MUSC 550: Chamber Choir
Fall 2026

Instructor
Dr. Andrew Crow
School of Music
Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana

Course Description:
The Ball State University Chamber Choir is the university's most prestigious concert choir, typically comprised of approximately 32 singers, mostly upper-level music majors and graduate students, selected by audition. The Chamber Choir frequently collaborates with other instrumental and choral ensembles for a robust performance experience.

Ensemble Objectives
Over the course of several semesters of participation, members of the Chamber Choir will perform accompanied and *a cappella* music representing a broad variety of history and regions. In preparation for performance, students will also receive instruction allowing them to advance music literacy skills, build vocal strength, accuracy, and flexibility, and connect their understanding of choral music to other disciplines and the greater context of history. During the course of this semester, students should progress toward excellence in music performance, including performance-level mastery of assigned repertoire and comprehension of the meaning and context for assigned repertoire.

Course Materials
Each singer will be issued musical scores from the BSU choral library at the beginning of the semester and required to return all scores by the final day of classes for the semester. Replacement fees will be assessed for lost scores. Singers must also provide a black folder for performances. Each choir member is responsible for providing their own concert attire. Guidelines are provided at the start of the semester.

Course Structure
In addition to the regular schedule of class meetings, the following performance-related dates are required. See the attendance policy below.

Performances and Outside Calls:

School of Music Showcase Concert

Occasion	Date	Time	Location
Dress Rehearsal	Friday, September 11	Likely 3:00-5:00pm	Sursa Hall
Performance	Friday, September 11	Call TBD 7:30pm concert	Sursa Hall

Campus Concert – w/Concert Choir (ticketed - $5-$10)

Occasion	Date	Time	Location
Dress Rehearsal	Friday, October 23	5:00-7:00pm	Sursa Hall
Performance	Sunday, October 25	1:00pm call 3:00pm concert	Sursa Hall

Graduate Conductors Recital (free, no tickets required)

Occasion	Date	Time	Location
Performance	Tuesday, November 10	6:30pm call 7:30pm concert	First Presbyterian Church

Holiday Concerts – w/all BSU choirs (ticketed - $5-$10)

Occasion	Date	Time	Location
Orchestra Rehearsal	T/R, Dec. 1 and/or 3	3:30-4:45pm	Sursa Hall
Dress Rehearsal	Saturday, December 5	9:00am-1:00pm	Sursa Hall
Performances	Sunday, December 6	1:00 call 3:00 concert 6:00 concert	Sursa Hall

Course Assignments

Attendance and Grading Policies

Ensemble members are expected to be at each rehearsal as long as they are healthy. Preexisting conflicts with rehearsals or concert dates must be submitted in writing (email) to the conductor no later than Friday of the second week of classes. The nature and frequency of these conflicts will be evaluated to determine participation in the ensemble. Arrive early for rehearsal with all provided scores and a pencil. A consistent lack of musical preparation is not acceptable and will result in a diminished grade for the course. If you arrive after the rehearsal has begun, consult with the conductor immediately following the rehearsal. Each tardy entry counts as half an absence.

Missing a dress rehearsal or a performance without evidence of extreme circumstances will have significant repercussions on the final grade, regardless of other calculations. Unexcused absence or significant tardiness connected to a dress rehearsal will diminish the highest possible final grade by one letter grade. Unexcused absence from a performance will diminish the highest possible final grade by two letter grades. Circumstances related to extended illness or other significant disruptions will receive special consideration, but *communication is key*.

Regular rehearsals:

During the regular class meetings, rehearsal contributions will account for 85% of the final grade. Absences will diminish the final grade as follows:
1st and 2nd absence, deduct 0% from the final grade for each absence;
3rd and 4th absence, deduct 3% from the final grade for each absence;
5th and subsequent absences, deduct 5% from the final grade for each absence.

Individual Initiative:

While the undergraduates of this ensemble complete their first part-check assignment, graduate students in this section will devise and execute an initiative that elevates the ensemble experience, selected in consultation with the director. This initiative counts for 5% of the final grade. Creativity is encouraged, but examples include a specialized vocal exercise that aligns with the ensemble's repertoire, providing historical context for the repertoire's text or composition, or a team-building exercise.

