Brandeis Chamber Singers

MUS 81a  (2 credits)
MUS 81a 2xc (no credit option)*

Fall 2017, Tuesday/Thursdays, 3:30-4:50pm., Slosberg Concert Hall
Prof. Robert Duff, conductor (Slosberg 210, P: 781.736.3324; email: RDuff@brandeis.edu)

*All students are encouraged to enroll for credit. If you choose to enroll for the XC section, you are expected to fulfill *all* obligations required of the Mus 81a section.

Office Hours  
Tuesday and Thursdays, 11:00 am - 12:00pm or by appointment

Course Description  
Performance of vocal chamber music and choral masterworks from the Sixteenth century to the present. Open to all students by audition.

Prerequisites  
By audition.

Course Objectives  
1. To demonstrate an understanding of ensemble skills and music interpretations and instill a sense of musical flexibility in diverse musical situations.
2. To display an understanding of fine details regarding various styles, historical performance practices, voicing and languages.
3. To demonstrate an ability to operate at an accelerated pace in rehearsals and concert preparation.
4. To practice professional standards and technique that promote individual responsibility for vocal health.

Instructional Methodology  
1. Group Vocal Production.
2. Individual responsibility for self-evaluation.
3. Limited use of modeling.

Required Materials  
1. Music scores of assigned repertoire.
2. A sharpened pencil.
3. Full concert attire (as described later in the syllabus) including the “Black Folder.”
## Fall 2017 Chamber Singers Calendar

### Rehearsals:
- Tuesdays and Thursdays  
  - 3:30-4:50  
  - Slosberg Concert Hall

### Events:
- **Wednesday, August 30**: First Day of Classes
- **September 15-16**: Annual Chamber Singers retreat (Becket Falls, MA)
- **October 29**: Family Weekend Ensemble Showcase  
  - 2pm with 1pm call
- **November 4**: Chamber Singers dress rehearsal  
  - 10-1pm; Slosberg
- **November 5**
  - **Chamber Singers Concert**  
    - 3pm; Slosberg; with 2pm call
- **November 19, 3pm**: University Chorus Concert
- **December 3, 3pm**: Chamber Singers Outreach Concert
- **December 11, 4pm**: Messiah Sing, SCC (2:30pm call)
- **January 10, 2018**: First Day of Spring Semester
- **January 11**: First rehearsal
- **March 7-10**: American Choral Directors Association (ACDA)  
  - Eastern Division Conference – Pittsburgh, PA
- **March 30-April 6**: Passover Break
- **April 13**: Chamber Singers dress rehearsal  
  - 10-1pm; Slosberg
- **Sunday, April 14, 8pm**: Chamber Singers Concert
- **Sunday, April 22, 8pm**: University Chorus/Chamber Singers Concert

Students will be given ample notification if additional concert opportunities arise.
Grading and Participation Policy

In keeping with the professional objectives of the program, the Chamber Singers has a strict policy on participation and punctuality. Faculty and the choir manager keep daily records. A significant portion of the student’s grade will depend upon rehearsal and performance participation. The ensemble does not function at its peak without the presence of all of its members.

While your participation in this course is not currently assigned a letter grade with the Registrar, it is important for individual assessments to take place to aid in your development as a musician. Through assignments and assessments on Latte, you will have the opportunity to receive direct feedback on your performance in Mus 81.

Each student enrolled in Mus 81 (CR or XC) will begin each semester with 81 (out of 100) points. Through successful completion of assignments and assessments, you have the opportunity to excel in the course. There are also other actions where you may lose points (see below).

**Point Distribution system:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>91-100</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81-90</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71-80</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>61-70</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>00-60</td>
<td>F</td>
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</tbody>
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**Points are added for the following:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity Description</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preconcert vocal evaluations (testing will occur in quartets or small ensembles)</td>
<td>Up to 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive contributions to the ensemble (individual shows energy and concentration in rehearsal, exhibits good posture, marks music with a pencil, and participates in class discussions or rehearsal evaluations)</td>
<td>Up to 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use of rehearsal resources on Latte (part files, texts and translations, and articles on works will be posted, and your use of these resources will be tracked in Latte).</td>
<td>1 point for each 15 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance at other Music Department ensemble concerts</td>
<td>Up to 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance at other choral concerts</td>
<td>Up to 3</td>
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</tbody>
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**Points are subtracted for the following:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity Description</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>Unexcused absence from regular rehearsal (see attendance policy below)</td>
<td>-2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tardy to regular rehearsal</td>
<td>-1/2</td>
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Negative contribution to the group
(Music not prepared or memorized; excessively talks in rehearsals, exhibits bad posture, forgets music, does not mark music with a pencil) | Up to -10 points
---|---
Absence from dress rehearsal | -5 points
Absence from concert | -10 points

