

# Rhode Island College Chorus

2010-11

*MUS 161-01 Tuesday/Friday Rehearsals 2:00-3:50 p.m.*

*Teresa Coffman, conductor*

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**WELCOME** and welcome back to one of life's most wonderful experiences – singing in a choir! What a great journey I have had with you all in my eleven years at RIC, and I look forward to continually moving forward in our music-making! As our standards, talents, and expectations continue to rise, so also do our musical and personal experiences.

## **Course description:**

RIC Chorus is a select, auditioned Concert Choir open (by audition) to any RIC student.

## **Goals and Objectives:**

- To work together as a team in continually striving for choral, vocal, and personal excellence
- To uphold the highest standards for ourselves and for the college
- To act as ambassadors for the RIC Department of Music, Theatre, and Dance
- To work hard, look great, and sound incredible!

## **Expectations:**

- Everyone is expected to know his or her music and to SING!
- Everyone is expected to come to rehearsals prepared. Since rehearsal time is limited, it is up to each choir member to learn the music (esp. pitches and rhythms) individually. Rehearsal time will be spent on ensemble techniques, stylistic concerns, and general music-making. Some rehearsals during the semester will be devoted to sectional rehearsals, and many rehearsals will include either planned or spontaneous graded quartets or octets from within the choir.
- Everyone is expected to attend all rehearsals and concerts in order to accomplish our goals. A choir member may be heard in an Individual Testing Session if he/she has been absent more than twice or if he/she does not appear to be performing up to the standard. Since rehearsal time is limited, EACH is extremely important. Extra mandatory rehearsals are scheduled on the Wednesday and/or Thursday before our performances (in addition to the regular Tuesday/Friday rehearsals), so please mark your calendars accordingly.
- Everyone is expected to be punctual.
- Everyone is expected to bring a sharpened pencil **and music** to each rehearsal and to sit/stand with good singing posture.
- Everyone is expected to work hard with an attitude that expresses the joy of music-making. A bad attitude will not be tolerated, and a consistently bad attitude may result in a failing grade (regardless of attendance) or withdrawal from the ensemble. All qualified singers are WELCOME in RIC choral ensembles. However, if a singer does not want to be in the ensemble, the ensemble is better off without him/her. The stronger musicians are expected to take leadership roles in gently helping those less experienced, and section leaders may call for sectionals outside of rehearsal time. **Cell phones, alarm watches, and pagers WILL NOT BE TOLERATED IN REHEARSALS!** Ringing cell phones and text messaging in choral rehearsals can result in a lowered grade or **removal** from the ensemble (for the semester or permanently). You have fair warning.... If you are expecting an emergency call, please **let me know** and utilize the VIBRATE/NO RING option on your phone (or leave it in your locker). Use the restroom BEFORE the rehearsal begins; do not leave during the rehearsal unless you have a special situation (in which case, you would need to speak with me). Alcohol or drug intoxication is **prohibited** in RIC choral rehearsals

and concerts; anyone coming to a rehearsal or concert in such a state will be withdrawn from the ensemble (for the semester or permanently). In other words, be responsible. Everyone is expected to project a positive, considerate, and eager to make music attitude.

## **Grades:**

**Everyone begins the semester with a C.**

A “C” chorister is an average student who

- Comes to rehearsals and performances
- Knows his/her music
- Sings accurately

Some factors which will **lower** this grade include the following:

- Absences
- Excessive tardiness/excessive sitting out/habitual leaving and returning during rehearsals
- Lack of preparation/poor rehearsal performance
- Disruptive or inconsiderate attitude/whining
- Poor performance in graded quartets/octets, inconsistency
- Basically anything to do with a cell phone or blackberry
- Etc.

Some factors which will **raise** this grade include the following:

- Exemplary musicianship skills (reading, attention to dynamics, expression, etc.)
- Beauty of vocal tone
- Improvement, consistency
- Leadership
- Positive attitude
- Etc.

If you are a conscientious, considerate, and constantly improving musician, you do not need to worry. However, expectations are high.

**Attendance is mandatory.** Because we are an ensemble, everyone is important. Remember, we are only as strong as our weakest member, so we all must strive to do our best and to help those around us do theirs.

**All absences must be excused, and a maximum of two may be excused.** Please explain your absence in writing (e-mail is best) to increase the probability that it will be excused. Excused absences beyond two will result in the final grade being lowered (three absences equals a B, four a C, five a D, and six or more an F). Any unexcused absences will result in lowered grades (one unexcused absence equals a B, two a C, three a D, four or more an F). In other words, there are no “free” absences. Two tardies (and/or early departures and or “sit-outs”) equal one absence.

