

**Cherry Duke, Instructor**

University of Texas at El Paso  
 Fox Fine Arts Center, M442  
 (915) 747-6220 office  
 (917) 312-5598 mobile  
[ccduke@utep.edu](mailto:ccduke@utep.edu)  
[www.cherryduke.com](http://www.cherryduke.com)

**Office Hours:**  
 By appointment.

**COVID-19 PRECAUTION STATEMENT**

Please stay home if you have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. If you are feeling unwell, please let me know as soon as possible, so that we can work on appropriate accommodations. If you have tested positive for COVID-19, you are encouraged to report your results to [covidaction@utep.edu](mailto:covidaction@utep.edu), so that the Dean of Students Office can provide you with support and help with communication with your professors. The Student Health Center is equipped to provide COVID-19 testing.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that people in areas of substantial or high COVID-19 transmission wear face masks when indoors in groups of people. **The best way that Miners can take care of Miners is to get the vaccine.** If you still need the vaccine, it is widely available in the El Paso area, and will be available at no charge on campus during the first week of classes. For more information about the current rates, testing, and vaccinations, please visit [epstrong.org](http://epstrong.org).

**Prerequisites**

Placement audition for voice faculty.

**Course Description**

This course is designed to enhance students' ability to use their singing voices in the healthiest and most efficient manner possible, to advance their communication and performance skills, develop their knowledge of vocal pedagogy, and to expand their knowledge of vocal literature.

Vocal performance as a means of artistic communication is emphasized and will be tailored to the individual student's goals, whether those goals are vocational or recreational.

**Course Materials**

- Pencil with eraser, highlighter marker, and water, as you should take to any rehearsal.
- 3 copies of each assigned piece (one for self, one for accompanist and one for instructor).
  - Keep your own copies of music organized in an iPad with ForScore or a 3-ring binder (your "lesson binder"), where you will also keep your lesson forms, copies of exercises, song research, translations, etc. Bring this to every lesson.
  - Create/Keep PDFs of each assigned piece in your OneDrive voice lessons folder which you share with Ms. Duke.
  - Ask your pianist how they prefer to receive your music (in a binder, single-sided vs. double sided, etc.).
  - Be sure your photocopies and/or PDFs are clear and legible, and include ALL the notes and words.
- Any purchased music anthologies you were asked to buy for each semester. You will only be asked to purchase one per semester, however you may choose to supplement your own musical library with more.
- Metronome (there's an app for that).
- Bring all your assigned music, lesson forms, program notes, translations, and character analysis to every lesson. Just keep all that in your lesson binder or OneDrive (as long as you can easily access it as needed).

- It is your responsibility to contract a pianist to play for the second half of your lessons as well as your recital and jury performances. See section called “Pianist” on page 3.

## **Course Content**

---

Student shall:

- **Independently practice** assigned vocal exercises/vocalizes specifically designed to promote vocal growth and a better understanding of the fundamental concepts of vocal technique.
- **Independently prepare** and memorize assigned vocal repertoire.
  - For all repertoire:
    - Learn and memorize assigned music and text with accuracy of pitch, rhythm, diction, appropriate vocal style and dramatic expression.
    - Research the composer, poet or lyricist, historical period and context of the piece as it was originally performed.
  - For repertoire in a language other than those spoken fluently by the student:
    - Obtain and write a literal (not poetic) line-by-line/word-for-word translation into *all* copies of the music. It is also helpful to write the paraphrased meaning of each line into the music. Keep this in your lesson binder.
    - Write pronunciation (ideally using International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) symbols) for the text in your copy of the music.
  - For repertoire from a dramatic work (musical, opera, film or oratorio):
    - Obtain and study a synopsis of the work.
    - If possible, watch a video of a staging or movie of the entire work.
    - Research the character and understand who he/she is in the context of the story.
    - Research the scene to which the piece belongs.
  - For pop, jazz or rock repertoire:
    - Study as many recordings, arrangements and remakes of the song as one can find, using sources such as YouTube, Spotify, recordings available in UTEP libraries, etc.
- **Perform** the assigned vocal repertoire to a level acceptable for public presentation with accuracy of pitch, rhythm, diction and with dramatic expression appropriate for the piece.
- **Listen** to, discuss, and write about recordings by professional singers.
- **Attend** all lessons, as well as weekly studio and recital classes.

