

MASTER OF MUSIC: VOICE PEDAGOGY AND PERFORMANCE

Program Overview

The voice program seeks to develop the musician by establishing a sound vocal technique and a thorough understanding of the singing voice, its literature and pedagogy. These tools are essential for the study and performance of vocal and choral literature and for training students as solo performers, professional teachers or choral conductors.

Capitalizing upon undergraduate work, students continue to build and demonstrate healthy vocal technique while deepening their knowledge of voice literature and pedagogy. Students develop a strong understanding of the complex relationships between music and poetry.

Curriculum Overview

Students are provided with rich experiences including private lessons, voice literature, opera, performance-based classes, voice pedagogy, voice teaching methods and a full recital. For students whose undergraduate work has not included a public recital, presentation of a 30-minute recital is required before work on the graduate recital may begin. Studio and performance classes offer frequent performance opportunities. Two fully-staged operas, one with orchestra, are presented each year. Private vocal coaching is available (fee is charged).

Please see the Voice Handbook for language requirements.

Degree Offered

- M.M. in Voice Performance and Pedagogy

Contact

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Program Website: Voice Pedagogy & Performance (<https://www.rider.edu/academics/colleges-schools/college-arts-sciences/westminster-choir-college/graduate/mm-voice-pedagogy/>)

Related Programs

- Sacred Music (<http://catalog.rider.edu/graduate/colleges-schools/media-performing-arts/programs-certificates/mm-sacred-music/>)
- Music Education (<http://catalog.rider.edu/graduate/colleges-schools/media-performing-arts/programs-certificates/mme-music-education/>)
- Voice Pedagogy (<http://catalog.rider.edu/graduate/colleges-schools/media-performing-arts/programs-certificates/mm-voice-pedagogy-music-theatre-track/>)

Faculty

Margaret Cusack • Professor and Chair, Voice, and Chair of Performance Studies, 1994. B.M., M.M.T., Oberlin College Conservatory of Music.

Christopher Arneson • Professor, Voice, 2003. B.A., M.M., Binghamton University; D.M.A., Rutgers University.

Susan S. Ashbaker • Professor, Voice, 2006. B.M., M.M., Southern Illinois University; M.M., University of Illinois.

Victoria Browsers • Adjunct Assistant Professor, Voice, 2017. B.M., Ohio Wesleyan University, M.M. Westminster Choir College of Rider University; D.M.A. State University of New York at Stony Brook.

Aaron Cafaro • Adjunct Assistant Professor, Voice, 2024. B.M., M.M. Westminster Choir College of Rider University.

Akiko Hosaki • Adjunct Assistant Professor, Piano, 2005. B.M., Musashino Academia Musicae; M.M., Westminster Choir College of Rider University; D.M.A., University of Minnesota.

Pamela Stein Lynde • Adjunct Assistant Professor, Voice, 2024. B.M. Westminster Choir College of Rider University; M.M. Peabody Conservatory of the Johns Hopkins University.

Robin Massie • Adjunct Assistant Professor, Voice, 2008. B.M., Westminster Choir College; M.M., Yale University.

Martin Néron • Adjunct Assistant Professor, Voice, 2020. B.M., Université de Montréal; M.M. Westminster Choir College of Rider University; D.M.A., Manhattan School of Music.

Kathy Kessler Price • Professor, Voice, 2012. B.A., University of Richmond; M.M., University of Maryland; Ph.D., University of Kansas, Lawrence.

Debra Scurto-Davis • Adjunct Assistant Professor, Voice, 2004. B.M.E., Evangel College; M.M., Baylor University; S.M., University of Michigan.

Elizabeth Sutton • Adjunct Assistant Professor, Voice, 2005. B.A., Bowling Green State University; M.M., College-Conservatory of Music, University of Cincinnati.

Todd Thomas • Adjunct Assistant Professor, Voice, 2024. B.M., M.M. Oberlin College Conservatory of Music.

