



# **Choir Syllabus**

Fall 2021

MUEN 1150, 1151, 1141,  
1142, 2141, 2142

## Faculty Information

### Micah Bland

Director of Choirs | Instructor of Music

DMA, Choral Music, University of Southern California, Expected December 2021

MM, Choral Conducting, University of Texas at San Antonio, 2014

BM, Vocal Music Education, Abilene Christian University, 2009

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## Mission Statement

The mission of the Ranger College Choir is to enhance students' knowledge of reading and writing music, provide performing opportunities to students, and enrich the life of the college campus and community.

## Course Description

A mixed singing organization open to students interested in choral singing. Public concerts. Credit 2 semester hours. (Ranger College Catalog, 2019)

## Choral Program Goals

1. To develop musical excellence and comprehensive musicianship.
2. To foster student responsibility through teamwork and communication.
3. To provide students an outlet to increase musical skills and enhance creative abilities.
4. To create supporters of the arts and aesthetically astute citizens.
5. To create a safe environment that is conducive to learning.

## Student Learning Outcomes

Through participation in this course, students will:

1. Sing a varied repertoire of music, spanning all periods of musical history, alone and in groups while demonstrating proper vocal technique.
2. Perform in choral ensembles of various sizes demonstrating technical accuracy and expression.
3. Read music notation, using solfège syllables, on the treble and bass staff.
4. Define basic music terminology and apply terminology as it relates to choral music.
5. Demonstrate the ability to sight-sing proficiently using solfège syllables and Curwen hand signs.

6. Demonstrate correct posture/body alignment and breath-management techniques.
7. Understand basic anatomical functions of the human voice in relation to singing and vocal development.
8. Improvise and create music using the basic materials of music: melody, harmony, and rhythm.
9. Evaluate choral performances using scoring rubrics that contain specified criteria.
10. Interpret and analyze music of various historical periods and genres by using critical thinking and listening skills.
11. Demonstrate the ability to work as a team and effectively communicate with each other.
12. Demonstrate and apply an understanding of music notation, symbols, and terms.
13. Assess the impact of musicians and composers of various cultures, times, and societies.
14. Analyze and understand the relationship between choral music, related arts, and other academic subjects.

## **Attendance**

### ***Regular Rehearsals***

- A. Rehearsals for this semester will be scheduled as follows:
  - Tuesdays and Thursdays – 7:40 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. (Combined)
  - Mondays and Wednesdays – 8:00am to 9:20 a.m. (Tenor-Bass)
  - Mondays and Wednesdays – 3:05pm to 4:25 pm (Treble)
- B. Rehearsal attendance is mandatory for all students. When students are missing from rehearsal it slows the progress of the group. See the absence policy below:
  - The only excused absences are school functions, religious observations, extreme illness (must provide documentation), family emergency (must notify director prior to absence and provide documentation, amount of approved absences are at the director's discretion) or absences that have received prior approval from the director. An absence must be approved by the director prior to the missed rehearsal in order for it to be excused.
  - Students are permitted one unexcused absence per semester.
  - For every unexcused absence beyond the first permitted absence the student's final grade may be reduced by 5%. This reduction is at the director's discretion and discretion is contingent upon a student/director meeting.
  - For every unexcused absence beyond the first permitted absence, students are required to schedule a meeting with the director during office hours. This should occur within 3 school days of the absence. The scheduling of this meeting is the responsibility of the student not the director. Failure to meet with the director will result in an automatic 5% reduction in the student's final grade.
  - Students who are habitually absent may receive a reduction in their scholarship.
  - In extreme cases, a student's scholarship may be revoked and the student may be dismissed from the choral program.
  - Work, routine appointments, meetings with coaches/faculty/staff, not having a ride, etc... are NEVER excused.

- C. Being tardy is a disruption of student learning. See the tardy policy below:
  - On the third tardy and for every tardy after, the student's final grade will be reduced by 5%.
  - Students who are habitually tardy may receive a reduction in their scholarship.
  - In extreme cases, a student's scholarship may be revoked the student may be dismissed from the choral program.
- D. DIGITAL – if at any point during the semester we utilize zoom, all rehearsal attendance requirements and consequences apply.
- E. If you feel you must miss class for any COVID related reasons (tested positive, testing, possible symptoms) you must report to and be excused by the dean of students.

