



**Nipawin Bible College**  
**MU3113 Choral Conducting**  
**Fall 2023**  
**3 Credit Hours**  
**Ms. Myra Schmidt**  
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### ***COURSE DESCRIPTION***

In this course students will learn the basics of music conducting through a deeper understanding of musical theory as well as through practical experience in a choral setting.

### ***COURSE TEXTBOOKS***

Cook, D. F. *Conservatory Canada, Theory for Students, Book 3: Official Companion for Conservatory Canada Theory Examinations*. Stratford, ON: Novus Via Music Group Inc, 2002.

Cantata 2023 Song Binder

### ***THE BIG QUESTION***

How do our physical gestures and musical knowledge work together to produce a unified sound from a group of individuals?

### ***COURSE OUTCOMES***

The student will be able to :

- 1) Demonstrate a progressing understanding of musical theory and musicianship skills.
- 2) Demonstrate competence in musical leadership in a choir setting.

### ***COURSE ASSIGNMENTS***

#### **Cantata Choir Sectional Leadership - 15%**

- The student will lead a section of the choir for the first half of the semester, helping the members of this section learn their individual part.
- Each week, the choir director will give students the following week's rehearsal plan by Friday so that the student can practice and learn their section's part for the songs that they will be working on.
  - NOTE: Students should also practice the other voice parts so that they can help their section hear the harmony they will be singing against.
- Students should be studying the music to be aware of and able to teach through the "trouble spots" (rhythms, harmonies and counterpoint that may be difficult), as well as phrasing, entrances and cutoffs.

- While the student will be assigned to the same section for the duration of sectional practices, they will also be required to lead a different section for one week, as scheduled by the instructor at least one week prior.
- Each week, the student will video record themselves during the sectional rehearsal and submit a 1/2-1 page report by the next Monday answering the following:
  - What was one area that went well for the section? How did my preparation help the section?
  - What was one area that went well for me as a leader? Why do you think that is?
  - What was one area of weakness or struggle for the section? What can you do the next rehearsal to help the section through this?
  - What was one area of weakness or struggle for me as a leader? What can you do by or at the next rehearsal to grow in this?
  - How did I see improvement and growth in my section or myself as a leader in the trouble areas from the previous weeks?
- The reports can be point form but must be typed with standard margins and font sizes according to NBC paper guidelines.
- The video recording is for the student's use only to help them evaluate their sound, body language, engagement with the section and dialogue. This does not need to be submitted to the instructor though it might be reviewed in their individual lesson.

**Reports DUE: Weekly by Monday, 5:00 p.m.**

### **Cantata Choir Conducting - 40%**

- PART 1 (10%) - Song Performance: Throughout the semester the student will teach and conduct the cantata choir for one of the songs chosen for cantata.
  - The student *and* choir must show a competent level of ability in having learned the song by the *week after Reading Week* to determine whether the song will be used in the cantata.
  - This part of the assignment is pass or fail. Should the director decide the song is not ready, it will be an automatic 0% for this part of the assignment.
- PART 2 (15%) - Rehearsal Planning: Each week that the song is rehearsed, the student will submit a rehearsal plan, with times, to the instructor.
  - This plan should outline what section(s) will be rehearsed, what areas of musicianship (melody, rhythm, harmony, lyrics, breathing & phrasing, etc.) will be highlighted, what areas may be difficult or need to be pointed out to the choir, any other goals they have for the rehearsal time.
  - The plan should be emailed to the instructor prior to their individual lesson.
  - Each week the song is rehearsed, the student will have between 20-25 minutes to teach their song to the choir.
  - The choir director will have a rehearsal outline of which songs will be rehearsed on which weeks so that the student can prepare in advance.

