VOICE AREA HANDBOOK
Shepherd University
Department of Music
Entrance Auditions

Students seeking entrance into the Vocal Performance, Vocal Music Education, or the Musical Theatre programs are required to sing an entrance audition in addition to meeting the general requirements for admission to the college.

Audition Repertoire

Incoming freshmen and transfer students must present two art songs in contrasting styles. One musical theatre selection is acceptable. Both pieces must be performed from memory and should demonstrate the applicant’s vocal ability and musicianship. An accompanist will be provided, but the applicant may bring his/her own.

Scholarships

All vocal scholarships will be awarded through the music department. Participation in choral groups is beneficial to the singer and is required for the duration of the time the student is on scholarship, as is possible participation in the marching band. The Director of Choral and Vocal Activities will be present during the vocal audition or will have a separate hearing, and will be active in deciding upon scholarship recipients.

Applied Voice Lessons

Once the teacher assignment has been made, it is the student’s responsibility to register for the correct course and section number. Registration for 1 credit of Applied Voice entitles the student to 14 50-minute lessons; ½ credit = 14 25-minute lessons. The studio teacher will outline specific course requirements in the syllabus.

All voice majors are required to take 50-minute voice lessons. Exceptions may be made only by the consensus of the Director of Choral and Vocal Activities and the student’s applied teacher. Non-music majors who wish to partake of voice lessons must also be enrolled in one choral ensemble. Applied study is a privilege; the voice faculty will determine each studio’s roster from semester to semester.

Practice requirements

Students must maintain a regular practice schedule to be created in consultation with his/her private voice teacher. It is recommended that this includes one hour of practice every day. A vocal major is expected to know their notes for every piece they are assigned before any ensemble practice and before any lesson. It is unacceptable to be unprepared.
Voice Repertoire Class

Each individual voice studio will meet as a class weekly on Thursdays at 5:00pm. All Voice Majors are required to register for this class and attend. Music Education and non-majors are strongly encouraged to attend. The studio teacher will determine the specific course of study but the primary purpose of the class is to gain experience and critique in performance practice.

Double Majors

If a student is double-majoring in any two areas, the student must fulfill the requirements of both concentrations. When the requirements of two areas coincide, a student will not be expected to repeat requirements. For example, a student will not prepare more than one senior recital.

Jury Process

_Explanation of the jury process and level assignments_

The semester jury acts as a routine, high-pressure “audition” for every student. All students who continue in music beyond Shepherd will be faced with the audition process, be it for graduate school, a church job, regional theater, an apprenticeship, etc., and therefore all students need to gain practice in this skill. The standard for a level 8 indicates that the student is ready to take a graduate school audition. The assigned level for a student’s jury performance indicates their level of progress, as outlined below, toward this ultimate goal. The jury level will be assigned by the jury committee, consisting of at least two full-time faculty members as well as adjunct faculty as scheduling permits.

Incoming freshmen perform their initial jury as a level 1 unless otherwise determined by the voice faculty.

Upon the discretion of the voice faculty, a student may be denied a jury hearing if the student is not prepared. A grade of incomplete will result. Only one incomplete will be given to a student during his/her residency. The incomplete must be made up and the highest grade attainable will be a “B”. A second semester without proper preparation will result in dismissal from the Department of Music.

_How the jury level differs from the lesson grade_

The voice lesson, as a separate course, requires a grade from the voice teacher. While the student’s vocal progress may be a large part of this grade, the teacher will ultimately base the grade on the student’s fulfillment of course requirements as outlined in the syllabus (i.e., practice and preparation for each lesson, attendance, implementation of skills and knowledge, etc.).

_Make-up Juries_
An “Incomplete” will be given to a student who misses his/her jury due to illness or other circumstances approved by the voice faculty. A make-up jury time will be listed within the first two weeks of the following semester. All regular jury requirements still apply.

**Exceptions to jurying**
Every student must jury every semester unless the student has done a recital that semester and achieved the required level. Juries for comments only (no new level assignment) are permissible; the student will then retain his or her currently assigned level.

**Sophomore Evaluation**
All Vocal Performance, Music Education with Voice Concentration, and Musical Theater Majors:
At the third semester jury the student must demonstrate that he/she is capable of continuing successfully in the program by completing a level 3. If the jury committee finds vocal development and personal motivation insufficient for level 3, then the student will be placed on probation for one semester, with the level 3 requirement by the end of the 4th semester for reevaluation. If a level 3 is not then achieved, the student will be dismissed from his/her program.

