



South Eugene High School Choir Program Syllabus

Course Information

Course: Tyro Choir Experience, Concert Choir, Dorians Jazz Choir Course Fee: \$15 per trimester
Instructor: Chris Dobson Phone: (541) 952-2343 Website: www.SouthEugeneMusic.org
E-Mail (preferred communication method): dobson_c@4j.lane.edu
Office Hours: 3rd period daily, or after school, by appointment.

The South Eugene High School Choirs are performing ensembles that rehearse in preparation for various performances and events throughout the school year. Through collaboration, members of the choirs strive to create and present artistic performances that are musically and educationally excellent. To do well in choir, students must come to class on time, with a positive attitude, ready to sing. Students are expected to follow directions immediately. Choir is a class that relies on each student's willingness and ability to collaborate well with other students. Students are expected to actively participate in rehearsals and in every scheduled performance with a positive, respectful attitude. **Please read the following information and return the attached form to the school by the Friday of the first full week of class.**

Auditions

Auditions are required to participate in Concert Choir and Dorians. Auditions will be held the first day of class in September, by appointment during the school year and in June for the following school year. Students do not need to re-audition once accepted. Auditions may be limited to particular voice types as needed.

Required Course Materials

- Students will be issued a white view-style 3-ring binder in September. Students are expected to bring the folder to class daily and keep the folder in performance condition (free of rips, unsightly marks and unauthorized decorations). Should a student need a replacement, one can be purchased for about \$5.00 in most office-supply stores. Folders may not be stored in the choir room after class.
- Students are expected to keep a useable pencil in their folder at all times.
- Sheet music is loaned to students to use throughout the term. Each student assumes responsibility for their music. Lost or damaged music will need to be replaced at the music publisher's current selling price plus applicable shipping and handling. If the lost music is out of print, the student is responsible for contacting the publisher to seek permission to make a copy.
- Students will need to purchase and maintain a performance uniform. Every effort will be made to keep the price of the uniform below \$50 and assistance will be offered to families in need. More information about the performance uniform will be distributed via email.
- Any student wearing improper performance attire will be required to find, purchase or borrow the correct attire before the concert begins. If proper attire cannot be acquired, the student will not be allowed to perform and as such, cannot complete associated assignments.

Learning Outcomes

Choir is a performing art. This class will give students the opportunity to sing a diverse variety of music from many historic periods, perform on stage before an audience and improve individual musical abilities. Students will work to develop their skills to meet these National Core Arts Anchor Standards:

- MU:Pr5.1.E Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.
- MU:Pr6.1.E Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.
- MU:Re9.1.E Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.

In addition to the National Core Arts Anchor Standards presented above, students will also work to build their skills in the following Common Core State Standards for writing:

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details and well-structured event sequences.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.5 Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

Grading in Choir

As a performing arts class aimed at preparing students for possible further study and careers in the arts, choir assignments and graded curricular components are designed to foster and strengthen skills needed to succeed in a professional performing ensemble.

Rehearsals: In the professional performing arts world, performers are expected to attend and participate fully in all scheduled rehearsals. There are no “excused rehearsal absences” in the professional world and any absence may be cause for dismissal from the ensemble and could limit employability in the future. This, however, is a high school performing ensemble, so certain allowances will be made. Please read the following policy carefully:

Students are expected to be at every rehearsal on time. Missed rehearsals cannot be made up. Each unexcused rehearsal absence will immediately reduce a student’s grade in choir by 6%. Absences that are excused through the front office will not affect a student’s grade, but the student will be held responsible to seek out any information missed and work on choir music outside of class. Please note that absences can only be excused through the front office up to TWO DAYS from the date of the absence! After that, unexcused absences cannot be excused. Frequent tardy attendance may also affect a student’s grade, though every effort will be made to contact parents before this would come into effect.

