

Don Wright Faculty of Music
Western University Chamber (Opera) Orchestra 2020-2021
Music 2973a, 3973a, 4973a, AND 2974b, 3974b, 4974b, 9564a, 9565b
Time: As per attached schedule

Conductor/Instructor: Simone Luti
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Office hours: by appointment
Email: sluti@uwo.ca,

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Course Description

Experience in the chamber orchestra helps to prepare students for careers as performers and teachers. Students have the opportunity to develop rehearsal, performance and ensemble skills, as well as leadership abilities, while rehearsing and preparing operatic repertoire. Repertoire is varied and challenging, requiring individual preparation between rehearsals. Throughout the course of the academic year, the orchestra will perform Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *Così fan tutte* and Giacomo Puccini's one-act operas *Gianni Schicchi* & *Suor Angelica* (Please note: the instrumentation requirements for these operas are not identical). Placement in this ensemble is based on a combination of students' technical and sight-reading abilities and a perceived positive, hard-working attitude. Participants are expected to audition and placements are decided by a panel of experts comprising staff and faculty of the Western University music department.

For the 2020-2021 academic year, Western University is providing instruction in a blended face-to-face/virtual learning model. In light of COVID-19, The Don Wright Faculty of Music is committed to providing a safe environment for in-person learning, which includes operating music ensembles in a manner that prioritizes students' wellbeing. With this in mind, the chamber orchestra will be operating differently than in previous years. Opera performances will be semi-staged, with orchestra musicians being seated on stage rather than in the orchestra pit, so as to ensure adequate physical distancing. The membership of the chamber/opera orchestra will be cycled between concerts throughout the year to ensure that all players have sufficient opportunities to gain playing experience in different contexts. Other changes to the chamber orchestra's normal operations in light of COVID-19 will be detailed in subsequent sections of this course outline. We strongly encourage all students to check their UWO email regularly for messages regarding health and safety from the Don Wright Faculty of Music, and also to refer to Western's COVID-19 Information page for the latest updates: <https://www.uwo.ca/coronavirus/>.

Contingency Plan: In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction, all remaining course content will be delivered entirely 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 remaining assessments (e.g. performances) will also be conducted online at the discretion of the course instructor.

Learning Objectives

- Listening Practice: Developing listening skills relevant to understanding symphonic performances.
- Performance Study: Identifying and discussing historically important performances, orchestras, conductors, soloists, and developing an understanding of historical performance evolution.
- Orchestral Score Study: Analyzing and developing understanding of the score and its elements; structure, form, melody, harmony and rhythmic structure, various sectional relationships, themes and their variations, primary and secondary elements, etc.
- Excerpt Practice: Demonstrate knowledge of phrasing, articulation, dynamics, and rhythm related to excerpts chosen from the operatic repertoire. For string players - learning skills about various bow strokes and how these are to be deployed in orchestral playing. For wind and brass players – understanding how to play soloistic passages vs. accompaniment figures.
- Rhythm Practice: Developing rhythmical skills through collectively studying specific orchestral excerpts (e.g.: *Gianni Schicchi*)
- Basic Conducting Practice: Learning patterns, cuing, and basic conducting skills in order to be able to conduct small ensembles and sectionals, and better respond to conductors.
- Ensemble Practice: Working on adjusting balance, intonation, articulation, sectional blend etc. through face-to-face rehearsals, performances, and recordings
- Recording Practice: Learning skills for high-quality music recording to be applied in virtual orchestra sessions and/or asynchronous recordings.

Learning Outcomes

- Students will develop musical literacy and technical skills on their instrument at a high level of proficiency.
- Students will be able to collaborate in order to create and present musically artistic events, combining individual knowledge, skills, and values with a collegial and flexible mindset.
- Students will cultivate the abilities of effective time management; task prioritization is demonstrated by maintaining a practice regimen.
- Students will perform with artistic excellence, communicating emotional and musical meaning.
- Students will develop their artistic personality and potential through informed interpretation of practical, historical, and theoretical concepts in their performances.
- Students should be able to demonstrate musical independence through self-remediation in performance.
- Students should develop the confidence to know what to add, what to ignore, and what to enhance in a musical performance.
- Students will develop focus and efficiency in problem solving through critical listening and self-reflexivity during practice time.

- Students should be able to demonstrate professionalism through performance, pedagogy, and personal initiative.

