

Texas State University

**Part-Time Faculty Excellence in Teaching Award**

Nomination Form

Name Kristin Roach Net ID KR26

Department Music College Fine Arts and Communication

Current TXST teaching appointment FTE% 50%

Number of long semesters of TXST teaching at 50% or more FTE 6

Brief statement (100 – 150 words) of why the nominee is deserving of this award:

Nominee: Kristin Roach

Net ID KR26

As Director of Opera Studies, I see Ms. Roach's contributions every day. She is one of very few people in the country with her skill and knowledge as a Collaborative Artist for Vocal Music. So much more than an accompanist, she brings an understanding of style, performance practice, and orchestra needs; a conductor's ear and eye, an innate pedagogic ability to hear what a singer needs and give them the tools to succeed. She is an excellent musician in her own right, as pianist, collaborator and conductor. That she lives nearby and her sons are young is such a blessing to Texas State, as no one else in Central Texas

comes close to her expertise. I cannot recommend her highly enough for this Award, it is richly deserved.

Dr. Samuel Mungo

Associate Professor

Director of Opera Studies

Texas State University

**TEXAS STATE VITA**  
**(with Fine Arts components)**

Please note: For all entries, list most recent items first. Headings without entries may be eliminated, but the heading lettering/numbering should remain consistent with this template.

**I. Academic/Professional Background**

A. Name:	Title:
<u>Kristin Roach</u>	<u>Lecturer in Opera</u>

**B. Educational Background**

<i>Degree</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>University</i>	<i>Major</i>	<i>Thesis/Dissertation</i>
Bachelor of Music	1994	Eastman School of Music		Applied Music/Piano
Master of Music	1996	Eastman School of Music		Piano Performance and Literature/Piano Accompanying and Chamber Music

**C. University Experience**

<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>	<i>Dates</i>
<b>Texas State University</b>		2009 – present

**Lecturer in Opera**

Teacher of record of Opera Theater Class. Co-teacher of Opera Workshop class. Musical Preparation, Chorus Master, and Private coach of *Lady Bird: First Lady of the Land* (world premiere), *HMS Pinafore*, *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, *Face on the Ballroom Floor*, *Game of Chance*, and *Candide*

**Opera Conductor**

*Don Giovanni*, *Slow Dusk* (Carlisle Floyd), *Trouble in Tahiti* (Bernstein), *Children of the Sun* (world premiere of orchestration), *Speed Dating Tonight!*, *Gianni Schicchi/Buoso's Ghost*

**Pianist**

International Concert Series Recital with Jill Grove, mezzo soprano. March 22, 2016

**Music Director of Spotlight on Opera**

4-week intensive training program for opera singers; will be held on the Texas State campus for the first time in summer 2016; instrumental in relocating this program to the university, engaging other Texas State faculty in collaborating, developing new curriculum; conductor of two fully staged operatic performances, supervisor of all music staff,

**University of Texas at San Antonio**

1999 – 2011

**Conductor**

*La Boheme* and scenes from *La Traviata*, *Don Giovanni*, *Falstaff*, *Lakmé*, *La Cenerentola*, and *Carmen*.

**Opera Coach and Musical Director of “Opera To Go”**

Musical preparation and continuo for productions of *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *La Serva Padrona*, *Little Red Riding Hood*, *Brundibar*, *Gods of Mischief* (world premier by Seymour Barab), *Navarro* (world premier by James Balentine), *A Brief History of Root Vegetables* (world premier by David Heuser).

**Summer Music Institute Instructor**

Coaching of middle school and high school chamber ensembles; faculty accompanist

**Texas Lutheran University**

2000 – 2001

**Part-time Instructor (Opera) and Staff Accompanist****Texas Tech University**

1996 – 97

**Senior Staff Accompanist**

Accompanied faculty and student performances and choral rehearsals; musical preparation of *The Magic Flute*, opera scenes program, and opera chorus.

