

UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
MUSIC 9596y
LYRIC DICTION FOR PERFORMERS OF VOCAL MUSIC:
ITALIAN DICTION

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MEETING TIME: T 1:30-3:00pm, TC100

OFFICE HOURS: By appointment

REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS:

Montgomery, Cheri. *Italian Lyric Diction Workbook, 3rd edition*. Nashville, TN: S.T.M. Publishers, 2014.

ISBN: 978-0-9894385-2-0

An Italian Dictionary containing indication of open and closed “e” and “o” for stressed syllables (and other IPA helps if desired)

SUGGESTED MATERIALS:

- 3 Ring binder for notes, handouts, and assignments
- Hand-held mirror
- Original scores of music for class performance
- Personal recording device for study

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

1. Gaining a proficient basic working knowledge of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) as it relates to the Italian language
2. Learning general rules of pronunciation and syllabification for Italian
3. Transcribing Italian words and texts into IPA, including word-for-word translations from Italian into English
4. Incorporating the rules of pronunciation into spoken and musical contexts
5. Developing critical listening skills in regard to authenticity and flexibility of pronunciation
6. Developing performance strategies and skills through song/aria research

PROCEDURES:

1. Attending class periods, prepared for quizzes and scheduled examinations
2. Completing readings and homework assignments for the assigned class periods
3. Singing **two art songs/arias and one recitative** in Italian
4. Completing **one listening assignment and presenting your findings for the class**
5. Possible responsibilities in working with undergrad students in study groups

ATTENDANCE AND TARDINESS:

Attendance to each class period is expected. The professor should be informed of absences for medical reasons prior to the class period. These absences must be cleared with a medical note by the following class period to be accepted. Academic absences will be accepted when documented in accordance with university policy.

Tardiness to class sessions is strongly discouraged. Students who arrive tardy but less than fifteen minutes late will receive partial attendance credit for the day. Two partially attended classes will result in one unexcused absence. Students who arrive more than fifteen minutes after the beginning of a class session shall receive an unexcused absence for the day.

GRADING AND GRADING SCALE:

Your final grade will be based on the following percentages:

Attendance/participation:	15%	A+=100-90%	D=59-50%
Listenings and Assignments	25%	A=89-80%	F=<49%
Singing #1, #2, and Recit:	30%	B=79-70%	
Final (written and oral):	30%	C=69-60%	

GRADING STANDARDS:

1. You will be graded on accuracy of transcription of Italian into IPA, the accuracy of pronunciation of IPA symbols, and the accuracy of the sung representation of Italian. This includes participation and attitude during class sessions.
2. Assignments will be given during the class period, either on the syllabus or verbally. If you are absent from a class period, you are responsible for getting your assignments from the professor or TA through e-mail or individual appointment.
3. **Assignments must be completed by the beginning of class 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 presenting assignments at the earliest reasonable opportunity. **See below for Listening Assignment instructions and expectations**
4. **Songs, arias, and recitatives prepared for class performance MUST be memorized**, with a sheet containing the song's text, IPA transcription, and a word-for-word translation of the text. 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 on your assigned day due to medical reasons, you must contact the professor the morning prior to the class period. If you are not seriously ill and contagious, you will recite your text and present your IPA transcription. Failure to perform the piece or to make appropriate arrangements with the professor will result in a failing grade for the performance
6. **Oral examinations** will be scheduled and administered during the final exam preparation period. The exam will take no more than five minutes and be comprised of reading a text in Italian. You will be given appropriate time during the oral exam to analyze the text for accurate pronunciation.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE: (Assignments)

September

10- Course Syllabus, Accompanist Assignments, IPA introduction, syllabification (Units 1-3)

17-In-class exercises (Units 4-6)

24-In-class exercises (Units 7-9; Song #1 Transcriptions)

October

1-In-class exercises

8- **Singing Assignment #1**

15- **Singing Assignment #1**

23- **Graduate Listening Assignments**; in-class exercises (Song #2 Transcriptions)

30- In-class exercises

November

5- **FALL READING WEEK-NO CLASSES**

12- **Singing Assignment #2**

19- **Singing Assignment #2**

26-Final/Recit preparation

December

3- **Recit. Performances (Finals Due; Oral Exam)**

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. Western University 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.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS:

As part of a successful 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 a 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). Students that are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

ACCOMMODATION ON MEDICAL OR COMPASSIONATE GROUNDS:

According to new Senate policy, it is the instructor's responsibility to determine if and how work missed due to medical or compassionate grounds will be accommodated. This new Senate policy allows students in undergraduate programs to self-report up to 2 short (48 hours or less) absences for work worth 30% or less of their final grade. If the student has already self-reported absences, or if the duration of an absence is more than 48 hours or the work missed greater than 30%, the student will be required to file appropriate documentation, as soon as possible, to the office of the Associate Dean, Undergraduate in order to receive academic consideration. Students are not allowed to self-report absences during official exam periods.

