

MUS/THR 2620 Musical Theatre Bootcamp
MWF 10:30 – 11:30am, JAC 140, Fall 2021
Matthew Hougland, Assistant Professor of Music
Office: Johnson Arts Center (JAC) 133
mhougland@carthage.edu
262-551-5975 (land line, no text)
Office Hours: by appointment

Grad Assistant: Kevin Wehrhahn
kwehrhahn@carthage.edu

Course Description

This course for the singer-actor provides formal and informal venues to develop music theatre skills: character development and portrayal, scene study, and audition skills. The laboratory format allows students to learn from the instructor as well as each other as they cover varied repertory. The course culminates in a performance at the end of each term.

Course Overview

This course serves as an introduction to integrating acting and singing into performance. Topics of focus include song interpretation, text analysis, character development, scene study and integrating vocal technique with acting choices. This may also include some dance and movement study. Beyond performance, this course will also address audition (in-person and on-tape) preparation, repertoire book organization, and other current topics related to Music Theatre.

This course is both a performance and workshop-based class. It will explore a cross section of performance repertoire from early music theatre (turn of the 20 Century) to the present day. It will also introduce you to the philosophy of this program and the general philosophy of music theatre. We will work together with your voice teacher to select repertoire that will support your vocal growth, confidence, creativity, and – subsequently – marketability. It will enable you to speak many different languages: the language of each composer. The work will attempt to strike a balance between material for which you are presently well suited and material that will expand your range as both a singer and actor. Throughout this process we will maintain a direct line of communication with your voice teacher in order to insure shared vocal objectives that will support optimal growth. All songs performed must be completely memorized and prepared appropriately for the first performance.

The weekly work of this course is the amalgamation of those techniques you are learning in your voice studio combined with Song Analysis Techniques. Many classes will be conducted in a workshop format where a student performs, receives feedback from the class and instructor, followed by a collaborative work session. Each song will be performed on multiple occasions to allow for integration of feedback. Our goal as performers is to allow our vocal technique to fully support our imaginations in the art of communicating through sung repertoire in the service of the composer(s).

At the end of the semester, students will have an opportunity to present their work in the Freshman Showcase on Thursday, December 9th at 7:30 pm. Performance in this showcase is mandatory and will provide a safe environment where faculty, staff and students can support and encourage the freshman MT class and showcase the work that is being done.

When working with an accompanist, music must be in a binder, double-sided, and appropriately marked. This will be a topic addressed early in the term to clarify any confusion or questions you may have.

Objectives

For each student to:

1. Gain a basic understanding of the genre of Music Theatre.
2. Understand how to integrate vocal technique with storytelling, while maintaining good vocal health and musical integrity.
3. Interpret theatrical musical texts through lyrics, context (original and devised), given circumstances, etc.
4. Align vocal and dramatic choices with efficiency and clear communication.
5. Cultivate audition skills and develop craft for audition.
6. Practice self-assessment and learn to give appropriate feedback to others.
7. Begin to understand professionalism, as it pertains to the MT world and beyond.
8. Perform for their peers and faculty members, presenting the on-going work that is happening.

Texts and Materials

- Dramatic Circumstances by William Westbrook
- 1"-1½" three-ring binder (Heavy duty, back mounted rings, internal pockets, and front-facing cover pocket)
- Sheet Protectors (non-glare)
- Tab Dividers (8)

Sheet Music:

It is always recommended to support writers by purchasing music, though you may also take advantage of library services, including inter-library loan. If you are still in need, confer with the instructor who may be able to assist. If you are looking for songs and/or to purchase music, below are some recommended sites and anthologies:

- **Piano/Vocal scores.** These are the best option for learning music as you have access to the entire score. You may find some in the library systems, though newer ones are hard to find as they aren't often published. What the library does not have, inter-library loan will.
- **Singers Musical Theatre Anthologies (Hal Leonard)** – these anthologies feature songs in the original Broadway keys and have accompaniments that are reductions of the original orchestrations. It is a reputable series that has a lot of excellent repertoire with several volumes for each voice type.
- **For rock/pop styles:** www.musicnotes.com/audition
(with correlating playlists on Spotify, created by Sheri Sanders)
Note: **musicnotes.com** is NOT a good place to find sheet music from musicals.
- Carthage's Hedberg Library has subscriptions to both of the following sites – log in through the library to access all of the features of these sites.)
 - <https://musicaltheatersongs.com/> - This is a comprehensive database of songs both historic and contemporary. You may be asked to use this resource periodically through this term.

- **www.newmusicaltheatre.com** - this site features contemporary Music Theatre writers including those with Broadway shows, and others whose work has been popularized through performances found on YouTube.

