

# ADVANCED CHORAL REHEARSAL TECHNIQUES

MUG 6227

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Fall Semester 2025

## MATERIALS:

Text – Kesling, Will. *The Voices I Hear: A Philosophical and Practical Approach to the Choral Art*. Chicago: GIA Publications, 2022.

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
  - i. Learning the European roots of choral music,
  - ii. Gaining an historical perspective of choral music in America,
  - iii. Examining the techniques and philosophies schools of choral singing in America
  - iv. Examining the techniques of the schools of choral singing in America as they pertain to pitch, tone, dynamics, speech-in-song and vocal pedagogy,
  - v. Discussing the practical application of the various techniques presented, and
  - vi. 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
  - i. Executing purposeful rehearsals,
  - ii. Learning rehearsal preparation techniques
  - iii. Learning to prepare the score,
  - iv. Discussing the issues of ensemble singing,
  - v. Evaluating the rehearsal environment,
  - vi. Debating choral seating arrangements,
  - vii. Discussing the types of rehearsals and their functions,
  - viii. Learning rehearsal time/organization management,
  - ix. Refining the use of purposeful warm-ups,
  - x. Discussing rehearsal pacing, use of humor, group dynamics, interaction,
  - xi. Examining the make-up of different types of choral ensembles,
  - xii. Discussing the use of the piano, accompanist, other instrumentalists and orchestra,
  - xiii. Determining the vocal pedagogical responsibilities of the choral conductor – including corrective procedures and demonstrations,
  - xiv. Acquiring advanced techniques regarding choral tone, intonation, rhythmic accuracy, balance, and blend,
  - xv. Learning principles of rhythmic diction as they pertain to English, Latin, French, German, Italian, and Spanish, and
  - xvi. 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:

- |                       |     |
|-----------------------|-----|
| 1. Term Paper         | 40% |
| 2. Course Compendium* | 60% |

\*Compendium Includes:

1. Proposed Concert Programs (4)\*\*
2. Chapter Summaries (4 Texts)\*\*\*
3. Diction Analysis (all - Recital Repertoire)
4. Conductor's Analysis (all - Recital Repertoire)
5. Rehearsal Reviews (3)
6. Choral Recording Reviews (3)
7. Rehearsal Plans (Lesson 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.

(See attendance policy below)

### PURPOSED WEEKLY TOPICS

<b>WEEK ONE</b> – Introduction	Syllabus & Expectations Choral Tone & Ensemble Objectives The Vowel and Choral Tone: One Place to Begin
<b>WEEK TWO</b> - Building Sound Structure	Sense-Conveying Distinctness: Elocution Basic rules of diction: French, German, Italian, Latin, Spanish Placing the Voice in the Choir for Balance and Blend Ensemble Singing
<b>WEEK THREE</b> – Vocal Issues	The Choral Conductor & Vocal Issues The Choral Conductor as a Voice Teacher The Choral Conductor and the Individual Singer
<b>WEEK FOUR</b> - Selecting Repertoire:	Philosophy Palette & Canvas of Programming
<b>WEEK FIVE</b> - Selecting Repertoire: Technique	Selecting Repertoire: Technical Issues

	Our December Dilemma: the ‘Sacred’ Controversy
<b>WEEK SIX</b> - Interpretive Tools	Rhythm, Phrasing & Artistry Text, Style, and Interpretation
<b>WEEK SEVEN</b> - Interpretive Tools	Discovering the Composer’s Secrets: Score Study
<b>WEEK EIGHT</b> - Performance Practice	Renaissance Motet & Madrigal Singing Baroque Singing Style: Authenticity or Spirit
<b>WEEK NINE</b> - Performance Practice	Keys to Classical Singing Style Keys to Romantic Singing Style
<b>WEEK TEN</b> - Performance Practice	Keys to Singing Polystylism
<b>WEEK ELEVEN</b> - Performance Practice	Singing Spirituals: Slavery’s Unchained Melodies
<b>WEEK TWELVE</b> - Rehearsal Issues	A Few Thoughts on Rehearsing The First Rehearsal & the Last
<b>WEEK THIRTEEN</b> - Rehearsal Issues	Synchronizing the Chorus & Orchestra Balancing the Chorus & Orchestra
<b>WEEK FOURTEEN</b> - Conducting: A Process	The Enigmatic Choral Conductor The ‘Superior’ Choral Conductor
<b>WEEK FIFTEEN</b> - Conducting: A Process	Making a Maestro Expectations and the Chorister
<b>WEEK SIXTEEN</b> - Coda:	

### **UNIVERSITY ABSENCE POLICY**

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.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

### **SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS**

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once

registered, students will receive an accommodation letter that must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

## **COURSE EVALUATION**

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

## **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

The Honor Pledge that states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code, binds UF students. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.”

The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

## **CAMPUS RESOURCES**

Health and Wellness  
U Matter, We Care:

If you or a friend is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) or 352 392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center:  
<https://counseling.ufl.edu/>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

*Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS)*

Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

University Police Department, 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies). <http://www.police.ufl.edu>

## **Academic Resources**

*E-learning technical support*, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to [Learning-support@ufl.edu](mailto:Learning-support@ufl.edu). <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>

*Career Connections Center*, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling.  
<https://career.ufl.edu/>

*Library Support*, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/> ask Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

*Teaching Center*, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.  
<http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>

*Writing Studio*, 2215 Turlington Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>

*Student Complaints On-Campus*: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>

\*The syllabus is subject to change at any time.\*