

*Bellingham High School
Chorus*



*Syllabus and Handbook
2011 – 2012*

Marie Forte, Chorus Director

www.BellinghamMusic.org

Bellingham High School Chorus

Bellingham High School Course Description:

Senior High Chorus offers students a unique opportunity to demonstrate the musical skills and concepts mastered in the daily classroom rehearsal through public performances. Musical performance requires the integrated development of intellectual, emotional, and psychomotor skills. Chorus members experience the communication of emotions, ideas, and images before audiences of various age, cultural, and ethnic groups. The students have numerous opportunities to exhibit poise, control, self-reliance and self-discipline in public performances. This class focuses on the development of comprehensive musicianship, which includes musical perception, aesthetic sensitivity, and technical mastery. The study of music also affords opportunities for communication, critical assessment, commitment, creativity, teamwork, and increased self-esteem. Attendance at all rehearsals and performances is mandatory, and class meetings outside of regular school hours are to be expected.

While we embrace the spirit of the 10 content standards, we acknowledge that not all standards should be applied to all classes. The course "Senior High Chorus" is an elective course. Performance-oriented classes like band and chorus focus on the standards relating to performing, listening, and analyzing music. The 10 music standards for Massachusetts are listed below. Please realize that several of these standards are explored more in depth than others. These standards are outlined in a more detailed format, taken directly from the Massachusetts Frameworks.

1. Students will sing with correct technique alone and with others a varied repertoire of music.
2. Students will demonstrate the ability to read and instrumental or vocal score of up to four staves by describing how the elements of music are used.
Students will read and sing at sight moderately difficult melodies, all intervals and their inversions from unison through an octave, and triads and their inversions in arpeggiated form.
Students will in a choral/instrumental ensemble or class: sight-read, accurately and expressively, music with a level of difficulty of 3 on a scale of 1 to 6.
3. Students will perform with expression and technical accuracy a large repertoire of solo and ensemble literature representing various genres, styles, and cultural and historical periods with a level of difficulty of 4 on a scale of 1 to 6. Students will perform an appropriate part in an ensemble, demonstrating well-developed ensemble skills.
Students will perform in small ensemble with one student on a part.
4. Students will improvise, arrange, and compose music of various styles and genres.
5. Students will demonstrate an understanding of how musical elements interact to create expressiveness in music.
Students will demonstrate knowledge of the technical vocabulary of music.
Students will listen to performances of extended length and complexity with proper attention and audience protocol.
Students will analyze and describe the uses of elements of music in a given work that make it unique, interesting, and expressive.
Students will demonstrate the ability to perceive, remember, and describe in detail significant occurrences in a given aural example.
Students will compare and contrast ways in which compositional devices and techniques are used in two or more examples of the same piece, genre, or style.
6. Students will interpret the meanings of artistic works based on evidence from artists' biographies, autobiographies, or video-taped or written interviews.
Students will describe and analyze examples of art forms that integrate practical functions with aesthetic concerns.
7. Students will analyze how the arts and artists are portrayed in contemporary newspapers, magazines, films, and electronic media.
Students will describe various roles that artists serve, cite representative individuals who have functioned in these roles, and describe their activities and achievements.
Students will describe the roles of individual patrons, cultural organizations, and governments in commissioning and collecting works and presenting performances.
8. Students will classify works from the United States and world cultures by genre, style, and historical period; explain why the works exemplify a particular genre, style, or period.
Students will identify works, genres, or styles that show the influence of two or more cultural traditions, and describe how the traditions are manifested in the work.
9. Students will identify and describe examples of how technological development in one artistic domain can influence work in other artistic domain.
Students will compare the available materials, inventions, and technologies of two historical periods or cultures and explain their effect on the arts.
Students will identify and describe the examples of the persistence of traditional historical materials and technologies in contemporary artworks.
10. Students will continue the above and apply knowledge of cultural institutions to learning in the arts and other disciplines.

