Western University Singers
Music 1910, 2910, 3910, 4910
Fall 2020 and Winter 2021
(updated Dec. 14, 2020)

Instructor: Dr. Mark Ramsay
Talbot College TC325
Email: mramsay9@uwo.ca
Office Hours: by appointment
Pianist: Laura Altenmueller

Monday and Wednesday: 3:30 - 5:30 p.m.
Blended Course Delivery*
In-person Monday rehearsals: MB227, MB254, MB140
In-person Wednesday rehearsals: vKH, MB227
Online rehearsals: via Zoom

*Please see notes below for additional information regarding weekly rehearsal schedules and required dress rehearsals and concerts.

Course Description:
Western University Singers is an advanced mixed-voice choir that strives for excellence in both performance and the rehearsal process. The ensemble rehearses for four hours per week and performs throughout the academic year. Repertoire includes sacred and secular, accompanied and a cappella works, and spans centuries, styles, and languages. When possible, the ensemble engages with living composers to enhance the choristers’ understanding of the musical works they perform. Placement in this ensemble is based on audition each fall. Additional information related to the choir’s extensive history can be found on the faculty’s ensembles webpage: https://music.uwo.ca/ensembles/western-university-singers/index.html

Learning Outcomes:
Students will…
- develop musicianship and performance skills within an ensemble setting
- explore style and performance practice through performance
- refine and apply healthy vocal technique
- enhance listening skills and sight-reading abilities
- collaborate with peers to create and achieve performance goals
- foster and share a love of choral singing with others

Evaluation and Expectations:
We strive to work together to build an atmosphere similar to a professional-level ensemble setting. This means arriving to rehearsals and calls punctually and prepared, working collaboratively with your fellow choristers, demonstrating leadership and self-initiative within your section, and consistently practicing on your own to ensure your reliable preparation. In addition, the conductor may periodically assign and check for translations and markings in your score, or schedule individual or group note checks during class time.

Your attendance and preparation for each rehearsal and performance is the primary method of assessment. Full attendance at all our events for the year is required for credit. At the end of the year, students will receive a pass/fail grade for the course.
From the performance department...
“Large Ensemble rehearsals are not like other classes but rather like a professional service. Extra dress rehearsals are scheduled before each concert and performances are held in addition to rehearsal schedules. Attendance at all rehearsals and performances is mandatory. Punctuality is imperative for all rehearsals and performances. Three tardy arrivals will be considered equivalent to an absence. Perfect attendance and active participation are required to obtain course credit. Should a student miss more than two rehearsals for unvalidated reasons over the course of the year, they would be in jeopardy of losing their ensemble credit. This will be assessed on a case by case basis by the conductor and the Chair of the Performance Studies Department. Absence from performances or rehearsal(s) may result in the loss of your position in the choir and/or loss of ensemble credit. Attendance at the dress rehearsal is mandatory for participation in the concert. Notify the conductor of all absences with as much advance notice as possible. Attendance will be taken at all rehearsals.”

Course Materials:
Music (to be picked up at the CBO), pencil (at every rehearsal), and a black choral folder.

Music Sign-out
Choristers are responsible for signing out a folder of music for each term from the CBO library in Talbot College. Music must be returned in good condition at the end of each term to the CBO Library. Please take care to mark your music lightly, and with pencil only! Students will be financially responsible for replacing any music not returned to the CBO.

Concert Attire:
Full-length black skirt or black dress pants, black blouse or dress shirt (at least ¾ length sleeves), black socks or tights, black dress shoes.

Weekly Rehearsal Schedules:
Weekly rehearsal schedules will be posted on the class OWL site by Friday at 5:00pm of the previous week. These schedules will outline both Monday and Wednesday rehearsals for the following week and will include information related to required preparation as well as rehearsal rooms, groups of singers, and timings for in-person rehearsals and ventilation breaks.

Groupings of singers into smaller sub-choirs will change throughout the year. Sometimes we will be rehearsing as sections and sometimes we will be rehearsing as smaller mixed-voice ensembles.

Online rehearsals will be scheduled periodically so we can meet as an entire ensemble to share updates, discuss repertoire and related issues, and meet with invited guests.

