

WESTERN UNIVERSITY  
DON WRIGHT FACULTY OF MUSIC

**Western University Singers**  
**Music 1910, 2910, 3910, 4910, 9528**  
Fall 2023 and Winter 2024

**Instructor:** Dr. Mark Ramsay  
**Pronouns:** he/him  
**Email:** [mramsay9@uwo.ca](mailto:mramsay9@uwo.ca)  
**Office Hours:** by appointment

**Assistant Conductors:** Emer Montaña and Lorinda van Wyk  
**Pianist:** Sing Yuan Liew  
**Assistant Pianist:** Lezhuo Liu

Refer to the course OWL page for rehearsal location and times.

**Course Description:**

Western University Singers is an advanced mixed-voice choir that strives for excellence in both performance and the rehearsal process. The ensemble rehearses for four hours per week and performs throughout the academic year. Repertoire includes sacred and secular, accompanied and a cappella works, and spans centuries, styles, and languages. When possible, the ensemble engages with living composers and culture bearers to enhance the members' understanding of the musical works they perform. Placement in this ensemble is based on audition each fall. Additional information related to the choir's history can be found on the [faculty website](#).

**Learning Outcomes:**

Students will...

- refine musicianship and performance skills within an ensemble setting
- explore style and performance practice through performance
- apply healthy vocal technique
- enhance listening, sight-reading, and ensemble skills
- collaborate with peers to create and achieve performance goals
- foster and share a love of choral singing with others

**Evaluation and Expectations:**

We strive to work together to build an atmosphere similar to a professional-level ensemble setting. This means arriving to rehearsals and calls punctually and prepared, working collaboratively with your fellow choristers, demonstrating leadership and self-initiative within your section, and consistently practicing on your own to ensure your reliable preparation. In addition, the conductor may periodically check translations and markings in your score and schedule individual or group note checks during class time.

Your attendance and preparation for each rehearsal and performance is the primary method of assessment. Full attendance at all our events for the year is required for credit. At the end of the year, students will receive a pass/fail grade for the course.

From the performance department...

“Large Ensemble rehearsals are not like other classes but rather like a professional service. Extra dress rehearsals are scheduled before each concert and performances are held in addition to rehearsal schedules. Attendance at all rehearsals and performances is mandatory. Punctuality is imperative for all rehearsals and performances. Three tardy arrivals will be considered equivalent to an absence. Perfect attendance and active participation are required to obtain course credit. Should a student miss more than two rehearsals for unvalidated reasons over the course of the year, they would be in jeopardy of losing their ensemble credit. This will be assessed on a case by case basis by the conductor and the Chair of the Performance Studies Department. Absence from performances or rehearsals may result in the loss of your position in the choir and/or loss of ensemble credit. Attendance at the dress rehearsal is mandatory for participation in the concert. Notify the conductor of all absences with as much advance notice as possible. Attendance will be taken at all rehearsals.”

**Course Materials:**

- music (to be picked up from the CBO)
- pencil (in hand at every rehearsal)
- black choral folder
- concert attire (outlined below)

**Music Packets:**

Your music can be picked up from the Choral/Band/Orchestral (CBO) Collection, located on the main floor of Talbot College (TC134). Packets will be available before your first rehearsal, unless otherwise instructed by the ensemble director. You are responsible for the music signed out to you. Use pencil marks only and please avoid damaging your music to prevent potential fees. Please erase all unnecessary markings on your parts/copies before you return them to the library.

If, at any time, you need to switch music with someone, email or visit the Music Library so that scores can be reassigned to the appropriate account. You can return music to the CBO or the Music Library (TC234) by the appropriate due date, as indicated on your packet. If you are finished with your music and wish to return it at an earlier date, please do so. If you have any questions, contact [muscbo@uwo.ca](mailto:muscbo@uwo.ca).

**Concert Attire:**

Full-length black skirt, dress, or black dress pants, black blouse or dress shirt (at least  $\frac{3}{4}$  length sleeves), black socks or tights, black dress shoes.