Course Prerequisites

Please note that there are **no course prerequisites** for playing in the chamber orchestra. Admission to the ensembles is based on either a live audition a recorded audition, and granted at the discretion of the conductor and the audition committee. Admitted students enrolled in course number corresponding to their year of study, as well as the production to which they've been assigned (Fall or Winter). Those students who enroll in the course stand to receive an ensemble performance credit. As this credit is required for students in the Music Faculty, preference will be given to admitting music students to the orchestra prior to non-music students.

NOTE: Non-music students require special permission from the Dean of their home faculty to enroll in the chamber orchestra for academic credit. Unless you have 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 permission.

Rehearsals

Attendance is mandatory throughout the year for all scheduled orchestra sessions, including regular rehearsals with Professor Luti, dress rehearsals, performances, and breakout sessions with the GTA teaching team (See below). Orchestra rehearsals are not like other classes or labs, but rather like a professional service. Individual practice is expected outside of regular rehearsals.

The chamber orchestra rehearses on a condensed timeline relative to other university ensembles. The first four rehearsals of each production will be conducted without singers and will be fairly spaced out – once every two weeks. These orchestra-only rehearsals will be followed by the “sitzprobe” rehearsals the weekend before the production goes up, in which the cast sings through their parts without staging. In the week leading up to the performances, the cast and orchestra will rehearse together in Paul Davenport Theatre. Please refer to the attached schedule (at the end of the course outline) for specific dates and times of rehearsals and performances for the fall and winter productions. **Students who have a pre-existing conflict with any of the dates in the attached schedule should advise the instructor (Prof. Simone Luti) and GTAs as soon as possible.**

Important: While every effort will be made to adhere to the rehearsal schedule, please be aware that changes may occur depending upon the progress of the ensemble. Changes to the rehearsal schedule will be announced at the end of rehearsal and/or communicated via email and OWL. Please check your emails regularly. In the event that a COVID-19 resurgence necessitates moving from in-person rehearsals to virtual sessions, this will be communicated via email and OWL as well. Please refer to “Online Learning Resources” section below for information on how virtual orchestra sessions will be conducted.

Required Materials

- Metronome
- Tuner
- Pencils with eraser
- Cloth face-mask, or another face-covering approved for mitigating airborne spread of coronavirus (NOTE: Wind/Brass Players should keep a face-covering on hand for instances where they are not playing their instruments for extended periods of time)
- Music Stand (NOTE: To further mitigate COVID-19 spread, **all students are expected to bring their own stand** to all sessions. Stand-sharing is prohibited to maintain physical distancing.)
- Music (NOTE: Digital copies of scores and parts will be distributed online using OWL, or alternately via emailed PDFs. **Students are expected to print copies of their parts prior to the first rehearsal.** Portable tablet reading devices may also be used, provided the student has the conductor's permission, a paper copy of the music is on hand, and the use of a tablet does not inhibit the sightlines of other players in the orchestra.)
- Laptop or desktop computer with a webcam*
- A stable internet with at least a consistent 7 Mb per second upload speed*
- External USB microphone OR XLR mic and audio interface*
- CAT 6 ethernet cable for wired-internet connection*
- Any necessary dongles or connector cables for your computer/microphone set-up*
- Open or semi-open stereo headphones (Wired connection preferred)*

*Recommendations based on the Don Wright Faculty of Music's "Hardware Suggestion Checklist". Please consult with the chamber orchestra teaching team if you have any concerns about internet access and/or recording equipment so that we can make any necessary arrangements for you to participate in virtual learning activities.

Preparation

You need to have your music and a pencil at every session. Participants are expected to learn their parts prior to any group rehearsal so that rehearsal time can be spent as productively as possible. Listening to the works being played while viewing a full score is highly valuable and recommended.

While it is understood that this is a student ensemble, a **professional attitude and approach** is expected.

Repertoire for 2020-2021

Program #1: Mozart's *Così fan tutte* (for all 'a' versions of the course)

Program #2: Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi* & *Suor Angelica* (for all 'b' versions of the course)

Concert Attire

Bottom: Full-length black skirt or black dress pants, black socks or tights, black dress shoes

Top: Black blouse or dress shirt (At least $\frac{3}{4}$ length sleeves)

Grading Scheme

This course is graded. In addition to attendance, other factors affecting the grading include:

1. Punctuality to all services. Participants are expected to be in place and warming up at least 5 minutes before the service begins.
2. Preparation. Participants are expected to be able to play the music and be aware of general tempi etc.
3. Demonstration of improvement throughout the rehearsal process. This will require additional individual practice time
4. Demonstration of a positive attitude towards colleagues
5. Students are expected to address all theatre technical staff in a respectful manner should there be any need to request adjustments to equipment, etc. during services in Paul Davenport Theatre.
6. Demonstration of professional demeanor at all times during rehearsals and performances i.e. no phones/tablets, no talking during performances, etc.

