

Opera Literature I

MUAG 4070/5070 • 3 Credit Hours Fall • Semester 2026
Course Location: Music 288 • M, W, F (11:15am-12:05pm)

Dr. JJ Hudson, Instructor • john.hudson@unt.edu

Office: MPAC 145 • Office Hours: 1:00pm-2:00pm M & W

COURSE DESCRIPTION FROM COURSE CATALOGUE

Historical overview of Western opera from Baroque through Bel canto; emphasis on skills for recognizing and analyzing opera styles and genres from both the musical and dramatic perspectives. (<https://catalogue.unt.edu>)

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students will receive an in-depth survey of opera literature from its late-renaissance roots through the middle of the 19th Century. The literature to be examined from this roughly 250-year period are those operas that have either/both historical significance and regularity of performance today. Examination of the literature will include: attention to notable stylistic features; awareness of musical/dramatic constructions; consideration of various eras' dramaturgy; and discussions of the cultural/social/political contexts that gave rise to various operatic conventions and reforms. Additionally, students will be asked to consider how repertoire from this 250-year era presents challenges for modern opera production.

Classroom instruction will take the form of a mix of professor-led lectures, classroom discussion, and scheduled student presentations. Students' work outside of class will include: 1) assigned readings, 2) preparation for an assigned presentation, and 3) study for the Final Exam.

At the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Name and historically contextualize dozens of operas from roughly 1580 – 1850.
- Recognize and communicate notable stylistic features of operatic works from this era.
- Identify and communicate common music/dramatic constructions of repertoire from this era.
- Understand the cultural and social forces that gave rise to and shaped operatic literature.
- Discuss some of the challenges that this repertoire presents for modern-day producers of opera.

COURSE PREREQUISITES (for MUAG 4070)

- MUMH 3500: Music History and Literature to 1750
- MUMH 3510: Music History and Literature since 1750

REQUIRED TEXT

A History of Opera (Updated Edition) – Carolyn Abbate & Roger Parker. Available in the UNT University Bookstore.

ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS

- Students are expected 1) to attend all scheduled class sessions, and 2) to arrive at class on time. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class session. Students will be marked as "present" or "absent." Any students arriving after attendance has been taken must see the professor immediately after class to have their "absent" marking changed to "tardy." (The professor will not change a student's absence to tardy unless the student approaches the professor immediately after class.) **Three tardy markings will equal 1 absence.**
- Attendance determines the highest possible grade a student can receive for the semester. The chart below outlines how absenteeism will figure into a student's semester grade.

If a student is absent:	Highest grade for the course is:	If a student is absent:	Highest grade for the course is:
0-3 classes	A	7 Classes	D
4-5 classes	B	8 or more classes	F
6 classes	C		

- Students who must miss class due to a College of Music event (a choir tour, an education conference, etc.) **will not** be marked as absent. Such absences require advance official notification. Any assignments/requirements due on the dates of absence must be submitted in advance of absence.

- Students may have opportunities for professional performance during the semester. Whether these absences meet the criteria of excused absences will be determined on a case-by-case basis. When students are excused for such opportunities, any missed assignments/requirements must be submitted in advance of absence(s).
- Illness happens, which sometimes prevents a student from attending class. Students are encouraged to save their unpenalized absences (absences 0-3) to use for occurrences of illness. The professor will not accept a doctor's note for illness.

GRADING CRITERIA

Grading in this course will be based on four items:

1) Attendance

(Please see information above under "Attendance Expectations." And please note again how absenteeism impacts a student's semester grade.)

2) A Group Presentations (1 presentation at 25% of total semester grade)

Students will present a group presentations during the semester: some will present at midsemester; others at the end of the semester. Each group will be comprised of 2 students, and each group will be assigned two operas to present. (Specifics about these presentations are found in a separate handout.)

