Murray State University
Department of Music

Vocal/Choral Unit Handbook

Introduction
This handbook is a supplement to the MSU Department of Music Undergraduate Handbook and the University Bulletin; the policies herein amplify certain sections of these publications and expand upon matters specifically related to vocal music study.

Degree Programs in Voice
Please see the Department of Music Undergraduate Handbook for descriptions and sample degree sheets.
BM Performance*
BM Education
BM Musical Theatre
BM Composition
BA/BS Performance Track
BA/BS Research Track
BS in Music Business, Music Track
BS in Music Business, Business Track – no audition required
Music Minor
Musical Theatre Minor
*Please note that incoming Freshmen may not be admitted to the BM Performance degree. Students wishing to be considered for this degree audition at the end of the first year of study.

Admission to Vocal Music Degree Programs
Before being admitted to applied study in voice, a student must perform an entrance audition before representative choral/vocal faculty members. Admission to any degree program is contingent upon meeting requisite test scores, grade point average, and admission to the University.
New and transfer student audition procedure (majors and minors)
Prior to arrival on campus, the following forms must be completed:
• Music department admission and scholarship application
• MSU admission application (rolling due date, but must be completed prior to applying for scholarships)
• MSU scholarship application
• MSU financial aid application
For the audition on campus, applicants will be asked to:
• Perform two memorized selections with piano accompaniment
• one classical solo song in English or a foreign language, and
• one contrasting classical or musical theatre selection
• Sight-read a short musical selection

• Perform tonal and rhythmic memory exercises

For the BM in Musical Theatre:
Two contrasting musical theatre selections from musicals (including film musicals), reviews, operettas, music theatre song cycles or music theatre song literature.

Monologue: One monologue, not to exceed 60 seconds

Dance audition: Students will have the option of completing either a live dance call or submitting a video showing movement skills. Details for this portion of the audition are available on the Music Department website under Admissions/Scholarships.

If you are currently a Murray State Voice major, and you are looking to change to the Musical Theatre degree, you will submit your audition requirements at your final jury or participate in the group dance class.

Applicants wishing to use an MSU accompanist must provide music in the correct key with any cuts clearly marked. Rehearsal time is not guaranteed.
Applicants appearing on campus during regularly scheduled audition days may also attend an informational session and a student panel discussion.

Degree change
Student wishing to transfer into a degree program to which they have not previously been admitted may use the semester jury as an audition. Students must notify their voice teacher, and sign up for one 4-minute time slot above the required time for the current degree (e.g., a sophomore Music Education major wishing to transfer into the B.M. Performance would sign up for 12 minutes instead of 8).

Secondary/Elective Study
A music major wishing to study voice as a secondary instrument or a student wishing to study voice as an elective must perform an audition for the voice faculty or be accepted into a studio pending area approval.

N.B. Private instruction beyond the requirements for a student's degree may be requested but is not guaranteed.

Student responsibility
The vocal student is responsible for knowing and adhering to the guidelines for applied study as documented in this handbook and the applied voice syllabus, particularly with regard to studio class, service learning, and performing requirements, as these may differ among the studios.

Ethics and professionalism
Voice students are to behave ethically and responsibly in their relationship with the applied teacher. The teacher should be notified of any performing or vocal study outside of MSU. Additionally, students should be respectful of the time and services of the professionals with whom they work. This includes punctuality for all classes, lessons, and rehearsals, and prompt and full compensation for collaborative

pianist services. Students are encouraged to be mindful that they represent their teacher and Murray State University in their behavior, demeanor, and appearance both on and off campus.

Studio assignments
Studio assignments are made in order to facilitate the student's success, taking into consideration voice type, personality, and studio load. Should a student request a specific teacher, every attempt will be made to honor that request.

