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| **Course Title: Chamber Chorale – 2014-15** |

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| **Course Description:**   1. A highly select mixed ensemble of eleventh and twelfth grade men and women. Membership is by audition only. 2. We believe that music is a way in which God reveals Himself to us and through which we praise Him. Through singing texts from the Bible and other religious sources we are confronted with God’s truths. Though these are not the only texts we sing, they make up the majority of the repertoire and through which we most clearly see God’s revelation. As image bearers of God we strive to develop the gift of creativity to its maximum potential. When we recreate music we experience a part of our nature that reveals to us something of God’s creative being. In the making of music we are brought closer to our Creator because He is the source of all that is created. Choir provides us with a unique opportunity to use the gift of voice that God has given us, as well as developing the skills necessary to do so to the best of our ability. |

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| **Essential Learning Objectives:**  Members continue to develop their knowledge and skills in several areas:  1. Music theory – Students will be challenged to attain a higher level of theory knowledge than the other choirs. Through periodic theory lessons and daily discussions about the music we are preparing, students learn to use the “language” of music. Some prior knowledge of theory and terminology is preferred but not required.  2. Sight reading – Students will be challenged to become better and more independent sight readers. Use of the “Moveable Do” (Solfege system) is a part of every rehearsal, whether it be a part of the warm-up, a formal sight-reading exercise, sight reading the music we are learning, or drilling a difficult passage.  3. Voice production. Music learning and performance is a major, but not the only objective of the choir. Students will continue to develop their skills in vowel production and uniformity, breathing technique, articulation of consonants, placement of tone, as well as explore and expand the voice’s range and color palette.  4. Ensemble and vocal cooperation (some call it blend). Being a part of a choir, especially a smaller one, means learning to listen to others as much or more than oneself. Students will be challenged to vocally cooperate with others while maintaining a healthy aggressiveness, something that takes practice and conscious effort.  5. Great attention is paid to what makes the music come off the page - working on the small details of phrasing, syllabic stress, meaning of the text, expressive singing of the text, communicating the meaning of the text, etc. Students will be challenged to go beyond the notes on the page and sing with passion and expression. |

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| **Course Outline:**  Members continue to develop their knowledge of music theory as well as their skills in sight reading and voice production. They prepare and perform music that represents a variety of styles/genres and levels of difficulty, in four to eight parts. There are frequent performances in a variety of settings. Music learning and memorizing must often take place outside of class time so that rehearsals can be spent exploring and refining the expressive qualities of the music. |
| **Online Learning Experience & Resources:** |

Students are required to use the GRCHS Choirs Moodle site. The site includes the following:

1. Handbook/Syllabus is available for reviewing.
2. Students and parents should consult the Syllabus first if there are questions regarding dates and locations, or policies.
3. Writing assignments that must be completed each semester and turned in.
4. Memorization schedule is posted before each concert so that the music is memorized in a gradual and organized way.
5. You Tube sites, accompaniments, part recordings, translations, are available to aide in the learning and memorizing process.

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| **Course Resources:** |

Music to be performed is supplied by the school.

Uniforms for Chamber Chorale are mostly supplied by the school. Each member must provide black shoes and: men-black socks; women-black nylons/tights.

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| **Course Assessments:** |

Students are evaluated based on their participation in class, grades received on voice checks for memorization, completion of writing assignments, theory tests, and attendance at performances. It is my expectation that all members of Chamber Chorale will receive the grade “A” for each marking period. If there is a problem we will deal with it as necessary.

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| **Initials & Date of Last Update: RVW 08-19-15** |

**Other Opportunities**

For those who desire to go above and beyond our school choir experience there is the opportunity to audition for the Michigan School Vocal Music Association Honors Choir program. Auditions for the Region A Honors Choir are being done Online this year so there is no travel involved for the auditions. See Mr. Van Wingerden soon for details (there is a sheet that describes the program completely), the applications are due in mid September, very soon after school starts.

Another opportunity is for private voice lessons. You don’t have to consider yourself a soloist to benefit from taking voice lessons. Mr. Van Wingerden has a list of some teachers in the area for those interested in pursuing this option.

Any student may participate in the MSVMA District Solo & Ensemble Festival – February 7, 2015 at GVSU. This could be as a soloist or as a member of a small ensemble. Talk to Mr. Van Wingerden if you are interested in this. Registration is in mid-December.

