Alpharetta High School

Syllabus – Select Women’s Ensemble

Ms. Michelle Austin austinj@fultonschools.org

Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description:

This chorus provides students with the opportunity to experience the art of choral music through the study and performance of many styles of advanced music literature composed specifically for female voices. The focus is on performance techniques and music of various cultures.

Each student is expected to practice at home on a regular basis to be prepared for class. In class, students are expected to have their materials with them at each rehearsal. They are expected to take notes and mark the music to aid them in their home practice.

Materials:

#2 pencils A water bottle

Provided materials: A black folder with choral sheet music

Provided textbooks: Music For Sight-Singing (Ottoman), various sight-reading examples provided by GMEA

Course Topics:

Vocal production, aural training skills, diction, balance and blend, music reading, harmony, intonation, interpretive elements, styles and periods of music history, conducting, performance skills, rhythmic precision.

Evaluation:

Students will be assessed on four basic criteria: performance, participation, knowledge, and progress.

(40%) Performance: *There is no choir without performances. To miss a performance is the same as missing a final exam in any regular class.* Throughout the year, students will perform in various concerts, programs, and festivals. These performances allow the student to showcase all of their hard work to their peers, family, and friends. **All performances and dress rehearsals are mandatory**. Students who miss a dress rehearsal or performance for any reason will be required to do additional work. Please see “Absences and Make-Up Work” for further information.

(35%) Participation: Each student will begin the week with a 100 participation grade (20 points per day). 10 points will be given by having your music/pencil at your seat at the start of class. The other 10 points are based on various factors including effort, behavior, and attentiveness. If a student is not in their seat at the start of class, breaks one of the basic rules (e.g. fails to bring a pencil or music to class, food or gum, disruptive during class), then points will be taken off of their daily grade.

(15%) Knowledge: Final Exam

(10%) Assessments and Listening Journal: During the course of the year, students will learn about basic concepts in music theory, ear training, music history, and vocal health. Quizzes, texts and final exams will be given throughout the course to assess how much they have learned and retained.

Students are highly encouraged to ask for help when needed. Please make an appointment with Ms. Austin to receive help or additional practice outside of school hours.

The choral department uses the same grading scale as AHS.

Absence from a performance or extra rehearsal:

If a concert is missed because of severe illness, a doctor’s note must be brought in within **three (3) days** of the missed performance. If a concert is missed because of an emergency situation (death in the family, or other situation approved as an “emergency” by the director), an excuse note must be given to the director upon the **first day** of the student’s return. The excuse note must include a phone number where a parent/guardian can be reached. Severe illness and emergency situations will be considered an excused absence, so long as a note is given. If a student has to be absent from a rehearsal or performance, they must let the director know beforehand, otherwise the absence will be considered unexcused (except in unavoidable circumstances).

**Employment is not a valid excuse for absence from a rehearsal or performance.**

All students are expected to be at all performances for their group. Distinction for grading: School concerts and festivals, which are the culmination of the work we do in class, will be considered curricular. Community performances where we provide "entertainment" (PTSA, National Anthem, etc.) will be considered extra-curricular, and "extra-credit" for grading. Students are still expected to come and still expected to provide a written excuse if they cannot perform, but will not receive a grade penalty for failure to participate.

If a student is absent from a concert, before- or after-school rehearsal, or other performance obligation, the student will then be required to complete one of the make-up assignments (found in the AHS Handbook).