

Moravian Choir

Syllabus - Spring 2006

Course Numbers:

College Choir: MUS 310 (majors), MUS 001 (elective), or MUS 011 (M6)

Music Director: Dr. Paula Ring Zerkle

Office: Rm. 308, Music Building

Office Hours: M/W 2:30p-3:30p

Voicemail: 610-861-1681

Email: zerkle@moravian.edu

Goals of the Choral Program at Moravian College

To provide the students at Moravian College an exciting experience of standard choral repertoire, through performance and/or concert attendance

To involve students with a broad range of musical compositions, including, but not limited to, works by women composers, world music composers, student composers, and Moravian composers

To teach musical expression and vocal production, through enhancing students' knowledge of phrase shaping, articulation, diction, posture, and correct breathing techniques

To encourage individual integrity and responsibility along with teamwork and group responsibility.

Special exercises and activities during rehearsals as well as performances and tours are used to help in increasing individual self-awareness and in strengthening respect and appreciation among singers within the vocal ensembles

To integrate current repertoire with music curriculum, whenever possible

To encourage involvement from members of the Moravian community and of the Lehigh Valley community

CHOIR OFFICERS

Keith LaBar, President

Lisa Toth and Becky Dries, Manager/VP

Renee Sakos, Secretary

Christa Speck, Treasurer

Section leaders: to be determined

MEMBERSHIP AND AUDITIONS

- Membership is open to all Moravian students, staff, and faculty and members of the Lehigh Valley community
- All new vocalists who wish to join the Moravian College Choir or Women's Chorus must audition for the Music Director. A returning member of either group will not be asked to re-audition, unless the singer wishes to be in a group they have not been in before.
- **Auditionees** will be expected to
 - sing a prepared song of their choice (with or without accompaniment)
 - sight-read excerpts from choral repertoire
 - sing vocal exercises as led by the Choral Director
- Decisions on membership are based on the singer's performance in the audition in relationship to the balance of the ensemble. If someone wants to re-audition, it must be done within a week of the first audition.
- **Solo Auditions.** Sign up sheets for solo auditions will be available about two weeks in advance of the audition date, along with a list of expected criteria for the solo. The Choral Director and accompanist will be present during the audition. Decision for the solos will be made by the Choir Director and will be based on the level of musical preparation of audition material and on the level of performance according to the criteria expected.

REPERTOIRE

- Repertoire is chosen by the Choral Director in line with the Goals of the Choral Program.
- Other priorities considered in choosing repertoire include: works by student and faculty composers; works suggested by choral members; works that allow collaboration with others in the music department or in other departments
- **All choral members are expected to supply a 1-inch black binder in good condition to hold music and will be asked to purchase a Coro-Grip hand strip and music holder.**

CONCERTS AND SCHEDULES

- The College Choir and Women's Chorus normally participate in seven scheduled concerts in the fall (one pre-Vespers concert and six Vespers services) and a Spring Concert in the second semester. Other performances or tours may be added. In addition, the College Choir is expected to perform for Baccalaureate and Graduation.
- All members of the choirs are expected to attend all scheduled rehearsals, retreats, concerts, and tours that occur during a semester. Singers will be notified of these events in a schedule handed out at the beginning of the semester. The groups usually travel abroad every 4 years or so, and locally in the U.S. in the off-years.
- **EVERYONE MUST ATTEND DESIGNATED DRESS REHEARSALS OR THEY WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO SING IN THE CONCERT**

ATTENDANCE

- **Attendance is required at all rehearsals.** At the beginning of each semester, a complete schedule will be distributed, and all singers must complete a commitment form stating any scheduling conflicts with this schedule by the next week.
- **If a singer is sick, he or she is expected to sit quietly during rehearsal and mark music.**
- **If a singer is very ill** (vomiting, high temperature), he or she must call or email the music director AND the choral secretary prior to the rehearsal. Students who miss rehearsals due to illness must bring a **doctor's excuse** to the choral secretary by the next rehearsal AND fill out an absence form. Any singer not following these procedures will not be excused from the absence. The **ONLY** exception is in the case of an absolute emergency (to be determined by Choral Director and Officers).
- Any singer with more than three unexcused absences may be subject to dismissal from the ensemble.

GRADING AND CREDIT

- All music majors enrolled in MU310 (Performance) at any credit level with concentrations in voice, piano, organ, guitar, or electric bass must be in a large vocal ensemble each semester for credit and a grade to fulfill the large ensemble requirement. Vocal ensembles can also serve as secondary ensembles to wind, brass, string, and percussion majors, and two semesters are required of all music education majors with an instrumental emphasis.

