

MUAG 1909: Italian Diction (7604)
Fall 2025
Wednesday/Friday, 10:00-10:50 am
Classroom: Music 250

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MUAG 1909: Italian Diction**SYLLABUS****COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

An introduction to the principles and techniques of Italian pronunciation, with emphasis on:

- 1) *aural skills* (developing the ability to listen in an informed and active way to spoken and sung Italian and English);
- 2) *oral/vocal skills* (speaking and singing Italian and English texts and phrases); and
- 3) *reading and writing skills* in English, in Italian, and in the International Phonetic Alphabet.

COURSE MATERIALS

There is no required textbook for this course.

Course materials will include:

- 1) all written assignments and handouts (IPA transcriptions, translations, worksheets, etc.);
- 2) recordings of spoken and sung Italian texts;
- 3) recordings of piano parts for Italian songs and arias; and
- 4) access to a reliable Italian-English dictionary.

You are expected to have electronic access to *all course materials* at all times during each class session.

GRADING CRITERIA**Grading Scale:**

A = 90-100%

B = 80-89%

C = 70-79%

D = 60-69%

E = 50-59%

Your **final grade** will be computed as follows:

1. Performance 70%

There will be 6 performance assignments—see pp. 4-5 for further details. You will be graded on the quality of your preparation and performance for each assignment, on how easily you absorb instruction, and on your overall improvement throughout the semester. Note that you will continue to have opportunities throughout the semester to repeat performances for a higher grade. I will also be completely available to coach you individually at your convenience.

2. Written Assignments 15%

There will be 14 written assignments—see p. 6 for a description of each. Handwritten assignments will not be accepted. Assignments *must* be entered on CANVAS by the due date and time listed in the class schedule (pp. 11-12) in order to receive full credit. You will always have the opportunity to submit a corrected or more thorough written assignment in order to raise your grade...but late assignments will receive a *maximum* grade of 50%. Please submit early if possible!

3. **Class Participation + Attendance 15%**

This portion of your grade reflects your contribution to the life of the class. You must participate actively in class discussions, and your participation should have a positive effect on the overall flow of each class period. This will require consistent engagement and focus as well as access to all course materials.

This portion of your grade also reflects your attendance. The course attendance policy is as follows: you are allowed *one unexcused absence* in the semester. Additional absences—and any tardiness—could result in a substantial lowering of this portion of your final grade. Please note that I am passionate about using the entire 50 minutes allotted for each class period. Your absence and tardiness would inevitably have a direct negative effect on my ability to do that. Please do not schedule any performance activity, such as a jury, during our class time.

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PERFORMANCE ASSIGNMENTS 70% of final grade

P1	Speak and sing the text of Tommaso Giordani's "Caro mio ben" <i>from memory</i>
P2	Speak and sing the text of Francesco Sartori's "Con te partirò" <i>from memory</i>
P3	Speak and sing the text of your <i>recitativo</i> assignment <i>from memory</i>
P4	Speak and sing your first selection <i>from memory</i>
P5	Speak and sing your second selection <i>from memory</i>
P6	Speak and sing your third selection <i>from memory</i>

The performance assignments are intended to provide benchmarks for your growth in the field of Italian pronunciation. Please note the following:

- a) *Always* begin with meaning. The sounds themselves will never be right if you don't know what the words mean...And the inflections, flow, dramatic integrity? No way! If you don't know what you're saying, none of that is possible—only some very impressive but ultimately ineffective fakery!
- b) Because of this, I urge you to spend a large proportion of your preparation time *speaking* the English *translations* (each translation has two parts). I will emphasize this in class and attempt to show that it's actually an amazing shortcut!
- c) To expand on this, I am actually going to urge you to adopt, for this class, the following *method*:
 1. speak idiomatic translation;
 2. speak word-for-word translation;
 3. speak Italian text;
 4. sing Italian text
- d) You very often won't be able to complete your performance assignment during our allotted class time. Please be open to the possibility of doing so:
 1. in person in my office
 - or*
 2. via recording
- e) Practice efficiently and effectively—and patiently! Speak *out loud* as much as possible. Repetition is incredibly important...but be sure you are repeating the material with awareness and intelligence. Record yourself; use a mirror when possible; avoid physical tension.
- f) Your preparation and my guidance should result in a substantial improvement of your ability to process both verbal information *and* written information.
- g) The first two selections (P1, P2) are "dictated" by me. I hope that, by working on the same pieces together for the first couple of weeks, we will be more thorough and efficient in establishing a consistent approach for the rest of the semester.
- h) The repertoire for P3 is an extended passage of Italian-language *recitativo*, most likely from a Mozart opera. This assignment is truly the heart of our class. Over the decades of working on repertoire in Italian with singers of all levels, I've become convinced that the greatest challenges and greatest opportunities for growth are to be found in *recitativo*.