## **Course Goals**

---

The goals of this course are to help the student to:

- Sing with confidence, efficiency and a healthy, beautiful tone.
- Identify, discuss and demonstrate consistent practice of the primary vocal concepts of posture, respiration, phonation, and resonance.
- Develop and utilize research skills in order to adequately prepare a piece of music for study and performance.
- Develop and utilize efficient practice skills.
- Develop listening skills.
- Develop the skills necessary to combine technical and expressive qualities of singing to create an artistically fulfilling performance.
- Identify, discuss, and demonstrate consistent practice of essential performance skills including character/mood development and presentation, and recital/jury etiquette.
- Objectively assess their own performances and those of their peers through in-person discussion and written essay.
- Develop organizational skills necessary for the performing artist.

## **Course Outcomes**

---

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

- Effectively vocalize to balance the voice and body in preparation for practice or performance.
- Identify and utilize specific vocal exercises in order to promote vocal growth.

- Perform assigned songs from memory with accuracy of pitch, rhythm, diction, appropriate tone quality and musical expression.
- Critique self and others verbally and writing.

## Course Requirements

---

In order to achieve these objectives, the student will:

### Practice & Study

- Listen and/or watch recordings of your lessons at least three times, preferably *daily*, before the next lesson.
  - Audio and/or video record every lesson with your smartphone or other device.
- Practice (actually sing) a **minimum** of 30 minutes *daily* outside of the weekly lesson to keep consistency in your voice. A minimum of 1 hour daily is recommended for improvement beyond simple consistency. Additional time for quiet study is also necessary.
  - **Log your practice** using the form provided in each lesson. Save the completed practice form to shared OneDrive folder before each weekly lesson.
  - Divide your vocal practices into a portion for working on vocalization exercises to advance your singing technique and a portion for studying and learning assigned repertoire. Assign some practice time for just experimentation, and, as you advance, set aside some practice time just for focusing on performance/communication.
  - Total suggested vocal practice and study per week: 6–10 hours.
- Prepare and memorize 3–5 songs for performance on area/departamental recital as well as studio class and juries. Refer to Voice Area handbook for specific repertoire requirements.
- Read assigned materials on singing and related concepts.
- Listen to/watch recommended singers and performances on YouTube, Spotify, etc.

### Written Work

For each assigned piece, turn in a copy (and keep a copy printed in your music binder) of the following *before* you work on a song in your lesson:

- 1) **Pronunciation & Translation** (write into your music):
  - a) Phonetic transcription (International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) preferred), above lyrics.
  - b) Word-by-word translations into your native language.
- 2) **Program Notes\*** to be kept in shared lesson folder on OneDrive and/or your binder, including:
  - a) Biography of composer.
  - b) Biography of poet/lyricist.
  - c) Synopsis of song (“What is this song about?”).
  - d) Poem/lyrics written out (with poetic translation) separate from the music, in two columns, like you would see in a recital program. (See attached example, on page 9.)
- 3) **Song Research** (to be kept in your folder, lesson binder or in a journal) including character analysis; your own thoughts about each poem, the music and/or the arrangement; ideas for performance; and the emotional landscape of the piece.

### Performance

Students will perform material from their solo (lesson) repertoire at least 2 times each semester (see below). This can be accomplished by singing on a studio/master class, performing at NATS, as a soloist on a choir concert, in departmental/area recital, church services and Opera Workshop performances. *You must work on the piece you will perform at least twice in lessons for it to count towards a required performance.*

### Pianist

- **During lessons.** Students are required to hire a pianist at their own expense to attend the *last* half of each voice lesson, beginning at the latest during the second full lesson of each semester. This is to ensure student can work on required repertoire with appropriate accompaniment, enabling the instructor to focus on your vocal technique and style.
- **Work with your pianist outside of lessons.** Students are further expected to work with their pianist a minimum of one additional half hour each week on their assigned repertoire.

- **Payment.** You alone are responsible for paying your pianist on time, according to the schedule you agreed to with them. Pianists who are owed money will opt not to play juries. It is unacceptable to hire a different pianist to avoid paying one you owe.

### Concert Attendance

Observation of your peers and professionals in your field is one of the surest ways to improve your perspective and musicianship. To that end, you should attend or watch online:

1. All choral music concerts and at least one performance of each of the Opera Workshop productions.
2. At least 3 outside professional-level concerts of varying genres and at least one concert should be classical.
3. All recitals of Duke and Downen Studio members, and have a faculty member in attendance sign your program.

### Final Exam

Perform a jury for the voice faculty.

