

Apalachee High School



Choral Program Handbook 2022-2023

Doug Grant | Choir Director

Welcome and Introduction

Welcome and thank you for joining the Apalachee High School Choir Program. You are now an important member of an AHS performing ensemble. Your talents, professionalism, and hard work will allow our program to continue to grow and achieve excellence. I am very excited to have the opportunity to work with each of you. I hope you will find your choir class to be fun, informative, and rewarding.

The choral program offers a variety of in-school and extra-curricular ensembles. The ensembles encompass a variety of skill levels and voice types. All classes/ensembles will be focused on understanding and performing music ranging from the Medieval period to Modern works. To do this, the ensembles will gain a basic understanding of music theory, history, composition, aural skills, sight reading, and performance techniques. The ensembles also reinforce individual responsibility, teamwork, and the importance of music in society.

You will have the opportunity to demonstrate your musical ability through a variety of performances. Your participation in concerts, musicals, field trips, auditions, and competitions will continuously develop your abilities throughout the year.

As a representative of this school and the choral program, you are required to conduct yourself with professionalism in your school, your community, and any chorus related event. The choral handbook will explain the policies of the program and the obligations of ensemble members. You and your parents should review the information herein and direct any questions to the director.

Parents/Guardians, your involvement in chorus events allows the students to perform at their very best. Thank you for the encouragement and support that you provide to your students every day. If you would like to volunteer, please contact me at the email address below.

Doug Grant

Chorus Director

Tri-M Sponsor

Apalachee High School

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Course Overview

Each choir will focus on the following topics:

Music Theory and Aural Skills

Students will study music theory concepts (note names, clefs, rests, rhythms, forms, articulations, dynamics, key signatures, time signatures, vocal parts/ranges, etc.) and aural skills (listening, dictation) as they implement this knowledge into their own performances and compositions.

Vocal Production

Students will be evaluated on the improvement of their individual vocal production, including proper placement, breathing, posture, vowel shape, and blend within the ensemble.

Compositional Studies

Students will participate in score studies of musical works. Students will also compose their own musical works.

Music History

Students will learn how music developed through the progression of historical eras. Composers of all eras, and their contributions to music and culture, will be studied.

Sight Reading

Students will develop their ability to read and interpret musical works efficiently.

Ensemble Rehearsal

Students will be evaluated on their participation during rehearsal, focusing on their dedication, attitude, and professionalism.

Ensemble Performance and Interpretation

Students will be evaluated on their ability to perform and correctly interpret the music through their knowledge of music theory, aural skills, history, performance practices, and vocal production.

Music Critique

Students will evaluate various musical performances.

Grading Overview

Formative Assignments: 45%

Includes participation in rehearsals, sight reading, listening journals, games, etc.

Summative Assignments: 35%

Includes performances, written tests, and singing quizzes.

Final Exam: 20%

Includes a final performance, project, and/or written final exam.

Required Materials

All black ½ inch three-ring binder, pencil, personal water bottle, and uniform.

Choral Literature

We will explore, rehearse, and perform a varied selection of music throughout the year. Our sacred and secular choral literature is chosen based on the educational and aesthetic value of a composition.

Classroom Procedures

1. Be in your correct riser placement and prepared to work within 2 *minutes* of the final bell.
2. Choral folders, water, and pencils are the only items allowed on the risers.
3. All non-rehearsal related belongings must be placed in your assigned area.
4. Phone use is not permitted during rehearsal. Do not charge your phone in the classroom. Parents that wish to contact their students during instructional time should call the main office (770-586-5111).
5. Tardiness and unexcused absences will affect your grade and ability to perform. You will be marked tardy if you are not inside the choir room by the final bell.
6. Students should always have access to their own music and pencil. Do not share octavos. You are responsible for any damage to your musical scores. Do not make marks in your scores with anything other than a pencil. Erase all score marks before returning your music at the end of the semester. Lost or damaged sheet music must be replaced at the expense of the student.
7. Do not interrupt rehearsals/lessons with talking, phone use, or being out of assigned area. Leaving the rehearsal space to use your phone is not permitted.
8. No food or gum is allowed in the chorus room. Water only. You will be asked to throw away any food you bring into the classroom. Finish any meals and enter the chorus room before the final bell.
9. Failure to stand when asked will result in loss of participation points.
10. If your section is not singing, follow along in your own music. Do not work on anything from other classes during choral instructional time.
11. Be respectful of your peers, director, and classroom guests. Rudeness or bullying is unprofessional and will not be tolerated.
12. Limit your restroom trips.
13. Do not apply perfume, cologne, or fragrant lotions within the choir room. Practice good personal hygiene on a daily basis.
14. Do not leave the classroom without permission for any reason.
15. Maintain a clean, safe and welcoming classroom at all times.
16. Make the director aware of any issues that will affect your participation before rehearsal begins.
17. Students must follow the policies of the school and choral program at all events.

