3832B – Choral Literature and Techniques
Instructor: Patrick Murray, TC 437, pmurra29@uwo.ca
TA: Dongxiao, xdong224@uwo.ca
M 9:30-10:30am – MB 227 | Th 1:30-3:30pm – MB 227
Office Hour: T 1:30-2:30pm or by appointment

Course Description
This course is an in-depth practicum in choral conducting and rehearsal techniques, as well as an introduction to choral repertoire of different styles and time periods appropriate to ensembles of different abilities. Topics to be covered include conducting gesture, rehearsal planning, score study, programming, performance practice, choral pedagogy and ensemble leadership. A significant portion of class time is dedicated to individual laboratory conducting of assigned repertoire, providing students with the opportunity to practice and assess their own skill development as conductors and music educators. Lecture-discussions of specific repertoire, techniques, and class readings make up the remainder of the course. Students are expected to conduct and participate in the class choir in rehearsal and graded assignments, complete one written assignment, and participate in class discussion of assigned topics and readings.

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

University Policy: “Unless you have either the prerequisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enrol 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.”

Course Objectives
By the end of the course, students will...

• Develop effective and confident conducting technique to convey their musical intent.
• Assess specific repertoire for its technical and musical challenges, and its appropriateness for ensembles of different levels of ability.
• Develop sequential rehearsal plans incorporating strategies for teaching specific musical challenges.
• Analyze musical excerpts for formal structure and musical/technical challenges, and mark scores appropriately.
• Understand of the history of important genres of choral music and considerations of performance practice.
• Demonstrate an understanding of programming considerations for different choral ensembles.
• Develop leadership skills and their own personalities as emerging performers and educators.
**Required Materials**
Packet of choral works (available from the CBO or on OWL)
Full score of Mozart *Requiem* (Dover Publications)
Baton
Set of coloured pencils for score marking
Course readings as assigned (available on OWL or distributed in class)

**Required Readings**
To be assigned by the instructor as applicable throughout the course for lecture/discussions.

- Selected program notes (distributed in class).
Schedule
Subject to change at instructor’s discretion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week of</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 6</td>
<td>Class Intro</td>
<td>Choral Music History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conducting technique review</td>
<td>Conducting Lab: Chorales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 13</td>
<td>Score marking and rehearsal planning</td>
<td>Renaissance/Baroque Lab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 20</td>
<td>Performance Practice</td>
<td>Renaissance/Baroque Lab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 27</td>
<td>Rehearsal techniques</td>
<td>Classical/Romantic Lab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 3</td>
<td>Tone building and I.P.A.</td>
<td>Classical/Romantic Lab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 10</td>
<td>Programming and program notes</td>
<td>Conducting Mid-Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 24</td>
<td>Contemporary Rep Lab</td>
<td>Attend Dr. Bridget Sweet’s visit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Thurs, Fri, or Sat)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 2</td>
<td>Contemporary Rep Lab</td>
<td>Contemporary Rep Lab (P.M. away)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Programming Assignment Due</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 9</td>
<td>Major Work - introduction</td>
<td>Major work Lab (Mozart Requiem)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 16</td>
<td>Major Work - analysis</td>
<td>Major work Lab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 23</td>
<td>Working with instruments</td>
<td>Major work Lab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 30</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>Programming Assignment presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>To be scheduled during exam period.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Class conducting and participation, personal preparation, and attendance – 15 %

- You will have podium time every 1-2 weeks to practice rehearsal conducting, and receive feedback in a constructive setting. During these class periods, you are expected to come with your chosen score fully learned, marked, and prepared to conduct and rehearse, and be open to constructive criticism from the instructor and your peers. You will not be penalized for “mistakes.”
- You are to remain engaged as a singer or rehearsal pianist when not conducting, prepare readings and lead discussions as assigned, participate actively in discussion, and provide feedback to your peers.
- Conducting requires daily practice, just like learning an instrument. Plan to practice conducting for 15-30 minutes daily in order to progress.
- Due to the participatory nature of this course, attendance is mandatory for all class periods. 2% will be deducted from your participation grade for each un-validated absence. Significant un-validated absences may result in failing the course. See the absence section below for more details.
Conducting Journal – 15% (5 x 3% each)
After each lab sequence, review your video footage and instructor and peer comments. Write an approximately one-page response (typed, single space) reflecting on your progress and submit by the following class period. Prompts to guide your responses will be provided.

