

Humboldt State University
Department of Music

Syllabus

Music 106F/406F – Mad River Transit Singers

Spring 2018
1:00 – 2:20 pm, Fulkerson Recital Hall
Office hours:
Mon & Wed 2-3 pm and by appointment

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“Forgive me if I don’t have the words. Maybe I can sing it and you’ll understand.”
– Ella Fitzgerald

Course Description and Objectives

You will rehearse and perform small ensemble vocal music with an emphasis on jazz-idiom choral music. We will explore vocal techniques, musicianship skills and stylistic interpretation. We may have occasional off-campus concerts. You will:

1. rehearse and perform jazz choral music and related genres.
2. strive to achieve choral balance, blend, style and technique of the highest quality.
3. appreciate choral singing as an expressive means to aesthetic ends. Cultivate intellect, imagination, sensibility, and sensitivity through the study and performance of jazz choral music. You will be encouraged to respond subjectively to the music studied and performed, which will lead to the development of a sense of integrity of emotional response.
4. develop your voice through proper breathing and singing techniques.
5. perform as musicians by committing to the musical organization and by being prompt, attending all rehearsals and adopting a positive attitude.
6. Develop vocabulary necessary to explore ideas in choral music and foster the development of critical standards for the evaluation of their own and others artistic works; students may sing individually, in ensemble, attend concerts and festivals, listen to recorded music and write reports about their musical experiences.
7. Choral music is representative of many diverse cultures. You will become more aware of the richness of human culture as expressed in choral music. This will include examination of the contribution of performers of choral music as well as the contributions of composers and arrangers of choral music.
8. By adding to your knowledge of music, and by cultivating your subjective response to choral music, you will become aware of the artistic context of choral music as an art form, and you will become aware of how artists reflect on and participate in the human experience.

How to Succeed in This Course

To gain the most out of singing in choir, you are encouraged to be enthusiastic, keep an open mind, maintain mental focus, and be willing to express yourself through singing with others. To achieve maximum collective focus, efficiency and enjoyment of rehearsal, you are expected to listen respectfully to others and refrain from side conversations once the rehearsal has begun. Your cell phone should be off during rehearsal, and

texting in class is prohibited. You may bring a water bottle, but chewing gum and eating are not permitted in rehearsal.

Due to the cooperative nature of ensemble singing, the primary basis of assessment is regular contribution to the group learning process. This includes regular attendance and active and positive class participation. Each rehearsal is unique in its content and achievement and doesn't lend itself to having a makeup substitution. A positive experience and successful grade for the semester comes as a result of coming to rehearsals prepared and taking an active role in the ensemble. Therefore, punctual attendance at all rehearsals and performances is vital to your successful completion of this course.

Once you arrive, plan to stay for the entire rehearsal (use the restroom ahead of time if necessary). Arriving late and/or leaving the room (with the exception of urgent situations) is disrespectful to the members of the ensemble and disrupts the flow of rehearsal. Please see me about any extenuating circumstances.

With the exception of emergent situations or severe illness, no one should miss any rehearsal the week of a concert.

If an absence can be predicted, please e-mail me before the absence. In the case of severe illness or other emergency, please notify me via email or phone within a reasonable time period as dictated by the circumstances causing the absence.

If you are absent more than four times during the term, the following will occur:

- 1) You may be required to come and sing in an individual appointment with the instructor in order to determine your ability to keep singing with the group.
- 2) Depending on how that meeting goes, you may or may not be permitted to perform in upcoming concert(s).
- 3) You may not receive credit for the class.

Materials: You are expected to have your choir folder with scores and a pencil with you for every class period. Scores are on loan to you for the semester and need to be returned in reasonable condition at the end of the semester. You are encouraged to mark your score as much as is helpful (in pencil)! Consistent or frequent lack of preparation will jeopardize your success in the class.

Performances: You must attend all performances. If you do not attend a performance, you are not likely to receive credit for the class. Extenuating circumstances that would require missing a performance should be brought to my attention within a reasonable time period as dictated by the circumstances, and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Documentation may be required.

