

Mountain View High School Fine Arts Department
2016 - 2017 Course Information
Chorus
Mrs. Bonita Keene
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www.wildcatschorus.com
Office Hours: Wednesdays, 2:15 – 2:45
540-658-6840 ext. 1156

Course Description and Objective

Chorus is part of the Fine Arts program at MVHS, and is one of the performing arts ensembles. Levels I – IV of the Stafford County High School Choral Music Curriculum will be used, and the following topics will be covered:

Sight-singing and ear training
Vocal technique
Vocal health
Music notation
Music theory
Traditional, multicultural, and contemporary choral repertoire
Careers in music
Performance Etiquette

Performance

As a performing arts class, students are expected and required to perform with the Chorus several times during the school year. In addition, a dress rehearsal for each school performance is required.

Participation in these performances and rehearsals is mandatory, and part of each student's course grade. In some extreme cases, students may be excused from a performance and allowed to complete a make-up assignment for the performance grade. In these cases, the student must submit a note of explanation from their parent or guardian *in advance* or, in cases of emergency, upon return to school. Athletic activities, work or other extracurricular activities are *not* considered extreme cases and may not be excused. Every effort will be made to work with a student so that they may fulfill their extracurricular obligations; however, as a graded activity, concerts and dress rehearsal must take priority. *A request to be excused from a required chorus graded activity for an extracurricular school event must be accompanied by a signed note from the coach.*

All performances are in the auditorium, unless otherwise indicated. Additional performance times may be scheduled during the school year. Students must arrive no later than 6:15 PM for all school concerts unless otherwise directed.

A few important dates and times:

- September 30 – Renaissance Night (fund raiser)
- October 19 – All-County auditions (2:45 – 4:00)
- November 1 – Music Department Combined Concert
- November 9-10 – All-County Chorus
- November 12 – District Chorus Auditions
- December 15 – Winter Concert, 7:00 PM
- February 10-11 – District Choir and All-Virginia auditions
- March (dates TBA) – District Choir Assessments
- May 4 - 6 – Spring Play
- May 18 – Dress Rehearsal
- May 23- Spring Concert and Banquet

*(full schedule is available at www.wildcatschorus.com)
(Keep this section for your calendar)*

Student Conduct

All members of the MVHS chorus program are expected to treat others with respect at all times.

Students are expected to follow the Stafford County Public Schools Code of Conduct, as well as MVHS rules, at all times.

Students must be in the classroom when the tardy bell rings. Students are expected to proceed immediately to their seats with folders.

In accordance with Performing Arts Department policy, **no food, drink, or gum is allowed in the Chorus room or any other Performing Arts classroom at any time** (this includes after-school rehearsals). Bottled water is permissible.

Students may not enter practice rooms, storage rooms, the music library, or the Chorus office without permission.

As a performing ensemble, it is crucial that all members of the Chorus work together to obtain high performance standards. Students may be removed from performance by the teacher if their conduct or participation becomes an on-going problem.

Grading

Students receive a participation grade based on weekly evaluations. Participation and effort in performances is also graded. Concerts and Dress Rehearsals are 40% of the overall grade. Tests, both written and oral, will be given periodically to evaluate each student's progress. A written semester exam will be given at the end of the first semester, and this may include individual performances. A final performance assessment will be given at the end of the school year. Students will keep a daily journal, which will be included as part of each student's participation grade. *A full explanation of the grading policy is attached and is also available on Group Fusion and at www.wildcatschorus.com*

Materials and Uniforms

Boxes of tissues and pencils are requested for the classroom. Students will receive a music folder. They should provide a spiral notebook for use as a journal, or a used notebook will be provided for them. They are expected to have these materials each day of class. *Please have these items by the end of the first week of school.*

Uniforms for performance are required. Uniforms are owned by the school, and rental is covered by a \$55.00 non-refundable chorus participation fee. (This fee covers the cost of maintenance and repair of these uniforms as well as other activities in chorus.) *This fee is due no later than September.* Ladies will provide plain black pumps or flats. Heel should be 2 inches or less. Shoes must be closed at the toe and heel. Unless uniform jewelry is provided, earrings, bracelets, necklaces, anklets, and watches may not be worn during performance. These items should be left at home on performance days. Hair should be worn in a style away from the face, and natural hair color is preferred for concerts. Tongue piercings are highly discouraged and may not be worn during concerts.

