

# UTEP DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

## OPERA WORKSHOP

Spring 2021 | MUSA 2253 (CRN 22966) | MW 3-4:20 & TR 10:30-11:50 (Recital Hall & Choir Room)  
Prof. Cherry Duke | [ccdude@utep.edu](mailto:ccdude@utep.edu) | Office hours by appointment  
Available for Graduate and CEL credit.



### How do you create meaningful, engaging performances?

Why do you perform? What experience do you want your audience to have? Through games and play, master classes and group work, readings and research, performance and practice, this class will help you develop your stage skills so that you can express your songs and yourself more fully on stage.

★ You need to be able to learn your music on your own; this class will teach you what to do with the music onstage.

**See the Course Calendar for important dates and assignments**



**When you ask for help, you show strength! Ask and ye shall receive!**



**Be on time! Be prepared! Communicate!**



### What is this all about?

*Course Description.* In this class we will explore and practice of vocal, acting/communication, movement and analytical skills needed for success in performance of staged musical drama, culminating in at least one public performance per semester.

Additional study and evaluation may occur in the areas of audition preparation, role preparation and analysis, structure of song and scene, dance, technical aspects of theatre, and self- and peer evaluation. Emphasis is on professional behavior which will serve you in any career.

*Course Objective:* To nurture confidence, curiosity, teamwork, and professional behaviors within the realm of music/theater performances.

★ See Syllabus Addendum and Course Calendar (both on Blackboard) for details, including performance details and additional rehearsals. **Bookmark the Course Calendar:** <https://bit.ly/385JWam>.



## Textbook

*Actions: The Actor's Thesaurus* by Marina Calderone (available on Amazon.com)



## How about other required materials?

- Regular access to a computer (other than a phone or tablet) with reliable Internet access, a webcam, microphone and speakers. External microphone and headphones recommended.
- Voice recorder (i.e., the app on your smartphone) for recording rehearsals.
- A journal or other notebook for exploring, researching, taking notes, etc.
- Highlighter(s), pencil, water for every class or rehearsal.
- Printed repertoire, in a 3-ring binder\*.
- Yoga mat (a few are available to borrow, but you can buy one for less than \$10).
- Clothes you can move in appropriately for dance and yoga days.
- I encourage you to buy published printed scores of the operas or shows in which you have significant scenes/solos. Go to [www.classicalvocalrep.com](http://www.classicalvocalrep.com) or call them—tell the owner you're my student and he may give you a 10% discount.
- Character shoes for dance & performance (see info on Blackboard).
- SPRING 2021: A special mask for singing may be needed for comfort and acoustics.
  - <https://www.broadwayreliefproject.com/> - \$23
  - <https://www.mymusicfolders.com/> -- \$33
  - LOCAL: Mrs. Birdie Chesaneck and Marissa Hernandez also make popular singer's masks.