**Weekly Rehearsal Preparation Expectations:**

Weekly rehearsal outlines for the following week will be posted on Fridays on the class OWL site. These outlines will provide preparation expectations for both Monday and Wednesday rehearsals of the following week.

**Dress Rehearsal and Concert Schedule:**

Attendance at rehearsals and concerts is mandatory. Our performances are considered your exams for the course. Please add the dates to your calendars immediately and alert the conductor of any conflicts, in writing, by the second week of classes.

Dress rehearsal and concert dates, call times, and warm-up room locations are listed on the Overview page of our class OWL site.

**General Notes:**

i) **Course Prerequisites:** None. Unless you have either the prerequisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Admission to the ensemble is based on the completion of a choir placement audition with the choral faculty. Admitted students can enroll in the course number corresponding to their year of study. Those students who enroll in the course stand to receive an ensemble performance credit.

ii) **Grading scale:** Pass/Fail

iii) **Academic Consideration for Student Absence & Missing Work ( $\geq 10\%$ ):** Students are responsible for making up any missed classes or assignments as soon as possible. The University recognizes that a student's ability to meet their academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by medical illness. Illness may be acute (short term), or it may be chronic (long term), or chronic with acute episodes. Academic Consideration provides students with consistent, fair, and pedagogically appropriate consideration, without compromising the academic integrity of the course or program, when they have been unable to complete some component of a course due to short-term extenuating circumstances. Students who have long-term or chronic medical conditions (physical or mental) that may impede their ability to complete academic responsibilities are directed to seek Academic Accommodation through Accessible Education ([Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#)).

Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the end of the period of absence covered, to the Academic Counselling unit or Office of the Associate Dean, Undergraduate (TC210), of the student's Home Faculty together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the academic consideration being requested. Students are directed to read the [Senate Policy on Academic Consideration for Medical Illness](#) for further details regarding various requirements and procedures for the supporting documentation.

Whenever possible, students who require academic consideration should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, examinations, etc. Students must follow up with their professors and their Academic Counselling office in a timely manner.

iv) **Academic Consideration for Missing Work ( $< 10\%$ ):** In cases where students miss work that is worth less than 10% of the total course grade due to medical illness or compassionate grounds, if documentation is voluntarily submitted to the Associate Dean's office and the

Associate Dean grants an accommodation, then the missed assignment(s) or quiz(zes) will be discounted in the calculation of the final grade for the course. If documentation is not voluntarily submitted then the missed assignment(s) will receive a grade of zero. Students who have been denied accommodation by an instructor may appeal this decision to the Associate Dean's office but will be required to present appropriate documentation.

v) **Academic Offences:** Submission of work with which you have received help from someone else (other than the course instructor or TA) is an example of plagiarism, which is considered a major academic offence. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, as found at:

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

vi) **Mental Health & Wellness:** Students that are in emotional/mental distress should refer to the [Wellness & Well-being page](#) on Western's website for a complete list of options about how to obtain help or go to the Wellness Education Centre located in Thames Hall room 2170. **Students in crisis in need of immediate care are directed to go directly to Student Health Services in Thames Hall 2170 or to click on the big green "I Need Help Now" button on the Wellness & Well-being page above.**

vii) **Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:** Students work with Accessible Education which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here:

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation\\_disabilities.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation_disabilities.pdf)

viii) **Religious Accommodation:** Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays (other than statutory holidays), and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. The [Diversity Calendar](#) from the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion provides information on multifaith, multicultural and diversity related holidays and observances and links to resources for more information.

ix) **Contingency Plan:** Although the intent is for this course to be delivered in-person, should any university-declared emergency require some or all of the course to be delivered online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience), the course will adapt accordingly. The grading scheme will **not** change. Any assessments affected will be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

x) **Gender-Based and Sexual Violence:** Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence, either recently or in the past, you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts on the [Get Help page](#) at [Western Wellness & Well-being](#). To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact [support@uwo.ca](mailto:support@uwo.ca) or call 519 661-3568.