

Voice Area Handbook

SHEPHERD UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Expect the
Extraordinary

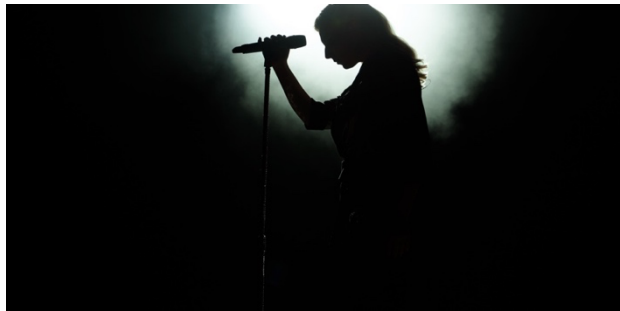


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The Study of Singing at Shepherd University

The study of singing for academic credit at Shepherd University takes place on different levels and with varying goals. The student and their instructor according to the student's potential; background; career or avocational interest in singing; and the choice of academic program determine them.

Entrance Auditions

Students seeking entrance into the BA in Music with Vocal Performance Concentration, and BME in Vocal Music Education are required to sing an entrance audition in addition to meeting the general requirements for admission to the college.

Audition Repertoire

Incoming freshmen and transfer students must present two art songs in contrasting styles. Both selections must be performed from memory and should demonstrate the applicant's vocal ability and musicianship. An accompanist will be provided, but the applicant may bring his/her own.

Scholarships

All vocal scholarships will be awarded through the music department. Participation in choral groups is beneficial to the singer and is required for the duration of the time the student is on scholarship, as is possible participation in the marching band. The Director of Choral and Vocal Activities will be present during the vocal audition or will have a separate hearing and will be active in deciding upon scholarship recipients.

Applied Voice Lessons

Once the teacher assignment has been made, it is the student's responsibility to register for the correct course and section number. **Registration for 1 credit of Applied Voice entitles the student to thirteen 50-minute lessons; ½ credit = thirteen 25-minute lessons.** The studio teacher will outline specific course requirements in the syllabus.

It is recommended for students to utilize a recording device/app for lessons. Recording lessons is an effective way to review vocalises, teacher instruction, and measure vocal progress.

All music majors where voice is their principal instrument are required to take 50-minute voice lessons each semester of study at Shepherd University. Exceptions may be made only by the consensus of the Director of Choral Activities, the Director of Vocal Activities, and the student's applied teacher.

Applied voice lessons are available for music minors, who are required to obtain 2 credits of applied lesson credits for their minor. They may continue with applied instruction if the applied instructor can accommodate them in their roster.

Non-music majors who wish to partake in voice lessons must also be enrolled in one choral ensemble. **Applied study is a privilege; the voice faculty will determine each studio's roster from semester to semester.**

Practice requirements

Students must maintain a regular practice schedule to be created in consultation with his/her private voice teacher. It is recommended that this includes one hour of practice every day. Practice time includes listening/studying vocal models, listening to a recorded lesson, practicing linguistics, learning notes, etc.

A vocal major is expected to know their notes for every selection they are assigned before any ensemble practice and before any lesson. **It is unacceptable to be unprepared.**

Voice Repertoire Class

Each individual voice studio will meet either as a studio or with combined studios periodically as schedules permit at a time arranged by the studio instructor. All Voice Majors are required to register for this class and attend. Non-majors are strongly encouraged to attend. The studio teacher will determine the specific course of study, but the primary purpose of the class is to gain experience and critique in performance practice.

Double Majors

If a student is double majoring in any two areas, the student must fulfill the requirements of both concentrations. When the requirements of two areas coincide, a student will not be expected to repeat requirements. For example, a student will not prepare more than one senior recital.