- Grading for MU310 is based on attendance, attitude, preparation, participation, performance, and quizzes with this breakdown:

Attendance	40%
Attitude	20%
Preparation	10%
Participation	10%
Performance	10%
Periodic quizzes	10%

- For every unexcused absence, 25 points are deducted from the weekly attendance grade; for excused absences, 5 points, and for each unexcused late, 10 points. An unexcused absence from a concert will subtract 15 points from the overall grade.
- Anyone who accumulates three or more unexcused absences in Choir may be suspended from the ensemble. **If a singer misses the dress rehearsal prior to a concert, he or she will not be allowed to perform in the concert.**
- **Auditors.** Anyone not taking this class for a grade is expected to follow the same attendance rules as those who are registered for it.
- **Exams.** Periodic oral quizzes may be given during the course of a semester. These will usually consist of singing one's part either alone or with singers on other parts.
- **A rubric sheet** will be filled out for each participant in the choir, regardless of their registration status.
- Students may fulfill their **M6** (Aesthetic Expression) requirement with six semesters of any combination of choir and/or women's chorus. The students are expected to participate in all rehearsals, performances, and tours. Singers will be required to produce written program notes on works selected by the director from each semester's repertoire. After four semesters, a .5 unit worth of credit will appear on the transcript, and after 6 semesters, a full unit will appear.

CONCERT ATTIRE

- Women are required to purchase a specific floor-length black dress through the College (\$90) and wear black stockings, flat black shoes, and a strand of pearls.
- Men are required to wear a tuxedo, which they may purchase through the College or from a local retailer (usually around \$200) if they do not already own one. The entire outfit includes a tux with a white shirt, black bow tie, black cummerbund, black socks, and black shoes.

CHORAL OFFICERS

- Two to three weeks before the end of the academic year, Choral Officers are elected in both vocal ensembles for the following academic year. Officers attend regular meetings (usually every week) with the Choral Director.

General duties that apply to all Officers are:

- act as liaison between choir members and the conductor and serve as models of behavior and choral decorum
- meet weekly or bi-weekly with the conductor
- arrange for rehearsal refreshments when necessary
- assist conductor in arrangements for fundraisers, tours, retreats, social events, publicity, and more, as needed
- assist conductor in guiding and facilitating choir policy, resolution of personnel conflicts, and public relations
- run elections

Duties specific to each office are:

President

- public spokesperson for choral ensemble and in charge of publicity
- in charge of overseeing the other officers and organizing choral activities inside and outside of rehearsals

Manager (Vice-President)

- responsible for logistical set up for rehearsals, concerts, and refreshments
- assists president and director in the running of the ensemble

Secretary

- in charge of daily attendance, commitment and release forms - supplies Director with accumulative list of absences each week
- choir correspondent

Treasurer

- in charge of fundraising, money collecting, ordering concert attire, music distribution, and tour money management

Section Leaders

- At the beginning of each semester section leaders will be chosen (at least one (1) from each vocal part) to be a representative and liaison to their respective voice section. These people will be part of the Choral Board and may be asked to attend occasional meetings with the Choral Officers and the Choral Director. The section leaders are also expected to be able to run occasional sectional rehearsals.

The Choral Board

- This group will be made up of the Choral Officers, Choral Director and section leaders from each choral ensemble. The Board will hold periodic meetings and will deal with issues such as tour planning, fundraising, repertoire planning, personnel conflicts etc. These meetings are not closed. Anyone from the choral groups is able to come to these meetings and express ideas and concerns.

TOURS

- The Choral Officers will assist the music director in the planning and organizing of performance tours. The Treasurer will assist in fundraising and money collection.
- For extended tours, special tasks may be assigned to various students, who will work with the Music Director in the planning and preparation of the tour. These tasks include Planning, Attendance-taking, Stage Set-up and Instrument handling, Photography, Concert Recording, among others.

EVALUATIONS

- Each semester members of the ensemble will complete **Conductor/Course Evaluation Forms**. After the ensemble grades are turned in, these forms are made available to the conductor and placed in her permanent file.
- Additional evaluations may be distributed by the Director and may consist of three parts: 1) an evaluation of yourself, including a review of your attendance, attitude, contributions to the group, and personal experience, 2) an evaluation of the Officers and how you perceive their accomplishments, and 3) an additional evaluation of the conductor that does not become an official school document. These forms may be signed or left anonymous and are returned to the Choral Officers. As with the Conductor/Course Evaluation Forms, the Director may not read them until the course grades have been completed. These evaluations will then be reviewed by the Choral Officers and in conjunction with the Director.
- Throughout the semester, choral members are encouraged to communicate both satisfaction and discontent to the conductor, individually or in groups. If the choral member is uncomfortable approaching the Choir Director, that member may speak to a Choral Officer or a section leader.