

Applied Voice Syllabus for MUS 151 & MUS 152
East Texas A&M University – School of Music
Fall 2025

Dr. Katie Mersch, Adjunct Voice Instructor
 Email: Katie.Mersch@etamu.edu
 Phone: 913.669.7455

Office: Music Building, Room 237
 Office Hours: By Appointment

SCHOOL OF MUSIC MISSION STATEMENT:

The School of Music at East Texas A&M University promotes excellence in music through the rigorous study of music history, literature, theory, composition, pedagogy, and the preparation of music performance in applied study and ensembles to meet the highest standards of aesthetic expression.

UNIVERSITY MISSION STATEMENT:

East Texas A&M University provides a personal educational experience for a diverse community of life-long learners. Our purpose is to discover and disseminate knowledge for leadership and service in an interconnected and dynamic world. Our challenge is to nurture partnership for the intellectual, cultural, social, and economic vitality of Texas and beyond.

GENERAL COURSE DESCRIPTIONS:

MUS 151 One to four semester hours. Private instruction for music majors in keyboard, voice, instruments, or composition. The course includes recitals and performance forums with teacher-directed student evaluations and instructions. May be repeated for credit.

MUS 152 Principle Applied. One to four semester hours. Private instruction for music majors in keyboard, voice, instruments, or composition. This course includes recitals and performance forums with teacher-directed student evaluations and instructions. May be repeated for credit.

Students enrolled in one credit hour will receive one 25-minute private lesson per week. Students enrolled in two credit hours will receive one 50-minute private lesson per week. Additionally, all students enrolled in this course will meet in a weekly Studio Class structured in the form of a masterclass. You will participate as a performer and as an audience member. This is an opportunity for students to practice the art of solo performance. Each student is required to dress appropriately for performances when singing on Studio Class and Juries – business, business-casual, or “Sunday best” and dress shoes are expected; absolutely no jeans or athletic shoes will be permitted. Any student not in compliance with the performance dress code will not be allowed to perform and will receive a zero for their missed performance.

See the [Vocal Studies Handbook](#) for more information.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Through individual lessons, studio class, and recitals, this course will:

1. Explore functional voice technique concerning respiration, phonation, registration, articulation, and resonance.
2. Explore vocal development through song study and vocal methods.
3. Explore concepts of lyric diction within song literature.
4. Explore musicality and interpretation within song literature.
5. Explore performance practice of song, operatic, and oratorio literature from multiple style periods.
6. Explore practice strategies for technical work and musical development.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

MUS 151 Students will perform selected repertoire with basic technique and musicianship suitable for a secondary performance medium. Students will memorize 3 pieces and perform 1 for their final jury.

MUS 152 In level one principle applied lessons, students will perform selected repertoire suitable to the student's musical development with intermediate technique and musicianship in preparation for the upcoming junior level proficiency exam. Students in this level must memorize 4-5 pieces and will perform 2 for their final jury. In the 4th semester, students will perform all pieces as a part of their JLPE.

Through individual lessons, studio class, recitals, and individual practice, the student will:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of functional singing technique through performance.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of lyric diction in their vocal literature with emphasis on pronunciation, enunciation, purity of vowels, and clarity of consonants.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of musicality in their singing as it relates to dynamics, phrasing, and sensitivity to nuance, expression, communication, and performance practice.
4. Demonstrate preparation and musicianship in their song literature as it relates to correct rhythm, notes, tempo, and articulation.
5. Demonstrate the ability to memorize and perform a variety of assigned repertoire from the stylistic periods of the Baroque to the present, including study of standard art song, oratorio, cantata, and operatic repertoire in English, Italian, French, and German. Other genres may be explored.
6. Demonstrate an understanding of song and opera composers regarding composition style, historical context, and interpretation of song lyrics (poetry).
7. Demonstrate an awareness of health and safety issues related to the voice.
8. Demonstrate the disciplined art of maintaining a regular practice schedule.

Good vocal technique includes consistent production of a free and pleasant tone; freedom from unnecessary tension in the vocal tract and articulators; coordinated engagement of the body in alignment, respiration, resonance, phonation, and articulation; management of breathing and phrasing; coordination of registers; and the ability to express through idiomatic text delivery.

PHILOSOPHY: I aim to teach healthy singing through proper vocal technique, provide tools that will enhance musicianship, and build confidence as a performer. I hope to instill the passion I possess for music in my students and help them attain their musical potential.