Change of teacher
No changes will be considered until two consecutive semesters of study have been completed with the current teacher. Continuity is very important in vocal development; therefore, the voice faculty discourages studio changes. Students wishing to change studios must first discuss their intentions and any concerns with the current teacher. If concerns are unable to be satisfactorily resolved by both parties, students may then ask both the current teacher and a prospective teacher for permission to study with another faculty member.

Attendance policy
Each teacher's syllabus outlines specific expectations and supersedes these guidelines. Absence from a lesson with no prior notification will be considered unexcused and result in a grade penalty. Make up lessons are not given in case of student absence or cancellation; this includes excused and unexcused absences.

Texts
Students are required to purchase scores and/or recordings as assigned by the teacher, typically $40-80 per semester.

Collaborative pianists
It is the student's responsibility to secure and pay for the services of a qualified pianist each semester. The pianist is to come for the second half of each lesson, and play in studio classes. Failure to find a pianist in a timely manner and rehearse with that person weekly will result in a lower grade. Students are expected to practice at least one-half hour (one hour is preferable) each week with the pianist for the upcoming lesson. Students should schedule this time the same way the lesson is scheduled, so that it is consistent from week to week. There must be a professional relationship between singer and pianist. Therefore, the student needs to behave professionally by meeting on time and having goals clearly defined. Insufficient preparation with the pianist will result in a lower lesson grade or even cancellation of lessons by the teacher. It is unacceptable to ask pianists to sight read in lessons. Students should budget approximately $300 per semester for pianist services.

Incompletes grades
In the event of a severe illness or other emergency prohibiting a student from singing the semester jury, the applied teacher may assign the grade I (incomplete), indicating the final exam for the course has not been completed. The student has approximately two weeks after the beginning of the next semester during which to make up the jury before the I becomes an E (or another grade as designated by the instructor). The student must make the necessary arrangements to complete the jury, and is responsible for checking

with the registrar for the exact date by which the grade must be changed. Incompletes are rarely given, and only at the discretion of the applied teacher and the Chair of the Music Department.

Class Recitals
In the spring semester, all applied voice students perform on a recital grouped by level of study. The Freshman/Sophomore recital and the Junior/Senior recital are typically themed, and each student is assigned appropriate repertoire. Each student must pass a hearing, which takes the place of the midterm jury. See individual teacher's syllabus for grading guidelines.

Studio Class
Each teacher holds a required studio class weekly. If a student has an irreconcilable class conflict with their teacher's Studio Class time, they may request to attend another Studio Class for that semester. See syllabus for meeting time and performance requirements.

Chamber Music performance
One chamber music performance is required for all BM Music Education and BM Performance students prior to graduation. Participation in chamber music is to be documented each semester on the jury sheet. Chamber performances may include extensive solo or concerted work in a choral ensemble, an opera or musical theatre role, or participation in opera workshop. If no chamber music is documented before the Senior Recital, a chamber work must be performed on the recital. Extracurricular musical activities do not count toward this requirement.

Recital Assembly performances
Students are required to perform on Recital Assembly once per academic year beginning at the 219 level of study. Prior to any recital hearing, including non-degree recitals and recital assists, the student is required to perform on a Music Department Recital Assembly program.

Failure of a jury or proficiency
If a student does not pass a jury or proficiency, he or she may request an additional semester of study at the current level. If the student fails two of three semesters of study at any level, the student will not be permitted to continue in the current degree plan.

Class voice
A non-music major wishing to study voice may enroll in MUS 127 or MUS 128. A student subsequently entering a voice major or minor may substitute MUS 127 or MUS 128 for the first semester of MUS119 with permission from the voice faculty. MUS 127 or MUS 128 may not substitute for MUS134.

