**Instructor:** Dr. Patricia P. Fleitas, Director of Choral and Vocal Studies

[pfleitas@fau.edu](mailto:pfleitas@fau.edu), 561-297-3823, AL 245

**Office Hours:** Monday -Wednesday 9:00-10:00, and by appointment. *Please do not disturb a lesson to speak with me*. Email me for a time.

**Course Description:** A small choral ensemble performing a wide repertoire of choral literature from Caribbean, Latin, Central, and South American countries.

**Course Objectives:**

# Perform at a high level of performance through the opportunities available in rehearsals, concerts, and all other choral orientated activities.

* Demonstrate musical styles and performance practices in various stylistic periods through rehearsal and performance.
* Improve musical skills through the rehearsal process in musical selections and sight-reading.

Our curriculum is designed to expose vocal students to the full array of vocal music culture. Therefore, as part of your educational experience you will be expected to sing secular text, sacred text, patriotic songs, and holiday themed repertoire. Please note that by singing this music, you are not being asked to espouse any religious beliefs or to accept as your own any ideological point of view. You are merely being required to participate in classroom exercises; which are essential components of the vocal curriculum at Florida Atlantic University. These workds are presented as works of art. Therefore, you will be required to sing all selections, and participate at all scheduled rehearsals and performances, without regard for religious or ideological background.

**Course Materials**

* Choral uniform must be purchased through he choral department and paid for in full by the end of the **second** week of classes.
* Each individual will receive assigned music, which belongs to the Choral Activities area at FAU and must be returned in its entirety to the Department without markings, on or before the final exam period.
* Occasionally students will be asked to print public domain scores or manuscripts from Blackboard. Once posted they are the student’s responsibility and must be brought to class in hard copy format.
* Students will be fined for lost or damaged music.
* Each student is required to have A PENCIL at every rehearsal.

**Course Requirements:**

1. A positive attitude throughout rehearsals and performances is expected.
2. The distributed / posted semester schedule is mandatory.
3. Any conflicts with the schedule must be brought to the director’s attention during the **first week** of classes.
4. **Five points will be deducted from the final grade for disruptions to class. This will include, but not be limited to, texting, cell phone rings, and talking.**
5. **ALL DRESS REHEARSALS ARE MANDATORY.** ANY STUDENT WHO MISSES A DRESS REHEARSAL WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO PERFORM IN THE CONCERT RESULTING IN A MISSED PERFORMANCE. OFTEN REHEARSALS AND PERFORMANCES WILL TAKE PLACE ON FRIDAYS, SATURDAYS, AND/OR SUNDAYS. PLEASE BE MINDFUL THAT THERE WILL BE NO EXCUSED ABSENCES FOR THESE EVENTS.
6. During the course of the semester other choral activities might be scheduled and thus become mandatory. All extra opportunities will have no less than one-week notice. If a performance/rehearsal opportunity arises with less than one-week notice the group will decide by majority vote if it will become mandatory. However, if an extra rehearsal arises due to lack of progress, such rehearsal becomes mandatory when scheduled by the director. Any significant problems must be brought to the director’s attention at the time of the announcement; otherwise it will not be excused.
7. Music folders with your assigned music are required at every rehearsal and performance. Students without music and pencils may be dismissed from rehearsal, thus receiving an absence for the day.
8. Each student must be prepared to sing alone or in other given formats at every rehearsal. Every student needs to anticipate that he/she may be called upon to sing without prior notice. At certain times pieces will require memorization. All pieces assigned to memory will be given a goal deadline. If a student is called upon to sing any of these pieces in rehearsal he/she must do so by memory.
9. Sectionals that are scheduled by the director are mandatory. All others are seriously recommended.
10. Relative progress should be evident at EVERY rehearsal. Singing tests (solo or in a small ensemble) have been scheduled (see course schedule). Other testing methods may arise if the ensemble does not demonstrate the expected progress. If progress is not demonstrated, pop quizzes may be called.
11. The ensemble’s concert attire is mandatory. The uniform should be neatly pressed and well maintained. If a dress is too tight or too short, the student may be asked to acquire one that meets the Ensemble’s standards.
12. Some piercings may need to be removed for rehearsals or performances. These include tongue, nose, other facial, and ear.
13. Music must be turned in at the end of the semester in good condition (no writing or water stains, etc). If it is not acceptable or missing (by assigned number) you will be charged amount necessary to replace that music.

