

Santa Monica High School

Department of Vocal Music

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Samohi Choirs Course Overview

CHOIR CLASS EXPECTATIONS:

All choral ensembles are a two-semester commitment. The curricula of all of the ensembles are music literacy based, performance based and competitive. All ensembles rely upon each member to rehearse and perform to the best of their ability. The action of one member directly affects all the other members of the group.

Members of the Samohi Choral Program are ambassadors that represent their music department, their school, their community, city, and state at various musical events throughout the concert year. Appropriate professional decorum must be exhibited at all times. When performing with the ensembles on or off campus, it is important that each student conducts himself/herself in a manner that reflects favorably upon the individual, group, and school.

- BE RESPECTFUL.
- BE ON TIME.
- BE PREPARED.
- BE RESPONSIBLE.
- MAKE LEARNING YOUR TOP PRIORITY.

If you **are unable to sing** for a day for whatever reason, you are expected to participate fully in the class. This means following along with the music, lip syncing, and marking the score. **You may not read a book, listen to music, or do homework.** At the end of rehearsal you will submit the required form documenting what you heard in the rehearsal and what instructions were given in order to receive credit for that day.

CLASS GOALS:

- **musical** (rhythmic precision, pitch accuracy, performing in variety of musical styles, expressive singing, etc.)
- **voice** (singers posture, breath management, negotiating vocal registers, appropriate voice qualities and styles, diction, intonation, etc.)
- **performance** (attention to immediate and long-term choir goals, increased confidence, respect for the team, calendaring and organization, multiple performance opportunities, etc.)

TOPICS TO BE COVERED:

Performance Units

- Sweet Serenade, Choral Pops Concert, All Choirs
- Fall Festival, Madrigal Ensemble/Chamber Singers

- Winter Concert, Formal Choral Concert, All Choirs
- Stairway of the Stars, Formal District Choral Concert with a guest conductor, Samohi Chorale/ Madrigal Ensemble/Chamber Singers
- Café Samo, Student Showcase, Selected auditioned students only
- Masterworks Concert, Formal Majorworks Concert with orchestra, Chamber Singers/ Madrigal Ensemble/Samohi Chorale
- Cathedral Classics, Formal a cappella Choral Concert, Madrigal Ensemble/Chamber Singers
- Kiwanis Vocal Competition, Classical Solo Performance, All Choirs
- Spring Concert, Culminating Formal Choral Concert, All Choirs

Music Literacy Units

Learning to become a good singer is no different than learning to play the piano or the cello. It requires constant dedication to the craft. Becoming a literate musician is essential to developing good singing skills. You would never find a trumpet player in the marching band who could not read music. The same should be true for choral music. A “good” voice alone does not lead to success in a choral program. Dedication to reading the notes and rhythms on the page is most important to developing the independent musician. This is what leads to lifelong musical enjoyment.

Women’s Chorus & Men’s Chorus

Unit	Musical Concepts
1	beat, rhythm, notes, rests, staff, treble clef, lines and spaces, ledger lines, flat, sharp, key signature, time signature, barlines, measures, double bar lines, 4/4 time, major scale, C Major, F Major, quarter note and rest, half note and rest, eighth note and rest, moveable ‘DO’ solfege, and applicable scales
2	repeat sign, 1 st and 2 nd endings, G Major, D Major, tie, dotted half note, dotted quarter note, intervals – 2nds/3rds
3	dynamic signs, crescendo, decrescendo, Bb Major, Eb Major, 3/4 time, 2/4 time, octaves, syncopation, intervals – 4ths/5ths
4	bass clef, da capo, dal segno, fine, coda, A Major, E Major, intervals – 6ths/7ths, changing meter, pick-up notes (anacrusis), sixteenth note
5	articulation marks, Ab Major, Db Major, dotted eighth note, dotted eighth-sixteenth combination, triplet, two-part harmony
6	tempo markings B Major, Gb Major, 2/2 time, 6/8 time, 9/8 time, three-part harmony

Samohi Chorale

Unit	Musical Concepts
1	bass clef, da capo, dal segno, fine, coda, A Major, E Major, intervals – 6ths/7ths, changing meter, pick-up notes (anacrusis), sixteenth note
2	articulation marks, Ab Major, Db Major, dotted eighth note, dotted eighth-sixteenth combination, triplet, two-

	part harmony
3	tempo markings B Major, Gb Major, 2/2 time, 6/8 time, 9/8 time, three-part harmony
4-16	synthesis of all previous concepts for speed and agility, increasing difficulty with each new unit

