

*Westminster Choir College  
of Rider University*

**VOICE HANDBOOK  
2024 - 2025**

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## WELCOME

Welcome to Westminster Choir College of Rider University! Your years here are crucial to your development as a musician and as a person. We wish you every success in your endeavors and are here to assist you in any possible way. This handbook has been developed as a supplement to the Academic Catalog of Westminster Choir College and serves to provide you with assistance in understanding the departmental program in general and in the pursuit of your particular course of studies. Please read it carefully, and keep it for reference throughout the year. The responsibility for knowing the information contained in this handbook, as with all school policies and procedures, rests with you. Consult your major teacher or chairperson/program coordinator with any departmental questions or concerns.

We hope you will enjoy your time here – and that it will be exciting, rewarding and productive.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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## TEACHER ASSIGNMENTS and LESSONS

### Teacher Assignments

Students may request a teacher of their choice. Studio assignments are determined by the department chair. Requests are honored by availability, seniority and the recommendations of faculty.

### Changing Teachers:

If a student has problems with her/his assigned teacher and wishes to change to another studio, the procedure is as follows:

1. The student should speak to her/his teacher about the concerns.
2. The student should speak with the chair/coordinator of the department, who will offer counsel and act as a mediator if conflict arises. If the student's teacher is the chair/coordinator of the department, s/he should speak with the Assoc. Dean for Administration.
3. If the problems cannot be resolved, the student must obtain a Student Release Form from the chair/coordinator of the department.
4. After discussing the concerns and the student's intentions, the teacher will sign the form, releasing the student from that studio at the end of the semester.
5. The student should make arrangements to audition for another teacher and should take the signed form to the audition.
6. At the audition, the prospective teacher may accept the student or suggest another teacher.
7. The new teacher will sign the release form and give it to the department chair/coordinator.

Teacher changes may be made only prior to a semester.

**NOTE:** In our profession, it is considered unethical to study voice with more than one teacher concurrently. In support of this position, the Voice Department prohibits any student taking voice instruction for credit at Westminster from studying with any other teacher on or off campus.

### Lessons

Lessons are either 30 or 60 minutes in length. A student must attend a minimum of nine 60-minute lessons (or the equivalent in 30-minute lessons) during a semester. Any fewer than nine lessons will result in a failing grade for the semester. Lessons missed by a professor due to illness or other reasons will be made up. Student absences, for any reason, including illness or personal scheduling conflicts, will not be made up. Students must notify in advance their teacher if they are unable to attend their lessons.

## STUDIO and PERFORMANCE CLASSES

Studio Class is a class made up of only those students studying with a particular teacher, and meets once weekly. The class is structured by the individual teacher and may include demonstrations, discussions, master class, and performances.

Performance Class allows students to experience performing before a large group. Students who are on the program are asked to exhibit appropriate performance behavior and dress. Students in the audience are expected to behave in a supportive and respectful manner appropriate to accepted concert etiquette. All students are encouraged to perform. This class meets in lieu of Studio Class three times each semester.

Performance Seminars may be offered as replacements to Performance Class.

In order to schedule him/herself for a performance class, the student (with his/her teacher), should fill out a *Performance Class Form*. These forms can be found online or from the Departmental Graduate Assistant. The class is filled on a first come, first served basis; therefore, it is advisable to turn in the form as early as possible since classes are often filled more than a week in advance. If the class for which the student has applied is filled, he/she must resubmit a form for the next available class.

Attendance at Studio Class, Performance Class, or Performance Seminar classes is required of all undergraduate and graduate students who have primaries or concentrations in this area. In the event that a student has an unavoidable conflict, the student should notify the teacher as early as possible. *Any student who is absent from the class more than three times in any semester will be considered deficient and will be required to repeat the semester or complete a project such as a paper, listening assignment, extra reading, etc. assigned by the teacher.*

**NOTE:** A teacher may at any time hold a studio class for his/her studio in place of a performance class. Finding a room will be the responsibility of the teacher – each teacher should contact the chair for information on open rooms.

## GUIDELINES FOR VOICE FACULTY

1. Teachers will make up any lessons they miss. *Teachers are not required to make up lessons missed because of student illness or other absence.* Teachers are encouraged to make up lessons missed because of choral engagements.
2. Students must attend at least nine hour or 18 half-hour lessons to receive a passing grade.
3. Faculty who must be absent from lessons for a week or more should inform the department chair of the dates of anticipated absence and the plan for rescheduling lessons.
4. Make-up lessons because of teacher absence must be scheduled in a way that fits the student's schedule and does not penalize the student academically or financially.
5. All teachers must be present for their students' required recitals.
6. All teachers (full-time and adjunct) must be present at studio class and performance class.
7. All teachers (full-time and adjunct) must be present at the end-of-semester juries of their students. Adjunct faculty must attend at least one full day of juries.
8. Lessons will be scheduled to accommodate the student's class schedule.