### ***Special Rehearsals***

- A. The director reserves the right to schedule special rehearsals (Example: small group work, sectionals, performance rehearsals etc...)
- B. These rehearsals will be scheduled in advance and all students are required to attend.
- C. These rehearsals will have the same attendance and tardy policies as regular rehearsals (see above).

### ***Performances***

- A. All students are required to attend all performances.
- B. Performances include, but are not limited to, semester concerts, community concerts, and school events (e.g. basketball games, graduation, etc...).
- C. Performance attendance will be a portion of the semester grade.
- D. Students who choose not to attend performances **will be in danger of failing** the course and scholarship revocation.

### ***Excused and Unexcused Performance Absences***

- A. The only excused absences from performances are for medical and family emergencies (must provide documentation and absence is at the director's discretion), religious observations, and school events. If a student is going to miss a performance, he or she must notify the director prior to the performance in order for the absence be considered excused. In all cases, proper documentation is required. The student must meet with the director within 3 days of the missed performance. The scheduling of this meeting is the responsibility of the student not the director.
- B. If you do not inform the director beforehand, your absence may be considered unexcused no matter the reason.
- C. Work, routine appointments, meetings with coaches/faculty/staff, not having a ride, etc... are NEVER excused.

<h2><b>Required Materials</b></h2>
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- Students will be provided music and a choir robe for this course.
- Students may be asked to provide additional items for their performance attire.
- Students are required to have a pencil (no pens) at every rehearsal
- Students are required to have a black binder for their music

- Students are responsible for all loaned choir materials and must return them at the end of the semester.
- If you do not return loaned choir materials at the end of the semester, you will be assessed the following fees:

Music	\$2.00 per piece
Robe	\$85.00

- A hold will be placed on your account until all fees for non-returned items are paid.

## Concert Attire

An audience hears with their ears and their eyes. For this reason, it is essential that we visually present ourselves in a uniform manor. Students not in proper attire will not be permitted to perform. Listed below are the attire requirements.

- For sporting events, students may be asked to wear jeans, and a matching shirt or matching color shirt. Jeans should be free of holes or illusions of holes. Students are responsible for wearing the required shirt.
- Students may be asked to wear black attire for select performances. Students should have black dress pants (no jeans or leggings), black closed toe shoes, black socks (girls do not need to wear socks if their shoes do not require them), and a solid black button up shirt, dress, or blouse.
- Students will be provided with a robe for select performances. When wearing robes, students should wear their black dress shirt, black dress pants, black socks, and black closed toe shoes.
- Students are responsible for maintaining their robes and stoles. Students will be responsible for any lost to damaged parts.
- Students should be clean and presentable and free from smells for performances.
- For major performances (i.e. full concerts) hair must be a natural color. For minor performances unnatural colors are permitted.
- Students should have their hair pulled back out of the performer's eyes

## Grading Policies and Evaluation

This course meets the following of the six Core Objectives established by Texas:

- Critical Thinking Skills (CT)** – Creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis; evaluation and synthesis of information
- Communication Skills (COM)** – effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication
- Empirical and Quantitative Skills (EQS)** – The manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions

- ☒ **Teamwork (TW)** – The ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal
- ☒ **Social Responsibility (SR)** – Intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities
- ☒ **Personal Responsibility (PR)** – The ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making

***Rehearsal Participation / Attendance = 40% (Texas core objectives COM, TM, SR, PR)***

- Each student must fully participate in all rehearsals.
- Students will be evaluated on participation. Students will be given a weekly participation grade. Students may lose daily points for the following offenses:
  - Unexcused absences – no credit for that class
  - Arriving late to rehearsal – 10% loss in credit for that class
  - Not bringing required materials to rehearsal
  - Cell phone use of any kind during rehearsal
  - Failure to participate or follow instructions during rehearsal
  - Showing disrespect to the instructor or classmates during rehearsal
  - Any other action the director feels are disruptive to student learning

