

WESTERN UNIVERSITY
DON WRIGHT FACULTY OF MUSIC

Music 3832B – Choral Literature and Techniques
Winter 2024

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Course Description:

A survey of repertoire selection, score study and applied rehearsal strategy which supports the choral music educator to teach and conduct in a variety of settings, providing a complex understanding of choral music making today.

Together, we will explore how to select appropriate repertoire for different choral ensembles, refine our score study skills to better inform rehearsal approaches, and build rehearsal plans that support various learners in an ensemble setting. In-class conducting opportunities will help to expand our toolbox of possible conducting gestures and rehearsal strategies. Throughout the course of the semester, we will refine our ability to provide supportive feedback to others while modeling inclusive language, and investigate contemporary issues impacting the choral field.

You will be expected to complete readings and written assignments, and to participate in, as well as lead, musical activities and class discussions. Assignments include personal reflections, in-class rehearsal segments, and a final project that incorporates in-class teaching, sequential rehearsal planning, and programming. A weekly announcement will be posted on our OWL site to assist with preparation for the following week. You will be required to video record your own conducting and teaching and store the footage in an online portfolio.

Prerequisites: Music 2832A/B or the former Music 2830 or Music 3841A/B or the former Music 3840.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course you should be able to:

1. Select repertoire that fits the needs of an identified ensemble and the long-term goals of a larger program
2. Analyze musical scores to inform rehearsal planning
3. Develop sequential rehearsal plans that incorporate strategies for teaching specific skills and knowledge
4. Implement effective rehearsal strategies to benefit an ensemble
5. Demonstrate comfort and ability in leading others in rehearsal
6. Communicate musical intentions through conducting gestures
7. Aurally identify areas for improvement within an ensemble
8. Utilize inclusive and supportive language

9. Demonstrate care and consideration for the vocal health of a choral ensemble
10. Dialogue effectively with peers, instructors, and community music leaders to seek answers and build knowledge
11. Participate thoughtfully to class discussions and contribute to group music-making opportunities
12. Enhance evaluative skills through self and peer evaluation

Course Materials:

Supplemental materials, scores, assignments, and announcements will be available on the OWL course page. Be sure to check the course page regularly for updates. Classes will require singing and active participation.

You will be required to video record your conducting and teaching throughout the semester. These videos must be uploaded to an online platform that will allow you to easily review them throughout the semester and also share them with others for viewing as required.

As a class, we will purchase a set of scores that we will all use during the second half of the semester. The cost of the music order will be shared among everyone in the class and you will retain one copy of each score at the completion of the course for your future use. Budget \$30 for this music.

Evaluation:

Participation and Classwork: 10%
Weekly

This course will require you to work independently as well as in small groups and with the entire class. You are expected to attend and be punctual for all classes, to prepare weekly readings and tasks with care and consideration, to meaningfully contribute to class discussions, to provide helpful feedback to classmates, as well as appropriately receive feedback from others. You will be required to actively participate as a singer in the class and will have multiple opportunities to act as a musical leader for the class. You must be prepared. You will be expected to read, reflect on, and be prepared to discuss one reading of your choice from the Reading Folder (found on OWL) each week. In addition, you will maintain a learning log throughout the course that includes your evolving learning goals, self-reflections from your in-class teaching experiences, links to recorded videos of your teaching, feedback from instructors, and weekly readings you complete. Assessment criteria includes: consistent commitment to preparation; care and consideration of others; demonstration of effort and initiative; and punctuality and consistent attendance.

Personal Reflections: 20% (10% + 10%)
Due dates: Feb. 5 and Mar. 11

Two formal personal reflections will be completed throughout the semester. You may choose a format of written prose (approx. 500-750 words), audio recording (approx. 5-7 mins), or audio/video recording (approx. 5-7 mins). Prompts will be provided a minimum of one week before the due date for each reflection. The purpose of the assignment is to provide the opportunity for you to share your critical reflections in relation to the topics we discuss, your own

weekly readings, your experiences in the class as a singer and leader, and also to explore your own ideas, beliefs, and understandings as they relate to your skills as a musical leader. Assessment criteria includes: clarity of communication; awareness of your own learning; and depth of critical analysis.