**COURSE NUMBERS FOR APPLIED STUDY  
Applicable Fall 2023**

| <b>No.</b> | <b>Undergraduate Students</b>                                | <b>Length of lesson</b> |
|------------|--|-------------------------|
| VC 168A    | Voice primaries in all programs at WCC                       | One hour                |
| VC 168B    | Theory/composition majors                                    | ½ hour                  |
| VC 168C    | Elective voice study (there is an additional fee)            | One hour                |
| VC 168D    | Elective voice study (there is an additional fee)            | ½ hour                  |
| VC 168E    | Elective voice study for special (non-matriculated) students | One hour                |
| VC 168F    | Elective voice study for special (non-matriculated) students | ½ hour                  |
| VC103      | Voice class for organ and piano primaries                    | One hour                |

| <b>No.</b> | <b>Graduate Students</b>                          | <b>Length of lesson</b> |
|------------|---|-------------------------|
| VC 641A    | Voice primaries in all programs                   | One hour                |
| VC 641C    | Elective voice study (there is an additional fee) | One hour                |
| VC 641D    | Elective voice study (there is an additional fee) | ½ hour                  |

**For the fees for the current year, please go to  
<https://www.rider.edu/tuition-aid/tuition-fees/undergraduate>**

**REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF SEMESTERS OF VOICE STUDY OR FOR  
CREDIT BY EXAM**

A student requesting a waiver or credit-by-exam of one or more semesters of voice study must discuss this possibility with the voice teacher. If both are in agreement, the student must prepare a program of 10 minutes of music, including a minimum of three languages, to be sung at the jury time in either December or May, or in September if the student has completed a semester of voice study in the summer.

If the student is also singing a Level, the jury repertoire should be part of the ten-minute program.

This policy will apply to all requests for waivers or credit-by-exam.

## CONCERT ATTENDANCE POLICY

All undergraduate students are required to attend seven recitals, or other approved musical events, per semester. Proof of attendance is shown by submitting a brief report of each concert. Compliance with the concert attendance policy will be a part of the student's primary lesson grade.

## AUDITION FOR A CHANGE OF DEGREE PROGRAM

Any student wishing to change degree programs may audition for the Voice Faculty at the end of any semester during the exam period. Those auditioning for undergraduate Voice Performance must prepare *four songs from memory*.

## VOICE AWARDS AUDITIONS

The Voice Awards Auditions, which take place in the second semester, are the means for naming recipients of several voice scholarships for returning students enrolled in Westminster Choir College.

To be eligible to compete, undergraduate voice students must have a minimum 2.5 cumulative GPA (grade point average). Graduate students must have a minimum 3.0 GPA. Some awards have higher academic requirements as well as age and financial need restrictions.

Students audition and compete within their graduating class. Undergraduates in their first or second semester of college voice study will sing with the freshman class, those in their third or fourth semester of college voice study will sing with the sophomore class, those in their fifth or sixth semester of college voice study will sing with the junior class, and those in their seventh or eighth semester of college voice study will sing with the senior class.

**Undergraduate students may only audition once at each level.**

**Only first year Graduate students enrolled in VC641 may audition for the graduate award(s).**

Results of the competition are announced at the Awards Convocation in May. All scholarships are credited toward payment of tuition for the following year.

## **COURSES of STUDY PRIVATE COACHING**

### **PRIVATE VOCAL COACHING**

Private Coaching, VC 457/458 (for undergraduates), and VC 657/658 (for graduate students), are individual coaching sessions for singers on musical style, interpretation, ensemble, languages and presentation. Private Coaching VC 457 and VC 657 consist of weekly hour-length lessons; an extra fee is charged.

Private Coaching VC458 and VC658 consist of weekly half-hour lessons; an extra fee is charged. These courses may be repeated for credit. The prerequisite for VC457 and VC458 is the successful completion of Level II. VC657 and VC658 are open to graduate Voice Pedagogy and Performance majors.

### **PRIVATE DRAMATIC/ROLE COACHING**

Private Dramatic/Role Coaching, VC 467/468 (for undergraduates), and VC667/668 (for graduate students) are individual dramatic coaching sessions for singers on operatic role study and/or audition preparation. Students will provide their own accompanists as needed.

Private Dramatic/Role Coaching VC467 and VC667 consist of weekly hour-length lessons; an extra fee is charged. Private Dramatic/Role Coaching VC468 and VC668 consist of weekly half-hour lessons; an extra fee is charged. These courses may be repeated for credit. The prerequisite for VC467 and VC468 is successful completion of Level II.

**For the fees for the current year, please go to  
<https://www.rider.edu/tuition-aid/tuition-fees/undergraduate>**

## **PROGRAM GOALS: : STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

### **Bachelor of Music in Voice Performance**

1. Students will build and demonstrate a healthy vocal technique.
2. Students will be able to recognize and interpret a certain breadth of voice literature
3. Students will develop abilities to communicate the complex relationships between music and poetry.
4. Students will sing with correct diction in English, Italian, French and German, as well as communicate both the general meaning and specific nuances of their sung texts.
5. Students will integrate musicianship skills and their knowledge of musical structure and form to communicate musically, with stylistic and textual expression. These skills include but are not limited to, sight-reading, keyboard skills and basic musical analysis.
6. Students will build vocal and performance skills that equip them for the demands of solo and ensemble singing.

*We apply these student learning outcomes to all voice primary students, not just Voice Performance majors.*

### **Master of Music in Voice Pedagogy and Performance**

1. Students will demonstrate a high level of proficiency in vocal technique and musicianship, including effective coordination of breath and tone, even registration, the ability to sing legato, and the ability to employ a range of dynamic choices.
2. Students will demonstrate skills in the pronunciation, translation, and understanding of the following languages: English, Italian, French and German.
3. Students will demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the science of teaching voice as well as historical and current methods of voice pedagogy.
4. Students will employ research methods that will advance critical thinking in voice pedagogy and the literature of singing.
5. Students will be able to identify the roots and development of German Lieder, French mélodie, and/or opera literature as well as the poetry and cultures from which they emerged.
6. Students will demonstrate the ability to synthesize their vocal and interpretive skills to become effective artists on the concert and operatic stages.

