

**Honors Conducting, MUMS 421**  
**Time TBD**  
**Paul Wiens, Professor**  
**Syllabus online: paulwiens.com**  
**Revised: 7/17/11**

Admission: Selection of Honors Conductors is through audition (rehearsal of the choir) during the final weeks of Spring semester for the following academic year. An Honors Conductor must be a performing member of Concert Choir.

Schedule: Approximately one hour of class per week throughout the academic year (even though the credit hours may be taken in either semester), attendance at all ensemble rehearsals and performances, briefings after rehearsal, vocal preparation and rehearsal of the ensemble as determined.

Goal of the course: As a result of the student's participation in Honors Conducting, the student will have the opportunity to demonstrate rehearsal and performance skills with Concert Choir.

Pre-requisite for the course: the successful completion of all levels of aural skills (MUMS 364), Basic Conducting (MUMS 248) and Choral Conducting (MUMS 311). Score Study I (MUMS 375) is highly recommended either as a prerequisite or as taken concurrently with honors conducting. Score Study II (MUMS 376) is recommended.

Outcomes of the course:

1. Honors conductors will demonstrate choral performance skills:
  - a. Through rehearsing and public performance of one short work
  - b. Writing program notes for the short work
  - c. Study of baton technique
2. Honors conductors will develop choral rehearsal skills including:
  - a. Application of solfeggio in teaching of pitch
  - b. Training voices to create appropriate vocal tone
  - c. Fixing intonation issues
  - d. Modeling the pronunciation and enunciation of text
  - e. Pacing of rehearsal for maximum efficiency and productivity
  - f. Unifying phrasing
  - g. Developing dynamic contrast
  - h. Employing standard vocal techniques
3. Honors conductors will develop organizational skills useful in choral work by:
  - a. Participating in Section Auditions and auditions for solo roles
  - b. Discussing personnel issues
  - c. Reviewing the progress of the choir in rehearsal
  - d. Designing and implementing choral formations
  - e. Moving the choir from rehearsal to concert stage
  - f. Writing and proofing program materials

Required materials for the course:

1. Pitch pipe: Master Key brand is recommended
2. Professional baton: GL Custom, Premier, or comparable
3. 4GB SDHC card for video capture
4. *B Minor Mass*, J. S. Bach, Dover edition or other low-priced edition at Amazon.com (or Bärenreiter study score). Check with Professor before ordering.

Procedures:

Honors Conductors serve as the highest level of student input to the Conductor (the hierarchy proceeds as follows: Conductor, Honors Conductors, Section Leaders, choir members). Honors Conductors will meet with the Conductor of the Concert Choir once each week to work on matters related to the Outcomes of the Course. Performance repertoire will be chosen and rehearsal/performance schedules will be developed as appropriate.

Grades:

The final grade for Honors Conducting will be computed following these guidelines:

Demonstration of Choral Performance Skills = 30%  
Development of Choral Rehearsal Skills = 25%  
Development of Organizational Skills = 25%  
Level of preparation/performance = 10%  
Attendance = 10%

Regular testing or grades for projects are not issued in Honors Conducting. The assumption is that at this level (advanced, senior) you will receive a relatively high grade unless you have received clear feedback from the conductor about unresolved deficiencies or unsatisfactory work.