

SINGER'S DICTION
Italian/MUS 2241
Fall 2024

Instructor: Dr. Brenda Smith
Office: MUB 302
Phone: (352) 273-3174
Cellphone: (352) 339-1008
gesang@ufl.edu or bsmith@arts.ufl.edu

Class Meetings

Italian Diction meets M/W/F, Period 5 beginning on Monday, October 14, 2024, in Room 142 of the Music Building. This is a seven-week course that will conclude its meetings on Wednesday, December 4, 2024, with a capstone activity.

Student Office Hours

Student Office hours are posted on the door of MUB 302. Office hours are available by appointment as well. Feel free to communicate by e-mail or phone if needed.

Course Description

The course is designed to improve the capacity of singers, vocal coaches, and choral conductors to perform vocal repertoire in the Italian language with ease, accuracy, and expression. The International Phonetic Alphabet will serve as a basic tool for pronunciation study. The activities of the course will include the preparation and presentation of spoken and sung excerpts from Italian recitative, song, and operatic repertoire from all historical style periods.

Textbooks and Materials

The textbook for the course is *Diction in Context: Singing in English, Italian, German and French* by Brenda Smith (San Diego, CA: Plural Publishing 2021). A copy is always available on the reference shelf of the AFA library.) Each student should purchase an Italian-English dictionary equipped with IPA for the Italian words as well as a copy of the *24 Italian Songs and Arias*, *26 Songs and Arias from 16th & 17th Centuries* or *28 Italian Arias* in the appropriate key range. Students should consult studio teachers regarding the edition of choice.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to recognize the phonemes and transcribe the symbols for Italian language words, using the International Phonetic Alphabet. Students will be able to enunciate clearly in Italian both in speech and song. Students will have skills to evaluate poetic meaning and historical context for texts set by Italian composers in all style periods. Through critical listening, students will gather criteria for developing an aesthetic appreciation for vocal performance of repertoire in Italian. Students will understand the use of the skills learned for further study of vocal repertoire.

Measurement Tools

Timely attendance, initiative and progress are the criteria for grading. Attendance, quizzes, dictations, self-reflection assignments, classroom presentations, concluding essay, and a comprehensive final exercise will be the measurement tools for the course. All assignments, quizzes and exercises should be completed on time. Should you have a circumstance that keeps you from completing your work on time, please consult the instructor prior to the deadline. Classes are structured as interactive group events and will begin and end on time.

Quizzes, Class Activities and Final Exercise

Quizzes, class activities, and homework assignments are intended to assess a student's command of newly introduced material. Class notes, and self-reflections can be collected for future use. The final exercise, an open book activity, is comprehensive in scope. A final dictation and an essay are included in calculating the course grade. The prompt for the essay will be distributed 14 days before the submission date.

Attendance and Participation

Due to the brevity of the semester and the importance of the subject matter for your success as a music major, please arrive on time for class daily. Regular attendance is expected. Excused absences are those officially sanctioned by the University of Florida. <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

Class Presentations

Each student will be expected to present to the class Italian texts in spoken and sung form. Presentations will be evaluated for the depth and clarity of preparation and the accuracy of the diction. Class presentations are scheduled from the beginning of the semester and should be given on the date assigned. In case of illness, please notify the instructor at least 24 hours prior to the day of the scheduled presentation. Assessment forms will be distributed prior to presentations, allowing students to understand the elements being assessed. IPA transcriptions should be original work, done by hand **in pencil, and legible**. All references (information gleaned from online, printed, or recorded materials) should be cited. The grading criteria for class presentations are musical and textual preparation, diction accuracy, poetic, and historical score study. Each student will receive feedback from peers and instructor.

Dates for Class Presentations

First Class Presentations (graded S/U): October 30, November 1, and 4, 2024.

Final Class Presentations (worth 25% of grade): November 18, 20, and 22, 2024.

Final Essay

The final essay prompt will be discussed in class and posted on Canvas.

Grading

Using the plus/minus scale, the course grade will be calculated in the following way:

Attendance/Participation*	15 points
Quizzes and Dictations	15 points
Self-Reflection Assignments	10 points
Final Exercise	10 points
Class Presentations	25 points
Final Essay	25 points
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	100 total points

*Attendance is an essential element for success in this course. There are no discretionary, unexcused absences. Should extenuating circumstances arise that prevent your prompt attendance, please notify the instructor by email or phone as indicated above. Given prior notice, accommodation can be arranged. As a courtesy to others, please notify the instructor or a classmate prior to class if you anticipate arriving late.

*Participation is evaluated through in-class activities that include quizzes, dictation practices and daily discussion. Because the course activity is interactive, please set all cell phones and other comparable devices on “off.” In case of an emergency, please inform the instructor prior to class and adjust your equipment to “vibrate.”

Grading Scale & GPA equivalent:

Percent	Grade	Grade Points
93.4-100	A	4.00
90.0-93.3	A-	3.67
86.7-89.9	B+	3.33
83.4-86.6	B	3.00
80.0-83.3	B-	2.67
76.7-79.9	C+	2.33
73.4-76.6	C	2.00
70.0-73.3	C-	1.67
66.7-69.9	D+	1.33
63.4-66.6	D	1.00
60.0-63.3	D-	0.67
0-59.9	E	0.00

More information on grades and grading policies is here:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Please feel free to consult with the instructor at any time regarding your status in the course.

Note: The syllabus is subject to change. Stay in touch with the progress of our course by reading email (ufl.edu) and checking in Canvas.