***Performances = 30% (Texas core objectives COM, TM, SR, PR)***

- A. Students are required to fully participate in all performances.
- B. Performances include, but are not limited to, off-campus concerts, on-campus concerts, community events, and school events.
- C. Tardiness, off-task/disruptive behavior, not wearing the correct concert attire, and failure to fully participate will result in a significantly lowered grade for the performance. If behaviors are extreme, the student may be dismissed from the performance and will receive no credit for the performance.
- D. Students must abide by good concert etiquette rules during performances. To demonstrate good etiquette, students should:
  - Refrain from cell phone use of any kind
  - Avoid talking
  - Watch the conductor and be engaged
  - Use good singing posture
- E. Additionally, students may be asked to assist with concert preparations (e.g. setting up chairs, handing out programs, greeting guests, etc...). This will count as part of the performance grade.
- F. **Reminder: Missing a performance may result in failure of the course and/or revocation of scholarship.**

***Assignments/Quizzes = 30% (Texas core objectives CT, COM, PR)***

- A. Students may be required to complete occasional assignments and/or quizzes.
- B. Assignments may include, but are not limited to:
  - Group singing assignments - students may be asked to sing in small ensembles (trios, quartets, etc...)
  - Individual singing assignments

- Music theory assignments - students may be asked to complete basic music theory assignments (e.g. worksheets).
  - Score markings and preparations (e.g. measure numbers, conductor’s notes).
  - Rehearsal and performance reflections.
  - Assignments, excluding tests/exams, will be accepted up to two days after the initial due date with a 20% grade reduction. The student will receive a 10% grade reduction if turned in one day after due date.
- C. Quizzes may include, but are not limited to:
- Sight-singing quizzes - students may be assigned sight-singing exercises to be performed for the instructor.
  - Part-singing quizzes - students may be asked to sing their parts on specific pieces so the director can determine their readiness for performance.
  - Music theory quizzes.
- D. Additionally, students should check Blackboard regularly for posted announcements and assignments. Not knowing about an assignment/quiz is not an excuse.

**Grading Scale:**

100-90 = A    89-80 = B    79-70 = C    69-60 = D    59 and below = F

**Final Grade Calculation:**

Participation/Attendance	=	40%
Performances	=	30%
Assignments/Quizzes	=	30%
TOTAL	=	100%

**Student Conduct and Classroom Policies**

**Student Conduct: during choir-related activities:**

- A. Students are expected to be respectful at all times. Disrespectful behaviors include, but are not limited to:
1. Talking while the instructor is teaching
  2. Using technology at unapproved times (e.g. texting)
  3. Sleeping
  4. Distracting others / interrupting the learning process
- B. Disrespectful behavior **will not** be tolerated. Students who choose to behave in this manner will be warned one time. After one warning, the student(s) will be asked to leave the classroom for that class meeting – this will constitute an absence for that meeting and a “zero” for any assignments that day.
- C. In extreme cases, the instructor may refer the student to the Vice President for Student Services.

**Student Conduct: during non-choir-related activities:**

- A. Choir students are expected to maintain good conduct in all aspects of campus life, as they are visible representatives of the Ranger College choral program.
- B. Poor conduct reflects badly on the Ranger College choral program as a whole, not just the individual choir student.
- C. Examples of poor conduct include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Speaking negatively about the choir program or other choir members or the college
  - b. Not following the Ranger College Student Handbook and Catalog
  - c. Inappropriate behavior in the dormitories or other campus areas
  - d. Disrespectful behavior towards Ranger faculty, staff, or fellow students
- D. Offenders of this policy will be dealt with appropriately by the director/instructor, which may include revocation of choir scholarship and/or dismissal from the choral program.
- E. In extreme cases, the instructor may refer the student to the Vice President for Student Services.

***Choir Room Policies:***

- 1. No food or drink, other than water, is permitted in the choir room during rehearsal.
- 2. Cell phones and electronics must be out of sight and on silent or turned off.
- 3. Be respectful of all people and property.
- 4. Participation is expected and required during rehearsals.