Online Learning Resources

For the duration of the 2020-2021 academic year the chamber orchestra teaching team will be maintaining OWL Project Sites to coordinate communications, distribute music, enable file-sharing, as well as provide access to VoiceThread and other resources related to virtual learning. All members of the orchestra will be given access to the chamber orchestra OWL project sites via their individual OWL accounts.

All players will have received an email notification about being granted access to the project site for the production in which they're involved – please notify a member of the teaching team if you did not receive this notification email. To access the project site, simply go to the OWL log-in page (<https://owl.uwo.ca/portal>) and type in your Western ID and password, and then go to the Sites portal (The “Sites” icon looks like a waffle-iron in the upper-right-hand corner of the interface). In the Sites portal, you should see the opera production listed under the Projects heading – click on the link to be taken to the chamber orchestra project site.

As in the past, email will be the primary means by which the teaching team communicates with the orchestras. Please ensure that you are checking your UWO email regularly for updates and announcements. These communications will also be posted to the OWL Project Sites. If you prefer to receive messages at a non-UWO email address, it is your responsibility to arrange that with the teaching team. **If you are not receiving communications from the teaching team, please notify us immediately at your next in-person/virtual session so that we may remedy the situation.**

Note that any virtual orchestra sessions will be conducted using Zoom video conferencing software. Western students may access Zoom, and also download the latest version of the Zoom Desktop Client application for their computer, smartphone, or tablet by logging in with their Western ID and password at <https://westernuniversity.zoom.us>. Prior to every zoom session, students will receive a notification via email that contains a secure link and/or a meeting-room

ID number + password. To join a Zoom meeting, simply click on the secure link, or alternately you can click on “Join Meeting” in the Zoom interface and fill in the pop-up prompts for the meeting ID number and password. Information on Zoom sessions will also be provided on the OWL project sites. Attendance will be taken by a designated GTA during all virtual orchestra sessions, just the same as for in-person sessions. Therefore, to ensure that you “arrive” on time, set up and be ready to start at least 5 minutes before the scheduled time.

For privacy and security reasons, **do not reply to Zoom email notifications or forward them to other students.** The teaching team will address any issues that may arise having to do with Zoom access on a case-by-case basis. Students who have questions or concerns about Zoom are invited to email Jeffrey Komar, the chamber orchestra’s online-learning coordinator, at jkomar2@uwo.ca.

Due to the technical limitations imposed by video conferencing, Zoom orchestra sessions (as they are required) will be conducted differently than in-person rehearsals. This time will be spent on learning activities designed to cultivate technical and musical skills pertinent to operatic performance, e.g. score study and annotating parts, discussion of historic recordings, and the performance/adjudication of relevant operatic excerpts.

Recording of Online Activities: All of the 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.

Online Etiquette: Some components of this course may involve synchronous online interactions. To ensure the best experience for both you and your classmates, please honour the following rules of etiquette:

- Use your computer and/or laptop if possible (as opposed to a cell phone or tablet)
- “Arrive” to the session on time
- Ensure that you are in a private location to protect the confidentiality of discussions in the event that a discussion deals with sensitive or personal material
- To minimize background noise, kindly mute your microphone until you are invited to speak/play, unless directed otherwise
- Unless invited by the instructor, do not share your screen in the meeting
- **During Zoom breakout sessions,** Be prepared to turn your video camera off at the instructor’s request if the internet connection becomes unstable
- **During sessions in which the entire orchestra is on a zoom call,** to give us optimum bandwidth and web quality, please turn off your video camera for the entire session unless you are invited to speak/play

The course instructor or designated GTA will act as moderator for the class and will deal with any questions from participants. To participate please consider the following:

- If you wish to speak, select the blue “raise hand” function and wait for the instructor to acknowledge you before beginning your comment or question.
- Kindly remember to unmute your microphone and turn on your video camera before speaking.
- Self-identify when speaking.
- Kindly remember to select the “raise hand” function again to lower your hand, mute your mic and turn off your video camera after speaking (unless directed otherwise).

