

Christian Academy of Louisville
High School
Mens Choir
2024-2025 Syllabus

Angela Stephens, Director, Room CM 111
Class Time: 4th Block Blue Days
Phone: (502) 244-3225 ext. 1123
Email: astephens@caschools.us

Course No. 424; 1 Credit; Regular Grading Scale; Prerequisite: None

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Christian Academy of Louisville High School Men's Choir is a non-audition group for students with minimal or intermediate-level choral singing experience. This ensemble meets every day with the purpose of emphasizing basic fundamental choral skills, which include music literacy, sight reading, vocal technique, and introductory music theory. Students will perform regularly throughout the duration of the class and may combine with other school choirs for performances. Fundamental skills will be addressed and built upon to move students into a higher level of performance. Vocal production, tone, blend, aural skills, and sight singing will be examined. Literature will be chosen from different styles and genres appropriate for the female voice and will reinforce skills learned in the rehearsal setting. Students will apply these skills in school and public performances.

As a choral ensemble, students should pursue excellence – this includes the everyday, regular rehearsal as well as public performances. Students have a unique opportunity to praise God and represent Christ through performing music at a skillful level. Being on time for rehearsal, bringing necessary materials, and fully participating in rehearsals and performances contribute to this goal.

“ And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”
Colossians 3:15-17

Class Fee

Every student in one or more ensembles from 7th to 12th grade pays ONE \$50 class fee through FACTS. You do not need to worry about writing a check, but we want you to be aware of the charge so you aren't surprised when you see it. These fees will go to assist with music purchases, classroom needs and sectional staff for each ensemble, bus costs for performance assessment, etc.

OBJECTIVES

Performance

1. The student will demonstrate proper posture and breathing techniques to support vocal production. He will:
 - Demonstrate a consistent application of proper breath control.
 - Demonstrate a consistent application of proper singing posture.

2. The student will sing with a free and clear tone, using accurate intonation. He will:
 - Use vocal technique and exercises to develop desired tone and intonation.
3. The student will sing with purity of vowels and clarity of consonants. He will:
 - Produce pure vowels—ah, eh, ee, oh, and oo—across the vocal range.
 - Identify and articulate consonants, with emphasis on beginning and final consonants.
4. The student will use dynamics, tempo, blend, and balance in a group performance. He will:
 - Apply dynamic markings, including *pp*, *p*, *mp*, *mf*, *f*, *ff*, *crescendo*, *decrescendo*.
 - Respond to conducting prompts regarding blend and balance.
5. The student will sing music written in two or more parts. He will:
 - Maintain voice part in small ensemble.
 - Sight-read four-measure phrases, using a symbol system.
 - Sing with and without instrumental accompaniment.
6. The student will respond to conducting patterns and interpretive gestures. He will:
 - Demonstrate and respond to basic conducting patterns of one, two, three, and four beats.
 - Demonstrate and respond to expressive conducting gestures as they relate to style and interpretation.
7. The student will improvise within limited parameters. He will:
 - Improvise short rhythmic and melodic phrases.
 - Create vocal harmony to a given melody.
 - Use available multimedia applications and technology in creating original music.

Context and Music Theory

1. The student will read and write music notation. He will:
 - Identify dotted notes and rests, sixteenth notes and rests, basic symbols, and terms.
 - Read rhythmic patterns in simple and compound meters and various tempos.
 - Use available technology and related software.
2. The student will study and perform selections representing diverse historical periods, styles, and cultures.

Judgment and Criticism

1. The student will use choral techniques and musicianship in the evaluation of music performances.

MATERIALS

All music will be provided by the school. Students will be assigned a folder for their music at the beginning of the year – the folder is the student’s textbook. The music must be returned at the end of the school year in the same condition in which it was originally assigned.

Students are asked to have their folder with music, **sharpened pencils**, and their **chromebooks**. These items will be used regularly and therefore must be brought to class on a daily basis.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Grading will consist of daily grades, sight singing, quizzes/evaluations, and performances.

• Sight Singing:

The ability to read music is vital for members of this ensemble. Sight singing skills will be taught and evaluated individually as sight singing enables students to learn music independently. Students will have the opportunity to sight sing as an ensemble at every

rehearsal, although some assessments will be given individually. These will be worth anywhere from 10 to 25 points. These assessments will be done both in class and outside of school, therefore, absent students will be excused from the assignment and points will not be accumulated if the absence is excused. **If the absence is not excused, students will need to see the director about the possibility of making it up.**

- **Performance Checks:**

Approximately a week before every concert, students will be assessed both formally (through canvas recordings) and informally through group performing on their concert pieces. The individual video assessments will be assigned through Canvas and due by midnight of the assigned day. These assessments will be worth anywhere from 15-50. Group informal assessment will be worth anywhere between 10-30 points and will take place during class. **If a student is absent they will need to check with the director in order to understand how the missed assignment will be made up.** Often, the student can make it up during the following class, but occasionally they may have to make it up at home.

