

**ADVANCED CHORAL REHEARSAL TECHNIQUES
MUS 6905**

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MATERIALS: Text – Kesling, Will. *The Voices in My Head: a Philosophical Approach to the Technical Issues of Choral Performance*. Manuscript

Additional texts as assigned from the Fine Arts Library
Lecture Outlines, selected Articles, selected Scores and a Baton

PURPOSE OF THE COURSE: To illustrate, discuss and apply practical, efficient and effective methodology for teaching choral music in rehearsals at an advance level.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES:

1. To study the role of the teacher/conductor as a musician and the role of the professional maestro and to present and their qualifications, responsibilities and professional preparation.
2. To study and analyze the elements of an artistic musical performance.
3. To study the conditions under which successful rehearsal of school choral ensembles are conducted.
4. To investigate the components of a rewarding musical experience.
5. To gain an overview of the body of appropriate repertoire available for secondary school choral ensembles.
6. To create a Compendium containing the materials of the course.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

1. To gain an understanding of how to develop the choral instrument by
 - a. Learning the European roots of choral music,
 - b. Gaining an historical perspective of choral music in America,
 - c. Examining the techniques and philosophies schools of choral singing in America
 - d. Examining the techniques of the schools of choral singing in America as they pertain to pitch, tone, dynamics, speech-in-song and vocal pedagogy,
 - e. Discussing the practical application of the various techniques presented, and
 - f. Analyzing the Instructor's methodology.
2. To continue to develop a philosophical basis for teaching and building an artistic ensemble.
3. To gain a deeper understanding of the choral conductor and the rehearsal by
 - a. Executing purposeful rehearsals,
 - b. Learning rehearsal preparation techniques

- c. Learning to prepare the score,
 - d. Discussing the issues of ensemble singing,
 - e. Evaluating the rehearsal environment,
 - f. Debating choral seating arrangements,
 - g. Discussing the types of rehearsals and their functions,
 - h. Learning rehearsal time/organization management,
 - i. Refining the use of purposeful warm-ups,
 - j. Discussing rehearsal pacing, use of humor, group dynamics, interaction,
 - k. Examining the make-up of different types of choral ensembles,
 - l. Discussing the use of the piano, accompanist, other instrumentalists and orchestra,
 - m. Determining the vocal pedagogical responsibilities of the choral conductor – including corrective procedures and demonstrations,
 - n. Acquiring advanced techniques regarding choral tone, intonation, rhythmic accuracy, balance and blend,
 - o. Learning principles of rhythmic diction, and
 - p. Discussing the stimulus of performance and festivals.
4. To develop a philosophy and gain insights as to how to select choral music and how to create interesting and effective concert programs.
 5. To explore the interpretive values of a choral composition and to gain deeper interpretive insights through and by the analysis of style and performance practice, phrasing and “musical meaning”.
 6. To relate the “grammar” of conducting to actual rehearsal techniques.

GENERAL INFORMATION: In this class the student will be expected to participate as

1. A singer,
2. A conductor, and
3. A participant in class discussions and presentations.

GRADING PROCEDURES: The final grade in the class is based on the following exams and assignments:

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| 1. Mid-term Exam | 10% |
| 2. Final Exam | 10% |
| 3. Term Paper | 20% |
| 4. Rehearsal Project | 20% |
| 5. Course Compendium* | 40% |
| 6. (See attendance policy below) | |

*Compendium Includes:

1. Proposed Concert Programs (4)**
2. Chapter Summaries (4 Texts)***
3. Diction Analysis (3)
4. Conductor's Analysis (3)
5. Rehearsal Reviews (3)
6. Choral Recording Reviews (3)
7. Rehearsal Project Rehearsal Plan
8. Class Notes

** Proposed Concert Programs:

1. Describe hypothetical ensemble and audience profile
2. Pick a concert program format.
3. Pick repertoire for the concert based on principles for developing programs
4. Using a few descriptors justify your selection of the pieces and why these are placed in the chosen position on the program

*** Chapter Summaries:

1. Summarize the chapter in one word.
2. Using the one word summarize the chapter in one sentence.
3. Using the one sentence summarize the chapter in one paragraph.

ABSENCE POLICY: Students are responsible for satisfying all academic objectives as defined by the instructor. There are no unexcused absences permitted. Inasmuch as the class meets once per week, attendance is mandatory. Unexcused absences will result in the grade being lowered 3% for each offense. Absences count from the first class meeting.

In general, acceptable reasons for absence from or failure to participate in class include illness, serious family emergencies, special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, and professional conferences), military obligation, severe weather conditions, religious holidays, and participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate. Absences from class for court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena) must be excused. Other reasons also may be approved.

* Reasonable accommodation will be provided for all persons with disabilities in order to ensure participation in the class. Please see the School of Music handbook for details

*As a result of completing the registration form at the University of Florida, every student has signed the following statement: ***"I understand that the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in all their academic work. I agree to adhere to this commitment to academic honesty and understand that***

my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the University. The instructor of this course fully supports the intent of the above statement and will not tolerate academic dishonesty. The members of the University of Florida Community pledge to hold themselves and their peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.

WEEKLY CLASS SCHEDULE OF TOPICS

WEEK ONE – Introduction	Syllabus & Expectations Choral Tone & Ensemble Objectives The Vowel and Choral Tone: One Place to Begin
WEEK TWO- Building Sound Structure	Sense-Conveying Distinctness: Elocution Placing the Voice in the Choir for Balance and Blend Ensemble Singing
WEEK THREE – Vocal Issues	The Choral Conductor & Vocal Issues The Choral Conductor as a Voice Teacher The Choral Conductor and the Individual Singer
WEEK FOUR - Selecting Repertoire: Philosophy	Palette & Canvas of Programming
WEEK FIVE - Selecting Repertoire: Technique	Selecting Repertoire: Technical Issues Our December Dilemma: the ‘Sacred’ Controversy
WEEK SIX - Interpretive Tools	Rhythm, Phrasing & Artistry Style and Interpretation
WEEK SEVEN - Interpretive Tools	Discovering the Composer’s Secrets: Score Study
WEEK EIGHT - Performance Practice	Renaissance Motet & Madrigal Singing Baroque Singing Style: Authenticity or Spirit

WEEK NINE - Performance Practice

**Keys to Classical Singing Style
Keys to Romantic Singing Style**

WEEK TEN - Performance Practice

Keys to Singing Polystylism

WEEK ELEVEN - Performance Practice

Singing Spirituals: Slavery's Unchained Melodies

WEEK TWELVE - Rehearsal Issues

**A Few Thoughts on Rehearsing
The First Rehearsal & the Last**

WEEK THIRTEEN - Rehearsal Issues

**Synchronizing the Chorus & Orchestra
Balancing the Chorus & Orchestra**

WEEK FOURTEEN - Conducting: A Process

**The Enigmatic Choral Conductor
The 'Superior' Choral Conductor**

WEEK FIFTEEN - Conducting: A Process

**Making a Maestro
Expectations and the Chorister**

WEEK SIXTEEN - Coda:

Rehearsal Projects