

Seaquam Music Department
Course Outline and Music Teacher's Expectations
Choir

"For the strength of the pack is the wolf and the strength of the wolf is the pack"
Kipling

The coursework in the Choir is designed to develop each student's individual musical skills, learn the responsibilities of being a member of a musical ensemble, provide opportunities for musical leadership, and continue to foster a life-long love of music.

The Choir focuses on refining musical skills technical and theoretical but the focus is on a variety of choral literature for performance and study.

This outline of my expectations of student musicians and how they will be evaluated while serious in it's tone, is meant to help create an atmosphere where we can experience the joy of learning and performing music together.

Assessment and Evaluation

Students will be assessed and evaluated on three components of musicianship: Performance Skills (50%), Written Skills (20%), and Personal Responsibility (30%). Students will earn a letter grade for each term. In music the goal is progressive mastery of skills. For this reason only a small percentage of a student's Individual Performance Test and Written Test grades are averaged over the three terms to create a final mark for the course.

Performance Skills

Students will be given Individual Performance Tests and Group Performance Tests.

Individual Performance Tests are done in class in front of their fellow choir students. The students are informed in advance what specific musical passages/exercises and elements (notes, rhythms, tempo, etc) will be tested. As mastery of the material is the goal, students may re-sing a test at any time before the test material is performed, or the end of the term for scale or other technical tests.

If a student is unable to sing a test because of illness/injury the student must have a note from their parents **before** the test. If a student is absent on a test day, parents are to call and leave a message on my voicemail 591.6166 (local 6179) before the test. Students who miss tests must make an appointment with me to make up their tests on their own time (most often during the lunch hour).

Students may be given random "spot quizzes" if necessary. If a musical passage has been rehearsed in class, but requires individual practice to polish, this section will be deemed "learned" by the teacher. If in a future class the individual students have not polished this section, this section(s) will be given a spot quiz. All sections of the choir will be given an equal number of these quizzes in a term.

Group Performance Tests are concerts. Students must attend and are required to stay for the entire concert not just their ensemble's performance. Learning to be a respectful audience member and supporting one's fellow musicians is part of our curriculum. A list of confirmed

concert dates for 2011/2012 follows. The dates of other performances will be posted on the website as soon as they are confirmed.

Wednesday October 5	Squeak & Squawk/ Chantalez Nouveau	7:00 p.m.	Music Room
Thursday November 10	Remembrance Day	8:30 a.m.	Seaquam PAC
Tuesday November 29	Premiere Concert	7:00 p.m.	Seaquam PAC
Thursday March 1	Spring Concert	7:00 p.m.	Seaquam PAC
April 12 - 14	Kiwanis Choral Festival	TBA	Bethany Baptist Church
Monday May 7	Delta Festival of Music	7:00 p.m.	Seaquam PAC
Thursday June 7	Final Concert	7:00 p.m.	Seaquam PAC

On extremely rare occasions students have an irreconcilable conflict with a concert. Unlike other tests, it is impossible for students to "make up" a Group Performance Tests. However, students will be able to make up a missing a Group Performance Test by completing a written assignment if they have met the following conditions.

- 1) The student must demonstrate that he/she has made every possible effort to resolve the conflict.
- 2) The student informs Ms. Sparrow-Ng in writing with enough notice so the student's part can be covered in order that the student's absence will not damage the performance of the ensemble.

If a student is so ill they cannot perform on the day of a concert, they must **phone** Ms. Sparrow-Ng directly first thing in the morning 591.6166 (local 6179).

Written Skills

Throughout the year students will be given various written assignments and tests (lyrics quizzes and tests, theory exercises, music study assignments, self-evaluation forms) to enhance the students' knowledge of general music theory and history and specific knowledge of the music they are performing.

Personal Responsibility

*"Research and preparation is a privilege."
Russel Crowe*

Music is participatory. Students must be in classes, rehearsals, and concerts on time, prepared, and with all equipment.

Attendance

Other than music learning, I believe that one of the most important things students learn in a music class is how to work within a goal-oriented group on a long-term basis. Music is a group project everyday. When you are absent the group is impacted in two ways. One, you miss the learning for the day which means you are behind, and two, the group is less able to rehearse fully as you part and your part are missing. This is why when professional musicians, must miss a rehearsal or concert, they are expected to arrange, and pay for, a substitute to take their place — yes, even for rehearsal!