Failure to attend a concert results in a failing (if unexcused) or substantially lowered grade (if extenuating circumstances, such as hospitalization, prevent concert attendance). Failure to attend dress rehearsals result in failing or substantially lowered grades (as outlined above). **You are expected to arrange your work schedule around Chorus rehearsals and performances.** Missing a rehearsal/performance due to a job schedule is an unexcused absence and may result in a failing grade.

**Be prepared for mid-term and final GRADED quarters and octets.** Details will be explained in class.

The grading for this course is subjective based on the above factors. If you have questions about your grade, ASK. More importantly, ask BEFORE the end of the semester. **If you attend all rehearsals and concerts, if you know your music and come to rehearsals on time and prepared, if you improve musically, if you take responsibility for your own music-making, and if you project a positive and helpful attitude, you will earn an A in this course.** If you know you must miss a class, TALK TO ME.

If you cannot sing due to illness but are not contagious, sit near your section and study your music silently as it is rehearsed. If this becomes a habit, you should withdraw from Chorus or risk a failing grade.

Please use the restroom before rehearsal begins: habitual leaving and returning to rehearsals will not be tolerated. This behavior is extremely disruptive and inconsiderate.

Each singer will be periodically required to sing in GRADED quartets or octets during the rehearsal period (in front of the Chorus). Needless to say, knowledge of music is crucial to the success of the ensemble and to each individual. Details may or may not be announced – be prepared.

Please be responsible, be musical, and do not “push my buttons” regarding grading and attendance; the goal is to be a musically excellent, exciting, expressive, and cohesive ensemble.

The following is the grade policy for music majors as outlined in the RIC Music Student Handbook:

**A minimum grade of C is required in all required music courses – including MUS 161 RIC Chorus – in order to be credited towards a degree in music. Music education professional courses require a grade of B- or better. Students who earn less than the minimum grade will have to repeat that course, earning a C or better before the course will count toward fulfilling curricular requirements in their program.**

### **Concert attire:**

WOMEN are required to purchase the required concert dress (\$80.00).

MEN wear a standard black tuxedo, black bow tie and white tuxedo shirt.

ALL: MEN wear black shoes and socks and WOMEN wear comfortable black closed-toe dress shoes and black nylons. Please do not wear perfume or use strongly scented styling products (hairspray, gel, etc.). Please DO wear a reliable deodorant/antiperspirant.

NOTE: if you appear for a concert inappropriately dressed, you may not be allowed to sing the concert, which will result in a failing grade.

Again, please do not “push my buttons” on this issue; the point is to act, look, and sound like professional musicians.

### **Music:**

Music will be checked out to Chorus members from the choral library and is to be returned by the end of the semester. You will be charged a replacement fee for any lost or excessively damaged music. If music is not returned and a replacement fee is not paid by the end of the semester, you may receive a failing semester grade, an “Incomplete”, or your semester grades may be withheld by the college.

Each choir member is expected to purchase a black, three-ringed binder for his/her music. Details will be provided.

### **Calendar:**

Rehearsals are each Tuesday and Friday from 2:00 to 3:50 p.m. (unless there is a scheduled college holiday or if the campus is closed due to weather conditions), and extra mandatory dress rehearsals are scheduled in the performance venue one or two evenings before the performance.

### **Known 2010-11 Performances (continued on back)**

**Saturday, October 2, 10:00 or 10:30 a.m.** (dress rehearsal TBA) –

RIC Homecoming (RIC Chorus and RIC Chamber Singers)

**Friday, October 29, 2010** (dress rehearsal Thursday, Oct. 28) –

Halloween Collage Concert (RIC Chamber Singers, Men's Chorus, and Women's Chorus and MAYBE RIC Chorus)

**Friday, November 5, 2010** (dress rehearsal during Friday rehearsal) –

RIC H. S. Invitational (RIC Chorus and Chamber Singers)

**Friday, December 10, 2010**, (dress rehearsal Thursday, Dec. 9) –

RIC Winter Choral Concert (RIC Chorus, Chamber Singers, Men's Chorus, and Women's Chorus)

**Saturday, December 11, 2010 –**

Possible Chamber Singers holiday concert at St. William's in Warwick (RIC Chamber Singers)

**Late January and/or mid-May** (the Thursday or Friday before classes begin in January and/or the week after final exams in May) –

Chamber Singers tour area high schools

**Friday, March 11, 2011** (dress rehearsals Wednesday and Thursday, Mar. 9 and 10) –

RIC Spring Choral Concert featuring RIC Composers

**(NOTE: This is the Friday just before Spring Break)**

**Friday, April 29, 2011** (dress rehearsal Thursday, April 28) –

RIC Bon Voyage Choral Concert (RIC Chorus, Chamber Singers, Women's Chorus, and Men's Chorus)

*Being a part of this ensemble is a joy and privilege for all of us.  
Looking forward to another great year of making music with you all!!!*