



Syllabus of Introduction to Opera

MUSC 154 – THTR 154

John Felice Rome Center

Fall Semester 2026

Mondays | 6.45-9.15pm

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Office Hours: Mon. 5.30-6.30pm by appointment

Course Description

This course, distributed in weekly sessions, offers the student an overview of the development of opera in Europe with an emphasis on some of the most representative Italian operas and authors from the 17th to the 20th century. As the course considers opera as a cultural phenomenon, the historical, intellectual, political, social, religious, and economic conditions that influenced the development of this art, will be also examined during the semester. The course includes some opera projections. Each of them is preceded by an introduction to the period in which they were first performed to provide the students with a historical, social, and cultural background. Each projection will be followed by class discussion. Students will sit for two examinations during the semester. The examinations will include multiple-choice questions, short answer questions and three longer questions based on watching excerpts from the operas analysed in class. Quizzes will be given the next class after each projection of a new opera. Missed quizzes may not make up.

In addition to the operas seen in class, the students will be asked to watch other operas: assigned out-of-class videos will be suggested during the semester.

The teacher will also organize one or more opera evenings according to the season of the Opera House. Moreover, as this course considers opera as an art form that combines music and drama, libretto structure, music forms, different types of arias and other aspects will be analysed. Assigned out-of-class videos will be announced or posted on SAKAI.

Learning Outcomes

The aim of this course is to acquire the basic knowledge to understand the cultural phenomenon of opera. Difference in style between early operas and later operas will become easy to grasp. The student will become familiar with musical terms like da-capo aria, cavatina-cabaletta, recitativo secco, recitativo accompagnato, chorus, ensemble etc. The distinction between an opera seria, a comic opera, an opéra comique and other genres will be clear by the end of the semester. Moreover, the student will learn how to individuate musical themes, how to recognize descriptive symphonies and different types of arias.

Required Text / Materials

There will not be a recommended text, but the most relevant notes for the course as well as the synopsis of the operas that will be seen in class or assigned during the semester will be available on Sakai. The PowerPoint presentations used to introduce the topics to the students in class as well as other suggested readings and videos will be available either on SAKAI or in the University library.

Attendance policy

In accordance with the JFRC mission to promote a higher level of academic rigor, and in compliance with full-time student visa status, all courses adhere to the following absence policy.

Prompt attendance, preparation and active participation in course discussions are expected from every student and synonymous with academic success. Attendance is mandatory at every class meeting for each course. Lateness or leaving class early will impact the course grade at the professor's discretion. All absences, including medical absences, will be treated the same, unless they are documented long-term conditions or emergencies. Such situations will be evaluated case-by-case by the Academic Affairs office.

According to the attendance policy for once-a-week classes

- After 1 absence, a 2% final grade reduction will be applied for each missed class
- Missing 3 classes or more will result in an automatic failure (F)

Evaluation

<u>Assessment components</u>		GRADING SCALE
MID TERM	20%	A 100-94
		A- 93-90
		B+ 89-87
FINAL EXAM	30%	B 86-84
		B- 83-80
FOUR QUIZZES	40%	C+ 79-77
		C 76-74
Class discussion/ Participation	10%	<u>C- 73-70</u>
		D+ 69-67
		D 66-60
		F 59 or lower

Device Use Policy

The use of laptops, tablets, and mobile phones is not permitted during screening sessions to promote focused attention and careful engagement with the material, which will support subsequent class discussions. Students who require devices for accessibility reasons are encouraged to speak with the instructor.

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct are unacceptable at the Rome Center and will be dealt with in accordance with Loyola University Chicago's guidelines. Please familiarize yourself with Loyola's standards here: <https://catalog.luc.edu/academic-standards-regulations/undergraduate/>. You are responsible for complying with the LUC University Catalog.



Late or Missed Assignments & Exam Policy

Late or missed assignments will not be accepted for grading without the authorization of the instructor. *As per the JFRC academic policies, students who miss any scheduled exam or quiz, including a final exam at the assigned hours will not be permitted to sit for a make-up examination without approval of the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. Permission is given rarely and only for grave reasons; travel is not considered a grave reason. Make-up exams will only be given for documented absences.*

Accessibility Accommodations

Students registered with the Student Accessibility Center (SAC) requiring academic accommodation should contact the Academic Affairs office at the John Felice Rome Center during the first week of classes.

Statement on Title IX

The Rome Center follows Loyola's Comprehensive Policy and Procedures for Addressing Discrimination, Sexual Misconduct, Retaliation and will comply with those as indicated and instructed.



JOHN FELICE

**ROME
CENTER**

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

August

- 31 Introduction: technical terms, singers' voices with examples, forerunners of opera. The seventeenth century: the beginnings, the Florentine Camerata, the Roman opera, the Venetian opera, Claudio Monteverdi. Introduction to *L'Orfeo*.

September

- 7 Claudio Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo*.

- 14 Review and discussion of Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo*. **I QUIZ.**

The second half of the seventeenth century: the Venetian opera, the French opera (Lully). The eighteenth-century opera: opera seria and comic opera. Introduction to Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro*.

- 21 Analysis of Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro*.

- 28 Discussion of *Le Nozze di Figaro*.

II QUIZ

The nineteenth century: Rossini's importance with the analysis of parts of his *The Barber of Seville* (the students are asked to watch and complete the analysis of Rossini's *The Barber of Seville* using the PowerPoint presentation available on Sakai, before the next lesson)

October

- 5 Review

MID-TERM EXAM.

- 9-18 **Fall Break**

- 19 The nineteenth century: Introduction to Donizetti's *L'Elisir d'Amore*.

- 26 Donizetti's *L'Elisir d'Amore*.

- 30 Discussion of Donizetti's *L'Elisir d'Amore*. **III QUIZ.**

The nineteenth century: Opéra comique (Bizet's *Carmen*), Operetta, Grand Opera. Introduction to Verdi's *La Traviata*.

November

- 2 Analysis of Verdi's *La Traviata*.

- 9 Discussion of Verdi's *La Traviata*.

IV QUIZ

Introduction to Verismo operas and Puccini's *Tosca*

- 16 Analysis of Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci*.

- 23 Analysis of Puccini's *Tosca*.

- 30 A glance to the 20th century opera. Review and conclusion

December

- 7 **FINAL EXAM**

BECAUSE OF THE LENGTH OF SOME OPERAS CLASSES MAY EXTEND BEYOND THE ALLOTTED TIME.