



## **Syllabus of Introduction to Opera**

**MUSC 154 – THTR 154**

**John Felice Rome Center**

Spring Semester 2026

Mondays | 6.45-9.15pm

Dr. Leila Zammar

e-mail: [lzammar@luc.edu](mailto:lzammar@luc.edu)

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 17<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> 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**

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

**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.



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## SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

### January

- 19 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*.
- 26 Claudio Monteverdi and his *L'Orfeo*.

### February

- 2 Review and discussion of Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo*. **I QUIZ.**  
The second half of the seventeenth century: Lully. The eighteenth-century opera: Scarlatti. Bach. Opera seria and comic opera. The operas of Mozart. Introduction to *Le Nozze di Figaro*.
- 9 Mozart and his *Le Nozze di Figaro*.
- 16 Review and discussion of *Le Nozze di Figaro*. **II QUIZ.**  
The nineteenth century: introduction to Donizetti and his *L'Elisir d'amore*
- 23 Donizetti and his *L'Elisir d'amore*

### March

- 2 General review **MID-TERM EXAM.**
- 6-15 **SPRING BREAK**
- 16 The nineteenth century: Bellini, Donizetti, Verdi. Introduction to Verdi and his *La traviata*
- 20 Verdi and his *La traviata*
- 23 Discussion of Verdi's *La traviata* **III QUIZ.**  
The nineteenth century: Opéra comique, Operetta, and Verismo operas. Puccini and his operas. Introduction to Puccini's *Tosca*. (*The students are asked to visit the places of Tosca: Church of Sant'Andrea della Valle, Palazzo Farnese and Castel Sant'Angelo*)
- 30 Puccini's *Tosca*.

### April

- 3-6 **EASTER BREAK**
- 13 Discussion of Puccini's *Tosca* **IV QUIZ.**
- 20 A glance to the 20<sup>th</sup> century opera. Review and conclusion
- 27 **FINAL EXAM**