### **Master of Voice Pedagogy**

1. Students will demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the science of teaching voice, as well as historical and current methods of voice pedagogy.
2. Students will employ research methods that will advance critical thinking in voice pedagogy and the literature of singing.
3. Students will demonstrate the ability to diagnose and correct vocal faults, as well as to build proper vocal technique and artistry, in their students.
4. Students will be able to identify the roots and development of German Lieder, French mélodie, as well as the poetry and cultures from which they emerged.
5. Students will demonstrate the ability to synthesize their experience in the profession with the skills named above to become effective teachers of singing.
6. Students will demonstrate the ability to synthesize their experience in the profession with the skills named above to become effective teachers of vocal performance, including vocal and musical interpretation.

## **UNDERGRADUATE VOICE REPERTOIRE REQUIREMENTS**

### **UNDERGRADUATE VOICE PERFORMANCE MAJORS**

We believe that students should have experience singing in English, Italian, French, and German as well as in many compositional styles and periods. We feel teachers and students should have some flexibility as to how and when they sing in these styles and languages. We also believe that students should learn a significant amount of repertoire over their four years of study.

A song is defined as a solo vocal composition not intended for the theatrical or commercial stage.

Requirements:

- Students will learn at least 40 works (songs, arias, recitatives) over the course of their 4 years (including Level requirements and two recitals.)
- Students will document all works studied, both memorized and not memorized (indicating which works were memorized) on the Voice Performance Repertoire List.
- Students shall have the following historic periods represented:
  - Baroque
  - Classical
  - 19<sup>th</sup> Century (including French *mélodie* and German *Lieder*)
  - 20<sup>th</sup> century
  - Original music written after 1975, not including arrangements of folk songs or spirituals.
  - Songs of American BIPOC or female composers
  - One song (not musical theater or popular arrangements) composed within the last 20 years
- Students shall have studied at least four Italian songs or arias.
- Students shall have studied at least two operatic arias.
- Students shall have studied a *secco* recitative before 1828.
- Students shall have studied at least one oratorio aria.
- Students shall have studied at least four German songs.
- Students shall have studied at least four French songs.
- Students shall have studied at least six songs in English including at least three American songs. Two of the American songs must be from American BIPOC or female composers.

- Students shall have studied at least two songs from “national schools” (Spanish, Czech, Russian, Scandinavian, Japan, Korea, China, Central and South American countries, for example)
  - One of these songs must come from outside Europe.
  - Selections may be learned in English translation.
- Students shall have studied two songs from music theater and/or the Great American Songbook.
- Students with their teachers will keep track of the repertoire they have studied on the Voice Performance Repertoire List. Their progress will be monitored at the Level II test and again at the Level III test.
  - At Level II, the Repertoire List should indicate that the student has made significant progress in fulfilling repertoire requirements. At least 18 selections, including three languages and three historic periods, should be completed at the time of the Level II.
  - At least 30 selections should be completed at the time of the Level III.
  -

Students must have sung each song in the Repertoire List with musical and linguistic accuracy for the teacher (does not have to be memorized) , to be included on the Repertoire List.

The student should present a COPY of the Repertoire List, SIGNED BY THE VOICE TEACHER, along with the Level II and Level III jury forms, at their respective juries. This copy of the Repertoire List will be filed with the jury form.

The completed Voice Performance Repertoire List, signed by the professor, must be submitted to the Academic Coordinator’s office with documentation of the senior recital.

Failure to complete the requirements of the Repertoire List will result in failure to graduate.

## **UNDERGRADUATE VOICE PRIMARIES IN MUSIC EDUCATION AND BACHELOR OF ARTS IN MUSIC PROGRAM**

We believe that students should have experience singing in English, Italian, French, and German as well as in many compositional styles and periods. We feel teachers and students should have some flexibility as to how and when they sing in these styles and languages. We also believe that students should learn a significant amount of repertoire over their four years of study.

A song is defined as a solo vocal composition not intended for the theatrical or commercial stage.

Requirements:

- Students will complete 30-35 works (songs, arias, recitatives) over the course of their 4 years (including Level requirements and one recital.)
- Students will document all works studied, both memorized and not memorized (indicating which works were memorized) on the Voice Primary Repertoire List.
- Students shall have the following historic periods represented:
  - Baroque
  - Classical
  - 19<sup>th</sup> Century (including French *mélodie* and German *Lieder*)
  - 20<sup>th</sup> century
  - Original music written after 1975, not including arrangements of folk songs or spirituals. One song (not musical theater or popular arrangements) must have been composed in the last 20 years.
- Students shall have studied at least four Italian songs or arias.
- Students shall have studied at least two operatic or oratorio arias.
- Students shall have studied a *secco* recitative from 1828 or earlier.
- Students shall have studied at least three German songs or arias (at least two must be songs).
- Students shall have studied at least three French songs or arias (at least two must be songs).
- Students shall have studied at least four songs in English including American songs. Two of the American songs must be from American BIPOC or female composers.
- Students shall have studied at least two songs from music theater and/or the Great American Songbook.
- Students, with their teachers, will keep track of the repertoire they have studied on the Voice Primary Repertoire List. It is strongly recommended that both teacher and student fill out the Repertoire Lists consistently throughout each semester. Their progress will be monitored at the Level II test and again at the Level III test.
  - The student must present a COPY of the Repertoire List, SIGNED BY THE VOICE TEACHER, along with the Level II and Level III jury forms,

at their respective juries. This copy of the Repertoire List will be filed with the jury form.