Outside Practice: As a member of Mad River Transit Singers this semester, you are committing yourself to learning repertoire at a high level. Therefore, it is essential that you do your part and practice outside of class. Practice can take many forms, including individually and in pairs or a small group. We will discuss techniques to help you get the most out of the time you spend practicing outside of class.
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In-Class Tests/Deadlines

To help us stay on top of learning the music, I will occasionally give deadlines for memorization and/or knowing the music accurately (not the same thing). You will always have notice ahead of time, and I will always be available to help and/or ask questions should you have concerns. This is meant to hold everyone accountable so that we can perform to the best of our ability.

Concert Information

Required Dress Rehearsals and Concerts

Tuesday, March 27 ~ Dress rehearsal 7:00-10:00 PM (you will not rehearse for three hours...the exact portion you will be needed for will be announced later, but please reserve the evening)

Thursday, March 29 ~ 6:00 call time/8:00 PM **Concert** in Fulkerson RH

Sunday, April 29 ~ 6:00 call time/8:00 PM **Concert** in Fulkerson RH

Also support your colleagues -- (optional, but you are strongly encouraged to attend!)

Friday, May 4 @ 8:00 PM in Fulkerson RH – University Singers and Humboldt Chorale

Concert Attire - concert black – The general look is tasteful and simple dressy.

Shoes: all black (no sneakers; no stripes, designs, etc.).

Bottom: Solid black slacks or skirt. If you wear a skirt, you must wear black (not sheer) tights. Very short skirts, even with tights, are not allowed. Skirts should be close to knee length or longer.

Top: Solid black dressy top (no T-shirts). No cleavage or spaghetti straps; sleeves preferred.

Dresses: Permitted if they meet the above general criteria.

Not Permitted: strong perfumes/scents, hats, sunglasses, flashy or eye-catching jewelry.

In general, the more coverage the better. You may be asked to bring in or show what you will be wearing ahead of time to determine appropriateness. Plan ahead! If you need any of these items and cannot afford them, don't worry; if you let me know ahead of time I can help you.

Diversity Statement

I consider this classroom to be a place where you will be treated with respect, and I welcome individuals of all ages, backgrounds, beliefs, ethnicities, genders, gender identities, gender expressions, national origins, religious affiliations, sexual orientations, ability – and other visible and nonvisible differences. All members of this class are expected to contribute to a respectful, welcoming and inclusive environment for every other member of the class.

Content of this syllabus is subject to change with reasonable notice.

Best wishes for an enjoyable and successful semester!

“I don't let my mouth say nothin' my head can't stand.” – Louis Armstrong

Syllabus addendum on HSU policies:

Students have rights and responsibilities at HSU and there are many resources on campus to help students succeed. The link below includes information about Add/Drop Policy, Resources for Students with Disabilities, Academic Honesty Policy, Attendance and Disruptive Behavior Policy, Financial Aid, Emergency Procedures, and Counseling and Psychological Services.

<http://www2.humboldt.edu/academicprograms/syllabus-addendum-campus-resou...>

Student Learning Outcomes: Through this course you will make progress towards meeting the following Student Learning Outcomes:

Course SLOs:

- 1) Students will collectively demonstrate improved proficiency on their instrument/voice through rehearsal and performance of literature from a variety of composers and styles.
- 2) Students will collectively practice and refine skills in rhythmic accuracy, intonation, balance, blend dynamics, and phrasing.
- 3) Students will demonstrate understanding of their musical role within the context of the large group setting.
- 4) Students will make meaningful assessments of the quality of their own large ensemble performance.

Music Major SLOs:

- 1) Students will demonstrate the ability to hear, identify, and work conceptually with the elements of music – rhythm, melody, harmony, and structure.
- 2) Students will demonstrate familiarity with, and an ability to perform a wide selection of musical literature representing principal eras, genres, and cultural sources.
- 3) Students will demonstrate ability in performing areas appropriate to the student's needs, interests, and degree path.

You are strongly encouraged to educate yourself on repetitive and overuse injuries. Please go to the music department's website for helpful information.