



Vocal Performing Ensemble Syllabus

Grading

- **Performance Attendance** is MANDATORY (includes *all* Games (as announced), Festivals, Competitions, Concerts, etc.). There are simply too many people relying on YOU as part of this performing group. Choosing to miss a performance shows lack of respect for your fellow performers, which will not be tolerated.
 - One letter grade lower for EVERY missed performance
 - Three Tardies (for performances) = One Performance Absence
 - Lowered Citizenship grade (if you have otherwise earned a “satisfactory” grade, you will now have an “unsatisfactory”). Someone who chooses to miss a performance is certainly not an Excellent citizen.
- **40% -- Student Effort/Commitment Level**
 - Student works hard 1) to improve his/her musicianship skills and 2) for the betterment of the group
 - If other category scores are low, this score will obviously reflect it. Citizenship Rubric is an excellent guideline for this category!!
- **20% -- Outside Rehearsal Attendance** (after school rehearsals, tech rehearsals, etc.)
 - As we near concert or other performance dates we will schedule a few after school rehearsals, including tech rehearsals the day before our Winter and Spring concerts and Music Department Showcase. These are mandatory and will be announced as far in advance as possible. Please remain current on homework and projects in other classes; don't wait until the last minute to complete large projects – having a project due the day after a rehearsal will not excuse you from attending rehearsal (I *will* check with your teacher to find out when the project was assigned and if you had adequate time to complete it without missing rehearsal).
 - Unexcused tardy reduces credit to 90% for each occurrence
- **20% -- Sectionals**
 - Students must attend sectionals as scheduled. Sectionals are student-run rehearsals which focus on content specific to one voice part (soprano, alto, tenor, bass). A student or small group of students will be assigned to lead each sectional.
 - Students are learning to work in autonomous, student-led groups – a skill that will be valuable as they move on from high school into college and/or the professional workplace.
- **10% -- Research Projects / Homework**
 - As assigned, usually only once per term
- **10% -- Tests / Quizzes**
 - As assigned, several times throughout each term

Citizenship

- See Rubric

Fundraising

- We all know the arts receive very little funding from the government, but it is impossible to keep a music program running without funds. Costs are very high for print music, piano tuning and maintenance, sound equipment, risers, accompanists, and other curricular items. The only way a program can keep going and grow stronger is through contributions and fundraising. Each student will be expected to participate in multiple fundraisers throughout the school year. If you prefer not to participate in fundraising you may choose a buyout option; you simply make a payment (check payable to North High Choir) for the profit amount from each fundraiser (you will need to request

this total from the director). The opportunity to raise money is one way you can directly help keep music alive at North High School.

Concert Attire

- Our vocalists and instrumentalists perform in numerous concert settings throughout the year. Required concert attire is long black dresses for ladies and tuxedos for men, and must be purchased through the music department. With sales tax this one-time purchase comes to \$110 (as long as your outfit still fits each year). Payment is due by the end of October. We will make some fundraisers available to help with this cost. More information on installment plans and fundraising will be coming soon.

Vocal Music Boosters

- Our North High Instrumental Music Booster Association (NHIMBA) is a very active group of parents and other adult supporters of music at North High. They help raise money, provide chaperone support, and communicate with parents to help keep them informed on upcoming events and ways they can help out. The NHIMBA Executive Board has offered to help with the creation of a Vocal Music booster group. Parents, please notify Mr. Cooke if you would be interested in helping out in any way. Last year saw some exciting events and concerts, and we have more in the works! I have former students who told their parents they really don't need to come help out... then after graduation confided in me how much it meant to them to have their parents around being active in their music program. Come be part of the excitement!