The graded components of choir are outlined below:

Grade %	Title	Abilities	Assessment
60%	Rehearsal Skills	I can work to improve my music sight-reading ability. I can use sheet music as a tool to perform with accuracy. I can demonstrate understanding of my professional responsibilities to myself, the choir and the director.	Students are authentically assessed continuously throughout rehearsal. In-class writing assignments may be administered to test understanding. Points lost due to unexcused rehearsal absences cannot be made up.
20%	Performance Skills	I can memorize choral music. I can perform rehearsed music, incorporating techniques and concepts learned during rehearsals. I can clearly communicate a personal reflection on my performance. I can demonstrate understanding of my professional responsibilities to myself, the choir and the director.	Students are authentically assessed at all performances. Students are required to submit a typed reflection for specified choir performances, due on or before the third school day following the performance. Missing a performance for any reason will automatically result in the student's inability to complete the assignment. Special accommodations may be made at the director's discretion in emergency circumstances only.
20%	Scholarly Achievement	I can use narrative techniques to develop experiences, events, and/or characters where one event logically leads to another. I can communicate ideas effectively and appropriately for my audience.	Students will complete various writing assignments throughout the year, detailed on the “Writing Assignments” page. All writing assignments will be due the week before finals. No late work will be accepted.

About The Use of Religious Music in Choir

Does music with a sacred text have a place in the public schools?

It is the position of the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) that the study and performance of religious music within an educational context is a vital and appropriate part of a comprehensive music education. The omission of sacred music from the school curriculum would result in an incomplete educational experience. For more detailed information about NAfME's stance and the law, please visit this webpage: <https://nafme.org/my-classroom/music-selection/sacred-music/sacred-music-in-schools-position-statement/>

At South, high-quality religious music is programmed only when its educational value justifies its selection. The religious meaning is never the focus of study and students are never asked to believe in the message of the music. Every concert is balanced to include both religious and non-religious music.

Writing Assignments

Performance Self-Reflections

Students will be required to submit a performance self-reflection narrative following specified performances throughout the year. This paper must be typed and not more than two pages in length using complete sentences and ideas. Content is more important than length. Reflections will be graded as either "meets" for full points, or "does not meet" for no points.

Content:

- General narrative of the performance. How did you feel? What did you experience?
- What skills or techniques did you use that you learned in class?
- What went well? What would you change? How did the performance meet your expectations?
- Include a conclusion to wrap up your narrative.

Due: On or before the end of the third school day following the performance. May be submitted electronically.

Scholarly Achievement

Due: on or before the last school day of the week before finals. No late work will be accepted.

Choose **one** of the following projects to complete **each trimester**. Other options may be made available.

Option A: **Music Performance Observation**

Attend a complete music performance. Write a paper detailing your experiences. The paper must be typed, double-spaced using a 12 pt. standard font (such as Times New Roman or Arial). The paper must be 1.5-2 pages in length using proper spelling, grammar and syntax.

Content:

- Performance Setting. Detail the location of the performance, the people in the audience, pre-performance happenings, the "vibe," etc.
- Performing Forces. Who was making music? What instruments, if any were used? Detail the specific timbres of what you heard.
- Performance Narrative. What happened? What songs were performed? Detail the unique or memorable parts of the performance.
- Personal Experience. How did it make you feel? What did you like? What would you change? Would you go again? Etc.
- Submit the final paper along with proof of your attendance: a copy of the program, a ticket stub, something signed by a performer, or a picture of yourself at the performance.
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Option B: **Extracurricular Music Project**

Participation in certain extracurricular music experiences will fulfill your scholarly achievement requirement. This experience must take at least 5 hours of your time during the trimester and have a clear music focus. Some examples might include: participation in a staged musical (such as with our drama program); participation in an extracurricular performing organization such as the Oregon Children's Choir; taking music lessons; performing at a retirement center; participating in the music program at your church; etc. Ask the director if your circumstances qualify to fulfill this option.

Simply turn in evidence of your experience such as a concert program, pictures of your experience, a signed parent note detailing your experience, etc.

Option C: **Music Composition Project**

Compose an original work of music and write a paper detailing your process and inspiration. The composition must be at least 32 bars in length and the accompanying paper must be typed, double-spaced using a 12 pt. standard font (such as Times New Roman or Arial). The paper must be 1 page in length using proper spelling, grammar and syntax.