Applied Voice Requirements

BM Music Ed, BM Performance, BA/BA Music, Minor in Music

Course/Hrs.	Sem.	Lesson	Memorized Selections	Additional Languages+	Hearing/length	Additional Performing Requirements
119/1 Minor	1	25 min.	2-4		Jury/4 min.	
	2	25 min.	2-4	Foreign language	Proficiency/8 min.	
119/2 BA/BS/BM	1	50 min.	4-6	Italian	Jury/8 min.	
	2	50 min.	4-6		Proficiency/12 min.	
219/1 Minor	1	25 min.	3-5	3rd language	Jury/4 min.	Recital Assembly
	2	25 min.	3-5		Proficiency/8 min.	Recital Assembly
219/2 BA/BS/BM Ed.	1	50 min.	5-8	German	Jury/8 min.	Recital Assembly
	2	50 min.	5-8	French	Proficiency/12 min.	Recital Assembly
219/3 BM Perf.	1	50 min.	6-8	German	Jury/12 min.	Recital Assembly
	2	50 min.	6-8	French	Proficiency/16 min.	Recital Assembly
319/1 Minor *	1	25 min.	3-5		Jury/4 min.	Recital Assembly
	2	25 min.	3-5		Jury/4 min.	Recital Assembly
319/2 BA/BS/BM Ed.	1	50 min.	6-8		Jury/8 min.	Recital Assembly
	2	50 min.	6-8		Jury/8 min.	Recital Assembly
319/3 BM Perf.	1	50 min.	7-10		Jury/12 min.	Recital Assembly
	2	50 min.	7-10		Recital hearing	Recital Assembly; Jr. Recital
419/1 Minor *	1	25 min.	3-5		Jury/4 min.	
	2	25 min.	3-5		Jury/4 min.	
419/2 BA/BS/BM Ed.	1	50 min.	6-9		Jury/8 min. or Recital hearing	Recital Assembly; Sr. Recital
	2	50 min.	6-9		Recital hearing or Jury/8 min.	Recital Assembly; Sr. Recital
419/3 BM Perf.	1	50 min.	7-10		Jury/12 min. or Recital hearing	Concerto; Sr. Recital
	2	50 min.	7-10		Recital hearing or Jury/12 min.	Concerto; Sr. Recital
519/1 Elective*	1	25 min.	3-5		Jury/4 min.	Recital Assembly
	2	25 min.	3-5		Jury/4 min.	Recital Assembly
519/2	1	50 min.	6-9		Jury/8 min.	Recital Assembly
	2	50 min.	6-9		Jury/8 min.	Recital Assembly
519/3	1	50 min.	7-10		Jury/12 min.	Recital Assembly
	2	50 min.	7-10		Jury/12 min.	Recital Assembly

+ Selections in English are required at every level of study. Students will continue each newly required language in subsequent semesters of study.

*Minor and/or elective lessons rarely offered beyond the 219 level.

BM Musical Theatre

Course/Hrs.	Sem.	Lesson	Memorized Selections	Additional Requirements	Hearing/length	Additional Performing Requirements
119/2 BM	1	50 min.	4-6	English Art Song	Jury/8 min.	One MT before 1970, One MT after 1970
	2	50 min.	4-6		Proficiency/12 min.	
219/2 BM	1	50 min.	5-8	Foreign language art song; New MT song	Jury/8 min.	Recital Assembly (at least once per academic year)
	2	50 min.	5-8	50s/60s song	Proficiency/12 min.	Represent developing technique in belting, legit, classical styles
319/2 BM	1	50 min.	6-9	Megamusical song	Jury/8 min.	Recital Assembly (at least once per academic year)
	2	50 min.	6-9	Folk/Country; At least 3 audition cuts separate from repertoire	Jury/8 min.	
419/2 BM	1	50 min.	7-10		Jury/8 min. or Recital hearing	Recital Assembly; Sr. Recital
	2	50 min.	7-10		Recital hearing or Jury/8 min.	Recital Assembly; Sr. Recital

BM Musical Theatre students will continue studying classical repertoire throughout their course of study with the balance of appropriate repertoire left to the teacher's discretion. Additionally, they should continue to present a balance of pre-1970 and post 1970 songs each semester.