Vocal Goals and Objectives

All individualized levels of vocal study share a common goal --- **to enable the student to use effectively and efficiently his or her voice mechanism as an instrument for artistic lingual/musical communication.** Achieving this goal is a long process, involving years of musical training and discipline as well as psychological, auditory, sensory, acoustic and physiological development. A viable pedagogy must establish a lifelong regimen, enabling the singer to preserve and enhance his or her vocal ability. For this reason, every level of singing study will include exercises and repertory designed to help the student become more efficient, confident, and effective in performing the following tasks:

Respiration

1. Develop and coordinate the muscles of inhalation and exhalation most for their most efficient use in singing.
2. Coordinate respiration with phonation.

3. Manage the breath in increasingly more difficult phrasing and Dynamic levels.

Phonation

1. Establish a mental concept of appropriate vocal quality.
2. Coordinate the onset of any tone at all pitch and dynamic levels.

Resonation

1. Shape the resonating system of the vocal tract to achieve the most desirable tone production in any range and at any dynamic level.
2. Shape the resonating system of the vocal tract to achieve clear and uniform production of vowel sounds in any range and at any dynamic level.
3. Shape the resonating system of the vocal tract to maximum freedom from unnecessary tension or constriction.

Registration

1. Develop all registers of the voice.
2. Coordinate the vocal registers in order to create a seamless production throughout the voice and to clarify diction.

Articulation

1. Clarify diction by removing unwanted tension in the articulators.
2. Achieve release of pure, relaxed vowel sounds.
3. Achieve clear, precise, quick production of consonant sounds.

Technical Skills

1. Develop ability to sustain flowing phrases.
2. Acquire the ability to perform quick passages, turns, arpeggios, and trills, etc. with ease.
3. Incorporate dynamic shading.

Textual Awareness

1. Develop understanding of song texts.
2. Develop ways of expressing song text effectively.

Performance Skills

1. Gain confidence in performance.
2. Gain physical poise.

Pronunciation

Learn the correct pronunciation of words within the context of songs for the function of singing.

Musicianship

1. Sight singing
2. Pitch accuracy
3. Rhythm
4. Dynamic expression
5. Understand musical styles

Vocal Literature and Styles

At the beginning of each level of study the teacher and the student will evaluate the student's interest and potential to determine the kinds of vocal literature to be studied. The teacher may assign certain songs, but the student will also be encouraged to study songs of his or her choice, with the teacher's approval. The vocal literature studied will be chosen from the following groups. Literature from at least two groups will be studied each semester.

1. Songs in Italian from the 17th and 18th centuries
2. Elizabethan songs
3. Songs of Purcell or his contemporaries
4. Songs of late 19th, early 20th, and 21st century British and American composers
5. Songs and arias in English, German, and/or Italian by late 18th century composers
6. German or French solo vocal music of the Baroque era
7. Songs in German by early 19th century German romantic composers (Schubert, Schumann, Franz, Mendelssohn, etc.)
8. Handel opera and/or oratorio arias
9. Songs in French by early mélodie composers
10. Songs in French by late mélodie composers (Faure, Debussy, Ravel)
11. A song cycle from any period, suitable for the individual singer's voice
12. Representative opera and/or oratorio arias suitable for the individual singer's voice
13. Contemporary concert and recital song literature
14. Chamber music (when possible) for voice and various instruments
15. Songs in German by late 19th and 20th century lieder composers (Wolf, Strauss, Mahler, etc.)
16. Special literature chosen to represent the singer's interest from any of the following categories
 - a. church music
 - b. musical theater
 - c. jazz
 - i. Ballads – modern and traditional (standards)

- ii. Bebop and swing (upbeat, big band)
 - iii. Latin (Jobim)
 - iv. Blues
 - v. Modern (Gretchen Parlato)
- d. folk idioms
- e. special language songs such as Spanish or Russian concert literature

Students in the various areas of study are expected to exhibit a minimum knowledge of vocal repertory by the end of their four-year course of study.