*DO NOT USE **vocal selections**. These have songs in 'generic' keys that are easier to play. No matter what, be sure that the sheet music that you have is the key you've been practicing.*

In Class Work Sessions:

Students **MUST RECORD** each in class work session. Within 24 hours of your session, you must send an email to your instructor with thoughts on the coaching. These thoughts might include what you thought you did, what you actually did and what changed during the course of the session both vocally and dramatically. This exercise will deepen your awareness of how you work as a performer and provide useful information worth sharing with your voice teacher.

Note: No student will be allowed to sing in class without recording the event and subsequent reflections are mandatory, not optional.

Written Reflections:

These reflections are useful tools to help you consciously process your in-class coachings and an opportunity to reflect, discuss, question and/or summarize your current work and how it can help you move forward. You are free to write whatever you would like in your reflection as long as it pertains to the work you are doing in class. There is no specific length requirement to each reflection submitted: it should be as long as you feel it needs to be. A reflection must be submitted within 24 hours of each in-class coaching, to my email.

Showcase:

Students will perform in an end of semester culmination presentation that is open to all faculty, students and staff. This is a chance for each student to showcase their work so far in the semester and for the freshman class to perform as a cohort. More will be discussed as the semester continues, but students will be expected to perform with the group and solo. Material chosen will be workshopped through the semester and must be approved with the instructor. One outside tech rehearsal will be required. Performance date: Thursday, December 9th at 7:30 pm

Final:

The course final will be given on Friday, December 17th from 10:30am – 12:30pm. Final presentation details and requirements will be given at a later date.

Composers to be Studied

- 1 Song by Irving Berlin or George Gershwin
- 1 Song from either Rodgers and Hart or Cole Porter
- 2 Songs from the following group, Rodgers and Hammerstein, Bock and Harnick, Frank Loesser, Jerome Kern, Harold Arlen, Stephen Sondheim, Burton Lane
- 2 Songs from Jason Robert Brown, Michael John LaChiusa, William Finn, Lyn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty, Maltby & Shire, Andrew Lippa, Stephen Schwartz, David Yazbeck, Adam Guettel, Jeannine Tesori, Maury Yeston, Alan Menken, Tom Kitt, Brian Lowdermilk, Pasek and Paul, etc. (Think anything 1980s to present)
- 1 Pop Rock Song (details to follow)

Grades:

Your grade in this class will be based on the diligence and consistency with which you work and the growth you exhibit in your ability to make strong choices and to turn those choices into actions. Achievement is measured by your progress as an individual *not* by comparison to the work of the other students. Your willingness to work, your class participation and the detail of your notes and circumstance reports will be a strong part of your grade.

This is a course that dependent on individual student work and collective student feedback. You will sharpen your skills as a performer by watching others work. The classes you spend as an observer are just as critical to your development as a smart performer, as the moments you perform. To continue to sharpen your analytical abilities, you will be assigned readings and are expected to incorporate new knowledge into feedback.

75%: Attendance, Participation, Preparation and Performances
25%: Reflections

Communication:

I will communicate with you via email. Please check your email at least once every 24-hours. My office phone is listed above, but I am easier to reach via email.

Late Work:

No late assignments will ever be accepted; not being in class is not an excuse for late work. No make-up work will ever be accepted without prior notification. If even one of these assignments is missing, the instructor reserves the discretion to fail the student outright or adjust the student's final grade in any way, regardless of the student's grade percentage earned.

Attendance Policy:

You will be allowed 2 absences for any reason without penalty, but please reach out to me directly to let me know you will not be in class. 3 or more absences will result in your final grade reduced by 5% for each subsequent absence. Cases of chronic or extreme illness, death in the family, or other unavoidable absences will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Tardiness:

DO NOT BE LATE! Tardiness shows a lack of organization and respect. Everyone needs to be in their seat, materials out, ready to go at 11:45am. Anyone who arrives after 11:45am will receive a recorded "tardy". Three "tardies" will result in your grade being lowered by one letter grade.

Professionalism:

Professionalism in the field is best learned when practiced. Scholarly participation in class discussions, activities, and projects should be approached in a professional manner. Students are expected to practice professionalism in preparing for class work and during partner situations.

Electronic Devices:

Electronic devices may be used for recording work sessions only. Don't use your phone in class. Failure to adhere to this policy will result in a decrease in your participation grade. ***This policy will be strictly enforced.***

Academic Integrity:

Academic honesty is a necessary corollary to academic freedom; each concept presupposes the other. The goals and objectives of Carthage fall within the implicit context of academic honesty. Therefore, Carthage expects academic honesty from all of its members and maintains college-wide honesty guidelines and penalties that must be supported by the whole academic community. The guidelines and penalties are found in the Carthage Community Code.