ATTENDANCE POLICY: Students are expected to attend all lessons. There are two weekly class meetings – studio class and a weekly lesson. I will excuse any school-sponsored trip, performance, event, etc. A student who must miss a lesson needs to notify me and their pianist at least 24 hours prior to the missed lesson. Make-up lessons need to be within 13 days of the cancelled lesson and are at the teacher's discretion. Lessons cancelled by a student without 24 hours notice are not rescheduled and will result in a loss of points. The vocal division has established 13 lessons as the normal number of lessons per semester, and 10 lessons as the minimum number of lessons a student must attend to receive a passing grade. Therefore, students who miss more than 3 lessons, either excused or unexcused, will be in jeopardy of receiving a failing grade for the semester.

ILLNESS: Do NOT come to a lesson if you are ill. Notify me at least 24 hours in advance and I will try to reschedule. Sick singers should stay home to rest and recover. If you come to a lesson ill, you will be dismissed and forfeit the lesson. In the case of chronic or severe illness, documentation from a medical professional may be required.

LESSON EXPECTATIONS:

- ✓ Come to lessons prepared and ready to work, with music and a pencil.
- ✓ Practice and prepare assigned music. Lessons are not the time for learning music. A singer arriving unprepared for a lesson may receive an invitation to spend that lesson time in a practice room.
- ✓ Learn all assigned repertoire by midterms (pitch, rhythm, and text) with two pieces memorized.
- ✓ Memorize all assigned music no later than the last 3 weeks of the semester, by **Thursday, Nov. 13th**.
- ✓ Demonstrate courtesy, responsibility, and professionalism in interactions with faculty, staff, accompanists, and other students.
- ✓ Be honest and patient. Use feedback to improve. Enjoy the learning process and don't expect perfection.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND REPERTOIRE: Students will purchase or obtain vocal literature according to their individual repertoire assignments. Assignments are determined by the applied teacher and student together and address the needs, skills, and interests of the individual student. Student input is encouraged during repertoire discussions.

- Repertoire planning occurs during lessons while school is in session.
- All assigned repertoire will be memorized and offered at the semester jury.
- Students need to make 3 copies of each song: one for you, one for me, and one for your pianist. You may use a digital copy if you can mark in your score. I prefer a digital copy emailed to me. Please ask your pianist what format they prefer.
- Each student needs a metronome, mirror, pencil, voice notebook/binder, and recording device.
- Students need access to foreign language dictionaries and reference books that use IPA.

IPA AND TRANSLATIONS: Understanding and expression of the text is essential to artistry. Students will write literal translations and IPA for all assigned foreign language repertoire in the copy of the music used for practice by **Thursday, Sept. 25th**. Show me IPA and translations during your regularly scheduled lesson that week. If that lesson has been cancelled or rescheduled, singers will show me IPA/translations no later than your normal lesson day and time that week.

PRACTICING:

- ✦ Practice is an investment you make to improve your skills and achieve your goals.
- ✦ Practice vocal exercises and solo repertoire 5 days/week, 30-60 minutes/day. Day 6 is your lesson and Day 7 is rest.
- ✦ Identify daily and weekly goals.
- ✦ Use “Learning a Song” to learn your music. Prepare the text before working on pitches and rhythms.
- ✦ Know the meaning of **all musical terms and unfamiliar words** in your repertoire.
- ✦ A total of 2 hours of singing per day is the maximum advised by most music professionals. That includes choir, opera/musical rehearsals, and church jobs as well as practicing and coaching. Singing in choir does NOT count as solo practicing but it DOES tire your voice.
- ✦ Practicing too much is as bad as practicing too little. It may be worse.
- ✦ Don’t practice at the end of the day when you’re tired.
- ✦ Minimize distractions – turn off your cell phone.
- ✦ Studying, translating, researching, memorizing, and listening are done in addition to actual singing time. This work does not fatigue the voice. If you get sick, this is a great way to “practice” your music when you are unable to sing.
- ✦ Listen to recordings of great singers.
- ✦ Speak with me if you have a question or run into a roadblock.

“No matter how important the teacher may be to the development of a singing voice, no one has ever been taught to sing by anyone other than herself or himself. The singer cannot undertake the construction of a solid vocal technique without the assistance of a fine teacher, but in the long run it is only the singer who puts it all together or who fails to do so.” – Richard Miller

STUDIO CLASS: Attendance at studio class is important to your success as a voice student. Our studio class meets weekly on Thursdays 5:00-5:50 pm in the Recital Hall with occasional combined studio classes on Mondays 5:00-5:50 pm. In studio class, you have the opportunity to encourage your colleagues, hear a variety of repertoire, and train your ear. Plan to sing each week and warm up before you come. Performances will be assessed according to technique, musicality, diction, and preparation. When singing on studio class, you should have your music memorized, except oratorio pieces. Please be courteous to the pianist and give difficult songs to Alan Dyer (our studio pianist) or Laura Maxwell (the combined studio pianist) ahead of time. Students will be excused from class if they are involved in a school function. You must dress nicely for all studio class performances. Please follow the required performance dress code.

