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MUSI 336.01: Choral Conducting

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CHORAL PROGRAM

Choral Conducting MUSI 336

Instructor: Dr. Coreen Duffy

Email: coreen.duffy@umontana.edu

Office Hours: By appointment

Meeting Times: M-W 9:00-9:50 a.m.

Meeting Place: Room 218

LEARNING OUTCOMES: The purpose of this course is to help you discover your inner conductor. We will give you the space—both physical (on the podium and in the lab choir) and emotional (support from your colleagues)—to connect your gesture to your intellect and grow as a leader. Specifically, these are the learning outcomes:

- 1) Embracing your identity and power as a conductor and music-maker on the podium
- 2) Score preparation techniques, focusing on:
 - a. audiation
 - b. score marking
 - c. vocal and scholarly preparation
- 3) Gestural and leadership issues, including:
 - a. conducting patterns
 - b. fermatas
 - c. cues
 - d. changing tempi
 - e. asymmetrical and changing meters

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGY:

1. Conducting with and without baton
2. Self-evaluations via video observations
3. In-person and remote delivery of learning objectives and assessments
4. Practicing conducting and rehearsal techniques

MATERIALS:

1. Resonance Mask for singing (optional)
2. Conducting baton, white 12-inch (optional)
3. Three-ring binder for music (required)
4. In lieu of a textbook, students will need to maintain scores, double-sided and three-hole punched, and organized in a binder.

SINGING/PARTICIPATION: The class itself forms the laboratory choir that each student will conduct. For this reason, and because students are uniquely capable of helping each other to solve conducting problems, consistent attendance, punctuality, **vocal preparation on parts**, gestural preparation, and accurate singing during class time are critical to everyone's development.

If you need to miss class for any reason, please email me at coreen.duffy@umontana.edu to let me know the reason for the absence. This is very important, as it helps both of us understand and track your participation and success in Choral Conducting.

Perfect attendance is the expectation. Absences due to illness and/or COVID-19 quarantine will be excused. A planned absence must be discussed in advance via email. Good communication and documentation is imperative. Absences will not be excused without written communication.

ORGANIZATION AND GRADING:

1. **Conducting Projects.** At the end of each unit, students will conduct the class on the repertoire assigned. This session will be video-recorded and graded according to a rubric that will be provided in advance. The students will have the opportunity to write a self-evaluation of the conducting project (using forms provided on Moodle) and post it to Moodle.
 - a. Each conducting project will be graded based upon the student's accomplishment of the conducting goals presented in the unit.
 - b. The student's overall progress, poise, and gesture—as well as participation in and preparation for lab choir—will be taken into account in the grading, as well.
2. **Participation** (including regular attendance, accurate singing for peers, and offering feedback) is expected and will figure into the final course grade.

The course components will be weighted as follows:

Six Conducting Assessments at 12% each	72%
Six Conducting Self-Evaluations at 3% each	18%
<u>Participation: includes accuracy in singing parts</u>	<u>10%</u>
TOTAL:	100%

Grading rubrics for each unit will be provided in advance on Moodle, so that you know exactly how your skills will be evaluated. Grades will be awarded on the following scale:

93-100	A	73-76	C
90-92	A-	70-72	C-
87-89	B+	63-69	D
83-86	B	60-62	D-
80-82	B-	59 or lower	F
77-79	C+		

CLASS SCHEDULE (repertoire, assessments and assignments subject to change, with notice)

M 8/29 Introduction/Diagnostics: Introduction to patterns, preparations, asymmetrical meter and fermatas
Star Spangled Banner

W 8/31 Use of *Star Spangled Banner* to facilitate fermatas, 3-pattern, preps and releases
Three fermata types: long break, short break, and no break

M 9/5 Labor Day: No class

Homework assigned for Wednesday, 9/7: study score and learn/audiate parts for the first page of Byrd Mass Excerpt.
W 9/7 Fermatas, *Star Spangled Banner*, prep beats with singer's breath in the pattern
If time: start assessments (see below)

M 9/12 **Round robin assessment on *Star Spangled Banner***, from "Oh, say does that Star Spangled Banner" to the end. Choose two different fermata types for the two fermatas.

W 9/14 Cues: they are fast and furious. William Byrd, Mass for Three Voices: Agnus Dei, excerpt

Assignment for 9/19: self-evaluation of *Star Spangled Banner* assessment
M 9/19 Cues, continued. Byrd Mass.

W 9/21 **Round robin assessment on Byrd Mass excerpt**

Assignment for Wednesday, 9/28: self-eval of Byrd Mass on Moodle and study score; sing/audiate parts for "The Handsome Butcher"

M 9/26 **Rosh Hashanah: class does not meet officially. Class members welcome to meet and practice singing and conducting "Handsome Butcher" independently**

- W 9/28 *Marcato* and *leggiere* conducting; tempo changes; taps and caesuras; conducting dramatic material; conductors as storytellers: “The Handsome Butcher”
- M 10/3 “Handsome Butcher,” continued
- W 10/5 **Yom Kippur. Class does not meet. Members welcome to practice in 218 during class time.**
- M 10/10 **Round-robin assessment on “Handsome Butcher”**
- W 10/12 **Assignment for Monday, 10/12: study score and sing/audiate parts for Mozart, *Lacrymosa* from Requiem (excerpt)**
Compound meter: Conducting in 6, 9 and 12-patterns: Mozart *Lacrymosa*
- M 10/17 **Assignment for 10/18: self-eval of “Handsome Butcher” assessment**
Mozart: rehearsal techniques
- W 10/19 **MMEA Departure day. Class will meet if students can leave for Bozeman after class.** Mozart, continued
- M 10/24 Mozart, continued
- W 10/26 **Round-robin assessment on Mozart**
- M 10/31 **Assignment for 10/31: self-eval of Mozart assessment, and prepare voice parts for Claussen, Psalm 100**
Conducting mixed, asymmetrical meter: how to mark and prepare your score
- W 11/2 **Assignment for 11/2: mark score for Claussen, Psalm 100**
Mixed, asymmetrical meter: Psalm 100
- M 11/7 Mixed, asymmetrical meter: Psalm 100
- W 11/9 **Round-robin assessment on Psalm 100**

Assignment for 11/14: Self-eval for Psalm 100; Study Britten score. Practice text, pitches
M 11/14 Bringing it all together: Britten, “Nimrod” section from *Rejoice in the Lamb*
(Dr. Duffy absent for Western A Choral Festival in Hamilton)

Assignment for 11/17: Mark Britten score for conducting
W 11/16 Piecing together the duple/triple combos: how to practice quick-changing asymmetrical meter

M 11/21 Conducting Britten score

W 11/23 Non-instructional travel day for Thanksgiving

M 11/28 Conducting Britten score

W 11/30 Conducting Britten score

M 12/5 **Round-robin assessment of Britten**

Due Wednesday, 12/7: Britten self-eval

W 12/7 **Reflections and connections to choral methods, instrumental conducting, and instrumental methods. What’s the through-line? Do you see yourself as a conductor? You should!**

We will not use the Final Exam period.

Wishing everyone the best possible semester! Remember, if you have questions about anything (conducting, preparing singing parts—anything), please come and see me!