- o At Level II, the Repertoire List must indicate that the student has made significant progress in fulfilling repertoire requirements. At least 18 selections, including three languages and three historical periods, must be completed at the time of the Level II.
- o At least 28 selections must be completed at the time of the Level III. Students must have sung each song in the Repertoire List with musical and linguistic accuracy for the teacher (does not need to be memorized) to be included on the Repertoire List.
- Students must have sung each song in the Repertoire List with musical and linguistic accuracy for the teacher (does not need to be memorized) to be included on the Repertoire List.
- The student should present a COPY of the Repertoire List, SIGNED BY THE VOICE TEACHER, along with the Level II and Level III jury forms, at their respective juries. This copy of the Repertoire List will be filed with the jury form.
- The completed Voice Primary Repertoire List, signed by the professor, must be submitted to the Academic Coordinator's office with documentation of the senior recital. Failure to complete the requirements of the Repertoire List will result in failure to graduate.

## **UNDERGRADUATE VOICE PRIMARIES IN MUSIC EDUCATION AND BACHELOR OF ARTS IN MUSIC PROGRAM WHO CHOOSE A MUSICAL THEATER REPERTOIRE TRACK**

Students in the Music Education and Bachelor of Arts in Music program may choose a Music Theater Track to complete their repertoire requirements.

Requirements:

- Students will complete 30-35 works (songs, arias, recitatives, musical theater songs) over the course of their 4 years (including Level requirements and a recital).
- Students will document all works studied, both memorized and not memorized (indicating which works were memorized) on the Voice Primary Repertoire List.
- Students shall have the following historic periods represented:
  - Baroque
  - Classical
  - 19<sup>th</sup> Century (including French *mélodie* and German *Lieder*)
  - 20<sup>th</sup> century
  - Original music written after 1975, not including arrangements of folk songs or spirituals. One song (not musical theater or popular arrangements) must have been composed in the last 20 years
- Students shall have studied at least two English songs or arias, including one American song.
- Students shall have studied at least two Italian songs or arias.
- Students shall have studied at least two German songs or arias (at least one must be a song).
- Students shall have studied at least two French songs or arias (at least one must be a song).
- Students shall have studied a *secco* recitative from 1828 or earlier.
- Students shall have studied at least four songs in English including American songs. Two of the American songs must be from American BIPOC or female composers.
- Students shall have studied at least two Golden Age (pre-1965) upbeat songs.
- Students shall have studied at least two Golden Age (pre-1965) ballads.
- Students shall have studied at least two 1965-1995 upbeat songs.
- Students shall have studied at least two 1965-1995 ballads.
- Students shall have studied at least two Contemporary (post-1995) upbeat songs.
- Students shall have studied at least two Contemporary (post-1995) ballads.
- Students shall have studied at least one pop song composed since their birth date.

## UNDERGRADUATE JURY REQUIREMENTS

1. Voice Levels, or juries, take place during exam week at the end of each semester. Make-up juries for students who are sick or have other emergencies during regular exam times will take place during the second week of classes in each semester.
2. REPERTOIRE LIST FORM --- This form must be filled out prior to both the Level II and Level III test or jury. The student must bring this form to the exams. The forms are available in the voice department office and from voice faculty members.
3. The tests are given one of the following grades by faculty vote:

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| <b>Pass</b>             | Student may prepare for the next test or recital.  |
| <b>Conditional Pass</b> | A Conditional Pass means that the test has been passed but the faculty is concerned about specific problems, which are serious enough to require a re-hearing at the next exam period. Both the concerns and the conditions of the rehearing will be explained in detail in writing and will be communicated to the student by the teacher. If the conditions are not satisfied at the next hearing, the student must repeat the semester of voice at the same number and sing again at the next exam period. <i>This option is not available for the Level II and Level III for Voice Performance majors.</i> |
| <b>Fail</b>             | Student must repeat the present course number until the test is successfully completed. Failure to complete any test in three attempts will result in dismissal from the program   |

4. Students will be notified via e-mail of the results of all tests. Decisions of the faculty are final.
5. A student may attempt any Level or Hearing three times. If a student fails a test three times, he/she will be dismissed from the voice primary.
6. Students should be prepared to give translations from memory of foreign language texts sung as a part of any test.

## **UNDERGRADUATE VOICE PERFORMANCE MAJORS**

- Evaluation will be divided between three tests, called “Levels,” and a portfolio documenting repertoire to be assembled throughout the four years of study.
- Language and Diction instruction will parallel the requirements in the Levels:
  - Freshmen will study the Italian language in the first year.
  - Freshman diction will be a two semester sequence that includes IPA, clear vowel and consonant sounds, English and Italian diction.
  - Sophomores will choose between studying German and French language and will take the diction of the chosen language during that year.
  - Juniors will be encouraged to take the other language and will take the diction of that language during the year as well.
  - Students who take only one of the second languages (German or French) will normally take the diction of the other language in their junior year.
  - *For each Level, students will concentrate on attaining proficiency in singing in English and in one particular foreign language, called the focus language. For Level I the focus language is Italian. French or German will be the focus languages for Level II and Level III, in the order chosen by the student and teacher.*

### **Level I**

1. Level I is to be taken at the end of the freshman year.
2. The main thrust of the Level I is to evaluate the student’s technical progress
3. Ten minutes will be allowed for the test.