Schedule for Fall Studio Classes

Thurs, Sept 4 th – <i>No Studio Class</i>	Thurs, Oct 23 rd – Mersch Studio Class
Thurs, Sept 11 th – Mersch Studio Class	Mon, Oct 27 th – Combined Studio Class
Thurs, Sept 18 th – Mersch Studio Class	Thurs, Oct 30 th – <i>No Studio Class</i>
Mon, Sept 22 nd – Combined Studio Class	Thurs, Nov 6 th – Mersch Studio Class
Thurs, Sept 25 th – <i>No Studio Class</i>	Thurs, Nov 13 th – Mersch Studio Class
Thurs, Oct 2 nd – Mersch Studio Class	Thurs, Nov 20 th – Mersch Studio Class
Thurs, Oct 9 th – Mersch Studio Class	Thurs, Nov 27 th – <i>No Studio Class (Thanksgiving)</i>
Thurs, Oct 16 th – Mersch Studio Class	Thurs, Dec 4 th – <i>No Studio Class (Gala Dress)</i>

COLLABORATIVE PIANISTS: Students are required to hire a pianist. The accompanist fee is the equivalent of purchasing a textbook for an academic course. See the Accompanist Policy for more details.

It is the responsibility of the singer to:

- pay their pianist on time
- inform accompanists about lessons, performances, juries, etc.
- supply pianists with music (and translations if necessary) in a timely manner
- manage all communication with pianists. If a lesson is rescheduled or cancelled, students are responsible for informing their pianist.

PHILOSOPHY OF GRADING: Evaluating an art form can be complex and subjective. Your applied voice grade is made up of a studio score, attendance score, and jury score. Your studio score is based on your preparation, practice, progress, professionalism, and midterm score--things easily under your control. This empowers you to preserve a strong GPA regardless of the magnificence or the modesty of your instrument. The jury score is based on your performance.

GRADING PROCEDURE: The applied voice semester grade is comprised of **1,000 points**:

300 points = the **Studio** score

200 points = the **Midterm** evaluation score

100 points = the **Attendance** score

400 points = the **Jury** score

At the end of the semester, the 1,000 point score is converted to a percentage to figure the applied voice grade.

GRADING SCALE:

A+	98-100%	B+	88-89	C+	78-79	D+	68-69
A	93-97	B	83-87	C	73-77	D	63-67
A-	90-92	B-	80-82	C-	70-71	D-	60-62
						F	0-59

STUDIO SCORE (300 points): You begin the semester with 300 points. As long as expectations are met, no points will be deducted and your studio grade remains an A.

25 points will be deducted if a student:

- has an unexcused absence from a lesson or masterclass
- comes to a lesson unprepared
- cancels a lesson with less than 24 hours notice
- demonstrates an unwillingness to work, practice, or perform during studio class
- has not memorized the assigned repertoire by the last 3 weeks of the semester
- exhibits chronic lateness, absences, cancellations, or evidence of poor vocal hygiene
- fails to demonstrate courtesy, responsibility or professionalism in dealing with faculty, staff, or colleagues

15 or 20 points will be deducted (teacher's discretion) if a student:

- fails to write IPA for all assigned foreign language repertoire into their music by the due date, and for each following week if the IPA is still not completed

- fails to write word-for-word translations for all assigned foreign language repertoire into their music by the due date, and for each following week if the translations are still not completed

MIDTERM EVALUATION (200 points):

- Students sing midterms during regularly scheduled lessons on **Thursday, October 16th**. By this date, all assigned music will be accurately learned and two of the pieces memorized. During the midterm, students sing through all assigned repertoire with two pieces sung from memory. The grade is based on accuracy of pitch, rhythm, and text--not on technique or artistry. In case of illness, email me. I may have you come to your midterm lesson and mark through your pieces.

GRADING OF MIDTERM EVALUATIONS:

Midterm evaluations are graded as follows:

- ✦ A (180-200 pts): outstanding preparation in the areas of accuracy, musicianship, language, technique, dynamics, phrasing, expression, interpretation, and artistry
- ✦ B (160-179 pts): very good preparation in all of the above areas
- ✦ C (140-159 pts): average preparation in the above areas; average language command, occasional errors in musical preparation or language; continued work encouraged in one or more areas
- ✦ D (120-139 pts): below average in the above areas; further work is warranted in a number of areas
- ✦ F (<119 pts): not accurate; not acceptable

ATTENDANCE SCORE (100 points): Music majors are required to attend all student and faculty recitals performed on campus. Attendance will be taken at each recital by the Opera Graduate Assistant and will be reported to each applied faculty at the end of the semester. If you have a conflict causing you to miss a recital for any reason, you must discuss it with your applied professor at least a week in advance. Attending performances is a vital and enjoyable part of your musical life that will broaden your musical knowledge and hopefully inspire you as a musician; therefore, I require ALL my students to attend voice recitals held on campus, regardless of your major.

