



DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

OPERA WORKSHOP

Spring 2023 | MW 3–4:20 (Recital Hall) & TR 10:30–11:50 (Choir Room, M340)

Prof. Cherry Duke (she/her): ccduke@utep.edu, (917) 312-5598 mobile, (915) 747-6220 office
Office hours (in person, phone or Zoom) by appointment | Available for [Graduate](#) and CEL¹ 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 learning music which is part of a theatrical/staged presentation. This includes acting/communication, movement/dance and analytical skills. We'll have at least one public performance per semester.

Additional study and evaluation may occur in the areas of audition preparation, role preparation, character analysis and development, structure of song and scene, dance, technical aspects of theatre, and self- and peer evaluation.

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

¹ Elements of this class that are relevant to the Community Engagement and Leadership Certificate Program are identified with this mark:



See **Syllabus Addendum and Course Calendar** (both on Blackboard) for details, including performance details and additional rehearsals. **Bookmark the Course Calendar:** <https://bit.ly/3X1O5Da>.

Respect for Diversity

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, and culture. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally or for other students or student groups. In addition, if any of our class meetings conflict with your religious events, please let me know so that we can make arrangements for you.



Get this now.

[In ONEDRIVE at this link](#) you'll find sheet music PDFs and midi files for the semester's opera. You need to download your assigned music in your iPad (use score-reading software such as ForScore!) or print out copies and keep them in a 3-ring binder.



Other required materials.





- Clothes you can move in appropriately for movement, yoga, body work, as applicable. Costume pieces: You may be asked to use or supply your own clothes for performances.
 - Black performance shoes (aka, "character shoes"; ask me before you buy)
 - Socks, pantyhose/tights/medias, black pants, white and/or black button-down shirts, black dress, black jacket/blazer, formal wear, etc.
 - Specifics will be provided for specific performances.
- 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* or tablet with score-reading software.
- 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 or call them—tell the owner you're my student and he may give you a 10% discount.



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 4 business days** before your performance.

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, concerts, shows, and/or scenes as scheduled.
- 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 professional practices, including dramatic presentation of songs/arias, appropriate attire, résumé writing, monologue preparation, etc.
- Master classes, coachings, and/or workshops with teachers and guest artists.
-  Public speaking, including introduction of songs and/or scenes to judges and/or audiences, and possibly additional audience engagement.
-  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 (“crew work”), 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 performance (i.e., concerts at retirement homes, schools, online, etc.).

In-Class Performances

Master Classes

In a master class, you sing a piece in front of the class and I or a guest artist works with you to improve your performance while the rest of the class observes. Master classes are most effective when you are fully memorized and know 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, set construction, and lighting operation, as well as publicity and audience development.

CEL 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):

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

Public Performances, including Main Production & Community Engagement

CEL Attendance, 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.

- ★ If you miss a performance or dress rehearsal, your overall final grade will be reduced by 15 points.²
- ★ If you are more than 15 minutes late for an assigned performance or dress rehearsal, your attendance grade will be reduced by 10 points.

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.

CEL Skills & Knowledge Equivalents

- 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

² This does not apply to absences or lateness due to a documented emergency.

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.

- ★ See additional info about Attendance, under “Course Policies,” below.


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

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, résumé, biography, etc. All assignments must be turned in by the stated due date and time. 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 community engagement and/or outreach programs.
- 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.)
- Promotional appearances for our mainstage show in other classes, public events, etc.

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 working with 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 and/or an outside pianist.
- ★ You will be given a 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/prepared, you will be given a grade of 75.

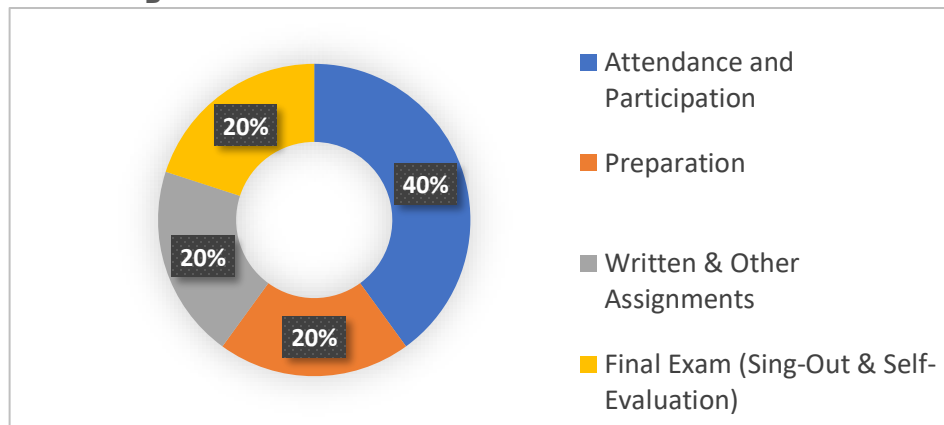
Final Exam

The final evaluation of the class will consist of a final solo performance. 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.



How are you evaluated?



Course Policies



Attendance. 80% of life is showing up. As is 40% of your grade! In OpShop, we work together, as a team. When you miss class or rehearsal or show up late, 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.

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/documentated emergencies or illnesses will be taken into consideration.

If you miss class for any reason, figure out what you missed (check the calendar, and ask me or a classmate), and make it up. Talk to me if you need help.

★ **Some days you may not be required to attend. Check both columns of the [daily calendar](#) before each class.**



CEL **Citizenship** has to do with attendance as well as how you treat others. 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 distracting. **Be on time every day.** This is especially important when we have guests. Respect and courtesy is required at all times, in all venues.



Cell phones. Use your phone to record your coachings during class. Otherwise, please keep your cell phone on silent so that we can all focus! Again, it's a dignity/respect thing.



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/SMS 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, etc.), let me know immediately.

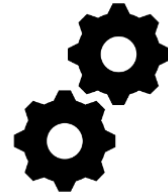


There is a Facebook Messenger group for quick class communications. If you would like to be a part of this group, please ask another member to add you.

Technical Stuff...

Submitting Assignments

Written assignments will be on the course calendar and Blackboard. Uploading will generally happen on Blackboard. You will upload either a PDF, a Word document or a scan of hand-written work (make sure it's legible). You may occasionally be asked to upload videos as well.



Turn things in EARLY

I strongly suggest that you submit your work BEFORE the deadline, 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 (915-747-HELP or helpdesk@utep.edu). You can email me a link to your back-up document as a last resort.

Ask for Make-ups

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.

Accessibility

You are encouraged but not required to share with me how I can make the class more accessible for you. Or, you may contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services at 915-747-5148, or email them at cass@utep.edu, or apply for accommodations online via the [CASS portal](#). **If there's a way I can help you succeed, please let me know.**

Sexual Discrimination & Harassment (Title IX)

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

Incompletes/Withdrawals

No automatic withdrawals or incompletes will be given.

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 one's 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.

Graduate Credit

This course is available for Graduate level ensemble credit. Students should consult their Academic Advisor for Music and enroll in 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 roles, assignments, technical work, and/or performances. Graduate students may 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.

Everyone needs help sometimes...

- [Student Outreach and Support \(utep.edu\)](#)
- [UTEP Food Pantry](#)
- [DIVE into DIVERsity \(utep.edu\)](#)
- [Resources | Borderland Rainbow Center](#)
- [LGBTQ+ Awareness | El Paso Behavioral Health \(elpasobh.com\)](#)
- [Centro de Salud La Fe](#)
- [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#)