General considerations of “netiquette”:

- Keep in mind the different cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the students in the course.
- Be courteous toward the instructor, your colleagues, and authors whose work you are discussing.
- Be respectful of the diversity of viewpoints in the class and in your readings. The exchange of diverse ideas & opinions is part of the scholarly environment.

Note that disruptive behaviour of any type during online classes, including inappropriate use of the chat function, is unacceptable. Students found guilty of “Zoom-bombing” a class, or of other serious online offenses, may be subject to disciplinary measures under the Code of Student Conduct.

Attendance Policies and Procedures

As previously stated, students are expected to attend and participate in all chamber orchestra rehearsals. Permission to be absent from rehearsal must be granted by the conductor in extenuating circumstances. Grounds for absences are as follows:

- Official school functions (e.g. Performing in a masterclass/recital, or attending mandatory exams in other university courses) Approval must be obtained from the conductor well in advance.
- A death in a student’s immediate family
- Illness (See note on COVID-19 below)

All other absences will be considered on a case-by-case basis. In most cases, any member of the chamber orchestra who is absent from a dress rehearsal will not be permitted to perform in concert.

Note that by enrolling in the chamber orchestra, the expectation is that your orchestra commitments will take precedence over other performing opportunities which may arise during the year. This policy is consistent with the expectation of a professional performing ensemble.

Attendance and participation are major factors in assessing students’ success in the chamber orchestra. Attendance is documented at each orchestra session by a designated GTA on the

teaching team. An **unexcused absence** will result in a review of a student's membership in the chamber orchestra and may jeopardize their credit.

Policy on Excused/Unexcused Absences: Absence from performances or more than one unexcused absence may result in loss of your position in the orchestra and/or loss of ensemble credit. Please e-mail the conductor or designated GTA in charge of attendance in advance of all absences (Preferably 2 weeks in advance). If the reasons for your absence abide by the bullet-points listed above, you will be marked down as "excused". In the event that you are marked down for two or more unaccounted-for absences, we will assume that you have withdrawn from the orchestra.

Absence due to Probable COVID-19 Exposure: In light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, it is imperative that you notify either the conductor or the designated GTA in charge of attendance in the event that you need to self-isolate...

- If you have come into contact with someone with a confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis
- If you have recently travelled outside of Canada (In the last two weeks)
- If you have come into contact with someone who has recently travelled outside of Canada (In the last two weeks)
- If you begin to experience signs or symptoms of COVID-19 (e.g. fever of 37.5°C or higher, fatigue or muscle aches, loss of taste or smell, chills, or new/worsening respiratory illness symptoms such as cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny nose, or difficulty swallowing)
- You are positively diagnosed with COVID-19

Any student who must self-isolate due to COVID-19 exposure will not be penalized for missing in-person orchestra sessions. That said, we still require that you communicate with the teaching team and notify us of when you expect to resume in-person meetings. Additionally, we request that you go through the official steps of self-reporting your absence and/or obtaining appropriate medical documentation (See "Academic Consideration for Student Absence" below). For more information and resources, once again we direct you to visit Western's Coronavirus/COVID-19 website, <https://www.uwo.ca/coronavirus/>.

Academic Consideration for Student Absence: Students will have up to two (2) opportunities during the regular academic year to use an on-line portal to self-report an absence during the term, provided the following conditions are met: the absence is no more than 48 hours in duration, and the assessment for which consideration is being sought is worth 30% or less of the student's final grade. For Graduate students, the threshold for using the self-reported absence portal is set at work constituting 10% or less of the final grade. The Self-Reporting Absence Portal can be accessed by logging into the Student Centre (<https://student.uwo.ca>) using your Western ID and then clicking on the Self-Reporting Absence button underneath the "Student Services Links" heading on the right-hand side of the screen. **Students are expected to contact their instructors within 24 hours of the end of the period of the self-reported absence, unless noted on the syllabus.** Students are not able to use the self-reporting option in the following circumstances:

- for exams scheduled by the Office of the Registrar (e.g., December and April exams)

- absence of a duration greater than 48 hours,
- assessments worth more than 30% of the student's final grade (10% for graduate students),
- if a student has already used the self-reporting portal twice during the academic year

If the conditions for a Self-Reported Absence are not met, students will need to provide a Student Medical Certificate if the absence is medical, or provide appropriate documentation if there are compassionate grounds for the absence in question. **Students are encouraged to contact their Faculty academic counselling office to obtain more information about the relevant documentation.**

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds, or for other reasons. All documentation required for absences that are not covered by the Self-Reported Absence Policy must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office.

