

Margie Damarys Bernal Rodríguez

Assistant Professor, Voice
Western University
Don Wright Faculty of Music
Phone: (519) 661-2111 ext. 85015
Email: mbernal5@uwo.ca
Office hours: By appointment only.

STUDIO VOICE SYLLABUS

September 8, 2023

Course Objectives

To develop a personalized routine of vocal exercises for warmups and technical mastery which, in turn, fosters a consistent and reliable vocal technique; to cultivate independence, confidence, and personal initiative in vocal repertoire selection; to develop musicality and personal stylistic intuition; to raise an awareness of proper vocal hygiene; and to foster a genuine enjoyment of singing.

Course Content

Lessons:

MMus students and undergraduate students registered in any of the following applied courses receive 24 lessons of 50 minutes each, normally 12 per term: 1920, 1925, 2920, 2921, 2922, 2925, 3920, 3921, 3922, 3925, 3929, 4920, 4921, 4922, 4923, 4925, 4929, 9509, 9584, 9585, 9786, and 9508. Students registered in 3924y or 4934y receive 12 hours of lessons, spread throughout the year.

Performance majors students registered in one of the following courses also receive 12 lessons of 50 minutes each, oriented toward recital requirements: 3921, 4921, 4922, and 4923. These lessons might be scheduled concurrently with the regular weekly lesson for a total of 75 minutes per week.

For undergraduate students taking one-hour lessons weekly, the first portion of the lesson is a technique lesson, which means it will be devoted to the development of a personalized regimen of vocal exercises for warmups and technical mastery. Time will be focused on the establishment and reinforcement of positive and healthy singing reflexes through a series of short and intensive exercises. The remainder of the lesson will be devoted to repertoire. Technical and musical mastery will be achieved through singing of vocal repertoire suited to the level and voice type of each student.

Third and fourth year undergraduate performance majors will have half an hour of technique lesson every week, plus an hour of repertoire lesson.

Students taking half an hour lessons will have a technical lesson every four weeks or so. The remaining of your lessons will be repertoire lessons.

Course Requirements

Students are expected to check e-mail regularly and respond in a timely manner.

Students are expected to record their assigned exercises and repertoire in a *notebook*, which they must bring to each lesson. In addition, it is strongly recommended that each lesson should be recorded. Students are required to practice daily. *“In preparing for juries or recitals, students should pace their practicing carefully, doing regular amounts every day. Practicing, like any other physical activity, requires fitness and a daily routine; students who cram in many hours of practice in panic preparation for a coming examination and who have not been practicing regularly throughout the year, run the risk of physical injury, and possible serious interruption of their Applied courses”* – MPS Handbook

Students are expected to be “off book” for all lessons and, ideally, for their coachings. The music and words must be firmly in your mouth and in your mind to facilitate meaningful coaching at the university level. Repertoire that students perform for Masterclasses, Performance Classes and Studio Recitals must, of course, be solidly memorised.

Students are responsible for obtaining any assigned music by the following lesson, as well as completing a translation and an IPA transcription. **Students must run their repertoire with their accompanist prior to their lesson.**

Accompanists

It is extremely important to make the best of the time with your collaborative pianist. Be as prepared as you possibly can for each of your coachings! This year, the accompanists for our studio are Dr. Olena Bratishko, Dr. Connor O’Kane, and Mr. Paul Digout. Please make arrangements with them ASAP. They are very talented and experienced coaches. You will want to prepare your repertoire and diction with your coach and work with them as extensively as is financially feasible. **Please note that the common practice here is that you are responsible for all financial arrangements and commitments with pianists throughout the year.**

Also, please note:

1. The student is responsible for retaining the services of an accompanist.
2. Accompanists should come to the agreed repertoire portion of the lesson.

3. Students are responsible for communicating master class performance dates and studio recital dates to their accompanist.

Lesson Times

After the lesson times have been arranged, the time will be changed/rescheduled only to mutually convenient times.

