

Opera Workshop MUSA 2253/3253

Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays 11:30 am–12:20 pm, Recital Hall (M243)
& Tuesdays & Thursdays 10:30–11:50 am Choir Room (M340)

Classes will occasionally be held in M102.

Cherry Duke, Instructor
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Office Hours:

Monday & Wednesday 10:00-11:00 am, Tuesday 12-12:30pm and by appointment.

Prerequisites

None; however, course will be most valuable to those with some prior performing experience.

Course Description

Exploration and practice of vocal, acting, movement and analytical skills needed for success in performance of staged musical drama, culminating in at least one public performance (see below). Additional study and evaluation in the areas of audition preparation, role preparation and analysis, formal structure of song and scene, dance, technical aspects of theatre, and self- and peer evaluation.

See Addendum for course schedule, performance details and additional rehearsals.

Course Content

- Group activities to develop performance, acting and movement skills, including improvisation, dance and facial and physical expression.
- Written and reading assignments, covering character preparation, role preparation and theatrical terminology.
- Preparation, rehearsal, and performance of staged operas and/or scenes as scheduled. Collaborations with El Paso Opera and other arts 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.
- Community outreach presentations.
- Readings from various articles and books online and/or on reserve in Music Library.
- Research and written and verbal reporting on various operas and characters, utilizing online videos, recordings, etc.
- Private and group coaching of assigned scenes as well as songs and arias from applied studio repertoire.
- Study and practice of opera audition techniques and best practices, including dramatic presentation of songs and arias, appropriate attire, resume writing, monologue preparation, etc.
- Master classes and/or workshops with guest artists.

Course Objectives

- Recognize and put into practice industry-accepted standards of professionalism, on- and off-stage.
- Increase body awareness.
- Explore and demonstrate many possibilities of dramatic expression.
- Independently research and prepare selections for dramatic interpretation.
- Utilize interpretative and critical thinking skills necessary to present quality performance.
- Understand the steps necessary for successful and complete role preparation.

- Utilize technology as an evaluative and research tool.

Course Outcomes

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

- Conduct themselves professionally in an audition.
- Independently prepare selections from the operatic repertory.
- Accurately identify and use theatrical terminology in verbal and written form.
- Perform assigned selections with accuracy of pitch, rhythm, and dramatic expression.
- Prepare and perform assigned repertoire to a level acceptable for public performance at UTEP and in the community.
- Evaluate self and peer performances with appropriate terminology and constructive commentary, in person and in writing.

Course Requirements

In order to achieve these objectives, the student will:

- **Review syllabus and course schedule regularly, including updates to be given throughout the semester.**
- Attend all class sessions and additional tech week rehearsals as assigned (see "Absences," below).
- Submit all assignments on time.
- Read and demonstrate comprehension of all assigned articles and texts.
- Explore the possibilities! Be open to new ideas.
- Memorize words, songs, scenes, movements, etc. by prescribed deadlines (see Addendum).
- Respect and assist all class participants and instructors(s) in a positive and professional manner.
- Complete production (crew) duties as assigned.
- Communicate regularly and effectively with colleagues and faculty.
- Participate in all course performances as assigned, to the best of the your ability.

Materials and Personal Equipment

- TEXTBOOK: *Singing, Acting, and Movement in Opera* by Mark Ross Clark
- Scores as provided, organized in 3-ring binder or iPad*.
- Pencil (s) and highlighter marker.
- Recording device (e.g., smartphone + recording app), for coachings, etc.
- On movement/dance days, you must wear clothes you can move in comfortably, and closed-toe shoes.
- Regular access to a reliable computer with Internet connectivity.

*If using tablet for score study, it is strongly recommended that you utilize a music score reading app, such as ForScore (available for around \$7) and that you become fast with using it. Using a PDF reader is inefficient and may waste valuable rehearsal time. If your device is slowing you down, you will be asked to bring a paper score.

Grading & Guidelines

- Attendance – 25%
- Written & Other Assignments – 25%
- Preparation and Participation – 35%
- Final Performance – 15%

Attendance

On-time attendance to all classes is required. If you have an emergency, please inform me immediately, preferably in advance, within 24 hours. 2 tardies will be counted as an absence.

Be ready to work when the session is scheduled to begin. "On time" means arriving *no later than 5 minutes before* class 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 and your scene partners.

If you are sick, DO NOT ATTEND. Contact me immediately to let me know you will not be in class. You will be responsible for materials and/or performances/evaluations missed. I am an active performer and also need to stay healthy, just as all your colleagues do.

