

DEGREE PROGRAM GUIDELINES

A-State Undergraduate and Graduate Voice Majors

The following is an explanation of the expectations and procedures for voice majors at Arkansas State University. The motivation behind these guidelines is the desire of the A-State Department of Music to ensure that graduates are qualified and prepared at the highest possible level for professional endeavors appropriate to the degree program sought. These criteria pertain to students whose applied area of concentration is voice.

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

Admission—Prospective students must meet the admission requirements of the university as noted in the bulletins.

Auditions—Prospective voice students must audition for the appropriate applied faculty member prior to initial enrollment. At the discretion of the applied faculty member, a three to five member committee will be convened to hear the audition. Each student will be notified individually regarding audition results.

Graduate Student IPA Exam—At the time of the audition, all candidates for the Master of Music in Voice Performance will take an exam (written and oral) to determine proficiency with English, German, Italian and French pronunciation for singing. The written exam will include transcription of these languages using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). If a passing score (70%) is not attained, enrollment in Diction I (MUS 3211) and Diction II (MUS 3221) will cover the deficiency.

LEVELS OF STUDY

Lower Level (MUSP 1111) is appropriate for the following:

- Bachelor of Arts students who have been advised accordingly

Lower Level (MUSP 1112) is appropriate for the following:

- All beginning freshmen or transfer students
- Students who have changed their major and have not yet completed 4 credit hours of vocal study, including those changing applied majors within the area of performance (i.e. trumpet to voice, piano to voice, etc.)
- Students who have not yet passed the **Upper Level Proficiency Exam**

Upper Level (MUSP 3112) is appropriate for the following:

- Bachelor of Music Education students who have passed the **Proficiency Exam** after at least 6 credit hours of vocal study
- Bachelor of Arts students who have been advised accordingly after at least 6 credit hours of vocal study

Upper Level (MUSP 3113) is appropriate for the following:

- Bachelor of Music students who have passed the **Admittance Exam** after at least 4 credit hours of vocal study

Graduate Level (MUSP 6111 or 6112) is appropriate for the following:

- Master of Music or Master of Music Education students

REPERTOIRE REQUIREMENTS

Lower Level Literature	standard English and Italian repertoire
Upper Level Literature	standard English, Italian, French and German repertoire
Graduate Level Literature	expectation beyond the standard literature
Lower Level (1 credit hour)	at least 4 memorized pieces per semester
Lower Level (2 credit hours)	at least 6 memorized pieces per semester
Upper Level (2 credit hours)	at least 6 memorized pieces per semester
Upper Level (3 credit hours)	at least 8 memorized pieces per semester
Graduate Level (2 to 3 credits)	8 to 11 memorized pieces per semester

The above repertoire requirements are the minimum to be accomplished each semester from memory. The student and teacher will select literature in various languages, genres and contrasting styles. As each student progresses, the difficulty of the repertoire assigned will increase. Failure to learn and/or perform the selected repertoire at the appropriate level will affect the final applied lesson grade.

COLLABORATIVE PIANIST REQUIREMENTS

All voice students will need a pianist with whom to perform for lessons, studio classes, juries, recitals and other performances. Inquire with your teacher regarding available pianists. Collaborative Pianist Guidelines are available in the Music Student Handbook found on the A-State Music Department Web page under *Important Links*.

PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

All formal performances (Tuesday Morning Recitals and degree recitals) are evaluated by means of a rubric specifically designed for voice majors. Students may receive an assessment of performances from the applied teacher once the results are available toward the end of the semester. Prior to that time, see the applied teacher for comments. Expectations for the presentation of any formal performance are as follows:

- **Musicianship**—The ability to sing correct pitches, rhythms and phrases; and to sing with accurate intonation.
- **Diction**—The ability to pronounce correctly and enunciate clearly the languages of the literature.
- **Expressive Interpretation**—The ability to perform non-mechanically and to demonstrate feeling for the expressive qualities which occur within the text and music. In connection with this, the student must know the English equivalent of all foreign texts and should be able to explain an expressive meaning of the songs.
- **Stage Presence**—The ability to sing in a professional manner without visually demonstrating nervousness. Appropriate attire is mandatory for proper deportment.
- **Technique**—The ability to demonstrate understanding of sound vocal production such as: correct breathing, proper vowel concepts, legato singing style, etc. Each student's technical concepts should reflect the ideas of the major teacher. It is understood that there may be minor variations in concepts.

