

**SINGER'S DICTION**  
*Italian/MUS 2241*  
**Fall 2023**

Instructor: Dr. Brenda Smith  
Office: MUB 302  
Phone: (352) 273-3174  
Cellphone: (352) 339-1008  
[gesang@ufl.edu](mailto:gesang@ufl.edu) or [bsmith@arts.ufl.edu](mailto:bsmith@arts.ufl.edu)

**Class Meetings**

Italian Diction meets M/W/F, Period 5 beginning on Wednesday, October 18, 2023, in Room 142 of the Music Building. This is a seven-week course that will conclude its meetings on Wednesday, December 6, 2023, with a capstone activity.

**Student Office Hours**

Student Office hours are posted on the door of MUB 302. Office hours are available by appointment as well. Feel free to communicate by e-mail or phone if needed.

**Course Description**

The course is designed to improve the capacity of singers, vocal coaches, and choral conductors to perform with ease, accuracy, and expression vocal repertoire in the Italian language. The International Phonetic Alphabet will serve as a basic tool for pronunciation study. The activities of the course will include the preparation and presentation of spoken and sung excerpts from Italian recitative, song, and operatic repertoire from all historical style periods.

**Textbooks and Materials**

The textbook for the course is *Diction in Context: Singing in English, Italian, German and French* by Brenda Smith (San Diego, CA: Plural Publishing 2021). *Diction in Context* is the textbook for the entire year's course. A copy is always available on the reference shelf of the AFA library.) Each student should purchase an Italian-English dictionary equipped with IPA for the Italian words as well as a copy of the *24 Italian Songs and Arias*, *26 Songs and Arias from 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> Centuries* or *28 Italian Arias* in medium high or medium low voice as appropriate. Students should consult studio teachers regarding the edition of choice. Study materials should be gathered and ordered in a notebook that is dedicated to diction handouts, phonetic readings, and related information. The singer's notebook will be reviewed as a major part of the grading process.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of course, students will be able to recognize the phonemes and transcribe the symbols for Italian language words, using the International Phonetic Alphabet. Students will be able to enunciate clearly in Italian both in speech and song. Students will have skills to evaluate poetic meaning and historical context for texts set by Italian composers in all style periods. Through critical listening, students will gather criteria for developing an aesthetic appreciation for vocal performance of repertoire in

Italian. Students will understand the use of the skills learned for further study of vocal repertoire.

### **Measurement Tools**

Timely attendance, initiative and progress are the criteria for grading. Attendance, quizzes, dictations, self-reflection assignments, classroom presentations, concluding essay, and a comprehensive final exercise will be the measurement tools for the course. All assignments, quizzes and exercises should be completed on time. Should you have a circumstance that keeps you from completing your work on time, please consult the instructor prior to the deadline. Classes are structured as interactive group events and will begin and end on time.

### **Quizzes, Class Activities and Final Exercise**

Quizzes, class activities, and homework assignments are intended to evaluate a student's command of newly introduced material. Class notes, listening log, and reflections will be collected in an e-portfolio for future use. The final exercise, an open book activity, is comprehensive in scope. A final dictation and an essay are included in calculating the course grade. The prompt for the essay will be distributed 14 days before the submission date.

### **Attendance and Participation**

Due to the brevity of the semester and the importance of the subject matter for your success as a music major, please arrive on time for class daily. Regular attendance is expected. Excused absences are those officially sanctioned by the University of Florida. <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

### **Class Presentations**

Each student will be expected to present to the class Italian texts in spoken and sung form. Presentations will be evaluated for the depth and clarity of preparation and the accuracy of the diction. Class presentations are scheduled from the beginning of the semester and should be given on the date assigned. In case of illness, please notify the instructor at least 24 hours prior to the day of the scheduled presentation. Assessment forms will be distributed prior to presentations, allowing students to understand the elements being assessed. IPA transcriptions should be original work and done by hand **in pencil and legible**. All references (information gleaned from online, printed, or recorded materials) should be cited. The grading criteria for class presentations are musical and textual preparation, diction accuracy, poetic, and historical score study. Each student will receive feedback from peers and instructor.