Keys to Success

Phonetic Transcriptions

Because many symbols have similar shapes, it is important to be distinct in your IPA penmanship. Make phonetic transcriptions that are neat and clearly legible. **Use pencil** to allow for easy correction. Transcriptions should be original work from your hand. Feel free to consult published sources (online or print) as you create your phonetic transcriptions and always cite those sources. It is **not** acceptable to submit a published source instead of your own work.

Poetic Interpretations

Please present poetic interpretations in your own words.

Research Citations: Please cite your sources for all class presentations requiring research.

Quizzes

Quizzes are announced one week in advance. Flashcards and/or group study are useful.

Final Exercise

The final exercise is an in-class, open book activity requiring access to a textbook, an Italian-English Dictionary and your class notes. Prepare accordingly.

Final Dictation

Be prepared to take the text presented in IPA transcription **as the performer sings it**.

Final Essay

Follow every aspect of the Essay Prompt. Write legibly. Cite all sources.

PROPOSED WEEKLY PLAN

The details of this plan may vary. Watch for “This Week in Italian Diction” emails and notices on Canvas.

October 14-18	Monday: Introduction: “Singing in Italian” Bel Canto and its Pure/ Open/Closed Vowels Wednesday: “Italian language and Thought” Dante/Petrarch No Class on Friday/Homecoming!	For Monday: Read p. 134-141. Bring Textbook and Italian Art Song Anthology For Wednesday: Read p.105-108 The Sounds of Italian/ p. 141-147 “Amarilli” to “Se tu m’ami” Enjoy the Celebration!
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October 21-25	<p>Monday: Auxiliary Verbs Discussion of the Letters “e” and “o”</p> <p>Wednesday: More about the letter “o” and First dictation in class</p> <p>Friday: Consonants, “c”, “g” and “sc” and the Songs and Arias of the 17th and 18th centuries and how they survived.</p>	<p>For Monday: Study textbook p. 126 / “Selve Amiche” on p. 109</p> <p>For Wednesday: “Ombra mai fu” p. 110 First dictation in class</p> <p>For Friday: Study p. 110-112 of textbook, “Va tacito e nascosto” P. 112-113.</p> <p>First Reflection due on Canvas by 5 pm.</p>
October 28- November 1	<p>Monday: Quiz on Auxiliary Verbs and Musical Terms I After the Quiz: Single and Double Consonant Practice Materials for First Presentations due in class</p> <p>Wednesday and Friday: First Class Presentations S/U <i>The instructor provides program notes regarding poet, composer, and musical style.</i> <i>Student completes and reads the poem as it will be sung using the IPA transcription, gives a brief poetic analysis and sings the selection.</i></p>	<p>For Monday: Review Parts of Speech of and Elements of Grammar p. 115-134</p> <p>First Presentation Materials due in Class</p> <p>For Class Presentations: Recite the text as you intend to sing it and share with the class your reflections on the poetry and musical settings. Be sure to rehearse with class accompanist. Listen attentively to the performances of your peers. You will be asked to respond with constructive feedback. Attendance is mandatory.</p>
November 4-8	<p>Monday: First Presentations (cont’d)</p> <p>Wednesday: Italian Arias- old and new: Alessandro Scarlatti and Stefano Donaudy</p> <p>Friday: Discussion of Strategies for Dictation and In-Class Singing Exercise</p>	<p>Please bring your Italian Art song anthology, take notes and participate actively. Attendance is mandatory.</p> <p>For Wednesday: Study p.142-148 “Sento nel core” in comparative settings</p> <p>For Friday: Read p. 149-150 Musical Terms and Question Words, In-Class singing exercise: “Là ci darem la mano”</p>

November 11-15	<p>No Class on Monday in honor of Veteran's Day</p> <p>Wednesday: Introduction to Italian Vocal Music in the 19th century and Gioacchino Rossini Essay Prompt Distributed Rehearsals for Final Presentations will begin this week TBD.</p> <p>Friday: Vincenzo Bellini, Gaetano Donizetti and Giuseppe Verdi Musical Terms II and Question Words Quiz</p>	<p>NO CLASS on MONDAY</p> <p>For Wednesday: Read p. 151-157 Expect a dictation in class</p> <p>For Friday: Musical Terms and Question Words/Quiz in class</p> <p>Materials for Final Presentations due in Class on Friday, November 15</p>
November 18-22	<p>FINAL CLASS PRESENTATIONS</p>	<p>Final class presentations Remember that attendance is mandatory on days when you do not perform</p> <p>Second Self-Reflection due by 5 pm on Canvas</p>
November 25-29	<p>THANKSGIVING BREAK!</p>	<p>Enjoy the break for which we all are grateful!</p>
<p>December 2</p> <p>December 4</p> <p>December 6</p>	<p>Monday: Final Dictation</p> <p>Wednesday: Final Exercise/Last Day of Class Please bring the printed version of Final Presentation Program Note with appropriate cited sources to class.</p> <p>FINAL ESSAY IS DUE ON OR BEFORE 5 PM ON FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2024 as an UPLOAD TO the following EMAIL: bsmith@arts.ufl.edu.</p>	<p>Monday: Final Dictation (Be certain that all IPA symbols are legible.) For Wednesday: Bring textbook, class notes, and dictionary for use in the open book, in-class exercise. Printed Program Note due in class. PLAN AHEAD! Upload your essay as an email attachment before 5 pm on Friday, December 6, 2024. DO NOT SUBMIT ON CANVAS. Late work compromises final grade.</p>

Students Requiring Accommodation

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, <https://disability.ufl.edu/>) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

UF Evaluations Process

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Counseling and Wellness Center

Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/default.aspx>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

The Writing Studio

The writing studio is committed to helping University of Florida students meet their academic and professional goals by becoming better writers. Visit the writing studio online at <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/> or in 2215 Turlington Hall for one-on-one consultations.