Studio Classes will occur on a weekly basis. Each is typically conducted as a master class in which members of the voice faculty will critique the performers; pedagogical aspects of the instrument will also be covered.

Student Recitals (Tuesday Morning Recitals) involve all applied areas and occur periodically in the Recital Hall on Tuesdays at 11:00. The format is a traditional recital for which the appropriate attire is required. Normally, singers perform 2 pieces of contrasting styles on one recital. All performances require consent of the major applied teacher by filling out the *Tuesday Morning Recital Reservation Form* found on the A-State Music Department Web page under *Important Links*. <http://www.astate.edu/college/liberal-arts/departments/music/>

All students	at least 3 Studio Classes and 1 Student Recital per semester
First Semester Freshmen	may be excused from the student recital performance
Upper Level students	at least 3 Studio Classes and 1 Student Recital per semester
Graduate students	at least 3 Studio Classes and 1 Student Recital per semester

JURIES

At the end of each semester of vocal study, students will perform a **Jury** (final exam) before a majority of the voice faculty or **Jury Committee**. Generally the length of the Jury coincides with the number of credits taken (5 minutes per credit hour). The number of works offered correlates directly with the minimum repertoire requirements for the semester. The Jury Committee (excepting the student's teacher) will select the appropriate number of pieces from the repertoire list to be performed. For the typical Jury, a grade will be given by each faculty member, the average of which will be the jury grade. An Applied Lesson Record will be presented to the Jury Committee by each teacher. After a brief discussion, a final grade will be determined by the major applied teacher based on the jury grade, input from the Jury Committee and the student's progress throughout the semester. Attributes of a fine jury performance demonstrate mastery of style, interpretation, diction, stage presence, and emotional expression. Exceptions to the jury requirement include students giving a degree recital in the semester.

At certain times during a student's residency at A-State, the Jury may include a more extensive exam: a **Proficiency Exam**, an **Admittance Exam** or an **Exit Proficiency Exam**. The Proficiency and Admittance Exam permits study at the upper level. The Proficiency Exam/Admittance Exam will be 15 minutes in length and may be repeated in subsequent semesters until admission is granted. The Exit Proficiency is similar to a half recital and will be 30 minutes in length; however, it is performed before a Jury instead of the public. Failed attempts will result in extra semesters of enrollment. For the **Proficiency Exam** and the **Admittance Exam**, the student will present the Jury Committee with a semester-by-semester list of repertoire studied and performed to that point (3 semesters for **BME**; 2 semesters for **BM**). For the **Exit Proficiency Exam**, a complete list of all repertoire studied and performed during the student's course of vocal study will be presented to the Voice Faculty.

A Proficiency Exam is appropriate for the following:

- A-State Bachelor of Music Education students who are at the **end of the third semester of MUSP 1112** (typically the end of the first semester sophomore year)
- Transfer students seeking the Bachelor of Music Education Degree who have completed 6 or more credit hours of private vocal study at another institution **(those with less than 6 credits may attempt the exam at the discretion of the advisor)**

An Admittance Exam is appropriate for the following:

- A-State Bachelor of Music students who are at the end of the **second semester of MUSP 1112** (typically the end of the freshman year)
- Transfer students seeking the Bachelor of Music Degree who have completed 4 or more credit hours of private vocal study at another institution **(those with less than 4 credits may attempt the exam at the discretion of the advisor)**
- A-State students who desire to change their major to voice performance, but have taken 4 or more credit hours of private vocal study prior to becoming a music major
- A-State students seeking the voice performance degree as a second degree and have already taken 4 or more credit hours of private vocal study prior to beginning the degree program
- Graduate students who have completed one semester of vocal study

Literature Requirements for the Undergraduate Proficiency Exam or Admittance Exam:

- A **minimum of 6** representative selections from the standard **English and Italian** repertoire must be presented from memory.
- The student is not limited to the English and Italian languages if the teacher finds more variety appropriate.
- Repertoire must be from the current semester.
- Stylistic variation will be expected.