Range definitions:

Soprano Bb4 to C6

Mezzo G3 to Bb6

Tenor C3 to Bb5

Baritone A2 to G4

Bass-Baritone F2 to F4

(**The ranges for other, less common Fachs will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Repertoire Requirements for BME Music Education Majors

	Repertoire	Memorized for Jury
Semester 1	(See “Audition Repertoire”) 2 songs in contrasting styles	2
Semester 2	3 songs including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 song in English • 1 Song in Italian from the 17th and 18th centuries 	2
Semester 3	4 songs including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Song in Italian from the 17th and 18th centuries • 1 English language art song (see nos. 2, 3, 4, 5) • 1 German language art song in the Baroque, late classical or early romantic period (see nos. 5, 6, 7) 	3
Semester 4	4 songs including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Song in Italian from the 17th and 18th centuries • 1 English language art song (see nos. 2, 3, 4, 5) • 1 German language art song in the Baroque, late classical or early romantic period (see nos. 5, 6, 7) • 1 Handel opera and/or oratorio aria 	3
Semester 5	5 selections including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 song of late 19th and early 20th century British and American composers • 1 song in German by early 19th century German romantic composers (Schubert, Schumann, Franz, Mendelssohn, etc.) • 1 French mélodie (see nos. 9, 10) 	4
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Representative opera and/or oratorio aria suitable for the individual singer's voice • 1 additional selection (see no. 16) 	

Semester 6	6 selections including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 song of late 19th and early 20th century British and American composers • 1 song in German by early 19th century German romantic composers (Schubert, Schumann, Franz, Mendelssohn, etc.) • 1 French mélodie (see nos. 9, 10) • 1 Representative opera and/or oratorio aria suitable for the individual singer's voice • 2 additional selections from any group. 	5
Semester 7	6 selections including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 early 20th century American Musical Theatre song • 1 song in German by early 19th century German romantic composers (Schubert, Schumann, Franz, Mendelssohn, etc.) • 1 French mélodie (see nos. 9, 10) • 1 Representative opera and/or oratorio aria suitable for the individual singer's voice • 2 additional selections from any group. 	5
Semester 8	6 selections including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 20th century American art song • 1 song in German by early 19th century German romantic composers (Schubert, Schumann, Franz, Mendelssohn, etc.) • 1 French mélodie (see nos. 9, 10) • 1 Representative opera and/or oratorio aria suitable for the individual singer's voice • 2 additional selections from any group. 	NA for recitalists, 5 for those enrolling beyond 8 semesters

Repertoire Requirements for BA in Music Performance Concentration

	Repertoire	Memorized for Jury
Semester 1	(See "Audition Repertoire") 2 songs in contrasting styles	2

Semester 2	3 songs including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 song in English • 1 Song in Italian from the 17th and 18th centuries • 1 additional selection (see no. 16) 	2
Semester 3	4 songs including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Song in Italian from the 17th and 18th centuries • 1 English language art song (see nos. 2, 3, 4, 5) • 1 German language art song in the Baroque, late classical or early romantic period (see nos. 5, 6, 7) • 1 additional selection (see no. 16) 	3
Semester 4	4 songs including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 English language art song (see nos. 2, 3, 4, 5) • 1 German language art song in the Baroque, late classical or early romantic period (see nos. 5, 6, 7) • 1 Handel opera and/or oratorio aria • 2 additional selections (see no. 16) 	3
Semester 5	5 selections including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 song of late 19th and 20th century British and American composers • 1 song in German by early 19th century German romantic composers (Schubert, Schumann, Franz, Mendelssohn, etc.) • 1 French mélodie (see nos. 9, 10) • 2 additional selections from any group. 	4
Semester 6	6 selections including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 song of late 19th and 20th century British and American composers • 1 song in German by early 19th century German romantic composers (Schubert, Schumann, Franz, Mendelssohn, etc.) • 1 French mélodie (see nos. 9, 10) • 1 Representative opera and/or oratorio aria suitable for the individual singer's voice • 2 additional selections from any group. 	5

Semester 7	6 selections including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 early 20th century American Musical Theatre song • 5 additional selections from any group. 	5
Semester 8	6 selections including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 20th century American art song • 5 additional selections from any group. 	NA for recitalists, 5 for those enrolling beyond 8 semesters

Jury Process

Explanation of the jury process and level assignments

Who is required to participate in voice juries?