GRADING POLICY: Students will be evaluated in the following areas according to the following percentages:

45% Rehearsal Techniques and In-Class Assignments: Because Chorus is a performing ensemble, student attendance is expected at rehearsals, performances, and concerts. Failure to participate in these events means that the student is not fulfilling his/her obligation to the course requirements and the whole ensemble. Students who have necessary conflicts with these rehearsals will be required to “make-up” these rehearsals in a variety of ways. These make-ups can take the form of any of the following: a make-up practice with the Director, a taped quiz or test on missed material, music theory assignment, etc.

30% Quarterly Test: Each quarter students will be required to submit a taped exam of designated material. The tape will be evaluated by the Director based on a performance rubric. Students should prepare for these exams carefully and well in advance to secure a good evaluation. Any student who would like extra help or a pre-evaluation with the Director may request this at any time BEFORE the deadline.

15% Quarterly Quiz: Each student will submit a quarterly quiz in addition to the exam. This quiz helps the student prepare better for the exam and allows the Director to give the student constructive feedback on how to improve for the next assignment and his/her performance in the ensemble. This quiz will be evaluated using the same performance rubric as the exam and **will be given during sectional rehearsals live for the director.**

10% Quarterly Concert/Performance Review: Each student will submit a written concert review each quarter. The Director may decide to assign students may be assigned a specific listening assignment or it may be a concert or performance of their choice. Each quarter will vary. Student’s writing will be evaluated using an appropriate rubric.

100% Total: The Director will use the above percentages to arrive at a final quarterly grade. The Director reserves the right to change grading policy as needed from quarter to quarter depending on curriculum.

Mid-Term and Final Exams will follow the same rubric and procedure as the quarterly exam.

HONORS CHORUS CREDIT: Students taking chorus for honors credit must also participate in at least three of the following extra activities: Central District Auditions, Jazz Band, attend and critique 2 classical music concerts, solo or small performance in the Student Artist Recital, MICCA Solo & Ensemble Festival and/or private lessons.

Please Note: Due to the fact that this is a performance-oriented class, performance absences will count as missed tests and result in the student’s grade being **LOWERED 1 – 2 letter grades** (for example: from A to B or A to C), unless the absence is excused. Concert absences will be excused only in the event of serious illness or family emergency.

Daily Homework – Daily Practice

Each student is expected to practice their voice/instrument at home on a regular basis. **Daily practice IS the homework for this course.** Regular practice on your voice/instrument is crucial to improvement in endurance, range, tone, intonation, technique, rhythm, and expression. Practice should be regular, intelligent, and consistent. Twenty minutes of practice each day is better than two hours of practice once or twice a week. Even if you know your music well there is always room for improvement on other areas or concepts for your voice/instrument. Here are some tips to help with your practice sessions:

- Schedule a regular practice time. Parents can help by reminding their students of this!
- Set up a place in your home to practice – someplace quiet and without many interruptions.
- If you’re having problems working out a passage, stop and think! Try it slowly, try clapping the rhythms, break it into smaller sections, ask your section leader or Director for help.

Rehearsal Protocol

The following rehearsal protocol should be observed:

- Each musician should be in their seat, ready to sing/play prior to the downbeat.
- Music should be placed in rehearsal order, with a **pencil** on the stand for marking dynamics, phrasing, directions, etc.
- When the director steps onto the podium, all talking and playing stops.
- Sit on the front half of your chair with proper posture.
- Sing/play only when asked to do so; otherwise listen attentively – chances are you’ll hear something important being said or can learn from what others are playing.
- Remain in your seat during the entire rehearsal.
- Raise your hand when you have a question.
- Display respect for fellow musicians and the director.

Uniforms, Music and Concerts

Uniforms – As part of this organization, you will be required to wear uniforms depending upon the particular event. We take great pride in the way that we sound musically, and the same attitude should be applied to how we present ourselves in public. We strive to be a professional organization – professional in all aspects of what we sound like and look like. Concert uniforms are property of the music department and therefore, great care should be taken to return them in the excellent condition in which you received them. The student is responsible for the proper care and maintenance of all pieces, including dry cleaning when necessary. Immediately after each performance these items should be hung in its garment bag. This not only protects the uniform but will save you time and energy with cleaning and ironing later. At the end of each year, students must have the uniforms dry cleaned and then return them to school. Students will be responsible for the replacement cost if these items are not returned in the same condition they were received in.

