



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MISSISSIPPI

MUS 384: Choral Literature and Arranging

Fall 2018

Mr. Eric Johnson, Instructor

T & Th 11:00 – 12:15

GA Office. 114

Office Hours: MWF 10:00 – 11:30

Music Building 148

ejohnso4@olemiss.edu

The study of musical repertoire is important to creating the framework of success for your future ensembles. This course will present a broad survey of historic and new choral literature in the practical context of concert programming. This course also includes instruction on choral music sources, performance practice and related conducting issues, music librarianship and other music administration related concepts unique to a choral ensemble. The course will also present basic arranging techniques that will be useful in adapting music for a variety of circumstances.

Texts and Materials:

- Blake Henson and Gerald Custer, *Arranging: A Beginner's Guide*. (GIA Publications).
- Debra Spurgeon, *Conducting Women's Choirs: Strategies for Success*. (GIA Publications).
- Access to Blackboard for readings and supplemental materials to be posted online
- Access to music notation software.
- Copied handouts, arrangements, kept in notebook.
- You will also be assigned supplemental readings.
- Packets of choral music, to be reviewed and used in your choral file.

Attendance and Participation Policy:

It is my opinion that learning is inherently social and collaborative, and it happens best in communities of people who are committed and mutually accountable to each other. In essence, your presence matters, because we all learn better when all of us are here.

You are permitted two (2) non-school related absences with this course. It is the student's responsibility to make up a missed assignment that occurs while they are absent. You should save these two absences for when you truly need them, such as illness or other emergencies. Any absence above the allotted two will equal a .5 deduction per additional absence from your overall course grade. Two (2) tardies will equal an absence and anyone arriving over ten minutes late will receive an absence for that day unless prior notification is given. Of course, if extenuating circumstances cause you to have an extended absence, I will work with you; just communicate with me so I am informed.

BONUS: Students who have perfect attendance (no tardies or absences) for the semester will receive a 2-percentage increase in their final grade.

Your participation in this class constitutes 20% of your final course grade. Your active contribution in class discussions and other activities will determine this portion of your grade.

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will learn techniques for successful arranging suitable for teaching/conducting choirs.
2. Students will study vocal ranges and learn to choose music that is appropriate for each level.
3. Students will arrange pieces for various choir voicings that take into account ranges and vocal limitations for different age groups.
4. Students will learn the criteria for judging quality in choral music, become an educated choral music critic.
5. Students will become comfortable talking about music and making judgements based upon established criteria.
6. Students will study the historical and present day choral genres.
7. Students will learn about performance practice for each historical style period.
8. Students will build a repertoire of literature suitable for choirs of all ages.
9. Students will study some aspect of choral literature in depth and complete a project.

Assignment Expectations:

- All assignments must be turned in during class on the assigned due date. Late assignments may be accepted, when unavoidable, but grades will be lowered after the due date.
- All papers must be typed and free of typos and errors.
- Arranging projects must be turned in when due. A hard copy must be presented along with the electronic version. Failure of email, printer, or computer will not be an acceptable excuse.
- It is your responsibility to get class notes and assignments when you are gone.
- Always come to class prepared and ready to participate. A portion of your grade will depend upon your preparation and participation.
- Do not wait until the hour before class to print your composition. Tardies for copying will count the same as other tardies. PLAN AHEAD taking into account the hours of the computer lab, when necessary.
- Arranging assignments must be notated into a composing program. If not, the highest grade they will be assigned is a B.

On Going Projects:

1. Music file of reviewed pieces for choirs of different levels.
2. Notebook with all class materials, tests, and music, organize into a professional resource.
3. Choral arrangements, completed and in progress, kept in notebook.
4. Final Project: School year programming for a choir with specific needs. Written rationale to accompany.

Evaluation and Grading:

- Preparation, Participation, and Attendance 20%
 - Consistently thorough preparation
 - Evidence of completed readings
 - Participation in class discussions, critiques, and performances
 - Attendance
- Assignments, Exams, Final Project(s) 80%
 - Quality of written assignments
 - Thorough editing of arranging projects
 - Evidence of scholarly research
 - Exams will cover class lectures, readings, and handouts

Grading Scale: A (90 – 100), B (80 – 90), C (70 – 80), D (60 – 70), F (60 and below)

You must make a grade of C or higher in this class to count toward your degree.

