Course Description
This course is an introduction to choral repertoire and techniques relevant to teaching young singers. Topics and repertoire will be introduced sequentially to explore different ages and stages in a young singer’s development. Topics to be covered include teaching musical literacy and part-singing, physiology and psychology of child and adolescent singers, healthy vocal production, analytical and rehearsal techniques, major pedagogical influences on choral practice, and choral movement. This course aims to equip students with skills and resources that will lead to confident teaching and leadership in both classroom and community choral settings. Thus, while conducting gesture will be an important skill developed throughout the course, students’ principal focus will be on refining their rehearsal and communication skills as conductor-educators.

Students are expected to conduct and participate actively in the class choir and lecture/discussions, prepare and teach pieces for reading sessions as assigned, complete three teaching demonstration assignments, a vocal technique demonstration, and a rehearsal observation assignment.

Prerequisites
“Unless you have either the requisites 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.”

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

• Demonstrate effective choral teaching and rehearsal techniques appropriate to different ages and abilities of singers.
• Develop sequential lesson plans to address specific musical and technical challenges in the score.
• Demonstrate and teach healthy vocal technique using appropriate vocal exercises.
• Demonstrate an understanding of different issues and pedagogies that have influenced contemporary choral practice with children and youth.
• Analyze the rehearsal and leadership styles of their mentors and peers and apply those insights to their own practice.
• Develop an awareness of children’s and youth choral singing as it is practiced around the world.
• Develop leadership skills and their own personalities as conductor-educators.
**Required Materials**
Packet of choral works (available for purchase)
Other choral works to be picked up from CBO or downloaded from OWL as assigned
Set of coloured pencils for score marking
Course readings as assigned (available on OWL)

**Schedule**
Lecture periods will generally take place during the first half of class on Mondays. Lab periods will often begin during the last half of class on Mondays and conclude during class on Wednesdays. Teaching demonstration assignments take up the full class period. Students will receive a schedule early in the term for when they are required to conduct/teach/present. Schedule and topics subject to change at instructor’s discretion.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lecture/Discussion</th>
<th>Lab</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sep 9/11</td>
<td>Review: conducting fundamentals.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep 16/18</td>
<td>Teaching healthy vocal production</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep 23/25</td>
<td>Child and adolescent singers: physiology and psychology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep 30/Oct 2</td>
<td>Lesson and rehearsal planning Analyzing and teaching a new piece</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 7/9</td>
<td>Music literacy cont.: Singing in parts</td>
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<td>Oct 14/16</td>
<td><strong>THANKSGIVING DAY OFF</strong></td>
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<td>Oct 21/23</td>
<td>Pedagogical lineages (Kodaly, Dalcroze, Orff…)</td>
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<td>Oct 28/30</td>
<td>Children’s/youth choral organizations around the world: structure, curriculum, repertoire</td>
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<td>Nov 4/6</td>
<td><strong>BREAK</strong></td>
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<td>Nov 11/13</td>
<td><strong>Teaching Demonstration 2</strong></td>
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<td>Nov 18/20</td>
<td>Movement in rehearsal and performance</td>
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<td>Nov 25/27</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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<td>Dec 2/4</td>
<td><strong>Teaching Demonstration 3: Movement/improv assignment</strong></td>
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**Required Readings**
*To be assigned as appropriate throughout the course for lecture/discussions.*


**Grading**

**Conducting/teaching demonstrations – 55% (1 = 15%, 2 and 3 = 20% each)**

Students will be formally assessed on their conducting and teaching three times during the course. Each assignment will consist of c. 6-10 minutes of podium time. Each student will choose one piece from the preceding two reading sessions for their test.

