Westminster College
School of Music

Opera Workshop MUS 425 and 525
Fall 2017
Syllabus

Instructor:  Dr. Anne Hagan Bentz
MWF 3:10-4:50  * see below
PH Studio D  724-946-6045 bentzah@westminster.edu
Pianist:  Marie Libal Smith  724-728-3832
Conductor:  Mihai Valcu  724-658-4328
PH 51(MW) , 53 (MWF) and Orr Auditorium
Office Hours:  M 10:30-1:00 and W 12:30-2:00

The Opera will be a two semester commitment.

I.  Course Description
Opera Workshop is designed for students of singing to provide them with the techniques necessary in preparing an operatic role for performance. Students will study the principles of movement, body language, verbal and non-verbal communication, stage directions that enhance a singer’s performance, stage dance, and the process of learning to re-act as well as to “act” while singing.

II.  Required Materials
1.  Rehearsal clothes that allow you to move and appropriate shoes. No sneakers
2.  Students may be expected to provide their parts of their costumes.
3.  Score to The Marriage of Figaro

III.  Course Objectives
Students will learn the necessary skills to prepare and execute a role within an operatic scene as well as the necessary “stage techniques” that a singer needs in order to be an effective performer.

IV.  Outcomes and Assessments
1. Each student will attend all classes. Failure to attend class will result in lowering of your grade. No production can take place without a total commitment of the entire cast. In cases of sickness, students must have a documented excuse from a doctor and must have informed the instructor of a potential absence 24 hours in advance so that there is time to make adjustments in the rehearsal schedule. Additionally, Each student will be evaluated on their preparation in coachings and rehearsals. Each student will be assigned one or more roles that he/she will be expected to practice and rehearse outside of class and come prepared with notes, and rhythms learned to rehearsals and will rehearse with good singing technique. A role must be conditioned vocally and as such must be rehearsed in this way for maximum growth. Coaches and Stage Director will evaluate each students based on attendance and preparation.

*Rubric: Nr.of Rehearsals, Classes Attended and degree of Preparation/ Total Nr. Rehearsals Attended and Degree of Prep./ X 15% = ____%.
2. Each student will prepare in writing an analysis of his/her role/s – due prior to the commencement of the staging of the opera in essay form.

*Rubric:

_____(5pts.) Opening Paragraph identifies and defines assignment (Role/ Roles Name Analysis) - Upper Left Corner Name, Date and Assignment.

_____(10 pts.) Body of Essay:
* Define the character according to age, position in society, physical aspects, job description.
* Relationships to each of the other characters in the production. This description will be based on information taken from the score.
* Define the actions and goals of your character from beginning to end of the opera.
* Explain what your character would look like, be wearing, and hair do/wig. If it changes, explain when and why.
* Consult three other sources to supplement your essay. Document in correct Bibliographic form. (One book, two online sources.)

_____(5pts.) Concluding paragraph that sums up your character and your personal thoughts about what you personally bring to the role.

_____(_____/20%) Total See calendar for Date:

3. Each student will be assigned a non performance task (program production, props, lighting/sound, set construction, advertising, etc.)

_____(5 pts.) Based on thoroughness of task. (Scale of 1-5)

_____(5pts.) Evidence of task's timely completion. (Scale of 1-5)

_____(_____10%) 

4. Role Execution – October 24th, first Minster Presbyterian Church – Finale II
Roles of Cherubino, Barbarina and Don Curzio will have an alternate Performance date since they are not in this finale. 15%

5. Memorization Test on November 17th run through with piano. 35%

V. Basis for Grading
* Weekly Attendance MWD and Participation in Class (prepared and on time to rehearsals, dressed in rehearsal attire and ready to sing/rehearse at 3:10), with a work attitude and behavior that helps rehearsals move ahead quickly. 15%
* Role Analysis 20%
* Non Performance Task for the Opera 10%
* Role Execution Oct. 24th Finale II 15%
* Memorization Test Date (Once through singing acting w/o music) 40%

Date tbd.

*** Those who are taking the course for “0” credit (MUS 525) with Instructor's permission only, are graded P/F and are obligated to do the same work as those taking it for credit.

VI. Grading Scale
93-100 A 77-79 C+ 60-63 D-
VII. Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is central to the purpose of any academic community. We ask that you read the section in the catalog entitled "Academic Integrity" which includes the following definition:

Academic dishonesty is a profound violation of the expected code of behavior. It can take several forms, including, but not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, purposely altering the work of another (without that person's permission), misrepresentation of attendance in class or at college events, misrepresentation of work, facts, or experimental results, unauthorized use of or intentional intrusion into another's computer files and/or programs, intentional damage to a computer system, and unauthorized use of library materials and privileges, or engaging in any activity which attempts to alter or harm another's academic standing...

Of special concern is the issue of plagiarism, which is defined as leading your reader or listener to believe that what you have written or said is your own work, when, in fact, it is not. The range of plagiarism includes word-for-word copying of another's text, to even the unquoted borrowing of apt phrases or terms. All of these degrees of plagiarism are equally unethical and may be penalized with failure for the assignment, or, in extreme cases, failure for the course.

VIII. Conduct

"The mission of Westminster College is to help men and women develop competencies, commitments, and characteristics, which have distinguished human beings at their best. The abuse of alcohol and other drugs serves only to undermine the achievement of these goals. The faculty therefore expects all students, as they do of themselves, to take seriously the implications of such risk taking behaviors in their pursuit of a Westminster education."

Note: Documented disabilities and accommodations must be discussed with the instructor at the beginning of the course.