The following are expected of a successful Level I Test:

1. Musical accuracy
2. Physical alignment that serves singing
3. Evidence of efficient breath management
4. Connection of breath to tone
5. Proper pronunciation and inflection of the languages represented
6. Evidence of responsiveness to text
7. Evidence of a communicative performer

### **Test Requirements**

1. Four selections from memory (an Italian song or aria from the 17<sup>th</sup> or early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, a second Italian song or aria and two selections in English)  
The student will begin with:
  - a. One Italian song or aria
  - b. One English song or aria
2. Faculty may request to hear more of the required repertoire.

### **Outcomes**

1. Pass – A passed Level I indicates satisfactory progress in the Voice Performance program and permission to proceed to sophomore level voice.
2. Conditional Pass --The Level I with a conditional pass reveals significant deficiencies but is not deemed failed. This outcome allows the student to proceed to sophomore voice but requires the student to sing again in the next semester. The concerns, conditions and repertoire will be explained in detail in writing and will be communicated to the student. Those reasons will NOT be the sole basis on which the next test will be assessed. If the conditions are not satisfied at the rehearing, or if other parts of the rehearing are deemed by the faculty to be unsatisfactory, the student must repeat the semester of voice at the same number and sing again in the next exam period.
3. Fail—A failed Level I test will put the student on probation in the Voice Performance Program and require the student to repeat a semester of freshman voice.

### **Level II**

1. Level II is to be taken at the end of the sophomore year.
2. Level II is a gateway test for remaining in the Voice Performance Program.
3. Technical progress remains a significant part of this assessment.
4. Students will present their repertoire lists to the faculty to assess progress.
5. 15 minutes will be allowed for the test.
6. Repertoire for Level II must represent work done after the successful completion of the Level I test.

This test should demonstrate a synthesis of vocal, musical and performance achievement, progress in all skill sets, and continued growth in the following areas:

1. Musical accuracy
2. Correct pronunciation and inflection of text
3. Vibrant, resonant singing that reflects physical coordination
4. Ability to sing a legato line
5. Sensitivity to musical style
6. Performance that reveals an understanding of and commitment to text
7. Development as a persuasive and communicative performer

### **Test Requirements**

1. Six selections from memory
  - a. 3 songs in the focus language (either German or French)
  - b. 1 song in English
  - c. 2 other selections
2. Students will present 1 song (not an aria) in the focus language and one other selection.
3. Faculty may request to hear more of the presented repertoire.

### **Outcomes**

1. Pass—A passed Level II indicates full acceptance into the Voice Performance Program and permission to proceed to junior level voice and sing the Junior Recital in the junior year.
2. Fail--Failure of the Level II will result in:
  - After one semester of probation in the Voice Performance Program, the student must be retested and admitted in full standing to the program or dismissed. The students must repeat a semester of sophomore voice.

OR

  - Removal from the Program
3. Pass or Fail are the only options for Level II.

### Reasons for dismissal from Voice Performance as the result of a failed Level II:

- Inadequate vocal development
- Inadequate musicality
- Inadequate musical skills
- Lack of performing skills and/or spark

### **Level III**

1. Level III is to be taken at the end of either semester of the junior year.
2. Technical progress remains a significant part of this assessment.
3. Students will present their repertoire list for the faculty to assess progress.
4. 15 minutes will be allowed for the test.
5. Repertoire for Level III must represent work done after the successful completion of the Level II test.

### **Test Requirements**

1. 7 works from memory
  - a. 3 songs in the focus language not tested in Level II (either German or French)
  - b. 1 aria
  - c. 1 song in English
  - d. 1 song in any language other than the focus language of the test

- e. A secco recitative composed before 1815
2. Students will sing two selections. One selection must be a song in the focus language.
3. Students must include one song or aria written after 1975 (unless satisfied at an earlier test). The post-1975 art song may not include spirituals or selections from music theater.
4. Faculty may hear further repertoire.

### **Outcomes**

1. Pass—A passed Level III allows the student to progress to senior level voice and prepare the Senior Recital.
2. Fail— If the student does not pass Level III, the student may not proceed to VC401 or present the Senior Recital. The faculty may place the student on probation or may remove the student from the Voice Performance Program.
3. Pass or Fail are the only options for Level III.

## **UNDERGRADUATE VOICE PRIMARIES IN MUSIC EDUCATION AND BACHELOR OF ARTS IN MUSIC**

- Evaluation will be divided between three tests, called “Levels,” and a portfolio documenting repertoire to be assembled throughout the four years of study.
- For each Level, students will concentrate on attaining proficiency in singing in English and in one particular foreign language, called the focus language. For Level I the focus language is Italian. French or German will be the focus languages for Level II and Level III, in the order chosen by the student and teacher.

### **Level I**

1. Level I is to be taken at the end of the freshman year.
2. The main thrust of the Level I is to evaluate the student’s technical progress
3. Ten minutes will be allowed for the test.

The following are expected of a successful Level I Test:

1. Musical accuracy
2. Physical alignment that serves singing
3. Evidence of efficient breath management
4. Connection of breath to tone
5. Proper pronunciation and inflection of the languages represented
6. Evidence of responsiveness to text
7. Evidence of a communicative performer

### **Test Requirements**

1. Four selections from memory (an Italian song or aria from the 17<sup>th</sup> or early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, a second Italian song or aria, and two selections in English)  
The student will begin with:
  - a. One Italian song or aria
  - b. One English song or aria
2. Faculty may request to hear more of the required repertoire.