JURY SCORE (400 points): At the end of each semester, during finals week, all voice students sing a final exam in the form of a jury in the presence of the voice faculty. All voice faculty members score the jury. Those scores are averaged together to comprise the jury grade. Performances will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- Tone: onsets/offsets, timbre, resonance, intonation, vibrancy, flexibility
- Breathing: alignment, inhalation/exhalation, energized tone, release of tension
- Registers: balanced, smooth transitions
- Language/Diction: articulation, clear vowels, crisp consonants
- Musicianship: accuracy, memory/communication

MEMORIZATION: All voice literature must be memorized except for oratorio literature as appropriate to common performance practice. Students may use scores for oratorio and cantata literature in studio class and juries.

OTHER: The studio grade will be dropped by a letter grade if a student fails to offer an assigned piece as memorized for a jury or fails to sing in studio class during the semester. Extra credit projects are not offered to raise applied voice grades. Students may make an appointment at any time during the semester to discuss grades.

VOCAL HYGIENE: Students are expected to promote and preserve vocal health. Smoking, illegal drug use, and excessive alcohol consumption are incompatible with voice study, professional voice use, and vocal health. Studio members are expected to maintain non-smoking status and a healthy lifestyle. Singers are strongly advised against extended loud speaking, speaking in noisy environments, yelling at sporting events, or the use of corticosteroids. Singers taking medications or substances that may affect vocal function are asked to

communicate honestly and promptly with me so that I may help to preserve and care for their voices. Speak with me if you have questions or concerns.

POLICY REGARDING LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION: I am willing to write reference letters but I require a minimum of 3 weeks notice. I must have all your materials and information (bio, resume, etc.) in hand a *minimum* of 3 weeks prior to the due date. I strongly recommend 3-4 weeks notice. If a mailed reference letter is required, please provide me with an envelope, stamp and the address where it needs to be mailed. Thank you for respecting these parameters.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY, NEEDS AND CONDUCT: Students are expected to assist in fostering and maintaining a studio environment that is conducive to learning. Inappropriate behavior shall result, minimally, in a request to leave the lesson. Students are responsible for maintaining the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact their applied teacher for a confidential discussion of their individual needs for academic accommodation.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND STATEMENTS

Texas Education Code – Music Education

This course content is aligned with the standards established by the Texas Education Code, covering areas such as Music, the Commissioner's Rules, Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities, Technology, and English Language Proficiency. To review these standards, please visit the Music Education Program D2L Shell and select "Standards and Objectives."

ETAMU Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).
<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>
<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

Academic Integrity

Students at East Texas A&M University are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

UNDERGRADUATE POLICIES

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

Students with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

East Texas A&M University

Velma K. Waters Library Room 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

East Texas A&M University Supports Students' Mental Health

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel

Student Conduct and Tenets of Common Behavior: All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the Current University Student Guidebook. Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

Campus Concealed Carry Statement:

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun.

Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer. Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses.

Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

Nondiscrimination Notice

East Texas A&M University will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Technology Requirements

LMS

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool:

https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universitymenu

Access and Navigation

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@etamu.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a ETAMU campus open computer lab, etc.

Communication and Support

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

Health and Wellness

As an Institutional Member of the National Association of Schools of Music, East Texas State A&M University supports the Association's commitment to student health and wellness. The following web address provides links to information for resources related to physical and mental well-being, as well as assists in offering preventative measures that students can take to avoid serious and/or chronic conditions: [Musician Health and Safety - East Texas A&M University](#)

This syllabus may be subject to revision; revisions will be offered in writing.

Bibliography for Applied Voice

General:

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- Fischer-Dieskau, Dietrich. *Schubert's Songs: A Biographical Study*. New York: Limelight Editions, 1984.
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Vocal Methods and Technique:

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- Nesheim, Paul and Weston Noble. *Building Beautiful Voices: A concise, yet comprehensive study of vocal technique for the choral rehearsal or private instruction* (Director's edition). Dayton, OH: Roger Dean Publishing Co., 1995.
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Program Notes/Poetry:

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Style and Interpretation:

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Jazz Techniques:

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