- i) The selections for P4, P5, and P6 are your choice...but I'd like to reserve the right to have final approval of your proposed repertoire. Please consult with your voice teacher about appropriate selections. Ideally, these selections should be repertoire you intend to have voice lessons on this semester. Also...try to select pieces that you genuinely love!
- j) In the case of *all* your performance assignments, the focus in this class will be on delivery of the text, not on vocal technique.
- k) I would be happy to provide you with recordings of the piano parts for any of your selections. Feel free to experiment with a variety of keys, etc.
- l) Every time you undertake a performance assignment, I will give you feedback that will include specific comments and a number grade. As stated on p. 1, you will have until the end of the semester to "lock in" your grade for each performance assignment.
- m) I intend to be *always* available to you to answer any question or concern and for individual coaching on any performance assignment. Please take advantage of this offer. Regardless of the level of your experience and comfort with the material, I am absolutely confident that you can succeed in this course. But the key to this, I'm convinced, is patient encouragement and *personalized* attention. My goal is to do all I can to create a positive and affirming atmosphere in class and in individual sessions.

MUAG 1909: Italian Diction**WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS****15% of final grade****W1 Questionnaire**

See sample on pp. 7-8. Your answers to the questions will help me get to know you better as I prepare to coach you on Italian diction. I will share no part of your questionnaire with anybody else. My intent is to be able to help you more thoroughly and specifically. At no time should you feel any pressure to answer or share more than you feel comfortable with. This means that you have absolute freedom to leave questions blank as you see fit and/or to give incomplete or partial answers. Please consult with your voice teacher before answering the last question (about possible Mozart opera roles for *recitativo* assignments).

W2 Recording

Submit (on Canvas or by email) a video recording of your singing. This will help me as I make *recitativo* assignments.

W3, 5, 8, 10, 12 Interaction with, questions about, explanations of...

See sample on p. 9. I will always provide IPA transcriptions for your performance assignments. In exchange, I am asking you to study these materials and submit a written record of your interaction with the specific choices I make. Feel free to consult other IPA transcriptions of the same repertoire. As the semester progresses, your interactions will hopefully feature fewer questions and more explanations.

W4 List of 3 solo selections

Submit a list of your 3 solo selections (P4, P5, P6). Please follow the formatting as demonstrated in the sample on p. 10. Remember to consult with your voice teacher *before* you submit your list. As an additional component of this assignment, please send me .pdf versions of the vocal scores of your selections. Be sure to use the key you intend to sing each selection in!

W6, 7, 9, 11 Quizzes

These 4 quizzes will give you an opportunity to consolidate your knowledge, assess your own progress, and experiment with IPA transcriptions.

W13 Video Recording

Please submit a video recording of you speaking any text you will perform on the Class Recital.

W14 Final Paper

Discuss one or more topics in relation to this course. Maximum length: 1.5 pages. Please be adventurous in selecting the paper's structure and tone. Humor and creativity are encouraged. *Papers may not be boring!*

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Written Assignment W1 QUESTIONNAIRE: **Sample**

1. What is your name? **Lucy Sky Diamond**
2. What is the name by which you would like to be addressed in class? **Luz**
3. What pronouns do you use for yourself? **they/them**
4. What is your telephone number? I will only use it to communicate about this course, and I won't share it with anyone else. **I'd rather not release it...please communicate with me only by email.**
5. What is your email address? I will only use it to communicate about this course.
Luz.Diamond@my.unt.edu
6. What is your hometown? In other words, where you would like to be thought of as being "from"? Messy or complicated answers are welcome. **Austin, Texas (spent first 11 years in Michigan)**
7. What is your year in school? **Sophomore**
8. What is your major? **Choral Music Education**
9. Who is your voice teacher or major music teacher at UNT? **Molly Wilson**
10. What are your professional goals? **teach high school choir/win the lottery**
11. Outline your formal language study [i.e. courses taken, teachers studied with, etc.]. Please be specific.
 - Middle school: 1 year of Spanish**
 - High school: 2 years of Spanish**
 - AP English (5 in grammar, 4 in literature)**
 - sang Italian, German, and French in voice lessons and performances**
 - College: 1 semester of German**
 - sang Italian, German**
 - English minor**
12. Outline your informal exposure to language. Please be specific.
 - 18 years of English**
 - My grandparents speak Spanish, and I grew up hearing it (but not speaking it)**
 - Some summers in México**
 - One summer workshop in Italy (before freshman year in college)**
 - Some Duolingo Spanish and French**

13. Evaluate your strengths and advantages in studying Italian diction.

early exposure to languages
 excellent ear/eye and ear/mouth coordination
 I've always been fascinated by languages
 My background in Spanish makes Italian so much easier

14. Evaluate your challenges and disadvantages in studying Italian diction.

childhood speech impediment—had 1 year of speech therapy
 I just can't roll my r's
 my Spanish teachers in middle school and high school weren't very good
 I get very flustered trying to imitate sounds, accents, and inflections—it really triggers
 some strong emotions due to being berated by my HS voice teacher
 I don't really "get" IPA—it's almost incomprehensible to me!