Important – Uniforms must be returned at the end of each school year. Failure to return uniforms items before the deadline will result in your report card being “held” until items are returned. **Please pay attention to uniform deadlines!** It is a HUGE, time-consuming task to organize the uniform closet in June, please be respectful of the volunteers and music staff by making sure you do your part to return items in an orderly fashion. **Please Note:** Being properly dressed and ready for the performance is also part of your grade. Any student who fails to dress properly for a performance will risk their participation in the performance and a lowered grade.

Hemming Pants and Skirts – We have noticed that many students have failed to get their uniforms properly hemmed over the past several years and, as a result, we have many pants that are fraying at the bottoms. If your student is given a hemming coupon we ask that you please use it to have the hem correctly altered at the company on the coupon. BFOM will be paying for the cost so really all it takes is a trip to the tailors to have them marked for the right length. **PLEASE GET ALL PANTS AND SKIRTS HEMMED BEFORE WEARING THEM FOR PERFORMANCES!!!!**

Music and Folders – Each student will receive a leather bound music folder and many pieces of sheet music throughout the year. These music items serve as the textbook for this class and should be treated as any other textbook – with great care! Folders and music are the property of the music department – any student who fails to return these items will be billed accordingly for their replacement. If replacement parts or music are needed, the student should notify the music librarians or the Director as soon as possible. It is not productive or responsible to come unprepared to rehearsal!

PERFORMANCE DATES for 2011 – 2012

Tuesday, November 8 – **BHS Student Artist Recital**, 7:30 p.m. at BHS

Saturday, November 19 – Central District Auditions at North Middlesex High School

Saturday, November 26 – TENTATIVE – **Bellingham Tree Lighting Ceremony – 5 p.m.**

Thursday, December 8 – **BHS Winter Concert** – Band and Chorus – 7:30 p.m. at BHS

Wednesday, Friday-Saturday, January 11, 13-14 – Central District Rehearsals/Concert – selected students only

Thursday, March 7 – **BHS Spring Concert** – Chorus and Jazz Band - 7:30 p.m. at BHS

Friday – Sunday, March 30 – April 1 – MICCA Festival – we may be participating in this festival, TBD

Friday – Saturday, May 11 – 12 – **BHS Pops Concerts** – 7:30 p.m. at BHS

Sunday, May 20 – **Bellingham Memorial Day Parade and Ceremony** – Chorus to sing at Town Common for Veterans Ceremony, 2 p.m.

Friday, June 1 – BHS Class of 2012 Graduation – Chorus will perform at Graduation Ceremony

BELLINGHAM HIGH SCHOOL
INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT RUBRIC



DATE: GRADE: NAME:

- TONE QUALITY** The student's tone:
- 5 is full, rich and characteristic of the instrument in all ranges.
 - 4 is of a characteristic tone quality in most ranges, but distorts in some passages.
 - 3 exhibits some flaws in production (slightly thin or unfocused sound, breath support).
 - 2 has several flaws in basic production (consistently thin or unfocused, forced, breath not used efficiently).
 - 1 is a tone quality which hinders the quality of performance, breath support is lacking.

- INTONATION** The student's intonation:
- 5 is accurate in all ranges and registers.
 - 4 is mostly accurate, student adjusts the few problem pitches to an acceptable standard.
 - 3 is somewhat accurate, but includes out of tune notes, student makes some adjustments.
 - 2 exhibits a basic sense of intonation, yet has significant problems; student rarely attempts adjustment.
 - 1 is not accurate and hinders the quality of performance.

- MELODIC ACCURACY** The student performs:
- 5 the majority of pitches and note accurately.
 - 4 most pitches and notes accurately.
 - 3 some inaccurate pitches and notes; has some difficulty with melodic precision.
 - 2 several inaccurate pitches and notes but displays basic understanding of melody.
 - 1 inaccurate pitches and notes throughout the performance (i.e. missing key signatures, accidentals).

- TEMPO** The student's tempo:
- 5 is accurate and consistent with the printed tempo markings.
 - 4 approaches the printed tempo markings, but does not detract from the performance.
 - 3 is consistent but different from the printed markings and is inappropriate for the selection.
 - 2 is inconsistent (rushing, dragging, inaccurate tempo changes).
 - 1 is not accurate or consistent.