**Course Communication Policy:**

* Announcements
  + You are responsible for reading all announcements posted by the instructor. Check the announcements each time you login to be sure you have read all of them since your last login session.
* Email & Message Policy
  + All electronic communication must originate from a valid FAU email address
  + Except for Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays, instructors will respond to messages generally within 48 hours.
* If this course does not appear in your Blackboard list, it is likely that you are not fully registered. If you do not have blackboard, you will not receive emails, announcements, or materials for class.

**Grading:**

**Testing Dates (in class or private. Can be solo or group)**

# Week of October 21

# Week of November 18

# 

* Preparation and Demeanor will be graded at 10 points per day
* There will be a minimum of two singing tests. These will be assessed as High Pass (A), Pass (B), or Fail (C- to F). Should a student fail an exam, it could result in not performing with the ensemble at all- the result of which will be a grade no higher than a C-.
* It is possible that an additional singing test may be assigned within two weeks of the final concert. Failure to pass that test may result in the same situation as above.
* Concert Attire is expected to be neat and is a graded component of this course

**The starting value of the grade will begin with attendance as outlined in the chart below.**

**Attendance Chart**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Number of Absences** | **Maximum Start Value** |
| 0-1 | 100 |
| 2 | 94 |
| 3 | 85 |
| 4 | 75 |
| 5 | 65 |
| 6 | 50 |

**Punctuality to Call times and Dress Rehearsal**

* Students not in place at time of call will have points from the FINAL grade deducted as follows

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Minutes late** | **Points Deducted** |
| 1-5 | 2 points |
| 5-10 | 5 points |
| 10-+ | 10 points |

From that highest maximum grade the following considerations will be calculated to arrive at the final grade for the semester.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Singing Tests & Spot Checks | 60 % |
| Rehearsal Demeanor, Preparation  (score markings, music, pencils, text, etc) | 30 |
| Concert Attire | 10 |

**\*\*Five points will be deducted from the final grade for disruptions to class. This will include, but not be limited to, texting, cell phone rings, and talking. \*\***

**Spot Checks** (pop quizzes) may be added, as needed

**Some rehearsals and events will count double. They include:**

* All extra rehearsals scheduled
* The Mandatory Choral Retreat (the first Saturday of Classes in the Fall semester)
* The last rehearsal before and the first rehearsal after a holiday, concert, or vacation
* The first and last rehearsals of the semester
* Extra rehearsals before a concert

As this is a teaching ensemble, events involving community relations and concerts are considered mandatory. Failure to participate in these events will affect the student’s final grade. Students will be given a one-week notice prior to the event

**Testing Rubric:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | High Pass (A) | Pass (B- C) | Fail (C- or lower) |
| Pitch | Excellent, only slight intonation issues | Minor pitch inconsistencies, but overall knowledge of notes is apparent | Significant pitch issues. Some passages show lack of knowledge |
| Rhythm | Excellent, precise. Tempo maintained | Good rhythmic integrity, possible slight deviation of tempo | Lack of rhythmic integrity. Late entries or rushed tempo. |
| Vocal Plac.\*\* | Notes are well-placed in the voice. Overall good vocal production and tone. | Pitches placed in voice with only minor deviations from good vocal tone. | Placement not consistent. Inconsistent tone. |
| \*\* It is understood that everyone is at a different vocal level. All students should make every attempt to produce the best tone possible at testing time. For example, fundamental technical approach to singing should not involve breathiness or pushed chest placement. | | | |

# If A student receives a grade of C or lower, they will be in jeopardy of being removed from the performance. That will result in no less than one letter grade deduction of the final grade.