15. Please list Italian-language vocal repertoire you have performed and/or studied. Be as thorough as you can.

24 Italian Songs and Arias:
 Caro mio ben (performed)
 O del mio dolce ardor (studied)
 2 Tosti songs (studied—can't remember titles)
 Zerlina arias from *Don Giovanni* (studied—performed one of them in scenes program)

16. For purposes of assigning Italian *recitativo*, please list one or more Mozart opera roles in Italian that might be suitable for your voice. If needed, please check with your voice teacher before answering this question.

Ilia, Susanna, Zerlina, Despina, Servilia

17. Please list any scheduling issues or potential conflicts I should be aware of.

I will miss class on Wednesday, September 5 because of a medical appointment
 I will miss class on Friday, October 10 because I'll be celebrating Puccini's birthday
 I plan to be seriously ill on Friday, October 31...still not sure whether this will result in:
 a. my missing class; or
 b. my coming to class and doing my best to infect everyone
 I won't be able to get out of bed on Wednesday, November 12
 Because of my work schedule, I'm not sure I can attend the class recital on November 20
 I won't be available the week of December 1 because I'll have to recover from
 Thanksgiving Break

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Written Assignments W3, 5, 8, 10, 12

INTERACTION WITH STEPHEN'S IPA TRANSCRIPTION: **Sample**

“Caro mio ben”

music by Tommaso Giordani [tom 'ma zo dʒor 'da ni]

text by an anonymous poet

idiomatic translation: what's the point of this?

Caro mio ben,

credimi_{almen}: why the slur []?

senza di te

languisce_{il cor}.

My dear beloved,

at least believe me:

my heart is suffering

without you.

Il tuo fedel is this phrase gendered?

sospira_{ognor} –

cessa, crudel, is crudel gendered??

tanto rigor!

Your faithful one

is always sighing;

cruel one, stop

such harshness!

word-for-word translation + IPA transcription:

Dear my treasure,

Caro mio ben,

['ka rom mi:o 'bɛn]

why do you divide by syllable instead of by words?

why 2 ms?? why stresses? what's an [ɛ]? why is this e open?

what's with the weird r?? what are the brackets for?

what happens between syllables?

believe me at least:

credimi_{almen}:

['kre di mjal 'men]

why the [j] instead of an [i]? why [e] instead of [ɛ]?

without of you languishes the heart.

senza di te languisce_{il cor}.

why do you put these 2 lines of poetry together?

['sɛn tsa dit 'tɛ lan 'gwiʃ ʃe:il 'kɔr] Shouldn't the stress be on the first syllable of *languisce*?

That's the downbeat!

The your faithful one sighs always;

Il tuo fedel sospira ognor,

[il tu:of fe 'del so 'spi ra:o 'ɲor] why isn't there a stress mark on the first part of *tuo*??

not sure how to do the a:o...do I just take time for both?

cease, cruel one, such harshness!

cessa, crudel, tanto rigor!

['tʃɛs: sak kru 'del 'tan to ri 'gor] why are these rs rolled? why double k?

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Written Assignment W4
LIST OF SELECTIONS: Sample

P4

"Vanne, o rosa fortunata"
music by Vincenzo Bellini
poem by Pietro Metastasio

P5

"Possente spirto" from *L'Orfeo*
music by Claudio Monteverdi
libretto by Alessandro Striggio, based on Ovid's *Metamorphoses*
character: Orfeo

P6

"Deh vieni, non tardar" from *Le nozze di Figaro*
music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
libretto by Lorenzo da Ponte, based on the play by Pierre Beaumarchais
character: Susanna

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Fall 2025—Wednesday and Friday 10:00-10:50 am

CLASS SCHEDULE (REVISED August 29)

