

Elective Voice Studies – Student Responsibilities
Secondary Voice Department, Indiana University Jacobs School of Music
Rachel Wood, MMus, Associate Instructor
Merrill Hall, Room 337
Phone: [REDACTED]
E-mail: rachwood@indiana.edu

My goals are to help you....

- foster vocal growth and development through systematic instruction
- develop freedom and ease in both voice and body during singing
- develop a personalized voice regimen of daily technical rehearsal, as well as practicing good vocal hygiene and habits
- to gain a basic knowledge of vocal physiology
- to further musicianship through repertoire study (and performance!)
- integrate developing technique into repertoire
- to gain confidence in performing
- to foster independence in technical and repertoire study
- discover how to assess vocal quality based upon efficient muscular coordination and ease. (In other words, how tone production FEELS rather than how it sounds. Ultimately, we must all become our own voice teachers!)

Studio Policies

Students are required to familiarize themselves with the requirements and expectations of Elective Voice instruction, as outlined in the Secondary Voice Department course **syllabus**, available online at <http://www.music.indiana.edu/departments/academic/voice/elective-program/secvoice-syllabus.shtml>

Weekly lessons:

The first half hour of the lesson will be devoted to technical instruction through a series of short and intensive ‘warm-ups’ and exercises. The second half will consist of repertoire study, for which you may arrange to have your accompanist present.

Lesson preparation:

Please be on time for lessons. Please arrive for your lessons ‘warmed up’, if at all possible.

Students are expected to have prepared and rehearsed their assigned repertoire to the best of their ability for weekly lessons. Please bring a notebook to every lesson to record exercises; this will also serve as a practice journal to be updated over the course of the week. It should include any questions or concerns that arise during individual practice, and outline the technical concepts and repertoire you have rehearsed. Students are strongly encouraged to record their lessons.

A note about wardrobe: Please wear comfortable clothing and footwear to your lessons. Be mindful of tight clothing which may restrict lower abdominal breathing, as well as excessively high-heeled shoes which disrupt balance and alignment. Bear in mind that lessons may often include a stretching component.

Collaborative pianists:

You must arrange fees and scheduling with your collaborative pianist. You will require someone who is both an experienced pianist and accompanist, and may be knowledgeable of the voice repertoire. Your collaborative pianist is essential for your coursework! It is not necessary for your pianist to attend your lessons every week, but you should make arrangements with them at the **beginning** of the term, as this is much more difficult to do later in the term when schedules fill up. Ideally, your pianist will attend a few lessons throughout the term, and then weekly as we approach juries at the end of the term. You should make every effort to rehearse with your pianist outside of lessons as well, if at all possible.

Since the prerequisite of Elective Voice studies is an ability to read music, your collaborative pianists are not expected to teach you notes, rhythms, etc. They will certainly assist you with this, yes. But you must make every effort to teach yourself your own repertoire! Further to this, any pieces sung in a foreign language (Italian, German, French, etc.) must be translated! You should write both a poetic and word-for-word translation in the music before you begin learning the piece, and certainly before you bring it to a lesson. We will work together on lyric diction and phonetic spelling using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA).

Cancellation procedure:

A solidified lesson schedule will be completed as soon as possible. If I must cancel a lesson, it will be rescheduled at a mutually agreeable time. If a student cancels a lesson for any reason, it may be rescheduled, provided the student has followed proper cancellation procedure:

1. Students must notify me of absences for any reason at least 24 hours in advance in order to receive a make-up lesson. No grade penalty will be given. E-mail is the preferred method of communication.
2. Advance notice less than 24 hours prior to the lesson is acceptable cancellation procedure, and no grade penalty will be given. A make-up lesson may be scheduled. **PLEASE do not come to your lesson if you are sick!** Should you wake the morning of your lesson and discover you are unwell, please e-mail me immediately, or leave a voicemail at [REDACTED]. (Please e-mail for any other reason.) A note posted on or under the studio door is not acceptable cancellation procedure.
3. Unexcused absences (“no shows”) are not acceptable, and will result in a grade penalty. No make-up lesson will be given. (Exceptions will be made for medical emergencies or compassionate grounds.) Three unexcused absences result in automatic failure of the class.

Please see the course **syllabus** for further information.

Practicing:

Because vocal technique is largely dependent on muscle coordination and development, it is essential to rehearse technical exercises on a regular basis. While specific rehearsal needs will vary, I would suggest aiming for no less than half an hour to an hour of individual practice several days per week. This time may certainly be broken up into shorter rehearsals throughout the day. It is unpleasant, stressful and even counter-productive, vocally, to ‘cram’ repertoire. Please prepare your music well in advance. I will assist you in finding ways to practice your repertoire non-vocally; such as finding translations, IPA, speaking the text, listening to recordings, etc. All are effective means of learning music without overusing your voice.

PLEASE feel free to consult me should you have any questions or concerns regarding individual practicing. I am happy to help you develop a routine that suits your needs and schedule!

Repertoire:

Students are required to learn at least four new songs or arias per semester. **Three of these must be memorized.** Pieces may be chosen from art song, folk, and musical theater repertoire. I will certainly assist you in finding appropriate repertoire, but it is important to seek out options on your own as you grow more comfortable with your instrument and gain an understanding of what is suitable to your voice at each stage in your development. **Please submit a list of proposed repertoire for the term NO LATER than the fourth week of lessons.** There are many wonderful repertoire resources available to singers: anthologies, reference books, recordings, colleagues’ recitals, etc. It is useful to familiarize yourself with the Music Library! (located in the Simon Music and Recital Center).

Grading:

Student grades shall be calculated in the following way:

50% STUDIO WORK	Students will be assigned a weekly grade, which represents technical progress, repertoire progress, lesson preparation and punctuality, as well as attendance and overall attitude. Students will receive a mid-term grade which will count as 50% percent of their studio mark, and 25% of their final grade.
50% JURY	Students will prepare an end-of-semester jury of two memorized pieces (only one selection may be heard). Of this 50%: 25% - determined by instructor 25% - determined by jury panel

Please feel free to contact me, or the Secondary Voice coordinator (secvoice@indiana.edu) with any additional questions or concerns.