

## Music Department Voice Area Competency Levels

Revised 5/05

### Explanation of Competency Levels:

The Voice Area Competency Levels indicate minimum requirements for competency levels and specific goals to be achieved at certain points in the college career. To allow for the variable rate of student progress and the different needs of each degree program, some levels indicate “progress toward degree requirements” as a stated goal. If a student is doing consistent work, showing progress in vocal skills, and does not show significant deficiencies in pitch and rhythm skills or in memory work, the student should progress along the typical sequence of competency levels as listed at the end of this document.

“Pitch and Rhythm” and “Memory” skills are reliable indicators of practice habits and the required musical skills needed to complete the program and be a successful music professional. Deficiencies of these basic skills at any level may cause the student to be held or demoted in level. However, if a student has worked consistently throughout the semester but still shows deficiencies in these areas, an appeal may be made to the Jury to explain the deficiencies.

### Definition of terms:

“Introductory” = demonstrates at least 50% accuracy or completion of skill(s) (= #5 on the Jury Form)

“Adequate” = demonstrates at least 70% accuracy or completion of skill(s) (= #7 on the Jury Form)

“Very Good” = demonstrates at least 80% accuracy or completion of skill(s) (= #8 on the Jury Form)

“Mastery” = demonstrates at least 90% accuracy or completion of skill(s) (= #9 on the Jury Form)

### Skills to be assessed: (Each line below rated on a 10 point scale, with 10 being high)

- Pitch /Rhythm accuracy
- Tone Quality/Projection (includes breath control)
- Technique/Intonation (includes breath control)
- Musicianship
  - Dynamics, Phrasing, Legato, Style
- Diction/Expression (5 points each)
- Memorization/Sight reading\*

\*This line is divided evenly with each area (Memorization and Sight reading) being judged on the following 5 point scales;

#### Memorization

#1 = No memorization demonstrated

#2 = “Introductory”; many memory errors and/or must use music on one or more songs

#3 = “Adequate”; mostly memorized but still has some memory errors

#4 = “Very Good”; only a few memory errors demonstrated

#5 = “Mastery”; no memory errors demonstrated

#### Sight reading:

#1 = No notes or intervals correct

#2 = “Introductory”; few notes or intervals correct

#3 = “Adequate”; some notes and intervals correct;

#4 = “Very Good”; most notes and intervals correct

#5 = “Mastery”; very few mistakes noted on sight reading.

## Literature definitions:

### Simple

“Simple” literature is that which does not have a wide range, is mostly diatonic and scalar in melodic structure, is often repetitive, is in a medium tempo, the voice line is often doubled in the accompaniment, and is in English or in simple Latin or Italian. This is literature used for early training.

Examples might include: “Lasciatemi morire”, “Caro mio ben”, “All through the Night,” “Long Time Ago,” etc. Typical literature books might include: *24 or 26 Italian Art Songs and Arias*, *The Young Singer* series (one for each voice type), *The First Book of* series (one for each voice type), selected folk songs, etc.

### Medium

“Medium” level literature implies one or more of the following: wider range, higher or lower tessitura, less repetition in the melodic line, increased demands regarding dynamics or tempi indications, reduced doubling of accompaniment, more dramatic or difficult texts, longer phrases, and faster passage work. This category is the broadest and includes most of the literature needed for the BA or BME degrees.

Examples might include: “Ständchen” by Schubert, “Mandoline” by Fauré, “Voi, che sapete” by Mozart (opera), songs of J.J. Niles or folk songs by Copland. Typical literature for this level might be found in such books as: *The Second Book of* series, Boosey and Hawkes *New Imperial Edition* (for each voice type); composer anthologies of Schubert, Schumann, or Fauré; Language anthologies (i.e: German, French, Italian); Opera and Oratorio anthologies by G. Schirmer; the *Singer’s Musical Theatre Anthology* (one for each voice type).

### Advanced

“Advanced” literature is that which combines many of the qualities described in the medium level. These may include a very wide range, extreme tessitura, rapid passage work, complex language, disjunct or angular melodic lines, atonal or blurred tonality, long phrases, and sophisticated texts. This literature requires excellent technical skill and more mature voices.

Examples might include: “Una voce poco fa” by Rossini (opera), *The Nantucket Songs* by Rorem, complete or almost complete song cycles such as *Ariettes Oubliées* by Debussy, Schubert, Schumann, or Berlioz, etc; and selected solos from *The Messiah* (oratorio). Much of this literature is also found in the same books listed in the Medium level. However, these songs are more difficult due to the compositional elements listed above.

### Non-major voice students:

All students who are not officially registered and active in the curriculum as music majors, minors, certification candidates, or elementary education with music emphasis, will need to demonstrate music reading skills and basic piano skills to be considered for voice instruction. Non-majors who cannot read music or play the piano may elect to register for Theories of Music in Culture (MM 101) and Aural Skills I (MM 105) and Functional Piano I as co-requisites of voice lessons to satisfy these requirements.

The competency levels described below represent the minimum requirements for each level. A chart showing the typical sequence of competency levels and course numbers follows this description. See cover sheet for definition of terms used below.

All literature requirements are assumed to be “as appropriate to the voice type.” The teacher will have complete authority in selection of literature.