# Attendance Policy

1. Students are considered tardy at **the top of the hour** (refer to the atomic clock in the classroom). At that start time you should be prepared to sing- not in the process of gathering materials. Those not prepared to begin are late.
2. Two tardies will equal one absence.
3. An absence from a performance will constitute a grade of **F** for the semester.
4. See the above chart for punctuality for dress rehearsals and concert call times
5. Anyone missing the Dress rehearsal will not be allowed to perform in that concert which will constitute a failing grade. Therefore, please carefully consider the schedule before the drop/add period ends.
6. **There is no differentiation made between excused and unexcused absences; use of absences is left up to the students’ discretion. Documentation is REQUIRED for any absences to remove penalties. ALL DOCUMENTATION MUST BE SUBMITTED TO INSTRUCTOR WITHIN 2 weeks of return to classes to be considered.**
7. **Any student who misses more than 10 rehearsals (even with documentation) should consider a medical or regular withdrawl. Non-participation in 30% of the semester’s regular rehearsals will not be accepted for a passing grade.**
8. Every Student is responsible for learning and memorizing every piece of music in the “folder”. Do not expect to be spoon-fed in rehearsal. Thus, tests may include pieces that have not been covered in rehearsal.
9. IF a student is unable to sing or participate for an extended time (more than 4 rehearsals in a semester) then the student needs to seek a Medical Withdrawal from the course. Otherwise, a non-passing grade may be issued. If a student is unable to sing due to illness, the student needs to seek medical documentation as to the nature of the problem within a reasonable amount of time as determined by their applied voice instructor.
10. All students are required to attend ALL FAU choral concerts in which they do not perform. If a student performs in all concerts, this requirement will be waived. Failure to attend will result in a 10-point deduction from the final grade.
11. Students are responsible for arranging to make up work missed because of legitimate class absence, such as serious illness, family emergencies, military obligation, court-imposed legal obligations or participation in University-approved activities.
12. Examples of University-approved reasons for absences include participating on an athletic or scholastic team, musical and theatrical performances and debate activities.
13. It is the student’s responsibility to give the instructor notice prior to any anticipated absence and within a reasonable amount of time after an unanticipated absence, ordinarily by the next scheduled class meeting. (or the day of in the case of an exam)
14. Instructors must allow each student who is absent for a University-approved reason the opportunity to make up work missed without any reduction in the student’s final course grade as a direct result of such absence. (University Catalog <http://www.fau.edu/academic/registrar/FAUcatalog/academics.php>)

**Concert Attire:**

Students must purchase the required uniform. Price will be determined at the given semester according to current catalog prices. Uniforms must be paid for in full before it is ordered. Alterations needed are the responsibility of the student. The area of choral music has a seamstress who has agreed to follow the department’s guidelines. If a student chooses to go elsewhere and the guidelines are not followed, then the individual student is responsible for remedying the situation and may have to purchase a new uniform. If, in through course of time, a uniform does not fit or look as it should, the student will be responsible for replacing it before the next performance. At every concert a designated graduate assistant will evaluate the individual’s attire. Students will not be allowed to perform until the uniform meets departmental standards.

**Uniform:**

**Will be determined by the ensemble and director in the first two weeks of classes**

FOR CONCERTS: Hair should be worn up and off the face. This will be discussed prior to the first concert.

These items are the student’s sole responsibility. Failure to comply with the exact uniform will constitute a failed performance (the student will not be allowed to perform.)

**Uniforms are expected to be neat and well-cared for. Students wearing wrinkled uniforms will be considered not in proper attire.**

**Make up/ Late Work:** As this is a performance based course it is not possible to make-up missing a performance or a dress rehearsal. If a music check quiz is missed it must be made up with 24 hours unless for vocal health issues, all of which must be documented.