Literature Requirements for all Graduate Juries (including the Admittance Exam):

- A **minimum of 8** representative selections of sufficient difficulty from the Baroque, Classical, Romantic and Contemporary eras must be performed from memory.
- Selections must encompass song literature in French, German, Italian, English or other languages.
- At least one operatic and/or oratorio aria must be presented which are deemed appropriate for the individual singer's voice type and vocal range by the major applied teacher.
- Repertoire must be from the current semester.

An Exit Proficiency Exam is appropriate for the following:

- A-State Bachelor of Music Education students who are in their final semester of upper level study and do NOT want to perform the optional **Exit Recital**

Literature Requirements for the Exit Proficiency Exam:

- A **minimum of 6** representative selections performed in their entirety
- Selections must encompass song literature in French and German above the lower level of difficulty
- One aria must be presented from an opera or oratorio
- Various advanced selections in Italian, English or any other language are permissible.
- Stylistic variation will be expected.
- Repertoire must be from the current semester.

DEGREE RECITALS

Students of degree programs may include the performance of a half or full recital with teacher permission, even if not required. No matter what time of year the recital will occur, Recital Hall should be reserved during the first part of the fall semester for degree recitals. Stipulations for voice majors are as follows:

Bachelor of Music Degree	Junior Recital: 25 minutes of music – Required
	Senior Recital: 45 minutes of music – Required
Bachelor of Arts Degree	Exit Recital: 25 minutes of music – Optional
Bachelor of Music Education Degree	Exit Recital: 25 minutes of music – Optional
Master of Music Degree	Graduate Recital: 50 minutes of music – Required
Master of Music Education Degree	Exit Recital: 25 minutes of music – Optional

Recital Hearings—All students must perform a pre-recital hearing for a majority of the voice faculty to determine the readiness to perform the recital repertoire. For undergraduates, the hearing is four weeks prior to the Junior, Exit, or Senior Recitals; for graduate students, the hearing is six weeks prior to the Graduate or Exit Recital. The student should be prepared to sing any selections on the recital from memory with the collaborative pianist and all other musicians programmed for the performance. For a typical hearing, a portion of each set will be heard, including different stylistic periods and languages. A typed draft of the recital program will be presented at this time as well as notes and translations. In addition, a complete list of all repertoire studied and performed during the student's course of vocal study will be presented to the Voice Faculty. The hearing **MUST** be passed by a majority of the voice faculty in order to present the Degree Recital.

Recital Literature— All Degree Recitals will consist of a cohesive arrangement of German, French and English art song and at least one aria from opera or oratorio. The Junior and Exit Recitals will consist of a cohesive arrangement of German and French art song; at least one aria either from an opera or an oratorio; and various selections in English, Italian or any other language. Variations of these provisions may be made at the discretion of the teacher. The Senior and Graduate Recitals will follow the same guidelines; however, at least one aria **EACH** from an opera and an oratorio must be performed. Varying styles will be represented for all Degree Recitals. The Baroque, Classical, Romantic and Contemporary eras will be covered for all Graduate Recitals. All pieces programmed for any recital must have teacher approval. Some literature may be from previous semesters of study; however, the repertoire requirements for the applied lessons must be met and presented within the recital. **NOTE:** It is customary for music to be held for selections from oratorios; however, performance expectations remain the same.

Recital Evaluations—Following the recital presentation, the Recital Committee will convene. After discussion, each committee member will vote pass/fail and make comments. The recital must be approved on a vote of four to one by the committee. If the result is “fail” the committee may ask the student to give the recital again during the next semester with possible changes in repertoire. In such a case, a grade of “I” (“incomplete”) will be assigned. If the recital is not completed in due time, the grade will be recorded as “F.”

Recital Recordings are available upon request at least two weeks prior. See teacher for details.