- **Video and Practice Assignments:**

From time to time, students will be asked to practice their music outside of class and log it, submit recordings through Canvas and/or submit videos through Canvas for a grade. This is to better prepare them for the numerous concerts they participate in throughout the year. These assignments are anywhere from 30-50 points each and are usually given 3 weeks to a month before they are due so students should have ample time to complete them.

- **Daily Choir Standards:**

Students will be evaluated both formally and informally on the following rehearsal/performance standards:

1. I can demonstrate appropriate behaviors for the style of music being performed.
2. I can stand (or sit, when appropriate) with the correct posture while singing.
3. I can sing with proper breath support, diction, and projection. They can receive a maximum of 10 points each day.

Unless otherwise noted, one point will be deducted for each of the following as they inhibit mastery of the above standards.

- **Classroom Assignments:**

Students will also be asked to complete music theory worksheets on a weekly basis to turn in either in person or through canvas. This is to help better their understanding of how music is created and can be worth anywhere from 10-25 points. Students will also be asked to critically evaluate performances using a performance evaluation form. Points of emphasis include accuracy of pitches and rhythms, vocal technique, musicality, tone quality, personal and group participation and effort, and overall performance effectiveness. These forms are designed to allow students the opportunity to thoughtfully review performances as well as immediately identify areas of improvement individually and as an ensemble. Performance evaluations are to be completed the day/class immediately following a school or community performance. Students can earn up to 30 points per evaluation.

- **Performances:**

All music students are expected to be in attendance for all concerts in which they are performing. Unexcused absences will result in a concert grade of no more than 60%. If

illness should preclude a student from attending a concert, the student and/or parents *must contact the director prior to the concert* by email. Failing to contact the director in advance constitutes an unexcused absence.

Note: The athletic department is aware of all concert dates at the beginning of each school year. However, when conflicts occur, it is understood that music concerts come first, as they are curricular rather than extracurricular. The athletic department is supportive of this policy, and coaches should be aware of this policy as well. Missing a concert due to an athletic event constitutes an unexcused absence. Please let your coach and your director know about any schedule conflict as soon as possible, as we always try to accommodate these events.

Exceptions to this rule can be made for state level tournaments, senior nights, or final game for seniors, but only if you talk to your director well in advance. (Please see “Concert Requirements” on next page for more details concerning performances.)

CLASSROOM POLICIES

Attendance: “To be early is to be on time. To be on time is to be late.”

Please make an effort to be early and prepared for class. This is just one way to pursue excellence in every area of our lives. One hour of Saturday detention will be assigned for every three times a student is tardy. Points will also be deducted from the student’s grade for being tardy or absent. If a student is absent from rehearsal but is in school for the rest of the day, it is considered an unexcused absence.

Code of Conduct:

Luke 6:31 states, “And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them.” Respect for teachers and peers will be expected. Music students are most certainly considered to be some of the best students at CAL, and are held to the highest level of performance as well as discipline. Should discipline be required, the following steps of action will be taken. Due to the severity of the issue however steps may be skipped at the director’s discretion.

1. Give the students their first verbal warning.
2. The Ensemble Director will have a conference with the student individually.
3. The Ensemble Director will offer a second verbal warning, assign a detention and contact the parents of the student.
4. The Ensemble Director, Student, Director of the School of the Arts and possibly the parent will meet with the student.
5. Call a conference between the Ensemble Director, the Director of the School of the Arts, the Parent and the Principal or Assistant Principal to discuss removal from the music program.

Cell Phone/Personal Electronic Policy:

Phones (any personal electronic devices, even apple watches) are to be on silent at all times during class time and in the cell-phone caddy. This means from bell to bell, not just when direct instruction is occurring. Phones are not to be used during class time without express permission for academic purposes.