### **Outcomes**

1. Pass – A passed Level I indicates satisfactory progress.
2. Conditional Pass --The Level I with a conditional pass reveals significant deficiencies but is not deemed failed. This outcome allows the student to proceed to sophomore voice but requires the student to sing again in the next semester. The concerns, conditions and repertoire will be explained in detail in writing and will be communicated to the student. Those reasons will NOT be the sole basis on which the next test will be assessed. If the conditions are not satisfied at the rehearing, or if the faculty deems other parts of the rehearing to be unsatisfactory, the student must sing again in the next exam period.
3. Fail—A failed Level I test requires the student to sing again, repeating the entire hearing, in the next semester.

## **Level II and Level III Requirements for Music Education and BAM Majors**

1. Repertoire for Level II must represent work done after the successful completion of the Level I test.
2. It is recommended that Level II is to be taken at the end of the sophomore year, and Level III at the end of either semester of the junior year.
3. Technical progress remains a significant part of this assessment.
4. Students will present their portfolios for the faculty to assess its progress.
5. Ten minutes will be allowed for these tests.

Both tests should demonstrate a synthesis of vocal, musical and performance achievement, progress in all skill sets, and continued growth in the following areas:

1. Musical accuracy
2. Correct pronunciation and inflection of text
3. Vibrant, resonant singing that reflects physical coordination
4. Ability to sing legato line
5. Sensitivity to musical style
6. Performance that reveals an understanding of and commitment to text
7. Development as a persuasive and communicative performer

### **Level II and Level III Test Requirements**

1. Four selections from memory
  - a. 2 songs in the focus language (either German or French)
  - b. 2 other selections
2. Students will present 2 selections, one in the focus language and one other selection.
3. Faculty may request to hear more of the presented repertoire.

### **Outcomes**

1. Pass — A passed Level II indicates permission to proceed to work on the Level III. A passed Level III allows the student to prepare a senior recital, given during VC401.
2. Fail -- Failure of either Level means that the student must repeat the Level at the end of the next semester.
3. Failure of Level III prevents the student from enrolling in VC401 or preparing the senior recital.
4. Conditional Pass may be given for foreign language deficiencies.
  - a. The conditions will be explained in writing.
  - b. The student must sing a rehearing at the end of the next semester to fulfill the conditions.

**Level I, II, and III Requirements for Music Education and BAM Majors who  
choose a MUSICAL THEATRE Emphasis**

Outcomes remain the same as other juries.

Students must present their repertoire lists at the Level II and Level III juries as with other programs.

Level I:

- 1 English art song in the classical style
- 16-bar Golden Age upbeat
- 16-bar Golden Age ballad
- 2 Art songs in Italian

Level II:

- 1 Art song in German
- 1 Art song in French
- 16-bar Contemporary upbeat
- 16-bar Contemporary ballad
- Musical Theatre song of choice

Level III:

- Art song in classical style
- 2 16-bar cuts
- 1 32-bar cut
- Musical Theatre song of choice

## UNDERGRADUATE VOICE PRIMARIES IN THEORY/COMPOSITION

### SCHEDULE

| Freshman  | Sophomore  | Junior         | Senior   |
|---|--|----------------|--|
| <b>VC 168B</b><br>Progress Jury at the end of 2 <sup>nd</sup> semester of study | <b>VC 168B</b><br>Level I jury at the end of 4th, 5th, or 6th semester of study. | <b>VC 168B</b> | <b>VC 168B</b><br>Recital – 15 minutes of solo vocal music on the Senior Recital |

#### **Progress Jury Requirements: Two songs from memory**

- The student should have at least two songs prepared from memory. The student must present to the faculty committee a list of all repertoire studied during the semester(s) of voice study preceding the test and will indicate which songs have been prepared by memory.
- The student will choose one song to begin the hearing. The faculty may request an additional song from the memorized list.
- The purpose of the General Progress Jury is to determine that the student is making satisfactory progress toward the goals of the Level I.

Successful completion of this requirement will qualify the students to prepare for Level I. Students not passing the jury are required to continue voice study at the same voice number until the jury is passed. This additional instruction must be taken by registering for the course through the school and may result in added expense to the student.

#### Level I Requirements for Theory/Composition Voice Primaries

| Repertoire Requirements | Memory requirements   |
|-------------------------|---|
| 12 songs studied        | 6 memorized for the jury, representing 3 languages;<br>1 language must be English |

- Level I may include repertoire from the General Progress Jury.
- The student and his/her teacher will choose one memorized song to begin the hearing. The faculty will then choose one or more selections from the memorized repertoire.

The following are expected of a successful Level I Test:

1. Musical accuracy
2. Physical alignment that serves singing
3. Evidence of efficient breath management
4. Connection of breath to tone
5. Proper pronunciation and inflection of the languages represented

6. Evidence of responsiveness to text
7. Evidence of a communicative performer

### UNDERGRADUATE REQUIREMENTS FOR DOUBLE MAJORS

#### **Voice Performance and Music Ed//BAM/Theory-Composition**

Follow all Voice Performance requirements.

#### **Music Education/Bachelor of Arts in Music**

##### **Level I**

**Level II** Music Education, or BAM majors

### UNDERGRADUATE VOICE MINORS

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Freshman:<br/>Secondary Class Voice<br/>VC 103 or VC 168B</b> | General Progress Jury or Voice Proficiency Test may be taken at the end of either semester |
| <b>Sophomore:<br/>Secondary Applied Lessons<br/>VC 168B</b>      | Voice Proficiency Test (must be taken by the end of the fourth semester of study)          |

#### **General Progress Jury Requirements: Two songs from memory**

- The student should have at least two songs prepared from memory. The student must present to the faculty committee a list of all repertoire studied during the semester(s) of voice study preceding the test and will indicate which songs have been prepared by memory.
- The student will choose one song to begin the hearing. The faculty may request an additional song from the memorized list.