For every absence after the first, your attendance grade will be lowered by a letter. 6 missed classes or rehearsals will result in an F and being dropped from the class.

Written & Other Assignments

Throughout the semester you will be given a variety of written assignments as deemed necessary such as quizzes, character analysis, reports/reviews of live and online performances, scene mapping, etc. Due dates will be clearly communicated, and all assignments must be turned in on time. If you miss a day, it is your responsibility to check with me or a classmate to determine whether or not an assignment was given and get the applicable materials. Some assignments may require using Blackboard.

Preparation and Participation

Prepare 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 notes, rhythms, diction, etc. on your own, you should get help. This may mean hiring a pianist/coach, or teaming up with friends.

For each Deadline (see Calendar), you will be given a letter 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, you will be given a grade of 75.

Participation will be evaluated daily. If you are giving your best effort all the time, your grade will be high. If you appear "checked out," are not fully invested in your own improvement or you are letting your scene partners down, your grade will be proportionally lower.

Final Performance

The final performance 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 represents the course's "final exam."

Crews (Technical/Production/Publicity Assignments)

All students are expected to assist with publicity of Opera UTEP events and technical aspects of productions as necessary, including sets, costumes, stage management and lighting construction and operation.

Every student will sign up for a "Crew" and will be expected to help as-needed with jobs specific to their crew. Crews may include:

- Publicity
- Sets
- Costumes
- Lighting
- Supertitles

Performances

Full preparation and best effort is required, including professionalism, responsiveness, clear and prompt communication and responsibility toward all assigned crew duties, colleagues and scene partners.

en·sem·ble

noun

1. a group of musicians, actors, or dancers who perform together.

In French, the word *ensemble* means "together." Opera UTEP is an ensemble, and thus we work together *as a team*. This requires commitment from *every* member to work. You will be evaluated in this class based on the commitment you demonstrate. You don't have to be the very best, most talented student or singer; it means you give *your best effort* to every task and assignment.

Course Expectations

Phones

All cell/mobile/smart/dumb phones must be switched to silent and airplane mode before the start of class.

Communication

You are expected to **check your UTEP email twice a day**, according to Music Department recommendation. I further encourage you to check and respond to text 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.

Please reply to emails, even if just to say "Got it." This is common courtesy, and is *necessary* for planning and keeping on top of assignments.

Getting Help

You are expected and encouraged to communicate with me about your needs, concerns, and to ask for help when you need it.

Additional Policies

Incompletes/Withdrawals

No automatic withdrawals or incompletes will be given.

Graduate Credit

This course is available for Graduate level ensemble credit. Students taking this course for Graduate Credit are required to complete additional coursework beyond the requirements of the undergraduate students enrolled in the course. This work may include additional assignments, technical work, or performances. Graduate students will also be expected to assist with research, coachings and coordination of undergraduate students in technical roles. Additional required course work will be established and communicated to the student by the instructor at the beginning of the semester.

Academic Integrity

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

Accommodations

If you have a special need and need classroom accommodations, visit the Center for Accommodations (CASS) website at www.sa.utep.edu/cass.

Sexual Discrimination & Harassment (Title IX)

Sexual harassment, *which includes acts of sexual violence*, is a form of sex discrimination prohibited by Title IX. If you have a concern related to sexual harassment or violence, visit <http://admin.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=68750> for more information.

Religious Beliefs and Perspectives

Regardless of the discussions and opinions that may arise as we explore the music theater, operatic literature, etc., remain aware that others may not share your beliefs and approach this class with respect and an open mind.

Acknowledgment

By signing this document, you acknowledge that you have received and read this *entire* syllabus for Opera Workshop and understand all course requirements, deadlines and expectations.

Student's signature

Date

ADDENDUM: Spring 2016



Full Production

Speed Dating Tonight! by Michael Ching

WHEN: College Night/Final Dress, Thursday, April 14, 2016, 7:30pm
Friday, April 15, 2016, 7:30pm
Saturday, April 16, 2016 7:30pm

WHERE: Ardovino's Desert Crossing (Banquet Hall), 1 Ardovinos Dr, Sunland Park, NM 88063

The spring semester's public performance will be held off-campus, dinner-theater style! We will perform a hilarious one-act contemporary opera by Michael Ching, *Speed Dating Tonight!* This unique dinner theater production will resemble a flash-mob: the audience may not know until the singing begins who are the performers and who are in the audience!

