

MUS 717 Chamber Choir Spring 2024 Syllabus
MTWTH: 4:30-5:20 pm (Only Mon/Tues of fourth week)

Dr. Christopher Nakielski (Dr. N)

Pronouns: He his him

Office: Armstrong 244

Phone: (319) 895-4356 (ext 4356) (office) 414-881-0598 (cell, text)

Email: cnakielski@cornellcollege.edu

Course Objectives:

Develop and improve fundamentals of singing, including tone, intonation, technique, rhythm, and interpretation through the study and practice of choral music.

Develop and improve ensemble performance skills including ensemble tone, intonation, technical and rhythmic precision and musicality through individual practice, group rehearsals, and group performances.

Over time, learn and perform choral music of a variety of styles and historical eras.

Over time, become familiar with some of the major composers and their works for choir and combined orchestra/choir.

Cornell College's Educational Priorities and Outcomes:

Knowledge—of musical performance, concepts, musical styles, composers and works

Citizenship/Intercultural Literacy— develop musical skills, common to musicians around the world, that will allow students to collaborate and perform with other musicians throughout their lives

Vocation—develop musical skills that allow students to perform, either in professional or amateur settings, throughout their lives

Well-being—music can contribute to a balanced life

Practice: Good ensemble performance requires that students come to each rehearsal well-prepared to sing their parts. This will require individual practice of assigned parts by members of the group.

Rehearsals: All singers are expected to attend all rehearsals on-time and prepared to sing. Rehearsals will last 50 minutes.

Grading: The Chamber Choir is our advanced ensemble and thus, the music will be more difficult, with more responsibility placed on the shoulders of each individual. It is expected that you practice the music on your own and you will be held accountable in the way of performance assessments, occurring at least twice each semester

Grades will be earned on the basis of attendance, promptness, music preparation, and following the rules of the ensemble. Students who are present on time, and prepared to sing their parts will receive the highest grades.

Since an ensemble is a performing organization, your attendance is required for every rehearsal. Because of illness or other situations you may not be able to attend every day. A small amount of absence will not affect your grade. Being "excused" from class does not mean that your absence does not count. While performances cannot be "made up", rehearsals can be made up by sending in a recording, as long as they follow the absenteeism guidelines (found on the last

page of this syllabus). You are making an important commitment to everyone else in the ensemble to do your best to contribute to the group. For sake of transparency, your current attendance history will be made available via live spreadsheet on moodle bearing your ID number and not your name. Please also email others in your section when you will not be present at rehearsal.

GRADING POLICY

Attendance Rehearsal Grade—80% (based on absences from rehearsal):

0-3	A
4	B
5-6	C
7	D
8+	F (Loss of membership and scholarship if on probation)

***If you accrue 8 absences as a result of long-term illness or a mental health issue, you must seek the proper withdrawal type from this course. This does not include blocks abroad.**

If you miss a more significant concert (fall or holiday), your grade will go down two letter grades to C. If both concerts are missed, you will fail this course.

Performance Assessments—10%

*Performance Assessments will be assessed as needed, most likely near the completion of pieces. It is highly recommended to use practice tracks provided on moodle to stay up to speed with pieces.

Written Assignments—10% (Some assignments will include score markings for all of the pieces performed and when applicable concert reflections and song/text analysis)

Students should notify the director in advance of any missed rehearsals if at all possible. All absences from rehearsals will be counted except for Cornell class requirements or athletic contests with advance notification. Being more than 5 minutes late to class, or leaving class early will count as .5 of an absence. Being more than a minute late counts as tardy. **Use of cell phone in class will be marked as a tardy unless granted permission.**

To determine the final class grade, the director reserves the right to raise or lower the attendance grade by one letter based upon each student's general attitude, preparation, and commitment to the ensemble.

Materials:

- Music and folders are provided by the music department. If these are lost, students must pay the cost of replacement.
- A pencil is provided for each folder. It is the student's responsibility to be sure to have a pencil for use at every rehearsal.
- Habitual failure to have rehearsal materials and appropriate concert attire will result in grading penalties.
- Masks? We don't provide them this year. They are encouraged to wear but will not be required.

Concert Attire:

Suggested:

- Long black dress pants, black button down shirt, black socks, black dress shoes (non-gloss), black suit jacket preferred but not required.
- Long black dress pants, black blouse, black socks, black flats or heels (non gloss, close toed), colored accent scarves are okay, minimal jewelry
- Long (knee length or longer) black performance gown, black panty hose, black flats or heels (close toed), colored accent scarves are okay, minimal jewelry
- **FAILURE TO ABIDE BY ONE OF THESE THREE CHOICES CAN RESULT IN KEEPING YOU OFF STAGE FOR THE PERFORMANCE AND A LOSS OF GRADE.**

*No perfume, please.

Choral Citizenship Guidelines

- Communicate often and early regarding absences, tardiness and issues that require special attention.
- Be here, in the moment. Do not use cell phones during rehearsal; cell phone use during rehearsal will result in a tardy.
- Be the ensemble member you'd expect others to be. It's your art, your time, make it special.

Academic Honesty and Students with Disabilities:

(a) Cornell College expects all members of the Cornell community to act with academic integrity. An important aspect of academic integrity is respecting the work of others. A student is expected to explicitly acknowledge ideas, claims, observations, or data of others, unless generally known. When a piece of work is submitted for credit, a student is asserting that the submission is her or his work unless there is a citation of a specific source. If there is no appropriate acknowledgement of sources, whether intended or not, this may constitute a violation of the College's requirement for honesty in academic work and may be treated as a case of academic dishonesty. The procedures regarding how the College deals with cases of academic dishonesty appear in *The Compass*, our student handbook, under the heading, "Academic Policies – Honesty in Academic Work."

