advisor or applied instructor names (and phone numbers) of pianists in the area. Contact the pianist as early as possible, ask for rehearsal and performance rates, and book the pianist as soon as you have a tentative recital date. Again, ask the pianist in person or over the phone – do not send an e-mail or try to find an accompanist through someone else.
5. **Complete the *Recital Request Form* and return it to your academic advisor.** You may obtain a *Recital Request Form* from your academic advisor. This form lists your recital date, committee members, program repertoire, and other pertinent information regarding your recital. Once you have completed the form, make sure your applied instructor signs it and return it to your advisor. This form should be returned prior to your recital review and will be kept on file until the completion of your recital.
6. **Plan and organize a Recital Hearing in consultation with your recital committee.** One semester in advance, coordinate a Recital Hearing. The Recital Hearing itself will occur approximately four weeks prior to the recital. This hearing is a preliminary performance of your recital for your committee. By the time of your Recital Hearing, all music should be memorized and you should be practicing regularly with your accompanist.
7. **Begin research on your recital program and decide upon program order.** As a part of your recital, you will be required to provide program information. This information includes all music to be performed (in performance order), composers, biographical data, the original language and an English translation of each work in a foreign language, and program notes about each individual work. All information must be typed and submitted to your academic advisor. Your recital program will be due at the time of your Recital Hearing and will be formatted and printed for you.
8. **Plan and create a poster.** Prior to your recital, make a poster to advertise your recital to friends, fellow music majors, and the USCA campus. Posters are optional, but a great way to promote your work and preparation to this point. Posters must be approved by the Student Life Office prior to being placed on campus.
9. **Coordinate any reception or activities with the facilities host prior to the recital.** Occasionally, students have a reception after the recital. This is perfectly acceptable, though an option for each person. If you decide to have a reception, discuss the logistics with your academic advisor and any contact you have at the place of your recital. Make sure it is permissible to have food and drink on the premises.