**Eastman School of Music**

1994 – 96

**Graduate Assistantship in Opera Coaching**

*Suor Angelica*, *Les Mamelles de Tiresias*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *A Postcard From Morocco*, Kurt Weill review, and scenes concerts. Accompanist for opera workshop, movement classes, vocal and opera literature classes.

**Studio Teaching Assistant for Professor of Piano Fernando Lares****D. Relevant Professional Experience**

<i>Position</i>	<i>Entity</i>	<i>Dates</i>
<b>Opera Piccola San Antonio</b>		2012-present
<b>Music Director/Conductor</b>		
<i>Entführung aus dem Serail, Phaedra/Acis and Galatea, Cosi Fan Tutte, The Telephone, Face on the Barroom Floor, Don Pasquale, The Medium, La Curandera/Bastien and Bastienne, Green Sneakers/Orpheus and Euridice, The Italian Lesson/Trouble in Tahiti, Dido and Aeneas, Opera vs. Broadway, Bon Appetit/Gallantry</i>		
<b>Collaborations with Alamo Arts Ballet Theater</b>		
<i>Dvorak Poetic Tone Pictures and Songs Op.2,6,73; Brahms Ziguenerlieder and Liebeslieder Waltzes</i>		
<b>Utah Opera</b>		2014 - present
<b>Guest Coach:</b> <i>The Merry Widow, Les Pecheurs des Perles</i>		
<b>Spotlight on Opera</b>		2013 – present
<b>Music Director/Conductor</b>		
<i>The Magic Flute, Hansel and Gretel, Cosi fan tutte, Little Red Riding Hood, Carmen (excerpts), multiple community outreach performances and scenes</i>		
<b>Instrumental in moving program from Austin to the Texas State Campus beginning summer 2016</b>		
<b>The Opera San Antonio</b>		2014 – present
<b>Rehearsal Pianist</b>		
<i>Rusalka, Il Trovatore</i>		
<b>San Diego Opera</b>		1997-2014
<b>Principal Pianist / Assistant Conductor</b>		
<i>Assassinio nella Cattedrale (North American stage premier by Pizzetti) The Conquistador (world premier by Myron Fink), Le Nozze di Figaro, Hansel and Gretel, Samson et Dalilah.</i>		
<b>Taos Opera Institute</b>		2012 – 2014
<b>Music Director (Cantos de Taos)</b>		
<b>San Antonio Opera</b>		2008 – 2012

**Chorus Master and Cover Conductor**

*HMS Pinafore, Le Nozze di Figaro, Romeo et Juliette*

**Rehearsal Pianist and Children's Chorus Master**

*La Boheme, Madama Butterfly, Carmen, Il Trovatore, Le Nozze di Figaro*

**Pinkstone Opera Productions, Austin, TX**

2006

**Staff Coach**

**Youth Orchestras of San Antonio**

2006

**Guest Opera Coordinator for concert version of La Boheme**

Coordinated cast, crew, staff and budgets, rehearsal pianist, coordinated supertitles, prepared principal artists.

**San Antonio Symphony**

1998 – present

**Piano Soloist**

*Saint-Saens Carnival of the Animals; Zwillich Peanuts Gallery.*

**Extra/Substitute Keyboardist**

Piano, harpsichord, organ (2<sup>nd</sup> call position). Selected repertoire includes *The Miraculous Mandarin, Nutcracker, Carmina Burana, Also Sprach Zarathustra, and Pines of Rome.*

**Rehearsal Pianist**

*Messiah, Mozart's Magic Fantasy (Zauberflöte), Hansel and Gretel, John Schneider/Erich Kunzel "Western Pops", La Traviata, Tosca, Camelot, The Mikado, Kismet, I Pagliacci.*

**Supertitle Coordinator**

*Berlioz Romeo et Juliette, St. John Passion, I Pagliacci, Cavalleria Rusticana, Le Nozze di Figaro, Fidelio, Tosca.*

**Lyric Opera of San Antonio**

2002 – 2003

**Chorus Master**

*La Boheme, Amahl and the Night Visitors, and The Mikado.*

**Mid-Texas Symphony**

2000 – 2001

**Choral Director**

*Messiah, Vivaldi's Gloria, and Christmas Pops.* Membership tripled over this 18-month period.

