

## **Vocal Music Department**

**Phyllis Treigle**, Chair, Vocal Music, Applied Voice, Opera Workshop, Italian Diction

**Anne Copeland Sumich**, Musicianship, French Diction, Song Preparation, Vocal Coach/Accompanist

**Matt Wood**, Chorus, Chorale, Theory, Musicianship, German Diction, Vocal Music History, Vocal Coach/Accompanist

The NOCCA Classical Vocal Music Department accepts talented students who have an aptitude and interest in pursuing classical vocal music. Academic and performance standards are the same for all students, whether or not a career path is ultimately followed.

The NOCCA Classical Vocal Music Curriculum is designed to prepare students for auditions and admittance into university colleges of music or conservatories. Applied classes in vocal technique and repertoire are at the heart of the curriculum. Other curriculum elements include Music Theory, Musicianship (ear training and sight singing), Opera Workshop, Choral Ensembles, and Music History, with the goal of developing fully educated vocal musicians and effective performers. During a student's tenure, he or she undergoes periodic counseling sessions with music faculty to discuss progress and overall assessment.

Auditioning students are expected to demonstrate a singing voice with professional potential by singing one prepared and memorized song from any of the 24 Italian Songs and Arias of the 17th and 18th Centuries by G.Schirmer (such as "Caro Mio Ben," "Sebben Crudele") or one of these English songs: "Danny Boy" or "Drink to Me Only with Thine Eyes." They must also demonstrate the ability to match pitches played on the piano, sing a major scale in tune, demonstrate beginning sight-singing skills, and be able to repeat back with accuracy simple rhythmic or melodic sequences. All students need to take a basic written music theory test as a part of their audition. All accepted students are placed into Level 1. Entrance into subsequent levels is based on satisfactory completion of a full school year's study in the current level.

### **Guidelines for Continued Enrollment**

Good behavior, attendance, punctuality, and self-discipline are critical for continued enrollment at NOCCA. Students are expected to have all their materials for every class and their assignments turned in on time. Students must learn music as assigned for voice class, opera scenes, recitals, and choral concerts. Students are often required to stay after-hours for rehearsals for fall opera scenes, the spring opera, recitals, choral concerts, and other vocal music division performances. Students must attend classical music concerts and are required to listen to several hours of classical vocal music per year as part of the curriculum requirements. There is a Vocal Music Performance Class (recital) held every Friday from 4 PM- 5 PM. Each student is expected to perform in the Performance Class at least once per quarter. All students are required to attend the Performance Class whether they are performing that week or not.

The Classical Vocal Music Department is committed to assisting all vocal students with finding an appropriate college path. The Vocal faculty is experienced and knowledgeable regarding prestigious music conservatory requirements as well as university music programs. Faculty will assist Senior

Vocal Music students with the selection of appropriate potential schools, selection of audition repertoire, the making of an audition video to upload with their college application, and help with the application process itself.

#### **CLASSICAL VOCAL LEVELS I-IV**

**Performance Expectations:** Students will learn 6-12 classical vocal pieces per year, depending on their level. In level one, they will learn pieces in English and Italian; in levels 2-4, they will learn pieces in English, Italian, French, and German. Students will learn and demonstrate proper posture, breathing, head resonance, and diction appropriate to their level; learn to interpret their songs emotionally and intellectually; participate in all rehearsals and performances as assigned; successfully complete all assignments given by faculty; and receive a B or better in all required music classes, which include the following:

**Applied Voice Class:** This class introduces students to 'bel canto singing technique' and to various vocal works in classical music literature, most of which are performed in their original languages (Italian, English, German, and French). Emphasis is placed on the process of preparation and performance of this repertoire for performance classes, master classes, and recitals. Students learn vocal techniques of proper posture, breathing, resonance, and diction. In addition, students learn to successfully interpret their pieces emotionally and intellectually. Students also learn proper pronunciation rules for singing in Italian, French, German, and English, as well as repertoire in each language. At the end of each semester, every student appears before a jury of vocal faculty to be evaluated, based on progress in performance and in mastery of elements of vocal music. During this jury, students are asked to perform songs that were covered during the preceding semester (in December) or school year (in May).

**Opera Workshop:** An introduction to operatic repertoire intended for performance in the fall opera scenes and spring opera productions. Emphasis is on development of the skills of the singing actor. Students learn and perform excerpts and operas from various periods in music history and various musical styles, with special attention paid to the appropriateness of the repertoire for high school developing singers.

**Chorus/Chorale:** These ensembles focus upon learning choral works from various periods in music history for the purpose of developing sight-singing/part-reading skills, overall musicianship skills, balance, intonation, and response to a conductor. The ensembles also encourage a spirit of cooperation, self-discipline, and dedication.

**Vocal Music History:** In this course, students learn about the different periods of music history and the development of vocal literature from each period, as well as practices common to each period.

**Voice Lessons:** All voice lessons are taught at NOCCA by the vocal music faculty. Students are not allowed to study voice with an outside teacher while attending NOCCA.

Vocal music students are encouraged to take private piano lessons.

**COMMON CURRICULUM:** Taken by All Music Students - Theory /Musicianship

The Common Curriculum is a course of musical study that emphasizes basic fundamentals of musical language through study of Music Theory and Musicianship.

**Music Theory** focuses on the concepts, language, and rules of standard musical practice, as well as instilling an understanding and practice of basic piano fundamentals in relation to these theory concepts. Theory is taught sequentially in levels 1-3 with a review course in level 4. Concepts covered begin with note reading and progress through all major and minor keys/scales, chords, and inversions (including 7th chords and secondary dominants), figured bass, diatonic harmonic progressions with Roman numeral analysis, functional harmony, 4-part voice leading (including non-chord tones), modulations, augmented sixth chords, and various 20th-century compositional practices including Impressionism and twelve-tone serialism.

**Musicianship** develops the ability to hear and discern musical elements through melodic singing, rhythmic dictation, and oral dictation exercises. Musicianship is taught sequentially in levels 1-3 with a review course in level 4. After completing the course of study, students are able to sing major and minor scales with correct scale degrees and solfege syllables, write dictation of diatonic and chromatic melodies as well as 2-part exercises with their correct rhythms, read advanced syncopated rhythms up to and including sixteenth notes, identify intervals and chords (including 7th chords) by ear, aurally identify the sections of musical forms (ABA, rondo, sonata, binary, etc.), hear chord progressions and inversions modulating to closely related keys, and sing modal melodies, symmetrical scales, and other exotic scales.

The NOCCA Vocal Music faculty believe that Vocal students learn best by performing, so to this end the students participate on a voluntary basis in several events and competitions during the school year, such as the National Association of Teachers of Singing, the Wood Competition of the New Orleans Opera, the Classical Singer Competition, as well as other performances and recitals in the community.

### **Certificates in Music**

The Vocal Music Department awards three levels of certification:

*Certificate of Artistry* represents the highest level of attainment for a NOCCA music student. It is the culmination of four years of intensive music study. This highest level of artistry is demonstrated by the successful retention of specific musical skills acquired through performance and comprehensive examinations in Music Theory and Musicianship. Students must also perform in a faculty-endorsed senior recital.

*Certificate of Performance* is conferred upon a student who has successfully completed at least two or three years of study but has not completed the full musical curriculum. The student must perform in a faculty-endorsed senior recital and pass comprehensive examinations in Theory and Musicianship at their current level.

*Certificate of Recognition* is granted to a student who has attended NOCCA for 1-2 years. To be eligible, a student must pass a comprehensive exam at their current level.

**In all cases, the judgment by the Vocal Music faculty regarding the awarding of certificates is final.**