Vocal Courses – Fall 2015

Note: These courses are open only to vocalists, with the exception of Gospel Chorus and approved rhythm section accompanists (bass and drums) for Vocal Performance.

Basic Arranging for Vocalists - Amy London. This course addresses the special needs of vocalists as they develop arrangements of their repertoires. Through the analysis of recordings and scores, the course will include a study of these topics: Functions and stylistic characteristics of each instrument in the rhythm section, “stock” arranging techniques (introductions and endings), tempos and rhythmic feels, language for communicating with rhythm sections, and role of improvisation in vocal jazz. This course is for entering students in the vocal program. **1 credit**

Circle Singing Ensemble – La Tanya Hall. Vocalists only. This performance-based ensemble will utilize circle singing methods, similar to those developed by Bobby McFerrin in his vocal group Voicestra. Using only the human voice, contrapuntal motifs will be created within the four vocal sections (SATB). Later in the course, the choir will sing arrangements that explore the diaspora of jazz, R&B and world music while allowing ample room for improvisation. Exploring this music will offer students the opportunity to understand, grasp, and experience a variety of complicated, rare improvisational methods that can take them outside of the realm of improvising inside of jazz standards. The course will require and foster strong reading and rhythmic skills, while further enforcing the concepts of group singing. The approach this course will take is designed to cultivate the traditional skills required for ensemble singing—blend, balance, tuning, and sensitivity. Circle songs build the fundamentals of musicianship, including harmony, counterpoint, intonation, and deep, responsive listening. All music during this section of the course will be created in the moment, never to be recreated again. The course will culminate in a concert utilizing several of McFerrin's "composed" pieces, as well as several spontaneous circle songs. Pre-requisite: Must have completed Vocal Sight-Singing 1A and 1B. **2 credits**

Gospel Chorus - Charlotte Small. This class is open to all students who desire the experience of singing gospel music. This course will involve singing various styles of gospel music ranging from traditional to urban contemporary. The focus of this class will be on phrasing, stamina and three-part singing to achieve the authentic sound of gospel music. **1-2 credits**

Vocal Improvisation 1 - Richard Harper. This course emphasizes internalization of the chromatic scale in solfeggio, Blues related scales, diminished scales and the singing of basic diatonic seventh chord types. Students improvise rhythmically in solfeggio and scat utilizing these structures in the Blues, turnarounds, and rhythm changes. **2 credits**

Vocal Musicianship 1 - Staff. In the first semester, vocal musicianship consists of singing and internalizing the major scale using solfeggio. Improvisation utilizing solfeggio on limited pitches with rhythm is emphasized. Techniques of improvisation and duple bar phrasing are applied to songs that exclusively utilize the Ionian or Mixolydian modes. **2 credits**
**Introduction to Jazz Vocal Performance** - Julie Hardy. This course is for first-semester vocal students who have not had extensive experience developing a jazz repertoire or working with jazz instrumentalists. In this class the singers will put into action the concepts they are learning in Basic Arranging, begin work on developing repertoire, learn the basics of jazz vocal style, and practice communicating with the accompanist. **2 credits**

**Vocal Performance 1** - Joan Stiles. In this class vocal students are accompanied by a rhythm section and learn how to communicate effectively with the band – explain the form and mood of the tune, count off tempos, assign and signal solos, introductions and endings. They also gain experience in writing out clear transposed lead sheets and making basic arranging decisions. Within this framework, they develop repertoire, stage presence, Jazz rhythmic concepts and simple improvisation. This course is a part of the required vocal performance curriculum per evaluation placement. **2 credits**

**Vocal Performance 2** - Amy London. This is a repertoire building class with emphasis on preparing the student to pass the sophomore jury. Students are expected to utilize the standard song literature and research the composers. In singing, good story telling is emphasized. Interpretation of lyrics and creating lyrics based on the story are stressed. We also cover communication with the audience, stage presence, as well as microphone and amplification techniques. This course is a part of the required vocal proficiency curriculum per evaluation placement. **2 credits**

**Vocal Performance 3** - Janet Lawson. Vocalists learn to listen and interact with the band as an equal partner. This involves a high degree of listening skills, theoretical knowledge, as well as knowledge of both the singer’s craft and what instrumentalists are doing. Emphasis in this course is placed on applied theory; being able to improvise having internalized the melody, chords, and scales; and personalizing the musical interpretations through arrangements, improvisation, and improvising lyrics. This course may be part of the required vocal proficiency curriculum per evaluation placement. **2 credits**

**Vocal Sight Singing 1A** - Junko Arita. This class is designed to help students develop basic sight-singing skills using Solfege, Melodia, as well as original compositions and/or arrangements of existing music. The class emphasizes techniques for staying calm while maintaining the correct rhythm in realistic professional situations. This course is a part of the required vocal proficiency curriculum per evaluation placement. **1 credit**

**Vocal Sight-Singing 2A** - Junko Arita. This class, a continuation of Sight-Singing 1, develops more advanced sight-singing skills in non-diatonic situations. It also applies analysis and different approaches to music theory and sight-singing. This course is a part of the required vocal proficiency curriculum per evaluation placement. **1 credit**

**Vocal Blues Ensemble** – Danny Mixon. This course will teach Blues and Jazz concepts in various styles, with the emphasis on harmony and strong rhythmic interpretation of the Blues. Vocalists will learn how to interpret blues lines and jazz lines that lean into blues interpretation. Instrumentalists will learn to play together and perform Blues and Jazz styles. This course is a part of the required vocal proficiency curriculum per evaluation placement. **2 credits**