- Juries are **required** for all BA in Music and BME Music Education majors and music minors who are taking applied lessons that semester for whom voice is their principal instrument. This includes double majors where voice is one of the principal instruments.
- Juries are **optional** for music majors who are taking applied music lessons as their secondary instrument. Many voice students elect to participate to receive comments from evaluators.
- Juries are **optional** for non-music majors who are taking applied lessons. Some students elect to participate to receive comments from evaluators.

The semester jury acts as a routine, high---pressure “audition” for every student. All students who continue in music beyond Shepherd will be faced with the audition process, be it for graduate school, a church job, regional theater, an apprenticeship, etc., and therefore all students need to gain practice in this skill.

Students must select repertoire from the semester repertoire guidelines with the assistance of their teacher.

The jury grade will be assigned by the jury committee, consisting of at least two full---time faculty members as well as adjunct faculty as scheduling permits. Grades will be assigned as follows:

A = Passing

C = Fair

F = Failing

A grade of B or D may be used to indicate borderline performance.

Jury grades will be factored into the student’s applied lesson grade at 40%

Make---up Juries

An “Incomplete” will be given to a student who misses his/her jury due to illness or other circumstances approved by the voice faculty. A make---up jury time will be listed within the first two weeks of the following semester. All regular jury requirements still apply.

Exceptions to jurying

Every student must jury every semester unless the student has passed successfully their recital that semester. Juries for comments only are permissible in this instance, without receiving a jury grade.

Recital Requirements

BME Music Education majors are required to perform one senior recital, comprised of 50 minutes of music and/or music and lecture. All repertory is to be approved by the

applied voice teacher and repertoire selections should reflect the requirements of the semester of performance.

BA with Performance Concentration majors are required to perform two recitals: one 25-minute junior recital and one 50-minute senior recital. All repertory is to be approved by the applied voice teacher and repertoire selections should reflect the requirements of the semester of performance.

Recital Preparation

All students are required to give a recital hearing **two or more** weeks before their recital date. At least two faculty members will attend the hearing and may request any selections from the approved program. The decision will then be made whether or not to go ahead with the student's program on the scheduled date. If the student is deemed unprepared the student will postpone until later in that semester and take the penalty of one full letter grade.

Recital Postponement Due to Illness

Health issues are a special case. A doctor's examination is required, and documentation must be provided. In the circumstances that a student is simply unable to sing, arrangements will be made with the department head and the student's voice teacher as to how to proceed further. In a real medical emergency, no penalty to the grade should be assessed.

Other Performance Requirements

Wednesday Performance Forum (referred to as "The 1:10pm" Recitals)

All students except those in their first semester are required to sing once per semester on the Wednesday 1:10pm recitals.

Ensemble Policy

All students taking applied voice lessons, regardless of their major, are required to participate in at least one ensemble the semester they are studying applied voice.

All voice majors must enroll in a small ensemble (Chamber Singers, Men's Choir, Women's Camerata) and Masterworks Chorale every semester. The following total exceptions are granted to singing in Masterworks Chorale:

- When student teaching (in which case all ensemble requirements are waived)
- When a Music Ed student is in their first required semester of Marching Band
- When a student has been a full-time student at Shepherd University for eight semesters

Students who are engaged in their Junior or Senior recital or are part of the Fall or Spring stage production, are welcome to take a few Masterworks rehearsals off leading up to their performance. Students will request leave from the Director of Choral Activities to be granted any leave or semester exemption.

Concert Attendance

Required Concert Attendance:

- 100 approved concert events to graduate
- All choral ensemble concerts

It is strongly suggested that voice majors attend all student ensemble concerts, student recitals, and faculty recitals. Voice majors should make every effort to attend the junior and senior recitals of other voice majors. The recitals are an important part of your development as an artist, and it is a good practice to support your fellow voice students in their endeavors.

Keep a running, cumulative portfolio of all concerts attended. A faculty member must sign all concert programs for those at Shepherd University, on the evening of the performance. In addition, when the Vocal Department sponsors an off-campus trip to a performance, it is expected that all voice majors attend.