Classroom Leave

1. When leaving the classroom for any reason, students must sign in and out.
2. Students are permitted to leave the classroom one at a time with approval. You may not be allowed to leave immediately, so plan accordingly. Speak to the director privately if there is an emergency.
3. Do not go anywhere other than your approved destination.
4. Attendance, front office, and vending machine visits are limited to class transitions.
5. *You must have the approval of the director before leaving the classroom for any reason.*

Live Performance Procedures

1. Arrive in your uniform before or at the call time for each performance.
2. Direct your friends and family to the audience seating. Only choir members should be present in the warm-up area.
3. Stay in the warm-up area until given instructions by the director.
4. Please ensure that you have transportation to/from the performance ahead of the event.
5. Students arriving late or out of uniform may not be allowed to perform.
6. The use of cologne/perfume/fragrant lotions is not permitted. Practice good hygiene.
7. Acceptable jewelry is limited to stud earrings.
8. Phones and other valuables should be secured outside of the performance venue.
9. Remember that performances are graded events for you and your peers.
10. Students are **required** to break down and clean our venue after performances. Not participating will affect your grade for the performance. You will need to sign out with Mr. Grant to receive full credit.
11. Failure to adhere to these procedures will result in a lower performance grade.

Performance/Rehearsal Scheduling Conflicts

Due to the nature of the course, all choir performances are required and cannot be recreated. Unexcused absences from a performance could result in failure of the course. Acceptable excused absences are limited and will require documentation to receive a make-up assignment. It is your responsibility to inform the director of absences ahead of scheduled performances. If the student has an approved written excuse from a physician or parent, an alternate assignment may be provided at the discretion of the director. Conflicts with other performing groups or school activities will be handled on a case by case basis. Work, babysitting, sports practices, field trips, and not having transportation are not considered valid excuses. Please see the director for help immediately if one of these will prevent you from attending a performance.

Students that remain in class when ill are expected to have their music open, listen to instruction, and participate when possible.

Concert Attire

Approved attire is required for all performances. Students permitted to perform without complete, clean, and pressed uniform will receive a minimum 10 point reduction in their performance grade. Please inform the director of uniform issues prior to the day of performance. Students will own uniforms and can sell them to other students when they leave the program.

Soprano/Alto: AHS concerto dress and black closed-toe *dress* shoes. Heels are dangerous and not acceptable. Hair must be away from your face during performances. \$60

Tenor/Bass: AHS vest ensemble, black socks, and black *dress* shoes. Hair should be away from your face during performances. Unless you have a full beard or mustache, shave. \$70

Alternate Performance Attire

Special events may require an alternate uniform. Students will be informed of the use of any alternate uniform in advance of the performance.

Concert Etiquette

Students

During a performance, do not motion to audience members unless called for within the music. Focus should remain on the director at all times. Talking to your peers or horseplay while on stage is strictly forbidden. Speaking audibly in the venue wings is also not allowed. All actions during a performance must benefit the audience and our interpretation of the music.

Audience

All electronic devices must be silenced. Refrain from distracting any of the performers before or during the performance. Talking during the performance is disrespectful to the other audience members and performers. Please remain seated and refrain from entering/exiting the performance space until a song or song set has concluded. Young children should be watched after and removed if causing a disturbance. Please refrain from applauding until the piece is over (indicated by the composer lowering his hands). If the ensemble is performing a set of pieces, please wait until all the pieces are over before applauding.

Participation Requirements

You are expected to contribute vocally to your ensemble daily. Although not required to sing individually for your peers, you may be required to periodically sing to your director for progress assessment. Students that do not attend concerts without approved excuses are subject to failure of the course and removal from the choral program in the following semester.