Class Topics:

1. Building a Choral Music File
 - a. Review of music for choirs of all ages and voicings
 - b. How to choose and program quality music
 - c. Suitability of texts
 - d. Determining difficulty level
 - e. Judging quality in editions of early works
2. Choral Arranging (areas to be covered)
 - a. What can be arranged (public domain, copyrighted, etc.)
 - b. What ranges for various age levels
 - c. Music for young choirs
 - d. Music for limited range singers
 - e. Qualities of a good arrangement
3. Historical Genres and Performance Practice
 - a. Renaissance Sacred – mass, motet
 - b. Renaissance Secular – madrigal, chanson, lied
 - c. Baroque – cantata, chorale, oratorio
 - d. Classical
 - e. Romantic – oratorio, part song
 - f. Modern Era Music – 20th and 21st century
 - g. Latin pronunciation of common choral settings

Flexibility:

As circumstances dictate, Mr. Johnson may revise the syllabus, calendar, or grading percentages. However, every attempt will be made to inform students in a timely manner of any revisions.

University Policies:

Academic Integrity: The University of Mississippi's policy on academic integrity states that "the University is conducted on a basis of common honesty. Dishonesty, cheating, or plagiarism, or knowingly furnishing false information to the University are regarded as particularly serious offenses." In most cases, a student found in violation of the University's principles of academic honesty will be given a zero for the assignment or exam for a first offense, and an automatic failure for the class for a second offense. Particularly egregious examples of academic dishonesty may be dealt with more severely at the instructor's discretion.

Students with Disabilities: It is University policy to provide, on a flexible and individual basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or meet course requirements. Students with disabilities, verified by the Office of Student Disability Services, are encouraged to contact their instructors to discuss their individual needs for accommodations.

Disability Access and Inclusion: The University of Mississippi is committed to the creation of inclusive learning environments for all students. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to your full inclusion and participation, or to accurate assessment of your achievement, please contact the course instructor as soon as possible. Barriers may include, but are not necessarily limited to, timed exams and in-class assignments, difficulty with the acquisition of lecture content, inaccessible web content, and the use of non-captioned or non-transcribed video and audio files. If you are approved through SDS, you must log in to your Rebel Access portal at <https://sds.olemiss.edu> to request approved accommodations. If you are NOT approved through SDS, you must contact Student Disability Services at 662-915-7128 so the office can: 1. determine your eligibility for accommodations, 2. disseminate to your instructors a Faculty Notification Letter, 3. facilitate the removal of barriers, and 4. ensure you have equal access to the same opportunities for success that are available to all students.

Communication:

- **Conflicts:** Please notify me by email as SOON as you are aware of any conflicts with regular class times, or video conducting rounds. Review the course calendar and address conflicts early.
- **Questions or Concerns:** Students are encouraged to communicate regularly. Email and office hours are great resources. Email is also the fastest and easiest way to reach me.
- **Travel:** Mr. Johnson will have several travel obligations this fall semester. Please understand that responses to emails may be slower than usual during these times. Dates will be notated on course calendar.

Selecting and evaluating music is a skill that improves with time and practice. You will quickly find that not every piece works for every choir. I look forward to helping you develop this very important skill. Please feel free to schedule appointments with me if you need further help or explanation on any assignments and projects.

Choral Music File

Choral directors are constantly presented with new music from hundreds of composers, new and established. One of the most difficult aspects of the new conductor's job is to develop skills to recognize quality in new compositions. This is the reason we will review music as a group and individually in this course.

You will review music and fill out an information form on the pieces that you wish to place in your file. The purpose of the file is to have a professional resource and also to learn the skills necessary to choose music wisely.

You may check out packets from the choral office one packet at a time. You must return the previous packet in order to get another.

We will review songs together in class as a practice for your individual work and these may be used in your file. You will be graded on the quality of your observations and assessment of the music.

Your notebook will be turned in to be graded various times throughout the semester. It will be checked for thoroughness of entries and to make sure you have met the appropriate number of entries according to the course calendar.

To make an A on the music file, you must meet the following criteria:

1. Have thoughtful comments and accurate information about each song used in the file.
There must be commentary on every song in the file.
2. Review no fewer than 120 quality songs. (Approximately one fourth will be found in class reviews.)
3. Have a representative sampling of music for all voicings: Unison, SA, SSA, SAB, SATB, TTB, TTBB, etc. and various difficulty levels.
4. Aim for a mix of sacred and secular, different publishers, and seasonal music.
5. You may use some public domain music ([www. cpdl.org](http://www.cpd.org)) as well as published music.