Conducting and Teaching Opportunities (CTO): 40% (10% + 15% + 15%)

Due dates: #1: Jan. 25 – Feb. 1; #2: Feb. 26 – Mar. 4; #3: Mar. 28 – April 4

Throughout the semester you will have the opportunity to lead the class in rehearsal. Three of these opportunities will be formally evaluated and a schedule of conductors will be posted one week in advance. For each of these opportunities you will be required to prepare a written plan, execute the plan within the given time while responding to the needs of the ensemble, and reflect afterwards on the effectiveness of your mini-rehearsal. Feedback and support during the rehearsals as well as afterwards will be provided by the instructors and your peers. Assessment criteria includes: evidence of preparation; appropriateness of selected rehearsal strategies; ability to identify areas for improvement and effectively respond to the ensemble; demonstration of effective gestures and rehearsal strategies as well as inclusive and support language.

Programming and Planning Project: 30%

Due date: April 8

The purpose of this assignment is to combine your programming, analysis, and pedagogical skills into one final product. It is important that the final product is practical and useful to you in the future so choose your repertoire wisely. You will research and select 6-8 pieces of music for a choral ensemble of your choice. The repertoire is not intended to be performed in one single concert or connected thematically, but rather is intended to be used in a specific order throughout the course of a year to assist the choristers in effectively building skills. For example, pieces #1 and #2 should help the singers build skills that they will use in pieces #3 and #4, and so on. Scaffolding!

The final product will include a list of the repertoire, in order, with access links to view the scores, a brief description of each piece that identifies the skills to be learned and reinforced, and three short rehearsal plans targeting three specific skills found in the repertoire. Assessment criteria includes: effectiveness of repertoire selection and programming; ability to analyze musical scores and identify sequential skills; ability to construct effective rehearsal plans to target specific skills. Opportunities will be created for you to share your progress with instructors and peers to receive feedback.

Notes:

i) Course Prerequisites: Music 2832A/B or the former Music 2830 or Music 3841A/B or the former Music 3840. Unless you have either the prerequisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

ii) Grading scale: A+=90-100%, A=80-89%, B=70-79%, C=60-69%, D=50-59%, F=0-49%.

iii) Academic Consideration for Student Absence & Missing Work (≥10%): Students are responsible for making up any missed classes or assignments as soon as possible. The University recognizes that a student's ability to meet their academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by medical illness. Illness may be acute (short term), or it may be chronic (long term), or chronic with acute episodes. Academic Consideration provides students with consistent, fair, and pedagogically appropriate consideration, without compromising the academic integrity of the course or program, when they have been unable to complete some component of a course due to short-term extenuating circumstances. Students who have long-term or chronic medical conditions (physical or mental) that may impede their ability to complete academic responsibilities are directed to seek Academic Accommodation through Accessible Education ([Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#)).

Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the end of the period of absence covered, to the Academic Counselling unit or Office of the Associate Dean, Undergraduate (TC210), of the student's Home Faculty together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the academic consideration being requested. Students are directed to read the [Senate Policy on Academic Consideration for Medical Illness](#) for further details regarding various requirements and procedures for the supporting documentation.

Whenever possible, students who require academic consideration should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, examinations, etc. Students must follow up with their professors and their Academic Counselling office in a timely manner.

iv) Academic Consideration for Missing Work (<10%): In cases where students miss work that is worth less than 10% of the total course grade due to medical illness or compassionate grounds, if documentation is voluntarily submitted to the Associate Dean's office and the Associate Dean grants an accommodation, then the missed assignment(s) or quiz(zes) will be discounted in the calculation of the final grade for the course. If documentation is not voluntarily submitted then the missed assignment(s) will receive a grade of zero. Students who have been denied accommodation by an instructor may appeal this decision to the Associate Dean's office but will be required to present appropriate documentation.