Google Classroom/Microsoft Teams

The majority of classroom assignments and notifications will be posted on your choir's Google Classroom and/or Microsoft Teams website. You will be able to view and complete any posted assignment using the Google Classroom app on your phone or via your web browser. Please note that you must be signed into your school account in order to access your assignments. It is recommended that you enable notifications.

Field Trips

During the year, individuals or entire ensembles may be required or encouraged to participate in outside performance opportunities, including All-State Chorus, All-State Sight-reading Chorus, Honors Chorus, Literary Meet, Large Group Performance Evaluation, Competitions, Clinics, Choral Days, etc. Students must provide the appropriate forms and any payment by the due date to be able to travel with the group. On field trips, students are to follow the rules set forth by the school system, choir director, and any establishment at which they are to appear. Failure to adhere to the rules on a field trip will result in parents/guardians being called to pick up their student.

Auditioned Ensembles

The advanced ensembles are open to students by audition only. Some additional advanced groups will be open only to members within the advanced ensembles. Other groups will not require participation in the advanced ensembles but will require an audition. The size of the advanced choral ensembles is subject to change and may affect the difficulty of auditions. Some ensembles will require a year-long commitment.

Large Group Performance Evaluation (LGPE)

Advanced ensembles will participate in the Georgia Music Educators Association's LGPE. This event takes place in March during a school day. Participants will perform two pieces and sight-read for a panel of judges. This is a required and graded event for all advanced ensemble members.

Extracurricular Auditions & Reference Letters

Students will have the opportunity to audition for choirs, schools, scholarships, and musical productions throughout the school year. Please see the director to prepare for these auditions as soon as possible. If you are requesting a reference letter, please allow two weeks for completion and delivery.

Parental Involvement

In order for students to receive the most fulfilling experience from the choir program, parental involvement is essential. Parents help make the program run smoothly by helping with transportation, acting as chaperones, managing concerts, fundraising, publicity, and some administrative work. If you wish to help, please contact the director as soon as possible.

Fundraising

We plan to hold several fundraisers to help cover costs of choir participation, field trips, and more. Funds raised will be placed into the choral program account and/or student account. If you require additional assistance or payment plans, please notify the director.

Payments

You will be provided with a receipt for any payments you make to the choral program. Plan accordingly and do not allow other students to submit any payments for you. They will not be accepted.

If you are unable to submit required payments on time, please speak to the director immediately.

Calendar of Events

Please refer to the Google Classroom and/of Microsoft Teams for dates and times of upcoming choral activities. Extra rehearsals, auditions, and performances will be announced in class.

Safety Protocols

The director and students will employ all necessary precautions to prevent bodily harm or viral transmission during choral activities. Due to the increased risk of viral spread within choir rehearsals and performances, it may become necessary to adjust seating arrangements and mask use. Students failing to adhere to the safety protocols within classes or events will not be allowed to participate, which may affect your grade. Students should not interact with any classroom equipment unless directed to do so by the instructor. Students should not leave the classroom **for any reason** without notifying the director.

Lettering & Graduation Honors

Choral students will earn a varsity letter badge based on the criteria below:

1. Complete six semesters of AHS chorus classes with a grade of 90 or higher.
2. Attend all mandated ensemble performances.
3. Participate in an approved extracurricular choral event or Tri-M Music Honor Society.
4. Participate in choir during their senior year.
5. Students must bring the director appropriate form for approval signature.

Choral students will earn an honors graduation cord based on the criteria below:

1. Complete six semesters of AHS chorus classes with a grade of 80 or higher.
2. Attend all mandated ensemble performances.
3. Students must participate in choir during their senior year if scheduling allows.
4. Students must notify the director of completing these requirements by the third month of their graduating semester.

Handbook Policy Changes

At the discretion of the director or the administration, it may be necessary during the year to make alterations to the policies set forth in this handbook. Parents and students will be notified of any changes via Google Classroom and/or Microsoft Teams. Any conflicts with policy changes will be settled on a case by case basis.

Open Door Policy

If you need to discuss any issues, conflicts, or material from class, please schedule an appointment with the director as soon as possible. If you have immediate concerns, please inform the director before or after class. Do not discuss any issues/conflicts within the rehearsal space.