Course Information

Title: Chamber Singers (MUS 422, 522)  
Instructor: Dr. Don Schade  
Semester Credit Hours: 1  
Location: Patterson Hall Mezzanine  
Meeting Times: MWF, 11:40-12:40pm  
Office: Patterson Hall, Studio C  
Phone: (724) 946-7278  
Email: schadedb@westminster.edu  
Office Hours: MW, 1-2pm; TTh, 9:20-11:00am; by appointment

Course Description

Chamber Singers is a select, mixed ensemble, which sings small ensemble music such as madrigals, chansons, motets, vocal jazz, etc. Performances are both on and off campus. This course does not fulfill the large ensemble requirement for music majors.” This class is open to all students by audition and permission of the instructor.

Course Outcomes

I. Students will understand and demonstrate ensemble skills and musical interpretations and gain a sense of musical flexibility in diverse musical situations.

II. Students will operate at an accelerated pace in rehearsals and concert preparation.

III. Students will display an understanding of fine details regarding various styles, historical performance practices, voicing and languages.

IV. Students will practice professional standards and technique that promotes individual responsibility for vocal health.

V. Students will sing with proper vocal and choral production techniques as stated and recognized by major vocal and choral pedagogues.

Materials

*Assigned musical scores will be provided, but are to be returned at end of semester. Students will be charged for music that is not returned.  
*Students are required to purchase a black choral folder (not a 3-ring binder). A bulk order will be made at the beginning of the year.

*Students are responsible for the purchase concert attire. Men wear a black tuxedo, black tie and
cumberbund, white tuxedo shirt, and patent leather shoes. Women all wear the same black concert dress, decided upon by the director. A bulk order will be placed at the beginning of the semester in order to cut costs and students will be made aware of the price (which fluctuates year to year) early in the semester.

*All students should bring several sharpened pencils to every rehearsal.

**Grading Scale**

A+ = 98-100  A = 94-97  A- = 90-93  
B+ = 87-89  B = 83-86  B- = 80-82  
C+ = 77-79  C = 73-76  C- = 70-72  
D = 60  F = 59 or below

**Performance Calendar**

Please refer to the Westminster College Choral Calendar for all required rehearsal and performance dates.

**Class Policies**

*Attendance/Participation/Grading*

An ensemble cannot achieve its full potential without complete commitment by all members, and it is impossible for students to actively participate without being in rehearsal or at a designated performance. Daily records will be kept and a significant portion of the student's grade will depend upon rehearsal and performance participation. The grading policy is as follows:

**Participation (30%)**

Participation is required at ALL rehearsals and performances.

Students are expected to arrive on time and remain alert and engaged throughout the class period. Again, participation is required at ALL rehearsal and performances. In the instance that a rehearsal must be missed, the student should submit a written note, one full week in advance of the given date, outlining the reason for the absence. The instructor reserves the right to deny a student’s request for absence for reasons deemed inappropriate.

Unacceptable reasons for requesting absence from rehearsal and performances include (but are not limited to):
* Voice lessons
* Meetings with faculty members or other organizations
* Make-up classes or exams
* Registration appointments
* Doctor/dental appointments
* Any other personal obligations

Absences for the following reasons are considered excused:

* Institutional excuses given five days in advance
* Extended illness with doctor's verification
* Death in the immediate family
* Religious holidays
* Other family emergencies
* Acute illness

Performances and dress rehearsals should not be missed under any circumstance other than emergency. In the extremely rare instance that a student must miss a performance for reason other than an emergency, the student should approach the instructor during the first week of classes to discuss any potential conflicts and submit, in writing, a description of the conflict, so the issue may be resolved. The instructor reserves the right to deny an absence request for reasons deemed inappropriate. Such reasons include, but are not limited to, those listed in the previous section.

Tardiness will not be tolerated. Arriving later than ten minutes after the start of class will constitute an unexcused absence and will result in the loss of participation points for the day. Unexcused absences in excess of one missed class will result in the loss of 5% of the overall participation grade per absence.

Additional participation/grading guidelines:

* FAILURE TO PARTICIPATE in a dress rehearsal without the prior approval of the instructor will result in a loss of one full letter grade.

* FAILURE TO PARTICIPATE in performances without the prior approval of the instructor will result in a loss of two full letter grades.

* FAILURE TO PARTICIPATE during the week of a performance will result in a lowered letter grade.

Demeanor (10%)

Criteria used to establish the demeanor grade include the following:

Work ethic (positive attitude and contribution):
* Student follows instructions and marks score when instructed.
* Student’s participation is conducive to the rehearsal process.
* Student responds well to constructive criticism.
* Student brings scores and a pencil to every rehearsal.
* If unable to sing, the student attends rehearsal and takes notes.

Food and Drink:

* No food or drinks are allowed in the rehearsal or performance facilities. Only closed capped water bottles will be permitted.

Preparation outside of class:

* Students will occasionally be given practice assignments and are expected to come prepared. Lack of preparation may result in the loss of daily participation points.

Part-testing: * Occasional announced and unannounced quartet or octet tests will be administered. Every student should be prepared to perform their part in this setting.

Professionalism:

* Students should show respect for the conductor and their fellow students.
* Students should adhere to the above participation policy.

Concert Attire:

* Students are expected to participate in choral performances in a clean and professional manner with the proper concert attire (outlined in the materials section).

Returning of Materials:

* Students are expected to return all musical scores at the end of the semester. Failure to return or pay for lost/damaged music by the announced deadline will result in the reduction of the demeanor grade.

**Vocal/Choral Production (30%)**

Individual and ensemble evaluation will be made using the attached rubric

**Final Exam (30%)**

The final performance of the semester constitutes the Final Exam.

*Electronic Devices*
Please silence all portable electronic devices prior to the beginning of each class period. Disruptions will not be tolerated and students responsible for disturbing the class will be asked to leave, resulting in an unexcused absence for the day. *Academic Honesty*

**Westminster College Academic Integrity Statement:**

“Academic dishonesty is a profound violation of the expected code of behavior. It can take several forms including, but not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, misrepresentation of facts or experimental results, unauthorized use of or intentional intrusion into another’s computer files and/or programs, intentional damage to a computer system, and unauthorized use of library materials and privileges. Academic dishonesty in any of these forms will not be tolerated. Students who engage in academic dishonesty face penalties such as failure in the course involved or expulsion from the College. All instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of the College.”

**Failure to follow this policy may lead to failure of the course or other disciplinary action.**

**Disability Statement**

As stated on the Office of Disability Resources website, “Westminster College is committed to removing barriers to education that may be experienced by students with disabilities, by providing appropriate supports and academic accommodations. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulate the provision of services and accommodations for students with disabilities in higher education.” Students with disabilities are encouraged to reach out to the Office of Disability Resources in order to determine what services may be available to them. Once a determination has been made, the instructor will work in collaboration with the administration, to make the necessary accommodations.