### **Dates for Class Presentations**

First Class Presentations (graded S/U): November 13, and 15, 2023.

Final Class Presentations (worth 25% of grade): November 29 and December 1, 2023.

### **Final Essay**

The final essay prompt will be discussed in class and posted on Canvas.

## **Grading**

Using the plus/minus scale, the course grade will be calculated in the following way:

Attendance/Participation*	10%
Quizzes and Dictations	10%
Self-Reflection Assignments	15%
Final Exercise	20%
Class Presentations	25%
Final Essay	20%
	=====
	100%

\*Attendance is an essential element for success in this course. There are no discretionary, unexcused absences. Should extenuating circumstances arise that prevent your prompt attendance, please notify the instructor by email or phone as indicated above. Given prior notice, accommodation can be arranged. As a courtesy to others, please notify the instructor or a classmate prior to class if you anticipate arriving late.

\*Participation is evaluated through in-class activities that include quizzes, dictation practices and daily discussion. Because the course activity is interactive, please set all cell phones and other comparable devices on “off.” In case of an emergency, please inform the instructor prior to class and adjust your equipment to “vibrate.”

Grading Scale & GPA equivalent:

Percent	Grade	Grade Points
93.4-100	A	4.00
90.0-93.3	A-	3.67
86.7-89.9	B+	3.33
83.4-86.6	B	3.00
80.0-83.3	B-	2.67
76.7-79.9	C+	2.33
73.4-76.6	C	2.00
70.0-73.3	C-	1.67
66.7-69.9	D+	1.33
63.4-66.6	D	1.00
60.0-63.3	D-	0.67
0-59.9	E	0.00

More information on grades and grading policies is here:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Please feel free to consult with the instructor at any time regarding your status in the course.

**Note: The syllabus is subject to change. Stay in touch with the progress of our course by reading email (ufl.edu) and checking in Canvas.**

**Keys to Success**

*Phonetic Transcriptions*

Because many symbols have similar shapes, it is important to be distinct in your IPA penmanship. Make phonetic transcriptions that are neat and clearly legible. **Use pencil** to allow for easy correction. Transcriptions should be original work from your hand. Feel free to consult published sources (online or print) as you create your phonetic transcriptions and always cite those sources. It is **not** acceptable to submit a published source instead of your own work.

*Poetic Interpretations*

Please present poetic interpretations in your own words.

Research Citations: Please cite your sources for all class presentations requiring research.

*Quizzes*

Quizzes are announced one week in advance. Flashcards and/or group study are useful.

*Final Exercise*

The final exercise is an in-class, open book activity requiring access to a textbook and your class notes. Prepare accordingly.

*Final Dictation*

Be prepared to take the text presented in IPA transcription **as the performer sings it**.

*Final Essay*

Follow every aspect of the Essay Prompt. Write legibly. Cite all sources.

Proposed Weekly Plan

*The details of this plan may vary. Watch for “This Week in Italian Diction” emails and notices on Canvas.*

October 18-20	<p><b>Wednesday:</b> Introduction: “Singing in Italian” Bel Canto and its Pure/ Open/Closed Vowels</p> <p><b>Friday:</b> “Italian language and Thought” Dante/Petrarch</p>	<p>For Wednesday: Read p. 134-141. Bring Textbook and Italian Art Song Anthology</p> <p>For Friday: Read p.105-108 The Sounds of Italian</p>
October 23-27	<p><b>Monday:</b> Auxiliary Verbs Discussion of the Letters “e” and “o”</p> <p><b>Wednesday:</b> More about the letter “o” and First dictation in class</p> <p><b>Friday:</b> Consonants, “c”, “g” and “sc”</p>	<p>For Monday: Study textbook p. 126 and “Selve Amiche” on p. 109</p> <p>For Wednesday: “Ombra mai fu” p. 110 First dictation in class</p> <p>For Friday: Study p. 110-112 of textbook, “Va tacito e nascosto” P. 112-113.</p>

