Casper College Course Syllabus

MUSC 1440-01: Chamber Orchestra

Spring 2016
MUSC 1440-01: Chamber Orchestra

Lecture/Lab hours: 2 hours   Credits: 1
Class Day & Time: TH 5:00-7:00 PM   Room: MU 123
Instructor: Jennifer Cowell
Office: MU 211   Phone: 268-2531   E-mail: jcowell@caspercollege.edu
Office Hours: Posted on my office door. Please email me if you wish to meet outside of office hours.

Other Contact Information: Please e-mail me or call my office. I will return your call or email within 24 hours. These two means of communication are my preferred method of contact. If you happen to have other contact information for me, please know that they are not official Casper College lines of communication, including Facebook messaging!

Course Description: A performance class open to all string players on campus. This course is designed to cover a variety of literature from primarily the Baroque era. Open to all students on campus, BOCES students and community members regardless of their field of study. Credit is given for attendance at the weekly rehearsals and concert performances. Emphasis is placed on the study of stylistic concerns of string performance including bowings, articulations, dynamics and ensembles.

Statement of Prerequisites: Permission of the instructor.

Goal: To foster knowledge of ensemble skills including: articulations, dynamics, balance and blend. Students will learn how to use these skills to become a proficient ensemble player. Students will work together to create a high-quality public performance that is enjoyable, educational and entertaining.

Outcomes:
- Demonstrate effective oral and written communication
- Solve problems using critical thinking and creativity
- Demonstrate knowledge of diverse cultures and historical perspectives
- Appreciate aesthetic and creative activities

Course Objectives:
Students will:
- Listen and respond to music accurately and intelligently
- Describe some of the social and historical situations which influence composition, style and performance of the repertoire
- Regularly apply appropriate and effective practice techniques
- Prepare, rehearse and perform appropriate levels of written music from a variety of musical eras

**Methodology:** One, 2-hour rehearsal each week of the semester. Students will also prepare their individual parts outside of this class time.

**Evaluation Criteria:** Student preparation of material, contribution in class, dress rehearsal, and concert attendance will all be taken into account for the final grade. Attendance is crucial to the success of any ensemble. Tardiness is also detrimental to a successful rehearsal. Lateness to rehearsal will be monitored and will affect the final grade.

**Grade breakdown as follows:**

50% Attendance, Preparation, Participation and Attitude  
50% Dress Rehearsal and Concert Attendance

Points break down as follows:
- 90-100 = A  
- 80-90 = B  
- 70-80 = C  
- 60-70 = D  
- 59 or lower = F

Casper College may collect samples of student work demonstrating achievement of the above outcomes. Any personally identifying information will be removed from student work.

**Required Texts, Readings, and Materials:** The instructor will xerox music at the beginning of the term. The student is responsible for his/her music throughout the term. Students must bring their own copies of the music to each rehearsal. Failure to do so may result in a lower final grade. The music, both originals and Xeroxes are to be returned at the end of the term. Failure to return music will result in the instructor holding the final grade until all materials are returned.

Casper College does have a limited number of rental instruments. Please have a QUALITY instrument, case and bow with real horsehair and rosin. A metronome is also required for this course. Please purchase one at a local music store by the third week of classes or download a FREE APP!!

**Class Policies:**

- **Last Date to Change to Audit Status or to Withdraw with a W Grade:** Consult CC Catalog.

- **Tardy Policy:** A student is considered tardy if he/she is not seated and ready to play when the tuning has begun. Every two tardies equals one absence.

- **Attendance Policy:** Any student who misses two rehearsals will lose one letter grade.
The instructor reserves the right to drop the student from the course if there are more than 4 unexcused absences. All excused absences must be documented by the instructor at least 24 hours before rehearsal. Excused absences will be dealt with on a case by case basis. Any member of the ensemble who misses the dress rehearsal will NOT play the concert. Members who do not play the concert will earn a FAILING grade for the course. This is a team and every player is an integral part of the team!

**Concert Dress Policy:** Please adhere to the following dress codes for our concert:
- **Men:** Long, black dress pants; long white collared shirt; black tie, black shoes and socks
- **Women:** Long, black dress pants or mid-calf length or longer black skirts; ¾ sleeve or longer black dress shirt; black shoes and pantyhose. If you have any questions about concert attire, please consult the director at least two weeks before a performance.