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WEEK 1: Tuesday 8/21	Thursday 8/23
Introduction, Syllabus, Music File What Speaks to You MS/HS?	What Is The Choir? <u>Read:</u> Collins pages 148 – 170
WEEK 2: Tuesday 8/28	Thursday 8/30
The Search for Healthy and Appropriate Repertoire: Three Perspectives <u>Read:</u> Jordan, Holt, and Head <u>Submit:</u> Two-page summary of Jordan, Holt, Head	How do we find music? <u>Read:</u> Freer Chapter 5
WEEK 3: Tuesday 9/4	Thursday 9/6
Score Preparation <u>Read:</u> Leck pages 68 – 81	Teaching Harmony Through Repertoire <u>Read:</u> Dwyer “Harmony in Sequence” <u>Read:</u> Swears “How to Teach Part Singing”
WEEK 4: Tuesday 9/11	Thursday 9/13
NO CLASS <u>Prepare:</u> Choral File	Introduction to Arranging <u>Read:</u> Henson & Custer Chapters 1 and 2
WEEK 5: Tuesday 9/18	Thursday 9/20
Introduction to Medieval and Renaissance Music <u>Submit:</u> 20 Choral File Entries <u>Read:</u> Phillips pages 4 – 7 and 315 – 319	Medieval and Renaissance Continued <u>Submit:</u> Descant Projects
WEEK 6: Tuesday 9/25	Thursday 9/27
Medieval and Renaissance Masses	Dr. Kevin Fenton Guest Lecture – Who, What, and Why We Teach
WEEK 7: Tuesday 10/2	Thursday 10/4
What Are Adjudicators Listening For? Choral Festival Repertoire Discussion	Transcriptions in Arranging <u>Submit:</u> Be Thou My Vision Arrangement <u>Read:</u> Henson & Custer Chapter 3

WEEK 8: Tuesday 10/9	Thursday 10/11
Hannah Gadd Guest Lecture – Give Your Choral Program Vitamin P <u>Submit:</u> 20 Choral File Entries	Composing Accompaniments and Obligato Lines and Introduction to Baroque Period <u>Read:</u> Phillips pages 7 – 8 and 319 - 321 <u>Read:</u> Henson & Custer Chapter 4
WEEK 9: Tuesday 10/16	Thursday 10/18
Baroque Period Continued <u>Read:</u> Spurgeon Chapter 3	Introduction to Classical Period <u>Read:</u> Phillips pages 8 – 9 and 322 - 323 <u>Submit:</u> Beautiful Dreamer Arrangement
WEEK 10: Tuesday 10/23	Thursday 10/25
NO CLASS – Assist with All-State Auditions	Expanding Lines in Arrangements and Classical Period Masterworks <u>Read:</u> Henson & Custer Chapter 5 <u>Submit:</u> 20 Choral File Entries
WEEK 11: Tuesday 10/30	Thursday 11/1
Romantic Period Music <u>Read:</u> Phillips pages 9 – 10 and 324 – 326 <u>Read:</u> Spurgeon Chapter 2 and 3	Texture Changes in Arrangements Introduction to 20 th Century Music <u>Read:</u> Phillips pages 10 – 17 and 326 – 328 <u>Read:</u> Henson & Custer Chapter 6 <u>Submit:</u> America The Beautiful Arrangement
WEEK 12: Tuesday 11/6	Thursday 11/8
20th Century Music Continued <u>Submit:</u> 20 Choral File Entries	Musical Hinges and Orchestrations in Arranging Spirituals and Gospel Arrangements <u>Read:</u> Henson & Custer Chapter 7 and 8
WEEK 13: Tuesday 11/13	Thursday 11/15
High School Masterwork Presentations <u>Submit:</u> 20 Choral File Entries	High School Masterwork Presentations
WEEK 14: Tuesday 11/20	Thursday 11/22
NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK	NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK
WEEK 15: Tuesday 11/27	Thursday 11/29
Mississippi Adjudication Repertoire – Middle School	Mississippi Adjudication Repertoire – High School <u>Submit:</u> 20 Choral File Entries
FINAL EXAM: Tuesday 12/4 (NOON)	
Time Will Be Used If Needed	