

Midwestern Singers – MUSC 1981,2981,3981,4981

Midwestern State University

Spring 2026 Syllabus

General Information

Instructor: Dr. Bret Smithey

Course Number: MUSC 1211

Class Location: FA-C117A

Class Times: M W 1200-1250

Class Dates: 1/20-5/4

Email: bret.smithey@msutexas.edu

Phone: (940) 397-4789

Office: Fain Music Hall C117K

Course Description

A chamber ensemble selected by audition from members of the University Singers. The Midwestern Singers perform a wide variety of music from different countries, ranging from madrigals and motets to vocal jazz arrangements from America and abroad.

Course Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes

Our primary goal is to produce musical performances of the highest caliber, for the benefit and enjoyment of the ensemble members and our audiences. Upon successful completion of the course, the student will be able to:

- Through performance, demonstrate improvement in the development of musicianship and group vocal techniques
- Perform and discuss various styles of choral literature

Develop a broad understanding of the history, common styles, and repertoire of the choir to successfully lead vocal ensembles in the future

Student Assessment:

Each student will be graded on their preparedness for each rehearsal (50%), attendance (25%), and professionalism (25%).

Preparedness (50%)

All ensemble members are expected to prepare the parts assigned them through individual practice outside of class time. This is the single most important factor in having effective rehearsals and, as a result, excellent performances. You must practice your parts and come to ensemble rehearsals prepared. If everyone meets this expectation, we will have a positive experience and make great strides toward reaching our full potential.

Attendance (25%)

You must be at every rehearsal and performance. A schedule for each rehearsal will be distributed to each member of the ensemble with advanced notice. Plan to attend every scheduled meeting. There is a chance that there will be a few rehearsals where you do not have to attend because we will be working on music for which you do not have a part. These cases will be minimal. Absences will be excused for the following reasons: Illness, death in the family, or an approved and school-sponsored trip. Any other reasons will be considered on a case-by-case basis. In order for any of these absences to be excused, I must be notified in advance. Two or more unexcused absences will result in a lowering of your final grade in the course. Absence from any dress rehearsal or concert results in an automatic F.

Professionalism (25%)

Acting professionally in this course not only means acting appropriately during rehearsals but also that everyone is set up for rehearsal with the equipment that is needed on time. Each student is required to be set up by the beginning of the rehearsal for the pieces that we are rehearsing that day. If you are coming from another class that is far away, set up earlier in the day. If at all possible, try not to schedule anything before percussion ensemble so you have plenty of time to move equipment and be prepared to play on time. There are no excuses in this area, as our limited rehearsal time can not be wasted trying to get set up.

Communication

Please feel free to contact me by email (bret.smithey@msutexas.edu) at any time. Do not wait until your next rehearsal to tell me that you did not understand an assignment or that you lost your music. If you let me know ahead of time, I will be more likely to be able to help resolve the situation. If I contact you, a response is expected within 24 hours.

Important Dates

2/26 and 28-Basketball

4/9 Concert

4/20 Concert

Other Information

Disability and Accommodations

If a student (1) needs class accommodation(s) because of a documented disability, (2) has an emergency medical condition that may interfere with class performance, or (3) requires special handling in case the building must be evacuated, they are encouraged to contact the office of Disability Support Services in room 168 Clark Student Center (940) 397-4140 and make an appointment with the professor as soon as possible.

Student Conduct

Behavior that interferes with either the instructor's ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to benefit from the instruction will result in the instructor removing the disruptive student(s) from the class, either temporarily or permanently (instructor drop), and assigning a final lower grade, up to and including an F. In addition, and depending on the nature of the behavior or conduct, the student(s) may be subject to further disciplinary actions as per MSU policies.

Privacy Statement

Federal law prohibits the instructor from releasing information about students to parties outside the university without the signed consent of the student. Thus, in almost all cases the instructor will not discuss a student's academic progress or other matters with his/her parents without the proper release from students.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty including plagiarism and giving or receiving unauthorized assistance is prohibited. Plagiarism is (1) the use of source material of other persons (either published or unpublished, including the Internet) without following the accepted techniques of giving credit or (2) the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given. If a student in the class plagiarizes material, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken. The Student Honor Creed developed and adopted by the MSU Student Government reinforces the discouragement of plagiarism and other unethical behaviors. The first statement of the creed reads, "As an MSU student, I pledge not to lie, cheat, steal, or help anyone else do so." Plagiarism is lying, cheating, and stealing.

Campus Carry

Senate Bill 11 passed by the 84th Texas Legislature allows licensed handgun holders to carry concealed

handguns on campus, effective August 1, 2016. Areas excluded from concealed carry are appropriately marked, in accordance with state law.

Campus Closure Policy

If Midwestern State University authorizes campus closing procedures, rehearsals for this course will be canceled. If the campus is closed for the date of a concert, the concert will be rescheduled to a later date.