WESTMINSTER COLLEGE
Applied Voice Instruction MUS
380, 381, 391
Syllabus-Fall/Spring/Summer
2017-2018

Instructor-William Ambert
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I Syllabus: Please refer to the Music Department Applied Voice Syllabus for the majority of information concerning voice study. In addition the following objectives apply to my studio.

II Attendance: Students are required to be at all scheduled lesson times! Students are required to notify the instructor of his/her absence prior to the lesson, giving the instructor plenty of time to make schedule adjustments. Twenty-four hours notice is ideal or as soon as possible. Failure to do so will result in an unexcused absence in which the instructor is not obligated to make up the lesson. Not having enough lessons will result in a lowered semester grade. If you have to cancel your lesson it is best to call or text my cell phone in the evening before your anticipated absence or in the early morning.

Students are entitled to the following number of lessons per semester:
MUS 380-(13) 1/2 hour lessons or more if pre-arranged (non required)
MUS 381-(13) 1 hour lessons or (26) ½ hour lessons
MUS 391-(26) 1 hour lessons

III Equipment: The student must supply a way to record each lesson. (Digital recorder, lap top, cell phone, etc.) No exceptions! This is a means
to learn technique, language, melody, rhythm, staging, interpretation, etc. Use also in your coaching sessions to record accompaniments by pianist. The student is required to bring current repertoire to each lesson and a suitable copy for the instructor and accompanist. This means all the notes should be visible. No guessing! It is not the responsibility of the instructor to provide the student with repertoire or copies.

The student is required to purchase several books containing repertoire that will be studied. In them should be contained: art songs, folksongs, spirituals, arias from operas and oratorios, and musical theatre selections. Repertoire will be discussed in the lesson, and chosen by the instructor and the student. In addition our McGill Library houses many musical scores for your use.

IV **IPA/Word for Word:** The student will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), and will transcribe it into the music of every foreign language song studied, as well as a word for word translation. NO EXCEPTIONS!

Each student will have to pass an aural International Phonetic Alphabet proficiency test to prove their working knowledge of the sounds of the alphabet. This will develop over the first semester of study.

V **Studio Assignments:** Students are required to complete and turn into the instructor at the beginning of the fourth week of the semester, two assignments. They consist of completing a "Song Analysis Form" for each piece studied as well as completing a "Media Performance Review" to accompany each piece studied. In addition, the student must complete four more selections of listening of his/her choice. These should be derived from the vast array of famous singers of our day and include all voice types and genres of repertoire: art song, opera, oratorio, jazz, and musical theater. Only one each of musical theater and jazz if chosen. These forms can be obtained from the instructor.

VI **Professional Engagements:** As your voice instructor I should be kept aware of any and all of the singing that you do. This includes: musical theatre, local and college ensembles, church work, local singing
engagements, auditions, etc. I will also try to act as your local singing agent and pass along any work I feel you can aspire to. Be as professional as you can be!!! Remember, you represent me as your teacher, yourself, this studio, musicians in general, and Westminster College. Dress appropriately, know your music, and be on time!

VII **Practice:** Over the years I have instituted a practice check or practice lab if you will. You must submit to me (3) 1/2 hour time slots in the 7 day week in which you can be found in a practice room. I will check periodically on all of you, and you must be present and practicing where prearranged or risk being marked absent, and thus lowering your studio grade. Practice and development is part of your studio grade and necessary for your advancement.

For ideal development and advancement, students should recreate vocalization done in the studio three times a day for 10-15 minute periods where technical concentration should be the goal. In addition, a longer more concentrated rehearsal for about an hour to learn language, notes, melody, and rhythms should be included in your daily practice regimen. The practice room is where self-realization and understanding of your instrument occurs, not the studio! You must be an active participant in the learning process. Don't make the teacher do it all. I will no longer be the "note plunker" more than one time. Bring those recording devices and "get thee to a practice room."

**PRACTICE! PRACTICE! PRACTICE!**

VIII **NATS Auditions:** It is strongly urged that all students in the studio; music majors or non-music majors, participate in the Tri-State National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS) auditions. This is a great opportunity for you to experience the professional audition process and be adjudicated by faculty from other schools. It is also enlightening to hear voices from other schools and see what the competition is like. Westminster has often fared very well at these competitions in years past. There are both classical voice and musical theatre categories. Theatre majors should certainly participate! The competition has often been held at Westminster.
IX **Weekly Regimen:** To receive a grade of "A" or 93 and above in this studio, the following tasks must be accomplished each week:

1. Practice 1 hour+ per day.
2. Study and learn all repertoire decided upon. (notes, rhythms, language,
3. You must transcribe into your music, the International Phonetic Alphabet for all foreign language repertoire studied.
4. You must transcribe into your music a word by word translation of all foreign language repertoire studied.
5. Be able to sing and play melody of repertoire.
6. Complete the "Song Analysis Form" for all repertoire.
7. Complete "Media Performance Reviews" for all repertoire studied.
8. Plan staging, blocking, movement, dramatic ideas to be used in performance.
10. Maintain a positive outlook in all you do mentally, physically, and spiritually.
11. Keep mind & body altering substances and social situations to a minimum as to not interfere with vocal progress or damage to vocal apparatus.

X **Studio Grading System**
Studio grades will be broken down into three equal parts, (1) Attendance, (2) Practice and Development, and (3) Studio Assignments. Each is worth 33.3 %. Failure to complete all of these requirements successfully or any portion will result in a failing grade for the semester. You will need to repeat the course.