

**WESTERN UNIVERSITY**  
**MUSIC 2942y-9596**  
**LYRIC DICTION FOR PERFORMERS OF VOCAL MUSIC:**  
**ITALIAN and GERMAN DICTION**

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**COURSE PRE- or COREQUISITES:** M2921, M2922, M3921, M3922, M4923, M9508, or permission of instructor *Unless you have either the prerequisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.*

**TEXTBOOK AND MATERIALS:**

Adams, David. *A Handbook of Diction for Singers: Italian, German, French, 3rd edition*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2022. ISBN: 978-0-19-7639511 (print) ISBN: 978-0-19-76395135 (ebook)  
Italian and German dictionaries (digital or hardcopy) that indicates open and closed vowels pronunciation and pronunciation for written Z for Italian

**SUGGESTED MATERIALS:**

- Binder for notes, handouts, and assignments
- Scores of music for class performance
- Digital video/audio recorder for assignments and practice

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

1. Gaining a proficient basic working knowledge of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) as it relates to the Italian and German languages
2. Learning general rules of pronunciation and syllabification for Italian and German
3. Transcribing Italian and German words and texts into IPA using the strategies found in the Adams' text. Completing word-for-word translations into English is also expected for singing assignments
4. Incorporating the rules of pronunciation into spoken and musical contexts
5. Developing critical listening skills regarding authenticity and flexibility of pronunciation
6. Developing performance strategies and skills through song/aria research

**PROCEDURES:**

1. Attending class periods in-person (or on-line if necessary), prepared for assignments, quizzes, and scheduled events
2. Completing readings and homework assignments for the assigned class periods
3. For both Italian and German, singers will perform from memory **two selections (art songs and/or arias) and one recitative** for the respective language
4. MMus students will complete a **listening assignment and present it in-class**.

**ATTENDANCE AND TARDINESS:** Class session will be held face-to-face in accordance with health and safety protocols. Attendance to each class period is expected. The professor should be informed of absences (medical or non-medical) prior to the class period. To be excused, absences must be cleared by appropriate documentation. Tardiness to class sessions is strongly discouraged. Please plan accordingly.

**ACADEMIC CONSIDERATIONS FOR STUDENT ABSENCE AND MISSING WORK (≥10%):**

Students are responsible for making up any missed classes or assignments as soon as possible. The University recognizes that a student's ability to meet their academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by medical illness. Illness may be acute (short term), or it may be chronic (long term), or chronic with acute episodes. Academic Consideration provides students with consistent, fair, and pedagogically appropriate consideration, without compromising the academic integrity of the course or program, when they have been unable to complete some component of a course due to short-term extenuating circumstances. Students who have long-term or chronic medical conditions (physical or mental) that may impede their ability to complete academic responsibilities are directed to seek Academic Accommodation through Accessible Education ([Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#)).

Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the end of the period of absence covered, to the Academic Counselling unit or Office of the Associate Dean, Undergraduate (TC210), of the student's Home Faculty together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the

academic consideration being requested. Students are directed to read the Senate Policy on Academic Consideration for Medical Illness at the following website for further details regarding various requirements and procedures for the supporting documentation:

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/academic\\_consideration.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration.pdf)

Whenever possible, students who require academic consideration should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, examinations, etc. Students must follow up with their professors and their Academic Counselling office in a timely manner.

The Graduate Program in Music recognizes that a student's ability to meet their academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by illness or injury. To ensure fairness and consistency for all students, academic accommodation for work representing 10% or more of the student's course grade shall be granted only in those cases where there is documentation indicating that the student was seriously affected and could not reasonably be expected to meet their academic responsibilities. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the office of the Associate Dean (Graduate Studies), not to the course instructor.

**ACADEMIC CONSIDERATION FOR MISSING WORK (<10%):** In cases where students miss work that is worth less than 10% of the total course grade due to medical illness or compassionate grounds, reasonable accommodations will be made to accept the missing work. Students who have been denied accommodation by an instructor may appeal this decision to the Associate Dean's office but will be required to present appropriate documentation.

**ACADEMIC OFFENCES:** Submission of work with which you have received help from someone else (other than the course instructor or TA) is an example of plagiarism, which is considered a major academic offence. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, as found at:

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

**MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS:** Students that are in emotional/mental distress should refer to the Health and Wellness at Western page (<https://www.uwo.ca/health/>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help or to go to the Wellness Education Centre located in UCC room 76. **Students in crisis in need of immediate care are directed to go directly to Student Health Services in UC11 or to click on the green "I Need Help Now" button on the Health and Wellness page above.**

**ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:** Students work with Accessible Education Western (AEW, formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here:

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation\\_disabilities.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation_disabilities.pdf)

**RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATIONS:** Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the Western Multicultural Calendar.