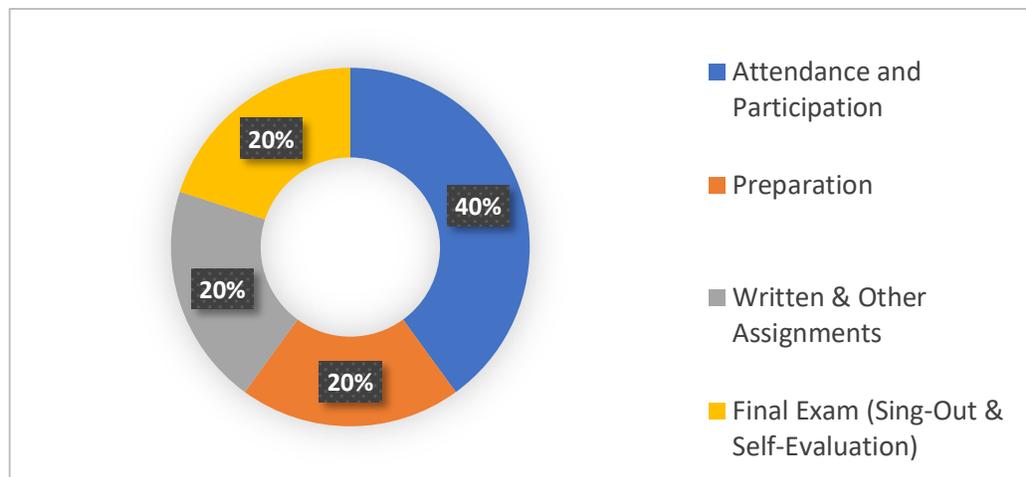


## Piano love.

Dr. Meza (our class pianist) is a great sight-reader, but he also likes to be prepared. Every time you are scheduled to sing in class, in outreach, etc., make sure he gets a clean, complete copy of your music at least 2 business days before your performance.



## How are you evaluated?



# How will we spend our time together?

- Group activities to develop performance, acting and movement skills, including improvisation, dance, movement, body awareness, and facial and physical expression.
- Written and reading assignments on character preparation, role preparation and theatrical terminology.
- Preparation, rehearsal, and performance of staged opera, shows, and/or scenes as scheduled.
-  Collaborations with El Paso Opera, El Paso Symphony Youth Orchestras, El Paso Museum of Art, UTEP Center for Arts Entrepreneurship, OLLI and other community 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, promotion of performances on social media, creation of supertitles.
-  Community outreach performances. All students will participate in at least one outreach deliverable (i.e., concerts at retirement homes, schools, online, etc.).
- Readings from course textbook(s) and various articles and books online and/or on reserve in Music Library.
- Research as well as written and verbal reporting on various shows and characters.
- Private and group coaching of assigned songs or scenes as well as songs and arias from applied studio repertoire.
- Study and practice of music theatre/opera audition techniques and best practices, including dramatic presentation of songs and arias, appropriate attire, résumé writing, monologue preparation, etc.
- Master classes, coachings, and/or workshops with teachers and guest artists.
- Utilize technology (YouTube, Vimeo, Spotify, Apple Music, etc.) as an evaluative and research tool.

## ***In-Class Performances***

### *Sing-In and Sing-Out*

Early in the semester, each student in the class will perform a solo with piano accompaniment ("Sing-In"). At the end of the semester, a similar process will occur as part of the final exam ("Sing-Out"). Each of these performances will be video recorded, and may serve as an audition for upcoming roles. Dress up and sing a song from memory that demonstrates your current level of vocal development. This is part of your practice and learning for "real" auditions. Repertoire ideally should be classical. Musical theater selections may be allowed in certain circumstances.

### *Master Classes*

In a master class, you sing a piece in front of the class and the instructor or guest artist works with you to improve his/her performance while the rest of the class observes. Master classes are most effective when you are fully memorized and knows the complete translation of the song. As an observer in a master class, take full advantage of the teaching being offered by taking notes, and asking questions when appropriate.

### ***Crews (Technical/Production/Publicity Assignments)***

You will assist with technical aspects of productions as necessary, including sets, costumes, stage management and lighting construction and operation as well as publicity and audience development for performances.

 You will be assigned to a team, called a "crew," and will be expected to help as-needed with jobs specific to your crew.

Crews may include (but are not limited to):

- Publicity & Communications
- Community Engagement & Hospitality
- Sets & Locations
- Costumes & Makeup
- Technical Needs (mics, video, livestream)
- Supertitles
- Stage Management

### ***Public Performances, including Main Production & Outreach***

 Full preparation and best effort are required. This includes professionalism, responsiveness, clear and prompt communication and responsibility toward all assigned crew duties, colleagues and scene partners. WE WORK AS A TEAM.

### ***Course Outcomes***

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

- Behave professionally in rehearsals, auditions and performances.
- Independently prepare selections from the operatic and/or musical theater repertory.
- Perform assigned selections with accuracy of pitch, rhythm, and dramatic expression.
- Prepare and perform assigned repertoire to a level acceptable for public performance.
- Evaluate self and peer performances with constructive commentary.
- Introduce yourself and your piece clearly and effectively in front of an audience.
- Accurately identify, understand and use theatrical terminology.