Any documentation, when required, is processed through the office of the Associate Dean and should be sent directly to this office, not to the instructor. Appropriate accommodation will be determined in consultation with the instructor. A typical accommodation for a student might involve postponing a due date for an assignment. Where a postponement is not possible or reasonable from the instructor's perspective, the student might be excused from an assignment or quiz and the remaining course requirements prorated in calculating the final course grade.

ACCOMMODATION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

Students with a disability that might require some special accommodation within a course must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS, formerly SSD) in the Student Development Centre. The SAS will advise instructors of the nature of the disability and will recommend accommodations. The responsibility of the Instructor, Chair, and Dean are stated thus in the Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_disabilities.pdf

The decision whether to accept an accommodation suggested by SAS rests with the instructor in the first instance. The instructor, Chair or Dean may reject a suggested accommodation only if it would compromise the academic integrity of the course or program. All those involved in making the decision must recognize their obligation to accommodate where possible, and their obligation to respect both the privacy and dignity of the student, as well as the academic integrity of the programs.

It is the responsibility of the instructor to identify the essential academic requirements of the particular course or program so that the discussions are properly informed. Where possible, it is recommended that instructors provide SAS with a summary of these essential academic requirements prior to or at the beginning of classes. The instructor is responsible for working with SAS to determine the manner and extent to which the student's needs, arising out of the diagnosed disability, can and should be accommodated. It is equally the responsibility of the instructor to question a suggested accommodation if the instructor believes it would compromise the academic integrity of the course or program. In such circumstances, instructors are encouraged to suggest alternative accommodations, where appropriate.

SAS will also advise the instructor that they will administer the course examination at the Student Development Centre, but in many cases, particularly if audio equipment is required, it is better to work out an arrangement with the student to complete the examination within our own facilities. Be aware that this will typically involve a separate exam room and an extended time period.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY:

- Adams, Andrew. "Unstressed E's and O's in Italian Lyric Diction: A Comparison of Diction Texts." *Journal of Singing* 59, no. 4 (March/April 2003): 333-39.
- Adams, David. *A Handbook of Diction for Singers: Italian, German, French, 2nd ed.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- _____. "Aspects of Consonant Articulation in Italian Diction." *Journal of Singing* 59, no. 3 (January/February 2—3): 247-52.
- _____. "On Teaching an Italian Diction Class." *Journal of Singing* 61, no. 2 (November/December 2004): 177-183.
- Colorni, Evelina. *Singers' Italian: A Manual of Diction and Phonetics.* New York: Schirmer Books, 1996.
- De' Ath, Leslie. "Dittongo and Iato in Italian." *Journal of Singing*, March/April 2005, Volume 61, No. 4, pp. 393-400.
- _____. "Materials for Teaching a Lyric Diction Class, Part I." *Journal of Singing*, September/October 2005, Volume 62, No. 1, pp____.
- _____. "Materials for Teaching a Lyric Diction Class, Part II." *Journal of Singing*, November/December 2005, Volume 62, No. 2, pp. 179-198.
- _____. "Phonemics and Lyric Diction." *Journal of Singing*, May/June 2006, Volume 62, No. 5, pp. 549-561.
- _____. "Perspectives on Italian Lyric Diction." *Journal of Singing*, May/June 2005, Volume 61, No. 5, pp. 503-515.
- Montgomery, Cheri. *Italian Lyric Diction Workbook, 3rd edition.* Nashville, TN: S.M.T. Publishers, 2014.
- Moriarty, John. *Diction.* Boston: E. C. Schirmer: 1975.
- Wall, Joan and Robert Caldwell, eds. *Diction for Singers.* Dallas, TX: Pst. . Inc., 1990.

Song/Recit. Assignment Instructions-

Song #1—October 16 and 23

Song #2—November 13 and 20

Recit.—December 4

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

IPA

Original text

Translation

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 each three-lined grouping (IPA, Original Text, and Translation). Marks will be taken off for lack of preparation or missing elements from the transcription sheets.

Listening Assignment Instructions-
Due Date— October 30

You will complete one listening assignment (separate or in groups) on two recordings of a song or aria. Your recordings should consist of one native Italian singer and one non-native singer. Your group will transcribe the text according to the rules of transcription discussed in class. After transcribing, you will listen to the recordings, indicating the discrepancies between what you transcribed and what was sung. You will present your findings to the class, combining efforts of your transcription and comparative listening of each of the recordings. Depending on the format of your presentation, professor/TA assistance will be provided for copies and AV support.

Ex.

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

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