Text and Translations

- Voice students must include both original foreign text and translations for all songs programmed
- Instrumentalists may include translations if they are performing with a singer or if the text is relevant to a particular piece

You will need to include:
- Full composer name, dates, and title of piece as a heading above each set of translations
- Full name of translator (i.e. "translation by _____)
- Websites or hyperlinks are NOT acceptable
- Translations must be in the same program order as the program document
- All information must include correct diacritical marks (é, è, ü, ř, â, etc.). For help, visit www.typeit.org

Program Notes Information
Program notes are required for all classical degree recitals

What to include in your program notes:
- A heading for each piece that includes:
  - Full name of the composer and years of birth and death (if deceased). If dates are not known, it is acceptable to furnish 'floruit' dates, or dates they were known to have worked or flourished
  - Full name of the piece, including Op., No., BWV, keys, etc.
    - Nicknames may be included where appropriate
  - Year of composition
  - The approximate duration
  - All proper linguistic signs with correct diacritical marks

Heading Examples:
Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)
Sonata No. 14 in C-sharp minor, Op. 27, No. 2, "Moonlight" (1801)
Duration: 15 minutes

Giovanni Antonio Pandolfi Mealli (fl. 1660-1669)
Sonata for Violin and Continuo, Op. 4, No. 1, "La Monella Romanesca" (1660)
Duration: 19 minutes

John Adams (b. 1947)
Short Ride in a Fast Machine (1986)
Duration: 5 minutes

Program Note Example:
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)
English Suite No. 2 in A Minor, BWV 807
Duration: 22 minutes

According to legend, J.S. Bach made a six-day, 200-mile pilgrimage by foot to hear Dietrich Buxtehude play the organ in the city of Lübeck, and ended up staying for two months absorbing all he could learn from the famous old master. Bach's English Suite in A minor bears many influences of his study with Buxtehude, especially in the grand treatment of the fugal Prelude that opens the suite. The subsequent movements are fashionable French dances that typically appear in large-scale Baroque suites. Incidentally, the name 'English Suites' came to be erroneously applied to Bach's collection of six French-style suites after his first biographer, Johann Nikolaus Forkel, made the apocryphal claim that they were a commission by an anonymous English gentleman.

Extra Assistance:
- For all other questions about formatting titles, musical terms, notation, etc., consult Cowdery, *How to Write About Music: The RILM Manual of Style*
- For grammatical questions, consult Strunk and White, *The Elements of Style*

DePaul Writing Center
- If your program notes need significant grammatical assistance, Jason Moy may recommend you visit the DePaul Writing Center for further help
  - Lincoln Park Campus
  - Schmitt Academic Center (SAC) 212
  - (773) 325-4272

Tips for writing effective program notes:
• Keep program notes concise and engaging to the reader, 1200 words max for the entire program. Think of program notes as a written form of spoken pre-concert remarks that you'd otherwise give before each piece at your recital. Keep them short, witty, and interesting.

• Highlight one to three of the most interesting points about each piece or composer. There will always be more to say about a piece than there is room to include, and that's ok; you're not writing a musicology paper, and quality always trumps quantity.

• A good way to enliven your notes is to include a relevant and interesting anecdote or quotation by or about composers/works. Don't overdo it by using this for every piece on the program - variety keeps things interesting.

• While citations are not needed in program notes, be sure to attribute direct quotations to the correct person. If the source of the quotation is not well-known to the general public, please include some qualifying information to give the reader some context; e.g. "According to the noted 20th century musicologist and philosopher, Theodor Adorno, this work represents..."

• Use program notes to give the listener a sense of historical context within which to interpret the piece. This may include referencing the general time period from which the work comes: Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, etc.

• If you're writing for a musically knowledgeable audience, such as your fellow music school peers, you may mention any relevant forms or structures that may help your listeners process the piece, for example, point out if the piece is a ground bass, rondo, or in a fast-slow-fast sonata form. However, please remember to use this sparingly and avoid too much detail; always stick to the 'big picture' or main ideas in your notes – you are not writing a theory analysis paper.

• For the general public, however, it is probably wise to avoid technical musical terms like sonata form, or even piano/forte and crescendo/diminuendo, since these will mostly likely mean nothing to them and therefore turn them off to reading the rest of your notes or enjoying your performance. Whether you're writing program notes, a research paper, or even a personal e-mail to a friend, always be mindful of the audience and adjust tone and content to fit.

• Avoid mentioning specific keys or tonalities unless it is relevant to the point of your notes. For example, saying "The second movement is in the key of E major" is too matter of fact to mean anything to the listener/reader, while "Bach chose the remote key of E-flat minor in this aria to illustrate the suffering of Christ on the cross" helps the listener/reader interpret the meaning of what they are hearing.

• If a composer is not a household name, it is acceptable to give a brief one or two sentence biographical description that highlights their unique achievements, or places them within the context of another more familiar composer. We probably don't need to know when and where this composer was born, or where he/she went to school unless this information is directly relevant to a point you are trying to make in the notes.

• Avoid subjective assessments such as, "The slow movement is followed by an Allegro of great difficulty and virtuosity." What you consider to be 'difficult' or 'easy' may not be so to others; for conciseness, stick with objective facts whenever possible.

• Avoid anachronistic comparisons, such as describing a particularly jazzy movement of Bach as 'Baroque-style Gershwin.' Bach can stand on his own without needing a reference to someone nearly 200 years distant to qualify his work, and vice versa.

• Always write from a third-person point of view and avoid "I" or "my" whenever possible. Your personal assessment of the piece, or the fact that you may consider a certain piece to be 'my favorite Mozart sonata or aria,' is irrelevant to the reader.