

**Vocal Music Department**  
**Course Syllabus for: Vocal Techniques 1-4**  
**Credit: One Carnegie Unit each year**

**Course Description**

Vocal Techniques is an ongoing (three or four year) course of study that develops the fundamentals of good singing through group and voice classes. Techniques of study include exercises that develop singing skills, repertoire in several languages and formal and informal performances. It is an essential course for every vocal major each year, and a yearly requirement for graduation from The Duke Ellington School of the Arts.

**Content Standards**

Six DCPS Content Standards are basic to the core skills, concepts and knowledge for vocal techniques courses:

- Students Sing Alone and with Others, a Varied Repertoire of Music Representing Diverse Genres, Styles and Cultures
- Students Read, Notate, and Interpret Notational Symbols for Rhythmic and Melodic Patterns
- Students Listen, Analyze, Compare and Describe Different Forms of Music
- Students Critique Their Own Performance and the Performances of Others
- Students Identify, Investigate and Interpret Relationships Among the Principles of Music and Other Disciplines
- Students Explore a Variety of Heritages from Music of Many Cultures

**Course Outline**

Primary to the study of vocal techniques are the fundamentals of singing—posture, breath management, vowel production, consonant production, musical line, vocal flexibility and the ability to interpret music with expression and appropriate style. Each student is expected to make progress in each area of the fundamentals of singing through class participation and daily practice.

Students will learn the physiology of the voice and apply that knowledge to their technical studies. They will study vocal hygiene and professional care of the voice, diction in several languages, and they will be introduced to the International Phonetic Alphabet. Students will apply their music reading and writing skills to the

study of voice.

Students will memorize repertoire in the songs' original languages, and they will be able to translate and interpret texts and poetry. They will learn and demonstrate appropriate stage presence, poise and discipline.

### **Grading and Evaluation Procedures**

Students are graded on class work each advisory and on a jury each semester. Class works includes learning and performing classical vocal literature as outlined below. Class grades may also include written work (song translations tests, composer papers, program notes, concert reports, etc.) or any criteria the teacher deems necessary to the development of the student. Jury grades are determined by averaging the grades given by the teacher/evaluators on the faculty jury panel. The jury grade counts for 50% of the class grade for advisories 2 and 4. Students who fail the final jury may be asked to transfer from Ellington.

Seniors are expected to give a senior recital of not more than 20 minutes during their senior year, reflecting the music they have studied while at Ellington. Those who are not able to give a recital must perform a senior jury with the same repertoire criteria.

**All students are expected to treat each other and their teachers with respect and to follow the guidelines given in the Music Department Handbook and the Duke Ellington School of the Arts Community Handbook.**

### **Literature Requirements**

Vocal students are expected to purchase their own music for vocal classes. Individual teachers will assign books in class. Specific songs are assigned by individual voice teachers, but general guidelines for study are outlined below.

1 <sup>st</sup> Year	Each semester: 2 songs in Italian, 1 Spiritual, 1 English Song
2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	Each semester: 1 song in Italian, 1 German, 1 Spiritual, 1 English
3 <sup>rd</sup> Year	Each semester: 4 songs in 3 languages
Senior Year	4 songs in 3 languages for Senior Hearing, Limit of 20 minutes of music for Senior Recital