**Music folders and parts policy:** Each player will have his/her own folder with his/her own copy of each piece of music with their name on it. It is the responsibility of each player to bring his/her own folder and parts to each rehearsal and performance. There will be no depending on stand partners for music at any time. Lost or damaged parts will be paid for by the player of such parts. Any markings on the music must be done lightly and in pencil, or the player will be charged for new parts.

**Student Rights and Responsibilities:** Please refer to the Casper College Student Judicial Code for information concerning your rights and responsibilities as a Casper College Student.

**Chain of Command:** If you have any problems with this class, you should first contact the instructor to attempt to solve the problem. If you are not satisfied with the solution offered by the instructor, you should then take the matter through the appropriate chain of command starting with the Department Head/Program Director, the Dean, and lastly the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

**Academic Dishonesty - Cheating & Plagiarism:** Casper College demands intellectual honesty. Proven plagiarism or any form of dishonesty associated with the academic process can result in the offender failing the course in which the offense was committed or expulsion from school. See the Casper College Student Code of Conduct.

**Official Means of Communication:** Casper College faculty and staff will employ the student's assigned Casper College email account as a primary method of communication. Students are responsible to check their account regularly.

**ADA Accommodations Policy:** If you need academic accommodations because of a disability, please inform me as soon as possible. See me privately after class, or during my office hours. To request academic accommodations, students must first consult with the college’s Disability Services Counselor located in the Gateway Building, Room 344, (307) 268-2557, dheuer@caspercollege.edu. The Disability Services Counselor is responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students requesting accommodations, determining eligibility for accommodations, and helping
students request and use appropriate accommodations.

**Calendar or schedule indicating course content:**

- **Sunday, April 3**  University of Wyoming Symphony Orchestra Concert  
  3PM Concert   You need to be in Wheeler at 2:30 to help usher and serve as CC Music Department Ambassadors.
- **Friday, April 22nd**  RED STONE GALLERY AND CONCERT EVENT:  
  University of Wyoming Summit Players  
  7:30 PM Concert. You need to be here at 6 PM to help usher and serve as CC Music Department Ambassadors.
- **Saturday, April 30th**  MUSIC OF THE MASTERS DRESS REHEARSAL  
  12-4 PM  (This is NOT optional)
- **Sunday, May 1st**  Music of the Masters Concert (Wheeler Hall)  
  3 PM Concert. Call time is 2PM

**PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE ORCHESTRAS AND THEIR SUCCESSES**

1. **Each person in the ensemble is important and necessary.** The orchestra cannot function without everyone there, and playing their part the best that they can. It does not matter where you sit in the section; all are able to contribute to the achievements of the group.

2. **Time is our most important asset.** It is completely unprofessional, unbecoming, and rude to be late -- ever. For most musicians, it is common to arrive to every activity at least 10-15 minutes early. This way, instruments, fingers, and brains can be warmed up and prepared to begin promptly when rehearsal starts. Players of this orchestra should follow this guideline.

3. **Preparation precedes perfection.** The difference between outstanding orchestras and mediocre ones is the will and skill of preparation. This goes for rehearsals as well as concerts. This also means that each person is prepared with their music in advance of the rehearsal, having practiced carefully before arriving so they can play with clarity, beauty, and precision.

4. **Never make the same mistakes twice -- always make new ones.** There is nothing quite so destructive to an orchestra as is repeating the same mistakes over and over. When something gets fixed, it needs to remain fixed. We cannot have repeat rehearsals where the same problems creep up again and again. An assignment given at any rehearsal is to be accomplished by the next rehearsal -- period.

5. **Talk only to the conductor in rehearsal.** Unless you are asking your section leader about something in the music, or receiving instructions from him/her about the music, there is no discussion permitted of any kind. Conductors only stop the momentum of the rehearsal when something needs to be fixed, and can easily continue thereafter if everyone is paying attention and listening. Otherwise, severe time is wasted, which is unpardonable.
6. **It’s all about the music.** Everything done in or out of this group which affects the orchestra will be about the music and the music only. Be all about the music always! The only thing that matters is making beautiful music together. Anything that jeopardizes that outcome will be avoided and discarded. This includes attitudes, people, politics, and other distractions and disturbances.