

COVER PAGE

UCAT Grant:

Curriculum Development Grant

Reviewed by UCAT Representative:

Yes

UCAT Representative:

Communication, Fine Arts & Media - Matthew Brooks (matthewbrooks@unomaha.edu)

APPLICANT INFORMATION

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College:

College of Communication, Fine Arts, and Media (CFAM)

Submission Date / Time:

10/20/2020 4:21:27 PM

Curriculum Development Grant (selected)

Course Numbers (if known)

MUS1660, MUS4610/8616

Course Names

Diction II: French and German, Vocal Pedagogy

Indicate whether the project includes the creation of new courses or the redesign of several courses or both:

Significantly redesign several courses

If there is more than one individual applying for the grant, list team members: (Graduate students may be members of the team but cannot be the primary recipients of UCAT funding)

Stipend Request:	1500
Other (if applicable):	
Less other funding (if applicable)	
Total Request:	1500
Other funding source(s) (if applicable)	

Applicants should carefully and clearly establish the rationale for funding requested. Describe the proposed activities clearly, addressing both the scope of the activities, the action steps you will take, and expected outcomes. Explain specifically how you expect your curriculum development activities will enhance the teaching/learning environment at UNO and when you expect to offer the curriculum developed as part of this grant.

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Overview

The voice area in the School of Music continues to grow in its enrollment and as we expand, some of the former ways of instruction need to be redesigned in order to serve a larger population of students. Much of the teaching of voice and our related courses involves individualized feedback. This requires more time in class which continues to shrink as our program grows. We have seen class size increase, and therefore amount of time we get to engage with individuals decreases based on the number of students enrolled. For example, in Spring 2020, there were 12 students enrolled in my Diction II course, and I estimate that it will be nearly 20 in Spring 2021. I am applying for this grant for the redesign and creation of complimentary content for two courses in our program being offered in Spring 2021, MUS1660- Diction II: French and German Diction and MUS4610/8616 Vocal Pedagogy. Diction is required of Bachelor of Music Education majors in area and voice emphases as well as Bachelor of Music voice performance majors. Pedagogy is cross listed with both an undergraduate and graduate section as it is required coursework for Bachelor of Music vocal performance majors and strongly encouraged for Master of Music vocal performance majors.

MUS1660- Diction II: French and German

(1) MUS1660- Diction II focuses on the learning and implementation of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) in the pronunciation of the German and French languages for classical singing. For the redevelopment of this class, I will be implementing a flipped class environment. I have realized that students need more time and emphasis on in-class practice with more opportunities for direct feedback as they strive to speak and sing like a native speaker of these languages. In past version of this course, much of the instruction time was used to introduce and demonstrate to students in producing sounds. Often, the practical application in singing has been negligible due to time constraints of in-class meetings. With the increased enrollment, if I continue to teach this course as before, students will not receive the individualized feedback required for mastery.

(2-3) There is no comprehensive resource that teaches lyric diction by offering sounds to singers to practice that is readily available. Students currently read a textbook that teaches the IPA symbols, but it lacks the aural/oral components necessary for mastery. In order to do this, I would like to research, produce, record, and edit around 20, 20-40-minute engaging, interactive lecture videos to serve as the assignments that students will complete as homework. All videos will be uploaded in a user-friendly manner on our course Canvas page. I will track their engagement via the analytics function in VidGrid. I will then design several assignments which will include in-class performances of songs in these languages with accompanying materials of IPA resources. This will allow our class time to be used for giving direct feedback and hands-on experience of speaking and singing in these languages.

I would also like to utilize the funds to help to make/procure about eight piano accompaniment tracks for the students to use for in-class performances. These performances have usually been done by singing a capella or having the instructor playing the piano while also focusing on the singer's diction in order to give them notes and corrections. This makes it difficult to give

accurate feedback and the use of an accompaniment track would free up the instructor to focus more clearly on the individual student who is singing and better engage the students in the class who are observing.

(4) It is my belief that this will provide a better understanding of the material in its practice as well as in its theory. With increased in-class engagement, students will be able to both participate and observe their colleagues in this work as well as understand how they can incorporate the teaching tools used by the instructor. The majority of these students are future music educators who will be utilizing these strategies in their own teaching. Additionally, these materials will then be able to be reused and honed for future semesters when this course is offered again, creating a sustainable and efficient model.