v) Academic Offences: Submission of work with which you have received help from someone else (other than the course instructor or TA) is an example of plagiarism, which is considered a major academic offence. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, as found at:
http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

vi) Mental Health & Wellness: Students that are in emotional/mental distress should refer to the [Wellness & Well-being page](#) on Western's website for a complete list of options about how to obtain help or go to the Wellness Education Centre located in Thames Hall room 2170. Students in crisis in need of immediate care are directed to go directly to Student Health Services in Thames Hall 2170 or to click on the big green "I Need Help Now" button on the Wellness & Well-being page above.

vii) Accommodation for Students with Disabilities: Students work with Accessible Education which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation_disabilities.pdf

viii) Religious Accommodation: Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays (other than statutory holidays), and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. The [Diversity Calendar](#) from the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion provides information on multifaith, multicultural and diversity related holidays and observances and links to resources for more information.

ix) Contingency Plan: Although the intent is for this course to be delivered in-person, should any university-declared emergency require some or all of the course to be delivered online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience), the course will adapt accordingly. The grading scheme will not change. Any assessments affected will be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

x) Gender-Based and Sexual Violence: Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence, either recently or in the past, you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts on the [Get Help page](#) at [Western Wellness & Well-being](#). To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca or call 519 661-3568.

Class Schedule: *(subject to change)*

	Date	Topics	Assignments Due
W E E K 1	M. Jan. 8	Welcome, introductions, and course overview	
	Th. Jan. 11	Introduce: Where do we start? - purpose of score study - warm-up structure - linking strategies with purpose	
W E E K 2	M. Jan. 15	Introduce: Where do we start? <i>(continued)</i>	
	Th. Jan. 18	Introduce: Where do we start? <i>(continued)</i>	
W E E K 3	M. Jan. 22	Where do I find music? Should we sing this?	
	Th. Jan. 25	Conducting and Teaching Opportunity #1 <i>Introduce</i>	
W E E K 4	M. Jan. 29	Conducting and Teaching Opportunity #1 <i>Introduce</i>	
	Th. Feb. 1	Conducting and Teaching Opportunity #1 <i>Introduce</i>	

W E E K 5	M. Feb. 5	Changing voices: What do I do?	Personal Reflection #1 due
	Th. Feb. 8	Reinforce: What am I hearing? - <i>identifying what you hear</i> - <i>responding with strategies</i> - <i>evaluating</i>	
W E E K 6	M. Feb. 12	Reinforce: What am I hearing? (<i>continued</i>)	
	Th. Feb. 15	Reinforce: What am I hearing? (<i>continued</i>)	
	M. Feb. 19 and 22	Reading Week (no classes)	
W E E K 7	M. Feb. 26	Conducting and Teaching Opportunity #2 <i>Reinforce</i>	
	Th. Feb. 29	Conducting and Teaching Opportunity #2 <i>Reinforce</i>	
W E E K 8	M. Mar. 4	Conducting and Teaching Opportunity #2 <i>Reinforce</i>	
	Th. Mar. 7	<i>Special guests: VIVA: The Chamber Youth Leadership Singers with co-conductors Carol Woodward Ratzlaff and Laura Menard</i>	
W E E K 9	M. Mar. 11	"But that has nothing to do with making music."	Personal Reflection #2 due
	Th. Mar. 14	Refine: How can we improve? - <i>building understanding</i> - <i>adding nuance and polish</i>	
W E E K 10	M. Mar. 18	Refine: How can we improve? (<i>continued</i>)	
	Th. Mar. 21	Refine: How can we improve? (<i>continued</i>)	
W E E K 11	M. Mar. 25	"Now what? How do I keep learning?"	
	Th. Mar. 28	Conducting and Teaching Opportunity #3 <i>Introduce, Reinforce, and Refine</i>	
W E E K 12	M. Apr. 1	Conducting and Teaching Opportunity #3 <i>Introduce, Reinforce, and Refine</i>	
	Th. Apr. 4	Conducting and Teaching Opportunity #3 <i>Introduce, Reinforce, and Refine</i>	
	M. Apr. 8	Final Project Due	

