

LANCER CHOIR

2014-2015

COMMUNITY ~ PERSONAL GROWTH

OPEN-MINDEDNESS ~ WORK ETHIC

Mr. Saville-Iksic

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Course Description: The *Lancer Choir* is a vocal performance ensemble open to any student who enjoys singing as part of a group. The choir rehearses a wide variety of repertoire on a daily basis as well as giving numerous school and community performances. The Choir functions as a community driven by the efforts and investments of its members. Students will be given opportunities to engage in projects that enrich the music-making experience through reflection, self-guided learning, leadership opportunities, and contribution to the Choir's daily and yearly operations.

Course Objectives:

Students will:

1. Develop a healthy, expressive, and effective singing voice.
2. Demonstrate command of the music language through aural and written forms of communication.
3. Analyze and create music based on an understanding of musical characteristics such as form, texture, harmony, melody, dynamics, rhythm, etc.
4. Express personal ideas and feelings through musical, written, and verbal communication.
5. Participate actively as a member of a music performance community.
6. Understand how music has a significant role in society and in the life of the individual.
7. Broaden their range of musical taste as a means for knowing more about the human experience – physically, intellectually, emotionally, spiritually, historically, and culturally.

Essential Questions:

- Why does music have an important role in our lives?
- What makes a piece of music worth studying?
- What make a performance worth presenting to an audience?
- How are you contributing to the Choir?
- How is the Choir contributing to the greater community or society?

Performance Responsibilities: This year, the *Lancer Choir* will be involved in five school performances. Students are required to sing in all Choir performances. Please, put them in your calendar as soon as possible. **Any conflicts (including sports competitions) with the dates below should be brought to the attention of the director by September 30**, and an appropriate excuse will be necessary if the absence from performance is to be excused. Absences due to homework, sports *practice*, and student employment will not be excused. If the student needs a ride to the concert, please notify Mr. Saville-Iksic. Unless otherwise announced, **report time is always 45 minutes before the performance.**

October 9, 2014	7:30 PM	Fall Preview Concert
October 11, 2014	TBD	HHH <i>Fall Music Marathon</i> at Lycoming College
December 17, 2014	7:30 PM	Winter Holiday Concert
TBD (March 2015)	TBD	Inter-/Intra-District Performance
May 14, 2015	7:30 PM	Spring Concert
May 26, 2015	7:30 PM	Small Ensemble Concert

Course Expectations:

Students will:

1. Conduct themselves in accordance with the desired behaviors outlined in the rehearsal behavior rubric found on Moodle.
2. Complete all written assignments and submit them on Moodle by established due dates.
3. Participate in all choir performances and special projects.

Teacher will:

1. Provide engaging music making opportunities that are educational, challenging, fun, and relevant to the student's life.
2. Provide guidance that respects the student's individual learning style and personal experience as (s)he grows as a intellectual, physical, and emotional person.
3. Provide meaningful, specific, and honest feedback to students and parents in a timely manner.

Concert Dress:

Men:

- Black pants, button-up shirt, belt, shoes, and socks
- Solid-colored neck tie

Women:

- All-black
- Solid-colored scarf
- Skirts and dresses at least knee length
- Shoes with 2" heels or less

Spring Concert (everyone):

- Black on bottom
- Solid spring color on top

Grading and Assessments: Students grades are broken down into five categories:

1. **Rehearsal participation (80 points):** Every three weeks, the student and teacher will both evaluate the student's rehearsal participation and behavior using the rubric found on Moodle.
2. **Outside Written Assignments (50 points):** Outside listening and reflection assignments will be posted on Moodle throughout the course of the year (probably two per marking period). Student will also complete a score study project once a marking period focused on a different aspect of musical analysis each time. A rubric will be provided for the score study assignments and reflections will be evaluated according to completion and effort.
3. **Marking Period Singing Exam (30 points):** Once a marking period, students will submit a recording of themselves singing to be evaluated by the teacher. Recordings must be made using the video app on the iPad and submitted on Moodle. Assignments will differ for each marking period and rubric will be provided to correspond to the various assignments.
4. **Bell-Ringers (20 points):** Nearly every day, students will be expected to complete a short music reading or reflection exercise at the beginning of the class. Each one is worth 1 point.
5. **Special Project (20 points):** Once a marking period, students will be assigned a special project. Many of these projects may be group projects. Students will be given time in class to complete these projects but may also require extra time outside of class.