### Evaluation

---

*Grades will be based on the following criteria: (Scale: 90-100% = A; 80-89% = B; 70-79% = C; 60-69% = D; 0-59% = F)*

#### 50%: Weekly lesson grades

- *Attendance* and punctuality (see attendance policy below).
- *Execution* and ability to perform exercises and repertoire as instructed. (Includes evidence of having worked with your pianist, and ensuring your pianist is present at lessons as required.)
- *Practice:* evidence of regular and consistent practice, as logged on Lesson Form/Practice Plan which must be turned in at every lesson.
- *Assignments:* completion/mastery of assigned exercises, concepts and other assignments, as written on lesson form.

#### 25%: Written and other assignments

- Song research and Program Notes turned in before working on song in lesson.
- Word-for-word translation written into music and absorbed. You should be able to say what each and every word means, as well as the meaning of complete sentences and concepts in the text.
- Completion and quality of research, including journal, translations, composer biography, IPA in music, etc.
- Listening assignments.
- Concert attendance.

#### 25%: Jury Grade

- Average of grades assigned by the voice area faculty.

### Studio Policies

---

#### Attendance

1. Attend all scheduled lessons.
  - a. **Arrive physically and mentally ready and able to sing at the designated start time**, with all materials and assignments. Since much of the learning and course work is accomplished during lesson time, attendance and engagement are critical to your success. If you know this will be difficult for you, please discuss this with me ahead of time.
    - i. If you have not put in the work expected/assigned, it will show, and your grade will reflect it.
    - ii. Your teacher has the option to cancel your weekly lesson if you are unprepared.
  - b. Lessons will be scheduled at the beginning of the semester and constitute a class that meets weekly at the same time.
  - c. Occasionally, your teacher may need to reschedule your weekly lesson. Be sure to mark your personal calendar and notify your pianist.
2. Attend all scheduled studio classes and perform as assigned.
3. Attend area and/or departmental recitals as required by department. See "Departmental Requirement," below.

### **Absences & Tardies**

1. One absence per semester is allowed, regardless of the reason. All other absences will impact your lesson grade. Documented emergencies will be taken into account.
2. If you are sick, contagious, and/or unable to sing, do not come to your lesson.
3. If you are more than 10 minutes late, the lesson will be forfeited and recorded as an absence.
4. If you are tardy, that does not mean you will get extra time at the end to make up for your lateness.

### **Lesson Cancellation**

- If you must cancel your lesson, contact your teacher as soon as possible, but **no later than 8:00 a.m. on the day of your lesson**. Be sure to notify your pianist.

### **Make-up Lessons**

- Make-up lessons are not guaranteed, and may be offered at the teacher's discretion.

### **Studio Class: Fridays, immediately after Voice Area Recital**

Studio class is an essential complement to your one-on-one lessons. This class functions like an informal masterclass. Mr. Downen and Ms. Duke combine studios for this class, so that Ms. Duke's students have the benefit of working with Mr. Downen, and vice versa. You will be assigned dates to sing, and the song you present should be memorized, and approved in advance by Ms. Duke.

1. Weekly studio class provides necessary performance opportunities and additional time to explore performance-related technical and acting issues.
2. If Recital Class runs late, Studio Class will start late and run the full time period.
3. If Recital Class ends early, Studio Class will still start after a short break.
4. Location of class will be posted on the studio schedule, on the instructor's door.
5. You are expected to attend every studio class, unless discussed with teacher in advance.

### **Communication**

Please communicate with your teacher in a timely manner during reasonable hours.

- Use phone, text or email. When time is of the essence, call, or send a text message. *If you do not receive a reply, follow up* using a different method of communication until you know your message was received.
- Official communications from your teacher will be sent to your university email account. Please check this account twice daily. (I can show you how to set it up on your smartphone.) *A prompt reply is expected*. If time is of the essence or in case of emergency, communication will be by text message or by phone call.

### **Vocal Health**

**PRACTICE.** Regular, effective practice is very important in order to progress toward your vocal and performance potential. However, excessive practice or singing "full out" in excess of two hours per day can be counterproductive and dangerous to your vocal health. A lot of progress can be made with quiet study. Listen to your body. Give yourself appropriate rest periods.



**CARE FOR YOUR BODY.** Stay hydrated, do not smoke, avoid overuse of caffeine and alcohol, get adequate sleep (7 hours per night should be a *minimum* goal), stay healthy and do not abuse your voice (i.e., talking over loud environments, yelling at sporting events, concerts). Wash your hands frequently and avoid contact with sick people. If you may be contagious, stay home for the sake of the health of others, as well as yourself!

**HYDRATION.** Many singers find it necessary to use a humidifier, especially in this dry climate, to keep their voice working at their best. For chronic sinus trouble, a saline rinse ("neti pot") can be very useful and economical.

