



DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

OPERA WORKSHOP

Spring 2024 | MW 3–4:20 (Recital Hall) & TR 10:30–11:50 (Choir Room, M340)
and other rooms as announced.

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 tell meaningful stories 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 performing music as part of a theatrical/staged presentation. This includes acting/communication, movement/dance and analytical skills.

Additionally, we will explore audition preparation, role preparation, character analysis and development, structure of song and scene, technical aspects of theatre, and self- and peer evaluation.

We'll have at least one public performance per semester. Some students may opt for a non-performance track.

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

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

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.



Get this now.

SHEET MUSIC and other MATERIALS: [In ONEDRIVE at this link](#) you'll find sheet music PDFs and other materials for the semester's performance(s). You need to download your assigned music in your iPad or tablet (use score-reading software such as ForScore) or print out double-sided copies and keep them in a 3-ring binder. This link is also on Blackboard.

TEXTBOOK: [Role Preparation Guide](#). It's free and short. Please read it ASAP; you have assignments based on it. You can download it from Blackboard.



Bookmark the Course Calendar: This [Excel workbook](#) has more than just our daily activities and rehearsals. It also contains a list of assignments and crew information. It could change, so reference it often. **CALENDAR LINK:** <http://bit.ly/operaschedule>



Other required materials.

- Printed repertoire, in a 3-ring binder* or electronic tablet with music score-reading software such as ForScore.
- Voice recorder (i.e., the app on your smartphone) for recording rehearsals.
- App/device with which you can scan music and assignments and create PDFs (TurboScan, TinyScanner, etc.)
- Access to a computer (not just a mobile device) and Internet access. Required software for your computer: Adobe Reader installed on your computer for fillable forms
 - Microsoft Word
 - OneDrive
- ATTIRE: Clothes you can move in appropriately for improvisation, staging, movement, yoga, body work, as applicable. Performance attire and costume pieces:
 - Black performance shoes ("character shoes"; see info on Blackboard)





- 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.
- “Audition Attire”.
- A journal or other notebook for exploring, researching, taking notes, etc.
- Highlighter(s), pencil, water for every class or rehearsal.
- 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.

Help our class pianist(s) to be prepared. Every time you are scheduled to sing in class, in outreach, etc., make sure they gets a clean, complete copy of your music **at least one full week, preferably two**, before your performance or coaching.

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.
- Private and/or group coaching of assigned songs or scenes as well as music from your applied lesson 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 a “master teacher” (I or a guest artist) works with you to improve your performance while the rest of the class observes. You should be 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 and “behind the scenes” aspects of production.

 You will be assigned to a team, called a “crew,” and will be expected to help as-needed with jobs specific to your crew. Descriptions of duties for each crew are on a separate tab in the Course Calendar.

Crews may include (but are not limited to):

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

Public Performances, including Main Production & Community Engagement

 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 at least one letter, and you may get dropped from the class.²
- ★ If you are 15 or more minutes late for an assigned performance or dress rehearsal, your attendance grade will be reduced by 10 points.

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

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 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?

Preparation is Essential

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.

Show up, physically & mentally!

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.

★ 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!”

Homework, etc.

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, in the tab marked “Assignments.”
- ★ 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.

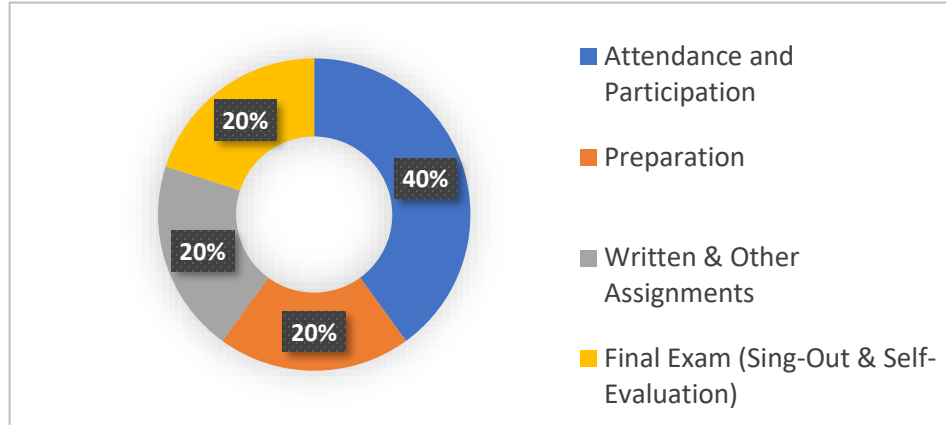
Final Exam

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/documented 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 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—I'm not a mind reader. Let me know what's going on, and 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 24 hours, if not sooner. If your contact information changes (email, phone number, etc.), let me know immediately.