Assignment Details: Below are brief descriptions of the more specialized assignments students will be asked to complete. Not included below, Bell-Ringers and Listening & Reflection exercises are more regular practices for the development of listening and music reading skills. Score Study assignments vary greatly as they are tailored to challenge students with varying degrees of experience in the choir.

Singing Exams:

1. Free Choice – 30 to 45 seconds for anything you would like to sing
2. Excerpt from the Choir's repertoire – focus on correct pitches and rhythms
3. Excerpt from the Choir's repertoire – focus on diction and vowel color
4. Improvise a melody along with pre-recorded chord progression
5. Excerpt from the Choir's repertoire – focus on style and expression
6. Free Choice

Special Projects:

1. Create your own verse to a given song with multiple voice parts
2. Create an ostinato ensemble with at least four parts
3. Harmonize a given melody
4. Create your own melody, chords, and lyrics
5. GarageBand composition with vocal improv
6. Create a *a capella* arrangement in a group

Assessment Details: Brief descriptions are included below of the knowledge and skills to be measured on the Choir's midterm and final exams. Study guides will be provided before each exam. Also, please find the School-Wide Assessment Procedure on the following page.

Midterm Exam will measure music reading skills (e.g. rhythm labeling and solfege) learned during the first semester, as well as the student's knowledge of diction, key terms and concepts related to choral musicianship, and characteristics of the Choir's repertoire.

Final Exam will focus primarily on the student's reflection of how their participation in the Choir has contributed to his/her growth as a musician, student, and individual over the course of the school year.

School-Wide Assessment Procedure (SWAP)



STUDENT ROLE

Rationale: Before a classroom test or assessment is administered, the teacher will evaluate the assessment to make sure it conforms to a number of criteria. These include reliability, error, validity, conformity to learning outcomes/standards, and correlated assessments that are horizontally aligned with other teachers teaching the same course. A standardized procedure allows for teachers to make predictions and to know what was learned by individual students on any assessment, thereby providing necessary feedback about a student's overall achievement.

These procedures are to be used in all summative (unit exams, labs, larger quizzes, and any other formal assessment used to ascertain student mastery) AND formative assessments (quizzes [pop or announced] and other assessments that are formative in nature). NOTE: Teachers may also use the SWAP for any other type of assessment in which individual students are administered a "pen and paper" hard copy assessment for a given amount of time.

- Students should refer to the SWAP within each course's syllabus and know where to find it: each teacher's Moodle or iTunesU account or teacher web page.
- **Ask questions of the teacher if you are unclear about testing procedures** or expectations of the specific test, quiz, lab report, etc.
- Be aware of the consequences for academic dishonesty on any assessment.
- For any classroom assessment, students will be in a modified seating arrangement using the following procedures:
 - Teachers shall design and post a classroom assessment procedure map as to where you sit for assessments.
 - Student seats shall be placed apart from each other where possible by moving desks, separating rows, etc.
 - **Students must sit and complete the assessment (test, etc.) in ONE SITTING** as much as possible (EXCEPTION: Split lunch, SDI of any IEP or 504 student who has extended time on all assessments). Meaning, **students do not leave room until assessment is finished**. The teacher must communicate with the next period/block teacher about potential lateness of a given student.
- **Student electronic device collection** (iPad, smartphones/cells, iPods, etc.)
 - **iPads - if not to be used, students will place iPad FACE DOWN on the top of their desk. They should not touch or use until assessment is completed by everyone. If the iPad is allowed to be used as part of the assessment, the teacher will tell you.**
 - Students must surrender smartphone/cell phone prior to beginning of assessment.
 - **Students must surrender cell phone/device prior to beginning of the assessment.** Teachers will have a procedure to collect and place in a box and/or in a hanging organizer or have the devices placed on the teacher's desk until everyone's assessment is complete.
 - **A student's failure to surrender the device will result in disciplinary action and/or academic dishonesty referral**, especially if determined later that the student possessed the device when testing.
 - At the conclusion of the assessment, students may retrieve their devices from the teacher.

Agreement:

By signing below, we (the student and his/her legal guardian) state that we have reviewed this syllabus *together* and agree to the terms it establishes. We understand that Mr. Saville-Iksic reserves the right to alter the course schedule and assignments (including point values) as he may see necessary. We have directed any questions or concerns we may have to Mr. Saville-Iksic, and they have been addressed to our satisfaction.

Student Name (please print): _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Guardian Name (please print): _____

Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

PARENTS, PLEASE NOTE: There will be several changes and additions made to our vocal music program this year, including the likelihood of a choir trip. In order to fully inform you on everything that the year has to offer, I request your presence at a special *Beginning of the Year Information Session*, to be held...