**Tulsa Opera**

1997 – 99

**Coach/Accompanist**

Musical preparation of *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, *Die Zauberflote*, *Aida*, *Hansel and Gretel*, *Dreamkeepers* (world premier); conducted choral sectional rehearsals; assisted conductor with preparation of orchestral parts and arrangement of banda; accompanist for all rehearsals and community outreach performances; orchestral keyboardist; performed chamber music with Tulsa Philharmonic members; private coaching of principal singers and understudies.

**Brevard Music Center**

1998

**Opera Staff**

Accompanist for Renee Fleming and other guest artists; musical preparation and rehearsal pianist for *Romeo et Juliette*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Tosca*, *The Moon Singer* (premier by David Liptak), *Guys and Dolls*, *La Cenerentola*, opera scenes concert, musical theater scenes concert, and Cabaret evening; private coaching of guest artists and student singers; coordinator/conductor of banda and offstage chorus.

**San Francisco Opera**

1997

**Assistant Conductor**

Rehearsal accompanist for *Rigoletto* and *Tosca*; off-stage conductor; coaching of cover and understudy artists.

**Merola Opera Program of the San Francisco Opera**

1997

**Fellowship Coach**

Musical preparation and rehearsal accompanist of *La Cenerentola*, *Carmen*, song recitals, and final orchestral concert; musical preparation of women's chorus; continuo for performances of *La Cenerentola*.

**Aspen Opera Theater Center**

1995 – 1996

**Fellowship Opera Coach**

Musical Director of "Opera for Children," a cooperative between the Aspen Art Museum and the Aspen Music Festival; Musical preparation and continuo for productions of *Madama Butterfly*, *Ligeia* (world premier by Augusta Reed Thomas), *The Tales of Hoffman*, *La Traviata*, *The Happy Prince*, *The Magic Flute*; assisted faculty coaches with preparation and performance in weekly opera scenes master classes.

**Buffalo Opera Unlimited**

1994

**Coach/Accompanist/Conductor**

*Don Giovanni*

**Opera Theater of Rochester**

1994 – 96

**Chorus Master/Accompanist**

*La Traviata, Hansel and Gretel*

E. Other Professional Credentials (licensure, certification, etc.)

*Colleague of the American Guild of Organists, 2010*

**II. TEACHING**

B. Courses Taught:

Opera Theater, Texas State University

Opera Workshop, Texas Tech University

Private Vocal Coaching; Texas State University, University of Texas at San Antonio, Texas Lutheran University, Texas Tech University

**III. SCHOLARLY/CREATIVE**

B. Works not in Print

4. Musical Performances (international, national, regional, and/or state; if not refereed, please indicate):

**Opera Piccola San Antonio**

**Music Director/Conductor**

*Così fan tutte, The Telephone, Face on the Barroom Floor, Don Pasquale, The Medium*

**Collaborations with Alamo Arts Ballet Theater (pianist)**

*Dvorak Poetic Tone Pictures and Songs Op.2,6,73; Brahms Zigeunerlieder and Liebeslieder Waltzes*

**San Diego Opera**



**Principal Pianist / Assistant Conductor**

*Assassinio nella Cattedrale* (North American stage premier by Pizzetti)

**San Antonio Symphony**

**Keyboardist**

*The Nutcracker* (Tchaikovsky), *The Opera San Antonio Gala*, *Old and Slow Rivers* (Picker), *The Messiah* (Handel), *Baroque Series* (various composers)

**Camerata San Antonio**

**Chamber Music Pianist**

*Piano Quintet in A* (Dvorak)