<u>Level</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Literature</u>
Admission	Full admission to the music department as a voice major requires a Level 1 competency described below. To be accepted provisionally the student must demonstrate “adequate” pitch and rhythm skills and be able to sing with piano accompaniment on simple vocal literature and an “introductory” ability to project while singing.  (Note regarding memory requirements for all levels: ratings of “Adequate” or below for two consecutive semesters will result in the student being held at that level until “Very Good” memory skills can be demonstrated. For Sophomore Review, memory must rated at a “Very Good” or above.)	At least one song performed with piano accompaniment. Traditional High School contest repertoire is preferable. Other possible literature includes standard hymns or other religious music, and/or traditional music theatre songs. (Literature that is not acceptable: pop, rock, rap, gospel, country, etc.)
1	Lowest level accepted for admission into the B.A. and B.M.E programs. “Adequate” completion of a jury or performance of two songs from memory from the “simple” vocal literature (may be completed during the entrance audition). “Adequate” levels on pitch/rhythm skills, and memorization skills. At least an “introductory” level of tone quality/breath control.	Standard selections from beginning voice training sources (e.g.: 24 or 26 Italian Songs, First Book of Soprano solos, Pathways of Song, Folk Songs, The Young Singer, etc.)
2	Voice majors in all degree programs will demonstrate “introductory” knowledge of French, German, Italian, and English diction principles (this goal is waived for transfer students until the second semester of vocal study at Southeast) and an “introductory” skill in sight reading at the 100 level. All other skills must show progress towards the appropriate degree requirements.	Continued study from early voice training sources (e.g.: 24 or 26 Italian Songs, First Book of Soprano Solos, Pathways of Song, Folk Songs, The Young Singer, etc.)

3. Introductory level for the B.M. program.\* This level implies an elevated difficulty in literature; all degrees should be at least working on “medium” level art songs. The student will demonstrate “adequate” range and dynamic capabilities. B.M. students must demonstrate professional *potential* with respect to tone quality, projection, and range and a level of “Very Good” in singing in one foreign language and in English.
4. Literature to include continued study of “medium” level art song literature in the 4 primary languages (listed above). The student must demonstrate a level of “adequate” on all skills to pass to this level, accept memorization which should be at a level of “very good”. A deficiency in any skill may prevent the student from passing sophomore review (B.A. and B.M.E. students only).
5. The student will demonstrate continued progress on technical skills including range extension and unification, dynamic variation, clarity of tone, projection, flexibility, and interpretation. An increased difficulty in literature is expected with each successive level.
6. Graduation level for the B.A. student. B.A. students will perform a short recital in public demonstrating a “very good” level for pitch/rhythm and memorization skills. All other skills may be “adequate.” BM and BME students should show continued progress on all skills toward their respective degree requirements. (B.M. students must achieve a level 6 to pass sophomore review)
- To include *introduction* to “medium” level art song by (but not limited to) such composers as: Copland, Duke, Fauré, Debussy, Mozart, Handel, Schubert, Schumann, Vaughan Williams, and Britten.
- Continued work on medium level art song literature by (but not limited to) such composers as: Bach, Brahms, Copland, Fauré, Debussy, Mozart, Handel, Schubert, Schumann, Vaughan Williams, Wolf, and Britten.
- At least one of the following should be introduced in at this level: “advanced” art song, opera arias (including recitative), and oratorio literature
- “Adequate” level demonstrated on medium difficulty art songs, progress on at least one of: advanced art song, opera, and oratorio.

\* Because the literature requirements are more rigorous, and because there is an expectation of professional performing potential for the BM degree, where there is none for the other degrees, there may be a difference in assessment of competency levels when comparing a BM student to other students.

7. Graduation level for the B.M.E. student who must perform at least a half recital (25-30 minutes) in public. Both the B.M.E. and B.M. students must demonstrate “very good” level on all skills accept sight reading which may be “adequate” at the 300 or 400 levels.

“Very Good” in “medium” difficulty art songs (or greater), showing progress on “advanced” art song, and introduction to standard operatic and oratorio literature, if not already in progress.

8. Level to be achieved for successful completion of the Jr. B.M. recital. The student should demonstrate “very good” skill in all aspects of technique as shown in performance of appropriate literature. These include tone quality, projection, range unification, interpretation, language capability, dynamic variation, and memorization skills. The singer must further demonstrate continued development in professional potential with respect to tone quality, projection, and presentation.

“Very Good” on “advanced” art song and “Adequate” on operatic and oratorio literature

9. Level to be achieved in preparation for the B.M. senior recital. The student will show progress towards “mastery” of technique and interpretation.

“Mastery” of “advanced” art song literature, “Very Good” on operatic and oratorio literature

10. Level to be achieved upon completion of the B.M. senior recital. The student will demonstrate “mastery” of all technical skills as demonstrated by a full even range, legato phrasing, flexibility (appropriate to the voice type), dynamic control, and interpretation. The student will further demonstrate breathing techniques which support a clear and vibrant tone quality indicating professional performing potential.

“Mastery” of advanced vocal literature appropriate to the voice type including (but not limited to ) French, German, Italian, and English art song, opera, music theatre (if appropriate), and oratorio.

Typical sequence of competency levels and course numbers:

Degree	comp. levels	course numbers
BME and BA	1, 2	MP 100
	3, 4	MP 200
	5, 6	MP 300
	7	MP 400
BM	1, 2, 3	MP 100
	4, 5, 6	MP 200
	7, 8	MP 300
	9, 10	MP 400