**Plagiarism Detection:** Each student is expected to complete his/her assignments and tests on their own.

Any essays, including possible extra credit, that are submitted will be filtered through SafeAssign or TurnitIn. Papers with an originality report of more than 25% non-original material will be referred to the Dean’s office for review. Plagiarism may result in academic warning, or in extreme cases, expulsion. In addition, the paper will be considered failed and receive a grade of zero. In the case of a possible extra credit assignment, the amount that could have been added will be taken away from the final grade.

**Classroom etiquette:**

* NO COMPUTERS OR CELL PHONES WILL PERMITTED IN CLASS. (Exception: SDA office requests for specific reasons)
* STUDENTS MUST HAVE THEIR BOOK AND NECESSARY MATERIALS IN CLASS. Students without course materials may be asked to leave class.
* Should a student be found in violation of this etiquette, they will be asked to leave class and take the absence.
* Cell phones should be turned off.
* Additionally, students are asked to sit in the chairs in a proper manner and keep feet from residing on other furniture.
* Out of courtesy to other students and to the professor, students are asked to arrive in a timely manner. Please note that two tardies constitutes one absence.

**Disability Policy Statement:** In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), students who require reasonable accommodations due to a disability to properly execute coursework must register with the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) -- in Boca Raton, SU 133 (561-297-3880); in Davie, LA 240 (954-236-1222); in Jupiter, SR 110 (561-799-8010); or at the Treasure Coast, CO 117 (772-873-3441) – and follow all OSD procedures. <http://osd.fau.edu/>

**Religious Accommodation:**

* In accordance with rules of the Florida Board of Education and Florida law, students have the right to reasonable accommodations from the University in order to observe religious practices and beliefs with regard to admissions, registration, class attendance and the scheduling of examinations and work assignments.
* Students who wish to be excused from coursework, class activities, or examinations must notify the instructor in writing ***two weeks in advance*** of their intention to participate in religious observation and request an excused absence. The instructor will provide a reasonable opportunity to make up material from excused absences.
* Any student who feels aggrieved regarding religious accommodations may present a grievance to the director of Equal Opportunity Programs. Any such grievances will follow Florida Atlantic University’s established grievance procedure regarding alleged discrimination. <http://www.fau.edu/provost/files/religious2011.pdf>

**Incomplete Policy**: A grade of Incomplete will be assigned only in the case of extreme emergency or illness. This grade will only be assigned when such a situation precludes the students’ ability to complete the Final Performance. If such a situation should occur, the student should contact the instructor prior to the start of the performance and should be in EXTREME cases only. Should this occur, the student will be required to complete the course the next time it is offered as no make up for a collaborative performance is possible or reasonable.

**Code of Academic Integrity Policy Statement**: Students at Florida Atlantic University are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. Academic dishonesty is considered a serious breach of these ethical standards, because it interferes with the university mission to provide a high quality education in which no student enjoys an unfair advantage over any other. Academic dishonesty is also destructive of the university community, which is grounded in a system of mutual trust and places high value on personal integrity and individual responsibility. Harsh penalties are associated with academic dishonesty. For more information, see <http://www.fau.edu/regulations/chapter4/4.001_Code_of_Academic_Integrity.pdf>

**Important Dates:**

August 24 10:00am-5:00pm Choral Retreat ALL

September 2 NO CLASSES

November 5 Week of Possible rehearsal ALL

November 8 9:30am-10:00pm Choral Festival\* All

November 9 9:00am-10:00pm Choral Festival\* All

December 8 10:00am-10:00pm Annual **Messiah** All†

December 12-13 All day Commencement All

December 14-15 All day, 6:30 pm Annual Madrigal Dinner All ÷

\*\*\*\*Additional performances for local schools will be announced. As this is a recruiting ensemble your participation is absolutely crucial. All possible consideration of the academic schedule is taken into account. These dates will be announced as they are scheduled with the High School directors.

*A Look Ahead:*

January 25 9:00am-5:00pm “Sing at FAU” All Voice Majors

February 15 10:00am-10:00pm Choral Concert All

March 5-8 ~~~~ ACDA Regional Conference Interested participant

April 12 10:00am-10:00pm Choral Concert All

\*A Detailed schedule for these days will be provided- HOWEVER- students should make arrangements to be available for the entire day (unless in a class that cannot be missed)

† Students participating in this event will be asked to attend a few of the Chamber rehearsals in preparation.