Juries/proficiencies

The student is to arrive 10 minutes ahead of the scheduled hearing time, with up to six copies of the appropriate form, each neatly filled out with complete and accurate information. Additionally, a copy of the cumulative repertoire should be presented to the faculty panel at the end of each level of study.

Midterm jury

At midterm, each student will sing a 4-minute jury, unless presenting a degree recital that semester. Half of the semester repertoire must be memorized, from which the faculty will choose one selection. In the spring semester, the hearing for each class recital may substitute for the midterm jury.

Semester jury

A jury will be performed at the end of every semester of study unless the student has presented a juried recital some time during the last four weeks of class. If the recital is presented prior to that time, the student will give a jury, repertoire to be determined by the instructor. All assigned repertoire must be prepared; no repertoire performed on a previous jury, proficiency exam, or degree recital may be

performed. At second semester of 119 and 219 a proficiency exam is given in place of the jury (see below).

Proficiency examinations
After two semesters at both the 119 and 219 levels, the student must pass a proficiency to determine eligibility for continued study. If the proficiency is not passed, the student receives a grade of D or E for that semester and may require an additional semester of study (see Third Semester Contract), change of major applied area, or a change of major field (degree). Students may be asked for memorized poetic translations of any songs listed at the proficiency examinations.

119 proficiency
Students will thoroughly prepare all assigned music, with accurate pitches, rhythms, and text. They will demonstrate technical proficiency regarding body alignment, breath management while singing with consistently precise intonation and healthy tone production. A developing sense of artistry and text communication should be demonstrated.

219 proficiency
Students will show continued development of the skills demonstrated in the 119 proficiency. Additionally, they will present repertoire in English, Italian, German, and French, with polished diction, musicality, stage presence, comprehension and communication of text, body/breath connection, and the ability to sing at a variety of dynamic levels.

Recital hearings
All student recitals will be heard by a faculty committee at least two weeks prior to the scheduled performance, and the hearing must be passed before publicizing the recital. Students must present copies of the recital program along with timings of each selection for each member of the committee. The student will perform one-half of the program; the student selects the first piece and the remainder of the pieces are chosen by the committee. Recital hearings should be scheduled during the Vocal/Choral Unit meeting time, Mondays 12:30-1:20 p.m.

Petition for extra recital or full recital
Students wishing to present a non-degree recital or a program longer than that required for their degree must obtain permission from the voice faculty. They should sign up for an additional 4-minute slot at the semester jury prior to the desired performance, and have the petition form filled out for signatures at that time.

Ensembles

MUS 161/361 Concert Choir, Dr. Almquist (M-F 2:30-3:20)
The MSU Concert Choir is the premier choral organization at Murray State University and enjoys an international reputation for excellence in choral music. The Concert Choir is selected each fall by audition, and includes students from all of the academic colleges on campus. They regularly appear in concert both on and off campus, and frequently tour nationally and internationally.

MUS 166/366 Vox Lumina Treble Chorus, Dr. Almquist (TR 9:30-10:45)
Vox Lumina is a diverse group of talented treble singers representing many different majors and academic colleges on campus. The non-auditioned choir performs a wide variety of challenging repertoire from all of the major historical periods and styles. They perform concerts on and off-campus and often collaborate with the other MSU choral ensembles.

MUS 167/367 Una Voce Tenor/Bass Chorus, Dr. Mitchell (TR 4:00-5:15pm)
Una Voce is a non-auditioned ensemble consisting of students of all majors from across campus. Una Voce offers singers the opportunity to continue to develop their singing skills in a strong performance-oriented environment. This ensemble performs a wide variety of repertoire from traditional tenor/bass chorus music to more contemporary popular arrangements.

MUS 168/368 EQ Blu, Dr. Mitchell (T,Th,F 12:30-1:20)
EQ Blu is a select, contemporary a cappella ensemble. EQ Blu performs a wide range of a cappella repertoire from vocal jazz to contemporary/popular styles. This ensemble performs in the community and throughout the region as a visible entity of the music department.

