

MUSICAL THEATRE

Voice Handbook

FACULTY

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WEEKLY LESSONS

Musical Theatre Majors take 8 semesters of private voice lessons while Minors will take 2 semesters. Students meet with their private instructor once a week for 30 minutes. Lessons schedules are created at the beginning of every semester in consultation with the private instructor.

Students will adhere to the departmental attendance policy. A weekly lesson time will be scheduled between the instructor and the student. If the instructor misses a lesson due to illness or performance, the student will be offered a make-up lesson. If a student needs to miss a lesson, it is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor AND accompanist of their absence. Lessons that a student misses due to illness or other personal reasons generally will not be made up unless the instructor is notified in sufficient time, at the instructor's discretion. After two unexcused absences the student may not receive a final grade higher than a B. After three unexcused absences, the student will receive a failing grade for the semester.

STUDIO CLASSES

Studio Classes are held numerous times throughout the semester. Time and day will be determined by the studio instructor. Students will receive a schedule with locations at the beginning of each semester.

- Studio classes are designed in a master class format; students sing and are then critiqued by the instructor.
- All students registered for voice lessons are required to attend all studio classes within their studio assignment and sing once per semester.
- Attendance at all required events will be taken by the studio instructor.
- The department covers one Studio class performance. Anything beyond is an additional expense for the student.

ACCOMPANISTS

All students enrolled in voice lessons will be assigned an accompanist by their studio instructor. Your accompanist will attend lessons weekly or students may be required to meet with their accompanist regularly outside of lessons. Students need to provide fully legible photocopies or send digital copies to the pianist and instructor. All copies must be double sided.

It is the student's responsibility to pay for all additional fees associated with accompanists. Drake does not cover this additional expense. Failure to pay your accompanist in a timely manner may result in disciplinary actions. *If the instructor is ill the day of your lesson, you are still expected to meet with your accompanist.*

JURIES

All students enrolled in voice will sing a jury at the end of the semester in order to evaluate student progress. Juries function as finals for voice lessons and are evaluated by studio teachers as well as the Musical Theatre Faculty. Juries take place on Dead Day.

BFA MT jury slots are 10 minutes in length, all others are 6 minutes in length. Students will prepare all material worked on in lessons (6 songs for MT BFAs and 4 songs for MT minors/Acting BFAs). Prior to the jury, students must fill out a jury form on Blackboard. Students will receive grades and comments from each instructor.

- Students performing recitals will still perform a jury
 - Exception- if performing a Capstone recital, you will do a shortened jury.
- Juries may only be postponed by providing a doctor's note. Failure to do so will result in a failing grade for the semester.

SOPHOMORE CHECK-POINT

All Musical Theatre majors in their fourth semester jury (sophomore year) will be evaluated by all Performance (including applied voice instructor) faculty in terms of their vocal and academic progress as well as their suitability to continue to upper-level study. The faculty will recommend continuation or probationary status.

If probation is recommended, the student will be allowed one semester to address deficiencies. The fifth semester jury will be the final opportunity for continuation approval. Students that are on probation after the sophomore checkpoint cannot participate in a recital the semester that they are on probation.

DUCSOM

Students who wish to take hour-long lessons may have the opportunity to do so by registering with the Drake University Community School of Music (DUCSOM). This may also be a good option for minors who wish to continue study beyond their required two semesters. However, DUCSOM lessons are not covered by your normal tuition and require an additional semester fee.

Acceptance into DUCSOM lessons is at the discretion of the instructor and may vary every semester according to teaching loads and availability.

STUDENT STUDIO CHANGE PROCEDURE

It is our collective and considered position that all the vocal students at Drake University are in safe hands and will make progress with any of the instructors. However, in the rare case that a student

should desire to change studios, the following procedure must be followed. Failure to do so will jeopardize the request.

