

**St. Benedict's Preparatory School
Choir Course Syllabus
Winter 2017**

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Introduction

The Choir class will emphasize singing technique, reading skills, and musical expression. Repertoire will be drawn from choral standards, popular music, and functional church music (hymns, parts of the Mass, etc.) from a variety of religious traditions. Students will learn music as a form of celebrity and of service.

Text:

Essential Sight-Singing, Vol. 1, Male Voices Singer's Edition, Emily Crocker & John Leavitt, Hal Leonard Corporation.

Replacement cost: \$4

Students are responsible for replacing lost or damaged texts or sheet music. The typical replacement cost of a choir piece is \$2.

Grading Scale:

A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	81-83
C+	78-80
C	75-77
C-	70-74
F	00-69

There are no D's at any grade level in music because it is not a core course.

Grading:

- 30% - Classroom Participation and Behavior
- 20% - Final Performance Participation, Other Mandatory Events
- 20% - Music Proficiency Test 1 (mid-semester)
- 20% - Music Proficiency Test 2 (final exam)
- 10% - Reading and Writing assignments

Class Participation Rubric

A (95%) - The student *almost always*:

B (86%) - *Most of the time*, the student:

C (77%) - *Some of the time*, the student:

F (69%) - The student *almost never*:

- enters the room quietly and goes to his assigned seat.
- sets up his own music folder without delay.
- waits for instructions and prepares for class both mentally and physically.
- avoids playing common area instruments like the drums, piano, or percussion.
- listens while the teacher is speaking and does not practice or play.
- follows directions quickly without questioning or arguing.
- is polite and respectful of other students during class.
- cleans his area before leaving and picks up any trash whether or not it's his.
- collects all his personal materials at the end of class.
- returns his music folder to the appropriate area.
- returns his chair and music stand to the correct position.

FAQ

1. *Why is an A equal to 95% instead of 100%?* This is because nobody is perfect.
2. *Are there plus or minus grades?* Yes, this either adds or subtracts 3 points. For example, a B+ = 89% and an A- = 92%
3. *How do alert slips affect my class participation grade?* An alert slip related to class participation lowers your grade by 3%. One alert slip drops you from an A (95%) to an A- (92%).

Final Performance

The Choir will perform in concert on Thursday, March 30th in Conlin auditorium. Please mark the date in your calendars now. Participation is mandatory and counts as 20% of a student's class grade.

Other Mandatory Events

Saturday, January 7th, 11:30 am - 4:30 pm - Viewing of "Nabucco" in Seacaucus
Saturday, January 21st, 11:30 am - 4:30 pm - Viewing of "Romeo & Juliet" in Seacaucus
Friday, March 10th, 8:00 am - 12:00 pm - performance at St. Patrick's Day Mass
Sunday, June 5th, 2:30 pm - 6:30 pm - performance at Graduation

Music Proficiency Tests

Choir students will be required to take two proficiency exams over the course of the semester that each count as 20% of a student's overall grade. These are an opportunity to measure individual achievement and to make suggestions for future improvement. Typically, the exams involve a combination of scales and exercises, sight reading, and selections from the ensemble repertoire. Students will have ample notification of specific exam requirements. Each exam takes approximately ten minutes. Administering the exams to all students usually takes a period of two days.

The mid-semester exams will take place on February 16th and 17th and the final exams will take place April 10th and 11th. During the first exam period, students not being tested will participate in a reading and writing activity (explained below). During the second exam period, students not being tested may use the time to study for exams in other classes.

Reading and Writing in the classroom

Students will have specific days in which they are expected to read and write about articles pertaining to the process of learning music, music as cultural expression, and possibly music history. Reading and writing counts as 10% of a student's music grade.

Practicing: Nothing has a bigger impact on musical development than individual practice. This is the equivalent of homework for a developing musician. Through practice, students learn how to problem solve independently and how to become musically self-reliant. This benefits not just the individual but also the ensemble, because rehearsal time becomes focused on group success and not individual problems. Therefore, students are expected to practice between 15 and 30 minutes a day. If individual circumstances make practicing at home difficult, then arrangements can be made for a student to practice at school immediately after the school day.

Attendance:

In ensemble classes, attendance is extremely important. Most of the work is not written and therefore is impossible to make up. Even if a student learns the music on his own, an absence still negatively impacts the quality of a rehearsal for the other students involved. As a result, unexcused absences and or cutting class will lower a student's class participation grade by 6% for each instance. Notification by the student or his parents of the intent to be absent does not guarantee that the absence will be excused. All school-sanctioned events (such as athletic events and field trips) will count as excused absences upon receipt of a student list from the coach or trip moderator.

Late Policy

Every third time a student is late, his OVERALL grade will be lowered by 3%.

Late Work

For any written work that is not turned in on time, a student loses (3%) for each day the work is late. If a student is absent when the assignment is given, he will have one day after his return to complete the work before it is considered late. If a student is absent on the day the work is due, but received the assignment in advance, it must be handed in the day of his return.

Extra Help

Extra help is available Tuesday through Thursday after school between 3:15 and 4:15. Advanced notice is appreciated.

Google Docs and Student Email

In order to receive and submit many assignments and other documents (such as this syllabus), students must have the ability to use Google Docs. This means that they must have a functioning Google email account provided by the school that they check and maintain regularly. It is the student's responsibility to make sure that this is working. If a student knows or suspects that his school provided email is not working, he should contact Dexter Lopina in person, by phone at 973-643-4800 x5727, or from an outside email account sent to pchelp@sbp.org.

Academic Honor Code

Lying, cheating, and stealing are considered unacceptable violations of the Academic Honor Code and are subject to disciplinary action.

Lie: a false statement made with deliberate intent to deceive; and intentional untruth; a falsehood.

Cheat: to take an examination or test in a dishonest way, as by improper access to answers; to violate rules or regulations.

Steal: to take (the academic property or work of another or others) without permission or right, especially secretly or by force.

Community Commitment Code

"Benedict's men are persons of integrity. Whatever helps my brother helps me. Trust is the virtue by which we build our community, violation of the community's trust is grounds for dismissal."

We respect the property of others and of the community. It is our responsibility to ensure that we care for our own belongings, the possessions of others, and the shared property of the community. Benedict's men do not steal.

We are truthful with ourselves and with our brothers. Benedict's men do not lie.

Band Room Policies

1. The computers are only for use on music class assignments.
2. Students are not permitted in the band room without an adult employee of SBP.
3. Cell phones and tablets may not be used for personal reasons in class. Device charging is not permitted in class.
4. No food. It will be collected and thrown out.

PARENTS:

YOU DO NOT NEED TO SIGN THE SYLLABUS. INSTEAD, PLEASE SEND AN EMAIL TO jfletcher@sbp.org THAT SAYS:

"I AM THE PARENT OF (*your son's name*). I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTOOD THE SYLLABUS"