<p>October 30- November 3</p>	<p><b>Monday:</b> Quiz on Auxiliary Verbs and Musical Terms After the Quiz: Single and Double Consonant Practice</p> <p><b>Wednesday:</b> The Songs and Arias of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries and how they survived. Italian Musical Terms and Question Words. (Quiz 11/10)</p> <p><b>Friday:</b> Strategies for Dictation Practice</p>	<p>For Monday: Review Parts of Speech of and Elements of Grammar p. 115-134</p> <p>For Wednesday: Study p. 141-147 “Amarilli” to “Se tu m’ami”</p> <p>For Friday: Study “Intorno al’idol mio” on p. 142 -144.</p>
<p>November 6-10</p> <p>Presentation Materials are due in class on Wednesday.</p> <p>No Class on Friday.</p>	<p><b>Monday:</b> Italian Arias- old and new Scarlatti and Donaudy</p> <p><b>Wednesday:</b> Musical Terms and Question Words Quiz</p> <p><b>Friday: Veteran’s Day Holiday</b></p>	<p>Monday: Study p.147-148 “Sento nel core” in comparative settings. <b>First Presentation Materials due in Class</b></p> <p>Wednesday: Musical Terms and Question Words Quiz and In class diction and singing practice Duettino: “Là ci darem la mano”</p> <p><b>NO CLASS on Friday</b></p>
<p>November 13-17</p> <p>Self-Reflection Due on Canvas 11/17 5pm</p>	<p><b>Monday and Wednesday: First Presentations</b></p> <p><b>Friday:</b> Introduction to Italian Vocal Music in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and Gioacchino Rossini</p> <p><b>Essay Prompt Distributed</b> Rehearsals for Final Presentations will begin this week TBD.</p>	<p>Please bring your textbook and your Italian aria anthology to class. Attendance is mandatory on the days you do not perform.</p> <p>For Friday, Read p. 149-150</p> <p><b>Materials for Final Presentations due in Class on Friday, November 17</b></p>
<p>November 20</p> <p>Week of Thanksgiving Break</p>	<p><b>Monday:</b> Vincenzo Bellini and Donizetti Dictation Practice in Class</p> <p><b>No Class on Wednesday or Friday for Thanksgiving</b></p>	<p>For Monday, Read p. 151-157</p> <p><b>Enjoy the Thanksgiving Holiday!</b></p>

<p>November 27 – December 1</p> <p>Final Self-Reflection Due on Canvas 12/1 @ 5 pm</p>	<p><b>Monday:</b> Giuseppe Verdi, <b>Graded Dictation in Class</b></p> <p><b>Wednesday and Friday Final Presentations</b></p>	<p>Review all readings for 19<sup>th</sup> century Italian Art Song and Opera</p> <p>Remember that attendance is mandatory on days when you do not perform. <b>Self-Reflection due by 5 pm on Canvas</b></p>
<p>December 4</p> <p>December 6</p> <p>December 8</p>	<p><b>Monday: Final Dictation</b></p> <p><b>Wednesday: Final Exercise and Last Day of Class</b></p> <p><b>FINAL ESSAY AND PRINTED PROGRAM NOTES ARE DUE ON OR BEFORE 5 PM ON FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2023. BOTH ASSIGNMENTS ARE UPLOADS TO EMAIL: <a href="mailto:bsmith@arts.ufl.edu">bsmith@arts.ufl.edu</a>.</b></p>	<p>Monday: Final Dictation (Be certain that all IPA symbols are legible.)</p> <p>For Wednesday, bring textbook, class notes, and dictionary for use in the open book, In-class exercise, and final dictation.</p> <p>(As you prepare your essay and program notes, due on Friday, please <b>be sure to cite all sources.</b>)</p> <p>Plan ahead! Upload your work to the email address given before 5 pm on Friday, December 8, 2023. Late work compromises your final grade.</p>

### **Students Requiring Accommodation**

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, <https://disability.ufl.edu/>) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

### **UF Evaluations Process**

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

### **University Honesty Policy**

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

### **Counseling and Wellness Center**

Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center:

<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/default.aspx>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

### **The Writing Studio**

The writing studio is committed to helping University of Florida students meet their academic and professional goals by becoming better writers. Visit the writing studio online at <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/> or in 2215 Turlington Hall for one-on-one consultations.

