Omaha Northwest Magnet High School
Men’s Chorus & Treble Chorus/Ensemble
2019-2020 Course Syllabi

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Course Descriptions
Men’s Chorus and the Treble Chorus/Ensemble are voice-specific ensembles. They are designed for students to establish solid fundamentals of singing and performance, as well as artistic development and teamwork with like voices undergoing similar development. Over the course of the year, the ensemble will learn to function as a team and perform in several public performances, some of which take place off-campus.

Instructional Philosophy (Mr. Getty)
As an educator and musician, I believe singing in a choir is something everyone should experience at least once in their lifetime. It’s good for physical and psychological health, mental strength, social function and finding the value in one’s self and others. The experience of working with others to overcome challenges and achieve a common goal is a perfect metaphor for life itself, and you can’t put a price on that.

Content Standards (Grading - 65% Summative (final evaluation) 35% Formative (current progress))
- OPS Standard 1 - Performance – addresses successful habits built from rehearsal discipline, good vocal technique, and teamwork.
- OPS Standard 2 – Literacy and Application - addresses the knowledge and application of: music theory, history, and science of the voice.
- OPS Standard 3 – Cultural Connections - addresses listening to / analyzing music performances, reflection and the application of music in society.

Common Types of Graded Assignments
Assignments may be either formative (monitor of current progress) or summative (evaluation at the end).
Below are common examples of typical graded tasks. It is not exhaustive, however.

Performance
- Concert / Performance – Required assessment. Summative—this is the culmination of daily rehearsal.
- Rehearsal – In good faith, preparation for performance and musical development happens daily. Formative.
- Part Test – Students are assessed over individual knowledge of their part. Summative.
- Rehearsal Audit – Students are randomly chosen and assessed on progress for that particular day. Formative.

Literacy
- Rhythm reading practice/assessment – Reading rhythm in time by identifying symbols and patterns of symbols. Formative or summative.
- Interpretation – Using the knowledge of musical vocabulary to interpret the statement of a piece. Formative or summative.

Culture
- Reflections – Writing about one’s own experiences with performing and the arts. Formative.
- Enrichment exercises - Other activities that delve into themes we explore in our music in further detail. Formative.

Major Units of Study
The year is divided into four quarters, each running up to a set of major performances. Students will use resources provided to them (choral octavos, sheet music, rote sources, etc.) to vocally perform in numerous different styles, historical periods and cultures from around the world. Students will also have music theory assignments to complete and complete “audits”, which are randomly administered to provide a snapshot of student progress.

General Course Expectations
Performances serve as the primary summative assessment component for these courses. In an ensemble class, however, the success of everyone enrolled in the course is tied together. In part because of this, attendance at all performances is mandatory, and it is the student’s responsibility to ensure that they are present for all performances and all regular daily rehearsals. All calendar dates are given ahead of time, and only emergencies (i.e. hospitalization, bereavement, extreme illness) will be excused absences at the director’s discretion.

Students: Punctuality and regular, daily attendance are crucial to your success as well as the success of peers in the ensemble. Attendance at all rehearsals and concert appearances on the calendar is expected and critical to your individual success, as well as success of the ensemble. We expect that you are here, that you know your part, and that you play a role in our team. Finally, you must participate in class fully and in good faith. This is key to your success, as well as the success of those around you. It’s like getting into a swimming pool—it seems cold if you put only your foot in—you have to jump in all the way. You’ll be glad you did.
Class Rules and Expectations
We have high expectations for achievement, community and behavior in our department as well as respect for resources provided and fellow performers.