Master of Music: Voice Pedagogy and Performance Degree Requirements

(44 credits)

Learn more about General Graduate Policies (<http://catalog.rider.edu/graduate/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/mm-mme-mvp-general-policies/>)

Code	Title	Credits
Complete courses in the following major areas:		
Applied Primary Study		
VC 641A	Voice Primary (4 terms)	8
Performance		
CR 509	Symphonic Choir (Complete 1 credit per semester for a total of 4 semesters) ²	4
VC 593	Opera Theater (Complete 1 credit per semester for a total of 4 semesters) ²	4
Voice Core		
VC 553	Special Topics in Voice Performance Practice (2 semesters)	4
VC 633	Seminar in Opera Literature	3
VC 635	Seminar in Song Literature	3
VC 723	Voice Ped I: Voice Science	3
VC 724	Voice Pedagogy II: Methods	3
VC 002R	Student Recital	0
Pedagogy Elective (Select one of the following)		
VC 722	Literature for Teaching	
VC 725	Voice Pedagogy III: Teaching Practicum	
VC 726	Voice Research	
VC 740	Seminar in Music Theater Pedagogy	

Core

MH 731	Intro to Musicology	3
Theory or Music History Elective (1 course)		3
Music Education Elective (Select one of the following)		3
ME 692	Social Justice in Music Education: History, Philosophy, and Practice	
ME 685	Improving Musical Practice: Research in Music Education	
ME 723	Social, Emotional, and Musical Learning	
Total Credits		44

- ¹ Prior to graduation, students must complete at least one year of undergraduate-level study in two of the three major European singing languages (Italian, German, and French). Students must earn a minimum grade of "C" in these courses. Grades of "C-" or below are not accepted.
- ² Full-time graduate students are required to enroll in CR 509 and VC 593 each semester. Students who decide to enroll part-time in their final semester are not required to enroll in ensembles.

Academic Plan

The following educational plan is provided as a sample only. Students may follow a different plan to ensure a timely graduation. Each student, with guidance from their academic advisor, will develop a personalized educational plan.

Course	Title	Credits
Year 1		
Fall Semester		
VC 641A	Voice Primary	2
VC 593	Opera Theater	2
VC 723	Voice Ped I: Voice Science	3
VC 553	Special Topics in Voice Performance Practice	2
MH 731	Intro to Musicology	3
CR 509	Symphonic Choir	1
Semester Credit Hours		13
Spring Semester		
VC 641A	Voice Primary	2
VC 593	Opera Theater	2
VC 724 or VC 635	Voice Pedagogy II: Methods or Seminar in Song Literature	3
VC 633	Seminar in Opera Literature	3
CR 509	Symphonic Choir	1
Semester Credit Hours		11
Year 2		
Fall Semester		
VC 641A	Voice Primary	2
VC 593	Opera Theater	2
VC 553	Special Topics in Voice Performance Practice	2
CR 509	Symphonic Choir	1
Pedagogy elective		3
MH or TH elective		3
Semester Credit Hours		13
Spring Semester		
VC 641A	Voice Primary	2

VC 593	Opera Theater	2
ME elective		3
VC 633 or VC 635	Seminar in Opera Literature or Seminar in Song Literature	3
CR 509	Symphonic Choir	1
Voice Recital		
Semester Credit Hours		11
Total Credit Hours for Graduation		48

Courses and Descriptions

CR 509 Symphonic Choir 1 Credits

A large mixed chorus comprised of students above the lower division, including graduate students from all disciplines. The ensemble regularly performs in the region and focuses on the major choral/orchestral repertoire along with a wide variety of repertoire for large mixed chorus. Placement hearing required.

Prerequisite(s): CR 209 with a minimum grade of D.

ME 685 Improving Musical Practice: Research in Music Education 3 Credits

Intended for students in the MME and BM-MME degree programs, this course focuses on research as a tool for improving practice. Course members will read qualitative and quantitative research studies and consider the impact of research on their teaching. Course members will also plan and conduct original research that will help them to analyze their specific teaching contexts, identify and conduct inquiry into problems, and refine their practice as educators.