Dress Rehearsal and Concert Schedule:
Attendance at the following rehearsals and concerts is required. Our performances are considered your exams for the course. Please add these dates to your calendars and alert your conductor of any academic conflicts in writing by the second week of classes.
Concert Cycle 1 (Concert occurs within regular class time.)
Wed. Dec. 2, 3:30 – 5:30 p.m.  WUS Concert, vKH

Concert Cycle 2
Wed. Feb. 10, 3:30 – 5:30 p.m.  WUS Dress Rehearsal, vKH
Wed. Feb. 10, 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.  SCS and WUS Concert, vKH

Concert Cycle 3
Tues. Mar. 30, 3:30 – 5:30 p.m.  WUS Dress Rehearsal, vKH
Tues. Mar. 30, 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.  SCS and WUS Concert, vKH

Notes:

i) Course Prerequisites: 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) Academic Consideration for Student Absence: Students will have up to two (2) opportunities during the regular academic year to use an on-line portal to self-report an absence during the term, provided the following conditions are met: the absence is no more than 48 hours in duration, and the assessment for which consideration is being sought is worth 30% or less of the student’s final grade. Students are expected to contact their instructors within 24 hours of the end of the period of the self-reported absence, unless noted on the syllabus. Students are not able to use the self-reporting option in the following circumstances:
• for exams scheduled by the Office of the Registrar (e.g., December and April exams)
• absence of a duration greater than 48 hours,
• assessments worth more than 30% of the student’s final grade,
• if a student has already used the self-reporting portal twice during the academic year

If the conditions for a Self-Reported Absence are not met, students will need to provide a Student Medical Certificate if the absence is medical, or provide appropriate documentation if there are compassionate grounds for the absence in question. Students are encouraged to contact their Faculty academic counselling office to obtain more information about the relevant documentation.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds, or for other reasons. All documentation required for absences that are not covered by the Self-Reported Absence Policy must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office. For the Western University policy on Consideration for Student Absence, see: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic_Consideration_for_absences.pdf
and for the Student Medical Certificate (SMC), see: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

iii) Academic Consideration for Missing Work: In cases where students are unable to submit work due to medical illness or compassionate grounds, if an online self-reported absence is submitted, or if appropriate supporting documentation is submitted to the Associate Dean’s
office, and the accommodation is granted, then the missed assessments may be rescheduled or discounted in the calculation of the final grade for the course, at the discretion of the instructor. If neither a self-reported absence nor an appropriate supporting document is submitted to the appropriate office, then the missed assignments will receive a grade of zero.

iv) **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](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

v) **Mental Health & Wellness:** Students that are in emotional/mental distress should refer to the Health and Wellness at Western page ([https://www.uwo.ca/health/](https://www.uwo.ca/health/)) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help or to go to the Wellness Education Centre located in UCC room 76. **Students in crisis in need of immediate care are directed to go directly to Student Health Services in UC11 or to click on the green “I Need Help Now” button on the Health and Wellness page above.**

vi) **Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:** Students work with Accessible Education Western (AEW, formerly SSD) 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](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation_disabilities.pdf)

vii) **Religious Accommodation:** Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious 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. Additional information is given in the Western Multicultural Calendar. [http://multiculturalcalendar.com/ecal/index.php?s=c-uniwo](http://multiculturalcalendar.com/ecal/index.php?s=c-uniwo)

viii) **Contingency Plan:** In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction, all remaining course content will be delivered entirely 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 grading scheme will **not** change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online at the discretion of the course instructor.

ix) **Recording of Online Activities:** All of the remote learning sessions for this course will be recorded. The data captured during these recordings may include your image, voice recordings, chat logs and personal identifiers (name displayed on the screen). The recordings will be used for educational purposes related to this course, including evaluations. The recordings may be disclosed to other individuals participating in the course for their private or group study purposes. Please contact the instructor if you have any concerns related to session recordings.

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation, or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor.
x) **Online Etiquette:** Some components of this course may involve synchronous online interactions. To ensure the best experience for both you and your classmates, please honour the following rules of etiquette:

- Use your computer and/or laptop if possible (as opposed to a cell phone or tablet)
- “Arrive” to class on time
- Ensure that you are in a private location to protect the confidentiality of discussions in the event that a class discussion deals with sensitive or personal material
- To minimize background noise, kindly mute your microphone for the entire class until you are invited to speak, unless directed otherwise
- Unless invited by your instructor, do not share your screen in the meeting
- Be prepared to turn your video camera off at the instructor's request if the internet connection becomes unstable

General considerations of “netiquette”:

- Keep in mind the different cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the students in the course.
- Be courteous toward the instructors, your colleagues, guests, and authors whose work you are discussing.
- Be respectful of the diversity of viewpoints that you will encounter in the class and in your readings. The exchange of diverse ideas and opinions is part of the scholarly environment.

Note that disruptive behaviour of any type during online classes, including inappropriate use of the chat function, is unacceptable. Students found guilty of “Zoom-bombing” a class, or of other serious online offenses, may be subject to disciplinary measures under the Code of Student Conduct.