Successful completion of this requirement will qualify the students to prepare for the Voice Proficiency Test. Students not passing the jury are required to continue voice study at the same voice number until the jury is passed. This additional instruction must be taken by registering for the course through the school and may result in added expense to the student.

#### **Voice Proficiency Test Requirements for Voice Minors**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Ten songs or arias, including works in English and Italian | Four of these songs including one in a foreign language must be sung from memory |
|--|--|

- Repertoire from the General Progress Jury may be included in the Voice Proficiency Test.

- The student and his/her teacher will choose one song to begin the hearing. The faculty will then choose one or more of the memorized selections.
- Once the Voice Proficiency Test is passed, voice requirements are completed.
- Although the test may be attempted at the end of any semester, it must be taken no later than at the end of the fourth semester of instruction.
- Students who fail to pass the test after four semesters of voice study must repeat voice study at VC 204. This extra instruction must be taken by registering for the course through the school and may result in added expense to the student.

**Undergraduate Elective Voice**

|                |               |                              |
|----------------|---------------|------------------------------|
| <b>VC 168C</b> | hour lesson   | no departmental requirements |
| <b>VC 168D</b> | ½ hour lesson | no departmental requirements |

## GRADUATE VOICE PEDAGOGY AND PERFORMANCE

| <b>First Year</b>   | <b>Second Year</b>   |
|---|--|
| VC 641A<br>All Graduate students must sing a Graduate Hearing during either semester of their first year. <i>(With the teacher's permission, the Voice Qualifying Exam may take the place of the Graduate Hearing.)</i> | VC 641A<br>Voice Qualifying Exam no later than the end of the semester before the recital is planned.<br>Graduate Recital* – students must be enrolled in applied voice and have passed the Qualifying Exam in a previous semester before presenting the recital |

## GRADUATE APPLIED PRIMARY VOICE – MUSIC EDUCATION AND SACRED MUSIC

| <b>First Year</b>  | <b>Second Year</b>  |
|--|---|
| VC 641<br>All Graduate students must sing a Graduate Hearing during either semester of their first year. <i>(With the teacher's permission, the Voice Qualifying Exam may take the place of the Graduate Hearing.)</i> | VC 641<br>Voice Qualifying Exam no later than the end of the semester before the recital is planned.<br>Graduate Recital – students must be enrolled in applied voice and have passed the Qualifying Exam in a previous semester before presenting the recital. |

## **GRADUATE ELECTIVE VOICE**

|                |               |                              |
|----------------|---------------|------------------------------|
| <b>VC 641C</b> | hour lesson   | no departmental requirements |
| <b>VC 641D</b> | ½ hour lesson | no departmental requirements |

## **GRADUATE HEARING**

|   |
|---|
| Ten minutes of memorized music selected by the student and his/her teacher. |
|---|

- All graduate students must sing a Graduate Hearing or Voice Qualifying Exam by the end of the second semester of study.
- All faculty members at the hearing will write an evaluation of the student's performance. Students will receive the results of the evaluations from their teacher.
- A student placed in VC 655 in his/her first semester need not sing a Graduate Hearing for the faculty.

## **VOICE QUALIFYING EXAM**

|   |
|---|
| 1. No less than twelve minutes, and no more than 15 minutes of music                |
| 2. Songs and at least one aria from opera or oratorio                               |
| 3. The following languages must be represented: German, French, Italian and English |
| 4. Students may only repeat one selection sung at a previous graduate hearing.      |

- In order to pass this test, students must demonstrate sufficient technical, musical and performing proficiency to prepare the graduate recital.
- Students may take the test at the end of any semester of study, including their first semester. Once it is passed, no further hearings are required and they may prepare the graduate recital.
- All faculty members at the hearing will write an evaluation of the student's performance. Students will receive the results of the evaluations from their teacher.
- If after four semesters a student is unable to pass the Voice Qualifying Exam, the faculty may dismiss him/her from their program.

## RECITALS

### Scheduling

All required recitals are scheduled by lottery, organized and run by the Office of Performance Management. To arrange a date for a recital, a student must get a lottery number and a Recital Application Form, which must be signed by the student's primary teacher and then returned to the Office of Performance Management during the designated sign-up period. Recital dates will be determined, in lottery number order, by the Office of Performance Management, according to the choices of dates indicated on the Recital Application form. No required recitals may be scheduled during examination or reading days during the final examination period in any semester.

Dress rehearsal dates and times are available to be scheduled at the start of each semester.

### Recital Criteria

#### Recital Requirements For Undergraduate Performance Majors

|                       |                        |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Junior Recital during | 20-30 minutes of music |
| Senior Recital during | 40-50 minutes of music |

- While it is understood that the choice of repertoire for a required recital is the decision of both the singer and the teacher, the final judgment rests with the teacher.
- In order for a student to present a required voice recital, he/she must be registered for credit in voice at Westminster during the semester in which the recital is presented and must have the full support and endorsement of his/her teacher.
- The Junior Recital should be, when possible, a joint recital with 20-30 minutes of music from each participant.
- Recital repertoire should represent a culmination of the vocal, musical and artistic work done to date, and should be of the sophistication and level of repertoire sung in the Level II exam.
- If the student has met the minimum time requirements stated above for the recital, the remaining available time may be used to sing repertoire of other styles and genres, with the approval of the teacher.
- It is understood that, with the exception of chamber music requiring more than one accompanying instrument, the recital will be performed from memory.