1. A student wishing to change teachers MUST NOT approach other teachers to ask to be accepted as their student.
2. A student wishing to change teachers MUST complete a *Studio Voice Reassignment* form, and make an appointment with the Director of the Musical Theatre Program to make the request formal, giving a first and second choice. Confidential discussion may or may not occur at this meeting, as the student wishes.
3. This procedure protects both the student and the teacher from disrupted work. The student does not reveal to the teacher their wish to change teachers unless and until a new assignment is made.
4. The student's request is kept confidential until a secure new assignment is made. Then it is the student's responsibility to inform the teacher being left in a timely fashion.
5. All studio changes must happen at semester break, unless extreme circumstances warrant an immediate change.

RECITAL POLICIES & PROCEDURES

All Musical Theatre recitals are elective and are not a required element of the BFA degree program. Recitals must be approved by the individual studio instructor. Scheduling of a recital should be done in consultation with your teacher, your accompanist and any additional performers. A Senior Recital may be used to fulfill the Senior Capstone requirement.

- Junior and Senior level students may present a joint or full recital
- Freshman and Sophomores are not allowed to present recitals

If the student is electing to use their voice recital as their senior capstone project, you must register for THEA 190 (separate syllabus provided) and have an MT faculty advisor. There must be a dramaturgical aspect for the recital. Meaning the show needs a concept and through-line to qualify as a theatrical performance. This cannot simply be a demonstration of their vocal growth, but also their ability to tell a story through a song. Think a cabaret act, one person show, etc. All recital concepts must be approved by voice faculty AND MT Faculty. 3-4 weeks prior to the recital date we will do a 60 minute hearing. At this hearing ALL music must be MEMORIZED. The voice/MT faculty will ask for selections and/or portions of selections. The student will also be required to turn in a full draft of the script of the show for approval. The faculty provides written comments, and votes to approve the recital or to deny if they are unprepared. Music worked for capstones can be new or previously worked.

If a student elects to do a recital not as their capstone, the student understands that the recital is an elective. They may use new music being worked on in voice lessons, but understand that previously worked music will not be studied in voice lessons. The student also understands that they must meet with their accompanist outside of the regularly scheduled lesson times to work the material not being covered in voice lessons. A student may elect to have a 30 min hearing 3-4 weeks prior to the recital date. At this hearing ALL music must be MEMORIZED. The voice/MT faculty will ask for selections

and/or portions of selections. The student must provide a program list and order. The faculty provides written comments. These should last no longer than 30 mins. It is the student's responsibility to reach out to the faculty for this hearing.

VENUES

Music Majors are required to perform degree recitals and accordingly have priority in booking Sheslow Recital Hall. In order to facilitate this requirement, Musical Theatre majors should seek out alternative venues (Turner Jazz Center, Studio 55, Performing Arts Hall, etc). Only Juniors and Seniors are allowed to put on recitals in those spaces. If Freshman or Sophomores wish to do a recital, they must seek alternative spaces (classrooms, etc.). Musical Theatre majors who wish to perform recitals in Sheslow must obtain permission from the studio instructor *before* booking the hall. All halls should be booked the semester prior to your performance.

To use any rooms in FAC or Sheslow, make a reservation by contacting the Fine Arts Facilities Manager, Jacob Lemons in FAC 273A (x2018; jacob.lemons@drake.edu)

PROGRAMS & ADVERTISING

The music department has very specific policies about the format of recital programs as well as due dates for those materials. Please see their website for further information. Furthermore, please make sure you include the name of your accompanist on your program and your recital posters.

FOLLOW-UP

Make sure you leave a performance space in better condition than you found it. Clean up backstage as well as your reception area. Also, it is customary and polite to thank those who helped make your recital a reality. This includes your private instructor and your accompanist. Lastly, it's imperative that you pay your accompanist promptly following your recital. Unpaid accompanist fees will not be tolerated and will likely lead to a hold on your university account.

ADDITIONAL AND UPDATED POLICIES CAN BE FOUND BY VISITING THE "CURRENT STUDENTS & FACULTY" LINK ON THE THEATRE DEPARTMENT WEBSITE:

<https://www.drake.edu/theatre/currentstudentresources/>

RECITAL POLICIES/PROCEDURES

<https://www.drake.edu/theatre/currentstudentresources/recitalpolicies/>