### **Skills & Knowledge Equivalentents**

- Teamwork and interpersonal skills
- Initiative and responsibility
- Initiative and responsibility
- Build communication skills
- Build communication skills
- Self-driven and change-making skills
- Build communication skills
- Develop critical thinking skills
- Self-driven and change-making skills
- Build communication skills

# How do I get a good grade?

## *Attendance & Participation*

On-time attendance is required. "On time" means being ready to work when the session is scheduled to begin. Arrive at least *5 minutes before* the start 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, your scene partners and your grade.

→ **If you are sick, DO NOT ATTEND.** Your teacher and your colleagues need to stay healthy. Contact me immediately to let me know you will not be in class. You are responsible for making up any work or assignments you may miss. You may request extra credit to make up for unexpected absences.

★ There will be some days when you are not required to attend. Read the daily calendar before each class.

★ Communication is key—if you are sick or think you may be sick, or someone in your household is sick, **STAY HOME**, and contact the teacher right away. (SPRING 2021: This course is "hybrid." Sometimes classes will occur on Zoom only. Classes may be recorded and available for later review. Please discuss options with the teacher.)

**Participation will be evaluated at every class meeting.** Be present (physically and mentally!), on-time (early!), alert and engaged and give your best effort all the time. As Tom Hanks said in his Golden Globes acceptance speech, "Show up on time with a head full of ideas and ready to work!"

## *Written & Other Assignments*

Throughout the semester you may be given a variety of written assignments and assessments including but not limited to: character analysis, reports/reviews of live and online performances, scene mapping, etc. All assignments must be turned in by the stated due date. You will not always receive a reminder.

★ Assignments and due dates are noted on the Course Calendar.

★ If you miss a class or rehearsal, it is your responsibility to determine if an assignment was given and get the applicable materials. Some assignments may require using Blackboard or another online tool.

★ If you miss a graded assessment, test, quiz or date to turn in an assignment, it is *your responsibility* to ask for a makeup in a timely manner.

 As part of the Community Engagement and Leadership (CEL) Certificate Program, additional assignments may include:

- Planning and coordination of outreach programs for schools, retirement communities and/or community concerts.
- Communication and coordination with our community partners (i.e., the schools, retirement communities, El Paso Opera, El Paso Symphony Youth Orchestras, El Paso Museum of Art, etc.)

**"Show up  
on time with a  
head full of ideas  
& ready to work!"**

## Preparation

Prepare and execute 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 translations, notes, rhythms, diction, etc. on your own, get help. This may mean hiring a pianist/coach, tutor, teaming up with friends, buying accompaniment tracks, etc. If you don't know what to do, let's chat.

★ Especially if you have a sizeable solo, please work on your assigned music with your voice teacher.

You will be given a grade based on the *completeness* of your preparation. Example, if on the day you are to be fully memorized, you are only about 75% memorized/prepared, you will be given a grade of 75.

## Final Exam

The final evaluation 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 and the self-evaluation which follows represent the course's final exam. You should demonstrate your ability to present yourself professionally, with your piece prepared to the best of your ability, musically and dramatically. You will also be graded on your active participation in the viewing and commenting on your peers' performances.

★ Prepare for this final performance well in advance (remember that you will likely have many other exams during this time!) so that you will demonstrate improvement from your Sing-In.

## Course Policies



**Citizenship** has to do with attendance as well as how you treat others. Most wars, fights, retaliations, and insults happen when people feel their dignity has been assaulted. So please, respect each individual's opinions and beliefs—even if you disagree.

Walking out of class (even for a few moments) in the middle of a class, workshop, presentation, performance, lecture or other focused activity is disruptive and may be perceived as disrespectful. Please get your water and use the restroom *between* classes so that you may give your full attention and respect during class. Arriving to class after it has begun is similarly distracting. Be on time every day. This is especially important when we have guests.

**Netiquette:** when we're online together, on Blackboard, Facebook, Zoom, etc., remember that these are protected spaces for this class. Do not copy, share or re-post anything from our class time or private spaces. Respect and courtesy is required at all times, in all venues.