## **Recital Requirements for Undergraduate Music Education and BA Majors**

- Senior Recital 25-50 minutes of music  
(Junior Recital may be given after the successful completion of Level II, with permission of the teacher) (20-30 minutes of music)
- While it is understood that the choice of repertoire for a required recital is the decision of both the singer and the teacher, the final judgment rests with the teacher.
  - For a student to present a required voice recital, he/she must be registered for credit in voice at Westminster during the semester in which the recital is presented and must have full support and endorsement of his/her teacher.
  - Joint recitals either with another singer or a pianist or organist are strongly encouraged.
  - Recital repertoire should represent a culmination of the vocal, musical and artistic work done to date, and should be of the sophistication and level of repertoire sung in the Level II exam.
  - If the student has met the minimum time requirements stated above for the recital, the remaining available time may be used to sing repertoire of other styles and genres, with the approval of the teacher.
  - It is understood that, with the exception of chamber music requiring more than one accompanying instrument, the recital will be performed from memory.

## **Requirements for Graduate Recitals**

- While it is understood that the choice of repertoire for a required recital is the decision of both the singer and the teacher, the final judgment rests with the teacher.
- **For a student to present a required voice recital, he/she must be registered for credit in voice at Westminster during the semester in which the recital is presented and have passed the Graduate Qualifying Exam in a previous semester.**

## **GRADUATE VOICE PERFORMANCE AND PEDAGOGY**

- A recital of at least 50-60 minutes of music.

## **GRADUATE PRIMARY VOICE - MUSIC EDUCATION AND SACRED MUSIC**

- A graduate recital of 40-60 minutes of music. It is to be presented in the semester after the successful completion of the Voice Qualifying Exam.

## **Recital Programs**

A template for recital programs is now available from the Performance Management Office and online. Programs will be folded on 8.5x11 paper, preferably stapled.

Programs should include the following information:

Student name and voice part

- Name of accompanist and any assisting instrumentalists
- Date, time and place
- The following statement: (Student name) is a candidate for the Bachelor of Music degree in Voice Performance/Music Education (as appropriate) or the Bachelor of Arts in Music degree. (Student name) is a student of (teacher name).

Program notes should include translations of the foreign language works performed. The translations may be literal, a brief synopsis, or a description of the mood that the piece should project. Except in unusual circumstances, printed texts are not necessary for English compositions. The student must present the notes to his/her teacher for their approval well in advance of the time when the programs are to be duplicated.

## **Recital Documentation**

Once a recital has been completed, the student must submit to the Academic Coordinator (Williamson Hall), six copies of the recital program as well as the Recital Documentation Form, available in the Academic Suite in Williamson Hall, completed and signed by the student's primary teacher. **Failure to submit this form will negatively impact the completion of the student's graduation requirements.**

## GRADUATE DICTION REQUIREMENTS

### GRADUATE DICTION SCREENING TESTING:

The content of the Graduate Diction Screening Test varies with the individual screeners. All screenings, however, consist of reading words in IPA, and reading, intoning and/or singing in English, Italian, French and German. The test may include individual words, sentences, or poetry excerpts. To further assess the level of diction skills, a student may also be asked to sing part of a song that has already been studied. The test lasts for 15 minutes, at which time the student is informed of the outcome and advised as to the options for further study, if needed.

### RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE CASE OF FAILURE:

If the student is found to be deficient in knowledge of IPA, or in the diction of one or more languages, the student may:

1. Retake the test after one semester in an attempt to demonstrate that diction/language deficiencies have been corrected.
2. If all or part of the test fails a second time, the student must enroll in and successfully pass VC 614 Accelerated Lyric Diction Review. This satisfies the diction requirement and no further testing is needed.

A retest is always necessary unless the student registers for and takes the recommended undergraduate diction course(s) and earns a B or better.

## **GRADUATE ORAL EXAMINATION**

All students pursuing a graduate degree at Westminster Choir College must pass a final oral examination in each major field. This examination typically occurs during the last semester in which a student is enrolled before graduation. The examination may be scheduled only after completion of any and all non-credit-bearing courses being taken to remove deficiencies in musical preparation

The examination committee consists of no fewer than three Westminster music faculty members, full-time or adjunct, including two from the student's major area and one member from outside the major area. The departmental criteria for eligible faculty within the major area are: one faculty from the voice pedagogy area, and one faculty from the voice/opera literature area.

It is the student's responsibility to contact the faculty members whom s/he would like to sit on their committee.

### **Scheduling the Examination**

Once the student and her/his committee have all agreed on a date and time for the examination, the student must submit an Oral Examination Request Form (available from the Academic Coordinator) to the Academic Assistant. The Assistant will then reserve a room in which the examination will take place. One week before the examination, the AC will notify the student and the student's examination committee, via email reminding them of the date and time of the examination, as well as the room location.

### **Study Guide**

The department will provide the student with a study guide for the examination, which is available at all times in the office of the Academic Coordinator.

Students who have not passed all portions of the oral examination must be re-examined within one year from the date of the original or previous exam. Students failing to meet this deadline or have not passed the oral examination after three attempts are no longer considered degree candidates and become ineligible to graduate.

### **University Accompanist Program Guidelines**

All students and faculty are sent the University Accompanist Guidelines each year. Please refer to these guidelines for rules and fees.