<http://multiculturalcalendar.com/ecal/index.php?s=c-univwo>

**CONTINGENCY PLAN:** Although the intent is for this course to be delivered in-person, the changing COVID-19 restrictions may necessitate some or all of the course to be delivered online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will **not** change. Any assessments affected will be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

**ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN EXAMS:** Electronic devices of any type **will not** be permitted during the Midterm Test and/or Final Exam in this course (unless required for accessibility reasons based on an approved accommodation request from Accessible Education).

**ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN CLASSROOM:** The in-class use of electronic devices (other than for instructor-approved in-class uses) is expressly prohibited. Students found guilty of disrupting the class with electronic devices will be asked to leave the class and may be subject to disciplinary measures under the Code of Student Conduct.

**NOTICE FOR REMOTE LEARNING:** All remote learning sessions for this course will be recorded. The data captured during these recordings may include your image, voice recordings, chat logs and personal identifiers (name displayed on the screen). The recordings will be used for educational purposes related to this course, including evaluations. The recordings may be disclosed to other individuals

participating in the course for their private or group study purposes. Please contact the instructor if you have any concerns related to session recordings. Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor.

**STATEMENT ON GENDER-BASED AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE:** Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence, either recently or in the past, you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at [https://www.uwo.ca/health/student\\_support/survivor\\_support/get-help.html](https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html). To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact [support@uwo.ca](mailto:support@uwo.ca) or call 519-661-3568.

**GRADING AND GRADING SCALE for M2942y/M9596y:**

Your final grade will be based on the following percentages:

Attendance/participation:	20%
Assignments/quizzes:	20%
Song #1, Song #2, and Recit (I/G):	30%
Finals (I/G-written):	25%
Spoken Finals (I/G-oral):	5%

**UNDERGRADUATE SCALE:**

A+=100-90%	A=89-80%
B=79-70%	C=69-60%
D=59-50%	F=<49%

**GRADUATE SCALE:**

A=100-80%	B=79-70%
C=69-60%	D=59-50%
F=<49%	

**GRADING STANDARDS:**

1. You will be graded on accuracy of transcription of Italian and German into IPA based on the Adams' text, the accuracy of pronunciation of IPA symbols, and the accuracy of spoken sung representation of Italian and German. This includes participation, willingness, and attitude during class sessions.
2. Assignments are given generally at the end of the class period, either from the syllabus or verbally. They will also be posted on OWL. If you are absent from a class period, you are responsible for getting your assignments from the professor through e-mail, OWL, or individual appointment.
3. **Assignments must be completed/submitted/received by the designated time to receive full credit.** Appropriate partial credit will be given for assignments that are incomplete or late. Students who are absent for reasons stated above should contact the professor to make arrangements for assignments at the earliest reasonable opportunity. (**M9596y students see below for Listening Assignment instructions and expectations**)
4. **Songs, arias, and recitatives for class presentation must be memorized.** An IPA transcription, the actual written song text, and a word-for-word translation in English of the text must be completed as part of this assignment. Performing additional background research will also add to your comprehension of the piece and potentially add to your performance
5. If you are unable to sing and complete a singing assignment due to medical reasons, you must contact the professor as soon as possible and prior to the singing assignment due date. If you can phonate healthily, you will complete a recitation of your text and complete your written portion of your assignment. If time permits, a performance of the piece will be done at the next class period. Failure to make appropriate arrangements with the professor will result in a failing grade for the assignment
6. **Oral examinations** will be administered during the final class period of the term. The exam will take no more than five minutes and be comprised of reading a text in either Italian or German. You will be given appropriate time during the oral exam to analyze the text for accurate pronunciation.
7. **Final examinations for Italian and German will be held during the normal examination times in the Fall and Winter terms respectively.**

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** The Scholastic Offense Policy in regard to plagiarism states, "Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence. The University of Western Ontario uses software for plagiarism checking. Students may be required to submit their written work in electronic form for plagiarism checking." This directly implies that all IPA work be done without the use of other aids beyond the assigned textbook.