**Jury Requirements**

**Sight Reading**
All students are required to sight read an example chosen by the department. Students may choose to sing this on solfege, words, or nonsense syllables, but solfege is strongly recommended. The sight reading portion makes up 20% of the final jury level assignment.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Repertoire &amp; Technical Skill Requirements for Vocal Performance Majors and Music Education Majors</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level 1</strong></td>
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| Level 2 | 3 songs including:  
- 1 song in English  
- 1 early Italian art song | - Aligned posture  
- Diaphragmatic breathing  
- Clear diction for English & Italian  
- Expression of dynamics & musicality (attention to score, diacritical markings) |
|---|---|---|
| Level 3 | 4 songs including:  
- 1 Italian art song or aria—suggested composers are Mozart, Handel, 24 Italian Songs & Arias  
- 1 English language art song—suggested composers Purcell, Vaughan-Williams, Duke, Barber  
- 1 German language art song in the late classical or early romantic period—suggested composers Beethoven, Mozart, Schubert | - Absence of obvious external tension, such as clenched fists or shoulders, locked knees, stiffened neck, nervous gestures  
- Use of pure vowels (no diphthongs)  
- Demonstration of text understanding and interpretative skills |
| Level 4 | 4 songs including:  
- 1 Italian art song or aria—suggested composers are Mozart, Handel, 24 Italian Songs & Arias  
- 1 English language art song—suggested composers Purcell, Vaughan-Williams, Duke, Barber  
- 1 German language art song in the late classical or early romantic period—suggested composers Beethoven, Mozart, Schubert  
- 1 opera or oratorio aria | - Clean, accurate intonation  
- Dramatic ability – Freedom of movement in the body, facial expression  
- Beginnings of vocal resonance and a ringing placement  
- Proper German diction |
| Level 5 | 5 pieces including:  
- 1 20th century English language art song  
- 1 German Lied from the Romantic Era—suggested composers Schumann, Brahms  
- 1 French mélodie by Fauré  
- 1 oratorio aria in any language including Italian or Latin  
- 1 additional piece | Demonstrate bel canto skill:  
- flexibility (smooth interval leaps),  
- agility (melismas),  
- breath control (legato and sustained phrases) |
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<tr>
<th>Level 6</th>
<th>6 pieces including:</th>
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<td>- 1 20th century English language art song</td>
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<td>- 1 French mélodie by Fauré</td>
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<td>- 1 Italian operatic aria</td>
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<td>- 2 additional pieces</td>
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<td>- Proper vowel modification through register shifts</td>
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<td>- Proper French diction</td>
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<td>- Stage poise and knowledge of stage etiquette</td>
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<th>Level 7</th>
<th>6 pieces including:</th>
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<td>- 1 early 20th century American Musical Theatre song</td>
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<td>- 2 German Lieder from any era, including late Romantic—suggested composers Wolf, Mahler, Strauss</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- 1 French Melodie from any era—suggested composers Faure, Debussy, Duparc, Poulenc</td>
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<td>- 1 opera or oratorio aria from any era, any language</td>
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<td>- 1 additional piece</td>
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<td>- Consistent vibrato</td>
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<td>- Evenness of range (see range definitions below)</td>
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<td>- Stylistic diversity</td>
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<th>Level 8</th>
<th>6 pieces including:</th>
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<tr>
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<td>- 1 20th century American art song</td>
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<td>- 1 German Lied from any era, including late Romantic—suggested composers Wolf, Mahler, Strauss</td>
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<td>- 1 opera or oratorio aria from any era, any language</td>
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<td>- Demonstrate complete use of resonance throughout range; a fully ringing tone</td>
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<td>- Acceptable range for the individual's fach</td>
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<td>- Vocal stamina (as demonstrated by the senior recital)</td>
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**Range definitions:**

Soprano Bb4 to C6
Mezzo G3 to Bb6
Tenor C3 to Bb5
Baritone A2 to G4

Bass-Baritone F2 to F4

(**The ranges for other, less common Fachs will be determined on a case-by-case basis.)
Repertoire & Technical Skill Requirements for Vocal Performance Majors and Music Education Majors

Musical Theatre Levels

Levels 1-4 are identical to the above.