12. Workshops:

Spotlight on Opera, August 2015 – Crafting Your Artistic Vision Statement

Spotlight on Opera, July 2015 – German and French Lyric Diction

Classical Singer Convention, June 2015 – Your Competition Partner: How to succeed in any audition setting with a pianist you have never met

Spotlight on Opera, June 2014 – Audition Preparation and Success

Classical Singer Convention, June 2014 – Audition Strategies for High School students

Point Loma Nazarene University, March 2014 – Performance Class for Opera Studio

Spotlight on Opera, June 2013 – Audition Workshop for Opera Singers

**Semester & year:** FALL 2015

**Course number – section – Title:** MUSE 3106/5106- Opera Theatre

**Meets:** T-R--3:30-5:00pm Room- PAC room 209E

**Instructors:**

Kristin Roach **Phone:** (210)831-5747 **Email:** kr26@txstate.edu

**Office:** Music 201

**Office hours:** TBA

Dr. Samuel Mungo **Phone:** 5-3046 **Email:** samuel.mungo@txstate.edu

**Office:** Music 108

**Office hours:** TBA

## **COURSE PURPOSES & OBJECTIVES**

The purpose of this class is to strengthen and apply intermediate and advanced concepts of stagecraft, acting, musical comprehension and movement specifically to the aspiring professional opera singer. We will spend the first part of the class time working on the craft of creating a character on stage, including self awareness, improvisation, stage movement, acting and reacting, sharing the stage, etc. As the class continues, focus will turn to aria coaching and scene coaching to prepare for the Final Exam Performance.

## **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Through the application of these concepts on specific and particular pieces of stage literature brought into class, by the end of the semester the student will be able to create a strong, emotionally involved performance through the singing gesture.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

**NOTE-** The successful student will come to class prepared to focus, create and be open to physical and mental exercise. Each class the student will be expected to be onstage, working on improvisations, monologues, songs, arias or scenes. It will be the rare class where each student does not actively participate.

- **Repertoire-** Each student will be responsible for preparing at least three pieces of music from stage literature to be worked on in class. These must be arias or musical theater songs.
- **Character Subtext Exercise-** Each student will write out a line by line subtext of the character, time, place, relationships, everything that may play into what is affecting the text in the given text in every piece of music they have chosen. Each line of text will relate to a specific line of subtext. This will be submitted for each class performance.
- **Performance Critique-** Each student will write a 2-page analysis of a live performance in a combined music/theater form. This includes but is not limited to Opera, Musical Theatre, etc. You cannot write on a performance in which you will be participating, and the performance must be University level or higher. The paper will be a critique of one actor's ability to create a role in a music/theater setting. A handout detailing the guidelines for the evaluations will be given out in class. The final paper is due on the Final Exam day indicated above.
- All texts will be treated first as monologues, both in English and the sung language.
- **Tech Requirement-** Each student is required to work one afternoon per week at either the PAC Scene Shop, or Evans Auditorium. Participation does not require previous experience, just willingness to learn and work.

## **Class Guidelines**

- A schedule for in-class work will be distributed no later than the third class day. Students who are unable to follow the schedule for any reason are required to secure a substitute performer from the class, or forfeit their time. Forfeit will result in an unexcused absence.
- **Pre performance, performance and post performance repertoire submission-**

- a. No later than 24 hours prior to each in-class performance, each student will submit to Ms. Roach via PDF email attachment a copy of the repertoire to be coached with the word-for-word translation and IPA written in. Failure to submit this material by the deadline will forfeit the class performance opportunity and incur an unexcused absence.
  - b. For class performances, the student will provide the designated coach a printed copy of the music to be performed following the guidelines presented on the first class day.
  - c. No later than 24 hours following each in-class performance, each student will submit to Ms. Roach via PDF email attachment either a revised copy of their repertoire reflecting the work done in class, or a narrative description of what was discussed and accomplished.
- All material must be memorized BEFORE it is brought to class. Failure to be memorized will equal a failure of the assignment.
  - Students are required to get their voice teacher's approval for all musical material prior to presentation.
  - Each class will begin with a series of improvisation exercises. Avoid clothing that will inhibit your ability to move freely. Sweat clothes are preferable. No high heels, tight jeans, skirts, etc.
  - Opera Theatre is a class dedicated to raising the stakes in the operatic acting field. To this end much will be asked of the student intellectually and emotionally. The more dedicated you are to the class the more you will grow as an artist.
  - This class relies on a mutual form of support for your fellow students. Any one who feels they cannot be part of a supportive environment will be asked to leave the class.