MUS4610/8616 Vocal Pedagogy

(1) Vocal pedagogy is the study of the art and science of the teaching of the singing voice. Teachers focus on the efficient use of body, breath, and resonance to accommodate the singing voice as well as discuss musicianship, diction, acting, and artistry. The major component of this course will involve the development of a community-engagement project that will allow UNO voice majors studying vocal pedagogy to work with high school choral scholars to improve their singing. I also need to develop engaging in-class activities that scaffold the UNO students for this experience in a systematic way, leading up to their lesson experiences which include focusing on anatomy, physiology, voice methods, repertoire selection, and vocal health. The teaching experience project will be practical application of skills and strategies the UNO students learn in the class material.

(2-3) We have identified the Benson High Magnet School program as my partner in this project for Spring 2021. Benson Magnet High School Choral Director, Susanna Kearney, has already enthusiastically agreed to partner on the project. Each UNO student will be paired with a Benson choral scholar and they will be responsible for administering six, thirty-minute applied voice lessons over the course of eight weeks. All lessons will be given online, for the safety of all participants and to develop skills and strategies that we anticipate will become more regular in a post-pandemic world. UNO students will be responsible for re-watching and reflecting on their teaching experiences in order to gain insight into how to problem solve and increase their effectiveness. I will also be giving feedback after watching these videos on how best to proceed so that the Benson student is assured of progress.

UNO students will be required to assist in the preparation of one piece of repertoire with their Benson choral scholar over the course of these lessons. We will hold a final online recital where the Benson students sing this repertoire and have a debrief of the experience. This project will require a comprehensive course Canvas page so that UNO students can archive their lesson recordings and get individualized feedback as well as a comprehensive Box system to share accompaniment tracks and lesson recordings. I also hope to use clips from these lesson videos as fodder for course discussion, so I will be spending significant amounts of time watching, editing, and teaching from these experiences. This initial iteration of the project will serve as a

template and a relationship-building exercise with Benson High Magnet School for future collaborations of this nature as well as recruitment for our program.

I will construct the robust course Canvas platform and develop in-class activities for course meetings. I will need to be video editing and assembling on a weekly basis once the project begins in order to capture the best hands-on learning experiences from student lesson videos in order to provide feedback and insight during in-class meetings. I will be coordinating with Benson choral director, Susanna Kearney, on how to best set up the communication access, expectations, and best-practices for the major project as well as pairing the UNO students with their Benson choral scholar partners.

I will also be developing materials and augmenting the experience for graduate students enrolling in this course. They will be required to complete this project, but they will additionally work with collegiate students in a cadet teaching situation by participating and working with my Freshmen voice majors in my lesson times with the Freshmen.

(4) Benson High Magnet School is an incredibly diverse environment and is the school with the largest percentage of students on the free and reduced lunch program in all of the OPS system (79.8% in the 2019-2020 school year). In traditional American K-12 institutions the focus on singing is in a choral or group setting. Individual lessons are privatized, with students paying per lesson for private, individual instruction. This project creates meaningful relationships that allow mentorship from a current UNO student to model and encouraged Benson students to find pathways to higher education. This project will allow UNO students insight into teaching, scheduling, and mentoring a diverse body of students. They will analyze their teaching and find ways to make it more effective, thoughtful, creative, and inclusive. For this initial year, they will experience how the field of voice teaching can change and adapt through a hands-on experience of teaching online, as more online teaching will undoubtedly continue to be normal far after this pandemic.

I have already applied for funding through the 2020 Civic Participation Mini Grant to support the purchase of quality microphones and adaptors for the OPS students' iPads, which are integral to this project to allow students to hear the subtle nuances of the singing voice and for funds to create accompaniment tracks for these online performances.

Timeline

In regard to timeline and deliverables, I hope to have all of the Diction II videos complete and uploaded before the end of the Fall 2020 semester. I will spend winter break creating the course Canvas page, recording the accompaniment tracks, and developing in-class activities. My goal is to have this course completely finished and ready for implementation by the first day of the Spring 2021 semester. I will also be developing the Pedagogy class activities during winter break as well as organizing and setting up the online platforms before the beginning of Spring 2021. More of this courses work will need to happen on a weekly basis as I review footage of student lessons to find teachable moments to create videos to show the entire class. These materials will also be able to be archived and used in the future as case studies.