There is a Facebook Messenger group and the BAND App for quick class communications. Please ask a member to add you.

NEW!

SEE THE SYLLABUS ADDENDUM called "Artist Agreement."

Technical Stuff...



Submitting Assignments

Written assignments will be listed 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 or links to videos as well.

Turn things in EARLY

I strongly suggest that you submit your homework early, well BEFORE the deadline, in case 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 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 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 coachings, rehearsals, etc. 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 \(CAPS\)](#)



Syllabus Addendum 1

Artist Agreement

Our Opera Workshop class, helpers, and assistants form a TEAM. Everyone on the team is extremely important, and everyone's behavior influences the outcome of our group effort. The policies below are customary for any theatrical show environment, and your agreement to follow them ensures that we can do our best work and have a good time.

By registering for Opera Workshop (MUSA 2253 or MUSA 4033) you agree that you accept the syllabus as the rulebook, including these guidelines and any other guidelines set in place in writing. I also understand that if I violate any of these guidelines or others given to me, I may lose my part in the show, or other remedies at the discretion of the instructor.

Below is your "pledge" of agreement with these policies...

Preparation

- I will learn my pitches, rhythms, diction, spoken lines, choreography and follow blocking notes.
- I will practice sufficiently outside of class so that I can sing my parts with my best vocal technique.
- I will research the production properly and in a timely manner (see assignments).
- I will read the script and/or sheet music in detail and work to understand the vision of the composer, librettist, director, and music director.

Presence

- I will be ready to work on time and bring all needed materials to rehearsals, meetings, and performances (script, sheet music, pencils, requested items, presentation and research materials, rehearsal clothing/shoes, required tools etc.).
- I will meet all deadlines for production set by the instructor, mentors, directors, advisors and or production manager.
- I will leave my cell phone away from the stage or working space, unless I am specifically using it for the purpose of the show (for example, to record a rehearsal or coaching for my own private review or taking pictures or video (with permission) for publicity, etc.).
- I will show up to scheduled costume fittings on time and wear appropriate undergarments.
- I will communicate clearly and promptly with my director/choreographer/rehearsal director if unexpected issues that might affect my presence in the production come up.
- I will communicate and respond to communication (via email/text/other means of communication agreed upon) in a timely manner (within 24 hours).

Respect

- I will respect all persons involved in the production.
- I will respect the facilities and all production elements (rooms, shops, props, set, costumes, performance, etc.).
- I will respect the art and the design choices made by the designer.

- I will report any inappropriate or dangerous behaviors to the Stage Manager, Production Manager, and mentors or appropriate offices immediately.

Professionalism

- I will conduct myself in a professional manner in all spaces.
- I will not share, post, or make public recordings of any rehearsals without prior consent.
- I will not accept a role in a production or project that has a rehearsal or performance schedule that conflicts with a production to which i have already committed.
- I will bring my own water and food and will only eat during assigned times and will clean up after myself.
- I will sign up to help with promotional events for the production including but not limited to taking postcards to handout, social media posts/reposts, social media takeovers, tv/radio/newspaper interviews, publicity photos. (performers only)
- I will participate in company strike if asked (full company).
- I will not allow any personal relationships to impact my professional behavior.
- I will not deviate from established intimacy or fight choreography, or any other director's/choreographer's instruction aimed at keeping the performance safe.
- I will not rehearse intimacy or fight choreography without a faculty member or Stage Manager. The use of a placeholder is acceptable when rehearsing without a 3rd party present.

More about Respect

Some elements like kissing, patting, or hugging, etc. can be part of the performance and will be introduced through mutual consent and rehearsed in a safe environment in agreement with all parts involved. In addition, everyone shall pledge...