**Plans DUE: Emailed before lesson time of assigned weeks.**

- PART 3 (15%) - Rehearsal Evaluation: Each week the song is rehearsed, the student will video record themselves during the rehearsal of their song and submit a 1/2-1 page report by the next Monday answering the following:
  - Did I stay within my allotted time?
  - How did I achieve my goals outlined in the plan?
  - What didn't I accomplish from my plan and why?
  - How were my communication skills (verbal, conducting patterns) with the choir and piano player/band?
  - How did I see improvement and growth in the choir or myself as a leader in the trouble areas from the previous weeks?
  - Any other thoughts or concerns regarding your rehearsal time?
- The reports can be point form but must be typed with standard margins and font sizes according to NBC paper guidelines.
- The video recording is for the student's use only to help them evaluate their sound, body language, engagement with the choir and dialogue. This does not need to be submitted to the instructor though it might be reviewed in their individual lesson.

**Evaluations DUE: By Monday, 5:00 p.m. after assigned week rehearsals.**

### **Conducting Test Pieces - 25%**

- The student will be evaluated on their conducting technique and knowledge by conducting 3 test pieces to a "choir" in class throughout the semester. Each test piece will be progressively more complex.
- The student must be able to demonstrate the ability to conduct different time signatures, entrances, cut-off cues and dynamics without stopping or missing beats.
- Continual eye contact with the choir and fluidity of conducting motion will also be expected.

**DUE: See Course Schedule.**

### **Theory Assignments - 20%**

- Each week students will complete an assignment either in the theory workbook and/or their cantata music on the rudiments of musical theory and harmony as it relates to choral conducting.
- The assignments will be turned in at the beginning of class time as, typically, homework will be corrected in class.

**DUE: Weekly (see Course Schedule).**

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:** Refer to the NBC Handbook 2023-2024

**LATE ASSIGNMENT POLICY:** Refer to the NBC Handbook 2023-2024

## CLASS SCHEDULE:

- Two hours of class time each week will consist of general musical and conducting teaching as a group (if there is more than one student).
- 40 minutes of class time will be an individual lesson to review the student's choir rehearsal work.
  - Since this has a one-on-one component, please let the instructor know if you plan on being absent so that we can reschedule your lesson.
  - If you do not let the instructor know in advance (either in person or through a note in the event that you are sick) that you will be absent with good cause, I will not reschedule. REMEMBER: this is a class, your reasons for needing to reschedule must be legitimate. There will be a 5% penalty to your overall grade for the first two unexcused absences and 10% for every unexcused absence after.

Lesson Week	Conducting Concepts	Theory Concepts	Theory Due
Sept. 18-22	Conducting in Simple Time/Rehearsal Plans	Rhythm & Simple Time	
Sept. 25-29	Entrances & Cut-offs/ Conducting Dynamics	Notation & Key Signatures (Circle of 5ths - pg. 199)	p. 23-25: Q 6-7; p. 27-28: Q 4-5 Cantata music handout exercise
Oct. 2-6	Analyzing the Score	Scales & Key Signatures	p. 14: Q 19 b, d; p. 26: Q 2 Cantata music handout exercise
Oct. 9-13	Art of Listening	Intervals	p. 53: Q 3 p. 59: Q 6 p. 63: Q 9 Cantata music handout exercise
Oct. 16-20	Working with an Accompanist <b>Test Piece 1</b>	Chords	p. 88: Q 19a-c, j-l; p. 90: Q 21a-f Cantata music handout exercise
Oct. 23-27	Analyzing the Score II - Harmonic Structure	Chords & Cadences	p. 102: Q 7a-f; p. 105: Q 11 p. 110: Q 14-15 Cantata music handout exercise
Oct. 30-Nov. 3	Conducting in Compound Time	Compound Time	p. 115: Q 23 p. 130-131: Q 15-16 Cantata music handout exercise
Nov. 13-17	Conducting in Irregular Time <b>Test Piece 2</b>	Irregular Time	p. 35-36: Q 3-4 Cantata music handout exercise
Nov. 20-24	Leading Warm-ups	Open & Closed Scores	p. 41-42: Q 1-2 Cantata music handout exercise
Nov. 27-Dec. 1	Using a Baton/Rhythmic vs. Pulse Conducting	Transposition	Cantata music handout exercise
Dec. 4-8	Review <b>Test Piece 3</b>	Review	Cantata music handout exercise