Dress Code Requirements for all Performances

Our primary ensemble concert dress is very simple; the guys are expected to wear all black that will need to be purchased through the music boosters for \$65. Students will be fitted for these uniforms during class at the beginning of the year. It is vital that all students wear the same manufacturer to make certain that we do not get 50 shades of black on the stage. Guys must also wear black shoes that have no visible logo or color other than black. The girls are expected to wear our concert dresses that they will need to purchase through the music boosters, and black shoes that do not show their toes. No dangling jewelry will be accepted. Failure to comply with the dress code without prior discussion with Mr. Wooten or your ensemble director the student may not be allowed to perform with the ensemble and they will not receive their full concert grade.

Some secondary ensembles have their own dress code requirements but all fall within the Christian Academy of Louisville School System Handbook for dress code requirements.

Solo and Small Ensemble attire will fall within the Christian Academy of Louisville School System Handbook dress code requirements. Failure to comply with the dress code without prior discussion with Mr. Wooten or your ensemble director will result in an hour of detention and in some cases the student may not be allowed to perform and they will not receive their full concert grade.

Concert Requirements

Part of being an excellent musician is knowing how to also be a good audience member and to know what behavior is acceptable and unacceptable at any public concert.

1. All music students are expected to be in attendance for all concerts. In the event of an excused absence for another event, students will be required to complete a make-up assignment.
2. Students are expected to attend the concert in its entirety unless prior approval has been given (requests need to be made through email at least 1 week prior). Students will not receive full credit for the concert if they are not there for the entire duration of the evening.
3. Students will sit with their ensemble for the duration of the performance. Students observed in the hallways or classrooms during a performance will receive disciplinary action.
4. If you do have an emergency and need to leave (or enter), out of respect for the performers and the other audience members, please only exit (or enter) between selections.
5. The use of any and all electronic devices is not permitted during a concert. Any electronic device seen during a concert will be confiscated.
6. There should be no talking while a group is performing or while anyone is addressing the audience.

Music Boosters

Christian Academy is blessed to have a Music Booster organization. This organization is made up of parents who see the need, and share the vision of the music program here at our school. ALL PARENTS ARE INVITED AND ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND! Without parental support we could

not accomplish nearly as much as we have. The Music Boosters take care of fundraising, set-up and break-down for performances, and are actively involved in planning and chaperoning our trips, as well as many other things. I would HIGHLY encourage all parents to join our Music Boosters organization and become actively involved in the musical experience here at CAL.

CHORAL ACTIVITIES

KMEA Festivals:

KMEA Solo and Ensemble is held in Louisville during the Spring, typically in April. This event is optional, but I highly encourage all students to participate. At the festival, students perform as soloists and ensembles for a judge who listens to and critiques the student(s) performance. The judge then awards each soloist or ensemble a rating, with the top rating earning a medal, which will be awarded during our May Concert. Sign-ups for Solo and Ensemble are in October. More information will be available as the time approaches.

Large Ensemble Festival occurs in mid-March and will most likely be during the school day. This is considered a field trip from school, and all students will be participating. At KMEA Festival, school ensembles from around Louisville will perform their prepared concert music for a panel of judges to be critiqued and scored. This is our biggest event of the school year – our performance will demonstrate all the skills we have worked on throughout the school year!

KMEA All-State Choirs:

CAL Choir students have the opportunity to audition for and participate in the Kentucky Music Educator's Association All-State Choirs. This consists of rehearsals during the school day at the Kentucky International Convention Center and overnight accommodations at the Galt House hotel. Students are responsible for the cost and fees for the audition, registration, music, and hotel.

The Kentucky Junior High Chorus (KJHC) is comprised of the Kentucky Junior High Mixed Chorus (KJHMC) and the Kentucky Junior High Treble Chorus (KJHTC). Each chorus has approximately 200 seventh, eighth, and ninth grade students who are selected by taped audition from the state of Kentucky. Both choirs perform in concert as part of the KMEA In-Service/Professional Development Conference in Louisville, in February, in Whitney Hall at the Kentucky Center for the Arts. This is an optional event and is available to 9th grade students ONLY. Students interested in auditioning should see Ms. Stephens as soon as possible. The deadline for audition forms, fees, and tapes is in October.

The Kentucky High School All-State Chorus is comprised of the Kentucky High School SATB Choir, SSAA Choir, and TTBB Choir. Auditions are open to students in 10th-12th grade and consists of a live quartet performance audition and an individual sight-singing audition. Students will be notified of acceptance by mid-November. The concert will take place at the Kentucky Center in Louisville in February as part of the Kentucky Music Educators Association Professional Development Conference. Students will spend two full days in rehearsal and will spend two nights downtown at the Galt House as the CAL music department teachers will be attending the conference, workshops, and clinics those same days. Auditions will be held in September. The rest of the information is TBD.