Learning During a Pandemic:

While this class is a rigorous academic course, it is clear that all of us are dealing with anxiety, stress, uncertainty, trauma, and grief to varying extents, and there may be unforeseen disruptions in our lives. My goal is to create a culture of flexibility and care in our class community, and I believe such a culture builds upon consistent engagement, empathy, and clear communication. I will try to create channels for these and model clear communication, but will also rely on you to help build our community and provide feedback so that I can make adjustments when needed.

COVID-19 Health and Safety Resources:

Due to the ongoing pandemic, Carthage College has adopted a policy requiring masks to be worn by all individuals in all campus buildings. Masks must be worn at all times in the classroom, laboratory, studio spaces, hallways, bathrooms, and during in-person meetings. The face-covering must conform to CDC guidelines and must cover both the nose and mouth at all times. Note that bandanas, neck gaiters, and masks with exhalation or external valves are not acceptable and are not sufficient for the protection of others or yourself. Acceptable masks tie behind the head or loop behind the ears, fit snugly over the nose and chin, and can include cloth masks, medical/surgical masks, and N95s or KN95s. Eating and/or drinking are prohibited while in the classroom (because those activities interfere with consistent mask-wearing).

Any student who refuses to wear a mask or consistently forgets one will be asked to leave the class and not given an opportunity to make up missed work. The student will also be referred to the Dean and may receive an official charge and student conduct hearing for repeated offenses, resulting in fines, points, or removal from class.

- **Stay Safe Guidelines:** www.carthage.edu/carthage-covid-19/stay-safe-carthage
- **Campus Mask Mandate:** www.carthage.edu/carthage-covid-19/protocols/face-coverings

Health & Counseling Center:

The Health and Counseling Center (HCC) supports students by addressing physical, mental, and emotional well-being. All services are free and confidential and are available to currently enrolled, full-time undergraduate students. Health services include the assessment and treatment of minor illness and injury. Diagnostic testing, complimentary over-the-counter medications, and referrals to off-campus providers are all available. Our licensed counselors help students with challenges that can be resolved with short-term, solution-focused counseling. Some topics discussed during counseling include depression and anxiety, traumatic experiences, gender and sexuality, relationship concerns, stress management, and academic challenges. More details - including info about appointments - can be found at carthage.edu/health-counseling.

Uwill is a free teletherapy platform for Carthage students. Uwill connects students with licensed therapists from all 50 states. Support is available in a variety of formats -- video, chat, messaging, or phone. Counselors are available nights, weekends, and during holidays. Access is quick and easy: app.uwill.com.

Diversity & Inclusion:

I consider this classroom to be a place where you will be treated with respect, and I welcome individuals of all ages, backgrounds, beliefs, ethnicities, genders, gender identities, gender expressions, national origins, religious affiliations, sexual orientations, ability – and other visible and nonvisible differences. All members of this class are expected to contribute to a respectful, welcoming and inclusive environment for every other member of the class.

Gender-Inclusive/Non-Sexist Language:

This course will foster a learning environment in which people of all identities are encouraged to contribute their perspectives to academic discourse. Language is gender-inclusive and non-sexist when we use words that affirm and respect how people describe, express, and experience their gender. Just as sexist language excludes women's experiences, non-gender-inclusive language excludes the experiences of individuals whose identities may not fit the gender binary, and/or who may not identify with the sex they were assigned at birth. Gender-inclusive/non-sexist language acknowledges people of any gender (for example, first year student versus freshman, chair versus chairman, humankind versus mankind, etc.). It also affirms non-binary gender identifications, and recognizes the difference between biological sex and gender expression. Students, faculty, and staff may share their preferred pronouns and names, and these gender identities and gender expressions will be honored.

Support for Students with Learning, Psychiatric or Physical Disabilities:

Carthage College strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers due to your disability (including mental health, learning disorders and chronic medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, you also need to register with Diane Schowalter in Learning Accessibility Services (dschowalter1@carthage.edu).

Religious/Cultural Observance:

Persons who have religious or cultural observances that coincide with this class should let the instructor know in writing (by e-mail for example) in the first week of class. I strongly encourage you to honor your cultural and religious holidays! However, if I do not hear from you by the end of the first week, I will assume that you plan to attend all class meetings.

Title IX Statement:

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender is a Civil Rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find resources on the Carthage website at www.carthage.edu/title-ix.