Cancellations

If a teacher cancels a lesson, the lesson must be made up. If a student cancels a lesson for any reason, the teacher is not obligated to make it up. With that in mind:

1. If the student is unable to attend a scheduled lesson time, the student must contact the professor via e-mail at least 24 hours prior to the lesson time.
2. If the student wakes ill or with a sore throat that affects her/his ability to perform, the professor will accept cancellations between 8:00 and 9:00 a.m. by UWO email.
3. Under no circumstance will a note on the professor's door be accepted as proper cancellation procedure.
4. All lessons that have been cancelled according to one of the proper procedures may be made up at mutually convenient times. To ensure lessons are made-up, students should seek to trade lesson times with their studio peers in a given week where there is an absence.
5. Lessons cancelled by the professor will be made up at a mutually convenient time.

Tardiness

1. The student is expected to arrive on time for each lesson, as this directly impacts the productivity of a lesson. No tardiness will be made up at the end of the regular lesson time.
2. If the professor is not present at the beginning of the lesson time, the student is expected to wait for up to 15 minutes. If the professor is still not there after the 15-minute deadline, the student is expected to check voicemail, text, and/or e-mail for instructions.

Practicing

In preparing for juries or recitals, students should pace their practicing carefully, doing regular amounts every day. Practicing, like any other physical activity, requires fitness and a daily routine; students who cram in many hours of practice in panic preparation for a coming examination and who have not been practicing regularly throughout the year, run the risk of physical injury, and possible serious interruption of their Applied courses.

Repertoire expectations:

Non-Studio Repertoire

As a matter of courtesy and good pedagogy, all students should inform their studio teachers as early as possible of non-studio repertoire that they have been asked or assigned to do in addition to their studio course load.

First Year Undergraduates

- 14-16 songs fully prepared and memorized
 - One post 1960 Canadian composition

Undergraduate Non-Performance Majors

Second Year

- 18-20 songs fully prepared and memorized
 - One post 1960 Canadian composition

Third Year

- 18 songs +
- 3 arias (Opera/Oratorio)
 - One post 1960 Canadian composition

Fourth Year

- 20 songs +
- 3 arias (Opera/Oratorio)
 - One post 1960 Canadian composition

Undergraduate Performance Majors

Second Year

- 20-22 songs
 - One post 1960 Canadian composition

Third Year

- Short recital +
- 5 songs/arias including one post 1960 Canadian composition
- Oratorio jury in December

Fourth Year

- Full recital +
- 5 opera arias/3 oratorio arias /One post 1960 Canadian composition/
- Opera/Art Song jury in December (note that in the 4th year jury requirement, an oratorio aria can replace an opera aria)

Masterclasses

All music MMus and undergraduate students registered for individual instruction, excluding 1925, 2925, 3924y, 3925, 3929, 4924y, 4925, 4929, and 9508 are required to participate in performance classes as part of their Applied Music course and final mark. All MMus students are expected to participate in performance classes. A schedule will be provided at the beginning of each semester. **Performance Class place and time are TBA and it will happen weekly during the semester unless otherwise noted.** Unless discussed with the professor, students are required to sing on their assigned dates. **All repertoire to be performed for the class must be memorized. Your attendance is mandatory for the full duration of our studio Performance Class each week — even if you are not performing for the class that week.**

A Studio Recital will be given during each semester. Students are expected to participate. Be aware that all students' participation is mandatory. Dates and location TBD.

Written reviews

Students are expected to review three (3) vocal events per term: solo and chamber recitals as well as operas, oratorios and Masterclasses are acceptable. These reports must be one (1) page, single-spaced, and can discuss vocal technique, artistry and repertoire. Note that plagiarism is unacceptable and consists of a serious Scholastic Offence. The following dates are the deadline for handing in these reports:

Fall term:

October 6
November 10
December 8

Winter term:

January 26
March 1
March 28

Voice Fridays

Students should take advantage of the Voice Fridays series organized by the voice area. This will occur weekly, time and place TBA. Although not officially required, this series offers great insight into many different aspects of singing, and will greatly enhance the studio experience.

Grading

Please read very carefully the [Voice Jury/Recital Requirements document](#), the [Department of Performance Studies Handbook](#) as well as the [Recital Procedure Page](#). These documents outline what the Faculty of Music requires of you. These documents are found online through the hyperlinks above.