Due dates:
Jan 27 – Renaissance/Baroque Lab
Feb 10 – Classical/Romantic Lab
Mar 2 – Response to Dr. Bridget Sweet events
Mar 9 – Contemporary Repertoire Lab
Mar 30 – Major work Lab

Mid-term Conducting Exam – 20%
- Duration: 8 minutes of podium time
- Choose one work from either the Renaissance/Baroque lab or Classical/Romantic lab to conduct and rehearse for your exam.
- You will also submit a copy of your marked score, a structural analysis of the piece, and a rehearsal plan. Guidelines to be discussed in class.
- You will be graded on the effectiveness of your conducting gesture in conveying your musical intent, your ability to lead an efficient and effective rehearsal, your knowledge of the work, and the thoroughness and insightfulness of your marked score, analysis, and rehearsal plan.

Final Conducting Exam – 30%
- Duration: c. 10-12 minutes of podium time. The purpose of this exam is to simulate an audition for graduate study in conducting.
- You will conduct both a selection from the Contemporary Repertoire Lab and a movement of the Mozart Requiem. You will then choose one of these that you wish to rehearse for the duration of your podium time.
- You will also submit a copy of your marked score, a structural analysis of your assigned movement of Mozart Requiem, and a rehearsal plan for the piece you’ve chosen to rehearse. Guidelines will be discussed in class.
- During your exam, you will be asked to respond to several questions about musical details in your assigned movement of Mozart Requiem, which may include questions about structure, instrumentation, voicing, text, and style.
- You will be graded on the effectiveness of your conducting gesture in conveying your musical intent, your ability to lead an efficient and effective rehearsal, your knowledge of the work, and the thoroughness and insightfulness of your marked score, analysis, and rehearsal plan.
Programming Assignment (Due March 5 by email) – 20%

- Design a 30 minute program for a choral ensemble of your choice, chosen in discussion with the instructor and based on their interests. (High school, middle school, community). If you wish, you could design a concert for an institutional choral program (ie. a number of choirs of different levels at a high school).
- Each work chosen should be no more than 5-6 minutes. Works selected must reflect a diversity of styles, time periods, and languages. At least one work must be drawn from the Renaissance or Baroque era, and one from the Classical or Romantic era. If you wish, you may choose a theme. You may include one work from the class packet if you wish.
- Prepare a written programme that could be circulated to the audience. This will include a listing of all works and composers (include dates) in concert order, original program notes, and all texts and translations.
- Prepare an “appendix” that provides some more detail about each piece you chose. For each piece chosen, specify the publisher, duration, and performance forces (voicing, instruments). For each piece chosen, provide 2-3 bullet points about its educational and musical merits. Why did you choose it, and why did you place it in the program where you did? You should consider both the benefits to your choir of working on each piece, as well as what the audience will get out of it and the program as a whole.
- Your assignment will be graded on the diversity of repertoire chosen, its appropriateness for your chosen ensemble, its cohesiveness as a program, the fluency of your program notes, and your insight into the educational opportunities of each piece.
- On the last day of class, all programs will be circulated with the class and you will give a short presentation (not graded) about your program choices.

Grading Scale
A+ = 90% and up
A = 80-89
B = 70-79
C = 60-69
D = 50-59
Below 50% is considered insufficient to pass the course
**Attendance and Accommodation for Illness**

Students should consult the University’s policy on accommodation for illness, found here: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic_Consideration_for_absences.pdf

Students should provide medical documentation when appropriate, and are permitted by university policy to self-report up to two short (up to 48 hour) absences for work worth 30% or less of their final grade. Students may not self-report their absences for exams. Any absences should be immediately discussed with the course instructor within 24 hours of the absence, or preferably before an anticipated absence. Provided all parameters of the university policy have been met, the absence will be considered valid and the instructor will negotiate a new due date for any missed assignments.

Students will have 2% deducted from their participation grade (up to a maximum of 15%) for each absence which remains unvalidated at the conclusion of the course. In consultation with the Associate Dean, students may fail the course due to insufficient attendance.

**Late Work and Extensions**

Extensions on assignments may be granted on an individual basis for valid medical or academic reasons as per the policy above. Deadlines missed for invalid reasons will be subject to a penalty of one letter grade and a new date of submission must be immediately negotiated with the instructor within 24 hours of the missed deadline. Missed work which is not discussed within this timeline will receive a grade of 0%.

**Statement on Writing and Academic Offenses**

Academic proficiency is expected in all written assignments. This means using an appropriate tone, correct grammar, citations, and original work. Instances of plagiarism will result in a mark of 0 on the assignment in question and will be referred to the Department Chair for other appropriate disciplinary measures. University Policy: “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

**Statement on Mental Health**

“Students that are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/ for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.”

**Statement on Technology Use in Class**

Phones, laptops, and other electronic devices are not to be used in class unless the student is recording their conducting. All music should be printed out (no iPads). Devices may be used during discussion periods for readings when permitted by the instructor.

**Statement on Office Hours and Instructor Assistance**

Instructor will provide feedback on one first draft of any written assignment during office hours up to one week before the due date. Please schedule meetings appropriately in advance!