In the schedule below, and throughout the semester, *Speed Dating Tonight!* will be notated as "SDT".

All performances (>) and rehearsals are mandatory. Schedule subject to change.

Schedule

WEEK 1	Jan. 19*-22 *Tuesday, Jan. 19	Introductions, SING-IN (Thurs.), table reading of SDT, character research DEADLINE: All solo, ensemble and chorus parts for SDT must be ready for coaching (notes, rhythms, meaning/translation learned). Memorization not yet required.
WEEK 2	Jan. 25-29	Music rehearsals, character exploration
WEEK 3	Feb. 1-5	GUEST COACH: Randi Rudolph: music coachings & master classes
WEEK 4	Feb. 8-12	Music rehearsals for scenes, ACTING WORKSHOP with Justin Lucero (Th/F)
WEEK 5	Feb. 15*-19 *Monday, Feb. 15 Wednesday, Feb. 17	ACTING WORKSHOP continues (M/T); MASTER CLASS with Kevin Deas (Th); Work SDT Ensembles (F) MEMORIZATION DEADLINE: SDT solo scenes. Pope visits Ciudad Juarez/NO SCHOOL
WEEK 6	Feb. 22*-26 *Monday, Feb. 22	Rehearse ensembles MEMORIZATION DEADLINE: SDT ensembles & choral scenes EXTRA EVENING REHEARSAL – TBA, 3 hours (Probably Thursday)
WEEK 7	Feb. 29-Mar. 4 March 7-11	MIDTERM: Memorization assessment: Sing-through entire opera SPRING BREAK
WEEK 8	Mar. 14-18 Mar. 17 & 19	Begin blocking (staging) of SDT, plan concert repertoire <i>El Paso Opera's CARMEN (all should attend!) at Abraham Chavez Theater</i>
WEEK 9	Mar. 21*-24 Friday, Mar. 25	Costume planning, room run of all scenes, rehearse concert repertoire Good Friday/Study Day/Cesar Chavez Day/NO SCHOOL
WEEK 10	Mar. 28-Apr. 1 *Tuesday, Mar. 28 >SHOWCASE CONCERT Sunday, Apr 3	Finesse/polish scenes, costume parade, prep/run concert repertoire DEADLINE: Blocking fully memorized by beginning of class 2:15pm Cast Call: St. Mark's United Methodist Church, Grace Campus, 400 N. Carolina Dr., El Paso, TX 3:00pm Sounds of Grace Concert Series: Selected scenes and arias from SDT & more
WEEK 11	Apr. 4-8	Run through show, work scenes as needed.

Speed Dating Tonight — Tech Week

WEEK 12

Final preparations for performance

Fri. & Sat., Apr. 8– 9	>NATS Competition, Albuquerque, NM	
Sunday, Apr. 10	2:30–3:30pm	Set up, Band Hall, M140
	3:30–5pm	SITZPROBE (sing-through with band)
	5:30–7pm	Full run with band, Band Hall
	7pm+	Strike/cleanup; all called until job complete
Monday, Apr. 11	11:30–12:20	Regular class session, work scenes as needed
	6:30–10:00pm	Dress Rehearsal #1, Ardovino's (no band)
Tuesday, Apr. 12	10:30–11:50	Regular class session, work scenes as needed
	5:30 or earlier	Drive to Ardovino's
	6:30–10:00pm	Dress Rehearsal #2, ARDOVINO'S (with band)
Wednesday, Apr. 13	11:30–12:20	Regular class session, work scenes as needed
	On your own	Clean costumes
Thursday, Apr. 14	10:30–11:50	Regular class session, work scenes as needed
	6:00pm	Cast & Band Call: arrive at Ardovino's, dressed & made up.
	7:30pm	>COLLEGE NIGHT Preview / Final Dress Rehearsal
Friday, April 15	11:30–12:20	Regular class session, work scenes as needed
	6:00pm	Cast & Band Call: arrive at Ardovino's, dressed & made up.
	7:30pm	>PERFORMANCE #1, Ardovino's
Saturday, April 16	6:00pm	Cast & Band Call: arrive at Ardovino's, dressed & made up.
	7:30pm	>PERFORMANCE #2, Ardovino's

WEEK 13 Apr. 18–22

Audition package & preparation

WEEK 14 Apr. 25–29

Review needed skills

WEEK 15 May 26

Review, SING-OUT, Final Evaluations

WEEK 16 May 9–13

Finals Week. *No classes.* Announcement of fall production assignments.

FINAL EXAM: Sing-Out! & Evaluation