

PERFORMING ARTS DEPARTMENT

WOMEN'S ENSEMBLE: COURSE #875

Contact Information

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The Department's Educational Philosophy

Education in the Arts plays a major role in three general areas of educational impact: societal, instructional and individual. Societally, students gain knowledge of events and historical movements that shaped society. Instructionally, the arts may help to develop critical and creative thinking skills. Individually, the arts can provide the means for communicating thoughts, emotions, and ideas that cannot otherwise be expressed.

Guiding Principles

For those students interested in developing skills in vocal, instrumental, and drama performance, the Performing Arts Department offers courses and activities of considerable variety. Performance material is selected to meet the varied needs and skill levels of the students, provide cultural enrichment for the students, provide aesthetic value for the students, make provision for technical growth of the students, provide for school and community service, and create interdisciplinary relationships.

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Course Frequency: Two and a half times per week

Credits Offered: Two and a half

Prerequisites: None

Background to the Curriculum

The choral director revised the curriculum for the Women's Ensemble in 2003. Using the National Standard for Music Education, the State Frameworks, and knowledge of specific choral techniques, the director identified concepts and skills necessary for a thorough musical education at the high school level. Each year, the conductor then develops materials and selects repertoire to facilitate the teaching of these skills and concepts. This curriculum is extensively tied to the National Standards for Music Education.

Core Topics/Questions/Concepts/Skills

The Women's Ensemble curriculum helps to insure that students who take the course are encouraged to grow both personally and musically. The class involves a wonderfully diverse set of higher order and critical thinking activities. The two main activities involved in Women's Ensemble classes are singing (performing) and reading music, however other activities in the class involve listening, analyzing, interpreting, and creating. Throughout the class, student remain highly active, and the director expects a high level of participation.

In addition to the musical learning, the director helps to provide opportunities for personal growth through performances – both solo and in ensemble – social events, field trips, and festivals. The director encourages Women's Ensemble members to develop skills in team work, organization, and, pride, and individual responsibility.

Course-End Learning Objectives

<u>Learning objectives</u>	<u>Corresponding state standards, where applicable</u>
<p>1] Music Literacy Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain and identify meter in musical examples.• Read rhythms in 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, 4/8, 3/8, 6/8, 9/8, and 12/8.• Accurately perform the following scales using solfege syllables:<ul style="list-style-type: none">~ major scales~ natural, harmonic and melodic minor scales~ chromatic scale	<p>2.1 Demonstrate and respond to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The beat.• Division of the beat.• Meter.• Rhythmic notation, including half, quarter, eighth and sixteenth notes and rests. <p>2.2 Use a system (syllables) to read and sing at sight simple pitch notation in the treble [and bass] clef.</p>

<p>~ major scale in thirds ~ all scales in four-part rounds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain and identify major and minor key signatures in musical examples. • Sight-sing medium level melodies in all major and melodic minor keys and a variety of meters. <p>2] Aural Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocally perform all diatonic intervals in major (major second, major third, perfect fourth...). • Identify and perform tonic triads and arpeggios in all major and melodic minor keys. • Determine tonality and keyality of all pieces in the yearly repertoire. • Audiate musical motives. <p>3] Choral Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform with appropriate diction. • Perform with appropriate annunciation. • Perform with appropriate intonation. • Perform with appropriate dynamics. • Perform with appropriate phrasing. • Perform with appropriate blend. • Perform with appropriate balance between parts. • Accurately follow conductor. <p>4] Musical Expression</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an individual and/or class interpretation of each piece in the yearly repertoire. 	<p>2.11 Read and sing at sight:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderately difficult melodies. • All intervals and their inversions from unison through an octave. • Triads and their inversions in arpeggiated form. <p>2.11 Read and sing at sight:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderately difficult melodies. • All intervals and their inversions from unison through an octave. • Triads and their inversions in arpeggiated form. <p>1.1 Sing independently maintaining:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate intonation. • Steady tempo. • Rhythmic accuracy. • Appropriately-produced sound (timbre). • Clear diction. • Correct posture. <p>1.2 Sing expressively with appropriate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dynamics. • Phrasing. • Interpretation. <p>1.5 Sing in groups, blending vocal timbres, matching dynamic levels, and responding to the cues of a conductor.</p> <p>5.12 Demonstrate an understanding of how musical elements interact to create expressiveness in music.</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a variety of choral skills to express interpretations of pieces. • Justify use of specific choral skills in various selections or sections of music. <p>5] Vocal Skills (Students are expected to continually work to develop their vocal skills. It often takes several years of training to gain a complete understanding of vocal techniques.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate a working knowledge of breath support using the abdominal and intercostal muscle apparatus. • Work to increase lung capacity. • Work to release tension in throat, jaw, and lips while phonating. • Explain vocal fold abduction. • Explain the mask as it applies to the singing voice. • Work to increase range and agility in all vocal tessitoras. • Demonstrate a knowledge of vocal health maintenance. <p>6] Repertoire Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify titles and composers of all selections in the yearly repertoire. • Identify styles of all selections in the yearly repertoire. • Identify time period in relation to history of each selection in yearly repertoire. • Securely perform selections in a variety of styles and languages. 	<p>5.13 Demonstrate knowledge of the technical vocabulary of music.</p> <p>5.14 Listen to performances of extended length and complexity with proper attention and audience protocol.</p> <p>1.6 Sing independently with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased accuracy. • Expanded breath control. • Extended vocal range. <p>1.10 Sing with expression and technical accuracy a large repertoire of vocal literature representing various genres, styles, cultures, and historical periods, with a difficulty of 4 on a scale of 1 to 6, including works performed by memory.</p> <p>5.2 Listen to and describe aural examples of music of various styles, genres, cultural and historical periods, identifying:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expressive qualities. • Instrumentation. • Cultural and/or geographic context. <p>5.15 Analyze and describe uses of the elements of music in a given work that make it unique, interesting, and expressive.</p>
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<p>7] Ensemble/Class Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critique performances of the Women’s Ensemble and other choirs using knowledge of the above skills. 	<p>5.2 Listen to and describe aural examples of music of various styles, genres, cultural and historical periods, identifying:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expressive qualities. • Instrumentation. • Cultural and/or geographic context. <p>5.13 Demonstrate knowledge of the technical vocabulary of music.</p> <p>5.14 Listen to performances of extended length and complexity with proper attention and audience protocol.</p>
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Assessment

The conductor of the Women’s Ensemble constantly assesses the students based on the curriculum above. These assessments occur a minimum of four times per marking period. Assessments may occur in several of the following ways:

- Students perform at a number of concerts per year.
- Students sight sing musical examples alone or with others.
- Students perform repertoire in small or large groups.
- Students complete brief written exam.
- Conductor uses questioning to assess student understanding of a concept or skill.

Additionally, the conductor assesses students on their effort, attendance, and behavior in class. The conductor will determine a grade for each term based on the combination of the aforementioned assessments

Technology Learning Objectives Addressed in This Course

(This section is for faculty and administrative reference; students and parents may disregard.)

Not Applicable

Materials and Resources

The Women’s Ensemble Director chooses an ever-changing assortment of repertoire based on the needs of the ensemble. Pieces include classical works, musical theater selections, jazz standards, multicultural folk songs, early music, contemporary songs, and spirituals. The director also develops sight-singing and rhythm-reading materials and “mini music history workbooks” as needed.