Vocal Music I: Foundation

10.0 Credits, Prerequisite: Audition and Acceptance by Vocal Music Faculty

Designed for all incoming vocal music performance students, with or without knowledge of music or the voice, this entry-level course will introduce the fundamental techniques of vocal production, musicianship, and performance. In order to allow students to develop their own personal styles, the vocal and choral repertoire will be expanded constantly through the introduction of Italian songs and arias from the 17th and 18th centuries, English-language folksongs, spirituals, and selections from musical theater. Classes consist of daily vocalises followed by work on drills and both solo and choral repertoire. The physiology and anatomy of the voice are introduced on both conceptual and practical levels. Emphasis is placed on: the principles of breathing, establishing the appropriate vertical laryngeal position (VLP), developing the vocal range and removing emotional entanglements through the use of vocal fry, establishment of proper glottal pressure for desired sound, support as it relates to vocal fold involvement (resistance of air), resonance (the enhancement of sound), and posture as the framework of the instrument. Students will begin to develop their stage presence and individual practice strategies. Students will begin to establish their musical literacy (notation and vocabulary), as well as skills in solfege/ear-training, rhythm, linear independence, analysis, and interpretation, as well as understanding of the piano keyboard. Aesthetics and the general history of musical development (with a focus on vocal and choral music) are explored, as are composition, critique of music, and career opportunities in the field of vocal music. All students participate in ensemble (choir) performance, but the primary emphasis is training each singer as a soloist. This course is a pre-requisite for further vocal music study.

Vocal Music II: Development

10.0 Credits, Prerequisite: Vocal Music 1

This course is designed for all sophomore vocal music performance students who have completed Vocal Music I. The course continues the development of students’ personal styles by expanding the vocal and choral repertoire with the addition of German diction and solo literature. Classes again consist of daily vocalises followed by work on solo and choral repertoire and drills. The physiology and anatomy of the voice are further explored on both conceptual and practical levels. Emphasis is placed on the same
elements described in the Vocal Music I description, but with a focus on regulation of resistance as it relates to energy and vibration. The uniqueness of each student’s individual voice is further explored, with concentration on the elements necessary to develop each student’s own vocal production. Students continue to develop their stage presence and individual practice strategies. Students develop their literacy and skills in ear-training, rhythm, linear independence, analysis, and interpretation. The nature of the repertoire and materials used becomes more complex and progressively difficult. They continue to explore aesthetics and the history of musical development, in greater detail, as well as composition, critique, and career opportunities in the field. Again, all students participate in ensemble (choir) performance, but the primary emphasis remains training each singer as a soloist.

Vocal Music III: Individualization

10.0 Credits, Prerequisite: Vocal Music I, II

This course is designed for all junior vocal music performance students who have completed Vocal Music I and II. The course further expands students’ solo and choral repertoire but shifts emphasis toward a greater concentration of choral/ensemble literature. By the junior year, each student has developed a solid understanding of healthy vocal technique, and of his or her personal uniqueness as a singer. This development continues toward the goal of a consistent display of healthy vocal technique and a recognizable, individual vocal timbre. In addition to the ever-expanding Italian, English, and German literature, the French chanson is introduced. Classes consist of daily vocalises followed by work on solo and choral repertoire and drills. The physiology and anatomy of the voice are personalized to a high degree of clarity on both conceptual and practical levels. Students continue to develop their stage presence and individual practice strategies. Students further develop their literacy, ear-training, rhythm skills, linear independence, analytical skills, and interpretation, using materials of an even more complex and progressively difficult nature. Students expand the depth and breadth of their vocal music knowledge by continuing the exploration of aesthetics and the history of musical development. The explorations of both composition and critique of music are continued on deeper levels. Exploration of career opportunities in vocal music continues as students begin the selection of possible career paths by making appropriate plans and taking the initial steps toward their goals. This process includes an understanding of the required post-secondary education/training, the selection of potential colleges, and the preparation of applications. Again, all students participate in ensemble (choir) performance, but the primary emphasis remains training each singer as a soloist.
Vocal Music IV: Refinement

10.0 Credits, Prerequisite: Vocal Music I, II, III

This course is designed for all senior vocal music performance students who have completed Vocal Music I, II, and III. The expansion of the solo and choral repertoires continues in the shift in emphasis toward a greater concentration of choral/ensemble literature. The senior year extends and solidifies work accomplished during the junior year, with a more indulgent concentration on the uniqueness of each solo singer. By the senior year, the understanding and technique is refined to the point that each student is able to present a solo recital. The literature added to each student’s repertoire is augmented to reflect the level of musicianship and technique of each individual. Classes consist of daily vocalises followed by work on solo and choral repertoire and drills. The physiology and anatomy of the voice continue to be personalized to a high degree of clarity on both conceptual and practical levels. Students refine their stage presence and individual practice strategies. Students enhance their increasing literacy and musicianship skills (ear-training, rhythm, analysis, interpretation, etc.). On a highly individualized basis, the musicianship of each student is enhanced according to his/her areas of strength and weakness and as it relates to his/her future plans. Studies of aesthetics, historical style development, composition, critique are elevated to a level of greater specificity. Career opportunities continue to be explored as students finalize the process of selecting a potential career path, completing the final steps of their appropriate plans. Again, all students participate in ensemble (choir) performance, but the primary emphasis remains training each singer as a soloist.