

# 2020-2021 SYLLABUS

## NOVA ALTUS (Soprano/Alto Choir)

Instructor: Allison Bassett

Phone: email to set up ZOOM call

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Program website: <https://clevelandhschoirs.weebly.com>

### Course Description

Nova Altus is open to all students, of any experience level, who sing with a treble (higher register) voice known as Soprano/Alto vocal range. Students who take this class will explore choral literature from diverse cultures, time periods, and genres while learning the basics of music theory, various vocal techniques, and ensemble cooperation. During distance learning there will be a focus on an individual's vocal development including an understanding of anatomy, development of tone quality, improving intonation, building sight reading skills, and learning how to be a productive ensemble member. We will do this through singing, digital recording, music theory training and practice, as well as historical context lessons to provide a deep and rich understanding of choral music throughout the world.

### Course Objectives

The course objectives are made in accordance with the following National Arts Standards for Music:

Creating	Performing	Responding	Connecting
Conceiving and developing new artistic ideas and work	Realizing artistic ideas and work through interpretation and presentation	Understanding and evaluating how the arts convey meaning	Relating artistic ideas and work with personal meaning and external context

- ▶ Create emotionally engaging and musically vibrant experiences online or socially distanced when safe
- ▶ Develop healthy vocal/tone production, posture and breathing mechanics
- ▶ Develop techniques for producing different voice qualities. (speech, falsetto, bel canto, belt)
- ▶ Continue to develop basic skills in diction, vowels, and IPA
- ▶ Demonstrate the use of choral music vocabulary and notation
- ▶ Continue to recognize and interpret expressive markings
- ▶ Expand ability to sing a cappella alone and with others in tune
- ▶ Continue skills in reading music, including elements of rhythm, harmony, melody and form
- ▶ Recognize and analyze, visually and aurally, what is being heard in performances and in listening activities
- ▶ Expand interpretive skills by responding to choral music intellectually and emotionally
- ▶ Expand understanding of balance and blend
- ▶ Expand one's ability to respectfully perform a variety of music in diverse styles and languages
- ▶ Expand knowledge of professional performance practices
- ▶ Explore choreography, creative movement, and staging when able
- ▶ Learn how to foster and develop healthy relationships with fellow ensemble members
- ▶ Expand your role as a responsible and thoughtful member of our local community and world through music

### Supplies

Online optional gear (lists available on canvas)

- ▶ headphones that work with your computer/device, external microphone, a journal of choice, and a binder if they decide to print out music.

### Uniforms

Please reference the Choral Handbook for information on your needed attire for concerts and performances.

### Students with Disabilities

Any student with an IEP or 504 plan will receive any modification/accommodation needed for them to achieve success. Please feel free to contact me to discuss how I can further serve your needs within the context of my classroom

## Guidelines to Create a Safe and Creative Choral Classroom

### Purpose

The following guidelines are to help each member of all our ensembles understand how to create a positive and engaging classroom to create music in. Each of us, through our own actions, choices, and behavior will have a positive or negative impact on our always-evolving culture. Disruptions, disrespect, and negativity will lead to a toxic environment that is not conducive to creating art.

### Behavior Expectations

A physical or digital classroom should be a positive and productive space where ALL students have the opportunity to be successful. As an ensemble, we work as one unit. Our work is interconnected. Nothing you do should interfere with the right of others to learn. We will establish routines and digital norms so things run smoothly. Digital rules & expectations are posted on canvas for your convenience. As with all learning, sometimes we make mistakes, and for that reason, I will give you a second chance. However, if you continue to make poor decisions in the classroom, you can expect me to discuss the situation with you and in some cases, contact your parents for their support. Continued discussion with no change in behavior will lead to the involvement of the school's administration and reevaluation of why you desire to be a part of this ensemble.

### Tolerance Expectations

Choir brings people from all walks of life together to form one tight-knit group. My classroom is a safe place. Discrimination of any kind, whether it is related to ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, social class, or mental/physical disability, will not be permitted within my classroom under any circumstances. The consequence for behavior I consider to be discriminatory will be an immediate referral to the school's administration.

### Live Class Expectations

I am using ZOOM for all my live class sessions. It is more flexible and better for music applications than google meet.

A link is provided in canvas that you will use every week for our live session. The following is what I expect for our live classes.

#### ▶ **Come Prepared**

Have all the things you may need for our live session ready before class:

JOURNAL, PENCIL/PEN, WATER, MUSIC, CHARGER or ASSIGNMENTS from the previous week or asynchronous class

#### ▶ **Arrive on-time**

I know the transition times are tight between classes, please come as soon as you can and wait in the waiting room of ZOOM until I admit you to the session

#### ▶ **Participation**

I know this is awkward and difficult. We all have different scenarios at our homes that make an active mind, body, and voice during all parts of rehearsal challenging.