ME 692 Social Justice in Music Education: History, Philosophy, and Practice 3 Credits

The purpose of this course is two-fold. First, the course will explore the historical perspectives that have significantly shaped and informed music teaching and learning within American public education during the last century. Second, students will encounter, engage with, and interrogate philosophies and theories of practice from social justice perspectives in order to critically consider the place and purpose of music and music education within educational and societal contexts.

ME 723 Social, Emotional, and Musical Learning 3 Credits

This course examines topics in psychology of music from the lens of social emotional learning. This theoretical lens will allow students to find the relationships between music-making as social and cultural practices and the development of individual and collective psychological process in music teaching and learning. Major topics include affective and physiological responses to music, musical enculturation, learning theory, well-being and wellness, musical aptitude, developmental processes, and motivation. Students will discuss literature in the psychology of music with applications to K-12 music classes and rehearsals and conduct a pilot study in an area of interest based upon knowledge from the literature.

MH 731 Intro to Musicology 3 Credits

Introduction to the basic tools of research in historical musicology in order to foster: (1) an awareness of the nature and scope of historical musicology as a scholarly discipline; (2) familiarity with the techniques of musicological research; (3) an understanding of the relationship between musicological research and performance practice; and (4) experience in the application of musicological techniques to specific musical works and issues. It is strongly recommended that this course be taken at the outset of graduate study. Required for all Master of Music candidates.

VC 553 Special Topics in Voice Performance Practice 2 Credits

Intensive performance coaching and lectures in the form of master classes where performance practice in selected topics will be taught by current faculty or distinguished alumni and specialists in their fields. Open to students at the sophomore level and above with permission of the instructor.

VC 593 Opera Theater 2 Credits

This course involves preparation and performance of a role or in the chorus of a fully staged opera production. Open only by audition. May be repeated for credit.

VC 635 Seminar in Song Literature 3 Credits

An intensive study of some area of art song history and literature. The specific content of this course will change from semester to semester. Emphasis is placed upon in-depth study of the selected repertoire.

VC 722 Literature for Teaching 3 Credits

A survey of graduated teaching literature for beginning, intermediate and advanced voice students. Literature will be explored that is particularly well-suited to specific vocal issues (e.g. legato, coloratura, staccato, etc.).

VC 723 Voice Ped I: Voice Science 3 Credits

Study of voice anatomy and physiology with concentration on respiration, phonation, articulation, hearing and vocal health. Through hands-on experience in the Westminster Voice Laboratory, students explore the physics of sound, the fundamentals of musical acoustics, and acoustical elements that are unique to the human voice. Priority registration is given to M.V.P. majors and M.M. students majoring in Voice Performance and Pedagogy. Other students may enroll on a space-available basis.

VC 724 Voice Pedagogy II: Methods 3 Credits

A comparative study of various pedagogical methods and ideals. A wide range of important historical and contemporary pedagogy treatises is reviewed. Students explore exercises and vocalises for general voice development as well as techniques to address and correct specific vocal problems. Role-playing exercises are used to develop appropriate listening and teaching skills. Class participants begin supervised instruction of a volunteer singing student.

VC 725 Voice Pedagogy III: Teaching Practicum 3 Credits

Communication skills are explored and students develop a systematic approach to studio voice instruction. Each student is assigned at least two voice students (one adult and one teenager) to be taught both inside and outside of class. Emphasis is placed on becoming familiar with all voice classifications and basic vocal literature.

Prerequisite(s): VC 723.

VC 726 Voice Research 3 Credits

Peer reviewed research in voice is evaluated and research methodologies are explored. Class projects include research in historical, qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches.

VC 740 Seminar in Music Theater Pedagogy 3 Credits

Comprehensive study of various pedagogical approaches to teaching Music Theater singing techniques. Students explore exercises and vocalises for general voice development as well as techniques to address and correct specific vocal problems. Role-playing exercises are used to develop appropriate listening and teaching skills. Class participants begin supervised instruction of a volunteer singing student. The course is offered entirely online and will consist of recorded lectures, reading assignments, group discussions via discussion boards, listening assignments, and other written assignments.