**Physical Risk:**

This course includes physical activity, which by its very nature includes an element of physical risk. Students are encouraged to remain alert, follow directions, and be aware of potential hazards working individually or with others. If you ever feel any concern for your own or someone else's safety, you are required to inform the instructor immediately.

**GRADING POLICY**

Participation:	40%
Repertoire preparation analysis and work	40%
Tech Requirement	10%
Performance Critique	10%

**ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Attendance is mandatory and expected. Each student is allowed two unexcused absences; for every unexcused absence thereafter, the final grade will be lowered by 1/3 letter grade (i.e., an A would become an A-). Excused absences include serious illnesses (with an accompanying doctor's note) or family emergencies. Excused absences must be discussed with Ms. Roach in person, and then by email: please do not assume that an absence will be excused! Please see her if you have special circumstances.

**POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS**

Office of Disabilities Statement – If you are a student with a disability who will require an accommodation(s) to participate in this course, please contact the instructor as soon as possible. You will be asked to provide documentation from the Office of Disability Services. Failure to contact the instructor in a timely manner may delay your accommodations.

University Honor Code – Texas State University-San Marcos expects students to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is beyond reproach. Students found in violation of the Honor Code are subject to disciplinary action. The Honor Code can be found at [txstate.edu/effective/upps/upps-07-10-01-att1.html](http://txstate.edu/effective/upps/upps-07-10-01-att1.html). Cheating and plagiarism are not tolerated and will result in a failing grade for the course.

**Civility** – The School of Music supports the university’s commitment to civility. Disrespectful conduct undermines a culture of learning, just as acts of dishonesty do. The university policy, PPS 4.02.5-6 “Courteous Behavior,” gives examples of unacceptable conduct and sets out ways of responding to such conduct. If a student behaves in a manner that the instructor considers to be discourteous to the instructor or to any member of the class, the instructor may, at his or her discretion, request that the student desist or request that the student leave the classroom. A student who does not comply with such a request may be subject to suspension from the class, action by Student Justice or by the University Police Department. (PPS 4.02 may be found in the Policy and Procedure Statements Index at <http://www.provost.txstate.edu/pps.html>.)

Common courtesy is valued in this class. Please be punctual, and turn off all cell phones before class. Do not pack your bags before class is dismissed: doing so is disrespectful to the professor and to those around you. Remember that everyone comes to class with varying levels of experience, and be supportive of your classmates. Be understanding of different levels and learning styles; please treat others as you would wish to be treated.

Disabilities: All faculty and staff are required to make necessary accommodations for students with learning or physical disabilities. If you know or feel that you may qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to me a letter within the first week of the class so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities, and will issue official accommodation recommendations if necessary. Refer to UPPS 07.11.01 Please make an appointment with me if you wish to discuss this further.

Discrimination: Texas State University prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, age, sex, national origin, disability, religion, or sexual orientation. Texas State forbids discrimination in any University activity or program. Faculty members, staff employees and students who discriminate against others in connection with a University activity or program are subject to disciplinary action. If you feel you are or have been a victim of discrimination or harassment, contact Dr. Gilda Garcia, Director of Equity and Access Office, 1080 JC Kellam, 245-2539, or Cynthia Prado.