During the course of the semester, additional events may arise. The Calendar will be updated and an email sent if that occurs. All events that have at least two weeks notice become mandatory.\*

Other dates will be posted on Blackboard- check it frequently.

Sound Checks will occur the day of the concert or the day prior. Exact times will be announced closer to the event. Please plan on clearing the day.

Additionally, extra rehearsals may be called with more than a weeks notice. They are then considered mandatory. Please be sure that your schedule has been cleared. Exact times will be announced.

**What Singers Should Do**

The Area of Choral and Vocal Studies wishes to thank The Singer's Resource, the Texas Voice Center, Houston, and the University of Michigan Vocal Health Center for the following information:

1. **Maintain good general health**. Get adequate rest to minimize fatigue. If you do become ill, avoid "talking over your laryngitis" - see your physician and rest your voice.
2. **Exercise regularly**.
3. **Eat a balanced diet**. Including vegetables, fruit and whole grains, and avoid caffeinated drinks (coffee, tea, and soft drinks) and alcohol. Avoid spicy, acidic, and dairy foods if you are sensitive to them.
4. **Maintain body hydration**; drink two quarts of water daily.
5. **Avoid dry, artificial interior climates**. Las Vegas has an average daily humidity of 36%, a relatively low amount of moisture. Using a humidifier at night might compensate for the dryness.
6. **Limit the use of your voice**. High-ceilinged restaurants, noisy parties, cars and planes are especially damaging to the voice. If necessary, use amplification for vocal projection.
7. **Avoid throat clearing and voiced coughing**.
8. **Stop yelling, and avoid hard vocal attacks on initial vowel words**.
9. **Adjust the speaking pitch level of your voice**. Use the pitch level in the same range where you say, "Umm-hmm?"
10. **Speak in phrases rather than in paragraphs**. Always speak on “fresh breath”
11. **Reduce demands on your voice** - don't do all the talking!
12. **Learn to breathe silently to activate your breath support muscles and reduce neck tension.**
13. **Take full advantage of the two free elements of vocal fold healing**: water and air.
14. **Vocal athletes must treat their musculoskeletal system, as do other types of athletes;** therefore, vocal warm-ups should always be used prior to singing. Vocal cool-downs are also essential to keep the singing voice healthy.

**What All Musicians Should Do**

1. **Stay informed**. Awareness is the key. Like many health-related issues, prevention is much easier and less expensive than cures. Take time to read available information concerning injuries associated with your art.
2. Musicians might find the following books helpful:

Conable, Barbara. *What Every Musicians Needs to Know About the Body* (GIA Publications, 2000)

Klickstein, Gerald. *The Musician's Way: A Guide to Practice, Performance, and Wellness* (Oxford, 2009)

Norris, Richard N. *The Musician's Survival Manual* (International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians, 1993)

1. The following links may be useful:

[Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music](http://www.abrsm.org/) (ABRSM), the world's leading authority on musical assessment, actively supporting and encouraging music learning for all.

[Performing Arts Medicine Association](http://www.artsmed.org/) (PAMA), an organization comprised of dedicated medical professionals, artists educators, and administrators with the common goal of improving the health care of the performing artist.

[Texas Voice Center](http://www.texasvoicecenter.com/), founded in 1989 for the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of voice disorders.

[National Center for Voice and Speech](http://www.ncvs.org/) (NCVS), conducts research, educates vocologists, and disseminates information about voice and speech.

[Vocal Health Center,](http://www.med.umich.edu/) University of Michigan Health System, recognized locally, regionally and nationally as a leading institution for the treatment and prevention of voice disorders. At the heart of the Center is a professional team comprised of experts from the University of Michigan Health System and U-M School of Music, encompassing the fields of Laryngology, Speech Pathology, and Vocal Arts.