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:**

**Assignment Key:**

Reading for next class (from Adams)= [pg.xx]

+ Song and Listening Assignment Explanations

### **FALL TERM SCHEDULE—ITALIAN**

#### **September**

12- Italian first day-Syllabus, Intro to IPA, Vowels, Syllabification, Stress [Preface materials-31]

19-Vowels Revisited, Consonants, Articulation, Phrasal Doubling [31-68]

26-Diphthongs, Triphthongs, Underlay, Stressed *E* and *O*: does it really matter [68-105]

#### **October**

3-Expressive use of Diction; In-class exercises [105-129]

10- MMus Listening Assignments Song #1; Questions; In-class exercises

17- **Singing Assignment #1**

24- **Singing Assignment #1**

31-FALL READING WEEK

#### **November**

7- **Singing Assignment #1**

14- **Singing Assignment #2**

21- **Singing Assignment #2**

28- **Singing Assignment #2**

#### **December**

5-**Recitative/Italian Written Final/Oral Exam**

### **WINTER TERM SCHEDULE—GERMAN**

#### **January**

9- German First day--Syllabus, Intro to IPA, Vowels, WGO vs. WNGO, Stem and Stress [9-31; 131-149]

16- Consonants, Word Structure [150-186]

23- Suffixes, Endings, Glottal vs. Not Glottal; In-class exercises [186-218]

30- Reviewing All Things German; In-class exercises

#### **February**

6- MMus Listening Assignments Song #2; Questions; In-class exercises

13- **Singing Assignment #1**

20- READING WEEK

27- **Singing Assignment #1**

#### **March**

5- **Singing Assignment #1**

12- **Singing Assignment #2**

19- **Singing Assignment #2**

26- **Singing Assignment #2**

#### **April**

2- **Recitative/German Written Final/Oral Exam**

### **IMPORTANT CONTACTS:**

Xinyao Luo- [xluo68@uwo.ca](mailto:xluo68@uwo.ca) (My trusty GTA)

Jihyang Son- [json67@uwo.ca](mailto:json67@uwo.ca) (Our Trusty Collaborator)

Jingquan Xie - [jxie353@uwo.ca](mailto:jxie353@uwo.ca) (Our Trusty Collaborator)

### **MMus Listening Assignment Instructions: Oct. 10<sup>th</sup> and Feb. 6<sup>th</sup>**

You will complete two listening assignments in groups on two different songs or arias. After selecting pieces for the assignment, your group will make sure the library has a recording of it being performed by a native Italian and a non-native singer. Your group will transcribe the text according to the rules of

transcription discussed in class. After transcribing, you should listen to the recordings, indicating the discrepancies between what you transcribed and what was sung. The class presentation will be the combined efforts of your transcription, and comparative listenings of each of the recordings.

**Ex.**

Ombra mai fu  
Transcription: [ˈom.bra ma:i fu]  
Singer 1 [u bre ˌI v ]  
Singer 2 [ mai: ]

You need not transcribe the entirety of each recording's diction, only the deviation from the rules discussed in the Adams text and in class.

**Song/Recit. Assignment Instructions:**

**I Song #1 Oct. 17<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> and Nov. 7<sup>th</sup>**

**I Song #2 November 14<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>nd</sup>, and 28<sup>th</sup>**

**I Recit. Dec. 5<sup>th</sup>**

**G Song #1 Feb. 13<sup>th</sup>, Feb. 27<sup>th</sup>, and Mar. 5<sup>th</sup>**

**G Song #2 Mar. 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>st</sup>, and Mar. 26<sup>th</sup>**

**G Recit. Apr. 3**

For each assignment, prepare your text in the following manner:

IPA [ˈkwe:.sto a.'mo:r ver.'gɔŋ.na mi:a]  
Original text Questo amor, vergonia mia  
Translation This Love .....

Your assignment will be graded on the following: IPA transcription, translation of the text, spoken accuracy according to the written IPA, and sung accuracy according to the written IPA. Please provide at least 1.5 line spacing between lines of the three lined grouping (IPA, Original Text, and Translation).

**Selected Bibliography**

Adams, David. *A Handbook of Diction for Singers: Italian, German, French, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition*.  
New York: Oxford University Press, 2022.

*Handbook of the International Phonetic Association: A guide to the use of the International Phonetic Alphabet*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Montgomery, Cheri. *German Lyric Diction Workbook, 5<sup>th</sup> ed.*  
Nashville, TN: S. T. M. Publishers, 2014.

Montgomery, Cheri. *Italian Lyric Diction Workbook, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.*  
Nashville, TN: S. T. M. Publishers, 2013.