## **CLASS SCHEDULE**

<b>Week 1</b>	Intro and Improv
<b>Week 2</b>	Aria work
<b>Week 3</b>	Aria work
<b>Week 5</b>	Aria work
<b>Week 9</b>	Aria work
<b>Week 10</b>	Aria work
<b>Week 11</b>	Aria work

<b>Week 12</b>	Aria work
<b>Week 13</b>	Aria work
<b>Week 14</b>	Aria work
<b>Week 15</b>	Aria work

## WRITTEN STUDENT COMMENTS

From an email 12/15/2015

Yesterday's work on Must the Winter Come So Soon was extremely helpful for me. Yes, I have trouble with breath, but once again I am reminded that it's not because I cannot breathe correctly...it's because I'm not thinking about it the right way; placing the peak of the phrase near the end rather than the true middle or beginning, less ebb and flow and more true crescendo, these tips will help me to frame the entire piece in a healthier and more sensible way.

Beyond breathing technique, yesterday's acting work was valuable because I originally saw the aria as a reason to stop myself from moving as much as I normally do, not to move the eyes too much, etc. and I realized almost all of the messages I was sending to myself were negative (do not do this, don't do that). Positive messages are so much more effective...like DO find a relationship with the nouns/objects in the song, the forest, the deer, the owl; DO see out the window into the cold and silent winter; DO make the connection between the emptiness outside and the emptiness within.

There is SO much more there than I was originally ready to accept. Lots to work on! Thank you.

Sincerely,

Abigail Diltz

From an email 11/15/2015

After my performance in opera theatre it feels like I have a better feel for how the piece should flow, as well as the overall emotion of the character. I didn't quite understand how to sell the character (or a used car) effectively enough. As well I was able to gain insight into lines of the music that I've been doing wrong which effects my inflection and emotional connection to the accompaniment. Paul Nix

Class Review 11/16/2015

Micah Parker

Opera Theater 5106

Assignment 3 Review

*Hai già vinta la causa!*

First off, thanks for all the feedback, that was awesome.

I tried to originally subdue the emotions to make it a more calm and collected/refined characterization because I have a tendency to overuse body-English. I would take the count to be used to getting what he wants, but expressing his emotion with his eyes and vocalisms.

What I didn't think of was the fact that at this point in the opera, he's alone and is freer to express his emotions in a more physical way, so that's what I'll be putting into the characterization. Specifically the "lightbulb moments," and I had never considered the "vedró per man d'amore" to be a point of emotion change for him to think of Susanna.

Next tasks for me: finding places in the music where I can follow orchestral dynamics without destroying the line of text, finding places where the rests in the vocal line are prompts for thought about Susanna, prompts for thought of planning, or prompts for thought about Figaro. Some of these I'm using already, but many could be added or strengthened.

My biggest weakness is the morphing of emotions; I need to slow down and let them be more chunk-by-chunk so the audience can grasp them more easily.



Prompt 1) As an educator, I am equally at home with groups of varying sizes, as well as individual instruction. I have comprehension knowledge of the workings of the human voice which allows me to integrate the instruction our students receive from their private voice teachers with the musical and theatrical demands of their assigned roles. I am also able to demonstrate concepts vocally myself, which is rare among my coach colleagues trained primarily as pianists. I maintain an ongoing professional performing schedule, as conductor, pianist, and organist, collaborating with internationally recognized artists, which keeps my own skills as a benchmark for the high standards I demand from my students. These professional connections have also provided numerous opportunities to launch our students' further professional development. My colleague, Dr. Samuel Mungo, and I teach a *method of learning* a piece of music from first sight through final performance, which is customizable to each student's inherent strengths and weaknesses. Our method integrates theatrical, musical, body movement, visualization, writing prompts, and teamwork in a cutting edge blend designed to prepare our students for the ever-changing expectations of the operatic art form. Many opera programs present information, but my teaching focuses on utilizing kinesthetic, visual, and aural learning simultaneously. Ultimately, I expect that my students will become my best colleagues and hope to teach myself out of a job. But most importantly, I believe in training the whole artist, not just their skills. My students know I am deeply invested in them as human beings first, and I model the empathy and encouragement I hope each of them will display in their own careers upon graduation. One of the most frequent compliments I receive from students who return to visit is that they appreciated the real life application of our work in class.