Content:

- Your composition may be submitted as handwritten orthography (music notation you write on staff paper), a printout from music notation software, such as Finale, Sibelius or MuseScore, or an audio recording of your work along with a page with the lyrics, if applicable.
- Your music composition must be at least 32 bars long, with the correct number of beats per measure and clear, tonal musical ideas (notes shouldn't be completely random).
- Your music composition must include at least two simultaneous forces (such as two voices, a voice and a guitar, a clarinet and a tuba, independent right and left hands on the piano, etc.).
- Your paper should include a narrative of your compositional process. How did you start the process? What steps did you take to complete your work? What influenced your composition? What is your favorite part?

Option D: **Music Arrangement Project**

Make your own arrangement of a piece of music for performance by different forces than the original work (i.e. write an a cappella arrangement of a song by your favorite band, arrange a folk song for symphonic band or arrange a symphonic band piece for voice and piano). Your arrangement should be significantly different from the original, and not simply a "transcription" for different voices or instruments. If you choose to submit an audio recording as your work (instead of written notation), you will also be required to submit an accompanying paper detailing your process and inspiration. This paper must be typed, double-spaced using a 12 pt. standard font (such as Times New Roman or Arial), and must be at least 1 page in length using proper spelling, grammar and syntax.

Content:

- Your arrangement may be submitted as handwritten orthography (music notation you write on staff paper), a printout from music notation software, such as Finale, Sibelius or MuseScore, or an audio recording of your work along with a page with the lyrics, if applicable, as well as the aforementioned accompanying paper.
- Your arrangement must be at least 64 bars long, with the correct number of beats per measure and clear, tonal musical ideas (notes shouldn't be completely random). The melody should remain mostly intact, but it may be manipulated to add space, slightly different rhythms or a different tempo.
- Your arrangement must include at least two simultaneous forces (such as two voices, a voice and a guitar, a clarinet and a tuba, independent right and left hands on the piano, etc.).
- If you choose to submit an audio recording of your work instead of notation, please cover the following in your accompanying paper: How did you start the process? What steps did you take to complete your work? What influenced your arrangement? What is your favorite part?

Option E: **Individual Music Project**

Create and execute your own unique project to fulfill your scholarly achievement requirement. You must have your "Individual Music Project Form" approved and signed no later than the end of the third week of the trimester to proceed.

Content:

- Your individual project must have a clear music focus.
- There must be a written element. This could be in the form of notated music, a written essay, journaling, etc.
- You must submit physical evidence of your work. This might be on paper, or as an audio or video recording.

PLEASE READ AND FILL OUT ALL SECTIONS COMPLETELY. Return this page only. Choir: _____

Contact Information

Occasionally, the director may need to notify choir families of upcoming engagements and important choir-specific information. Emails will be sent directly from Synergy. Please make sure you have supplied your most current contact information, including phone numbers and email addresses to the school. Also, make sure 4j.lane.edu is in your trusted domains so school messages go to your inbox. **If you do not use email, please indicate which method you prefer:** Phone call Paper notice sent home Other (indicate below)

Volunteers

We need volunteers! A volunteer choir parent council may be established to help the director with planning and execution of events and fundraising. The choir parent council would meet a few times throughout the year for planning and brainstorming. Choir parent council members might be asked to plan, prepare or execute specific tasks outside our meeting times.

Are you willing to volunteer to help the choir this year? _____ Are you willing to join a parent council? _____

Financial Assistance

Some choir activities will cost money. If your family cannot afford some or all of these expenses, we still want to make it possible for your student to participate in these experiences. **Please read each statement carefully and initial by the statement that best describes your family's situation.**

_____ My family **will not** need financial assistance this year.

_____ My family will need **partial** financial assistance (50% or less) this year.

_____ My family will need **significant** financial assistance (Greater than 50%) this year.

We need donations!

Our choir has been a powerful experience for many students over the years, yet for some, it can feel like they aren't really part of the group when they can't afford to participate in the trips and other experiences. Please consider making a tax-deductible donation to help these kids have a positive, inclusive experience in choir this year. Our goal is 100% participation in every choir experience. If families like you and local businesses invest, we can reach this goal. Even \$20 can make a difference. You can submit a check directly to the director along with this page, made out to "South Eugene High School Choir" with "General Fund" in the memo line, or have your business contact us for tax ID information.

Certification

"I hereby certify that I have read the choir syllabus in full and understand that I am required to adhere to the policies therein."

Name of student (please print)

Student Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Name (please print)

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date