I understand and agree to abide by the policies and regulations listed in the course description and grading policy for MVHS Chorus 2016-2017

Student Name, printed

Student Signature/date

I have read and understand the policies and regulations listed in the course description above.

_____ (Parent/Guardian Signature/date)

PLEASE RETURN SIGNED FORM BY September 16

**GRADING POLICIES FOR Mrs. Keene, Chorus
2016-2017**

To calculate a student's overall grade for the current grading period, I use the total points method of grading. What this means is: I add the total points received for the entire grading period and divide by the total points possible for that period. For example, if there are 1000 points possible for all assignments this grading period and the student earned 936, the student's overall grade is calculated by dividing 936 by 1000. This would give the student a grade of 93.6%.

Point Value for Tasks	Student Grade on that Task	Student's Overall Grade
Tests 100	Test 78	Test 78/100
Singing Quiz 20	Singing Quiz 18	Singing Quiz 18/20
Classwork 50	Classwork 48	Classwork 48/50
Concert 100	Concert 95	Concert 95/100
		= 239/270
		Total Grade = 88.5%

There are some common abbreviations you should be aware of:

PEND – student needs to complete assignment, but no points will be deducted. Used if student was absent or needs additional time to master a skill

NHI (Not Handed In) – student was present but did not complete the work. Points will be deducted for late work, and grade becomes a 0 if not completed one week from assignment due date

P/F – a pass/fail assignment. 5 points if student passes, 0 points if student does not pass.

Assignment or Activity Name	Possible Points
Concert	250
Dress Rehearsal	150
Sight Reading (5 @ 16 pts each)	80
*Daily Participation	200
*Extraordinary Participation	100
Singing Test (2 @ 50 pts each)	100
Written Quiz (5 @ 24 pts each)	120

Dress Rehearsals and Concerts are an essential part of a performance class. Combined, they are 40% of the overall grade. Obviously, absence from a performance event cannot be made up easily as the SOLs for chorus include participation in and observation of a performance. The following explains how a student's grade will be impacted should an extenuating circumstance arise. (See syllabus)

Incomplete attendance

If a student is late, leaves early or is disruptive, the student's grade will be dropped to a B

Excused Absence

If excused absence is cleared *in advance* with alternate assignment completed, student will earn a C

If excused absence cleared *in advance* without alternate assignment, student will earn an F/average of 50

Unexcused Absence

If unexcused absence *but* alternate assignment is completed, student will earn a D

Student will receive 0 points if unexcused and no alternate assignment is received

***Extra Credit Opportunities** - *This option is only available as part of an alternate assignment for dress rehearsal and concert absences, tardies or early dismissals. You may use ONE per graded assignment.*

- Attend a concert and bring in a program– Grade moves up one letter grade
- Attend a concert, bring in a program, write a 1-page reflection paper – Grade moves up two letter grades

The alternate assignment and extra credit opportunities for absences from rehearsals and concerts are only available in extenuating circumstances. These cannot replace the skills learned and assessed as part of the SOL requirements met by participation in live rehearsals and performances. As a performance class, these events are mandatory and are a part of the expectations and homework assignments for Chorus.

Example of A Grading Rubric

SINGING RUBRIC

Name _____ Folder # _____ Score _____%

Song Title _____ Date _____ Class Period _____

	14 - 15	17	18	19	20	Totals
Diction & Memory	Large sections unclear or not memorized	Short phrase of inaccurate lyrics	Slight memory lapse or absent diction	Clear words and diction	Precise diction and clarity	
Melodic Accuracy	Large sections of inaccurate pitches	Short sections of inaccurate pitches	Slight pitch discrepancy on difficult passages	Accurate pitch with piano assist	Accurate pitch a cappella	
Rhythmic Accuracy	Repeated rhythmic errors	Short sections of inaccurate rhythms	Slight rhythmic or metric errors	Rhythmic and metric accuracy	Rhythmic and metric accuracy with energy	
Harmonic Accuracy	Unable to sing part in tune with partner	Short sections of inaccurate harmonies	Slight intonation or balance discrepancies	Harmonic accuracy and balance	Strong vocal leadership with balance/intonation	
Autonomy	Unable to sing own part independently	Short sections of singing partner's part	Some dependence on piano or partner	Independent singer	Strong leadership independent of partner	

Comments or Suggestions: _____