Ton.	Int.	Mel.	Tem.	Rhy.	Tec.	Mus.
☐ Comments from teacher on back			Score	Points	Num.	Grade

- DICTION** The student's diction:
- 5 is clear, enunciated and appropriate for language.
 - 4 is mostly clear and enunciated, some inconsistencies occur.
 - 3 is usually clear and enunciated, inconsistencies occur
 - 2 is sometimes clear, but inconsistent or has errors with certain syllables
 - 1 is unclear and lacks appropriate pronunciation

- RHYTHMIC ACCURACY** The student performs:
- 5 accurate rhythms throughout.
 - 4 nearly accurate rhythms, but lacks precise interpretation of some rhythmic patterns.
 - 3 many rhythmic patterns accurately, but some lack precision or have approximate interpret.
 - 2 many rhythmic patterns incorrectly or inconsistently.
 - 1 the majority of rhythmic patterns incorrectly.

C = Consistently (5 points)	S = Sometimes (3 points)	R = Rarely (1 point)
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- TECHNIQUE** The student:
- C S R performs with proper body posture and position.
 - C S R performs with efficient air support and breath management.
 - C S R performs with appropriate breath markings (does not interfere in phrasing).
 - C S R demonstrates appropriate legato, staccato, and marcato articulation as marked.
 - C S R demonstrates appropriate slurs as marked.

- MUSICIANSHIP** The student:
- C S R demonstrates control of time and pulse; appropriate for the musical style.
 - C S R demonstrates dynamic contrast as notated by the composer.
 - C S R demonstrates the ability to shape and contour the melodic line.
 - C S R demonstrates appropriate expressiveness.

**BELLINGHAM HIGH SCHOOL
REHEARSAL TECHNIQUES RUBRIC AND ATTENDANCE**



DATE: GRADE: NAME:

PREPARATION The student:

5 is always prepared for class in regards to instrument, music, and equipment needed.

4 is usually prepared for class . . .

3 is sometimes prepared for class . . .

2 is rarely prepared for class . . .

1 is never prepared for class . . .

PARTICIPATION The student:

5 always participates in all aspects of class/ensemble performance and rehearsal without reminders/cues.

4 usually participates in aspects of class/ensemble performance and rehearsal, occasionally needs reminders/cues.

3 sometimes participates in aspects of class/ensemble performance and rehearsal with frequent reminders/cues.

2 rarely participates in aspects of class/ensemble performance and rehearsal, only participates with reminders/cues.

1 never participates in aspects of class/ensemble performance and rehearsal, student does not respond to reminders/cues.

PERFORMANCE The student's performance:

5 is well prepared in class and shows evidence of consistent practice/effort.

4 is usually prepared in class and shows some evidence of consistent practice/effort.

3 is sometimes prepared in class and does not show evidence of consistent practice/effort.

2 is not prepared in class and does not show evidence of consistent practice/effort.

1 is not prepared in class and shows no evidence of practice/effort.

BEHAVIOR The student:

5 is consistently attentive and does not cause distraction to self or others.

4 is consistently attentive and sometimes causes distraction to self or others.

3 is usually attentive but causes distraction to others.

2 is occasionally attentive but causes distractions to others.

1 does not demonstrate attentiveness and causes distractions to others.

REHEARSAL TECHNIQUES:

	Prep	Part	Perf	Beh	Total	Num	Grade
Teacher							
Student							

- The student has met his/her attendance and participation obligations to the class and ensemble.
- The student has not met his/her complete attendance and participation obligations to the class and ensemble, please refer to band handbook for class requirements and contract.
- The student's grade has been affected by his/her excessive absences and he/she has not met his/her obligations to the class and ensemble.
Only if checked! Please call to schedule a parent-teacher conference to discuss this matter in further detail.

ATTENDANCE RECORDS:

DAILY CLASS

The student missed days of class this quarter.

The student had excused absences this quarter.

PERFORMANCES All performances are mandatory.

The student missed performances this quarter.

SECTIONALS Weekly sectionals are required.

The student missed sectionals this quarter.

OTHER EVENTS: _____

The student missed other events this quarter.

