

SINGER'S DICTION
SPRING 2026
FRENCH
MUS 2221

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Student/Office Hours

Official student/office hours are posted on the door of Room 302. Don't hesitate to contact the instructor by email or phone to arrange an alternative time and/or location for the meeting. The instructor is always happy to assist you in your learning.

Catalog Description

A French Diction course for singers and choral directors to improve their capacity to respond with ease, accuracy, and expression.

French Diction, MUS 2221 meets Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays in Room 142 MUB beginning on Monday, March 24, 2026, at 5th period (11:45 am). It is a one-credit course required of voice majors. It is the concluding course in the Singer's Diction Sequence.

Course Description and Objectives

Singer's Diction is a course for singers and choral conductors, intended to improve their capacity to respond with ease, accuracy, and expression in foreign languages. French diction presumes an understanding of the International Phonetic Alphabet. Through poetic readings, culture study, musical performances, phonetic drills, and grammar/vocabulary practice, students develop skills in presenting French texts set to music. Each student will be expected to attend class and complete all quizzes, homework, and dictations. A final presentation, exercise, and project constitute the course's capstone events. Grading for the course is based upon attendance, initiative, and progress.

Student Learning Outcomes

Using the International Phonetic Alphabet as a reference, students will learn to accurately pronounce French poetic texts. Students will become familiar with the historical and cultural events that influence the interpretation of French poetry. This knowledge will facilitate expressive interpretations of art song, operatic, and oratorios in French. These skills will be evaluated in the final presentation, exercise, and project.

Textbook and Materials

The textbook for the course is *Diction in Context: Singing in English, Italian, German, and French* by Brenda Smith (San Diego CA: Plural Publishing, 2019). A recommended text is *Singing in French* by Thomas Grubb (New York, NY: Schirmer Books, 1979). Each student must own a French-English dictionary. *The Interpretation of French Song* by Pierre Bernac (New York, NY: W.W. Norton, 1970) is recommended. Supplementary material will be distributed regularly in class.

Measurement Tools

Attendance, initiative, and progress are the main criteria for grading. The measurement tools for these criteria are: a.) quizzes, class activities and homework assignments, b.) final exercise and project c.) attendance and class participation, d.) class presentations.

Quizzes, Class Activities and Final Exercise

Quizzes, class activities and homework assignments are intended to evaluate a student's command of newly introduced material. Dictations develop fluency in IPA use and strengthen aural skills. The final exercise is comprehensive in scope, including a survey of pronunciation rules using the International Phonetic Alphabet as it applies to texts sung in French. The project draws upon class notes, assigned readings, and comparative listening. **ALL WRITTEN WORK MUST BE SUBMITTED ON TIME.** Under extenuating circumstances, please notify the instructor and provide documentation.

Attendance and Class Participation

Because of the brevity of the course, regular class attendance is expected. Lateness is at times unavoidable. Please text the instructor or a classmate to report any situation that deters a prompt arrival. Excused absences are those officially sanctioned by the University of Florida. <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/> Discretionary, unexcused absences are unacceptable in this brief course. Be careful to address anticipated absences or lateness as described above.

Class Presentations

Each student will be expected to present one French *mélodie* in spoken and sung form. The repertoire assignment will be given in consultation with your studio teacher. Presentations will be evaluated for the depth of preparation and the accuracy of diction. Please note: To receive full credit for any presentation, the presentation materials must be submitted on time. Students should perform on the assigned day. In the event of extenuating circumstances, students must notify the instructor at least 24 hours before the scheduled presentation. Please prepare your presentation with the course accompanist. Each student will receive feedback from peers and the instructor.

Dates for Class Presentations

Final Class Presentations (25% of final grade) are scheduled for April 16 and 18, 2026.

Grading

Using the plus/minus scale, the course grade will be calculated in the following way:

Attendance*	10%
Quizzes and Dictations	10%
Reflections Assignments	15%
Final Exercise	15%
Class Presentation	25%
Final Essay Project	<u>25%</u>
	100%

*Prompt Attendance is an essential element for success in this course. As stated above, there are no discretionary, unexcused absences. Should extenuating circumstances arise that prevent your prompt attendance, please notify the instructor as indicated above. Given prior notice, accommodations can be made.

Grading Scale & GPA equivalent:

Percent	Grade	Grade Points
93.4-100	A	4.00
90.0-93.3	A-	3.67
86.7-89.9	B+	3.33
83.4-86.6	B	3.00
80.0-83.3	B-	2.67
76.7-79.9	C+	2.33
73.4-76.6	C	2.00
70.0-73.3	C-	1.67
66.7-69.9	D+	1.33
63.4-66.6	D	1.00
60.0-63.3	D-	0.67
0-59.9	E	0.00

More information on grades and grading policies is here:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx> Please consult the instructor at any time regarding your course status.

Weekly Schedule

The assignments and due dates listed below are subject to change. Expect a weekly update by ufl.edu email for guidance and confirmation regarding all class expectations and activities.

March 24-28	The Sounds of French Nasal Vowels, Signals, and Symbols	Read “The Early French Art Song” pg. 241	Berlioz, Franck, and Gounod Pg. 241-250
March 31- April 4	Composers of the French Mélodie, Pg. 251	Saint-Saëns, Fauré Pg. 251-257	Introduction to the Life and Work of Paul Verlaine Pg. 257-262
April 7-11	Victor Hugo, Charles Baudelaire, and Theophile Gautier Pg. 262-269	Claude Debussy Pg. 267-269 Visual Art and Vocal Colors Individual Coachings with Dr. Smith	Chausson and Duparc Pg. 269-273 Text/IPA/Word-byWord and Poetic Translations due in Class on Friday, April 11, 2026
April 14	Emmanuel Chabrier Pg. 273-276 Ravel, Poulenc, and Satie Pg. 278-285 Rehearsals with Nansi Carroll	Reynaldo Hahn Pg. 276-278	Comparative Settings of Fauré, Debussy, and Hahn
April 16 and 18	Class Presentations	Class Presentations	Attendance at class presentations is mandatory.

April 21 April 22	Final Dictation Final Exercise	Final Assessments	Prompt arrival at assessment events is recommended. In the case of late arrival, extra time is not guaranteed.
April 25	Final Project Due by 5 pm		Final Project Due

For Required Policies and Resources, please visit: <https://go.ufl.edu/syllabuspolicies>