Each group will assigned a letter grade, which will correspond to the following numerical equivalent:

A = 95%	B = 85%	C = 75%	D = 65%	F = 0%-55% (exact percentage at the discretion of the professor)
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Each group will be graded on:

- Content of presentation (50%): Was the presentation informative? Well structured?
- Quality of presentation (50%): Was the presentation presented within the given parameters?

3) Reading Quizzes (10 quizzes at 5% each; 50% of total semester grade)

Throughout the semester, students will be assigned ten readings in preparation for specific classes. At the beginning of the ten classes for which the reading was due, students will be asked to handwrite a response to a question related to the reading. The professor will assign each response a letter grade correlating to a numerical equivalent:

A = 95%	B = 85%	C = 75%	D = 65%	F = 0%-55% (exact percentage at the discretion of the professor)
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Please note: Students who are not present on the days of writing prompts will receive a 0% on the assignment. Students who are tardy to class and miss the assignment (again, administered at the beginning of class), will receive a grade of 0%.

4) Final Exam (1 exam at 25% of total semester grade)

A final exam (a paper and pencil exam) will be administered in-person on the assigned exam date. The final exam will be a comprehensive exam covering all the course's presented material and information in the reading assignments. Students are strongly encouraged to take extensive notes throughout the semester to aid in their preparation for the final exam. (Please note: students will not be allowed to use notes during the exam.)

Final Exam: Saturday, December 5: 10:30am – 12:30pm (Music Building Room 288)

RETURN OF STUDENT WORK

The professor will make every effort to return student's submitted work in a timely manner. The professor will attempt to return student's submitted work (or assessment of in-class presentation) at the following class session. The final exam will be graded by the end of the day following the exam date.

STUDENTS' SCHEDULING OF JURIES

Students are not to schedule their end-of-semester jury during a regularly scheduled class.

DEFIBRILLATORS IN THE COLLEGE OF MUSIC

- Music Building: Across from the west side of the Music Commons, directly across from the elevator
- Music Building: Third floor hallway, across from the staircase that comes up from the Copy Room. Next to Room 322
- Music Building: Across from the Copy Room next to Room 293
- Music Building: Voertman Lobby by the big double set of doors that lead out to the courtyard
- Music Building: Main Office (247) under the student worker's desk
- Music Annex: Next to room MA117, near the triple set of doors on the east side of the building
- Music Practice Building North: First floor on the Avenue C side
- Music Practice Building South: First floor on the Avenue C side
- Bain Hall: First floor by the restrooms
- Murchison Performing Arts Center: Located off the main lobby, beyond the grand staircase, across from the single occupancy restroom (next to the public water fountains)

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a "0" for that particular assignment or exam [or specify alternative sanction, such as course failure]. Additionally, the incident will be reported to the Dean of Students (Office of Academic Integrity), who may impose further penalty. According to the UNT catalog, the term "cheating" includes, but is not limited to:

a. use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; b. dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; c. the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university; d. dual submission of a paper or project, or resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor(s); or e. any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage. The term "plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to: a. the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment; and b. the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

• See: [Academic Integrity](#)

• LINK: <https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003>

STATEMENT ON THE USE OF "A.I." IN THIS COURSE

Writing Assignments

The use of generative AI tools is not permitted on writing assignments in this course. By submitting a writing assignment, you attest that you are the only author and the original author of the written assignment.

Verbal Component of Presentations

The use of generative AI tools is not permitted in the fashioning the content of the verbal presentation. By verbally presenting the text of your presentation, you attest that you are the only author and the original author of the presentation's text.

Visual-Images Component of Presentations

The use of generative AI tools is not permitted in the fashioning the content of any visual elements in the presentation. Students should make sure that all use of images fall into fair use practices.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

• See: [Student Code of Conduct](#)

• Link: <https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct>

ACCESS TO INFORMATION – EAGLE CONNECT

Your access point for business and academic services at UNT occurs at my.unt.edu. All official communication from the university will be delivered to your Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect.