**Cell phones.** Please keep your cell phone on silent (or take it outside for emergencies) so that we can all focus! Again, it's a dignity/respect thing. We all know that feeling when you're talking to a friend and his or her attention is on the phone...



**Attendance.** 80% of life is showing up. And 40% of your grade is about showing up! In OpShop, we work together, as a team. When you miss class or rehearsal, you hold back your teammates. So show up on time (that means early!), prepared, ready to work!

Everyone gets two "free" absences. After that, every absence will lower your grade.

(SPRING 2021: this will be somewhat relaxed. Everyone's health comes first!!)

**Stay home if you're sick.** You'll get well faster and you'll keep those germs to yourself. And let me know if you're not coming. Communication counts for a lot!

Real emergencies or illnesses will be taken into consideration. Failure to plan or staying out late the night before doesn't count. It all comes back to dignity/respect, for yourself, and your teammates.

If you miss class for any reason, figure out what you missed, and make it up. Talk to me if you need help.



**Readings & Homework.** The homework forms the core of our class discussions, so please come prepared to participate! (Participation is part of that 40%!)



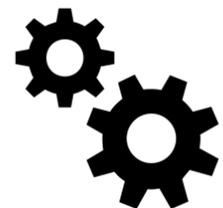
**Penny for your thoughts.** If/when you need help, I will make time for you. It's my job and my honor to be there for you and to help you toward success. If you're struggling, tell me. We'll figure it out together!



**Like brushing your teeth...** Check your Miners email morning and evening. As well, I encourage you to check and respond to text and/or Facebook 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.

**There is a Facebook Messenger group** for quick class communications. If you would like to be a part of this group, please ask another member to add you.

## TECHNICAL STUFF...



### *Submitting Assignments*

You will receive a link to a OneDrive folder where you should upload all your assignments (see the Course Calendar) by the time they are due. You will upload either a Word document or a scan of hand-written work. All hand-written work must be legible! You may occasionally be asked to upload videos as well.

Please name your files in a uniform manner and include your name every time, just in case. Use this format:

**SPG-P1\_Lastname,Firstname.docx** (Song Preparation Guide Part 1)

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.

### ***Make-Up Work***

Make-up work will be given only in the case of a documented emergency. Note that make-up work may be in a different format than the original work, may require more intensive preparation, and may be graded with penalty points. If you miss an assignment and the reason is not considered excusable, you will receive a zero. It is therefore important to reach out to me—in advance if at all possible—and explain with proper documentation why you missed a given course requirement. Once a deadline has been established for make-up work, no further extensions or exceptions will be granted.

### ***Incompletes/Withdrawals***

No automatic withdrawals or incompletes will be given.

### ***Graduate Credit***

- This course is available for Graduate level ensemble credit. Students should consult their Graduate Advisor for Music and enroll in CRN 11875, MUSA 5101.
- 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, and/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.

### ***COVID-19 Accommodations***

- Before coming on campus (each and every time!) please utilize the UTEP Screening App: <http://screening.utep.edu>.
- All people on the UTEP campus will be masked at all times until further notice. A special mask for singing may be needed for comfort and acoustics.
- Students are not permitted on campus when they have a positive COVID-19 test, exposure or symptoms. If you are not permitted on campus, you should contact me as soon as possible so we can arrange appropriate accommodations.
- Students who are considered high risk according to CDC guidelines and/or those who live with individuals who are considered high risk should speak with me about alternate ways of fulfilling class requirements.

### ***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. It includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another as ones' own. Collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. 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.

### ***Class Recordings***

The use of recordings will enable you to have access to class lectures, group discussions, and so on in the event you miss a synchronous or in-person class meeting due to illness or other extenuating circumstance. Our use of such technology is governed by the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and UTEP's acceptable-use policy. A recording of class sessions will be kept and stored by UTEP, in accordance with FERPA and UTEP policies. Your instructor will not share the recordings of your class activities outside of course participants, which include your fellow students, teaching assistants, or graduate assistants, and any guest faculty or community-based learning partners with whom we may engage during a class session. **You may not share recordings outside of this course.** Doing so may result in disciplinary action.