MUS 163/363 MSU Town And Gown Chorale, Dr. Almquist (M 6:30)
The MSU Town and Gown Chorale is an ensemble comprised of students and community members and is dedicated to the study and performance of choral literature from all periods, genres, and styles. Membership is open.

MUS 164/364 Opera Workshop, Dr. Crawford (M 6:00-9:00pm)
The MSU Opera Workshop is dedicated to the preparation of students for work on the operatic and musical theatre stage. A special emphasis is placed on introducing the novice singer/actor to basic stage movement while singing. During the semester opposite the main stage musical production, students have the opportunity to work on arias and scenes from opera, operetta and musical theatre or a studio performance of an opera or musical.

Concert Attire

New in 2022 - All new members of MSU Choirs will purchase a black, gender neutral uniform top that they will pair with black dress bottoms of their choosing (pants, long skirts, etc.) Returning choir members will have the option to purchase the new uniform or continue wearing concert black uniforms.

Concert Choir
Members of Concert Choir perform in concert black and have the option of purchasing a dress, a tuxedo or a director-approved third option that reflects their gender identity.

Vox Lumina
Members of this ensemble perform in black with a department-provided scarf. Students will be provided with the option to purchase a uniform black dress or may wear another black outfit as approved by the director.

Una Voce
Members perform in black on black concert attire. The standard outfit is a black dress shirt and black bottoms with black belt, black socks and black shoes. Other all black options can be approved by the director upon request.

EQ Blu
Members of EQ Blu coordinate outfits as a group, so no standard uniform is required, but students will be expected to acquire clothing that meets the agreed upon style.

Town and Gown Chorale
Same as Concert Choir.

Music
Music for choral ensembles will be issued to students from the choral library. All music must be returned to the music library at the end of the semester. Any student who does not return music or has defaced, destroyed, or lost scores will not receive a grade in the class until the student has paid for replacement scores.

Travel
Students in choral ensembles should expect to travel several days per semester; participation in tours and off campus performances is required. Students are expected to dress and behave professionally when touring with any MSU Ensemble or group. Specific guidelines for travel attire will be furnished by each ensemble director.

Attendance
Each ensemble director's syllabus outlines specific expectations and supersedes these guidelines. On time attendance to all regularly scheduled rehearsals, dress rehearsals, and performances is expected. Absence from a performance without prior arrangement with the director will result in a semester grade of E.

Main Stage Musical Productions
Each academic year, the departments of Music and Theatre jointly produce a musical, an opera, or an Operetta. Auditions are open to all students and students studying voice are strongly encouraged to participate.

Ensemble requirements by degree
Concert Choir, Vox Lumina Treble Chorus and Una Voce Tenor/Bass Chorus are considered major Ensembles.
EQ Blu, Town and Gown Chorale and Opera Workshop are considered secondary ensembles.
In general, any student taking Applied Voice is required to enroll simultaneously in a major choral ensemble.

BM Performance: Eight semesters of a major ensemble required
BM Music Education: Seven semesters of major ensemble required. Vocal Emphasis students must take two semesters of Vox Lumina or Una Voce.

BM Musical Theatre: Seven semesters
BM Composition: Six semesters
BA/BS (except Mus. Bus.): Eight semesters of ensemble, of which at least six must be a major ensemble.
BA/BS Music Business/Music: Four semesters of major ensemble.
BS Music Business/Business: Four semesters of any ensemble.
Music Minor: Four semesters of ensemble, two at the 100-level and two at the 300-level. At least three semesters of major ensembles are required.
Vocal Emphasis Keyboard Majors may substitute MUS 136 and MUS 336 for 2 semesters of major ensembles.

*BM Performance students taking voice as a secondary instrument do not have an ensemble participation requirement.

Music Scholarship requirements may differ from degree requirements. Scholarship students should be sure to check their Scholarship Contract for information on their specific requirements.