**WHEN TO SEE A DOCTOR:** If your voice is compromised by infection or overuse, see an otolaryngologist (also known as an ear, nose and throat doctor (ENT). Dr. Kevin Bright (915) 544-1350 is the recommended ENT for singers in El Paso.

### **Extracurricular Opportunities**

According to the Vocal Area Handbook, your applied voice teacher must approve all performance and/or coaching opportunities outside this studio and its assignments.

This includes, but is not limited to: El Paso Opera, UTEP Dinner Theater, Theatre Department productions, EPCC shows, volunteer or professional choruses (such as El Paso Chorale, Bruce Nehring Consort, church choirs, Living Christmas Tree),

Viva! El Paso, El Paso Gilbert & Sullivan Society, musicals and plays at The Forum, Sun City Musicals, master classes with guest artists or local teachers. AUDITION FOR EVERYTHING, and check with your teacher before accepting anything.

### Submitting Assignments

- You will receive a link to a OneDrive folder (which we will share) where you should upload all your assignments. Please email me when you have uploaded a new file for me to see.
- You will upload either a Word document or a scan of hand-written work. All hand-written work must be legible!
- PDFs of all of your assigned repertoire should also be kept in this folder.

### *Just in case...*

I strongly suggest that you submit your work with plenty of time to spare in the event that you have a technical issue with Blackboard, OneDrive, your network, and/or your computer. I also suggest you save all your work to a cloud storage service, external drive, or on your computer as a back-up. This way, you will have evidence that you completed the work and will not lose credit.

If you are experiencing difficulties submitting your work through OneDrive, please contact the UTEP Help Desk. You can email me a link to your back-up document as a last resort.

## **Departmental Requirement**

---

### Area and Departmental Recitals Attendance Policy

1. All students enrolled in Applied Lessons must attend a minimum of twelve (12) Area and Departmental which take place every Friday at 1:30 p.m. in the Department of Music. **Failing to attend twelve (12) required recitals will result in lowering your Applied Lessons final grade by one letter.**
2. Absences may be made up by attending UTEP Music Department concerts and recitals. Non-university recitals such as El Paso Opera, El Paso Music Forum, El Paso Symphony, El Paso Wind Symphony, and El Paso Pro-Musica as well as any other performances given by our faculty and guests will be accepted.
3. To receive credit for the make-up, a student must attend a music event. The program must be signed by a music faculty member who attended the same event. The program must be brought to the Music Office to record the attendance. Student name and ID# must be on the program. Without this information students will not receive credit.
4. It is the student's responsibility to turn in the signed programs to the main office by 5 p.m. on Friday of Finals Week. There will be no exceptions.
5. Students must sign the makeup sheet every time they turn in a program. At the end, the office must have both, the program with the student's information and their signature matching the date. There will be no exceptions.
6. Please note: When a single area recital is cancelled, students will need to replace the cancelled recital by either going to a different area recital held at the same time or turning in a program from a makeup recital.
7. At the end of the semester, all students will have the same number of expected recitals.

## **Additional Policies**

---

### Incompletes/Withdrawals

No automatic withdrawals or incompletes will be given.

### Accommodations

If you need accommodations in class, contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services at 915-747-5148, or email them at [cass@utep.edu](mailto:cass@utep.edu), or apply for accommodations online via the [CASS portal](#).

### Sexual Discrimination & Harassment (Title IX)

If you have a concern related to sexual harassment or violence, visit <https://www.utep.edu/titleix/>

### Scholastic Integrity

Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All suspected violations of academic integrity at The University of Texas at El Paso must be reported to the [Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution](#) (OSCCR) for possible disciplinary action.

## Campus Carry

Fox Fine Arts Building is an “Exclusion Zone.” Refer to <https://www.utep.edu/campuscarry/> .

### *5 Steps to an “A” in Voice Lessons*

---

1. SHOW UP for lessons, on time, ready to sing (warmed up!), prepared with last week’s assignments and geared up to work!
2. PREPARE – before working on a song with your teacher...
  - a. Learn your notes and rhythms.
  - b. Learn the translation and background of your song. Write your word-for-word translation into your music.
  - c. Write the IPA (pronunciation) into your sheet music and practice the diction.
  - d. Upload your 2 things: **Program Notes and Song Research**, as soon as you can as each song is assigned.
3. PRACTICE regularly, at *least* 5 days a week, 1 hour a day.
4. PERFORM
  - a. Area Recital at least once
  - b. Sing in Studio Class at least once, preferably memorized.
5. Be PRO-ACTIVE. Always look for ways to improve as an artist. Discuss your ideas with your teacher.

