

SYLLABUS
School of Music
University of Florida

Literature and Arranging for School Choirs

MUE 3416 (3)

Semester: Spring 2026

Meeting Time:

M,W,F 10:40-11:30 (Period 4)

Professor: Dr. Megan M. Sheridan

Office: MUB 122

Office Hours: MW pd. 3

Telephone: (352) 273-3192

Email: mmsheridan@ufl.edu

Course Description:

This course is designed to familiarize students with techniques and approaches for selecting and programming literature for K-12 performing ensembles. It includes an overview of major choral eras, works, composers, and publishers, as well as pedagogical and practical considerations related to selection of choral music for school choirs. In addition, this course will introduce students to fundamental techniques used to create arrangements of choral and vocal works in order to better meet the needs of individual singers or ensembles. Arranging for instruments will also be addressed. Students will apply previous theoretical knowledge to further develop their skills in composition, part-writing, transposition, and instrumentation.

Course Goals:

1. Students will develop an understanding of the body of choral literature, including major eras, composers, works, and publishers.
2. Students will assess the aural, technical, and ensemble challenges presented in published repertoire.
3. Students will learn the ranges, capabilities, and challenges of voices at each stage of development.
4. Students will learn techniques for selecting and programming choral music appropriate for the developmental level of their students and aligned with the pedagogical and musical goals of the school music program.
5. Students will learn the fundamentals of effective orchestration and apply prior music theory knowledge to develop new understandings of transposition, part-writing, and arranging.
6. Students will effectively adapt and modify existing repertoire to accommodate limited instrumentation and ability.
7. Students will identify the layers of harmonic structure in a musical passage and condense or expand these layers as necessary to create new arrangements.

Essential Questions

The following questions will be explored in depth throughout this course:

1. What is high quality literature?
2. How can I match music to students' musical interests, abilities, and developmental needs?
3. Why are some arrangements more effective than others?
4. How can I help students develop a thorough understanding of the music they perform?
5. How can I help audiences better understand the music our ensemble performs?

Required Texts:

Henson, B. & Custer, G. (2016). *Arranging: A Beginner's Guide*. GIA.

Sharon, D. & Bell, D. (2012). *A Cappella Arranging*. Hal Leonard.

Supplemental Resources:

Additional resources for this course have been placed on reserve in the music library and/or will be made available via the course Blackboard page.

Attendance:

Attendance at all class sessions is expected. Many portions of this course will involve in-class practice and collaboration; when you are not present, it affects not only your own participation but that of your colleagues as well. In the event that you know you must miss a class, please be in contact with me before your absence, stating the reason for your absence and agreeing upon a way to make up the work. Assignments are due on or before the indicated dates regardless of your class attendance. If you have an unusual situation that results in extended absences, or if you would like to request extensions to assignment deadlines, please contact me so I am aware of the situation and can make arrangements to meet your instructional needs.

Communication:

All course members need to check their UF e-mail regularly, as important communication regarding this course may take place via email. Your university e-mail account is the official email address used for this course, so please check it as part of your daily routine. In addition, all members of this course are expected to regularly check the Canvas page, since all course information and materials will be housed there.

Assignments:

Students will generally have small assignments to complete for each course meeting. These assignments will provide the foundation for the larger projects and products that will be due throughout the semester. Products are intended to be usable by students in their future teaching positions, and so students are encouraged to design projects around their own interests and career goals. Flexibility will be provided in many assignments to allow students to draw upon their experience and address individual learning goals and concerns. Students are encouraged to speak to the instructor if they have ideas for alternative projects or approaches that they feel would be more valuable to them.

Grading:

Assignment Type Weights:

Arranging Homework—35%

Arranging Projects—20%

Literature Analyses/Presentations—20%

Repertoire Lists—20%

Concert Programming Project—15%

Grading Scale

A...93-100	A-...90-92	B+...88-89
B...83-87	B-...80-82	C+...78-79
C...73-77	C-...70-72	D+...68-69
D...63-67	D-...60-62	E...59 and below

Information about university-wide policies and resources can be found [here](#).

Tentative Course Calendar

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>
Week 1	Course Intro Theory Review
Week 2	Vocal Ranges and Vocal Pedagogy Considerations Historical Periods in Choral Music
Week 3	Part-Writing for Choral Voices Renaissance Choral Music
Week 4	Introduction to Arranging Baroque Choral Music
Week 5	Arranging from Melodies Classical Choral Music
Week 6	Expanding or Reducing Musical Layers in Arrangements Romantic Choral Music
Week 7	Musical Hinges Twentieth-Century Choral Music
Week 8	Pop A Cappella Music Publisher Spotlights
Week 9	Pop A Cappella Music Publisher Spotlights
Week 10	Instrumental Ranges and Transpositions Music Publisher Spotlights
Week 11	Arranging for Instruments Music Publisher Spotlights
Week 12	Arranging for Voices and Instruments Music Publisher Spotlights
Week 13	Concert Programming Arranging and Programming Projects
Week 14	Project Presentations Semester In Review

This syllabus is a guide. It may be varied as needed.