The Studio Instruction mark will be calculated in the following manner:

Non-performance majors:

- 65% - Studio Work (lessons and the requirements outlined in this document.)
- 25% - Jury (3rd and 4th year Performance is 20% Jury and 70% Studio)
- 10% - Performance Class and Music Reviews

For 3rd and 4th year Performance Majors:

- 70% - Studio Work
- 20% - December Jury (Recitals are a separate course and marked separately)
- 10% - Performance Class and Music Reviews

Course Number	Jury Mark	Performance Class	Studio Instructor
M1920, M2920, M2921, M3920, M3922, M4920	25%	10%	32.5% Term I 32.5% Term II
M3921, M4921, M4922, M4923	20%	10%	35% Term I 35% Term II
M1924, M2925, M3925, M4925, M3924y, M4924y	25%	N/A	37.5% Term I 37.5% Term II

MMus:

100% studio and masterclass.

Additional Information

i) Course Prerequisites: Unless you have either the prerequisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

ii) Grading scale:

Undergraduate: A+=90-100%, A=80-89%, B=70-79%, C=60-69%, D=50-59%, F=0-49%.

Graduate: A=80-100%, B=70-79%, C=60-69%, F=0-59%.

iii) Academic Consideration for Student Absence & Missing Work (≥10%): Students are responsible for making up any missed classes or assignments as soon as possible. The University recognizes that a student's ability to meet their academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by medical illness. Illness may be acute (short term), or it may be chronic (long term), or chronic with acute episodes. Academic Consideration provides students with consistent, fair, and pedagogically appropriate consideration, without compromising the academic integrity of the course or program, when they have been unable to complete some component of a course due to short-term extenuating circumstances. Students who have long-term or chronic medical conditions (physical or mental) that may impede their ability to complete academic responsibilities are directed to seek Academic Accommodation through Accessible Education ([Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#)).

Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the end of the period of absence covered, to the Academic Counselling unit or Office of the Associate Dean, Undergraduate (TC210), of the student's Home Faculty together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the academic consideration being requested. Students are directed to read the Senate Policy on Academic Consideration for Medical Illness at the following website for further details regarding various requirements and procedures for the supporting documentation:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration.pdf

Whenever possible, students who require academic accommodation should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, examinations,

etc. Students must follow up with their professors and their Academic Counselling office in a timely manner.

iv) Academic Consideration for Missing Work (<10%): In cases where students miss work that is worth less than 10% of the total course grade due to medical illness or compassionate grounds, if documentation is voluntarily submitted to the Associate Dean's office and the Associate Dean grants an accommodation, then the missed assignment(s) or quiz(ze)s will be discounted in the calculation of the final grade for the course. If documentation is not voluntarily submitted then the missed assignment(s) will receive a grade of zero. Students who have been denied accommodation by an instructor may appeal this decision to the Associate Dean's office but will be required to present appropriate documentation.

v) Academic Offences: Submission of work with which you have received help from someone else (other than the course instructor or TA) is an example of plagiarism, which is considered a major academic offence. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, as found at: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

vi) Mental Health & Wellness: Students that are in emotional/mental distress should refer to the Health and Wellness at Western page (<https://www.uwo.ca/health/>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help or to go to the Wellness Education Centre located in Thames Hall room 2170. **Students in crisis in need of immediate care are directed to go directly to Student Health Services in Thames Hall 2170 or to click on the big green "I Need Help Now" button on the Health and Wellness page above.**

vii) Accommodation for Students with Disabilities: Students work with Accessible Education which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation_disabilities.pdf

viii) Religious Accommodation: Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays (other than statutory holidays), and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. The Diversity Calendar from the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion provides information on multifaith, multicultural and diversity related holidays and observances and links to resources for more information. <https://www.edi.uwo.ca/resources/2816-2023-Diversity-Calendar-PDF.pdf>

ix) Contingency Plan: Although the intent is for this course to be delivered in-person, should any university-declared emergency require some or all of the course to be delivered online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience), the course will adapt accordingly. The grading scheme will **not** change. Any assessments affected will be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

x) Gender-Based and Sexual Violence: Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence, either recently or in the past, you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html. To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca or call 519 661-3568.

xi) Examinations & Attendance: Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course (after due warning has been given). On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course. The Dean of the Faculty offering the course will communicate that decision to the Dean of the Faculty of registration.