Prompt 2) Initially as an opera coach, my teaching focused primarily on the music and the performing itself. I was much more concerned with the perfection of the *performance* rather than working with the *performer*. But I was continually faced with students who would disengage emotionally or doom themselves to failure facing performance anxiety. I saw other students unable to break an assignment down into easily accomplished steps, have difficulty maintaining a daily routine, or suffer from other self-discipline issues that I wanted to address. I realized the best contribution I could make was to teach my students to *learn* and to *practice their art* in a way that would serve them for their entire careers, not just for one specific piece or performance. I began incorporating team-building, visualization, planning and goal-setting, reading from autobiographies of professional singers, and group class projects in an attempt to maximize the non-musical training required. In addition to having multiple assessment models outside an individual's musical performance, I was also able to better address the difference between the performance majors and education majors, which was an unexpected benefit. The future educators really needed experience with every single issue presented in my class because they would likely face a student with a similar problem. I began to incorporate more discussion about teaching strategies for working with a particular student performer and invited brainstorming from the class about all the different possible approaches to take. Many students have said they appreciated knowing how to approach music from this teaching perspective, particularly when it was a piece of music that might not have been appropriate for them to sing themselves. The students also achieve a greater level of excellence in their individual performances thanks to the focus on the learning process.

Prompt 3) One challenge faced in my class has been working with a singer named Jenny who whenever she got up to sing a certain piece would burst into uncontrollable sobs. The particular aria was from *Suor Angelica*; a young girl gives up her illegitimate son and joins a convent, then later finds out the baby had died without her knowledge. She laments the child died without ever knowing his mother's love and she begs him to look down in forgiveness as an angel in heaven. Jenny had recently suffered the unexpected death of a beloved uncle, having not been able to tell him goodbye. While not a psychology oriented class, part of acting training is entering the psyche of a character, and it was clear that the combination of this piece and this student was proving devastating. Rather than just assigning her a different piece to perform (which I did and she was able to perform later in the semester with no difficulty) I had her continue to work on this piece in front of the class even while she was crying so hard she could barely talk, much less sing. (I had asked and received her permission to continue.) The discussion that arose from that session was some of the richest class discussion I have moderated. All students resonated with her struggle to perform in the face of overwhelming emotion, even if they personally had a different physical manifestation of stressful emotion. Other students all remarked that their typical response to being overwhelmed was to walk away, but they all saw the value in continuing to work while in a state of emotional distress. Jenny also shared that she appreciated pushing through this situation in front of her supportive peers and that it paid dividends in her other performance preparations.

Prompt 4) The process of learning a piece of music from first sight to performance is the focus of the Opera Theater class. Class participants submit their chosen repertoire in a written analysis before they are evaluated in class. Using a photocopy of the musical score, they notate all of their character research, text analysis, pronunciation, subtext, and musical choices. This written assignment allows us to identify any major errors prior to their in-class performances. It also provides a working copy for the class to use for discussion. The next level of assessment is performing the text only, for the class, first as an English monologue, and then in the original language. One of the greatest challenges for singers new to performing opera is the language barrier – performing in a language they do not speak, and often have no training in whatsoever. This intermediate step of performing the English translation as a monologue allows them to focus solely on their acting skills. The final step is to integrate the composer's contribution, in which they perform the entire piece for the class, and this time our instruction focuses on how the musical choices they made influenced their dramatic choices. Each student will present 8-10 times in the course of a semester, and each presentation is followed by immediately faculty guidance, class discussion, and 15-20 of in-class work. Following each in-class performance, the students submit a confidential written follow-up of their perspective of the in-class work. These written responses ensure that there has been effective understanding between the students, class participants, and instructors.