- See: [Eagle Connect](#)
- LINK: eagleconnect.unt.edu/

ODA STATEMENT

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter. You can now request your Letters of Accommodation ONLINE and ODA will mail your Letters of Accommodation to your instructors. You may wish to begin a private discussion with your professors regarding your specific needs in a course. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester. For additional information see the Office of Disability Access.

- See: [ODA](#)
- LINK: disability.unt.edu. (Phone: (940) 565-4323)

HEALTH AND SAFETY INFORMATION

Students can access information about health and safety at: <https://music.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness>

REGISTRATION INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

- See: [Fall Academic Calendar Information](#)
- Link: <https://registrar.unt.edu/registration/fall-academic-calendar.html>

SEMESTER CALANDER, FALL 2026

- See: [Fall Semester Calendar](#)
- Link: <https://registrar.unt.edu/registration/fall-academic-calendar.html>

FINANCIAL AID AND SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Undergraduates

A student must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) to continue to receive financial aid. Students must maintain a minimum 2.0 cumulative GPA in addition to successfully completing a required number of credit hours based on total hours registered. Students cannot exceed attempted credit hours above 150% of their required degree plan. If a student does not maintain the required standards, the student may lose their financial aid eligibility.

Students holding music scholarships must maintain a minimum 2.5 overall cumulative GPA and 3.0 cumulative GPA in music courses.

If at any point you consider dropping this or any other course, please be advised that the decision to do so may have the potential to affect your current and future financial aid eligibility. It is recommended that you to schedule a meeting with an academic advisor in your college or visit the Student Financial Aid and Scholarships office to discuss dropping a course before doing so.

- See: [Financial Aid](#)
- LINK: <http://financialaid.unt.edu/sap>

Graduates

A student must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) to continue to receive financial aid. Students must maintain a minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA in addition to successfully completing a required number of credit hours based on total registered hours per term. Music scholarships require a 3.5 cumulative GPA. Students cannot exceed maximum timeframes established based on the published length of the graduate program. If a student does not maintain the required standards, the student may lose their financial aid eligibility.

If at any point you consider dropping this or any other course, please be advised that the decision to do so may have the potential to affect your current and future financial aid eligibility. It is recommended you schedule a meeting with an

academic advisor in your college, an advisor in UNT-International or visit the Student Financial Aid and Scholarships office to discuss dropping a course.

- See: [Financial Aid](#)
- LINK: <http://financialaid.unt.edu/sap>

COUNSELING AND TESTING

UNT's Center for Counseling and Testing has an available counselor for students in need. Please visit the Center's website for further information:

- See: [Counseling and Testing](#)
- Link: <http://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>.

For more information on mental health resources, please visit:

- See: [Mental Health Resources](#)
- Link: <https://disparities.unt.edu/mental-health-resources>

ADD/DROP POLICY

Please be reminded that dropping classes or failing to complete and pass registered hours may make you ineligible for financial aid. In addition, if you drop below half-time enrollment you may be required to begin paying back your student loans. See Academic Calendar (listed above) for additional add/drop Information.

- Drop Information: <https://registrar.unt.edu/registration/fall-academic-calendar.html>

STUDENT RESOURCES

The University of North Texas has many resources available to students. For a complete list, go to:

- See: [Student Resources](#)
- Link: <https://success.unt.edu/aa-sa-resources>

CARE TEAM

The Care Team is a collaborative interdisciplinary committee of university officials that meets regularly to provide a response to student, staff, and faculty whose behavior could be harmful to themselves or others.

- See: [Care Team](#)
- Link: <https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care-team>

RETENTION OF STUDENT RECORDS

Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Canvas online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. You have a right to view your individual record; however, information about your records will not be divulged to other individuals without the proper written consent. You are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the university's policy in accordance with those mandates.

- See: [FERPA](#)
- Link: <http://ferpa.unt.edu/>