DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC
MUSC 2750/4750/5750: Concert Choir
MW 2-2:50 PM; TTh 2-3:15 PM, HUM 301
Spring 2018 (1 credit)

Instructor: Alex Sutton
asutton@westga.edu
Office: HUM 338, (678) 839-6276
Office Hours: as posted
Student Assistant: Samantha Craig

E-mail communication must be through UWG domains only

“I believe in singing. I believe in singing together.”
—Brian Eno

CATALOG COURSE DESCRIPTION

• **Prerequisite:** demonstrated vocal proficiency.

• **Description:** the study and performance of choral literature from traditional, contemporary, and diverse cultural sources. Includes on-campus and sometimes off-campus performances. Open to music-major and non-music-major students.

COURSE OBJECTIVES & LEARNING OUTCOMES

• Through guided study, rehearsal, and performance of choral literature, students will demonstrate:

  1. the ability to rehearse and perform a variety of choral music;
  2. an understanding of a variety of musical styles, including the various style periods in Western art music, music of other cultures, and occasional American popular styles;
  3. knowledge about the composer, history, and style of the music performed;
  4. the ability to respond to instruction and contribute positively to the performance level of the group;
  5. the ability to apply performance techniques appropriate to the style, composer, ensemble, and setting;
  6. the ability to perform music in public.

• **Learning activities:**

  1. Guided vocalization to develop individual vocal technique, including breath control, resonance, diction, and flexibility, and choral technique, including sensitivity to balance, vowel uniformity (blend), & rhythmic precision.
  2. Experiences in score study and sight reading to develop musicianship.
COURSE MATERIALS

- **Required Concert Attire:** students must provide performance attire at their own expense.

  **Men**
  - Black tuxedo with black cummerbund, white shirt, black bow tie, black dress shoes and black socks; men may order any or all parts of a tuxedo through UWG at a group rate; entire tux package is $102.

  **Women**
  - Choir dress, single strand pearls and pearl earrings, black closed-toe shoes;
    - Gown= $67.00
    - Gown with necklace= $75.00
    - Gown with earrings= $72.00
    - Gown with necklace and earrings = $80.00

  Students arrange for their own shoes.

- **Choir Folder and Sheet Music:** check periodically that you have your assigned number. Folders and pieces of music are the property of the University and must be returned at the end of the semester. Replacement costs for lost or damaged music will be assessed at the instructor’s discretion.

- **Pencil:** every rehearsal. Sheet music is university property and may not be marked in pen.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

- Consistent, prompt attendance by every member is essential for the success of the ensemble. As a condition of enrollment, students must commit themselves to attendance at all rehearsals and performances. Conflicts should be reported at the beginning of the term to determine whether the conflict will preclude continued enrollment in the Concert Choir.

  **Students who miss three (3) consecutive classes without contacting the instructor may be dropped from the course at the instructor’s discretion.**

- **Absences:**
  - Examples of EXCUSED ABSENCES are class field trips (if reported in advance), significant illness, or death in the immediate family.
  - Examples of UNEXCUSED ABSENCES are study sessions, making up tests, advisement, registration, meetings, weddings, attending to ill friends, family events, etc.
  - Students are allowed two (2) unexcused absences without penalty for these purposes. A third unexcused absence will result in the grade being lowered one letter-grade. Thereafter, every two unexcused absences will result in the grade being lowered an additional letter-grade.
• **Absence Forms:** all absences require the submission of a completed **Absence Form**. Forms are provided in the pencil box located on top of the folder rack. Completed forms should be given directly to the instructor or the student assistant. Whenever possible, students should notify the instructor before an absence. Absences reported after-the-fact may require additional documentation to be considered excused.

• **Tardies:** Students not in their seats with music and a pencil when warm-ups begin are considered tardy.
  
  o Three (3) tardies count as an unexcused absence.
  o Extended tardies/late arrival for dress rehearsals or concerts may count as two (2) tardies.
  o Leaving class early or temporarily (except in emergencies) will receive the same consideration as tardies.

**COURSE POLICIES**

• **Common Language for Course Syllabi:** consult the following link for University policies on academic support, online courses, honor code, e-mail policy, credit hour policy, and campus carry: [https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpaa/common-language-course-syllabi.php](https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpaa/common-language-course-syllabi.php)

• **Assigned Seating:** assigned seating within sections of voice parts is musically and logistically necessary for the operations of the UWG Concert Choir. If you would like to be moved for any reason, please contact the instructor.

• **Physical Contact:** shoulder rubs and upper back rubs, as well as light chopping, are traditional components of choral warm up procedures intended to promote relaxation in muscle groups associated with physical alignment, respiration, vocalization, resonance, and articulation. It is the policy of the class that participation in these instances of physical contact represents consent, and consent is informed, freely given, mutual, and can be withdrawn at any time. Students are under no obligation to participate and may remove themselves from physical contact.

• **Sacred Music:** The University of West Georgia Concert Choir follows the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) and National Association for Music Education (NAfME) philosophies on sacred music. In representing the history and development of music, vocal music cannot be taught without the inclusion of historic and cultural sacred choral literature. In representing historic composers and the variety of styles and forms in music, the use of sacred repertoire is essential to the curriculum and is introduced without teaching and/or promoting doctrines. Since roughly 80% of existing choral literature is sacred and 20% is secular, that ratio could be heard at any given UWG Concert Choir performance.

• **Special Needs and Accommodations:** If you have any special needs related to your participation in the course, including identified visual impairment, hearing impairment, physical impairment, communication disorder, and/or specific learning disability that may influence your performance
in this course, you should meet with the instructor to arrange for reasonable provisions to ensure an equitable opportunity to meet all the requirements of this course.

- **Common Courtesy and Common Respect**: please plan bathroom breaks with class length in mind. Eating and drinking in class is prohibited, except for water in closed containers. Students attending to other matters such as electronic devices, print materials, etc., will be counted absent for the day, and may be asked to leave. Turn cell phones off and put them away before class begins. Exceptions to the above are certainly possible, and students with extenuating circumstances should discuss them with the instructor.

**EVALUATION**

- Through observation and verbal dialogue, the instructor will evaluate each student’s demonstration of the Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes described above.

- Observed elements include the student’s ability to sing the music after a reasonable amount of rehearsal time, to perform the music as rehearsed (including phrasing, diction, style, and expression), and to exhibit leadership characteristics commensurate with the student’s vocal ability, training, and experience.

- **Upper Division students** are expected to model rehearsal and performance decorum for Lower Division students to emulate.

- **Graduate students** are expected to assist undergraduate students in acquiring the Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes.

- Elements evaluated through question-and-answer dialogue include such things as musical/historical facts and perspective, and elements of technique and style. The depth of understanding exhibited by student responses is expected to be commensurate with the level of enrollment.

- **Grades** determined as above may be adjusted to reflect an individual’s effort and attitude as demonstrated by prompt attendance at all rehearsals and performances, preparedness for rehearsals (including materials), proper rehearsal and performance decorum (including posture and refraining from distracting activities), and assistance with tasks as needed, (equipment, displaying publicity, tickets, etc.)

- Grades may be further adjusted to reflect attendance as described above.