Three-Summer Master of Music in Choral Conducting

MUS 480
Choral Conducting
Tuesday/Thursday - 1:00pm-3:30pm
Room : MUS 149

Instructor:
Dr. John St. Marie
StMarieMusic@gmail.com
(562) 335-3650

Course Description
Study of conducting technique based on score study, audiation, gestural function, and performance practice. Students will have significant podium time to explore these principles in both the contexts of choral rehearsal and performance.

Course Goals and Student Learning objectives
- To develop the conducting skills necessary to communicate effectively, efficiently, musically, and emotionally with a choral ensemble.
- To develop leadership skills.
- To study choral literature from different stylistic periods.
- To develop conducting technique/gestures for different styles of music.
- To create a method for systematic score study.
- To develop audiation skills and techniques
Expectations

- Classroom participation is essential. This course is interactive and includes teacher-student dialogues, group discussions, etc. It is important that students prepare carefully and participate actively. Preparation of music you conduct so that you can be an effective and expressive leader is imperative. Likewise, you are expected to be well-prepared to sing your assigned vocal part for all music that your colleagues introduce and conduct in this class.

- Preparation of the score for class presentation must include:
  1. Short bio of composer and poet: *including birth and death dates*
  2. Score analysis (*form, significant harmonic motions, motivic material, etc*)
  3. Literal and poetic translation of the text
  4. IPA Transliteration of the text
  5. Interpretation of the text
  6. Conducting gesture issues

- A one-page synopsis of the analysis will be provided for each class member (*a style format is attached*).

- A video recording of each conducting session will be made. You must provide any media (SD card or other appropriate media as announced in the first class) in order to view your conducting videos outside of class in order to prepare a written evaluation. Following each presentation, you will view the session and return a written evaluation of the video to StMarieMusic@gmail.com at least 1 day prior to your next conducting session. (*a style format is attached with areas that must be addressed as they apply*).

Course Content Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will have a clear understanding of:

- Audiation in theory and practice
- Iconic vs. arbitrary gestures
- Score preparation
- Conducting patterns
- Preparations and cut-offs
- Active and passive conducting
- Gesture of syncopation
- Fermata and cue techniques
- Ictus and rebound
- Rhythmic weight
- Conducting posture
- Psychological conducting

Attendance Policy

- Attendance at every class is important. An unexcused absence lower your final grade by one letter grade.
Grading

- **40% - Conducting Sessions (4)** – evaluated on preparation, effective gesture, and progress
- **20% - Video Reviews (4)** – evaluated on ability to assess conducting issues observed in the video recordings
- **20% - Analytical synopses** – evaluated on your ability to research and provide a condensed picture of the music, composer, poetry and style of the music.
- **10% - Conducting Session Evaluations (4)** – evaluated on ability to assess posture, gesture, expression, and knowledge of the score
- **10% - Vocal Preparation** – evaluated on your responsiveness to the conducting of others and the execution of correct notes, rhythms, dynamics, style, and vocal quality as shown in the conducting of your colleagues

The term grade will be based on the following scale:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>96-100</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>91-95</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<tr>
<td>87-90</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<td>80-83</td>
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<td>60-63</td>
<td>D-</td>
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<td>0-59</td>
<td>F</td>
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</tbody>
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University Policies

**Student Handbook**

Information on student rights and responsibilities, academic honesty, standards of conduct, etc., can be found in Schedule of Classes (http://www.calstatela.edu/classschedule/) under Policies and Procedures.

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**

Reasonable accommodation will be provided to any student who is registered with the Office of Students with Disabilities and requests needed accommodation.