TUSD Academic Eligibility

- Maintain 2.0 GPA (C Average)
- No more than one (1) "U" in Citizenship
 - *Ineligibility lists are published after every quarter. If a student appears on this list he/she is not allowed to perform with the rest of the ensemble for the **entire** following quarter. Students **ARE** still required to **attend all performances** with the group but **may not perform**: We are still a team ensemble and students need to show their support and commitment to the group by participating as part of the "running crew" for the performance (stage crew, equipment loading & setup, etc.). Mr. Cooke will **occasionally** excuse students from attending a performance so they can focus on homework, but this is done on a case by case basis.*
 - *Mr. Cooke excuses ineligible students from some after school rehearsals with the expectation that they attend CSF Tutoring in the Library and/or work on homework (tech rehearsals are still mandatory).*

Very Important Message from Mr. Cooke

I believe the arts are extremely important to human society. What we know of past cultures and historical periods is enhanced by the arts people have left behind. Our knowledge of pre-historic cultures is based almost solely on their arts. At the same time, I believe the arts should be fun; we will work extremely hard and we will play hard. School music programs should add to the students' school experience; participation in high school music has been proven to have great benefits to analytical and academic thought processes, but I do understand that these benefits can only occur if sufficient attention is paid to academics. I will do my best keep choir activities balanced with the students' academic requirements. Yes, we will often be busy, sometimes VERY busy, but I will still try to keep our students focused on their studies in addition to their music.

On that note, we have after school rehearsals on a "To Be Announced" basis as we approach concert dates. These rehearsals are a compulsory (required) part of being in choir and are reflected in the students' grades. If a student comes up to me on the day of rehearsal and informs me he or she is unable to attend because a big project is due the next day, I will contact the teacher to find out when it was assigned. If the student simply procrastinated and is now "cramming" at the last minute, I will not excuse the absence. PLEASE plan ahead, students! We also have many students who participate in sports after school. I will work with the students and coaches to help create the most beneficial schedule possible.

I encourage students to take advantage of CSF Tutoring in the Library (it's FREE). I can not recommend tutoring highly enough; every year we have students who become ineligible at the beginning of the second quarter because they have below a 2.0 grade point average (GPA). Any student holding lower than a 2.0 GPA is not allowed to perform or compete with the choir or any NHS sport. The ineligible students are still required to work for their music grades by fully attending and participating in class, and serving as our "road & tech crew" for performances and competitions. If you suspect your student may be on the path to ineligibility, please let me know and we can arrange for grade checks and verification of tutoring attendance. Every student that is not allowed to perform leaves a gap in the group's sound and stage formations. Let's work together to avoid putting that terrible strain on all our students.

I am strict on rehearsal attendance because each time just one person is missing from rehearsal it means 1) the students who are present have to adjust for a gap where that person would be standing, walking, dancing, etc., 2) we have to go back at a later date and teach the absent student what he or she missed, wasting precious rehearsal time, and 3) it is unfair to the students who *do* fully attend rehearsals, which causes dissension in the ranks. If a student builds a pattern of missing rehearsal he or she will be given a warning. If that warning is not heeded the student may be removed from all or part of the performance.


Keep In Touch

Students whose parents or guardians take an active role in their education are far more likely to succeed. I end up spending a lot of time with your students – most of them spend many hours in the music room every day. If you as a parent or guardian have a concern with your student or simply have any questions I can answer, please do not hesitate to contact me! E-mail is by far my best method, but how you contact me is completely up to you.

- director@saxonregiment.org
- 310-533-4412 ext. 7205 (my office at NHS)

Thank you for taking the time to read all this! I am looking forward to the upcoming school year; I anticipate our students doing amazing things and I am proud to be a part of it!

Sincerely,



Gregory Cooke

Mixed Chorus & Vocal Ensemble *Commitment Form*

By completing, signing, and returning this form, you are acknowledging that you and your student have read and understand the content of this letter / syllabus. You are also committing to the timely payment of your concert attire fee, and to fundraiser participation. Finally, you understand that your son or daughter's will be encouraged and expected to take responsibility for his/her learning, not only in this music class but in all academic classes.

CONTACT INFORMATION *(please print)*

Student Name _____ Student I.D Number. _____

Voice Part (if known): _____

2009-2010 Grade (circle one): 8 9 10 11 12

Parent/Guardian Name(s) _____

Home Address _____

Home Phone _____

Parent Cell Phone(s) _____

Student Cell Phone _____

eMail (parent) _____ (student) _____

Preferred method of communication: Phone _____ U.S. Mail _____ eMail _____

I hereby acknowledge that both my student and I have read and understand all of the content in this package and am committed to doing my part to continue the tradition of music excellence at North High.

Signature (Parent/Guardian)

Date

Signature (Student)

Date

Please sign and return to Mr. Cooke

Office Use Only

Date	\$	Check #	NOTES
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