Part checks:

Students will be assigned two part-check assignments via Canvas or in person, to total 10% of the final grade (5% each). Note that one part-check may become a memory-check per the needs of the ensemble. Specific objectives of each assignment will be shared at the time the assignment is made.
Part Check #2 – authentic assessment, recording submitted via Canvas, recorded during class
Part Check #3 – no submission, completed during class in a quartet/octet format

Alternate assignments:

The requirements for the ensemble and the grading scheme may change if in-person instruction is disrupted.

Grade Scale:
A = 93-100, A- = 91-92, B+ = 89-90, B = 83-88, B- = 81-82, C+ = 79-80, C = 73-78, C- = 71-72, D=65-70 Less than 65 percent will result in a failing grade.

Technology Requirements
Students will need access to a digital device with video and audio capabilities if required by the university to register attendance via Zoom. In addition, audio recording equipment (modest quality is acceptable) will be needed to create and submit part-check assignments. Contact the professor during the first week of the semester if this presents a barrier to your participation.

University Statement
We are committed to ensuring that all members of the community are welcome, through valuing the various experiences and worldviews represented at Ball State and among those we serve. We promote a culture of respect and civil discourse.

Disability Statement
If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please contact the instructor of record as soon as possible. Ball State's Disability Services Office coordinates services for students with disabilities; documentation of a disability needs to be on file in that office before any accommodations can be provided. Disability Services can be contacted at 765-285-5293 or dsd@bsu.edu.

Freedom of Expression
In this course, we are committed to fostering a learning environment that values intellectual diversity, encourages free expression, and promotes open inquiry. As members of the Ball State Community, we treat each person in the Ball State community with civility, courtesy, compassion, and dignity and respect and learn from differences in people, ideas, and opinions. Please review Ball State University's Statement on Freedom of Expression, the resources on Ball State's Freedom of Expression webpage, and Ball State's Beneficence Pledge.

Title IX
Ball State University is committed to providing a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students. If you or someone you know has experienced sexual harassment—including sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, please know that you are not alone. The University offers support services and resources. For more information or to report an incident, please visit bsu.edu/titleix or contact the Title IX Coordinator at 765-285-1545 or at titleix@bsu.edu

As your instructor, I am a mandatory reporter under the Title IX policy and required to report any information I receive about possible sexual harassment. This includes information shared in class discussions, assignments, or private conversations.

University Grade Appeal Policy
If you believe you received a final course grade that does not reflect your performance due to fairness or a procedural issue, you have the right to file an appeal within 5 school days after final grades are posted by the Office of the Registrar. Review the University Grade Appeal Policy and Process.

Student Academic Ethics Policy
Honesty, trust, and personal responsibility are fundamental attributes of the university community. Academic dishonesty and other forms of academic misconduct threaten the foundation of an institution dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and will not be tolerated. To maintain its

credibility and reputation, and to equitably assign evaluations of scholastic and creative performance, Ball State University is committed to maintaining a climate that upholds and values the highest standards of academic integrity. Visit the VPAA's academic integrity website (Students tab) for resources on understanding academic integrity, citing sources properly, and avoiding inadvertent academic dishonesty. To learn about BSU's academic integrity expectations and students' rights, please read the University Student Academic Ethics Policy.

Academic integrity violations include giving or receiving an unfair academic advantage (cheating), presenting someone else's ideas or work as your own (plagiarism), and falsifying academic records. Unless otherwise indicated, you must work independently by yourself. Check with me if you are unsure whether something constitutes academic dishonesty. Examples of academic integrity violations include but are not limited to:

- Using resources not authorized by the faculty member (including devices, AI tools, hidden notes, and open books)
- Sharing or allowing others to access your files, whether done with permission or not.
- Soliciting others to complete work for you.

Generative AI Statement

All work conducted and/or submitted in this course should reflect your own ideas and demonstrate your current knowledge, abilities, and skills. Therefore, generative AI should not be used to complete any portion of the assignment. Doing so constitutes a violation of Ball State University's Student Academic Ethics Policy.