Concert / Rehearsal Attendance
Attendance at every performance or rehearsal outside of school hours is mandatory. Part of learning the business of performing arts is learning to balance a busy performing schedule with the other needs of life that still need to be met. Being a member of this ensemble means that you must make necessary transportation arrangements ahead of time when we meet outside of the school day, and make up any missed schoolwork impacted by our rehearsals/performance. To assist you with these matters, we give you a calendar of all known choir responsibilities for the year. Write them down in your agenda and plan ahead. Communicate these to parents, guardians, coaches, bosses, teachers and people who give you rides immediately. In the event of an emergency or a genuinely irresolvable conflict, communicate directly with the director (talk, call, email, Remind) as soon as possible so that we can work out a solution. If transportation is an issue, we may be often able to assist if we know ahead of time; transportation difficulties will not excuse you from your responsibilities. Absences from vocal music events are rarely excused, and even then only in cases of specific emergencies at the director’s discretion with supporting documentation. If you see another Northwest High event on the calendar that you know to be a conflict with the performance schedule, get in touch immediately so that arrangements can be made. Students are responsible for contacting the director directly (see contact info below) and not through a third party if they are going to be late or absent to any vocal music event.

Outside-of-Class Events
A complete and up-to-date online calendar can be found at http://bit.ly/northwestchoral. Here, you can check our dates in real time (and even sync our Google Calendar to yours if you want!) In addition to our already listed events, our elected choir officers will also plan optional social events from time to time that will be added to the calendar. These socials are optional, but they greatly enhance the team dynamic.

Dress For Concerts
Proper attire and standardized deportment is a requirement for performance. The Northwest Choral Department provides a list of events for the entire year in August with the expectation that there is ample time to prepare a performance outfit. There are options available in cases of financial hardship if the department is given 1-2 weeks lead time. Lack of preparation on the part of the student does not excuse this requirement. We supply a choir robe, so student responsibility for attire is only from the knee-down. That said, we encourage students to wear full dress attire; a performance is a special event, and dressing for that event enhances the event and performance.

If you plan to wear pants (under robe) you need to wear:

- a pair of solid black dress shoes with black socks. No: sneakers, boots, skateshoes, Converse, etc.
- black dress slacks. No black jeans (they take stage light badly and overheat; aren’t professional)
- optionally a long sleeved collared shirt, in black, white, blue, gold or red; tie. Vest is an option. Jacket is OK, but not recommended (heat.)

If you plan to wear a dress or skirt (under robe) you need to wear:

- a pair of closed-toed solid black dress shoes with a heel no higher than 1.5 inches. Be aware that you will be standing for a long period of time. Solid black flats are fine. No boots, flip-flops, moccasins, houseshoes, slippers, Uggs (ugh).
- Option 1: skirt/dress (deemed appropriate by the student code of conduct) and natural colored hose;
- Option 2: Bermuda shorts in place of a skirt.
- No leggings, jeggings, stockings, tights, jeans, corduroy, fishnets, etc.
- an appropriate blouse (if wearing a skirt or bermuda shorts.)

In all cases:

- wear deodorant, but not perfume/cologne (this makes breathing difficult under the stage lights and among others with allergies)
- refrain from wearing large or noisy jewelry or pieces that heavily reflect stage light
- Long hair should be worn up and/or not covering the face.

Parent/Guardian Involvement
Classes in the Fine and Performing Arts demand a great deal of additional collective planning and teamwork behind the scenes. The Northwest PBO is a group of parents, community members and alumni dedicated to making activities and fine arts at Northwest shine! Volunteers are not obligated to assist in every event PBO is a part of, but rather can participate on an as-needed basis. Volunteers may assist with events, help with fundraising, chaperoning students and providing specialized skills in order to ensure our students are successful. Volunteers may also choose to work directly with the music department if they so choose. Contact Mr. Getty or PBO president Suzi Busby at Sheri.Yokley-Busby@ops.org.

Contact Information
If you have questions or concerns, we should talk! Our webpage is at http://bit.ly/northwestchoral.

Email - georg.getty@ops.org / Ph. 402-557-3544
Twitter - @OPSNWChoral
Remind - students AND parents can both subscribe and are encouraged to do so, which you can do so by texting our tags to the number 81010 from your phone. Our tags are

@nwmens (Men’s Chorus)
@nwtreble (Treble Choir)
@nwhch (Entire Vocal Music Department)

Contact me directly if you need assistance. Please register; we send files and updates this way frequently.

Finally, we are looking forward to a great year! I look forward to working with you and your student.