N.B.: Please note that attendance is expected at every rehearsal. Attendance at rehearsals the week before a concert is required for participation in performance.

Conflicts with the attached Chamber Singers Calendar must be presented in writing to the conductor of the ensemble during the first week of classes. All performances are listed on the attached schedule.

Do not schedule voice lessons, meetings with faculty members or other organizations, make-up classes or exams, registration, doctor/dental appointments, job interviews, or any personal obligations during rehearsal times.

Unavoidable emergencies will be handled on an individual basis. If an emergency occurs, (including acute, but brief, illness) the student must contact the conductor in a timely manner, followed with written notification within three days. Absences for the following reasons are considered EXCUSED:
- Institutional excuses given five days in advance.
- Extended illness with doctor’s verification.
- Death in the immediate family.
- Religious observances.

General Guidelines for Contributing Positively to the Ensemble

Work ethic while in class (positive attitude and contribution):
* Do you follow instructions by marking your score?
* Is your participation conducive or disruptive to the rehearsal process?
* Do you respond favorably to constructive criticism?
* Do you bring your scores and a pencil to every rehearsal?
* If you are unable to phonate, do you follow along in your music, mark your score, and submit written comments to the conductor at the end of the rehearsal?

Food and Drink:
No food or drinks are allowed in the Concert Hall or performance facilities. Only closed capped water bottles will be permitted.

Electronic Devices:
No electronic devices are allowed on the stage of the Concert Hall during rehearsal or performance. Please turn off your devices before entering the Hall.

Preparation outside of class:
* If assignments are given, are you prepared?
Part-testing:
* Can you accurately sing your part during quartet or octet testing?

Professionalism:
* Do you show respect for the conductor and your fellow students?
* Do you adhere to the above participation policy of the ensemble?

Concert Attire:
* Do you participate in choral performances in a clean and professional manner with the proper concert attire?

Concert Attire

**UNIFORM DRESSES/TUXEDOS**
You are responsible for your own concert attire. Attire for concerts must be complete.

Required Concert attire for women:
Brandeis University Choral Ensemble dress with costume pearl necklace
Black Closed toed shoes

Required Concert attire for men:
Black Tuxedo and Pants
White Tux Shirt
Black Bowtie and Cummerbund
Black Socks and Black Shoes

Payments for concert dress (dresses/pearls or tuxes) and black folders are to be given to the Student Manager. Checks in the amount of $115 are to be made out to “Brandeis University Music Department", and due by September 28, 2017.

**UNIFORM FEE**  $90
**BLACK FOLDER**  $25

*Please see the Conductor if you have a hardship that requires financial assistance for uniform and folder.

Membership

**MEMBERS NEED TO REMEMBER:**
* Membership in this ensemble is for the entire academic year.
It is understood that, rarely, unavoidable conflicts may arise in a students schedule for the second semester. In this event the student must notify the instructor as soon as possible so that a solution may be worked out.
* Each member is responsible for learning his/her music outside of class.
* Music for many of the concerts must be memorized. There will be periodic "music checks."
**Four-Credit Course** (with three hours of class-time per week)

Success in this 4 credit hour course is based on the expectation that students will spend a minimum of 9 hours of study time per week in preparation for class (readings, papers, discussion sections, preparation for exams, etc.). Academic credit is based on time spent in the classroom, as well as time spent studying for class. According to NEASC guidelines, students who are spending three hours per week in a class should be spending nine hours per week in preparation for class. Four-credit classes which meet for more (or less) than three hours per week should state classroom and preparation hours which total to 12 hours. When NEASC reviews Brandeis for reaccreditation, it will be examining sample syllabi from multiple departments and will be independently evaluating if out of class requirements meet academic credit standards. Therefore, your help with this initiative is very important.