Wednesday, September 10, 2014
7:10pm
High School Auditorium

Please indicate if you plan to be in attendance...

_____ I will be in attendance.

_____ I will not be in attendance.

Parent Meeting

- I. Introduction
 - a. Feelings hurt? Anyone not have feelings?
 - b. My mission as a teacher
 - c. How I do this
- II. Sing something
- III. Why music?
 - a. Life-long benefits
 - b. Educational benefits
- IV. What the students will be doing daily
- V. Special opportunities
 - a. Small ensembles
 - b. Festivals
 - i. Men of Song
 - ii. YMCF
 - iii. District Chorus
 - iv. JCC
 - c. Musical
- VI. Spring Trip
- VII. Communication
- VIII. Parent Involvement
- IX. Sing something

Special Projects:

- Create a verse to a song
- Harmonize a melody
- Create and arrangement of a similar style
- Arrange something in a different style

“Savs-Singing”

FIVE PILLARS:

1. Tell a story
 - a. Who is this story about?
 - b. What is the overall mood of the piece?
 - c. What are the most important messages/themes of the story?
 - d. What words are most important for telling the story?
 - e. How does this story relate to your own story?
2. Take a good breath
 - a. What does a good breath feel like?

- b. What does a good breath look like?
 - c. What type of posture allows for your best breath?
 - d. Why is breath important for good Sings-Singing?
 - e. What does the breath do?
- 3. Shape and color the sound
 - a. When was the music first composed?
 - b. Where was the music first composed?
 - c. With what musical and/or cultural traditions is the music associated?
 - d. If you could see the music, what would it look like? (colors, images, actions, etc)
 - e. What do the singers need to do physically to create that sound?
- 4. Open your ears and your mouth
 - a. Are you singing in tune and in time with the people around you?
 - b. How does your part relate with the other parts of the choir?
 - c. What is the order of priority for each of the parts of the choir?
 - d. Is your section singing in tune and in time with the other sections?
 - e. Can you hear the people around you?
 - f. Can you hear yourself?
 - g. Can the people around you hear you?
- 5. Enjoy what you are doing
 - a. Why do you like music?
 - b. Why do you do what you do?
 - c. What motivates you?
 - d. What does it take for you to enjoy something?
 - e. How do you handle hard work?
 - f. How do you handle things that don't work the way you expect them to?
 - g. How is your attitude?
 - h. What type of attitude do you prefer other people to have when they are around you?
 - i. How does it feel when you enjoy what you are doing?

TRICKS

Score Studies

- Label rhythm and/or solfege
- Text painting
- Text meaning interpretation
- Historical/cultural connections
- Ear-training (pop song)
- Scale identification
- Harmonic identification
- Stylistic analysis
- Phrasing analysis
- Textural analysis
- Form identification

Essential Questions:

- Why does music have an important role in our lives?
 - Concert, recital, emotion, aesthetic, spirituality, feelings, art, music, expressiveness, creativity, show, theatre, hall
- What makes a piece of music worth studying?
 - Form, harmony, rhyme scheme, melody, text, texture, form, references, ceremonial, sacred, secular, composition, poetry, word painting
- What make a performance worth presenting to an audience?
 - Technique, breath support, pharynx, larynx, vocal folds, resonance, style, staccato, legato, accented, marcato, diction
- How are you contributing to the Choir?
- How is the Choir contributing to the greater community or society?
 - Humanitarianism, charity,

Values

- **Community:** You are respectful towards the others in the choir. You make an effort to get to know the people around you. You actively participate in choir activities. You make an effort to promote what the choir is doing within the school and community at large – inviting people to concerts, etc.
- **Open-mindedness:** You approach new activities and music with interest and enthusiasm. You get to know a new piece of music, new people, and different ways of life before passing judgment on them.
- **Work Ethic:** You give your best effort (without over-extending yourself) during all rehearsals and for all outside assignments. You do honest work, getting help when you need it but not copying the work of others.
- **Personal Growth:** You set goals for way in which you wish to grow. You reflect on your own efforts and contributions.

Special Projects:

- Create an a capella arrangement in a group
- Create an ostinato ensemble
- Create your own melody, chords, and lyrics
- Find a pop song that tells a similar story to one of our pieces and learn it
- Create a verse to a song
- Harmonize a melody
- GarageBand composition

Singing Exams:

- Free Choice
- Improvise to chord progression
- Repertoire excerpt for pitch and rhythm accuracy
- Repertoire excerpt for diction and vowel color
- Repertoire excerpt for style and expressiveness
- Free Choice