*The final Teaching Demonstration assignment will be to develop a movement and/or improvisation-oriented rehearsal related to a piece introduced in class. Further guidelines to be discussed in class.*

Students will prepare a rehearsal plan for a section or sections of the piece that can be reasonably rehearsed in the allotted time. Your teaching demonstration should engage in detail and depth with the specific musical and technical challenges in your selection. What strategies can you use to introduce these challenges to your singers? Are there challenges that recur throughout the piece and can you build connections between them?
Students will hand in their rehearsal plan following their test. Rehearsal plans should follow guidelines discussed in class. Students will submit a self-evaluation of their teaching by Monday the week after each assignment, following their video review. Prompts for self-evaluation will be provided. Grades will be returned following the completion of your self-evaluation.

Students will be graded on effectively demonstrating musical intent through gesture, demonstrating teaching strategies to address specific musical challenges, developing and executing an effective and sequential rehearsal plan, offering insightful and critical self-reflection, and improvement over the course of the semester based on feedback. A rubric will be provided.

**Vocal technique lesson – 15%**

Students will prepare a written lesson plan and deliver a c. 5 minute group vocal technique lesson to the class, appropriate for singers ages 7-18. Students should specify a specific age range for their own lesson. Your goal is to teach your hypothetical young singers about healthy vocal production through effective demonstration and practice of vocal exercises. Each lesson should contain a minimum of three different exercises focusing on three different elements of vocal technique, including: posture, breathing awareness and support, onset, resonance, range and register development, articulation and diction. Use your imagination to make your lesson fun and creative!

All written lesson plans will be distributed to the entire class at the conclusion of the course as a resource for future teaching. Students will be evaluated on the clarity and organization of their written lesson plan, the effectiveness of their teaching and delivery, and the relevance and originality of their chosen exercises. More detailed guidelines and a schedule for presentations will be discussed and distributed in class.

**Rehearsal observation report – 15% (Due October 30 in class)**

Each student will attend a rehearsal of a local children’s or youth choir (eg. community choir, middle or high school choir, church children’s choir). Students will submit a c. 4 page, typed, double-spaced report based on their observations. Standard formatting please (12 point font, 1-inch margins). Please approach the conductor or administrator of the choir well in advance to request permission to attend and observe their rehearsal.

Written reports should reflect on the teaching that you observed during the rehearsal. Why do you think the conductor-teacher chose this specific repertoire for this specific choir? What strategies did they use to address challenges in the repertoire? Were these strategies and repertoire effective for the singers? How did the conductor balance music and challenges over the whole rehearsal? What changes did you hear or see in the singers over the course of the rehearsal? You may also choose to comment on conducting gesture and technique. Conclude with a paragraph on how you can apply what you observed in your own teaching and conducting.
Reports will be graded based on clarity of writing, insightfulness and appropriateness of your observations, and your ability to connect what you observed to your own practice.

**Attendance and participation - 15 %**
Students are expected to be active participants during discussion and lab sections. During several lab sessions, students will be asked to prepare pieces to introduce as part of reading sessions. During this time, students will not be assessed on conducting and teaching, although they will be expected to know their assigned work well enough to conduct and offer some initial thoughts on teaching strategies and challenges as a starting point for discussion. Students are expected to remain engaged as singers when they are not conducting, participate actively in discussion, and provide feedback to their peers. Students are expected to prepare readings and materials for discussion sections as assigned.

Due to the participatory nature of this course, **attendance is mandatory for all class periods.** Students will have 2% deducted from their participation grade for each un-validated absence. Two tardy arrivals to class will constitute the equivalent of an absence. Significant un-validated absences may, in consultation with the Associate Dean, result in students failing 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 are permitted to self-report up to two short (up to 48 hour) absences between September and April due to unexpected illness or extenuating circumstance without documentation. Students must report their absence using the online portal. Any absences should be immediately discussed with the course instructor within 24 hours of the student’s return to class, or preferably before an anticipated absence. Any absences which do not qualify for self reporting require a medical certificate. Provided the university policy has been met, the absence will be considered valid and will not impact a student’s standing in the course. The instructor will negotiate a new due date for any missed assignments or make other appropriate academic accommodations in consultation with the student.

Students will have 2% deducted from their participation grade 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!