**Cell phone or other personal communication device** –

Leave it in your backpack turned **off**. Please inform me at the beginning of class (by bringing a note from a parent) if there is some family situation that requires you to have it on your person (on “vibrate”) so you can respond to a parental message. If we talk about a change of date for one of our events, or the addition of a date, and you need to put that into your “calendar” wait until class is over. If I see you using a phone or hear it go off I will: first time take it but give it back at the end of the hour; second time and every time after that I’ll take it and give it to Mrs. Vander Wilp.

***Tardy*** – Since we meet first thing in the morning four days a week I will expect that you will be in your seat with your folder by the time the bell rings. On Fridays I will give you one minute extra to be in your seat because there are only five minutes for passing. Before you get to your seat please leave your backpack by the wall just beyond the folder cabinet and get rid of gum if you have been chewing some. Monday thru Thursday right after the bell and Fridays the bell plus one minute I will start attendance. At the time of attendance “if you ain’t there (in your seat), you ain’t here” (absent or tardy). Translation - tardy will be defined as not in your seat, with your folder when attendance taking is started. We need to be as judicious as possible with our time so I want to get started in a timely fashion without having to tell people to get to their seats every day, and/or having numerous people who need to get their folders when we are ready to start singing. It has been my experience that students know exactly when a period ends, I’m asking that you also show an equal awareness of when it begins.

**Communication from me to students**

will come primarily through announcements in class and your school Gmail account. It will save us a lot of time in rehearsal if I don’t have to tell you everything that needs telling so make sure you check your Gmail account regularly. I will try to inform you of when there is something for you to know, see, or listen to - please make sure you take care of business. Pretty much everything related to our class will be posted on the “GRCHS Choirs” Moodle site: this syllabus; the calendar with maps and times of performances; PDFs of the music we are learning so you have music to look at home; “You Tube” sights or other recordings of as many of our songs as I can find that you can use when memorizing your music; part recordings to help you learn the notes; memorization schedules. Most of you know how to access this site but we will review the process in class. Please make sure your parents know how to access it too. Our password is “room153”. Look at the Moodle site before asking me a question. If you can’t find an answer there then ask me.

**Communication from me to parents**

will come primarily through email – the school Gmail account, and phone calls. I will try to inform parents of when there is something for them to know, see, or listen to. Pretty much everything related to our class will be posted on the “GRCHS Choirs” Moodle site: Our password is “room153”. Please have parents look there for the answers to their questions. If an answer can’t be found there then call or email me.

School phone: 574-5597;

email: rvanwingerden@grcs.org

**First Assignment**

Your first assignment is to write something (a paragraph or two) about yourself as a way of introducing yourself to the rest of us. Remember, these paragraphs will be compiled, printed, and handed out to everyone in this choir. Please stick to reality – no fiction. I would hope I wouldn’t have to say this next thing since we are who we are and in the place we are, but just for the record: nothing off color, no use of inappropriate language, etc. Keep in mind, the booklets may also be read by moms and dads. In order for this to be meaningful you must tell us more than, "My name is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, I am in \_\_\_ grade, I have a dog named \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, two sisters and live at \_\_\_." If you’re having trouble thinking of something to write here are some suggestions: it could be about what you did this summer (maybe there was a life changing experience), who is in your family, your interests and hobbies, what you are looking forward to in Choir (or in school) this year, career choice as of now, favorite subjects, sports/extra curr. things in which you participate, etc. One overriding principle must be that we respect each other and never, never do or say something that would deliberately hurt or embarrass a fellow choir member or in any way make fun of them for who they are. We must always remember that we are all made in the image of God, and yet we are a diverse group of people. But we are in this together, and we cannot build trust in, and commitment to, each other if we don’t genuinely support each other. What happens in choir – stays in choir.

Your paragraphs are due next **Tuesday, August 26** (yes, one week from now).

***Here are the guidelines for what you will turn in:***

* **It must be typed**; single spaced on regular white printer paper;
* size 12 font in a readable font (like Times New Roman) and nothing bolded;
* printed on a good quality printer (if you don’t have a printer at home you can use one of the schools or email me your paragraph and I will print it here. rvanwingerden@grcs.org
* Include your name and grade.

**Due Tuesday, August 26** (YES, ONE WEEK HENCE).

#### GRAND RAPIDS CHRISTIAN HIGH

##### **CHAMBER CHORALE**

##### Syllabus

2014-15

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*"Music is fundamental - one of the great sources of life, health,*

*strength, and happiness*

For the common things of every day  
    God gave man speech in a common way.

For the deeper things men think & feel  
      God gave the poet words to reveal.

But, for the heights and depths that know

no reach God gave man MUSIC,

the soul's own speech.