Madrigal Ensemble & Chamber Singers

Unit	Musical Concepts
1	synthesis of all rhythmic concepts, 4-part choral reading, diatonic steps (2nds), octaves, lower neighbor accidentals, Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic styles
2	synthesis of all rhythmic concepts, 4-part choral reading, diatonic steps (2nds), 3rds, octaves, lower neighbor accidentals, Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic styles
3	synthesis of all rhythmic concepts, 4-part choral reading, diatonic steps (2nds), 3rds, 4ths, octaves, lower neighbor accidentals, Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic styles
4	synthesis of all rhythmic concepts, 4-part choral reading, diatonic steps (2nds), 3rds, 4ths, 5ths, octaves, lower neighbor accidentals, Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic styles
5	synthesis of all rhythmic concepts, 4-part choral reading, diatonic steps (2nds), 3rds, 4ths, 5ths, 6ths, 7ths, tritone, octaves, lower neighbor accidentals, Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic styles

MATERIALS*:

It is suggested that students bring the following supplies with them to class EVERY DAY:

- 1/2" black three ring binder (provided by the choral program) for their music. It is recommended that all students keep their folder in the music cabinet so that it is available each day
- Notebook paper for note taking
- Pencil for marking the music
- Music, as supplied by the teacher

PERFORMANCE ATTIRE*:

Proper concert dress is formal attire. The concert stage is not the place to make a personal fashion statement. It is the place where we come together as a group to perform. We should appear polished and professional. Nothing should be worn that distracts the audience from the enjoyment of the sounds we produce. For that reason the following standards have been established and will be strictly enforced. Not adhering to these standards will result in removal from the performance without the opportunity to make up the grade.

WOMEN	What to wear
Women's Chorus, Chorale	Ladies will wear a pre-established black concert dress. Information will be sent home. Students are to wear black character shoes. Hair must be in an "up-do" and out of the

Madrigal Ensemble, Chamber Singers	eyes. No pony tails. No jewelry. Pre-established dark blue velvet concert dress. Students are to wear black character shoes. Hair must be in an “up-do” and out of the eyes. No pony tails. Uniform jewelry will be selected. It is also suggested that students have a choir t-shirt for less formal performances.
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MEN	What to wear
Men’s Chorus	Option 1: Black pants, black dress coat, white dress shirt, black bow tie, black dress shoes, black socks. Option 2: Information regarding full tux rental (from an outside agency) will be sent home.
Madrigal Ensemble, Chorale	Black tuxedo, white tuxedo shirt, black tux pants, black bow tie, black dress shoes, black socks. Information regarding full tux rental will be sent home. Madrigal Ensemble men will check out a separate vest and bow tie from the choral program.

*** If for any reason the suggested materials or concert attire present a financial burden, please email or arrange a private and confidential meeting with Mr. Huls, your house principal, or your house adviser so that we can provide you with all necessary items. No one will ever be excluded from participation because of these reasons.**

HOMEWORK:

Most all of our work is done in the classroom rehearsal. In order to achieve mastery of the musical concepts, however, minimal homework (practice) will be assigned weekly for Men’s Chorus, Women’s Chorus, and Samohi Chorale. The practice and assignments (homework) are typically completed on the computer using the SMART MUSIC program. Practice room computers are available (before school, afterschool, lunch, or by appointment) for those students who are unable to complete the assignments at home. The average student can expect about 45 minutes per week which is **less than 10 minutes a day**. Madrigal Ensemble and Chamber Singers have weekly sectional (group) homework.

ATTENDANCE:

Daily Rehearsals

It is crucial that you are in class everyday and an effective rehearsal requires complete mental and physical involvement. Additionally, choir works like a team so when you are absent, we miss out and you miss out which hurts the team. *It is your responsibility to come and get any work you missed while you were absent.* See Mr. Huls during lunch, before school, or afterschool to discuss what you have missed. You have the number of days absent to make up missed worked without penalty.