***I only ask that you do the following to the best of your ability:***

- Have videos on if you are comfortable, it helps me as a teacher observe things like vowel shape, breath, and musical participation
- Sing along when your environment allows you to do so, if you don't sing you will not be able to improve vocally throughout the year, getting comfortable with it now will be key for us all to have the best experience we can this year for however long we have to do distance learning
- Strive to use the HAND SIGNS for visual acknowledgement of peers during discussions

#### ▶ **Etiquette**

For us to use live class time efficiently the following needs to be upheld

- Be respectful in the chat at ALL times, refrain from using it outside of requested responses as directed by the teacher or by a peer or for questions relevant to the tasks at hand
  - o Language usage should be the same as it would be in the classroom at school
  - o Asking questions; I encourage active participation but there are times when questions aren't conducive to the flow of digital class. You can raise your hand (in your video or digitally), post it in the chat, or ask at the end of class
  - o If you have personal items that aren't appropriate for school, please use a digital background during class
  - o Come fully dressed to class (I don't care if it is your pj's etc.) but clothes ☺

#### ▶ **Safety & good practices**

- o Comments to other members: giving feedback will be extremely important during distance learning, be mindful to always lead with constructive comments and positive praise – be kind always
- o Food/gum: when we sing, please do not eat or chew gum, it is dangerous

## GRADING POLICIES

### **Individual work 40%**

During this digital instruction time, individual work will be very important. A true musician knows the value of daily practice and you will need to take time to do sessions outside of live class time. Without it, one relies on natural talent alone which doesn't lead to growth. One must commit to daily practice to build the musical skills required to be truly free as a musician.

#### Work will include

- Music theory/language homework – online
- Journal Assignments – Rehearsal Reflections, Listening, Reviews
- Practice Logs
- Sight-reading – In-Class practice and online practice
- Recording projects
- Various musical topics/skills – Anatomy, vocal technique, music terminology/symbols etc.
- History and culture assignments/presentations

#### Evidence of completing individual work could include

- Being prepared for a rehearsal session with notes and rhythm learned ahead of time
- Demonstration of improved vocal technique, vowels, and intonation from previous session
- Video/sound recording of a practice session
- Completion of recording your part for a project we are working on
- Completed theory/musicianship work
- Sight Reading demonstrations, recordings, and tests
- Presentations on an assigned topic

### **Group Work & Performances 60%**

Music is inherently social and collaborative. Though we cannot sing together in the same room, we can make music together. I will do everything I can to create assignments and activities in which we depend on each other for a greater musical whole. This means that you will frequently be working in groups. Please let me know if you have any concerns about this for any reason.

Choir classes do have performances, they may be digital for the foreseeable future but attendance is still required. In-person events will be TBD based on regional and national guidelines. Any changes will be communicated in advance.

#### **Major Projects:**

In a typical year, we would hold concerts to showcase the music we have been studying and our growth as musicians. This year, we will be holding as many as six events that will be posted or livestreamed to share our music with the world. These events will be held at the end of each unit and will act as a final deadline for work in that unit. (you can always complete work after the event to demonstrate growth in your portfolio, but then nobody else will get to see or hear it!)

UNIT	EVENT/INFO	DATE
Debut Recording Projects	When I Rise & TBD	October
Intro to the Voice	Recordings of Small group work	November
Winter Songs	'We Brought the "Snow" To You' Show and vocal anatomy work	December

## PERMISSION FORMS & COURSE CONTRACT

### **EXTRA-CURRICULAR – (TBA) Information on this will be given in advanced, when/if we are approved for safe meetings**

This course is a performance-oriented course. Like a sport or other performance-oriented activity, choir has extra-curricular performances and trips that are a part of the GRADED STANDARDS of this course. To receive full credit and passing grades for this class, students must attend all scheduled performances and rehearsals throughout the year. If a student misses a performance, it will be recorded as a 0 until he or she completes the concert assessment supplement assignment (including the recording process). Please make arrangements, in advance to help your singer attend all performance and events to complete this course to the best of their ability. This may mean calling Ms. Bassett or another student to arrange appropriate transportation if you are unable.

#### **Photo Release -**

By signing below, I allow photos of my child from rehearsals, concerts and events to be used on the Official Cleveland Choral Music website or social media sites.

#### **Music Curriculum -**

Our choral program strives to provide high-level musical and educational experiences for all our students. By signing below, you understand that by participating in choir, your child will learn about and sing a rich and diverse musical program throughout the year that strives to deepen their understanding of the world, themselves and others. This will include music from all time periods, cultures and styles, representing different languages, with diverse themes, and all historical, political, and religious uses of music. We will always provide respectful collaboration, research and informed performance settings to enhance these experiences that will challenge and expand their musical and personal world.

#### **Choral Music Travel - TBA**

I allow my child to travel with the choir to required local events and concerts as listed in the choral music handbook and in the important dates section of the syllabus. If I **do not** grant permission, I understand my child is still required to attend and will need to be transported by a parent or guardian only to the event at the scheduled time. On larger trips, you will receive a travel plan and expectations to read over before the trip occurs.

Please feel free to contact me about your child at the e-mail address listed at the top of this course syllabus. Additionally, the school district's student information system, Synergy, is designed to help parents stay in better contact with the school regarding their child's attendance and progress in class. I would strongly encourage you to utilize this system. Parents and students can also access documents, including notes and assignments on this site.

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**FORM CAN BE SIGNED DIGITALLY THROUGH THIS LINK: <https://forms.gle/L4YpM9wS3dBVdQFt7>**

**By signing this form, you acknowledge that you have read and understand the course syllabus for your Choral Ensemble**

Student name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Student signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_

If there is something you do not grant your permission of, please notate that here:

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