DATE	ASSIGNMENT	DESCRIPTION
AUGUST Wednesday 20	P1 W1 (11:59 pm) W2 (11:59 pm)	INTRODUCTION Caro mio ben: speak idiomatic translation Questionnaire Recording of your singing
Friday 22	P1	Caro mio ben: speak word-for-word translation
Wednesday 27	P1 W3 (11:59 pm)	Caro mio ben: speak Italian text Interaction with Stephen's IPA of Con te partirò
Friday 29	P1	Caro mio ben: speak Italian text <i>from memory</i>
SEPTEMBER Wednesday 3	P1 W4 (11:59 pm)	Caro mio ben: speak Italian text <i>from memory</i> List of your selections (P4-6)
Friday 5	P1	Caro mio ben: sing <i>from memory</i>
Wednesday 10	P1 P2 W5 (11:59 pm)	Caro mio ben: sing <i>from memory</i> Rehearse Con te partirò Interaction with Stephen's IPA of your <i>recitativo</i> assignment
Friday 12	P3	Your <i>recitativo</i> assignment: speak idiomatic and word-for-word translations
Wednesday 17	P3 W6 (11:59 pm)	Your <i>recitativo</i> assignment: speak word-for-word translation <i>from memory</i> Quiz #1
Friday 19	P3	Your <i>recitativo</i> assignment: speak Italian text
Wednesday 24	P3 W7 (11:59 pm)	Your <i>recitativo</i> assignment: speak Italian text Quiz #2
Friday 26	P3	Your <i>recitativo</i> assignment: speak Italian text <i>from memory</i>
OCTOBER Wednesday 1	P3 W8 (11:59 pm)	Your <i>recitativo</i> assignment: sing <i>from memory</i> Interaction with Stephen's IPA of your first selection
Friday 3	P3 P4	Your <i>recitativo</i> assignment: sing <i>from memory</i> Your first selection: speak word-for-word translation <i>from memory</i>
Wednesday 8	P4 W9 (11:59 pm)	Your first selection: speak Italian text Quiz #3
Friday 10	P4	Your first selection: speak Italian text <i>from memory</i>
Wednesday 15	P4 W10 (11:59 pm)	Your first selection: sing <i>from memory</i> Interaction with Stephen's IPA of your second selection
Friday 17	P4	Your first selection: sing <i>from memory</i>
Wednesday 22	P5	Your second selection: speak word-for-word translation <i>from memory</i>
Friday 24	P5	Your second selection: speak Italian text
Wednesday 29	P5 W11 (11:59 pm)	Your second selection: speak Italian text <i>from memory</i> Quiz #4
Friday 31	P5	Your second selection: sing <i>from memory</i>

DECEMBER Wednesday 5	P5 W12 (11:59 pm)	Your second selection: sing Italian text <i>from memory</i> Interaction with Stephen's IPA of your third selection
Friday 7	P6	Your third selection: speak word-for-word translation <i>from memory</i>
Wednesday 12	P6	Your third selection: speak Italian text
Friday 14	P2-6	Rehearsal for Class Recital
Wednesday 19	P2-6 W13 (11:59 pm)	Rehearsal for Class Recital recording of you <i>speaking</i> all your Class Recital texts
Thursday 20	Class Recital 6:30-7:30 pm	in Recital Hall Attendance and participation required
DECEMBER Wednesday 3 (last regular class session)	P4-6 W14 (11:59 pm)	sing one of your selections <i>from memory</i> Final Paper
Saturday 6 8:00-10:00 am	FINAL EXAM TIME P3-6	Class discussion (please plan to stay for the entire time) Speak and sing your <i>recitativo</i> assignment and/or any of your selections <i>from memory</i>

****updated for Fall 2025****

Course Syllabi Information

**For complete information on course syllabi requirements, please see the [university's policy](https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-049).
(<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-049>)**

In addition to the information below, course syllabi should minimally include the following information:

- Course Title and Course Number
- Course Objectives
- Instructor Office Hours
- Attendance Expectations
- Grading Criteria
- Statement on timely return of student work, particularly final exams or final projects
- Statement that students should not schedule their end-of-semester jury against a regularly scheduled class
- For Faculty, Teaching Fellows and Adjuncts:
 - ✓ All undergraduate syllabi for lecture courses are required by law to be available to the public. **At UNT, undergraduate syllabi for lecture courses should be uploaded into the Faculty Information System by the 7th class day.**
 - To access the Faculty Information System, go to your my.unt home page. Under the Faculty Tab, click on Faculty Information System.
 - ✓ UNT requires that all graduate course syllabi to be uploaded into FIS.

Rather than including the text for the information below, it is also an option to include the links in course syllabi and review the information on the first day of class.

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>

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: [Registration Information](#)

Link: <https://registrar.unt.edu/students>

Academic Calendar, Fall 2025

See: [Fall 2025 Registration Information](#)

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

Final Exam Schedule, Fall 2025

See above

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>

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/>

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>