Special note for Seniors

Because SMMUSD wants to encourage all seniors to take the fullest advantage of their educational opportunities, **an absence policy has been reinstated to participate in graduation ceremonies. Senior students are allowed no more than 120 cumulative class period absences in order to participate in the Samohi graduation ceremony. This number is for both excused and unexcused absences and includes college visits.**

Required Rehearsals and Performances

Every choral group member is expected to attend all of that group's activities. All performances, rehearsals, and sectionals are REQUIRED, and are part of the grade. Extra rehearsals outside of class are infrequent (except for the scheduled dress rehearsals prior to a concert) but are occasionally necessary. All performances, and rehearsal dates will be given to you well in advance in order for you to make necessary arrangements in your schedules (i.e.

work or other personal activities). Students with a prolonged illness such as the flu, surgery, or other debilitating injury, should submit a physician's note for excuse.

If for some reason you must miss a dress rehearsal or a performance due to illness, please arrange to make up the missed activity **in advance**. Absences due to illness should be phoned or emailed to Mr. Huls **before the activity**. Mr. Huls' voice mail is at (310) 395-3204 ext. 71-404; email (preferred) is jhuls@smmusd.org. A 24-hour notice gives the director time to make needed adjustments. Students missing a performance due to any excused absence must make up the points missed. An unexcused absence will result in a performance "F" which will considerably impact your grade. There is no such thing as a surprise Bar Mitzvah, surprise wedding, or surprise family vacation to Aruba. Most events take months and months of planning. Make sure you put all dates on your family calendar immediately. In the event that you find a conflict, advanced notice makes life easier for all involved parties.

MAKE UP PROVISIONS:

Homework, tests, quizzes

All exams, tests, quizzes, and homework that are missed due to an excused absence can be made up. In most cases, make up work should be completed upon return to school. In some severe cases, the student/parent can make special arrangements as necessary with Mr. Huls without penalty. If one week has passed since the student was absent and the student has made no attempt to contact the teacher or make up the work, the grade will result in an automatic "0".

Performances

Any performance is a moment that **cannot be recreated**. During a performance, each student's ability, knowledge, and training are at their sharpest and fullest state. We are judged by our performances. When you are absent, it affects the entire ensemble. It is therefore critical that each member of each ensemble attend every performance and support his/her fellow group members. This is called team spirit and shows dedication and responsibility.

The only acceptable excuses for missing a concert would include verified serious illness, bereavement, or the observation of a religious holiday. **Transportation difficulty, or work schedule cannot be considered for excused absences**. You must call or email Mr. Huls to inform him if you must miss a performance. Makeup work must be discussed with the director and completed no later than the week before finals.

Concert Performance make up assignment: in order to receive credit for any required concert performance the following assignment has been established. This includes Stairway of the Stars.

- 10 page research paper on the life and works of a major composer **as selected by Mr. Huls**
- double spaced
- Times New Roman, size 12 font
- 1" margins on all sides
- standard bibliography with at least four bound (non-internet) sources
- This assignment will only be accepted through turnitin.com
- Mr. Huls will provide a template to help guide your research and writing

LATE WORK:

Classwork and homework may be turned in up to one week late without a grade penalty with the exception of finals week. Skill development is more important than a deadline. Mr. Huls, however, may require that the late work be made up during office hours. Students requiring more time than one week will need to schedule a meeting with Mr. Huls to discuss their specific situation. In extreme circumstances, Mr. Huls will arrange a meeting with the student and/or the advisor and/or the parent to discuss alternative options if turning in late work becomes habitual.

GRADING:

The grading scale is as follows:

90%-100%	A
76%-89%	B
56%-75%	C
40%-55%	D
0%-39%	F

Most assignments will be graded with the following rubric or a variation there of:

0	1	2	3	4	5
Students did not complete or attempt the assignment.	Student attempted the assignment but was unable to demonstrate any significant understanding of the musical concept.	Student is demonstrating preliminary understanding of the musical concept, with frequent mistakes.	Student is demonstrating some knowledge of the concepts, with two or more substantial mistakes.	Student is demonstrating thorough knowledge of musical concept with only a minor mistake. Assignment was mostly accurate throughout.	Student is demonstrating mastery of the musical concept with no mistakes. Assignment was accurate throughout.