(TIP: Write deadlines and goals into your personal calendar, and refer to it frequently to be sure you’re on track.)

## **UPLOAD these 2 things BEFORE WORKING ON A SONG IN LESSON**

- 1) Song Research
- 2) Program Notes

Keep reading for detailed instructions. Don't worry – it's easier than it looks.

### **Song Research**

*This is in addition to the Program Notes on the next page.*

#### **For each song, explore...**

---

**Dig deep** into each song you are assigned. In a notebook/journal, write down responses to each of the cues below. You may also type this in a computer document if you prefer.

**Make it fun** for yourself! Use colors, draw pictures, if that makes you happy. The point is to do a deep dive into your piece to get to know it from the inside out. (This is *in addition to* the "Program Notes.")

#### **Background**

- 1) If the song is from a musical, opera or other theatrical work, read a synopsis of the larger work, and read the entire scene (in the libretto or script) that precedes the song.
- 2) What were the trends culturally surrounding the composer and/or the lyricist/poet when the song/poem were written?

#### **Translation**

- 1) Create your own line-by-line guide with pronunciation (use IPA if you know it), original words, word-by-word translation. Then write a translation/meaning in your own words.
- 2) Write the word-by-word translation in your music.

#### **Expression**

- 1) Identify the dramatic ideas in the piece.
- 2) What is the trigger for you, your character, or the song's implied narrator to sing these words with this music?
- 3) What actions are suggested by the words of the song?
- 4) How can you relate the emotions/actions/situation to something in your life, or a situation you recognize from a friend's life, a TV show, book, etc.?



## Program Notes

**IN ADDITION** to Song Research, create **Program Notes** for each song. This is practice for creating program notes and translations for recital programs.

Use a computer, not a tablet or smartphone! Further instructions are at the bottom of this example page. You may find this same page as a Microsoft Word Doc on Blackboard. Use that doc as your template; do not make your own from scratch!

### **Alma Schindler Mahler (1879–1964)**

Born in 1879, the daughter of a Viennese painter, Alma Mahler inspired the passionate love and devotion of an astonishing array of creative artists of *fin-de-siècle* Vienna. She married three of them—the composer Gustav Mahler, the architect Walter Gropius, and the writer Franz Werfel—and had a host of admirers and lovers, including the painters Oscar Kokoschka, Egon Schiele, and Gustav Klimt. The composer Alban Berg dedicated his opera *Wozzeck* to her and a violin concerto to the memory of her daughter, Manon, who died of polio.

Despite showing promise as a composer under the tutelage of Alexander von Zemlinsky, she agreed to stop composing after marrying Gustav Mahler. Not unsurprisingly, this limitation put a strain on the marriage, which perhaps led to her dizzying array of lovers. Later in life, Mahler recanted and encouraged his wife to compose, even helping her to publish some of her songs. Only fourteen songs have survived to be published and recorded. (Compiled from Britannica.com and Wikipedia.com)

<b>Ansturm</b> Poem by Richard F. L. Dehmel (1863–1920)	<b>Onslaught</b> Translation © 2008 by Elisabeth Siekhaus
O zürne nicht, wenn mein Begehren	Oh be not angry, when my desire
Dunkel aus seinen Grenzen bricht,	Darkly breaks through its boundaries,
Soll es uns selber nicht verzehren,	If it is not to consume us,
Muß es heraus ans Licht!	It has to come out to the light!
Fühlst ja, wie all mein Innres brandet,	You clearly can feel how I churn inside,
Und wenn herauf der Aufruhr bricht,	And when my rapture breaks to the surface,
Jäh über deinen Frieden strandet,	Abruptly inundating your peace,
Dann bebst du	Then you tremble
aber du zürnst mir nicht.	but are not angry with me.

### **INSTRUCTIONS for Program Notes sheet**

Use the Microsoft Word template provided in the “Duke Studio” Blackboard Course.

- Type a brief biography of composer, and whenever possible, the poet or lyricist.
- Poetic translation (**use a table\***, not tabs, not columns, to make this easier, neater). One row per line of text!
- If you are copying from a printed or online source, be sure to credit your source. Plagiarism is illegal!
- Save this document *with a new name* in your shared OneDrive lesson folder. Use the following naming convention: COMPOSER-SongTitle-ProgramNotes.docx
- Keep a copy with your sheet music so you can reference it as needed.