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<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Repertoire</th>
<th>Technical Skills</th>
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| Level 5 | 5 pieces including:  
- 1 English Art Song  
- 1 French Mélodie  
- 2 pre-1960s MT pieces in contrasting styles (ballad vs. up-tempo)  
- 1 Jazz-standard MT (i.e. Porter, Weill, etc.) | - Appropriate vowel distinctions for classical vs. MT repertoire (i.e., diphthongs)  
- Demonstrate understanding of jazz-style, including individual choice  
- Demonstrate breath control (legato and sustained phrases) |
| Level 6 | 6 pieces including:  
- 1 French Melodie  
- 1 operetta aria  
- 1 pre-1960s MT  
- 1 Jazz-standard MT (i.e. Porter, Weill, etc.)  
- 1 MT 1960-1990  
- 1 English or German Art Song | - Proper vowel modification through register shifts  
- Proper French diction  
- Stage poise and knowledge of stage etiquette  
- Demonstrate effective acting in operetta and MT |
| Level 7 | 6 pieces including:  
- 1 song or aria in any language  
French, German, or Italian  
- 1 English Art Song  
- 1 operetta aria  
- 1 MT from 1960-1990  
- 1 MT from 1990 – present  
- 1 speech-dominated "chatty" MT piece AND 1 1-minute monologue | - Demonstrate clear diction in "chatty"-style singing  
- Consistent vibrato  
- Evenness of range, i.e. able to shift effectively from belt-mix-head registers  
- Effective acting in monologue |
| Level 8 | 6 pieces including:  
- 1 song or aria in any language  
French, German, or Italian  
- 1 English Art Song  
- 1 operetta aria  
- 1 MT from pre-1990  
- 1 MT from 1990 – present  
- 1 Character Voice MT piece AND 1 1-minute monologue | - Effective use of character voice  
- Vocal stamina (as demonstrated by the senior recital)  
- Demonstrate a command of all vocal styles (tempi, range, register shifts) required in MT |
Recital Requirements

Music Education majors are required to perform one senior recital, comprised of 50 minutes of music and/or music and lecture. All repertory is to be approved by the applied voice teacher and repertoire selections should reflect the requirements of the student’s current level.

Musical Theatre majors are required to perform two recitals: one 25 minute junior recital comprised solely of musical theatre repertoire representing the major periods (1920-1950, 1960-1990, 1990-present), and one 50 minute senior recital with the first half comprised of classical repertoire and the second half musical theatre rep. The classical repertoire must include one aria and cover four languages as well as music of the classical, romantic and modern eras. The musical theatre portion must include music from all three major periods.

Voice Performance majors are required to perform two recitals: one 25 minute junior recital and one 50 minute senior recital. All repertory is to be approved by the applied voice teacher and repertoire selections should reflect the requirements of the student’s current level.

Recital Preparation
At the discretion of the private instructor, a student may be required to give a recital hearing two weeks before their recital date. At least two faculty members will attend the hearing and may request any pieces from the approved program. The decision will then be made whether or not to go ahead with the student’s program on the scheduled date. If the student is deemed unprepared he/she will postpone until later in that semester and take the penalty of one full letter grade.

Recital Postponement Due to Illness
Health issues are a special case. A doctor's examination is required and documentation must be provided. In the circumstances that a student is simply unable to sing, arrangements will be made with the department head and the student’s voice teacher as to how to proceed further. In a real medical emergency, no penalty to the grade should be assessed.

Other Performance Requirements

Wednesday 1:10pm Recitals
All students except those in their first semester are required to sing once per semester on the Wednesday 1:10pm recitals.

Ensemble Policy
All voice majors must enroll in a small ensemble (Chamber Singers, Men's Choir, Women’s Camerata) and Masterworks Chorale every semester. The following total exceptions are granted to singing in Masterworks Chorale:

• When student teaching (in which case all ensemble requirements are waived)
• When a Music Ed student is in their first required semester of Marching Band
• When a student has been a full-time student at Shepherd University for eight semesters

Students who are engaged in their Junior or Senior recital, or are part of the Fall or Spring stage production, are welcome to take a few Masterworks rehearsals off leading up to their performance. Students will request leave from the Director of Choral Activities in order to be granted any leave or semester exemption.

**Concert Attendance**

*Required Concert Attendance:*

- 100 approved concert events to graduate
- All choral ensemble concerts
- All Friends of Music concerts

It is strongly suggested that voice majors attend all student ensemble concerts, student recitals, and faculty recitals. Keep a running, cumulative portfolio of all concerts attended. A faculty member must sign all concert programs for those at Shepherd University, on the evening of the performance. In addition, when the Vocal Department sponsors an off-campus trip to a performance, it is expected that all voice majors attend.