(b) Students who need accommodations for learning disabilities must provide documentation from a professional qualified to diagnose learning disabilities. For more information see cornellcollege.edu/disabilities/documentation/index.shtml

Students requesting services may schedule a meeting with the disabilities services coordinator as early as possible to discuss their needs and develop an individualized accommodation plan. Ideally, this meeting would take place well before the start of classes. At the beginning of each course, the student must notify the instructor within the first three days of the term of any accommodations needed for the duration of the course.

PERFORMANCE CALENDAR

*General guideline—if a rehearsal isn't listed as "canceled" assume that it is still happening unless otherwise notified.

- Monday January 15th, First Rehearsal
- *Tuesday-Friday, February 6-9th, no rehearsal (block break)*
- Wednesday February 21, extended rehearsal with Randall Stroope, 4:30-6 pm
 - Dinner with Randall Stroope after rehearsal
- Thursday February 22, extended rehearsal with Randall Stroope, 4:30-6 pm
 - Dinner with Stroope after rehearsal
- **Friday February 23, dress rehearsal with Randall Stroope, 6:30-8 pm @ United Methodist Church, 312 1st St W**
- **Saturday, February 24, Stroope Concert (6:30 pm call, doors open at 7 pm) 7:30 pm concert @ Methodist Church**
- February 26th and 27th, no rehearsal (slight post-concert break)
- February 28th, rehearsals resume
- March 6th-15th, no rehearsal (spring break, rehearsals resume March 18th)
- ***April 10-12th or 13th tbd, Block Break mini-tour to Minneapolis***
- Wednesday April 24th, extended rehearsal with Dr. Jim Henry, 4:30-6 pm
- Thursday April 25th, extended rehearsal with Dr. Jim Henry, 4:30-6 pm
- **Saturday, April 27th, Spring Dress Rehearsal and Concert with Ambassadors of Harmony**
 - **5-6:30 pm rehearsal, doors open at 7 pm, 7:30 pm concert @ Anamosa High School**
 - **It takes about 20 minutes to get to Anamosa HS, fyi!!**
- Monday, April 29th, Final Rehearsal, no rehearsal any day after this point

ABSENTEEISM GUIDELINES

What to do if...

- 1. I have a planned internship or block abroad.**
 - Answer: Contact me within the first week of choir. Your standing in choir will most likely not be affected, but this helps me to plan accordingly to make sure that sections are balanced. If you're a scholarship student, you're allowed to have a block away from campus, all other requests are on a case-by-base basis.
- 2. I have a "mandatory" work meeting on campus**
 - Answer: Come to rehearsal and schedule the meeting for another time. Your working supervisors should know that choir is a curricular course and cannot force you to attend a work meeting under penalty of missing. Please contact me if this happens.
- 3. I have a sporting or an important co-curricular event that will have a one-time, or consistent conflict with choir.**
 - Answer: Communicate with me about it with plenty of notice and we'll work something out. I too, was actively involved in music and sports and through good communication, was able to effectively participate in both. If you tell me that you have a game the day of rehearsal, you'll have to take one of your absences. If during a concert, you'll fail.
- 4. I have a consistent class/lab that runs late or I'm far away from Armstrong, so therefore will always be a couple of minutes late.**
 - Answer: I understand that different classes create different issues, please just communicate this with me and I'll mark these as excused tardies.
- 5. I feel somewhat of a cold, the sniffles...**
 - Answer: Come to rehearsal and either mark/don't sing and/or consider wearing a mask. Save your three allocated absences for when you absolutely need them. Simply saying "I don't want to get others sick" is not valid. If you have a sufficient mask on and we rehearse less than one-hour, these ensure that best practices are in place to ensure safe rehearsing, even when you have a cold.
- 6. I got into an accident, have Covid, bronchitis, pneumonia, the flu, stick-it-to-the-man-iosis or my leg fell off...**
 - Answer: Communicate with me and also provide medical documentation from a professional saying that you cannot attend classes for the foreseeable future. One of two things will happen. We'll design a makeup plan for you, or heaven forbid, we'll maybe have you take a medical withdrawal. If medical documentation is not a possibility, I will accept a detailed written explanation from you regarding your current health or personal issue and will still allow you to make up the work.
- 7. If a loved one passes away...**
 - Answer: Go to the funeral and take as much time as you need off from choir to grieve. We'll design a makeup plan for you, or heaven forbid, we'll maybe have you take a medical withdrawal.
- 8. If the weather is bad...**
 - Answer: Unless the campus shuts down due to inclement weather, we will still have choir, as we are a residential campus. If you feel uncomfortable walking to choir, take one of your three allocated absences. Please see about acquiring "Yak-trax."
- 9. If I have a doctor's or dentist appointment.**
 - Answer: I understand that given the block schedule, your only time to do this is during the noon-hour or after class during choir rehearsals, and generally, Fridays doctors take off. That said, if you could consider scheduling these during block breaks or really early in the morning, that would be helpful. If you have to miss, you have a week to send me a recording of what you missed, otherwise it goes down as unexcused.

What not to do? Pester those taking attendance and try to appeal absences. Talk to me.