- Undergraduate Students in Music submit their documentation to the Undergraduate Academic Counsellor Diane Mills (Office: TC 210G, Phone: 661-2111 x85352, email: pdmills@uwo.ca)
- Graduate Students in Music submit their documentation to the Graduate Admissions Assistant Audrey Yardley-Jones (Office: TC 216, Phone: 661-2111 x85354, email: ayardley@uwo.ca)
- Non-music students submit their documentation to the undergraduate/graduate academic counsellor in their home faculty.

For the Western University policy on Consideration for Student Absence, see:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic_Consideration_for_absences.pdf

and for the Student Medical Certificate (SMC), see:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

Academic Consideration for Missing Work: In cases where students are unable to submit work due to medical illness or compassionate grounds, if an online self-reported absence is submitted, or if appropriate supporting documentation is submitted to the Associate Dean's office, and the accommodation is granted, then the missed assessments may be rescheduled or discounted in the calculation of the final grade for the course, at the discretion of the instructor. If neither a self-reported absence nor an appropriate supporting document is submitted to the appropriate office, then the missed assignments will receive a grade of zero.

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

Statement to Graduate Students on Academic Integrity: The School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies has developed a mandatory Academic Integrity Module that is designed to help students understand and abide by principles of academic integrity. Further information about this module can be found at: https://grad.uwo.ca/life_community/study/index.html. The *Scholastic Offence Policy* for graduate students is provided at http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf.

Graduate students may appeal a mark on a particular piece of work, an examination, or final standing in a course. The first step is for the student to initiate informal consultation with the course instructor. If a resolution is not reached the student may appeal to the Associate Dean (Graduate Studies) in writing. Students may also appeal the ruling of an instructor, a program, or an administrator in any academic matter. Grounds for appeal include: medical or compassionate circumstances; extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control; bias; inaccuracy; and unfairness. Further information about appeals of grades in graduate courses may be found at: <https://grad.uwo.ca/administration/regulations/13.html>.

Mental Health & 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. As part of a successful undergraduate/graduate student experience at Western, we encourage students to make their health and wellness a priority. Western provides several on-campus health-related services to help students achieve optimum health and engage in healthy living while pursuing an undergraduate/graduate degree. Students seeking help regarding mental health concerns are advised to speak to someone in whom they feel comfortable confiding, such as a faculty supervisor, a program advisor, or the Associate Dean (Graduate Studies). Campus mental health resources may be found at http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/resources.html.

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 cited above. You can also access various health and wellness resources via Western's Student Experience website at <https://studentexperience.uwo.ca>.

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities: Students with special learning needs or other circumstances are asked to inform the instructor as soon as possible so that necessary accommodations can be considered. 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

Support Services for graduate students with disabilities can be found here: <https://grad.uwo.ca/administration/regulations/14.html>.

Religious Accommodation: When scheduling of course requirements conflicts with religious holidays that require absence from the University or that prohibit or require certain activities on the part of the student, the student will not be penalized for absence because of religious reasons.

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>.

Graduate students should consult with the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies in Music (Dr. Catherine Nolan, cnolan@uwo.ca) in the event that a suitable arrangement involving a graduate course cannot be worked out with the instructor. Further information can be found here:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_religious.pdf.

Schedule for Puccini Suor Angelica and Gianni Schicchi 2021

Feb 8 th	6.30-9.30 reading #1	MB27
Feb 22 nd	6.30-9.30 reading #2	MB27
Mar 1 st	6.30-9.30 reading #3	MB27
Mar 3 rd	6.30-9.30 reading #4 (optional)	TBA
Mar 6 th	2pm-5pm reading #5	From now on PDT
Mar 7 th	2pm-4pm/5pm-8pm sizt probe	
Mar 8 th	6.30-9.30 orchestra rehearsal	
Mar 9 th	6.30-9.30 orchestra rehearsal	
Mar 10 th	6.30-9.30 dress rehearsal #1	
Mar 11 th	6.30-9.30 dress rehearsal #2	
Mar 13 th	2pm performance #1	
Mar 14 th	2pm performance #2	