Students are required to demonstrate responsibility to the group by keeping absences to the bare minimum. Students will not be penalized for being absent, however, in order to earn full personal responsibility marks, by absences must be dealt with in the following way:

1) Having your parent/guardian having your parent/guardian report your absence to the main office (this is the best way as all a student's teacher's will be notified), leave a voice mail message 591-6166 (local 6179) before class on the morning you are away explaining your necessary absence, or bringing a note from your parent/guardian on the first class you are back. If you need to leave the school during the day, you must follow school procedure and sign out.

2) Immediately upon return, speaking with Ms. Sparrow-Ng and your section mates about the material you missed (technique, written, and rehearsal) and making an appointment to complete any missed tests and/or attending a noon-hour sectional if necessary to learn missed material.

At the end of each year, students who have never been AWOL (Absent With Out Leave) will be recognized with an award for Personal Responsibility.

Punctuality

Students must be in the music room getting equipment set up when the bell rings. Students who arrive in the music room after the bell without a legitimate reason in writing from parent, doctor, dentist, or previous teacher, will lose personal responsibility marks; the amount determined by the student's demeanor — rushing in apologetically (minimum) or sauntering in with fries from the caf, (maximum, and disposal of fries).

Preparation and Practice

Students are expected to have their music marked **in pencil** (bars numbered, correct pronunciations, breathing, and dynamics marked, etc.) as requested by the conductor.

*"All I want from tomorrow, is to get it better than today."
Huey Lewis and the News*

Students are required to practice at home. Choir students are not given practice charts with a prescribed amount of practice time. However, students must be prepared for rehearsal. For choir students who are just learning to read music and/or who do not play the piano, this can be problematic. However, a great deal can be learned singing by one's self or simply memorizing the text, and I am more than willing to spend time with students outside of class time to help students learn parts. The purpose of the rehearsal portion of class not to learn each note and rhythm for each student or section, but rather to put all of the parts together and work on ensemble problems, style, balance and the musical expression. Students who are not prepared for rehearsal will be required to attend sectional or individual practice sessions under the supervision of the director or student tutor. For each student to become the best musician possible, merely learning their "parts" for their music will not suffice. Students must practice technical exercises regularly in order to increase range and speed and develop beautiful tone.

Concert Uniform

How an ensemble dresses for concerts is extremely important. A group who comes onto the stage well-dressed shows respect for their audience, reflects personal pride, and gives off an aura of “something special is going to happen”. For all performances, Seaquam Music students wear the “uniform” on professional musicians: **Concert Dress Black**. The overall look is classy and formal, casual attire of any kind is not appropriate. Students are free to choose the components of their dress blacks within the following guidelines.

- no jeans, sweat pants, t-shirts, runners, or sports sandals
- shirts must have long sleeves and collars for boys and sleeves modest necklines for girls
- if girls choose to wear skirts, they must be just above knee length or longer
- fabrics must be muted, nothing shiny or sparkly
- all students must wear black socks or stockings (going sans-socks is not appropriate)
- the only skin we want to see are your hands and your face!

If you are not if something meets the requirements, ask before you buy or make sure you can take it back. Remember, your music, not your uniform is the show.

The Music Book

Students will need a duo-tang for their “Music Book” that will be kept in the student’s band folder. In educational jargon, the Music Book is a process-portfolio, which is a record of the student’s learning. The Music Book will contain a progress sheet (to record all assignments and tests), counting quizzes and tests, test evaluations, written assignments, score studies, and articles or other written information about music. In addition to being a record of a student’s learning, the music book is a means of communication between student, parent and teacher. I encourage all parents to ask to see the student’s book on a regular basis, and if you have and questions or concerns regarding you son/daughter’s progress, please contact me at Seaquam (604-591-6166) jsparrow@deltasd.bc.ca

What can students expect?

What students can expect from me is a mirror of my expectations for them. Student musicians can expect that the teacher musician will:

- be in class or rehearsal on time and prepared
- be concerned with the musical achievements of the ensemble and each individual within it
- give help outside of class time —please arrange a time in advance so I will be sure to be there!
- be concerned for the holistic welfare of each student
- share my love of music and learning

We have read and understand the music teacher’s expectations.

Student signature

Parent/Guardian signature

Date