I will not engage in the following behaviors:

- Any conduct that may be interpreted as discriminatory or harassing (in person and online).
- Abusive or bullying language such as insults, profanity, mocking, and body-shaming.
- Use of stereotypes and hazing.
- Sexual harassment.
- Unwelcome sexual advances that include (this is not a complete list):

Verbal

- Sexual innuendos, comments, or remarks about body, clothing, or sexual activities
- Repeated sexually oriented kidding, teasing, joking, or flirting
- Suggestive or insulting sounds (whistling)
- Offensive or crude language
- Sexual propositions, invitations, repeated requests for dates

Non-Verbal

- Offensive or obscene looks or gestures
- Staring, leering, or looking a person up and down
- Displaying, distributing, or sending sexually explicit or suggestive letters, emails, texts, pictures, etc.

Physical

- Patting, pinching, hugging, massaging, brushing up against a person's body, or other unwelcome touching
- Attempted or actual kissing or fondling

Be aware that:

- Behavior may constitute harassment even if the INTENT of the behavior was not to harass.
- What matters is the IMPACT of the behavior on the recipient.
- "I didn't mean anything by it" is not a valid defense for harassing behavior.

If you have a concern about intimacy, sexual harassment, or any other issue pertaining to your personal health and safety, speak with the faculty members associated with the production. If you do not feel comfortable speaking with the faculty member associated with the production, speak with the Department Chair. Understand that **all employees are required by law to report issues of sexual misconduct to the Title IX office immediately, without exception.**



Schedule Highlights: Spring 2024

Course Calendar

The detailed **Daily Calendar** is on an **Excel spreadsheet on OneDrive**: <http://bit.ly/operaschedule> . Details for every day are included. It's also posted on Blackboard. The schedule may change, so **check it every day**.



IMPORTANT: Some coachings and rehearsals will happen as scheduled in M402, M343, or M442. Please show up on time and prepared, always. A coaching is a time to work on refining material you have already learned on your own. Please use the learning tracks provided to learn your notes and rhythms or hire a pianist on your own time.

FEMMES FATALES: scenes with orchestra: April 26 & 27

This semester's main production will be scenes from French and French-inspired opera with the UTEP Symphony Orchestra in Magoffin Auditorium.

TECH & PERFORMANCES: April 15-28

The rehearsals in the 2 weeks leading up to our performances are critically important, and mandatory. If you have conflicts for these times, **please arrange your absence with your family, boss, teachers, etc. NOW**, and then remind them a couple of weeks before.

Monday, April 15	3:00 PM	4:20 PM	Sitzprobe 1		Recital Hall or Band Hall
Tuesday, April 16	10:30 AM	11:50 AM	run act 1		Choir Room
Wednesday, April 17	12:00 PM	1:00 PM	OUTREACH performance	Exact timing, singers & program TBA	The Women's Club of El Paso
Wednesday, April 17	3:00 PM	4:20 PM	Sitzprobe 2		Recital Hall or Band Hall
Thursday, April 18	10:30 AM	11:50 AM	run act 2		Choir Room
Saturday, April 20	3:00 PM	6:00 PM	Run through - TBA		TBA
Monday, April 22	3:00 PM	4:20 PM	Tech rehearsal		Recital Hall
Monday, April 22	6:00 PM	10:30 PM	Piano Dress Rehearsal		Magoffin
Tuesday, April 23	10:30 AM	11:50 AM	TBA		Choir Room
Tuesday, April 23	6:00 PM	10:30 PM	Orchestra Dress Rehearsal 1		Magoffin
Wednesday, April 24	3:00 PM	4:20 PM	Tech rehearsal		Recital Hall
Wednesday, April 24	6:00 PM	10:30 PM	Orchestra Dress Rehearsal 2		Magoffin
Thursday, April 25	10:30 AM	11:50 AM	TBA		Choir Room
Thursday, April 25			No evening rehearsal		
Friday, April 26			Performance 1 (evening)		Magoffin
Saturday, April 27			Performance 2 (evening)		Magoffin
Sunday, April 28			Strike		

Additional Events

MOVEMENT FOR THE STAGE: Tuesday, January 17

UTEP's Director of Musical Theatre, Rebecca Frost Mayer, will come and work with us on opening our bodies for storytelling. Bring your open minds and a willingness to PLAY! **Wear clothes you can comfortably move in and sneakers or dance shoes.**

MEMORIZATION DEADLINE: Monday, February 19

Everyone should be off-book (completely memorized) on their opera scenes in preparation for staging.

OUTREACH PERFORMANCES

This semester we have been invited to give performances for two community groups. These two performances are outside of class time so singers will be selected according to availability.

January 22	11 AM	St. Clements Church	Singers and program TBA
April 17	12PM	Women's Club	Singers and program TBA