***Communication:***

- A. Students are expected to maintain communication throughout the semester with the director/instructor.
- B. It is the student's responsibility to inform the director/instructor about school events and organizations in which they participate.
- C. It is the student's responsibility to inform the director/instructor prior to an absence from rehearsal via e-mail. Please note that just because you email the director/instructor does not make your absence excused.
- D. Students must use their Ranger College e-mail address. The instructor will not respond to e-mails from non-Ranger accounts.

<b>Academic Eligibility and Advising</b>
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- A. Students must maintain a 2.0 GPA to participate in the choral program and/or receive a choral scholarship. Students falling below a 2.0 GPA may be dismissed from the choral program and will be in jeopardy of losing their scholarship.
- B. Students must meet with the director/instructor for academic advising at least twice per semester. One appointment must be within a week after mid-terms and the second must be prior to finals week.
- C. It is the student's responsibility to schedule advising appointments.



- D. The director/instructor may complete student grade and conduct checks periodically as she deems necessary.

## **Choral Scholarships**

- A. Two levels of scholarship may be awarded:
  - Standard choral scholarship – pays for tuition/fees.
  - Half choral scholarship – pays for half tuition/fees.
- B. Scholarships are awarded at the discretion of the director.
- C. Student awards may vary between semesters based on student performance and the availability of funds.
- D. Students receiving a choral scholarship may be asked to perform extra duties.
- E. The director reserves the right to alter and/or revoke scholarships at any time.

## **Travel**

Throughout the semester, we will travel to various locations. As representatives of the Ranger College choral program, students are expected to maintain professional adult conduct. While traveling, all students are expected to abide by the policies in the Ranger College Student Handbook/Catalog as well as the Ranger College Choir Handbook.

Failure to adhere to the policies set forth in the handbooks mentioned above may lead to student disciplinary action, dismissal from the choral program, and/or scholarship revocation.

## **Choir Students Attending Satellite Campuses**

Students attending Ranger satellite campuses (Erath and Brown County) are welcome to join choir. It is understood that it may not be feasible for these choir members to attend all choir events. Therefore, off-campus choir students may not be required to attend minor choir events. However, this will be discussed in advance between the students and the director. Satellite campus students must have permission from the director to miss an event prior to the occurrence of the event. Major concerts may not be missed by these students.

Additionally, satellite campus students are not eligible for full choir scholarships.

## **Disclaimers**

- A. All choir students are responsible for knowing the information contained within this handbook as well as the Ranger College Student Handbook and Catalog.
- B. “Not knowing” about a policy is not an excuse.
- C. The director/instructor reserves the right to alter this handbook as deemed necessary. If alterations occur, all choir students will be notified.

## Non-Discrimination Statement

Admissions, employment, and program policies of Ranger College are nondiscriminatory in regard to race, creed, color, sex, age, disability, and national origin.

## ADA Statement

Ranger College provides a variety of services for students with learning and/or physical disabilities. Students are responsible for making initial contact with Ranger College Counselor, Gabe Lewis ([glewis@rangercollege.edu](mailto:glewis@rangercollege.edu)). It is advisable to make this contact before or immediately after the semester begins.

### Fall 2021 (Tentative) Calendar

\*Dates are subject to change

Friday Sept 17	Choir Retreat at Fine Arts Building	2-7pm
Friday Sept 17	Full Choir, National Anthem Soccer Game	2 & 4pm
*Thursday Sept 23	Fall Concert	7pm (call 6pm)
	*Tentative date, potential Cross Country conflict	
Thursday Oct 28	Full Choir, National Anthem Volleyball	2pm
Tuesday, Nov 30	Rehearsal in Stephenville for Christmas Concert	7-9pm
Friday, Dec 3	Ranger Graduation	TBD
Saturday, Dec 4	Dress Rehearsal with Orchestra	All Day
Saturday, Dec 4	Christmas Performance with Tarleton State	7:30pm
*Monday, Dec 6	Christmas Performance at Ranger	7pm
	*Tentative, awaiting confirmation from Abilene City Band for combined performance	

\*\*Additional performances of the *National Anthem* may be added for sporting events.