IMPORTANT: An A or a passing grade in any choir class does not indicate matriculation to advanced choral classes. Entrance to Chorale, Chamber Singers, and Madrigal Ensemble is audition based and highly competitive. Students must be able to demonstrate high levels of music literacy in addition to beauty of vocal tone, and ability to blend with other voices. It is also dependant upon total number of openings in any given section (i.e. if there are only openings for 2 tenors, the two tenors with the highest scores will be accepted, regardless of the number of total tenors auditioning).

ASSESSMENT/ GRADING PERCENTAGES:

Music Literacy/Participation 80%	Performances 20%
This category includes all music reading assignments, sight reading tests, music worksheets, ear training assignments etc. It also includes other assignments necessary for effective participation in the daily rehearsals but not directly related to music literacy (writing a program note, analyzing poetry of a text, practice reports, marking the score, etc). Assignments will be tagged ML(music literacy) and PART (participation) so they can be differentiated in Illuminate.	This category includes all required curricular dress rehearsals and performances. Assignments will be tagged PERF.

HONORS AND AWARDS:

Fermata Award – this medal is awarded to all graduating seniors who have participated in choral music for 4 years at Santa Monica High School. The medal is then worn as an honor at our final concert and at graduation.

Linda Allen Andersen Award – this scholarship award is given to 2 seniors who have participated in the choral program for 4 full years. The student will have demonstrated outstanding dedication to the program through their actions that go above and beyond just singing in a choir. Exemplary students take on added responsibilities and take initiative when extra work needs to be done.

Christopher Rhodes Award – this scholarship award is given to a senior who has participated in choir for 4 years and who is not a member of Chamber Singers or Madrigal Ensemble. The student will have demonstrated outstanding dedication and commitment to the choral program. The student will embody and promote all aspects that are great about the choral program. He/she will also work hard at encouraging and helping fellow singers by empowering them to be their best.

Promising Artist Award – this scholarship award is given to select seniors who are declared vocal music majors and have shared their talents with the program in extraordinary ways.

Director’s Award – this award is given to students at the discretion of the director. These students have given to the program through service, spirit, and commitment.

Bel Canto Award - this award is given to 1-3 students in each choir who have demonstrated extraordinary growth, commitment, spirit, service, leadership, and/or dedication.

Hodgson Memorial Tenor Award – this scholarship award is granted to a junior tenor, who has participated in the Kiwanis Vocal Competition and plans to continue in the Kiwanis solo competition as a senior. The scholarship is intended to go towards the costs of private lessons.

Honor Choir Pins – These pins are given to those students who participated in Southern California Honor Choir and All-State Honor Choir. Samohi typically has more students selected than most other schools.

Kiwanis Vocal Solo Pins - These pins are presented to those students who participate and are selected as finalists in the districts annual classical vocal solo competition sponsored by the Kiwanis Club of Santa Monica.

OFFICE HOURS/COMMUNICATION:

Students are encouraged to seek help during office hours which include Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:30pm-4:30pm or by appointment. Parents are encouraged to communicate with Mr. Huls via email (preferred) jhuls@smmusd.org or by phone 310-395-3204 x71404. Prior to calling or emailing, it is requested that students and parents **check the website** for important information. www.samohichoir.org

2016-2017 CHORAL CALENDAR:

Please review the choral calendar that is included in your packet and on the choral website. It is recommended that you put these dates immediately into you electronic calendars so you are aware of them when scheduling other appointments etc. Parents: you too should put these dates in calendars so you can avoid these times when scheduling doctors appointments, dental exams, swimming lessons, etc.

The instructor reserves the right to make additions, changes, and deletions to the syllabus during the course of the year as appropriate for student learning.

By signing this form, I acknowledge that I have read and understand everything in the Samohi Choir Course Overview. (for your records)

STUDENT NAME: _____

STUDENT SIGNATURE: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

(Please sign and return this page to Mr. Huls)

The instructor reserves the right to make additions, changes, and deletions to the syllabus during the course of the year as appropriate for student learning.ⁱ

By signing this form, I acknowledge that I have read and understand everything in the Samohi Choir Course Overview.
(for your records)

STUDENT NAME: _____

STUDENT SIGNATURE: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

ⁱ This page is the final page in the 2017-2018 Santa Monica High School Choirs Course Overview