

WESTERN UNIVERSITY  
DON WRIGHT FACULTY OF MUSIC

**Western University Singers**  
**Music 1910, 2910, 3910, 4910, 9528**  
Fall 2021 and Winter 2022  
*(revised Jan. 10, 2022)*

Instructor: Dr. Mark Ramsay  
Pronouns: he/him  
Office: TC325  
Email: [mramsay9@uwo.ca](mailto:mramsay9@uwo.ca)  
Office Hours: by appointment

Monday and Wednesday 3:30 - 5:20 p.m.  
Rehearsal location: MB227

Pianist: Laura Altenmueller

**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 members' 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...

- refine musicianship and performance skills within an ensemble setting
- explore style and performance practice through performance
- 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 rehearsals 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 from the CBO)
- pencil (in hand at every rehearsal)
- black choral folder
- concert attire (outlined below)

**Music Folders:**

Your music can be picked up from the Choral/Band/Orchestral (CBO) Collection, located on the main floor of Talbot College (TC134). Folders will be available before your first rehearsal, unless otherwise instructed by your ensemble director. You are responsible for the music signed out to you. Use pencil marks only and please avoid damaging your music to prevent potential fees. Please erase all unnecessary markings on your parts/copies before you return them to the library.

If, at any time, you need to switch parts with someone, please email or visit us in the Music Library, so that we can reassign the part(s) to the appropriate account. You can return music to the CBO or the Music Library (TC234) by the appropriate due date, as indicated on your folder. If you are finished with your music and wish to return it at an earlier date, please do so. If you have any questions, feel free to contact us at [muscbo@uwo.ca](mailto:muscbo@uwo.ca).

**Concert Attire:**

Full-length black skirt or black dress pants, black blouse or dress shirt (at least  $\frac{3}{4}$  length sleeves), black socks or tights, black dress shoes.

**Weekly Rehearsal Preparation Expectations:**

Weekly rehearsal outlines will be posted on the class OWL site by Friday 5:00 p.m. of the previous week. These outlines will provide preparation expectations for both Monday and Wednesday rehearsals of the following week.

**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** (*Recording session during regular rehearsal time*)

Mon. Oct. 18, 3:30 – 5:30 p.m.                      WUS Recording, vKH

**CONCERT CYCLE 2**

Fri. Dec. 3, 3:30 – 5:30 p.m.                      WUS Dress Rehearsal, PDT

Mon. Dec. 6, 7:30 – 9:30 p.m.                      WUS and CH Concert, PDT

A dress rehearsal and performance will occur within the final three weeks of the second semester. These events will be scheduled outside of our regular rehearsal times and will be considered by the Educational Policy Committee. Dates and times will be communicated to students a minimum of one month in advance.

Each student is required to individually speak with any instructors whose classes they may be missing due to the concert as early as possible once the dates are announced and bring any conflicts to your choir conductor's attention as soon as possible.

**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) **Grading scale:** Pass/Fail

iii) **Academic Consideration for Student Absence:** Students will have up to two (2) opportunities during the regular academic year to use an online 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](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](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf)

*Special Note for Covid-19-related Situations:*

As a guideline, if a student has been contacted by the Middlesex-London Health Unit (MLHU) to self-quarantine due to a Covid-19-related situation, then the Self-Reported Absence system is not to be used to report this absence or to request an academic accommodation. The student should contact the Academic Counselling office as soon as they are notified.

In general, even when the MLHU has not advised students to self-isolate, students are advised to follow the most recent directions from the university and the MLHU concerning when to self-isolate and for how long. Specifically, if a student believes they have Covid-19 then the student is directed to report this to the Academic Counselling office as soon as possible for further direction on receiving accommodation consideration.

iv) **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.

v) **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)

vi) **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/>) 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.**

vii) **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)

viii) **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-univwo>

ix) **Contingency Plan:** Although the intent is for this course to be delivered in-person, the changing COVID-19 restrictions may necessitate some or all of the course to be delivered 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 assessments affected will be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.